The Body Drawn Between Knowledge and Desire

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'Refer to the drawing!' This is in essence how the architect in Adolf Loos's parable 'The Story of the Poor Rich Man' reacts when his wealthy client forgets the proper location for one of the carefully designed objects in his house.[1] Loos's fictional Art Nouveau architect has designed everything at every scale, coordinating vases with staircases and slippers with wood floors. The drawing is such a powerful record that even he relies on it to ensure his intentions for the client's aesthetic delight. Here, drawing architecture is a kind of labour of love that delineates how the architect would touch others through their senses. At the same time, the drawing mobilizes general knowledge about perception and spatial occupation. Its relationship to the world that it describes depends on the body's normal capacities to see and feel, to move or stay still. Drawing architecture thus associates two forces: the desire to touch another body through precise material configurations, and the power to sustain and transmit knowledge about the human body in general. The body is thus drawn between desire's touch and knowledge's grasp. This article will discuss how knowledge and desire are ineluctably joined in architectural drawing, as well as the ethical considerations raised by this coupling.[2]

Commentators on 'The Story of the Poor Rich Man' tend to adopt Loos's perspective that there is something inherently wrong with the designer's attempt to conceive every aspect of an environment or experience. Indeed, Loos's moral tale lends itself more readily to sympathizing with the client, who is left with no room for play (*Spielraum*) in his life. Loos argues that a wealthy client with every reason to be content may be driven to despair by the overbearing presence of design intentions in his house. There is clearly no place for the unpredictability of gifts or whims. Realizing that he is 'complete' by virtue of the architect's total work of art, the poor rich man concludes: 'Now I must live with my own corpse.'

Loos sketches a rather unflattering picture of the architect as a snide authoritarian: 'Those two spots of colour destroy the atmosphere. Don't you understand that?' 'Did I not consider *everything*? You need nothing else.' It is nevertheless possible to give the architect the benefit of the doubt and to postulate that perhaps his efforts, while clumsy on the level of interpersonal relations, stem at least in part from a sincere intention to improve his client's life rather than impoverish it. Through a scorn that those familiar with the profession may recognize as frustration, perhaps this architect is also expressing the desire to affect a man who seemed so eager to enjoy a beautiful house. He works not only for material gain or public recognition (although he clearly considers these); his design is also a labour of love. It is perhaps not passionate love, but the architect's concern for the well-being of another person, or for others in general, partakes of an economy of desire with complex mechanisms and manifestations.

This architect is of course a fictional character (although it is tempting to imagine that Loos based his architect-client exchanges on anecdotes over-

heard in Vienna Secession circles), yet Loos's cautionary tale was part of a very real debate around 1900 regarding the way that design should enter people's lives.[3] That debate has echoes reaching as far as contemporary manifestations of avant-garde design practices.[4] It opposes a nostalgic or reactionary attempt to adorn daily life with authentic art and a modernist ethos that promotes sobriety and reproducibility in the interest of the greatest comfort and freedom for all. In Loos's argument, the distinction between art and use is important: the first should not invade the sphere of the second. However, there are some problems with constru-ing the opposition this way. On the one hand, casting the excessively involved architect against the overwhelmed occupant too easily resorts to a simplistic schema with an offender and a victim, a 'strategist' and a 'tactician' (to borrow Michel de Certeau's formulation, which I will discuss below), or, conversely, a misunderstood artist and an uncul-tured commoner. Here, architectural drawing would be reserved for an elite that imposes its values through design. On the other hand, the restrained position, whereby design intervenes in a minimal but still fundamental way, risks defining architecture as a technical intervention dominated by standards, norms, and generalizations about how people live. Drawing would therefore be a mere disincarnate tool. Overall, this debate tends to position aesthet-ics and function as polar opposites, a schema that fails when applied to real circumstances.

If we focus on the status of drawing in the rela-tionship between design and life, the debate takes an interesting turn. Drawing architecture harbours a concern for the human body. Regardless of its degree of detail, the architectural drawing has a hold on the world because its contents relate to bodily experience. Design and life are linked through the conventions that allow us, for example, to make sense of plans and sections. This relation-ship raises two considerations. The first involves the force that drives architects to design for others.

Does the need for survival or for public recognition fully explain the effort to draw environments that, if built, will affect others through physical sensation? A multifaceted desire may also be involved when we draw relationships between design and life. The second consideration is the nature of design's effect on human experience. Do the notions that design thinking deploys about what people think and feel in architecture become reality, and, if so, how does this happen? Given that architects tend to express only good intentions, this may not seem to be a concern. However, in so far as drawing carries knowledge about the body such as its average size and abilities, it participates in the power relations through which different bodily capacities and expe-riences are given relative value. We will see that negative effects can insinuate themselves into the passage from design to life independently of ideol-ogy or doctrine, and that drawing therefore involves a degree of risk.

From this perspective, the ethical question is not, as Loos's tale suggests, to what degree of detail architects should design environments destined for others. It is rather how drawing might harness the architect's desire to affect others without inad-vertently impoverishing our idea of the body and its relation to architecture. This essay attempts to elaborate a theoretical framework within which that question may be explored.

Knowledge and Desire

Architectural drawing's ability to evoke the body associates knowledge and desire in a complex web whose threads are difficult to untangle. Because a drawing has a degree of autonomy with respect to the intentions at its origin, it is possible that an architectural project drawn from a longing for a specific person also contributes to circulating and reinforcing suppositions about the human body in general. Conversely, an apparently staid architec-tural drawing that evokes nobody in particular may also be marked with very human desire.

Loos himself offers a case to consider, this time as architect rather than cultural critic. When he designed a never-built (and probably never-commissioned) house for Josephine Baker (1928), his drawings mobilized and transmitted knowledge of the human body in general [fig. 1]. The slope of a stairway, the width of passage, and the height of a window all refer to accepted corporal dimensions and abilities. These are encoded in the drawings, available for retrieval by anyone with a means to measure. Despite all the difference Loos would place between himself and his fictional architect, they both mobilize knowledge about how people perceive their surroundings, about the extent of their reach, about the way they occupy a chair. And this knowledge precedes, is refined or generated, and is retrieved in their drawings, with the difference that, in the fictional case, it is simply more dressed up.

At the same time, Loos deployed architecture to express his desire for the dancer's body. The sections and plans suggest that the Viennese architect imagined Baker swimming in a pool whose submerged walls include large windows looking into the watery stage, enveloping the dancer's body while putting it on display for guests - a group in which Loos probably hoped to count. In this design, Loos both reproduces disciplinary knowledge about what a body is and should be able to do, and, as Farès el-Dahdah argues, 'instrumentalizes a building as a tactile extension of his senses in order to covet the exoticized body of an absent Josephine Baker'.[5]

Interestingly, Pliny the Elder's (23 - 79 CE) widely cited story situates the origin of drawing in love. Pliny describes how Diboutades traced the shadow of her departing lover by lamplight. This story has been a popular subject of painting in Western art, eliciting the interest of William Mitchell, among others. For Mitchell, the erotic circumstances of drawing's ostensible invention are clear: 'So the image is born of desire, is (we might say) a symptom of desire, a

phantasmatic, spectral trace of the desire to hold on to the loved one, to keep some trace of his life during his absence.'[6] Drawing would be, according to Mitchell, mixed up with emotions including love and control ('to hold on'). It would also harbour a fear that may give way to denial: 'The silhouette drawing ... expresses the wish to deny death or departure, to hold on to the loved one, to keep him present and permanently "alive".'[7] The story attributes drawing to the imposed distance between human beings that are otherwise drawn together. Leonard Cohen expresses the corollary of this idea in lyrics: 'True love leaves no traces / If you and I are one / They're lost in our embraces / Like stars against the sun.'[8] In the absence of an embrace, Loos thus plans a house for Josephine Baker. But is this also true for the rich man's snide architect? Probably to a lesser personal degree and more clearly with regards to psychological factors that link one human being to human beings in general, but before developing that idea, a few more aspects of drawing need be elaborated.

Robin Evans also discusses the significance of Pliny's myth, although he offers a twist by evoking architect and painter Karl Freidrich Schinkel's version of 'The Origin of Painting' (1830) [fig. 2].[9] As Evans points out, Schinkel sets the scene outdoors and depicts the subject's shadow projected onto a rocky outcrop rather than on a wall of dressed stone. This differs from the interior architectural space portrayed in other versions, themselves faithful to Pliny's textual description. For Evans, Schinkel's departure from the conventional story suggests in an oblique way that architecture originates in drawing and therefore cannot be the setting of its invention: 'Without drawing there could be no architecture, at least no classical architecture constructed on the lines of geometrical definition.'[10] Evans also observes that the light source that produces the shadow is not a lamp, but the sun. The former constitutes a point that is analogous to the principles of naturalistic perspective represen-

tation, while the latter's practically parallel lines correspond to the abstraction of the orthographic projections that characterize architectural representation.[11] Schinkel's version of the origin of drawing would therefore suggest that conceiving architectural space requires drawing, and that such drawing objectifies the world that it represents.

Together, these two aspects define rather well the notion of knowledge in drawing that I would like to develop parallel to that of desire. Architectural drawing organizes knowledge so that it can act on the world. Evans notes that unlike drawing in the visual arts, drawing in architecture 'is not so much produced by reflection on the reality outside the drawing, as productive of a reality that will end up outside the drawing'.[12] It is oriented toward altering existing conditions, hence Schinkel's apparent concern with a chronology in which tracing lines precedes raising edifices. Complementing that orientation, architectural drawing consists of a formalized system 'capable of transmitting information', as Stan Allen puts it.[13] In Schinkel's painting, that capacity is represented (but not exhausted) by the sun's parallel lines casting an undistorted image of the model. The Josephine Baker house may be taken as a concrete example of these characteristics of architectural drawing: Loos's orthographic projections define precise spatial dimensions and proportions that portray a transformed world in which Josephine Baker could swim amidst her guests. At the same time, these objective plans and sections carry Loos's desire for Josephine Baker like a stowaway, to be read between the lines. Knowledge and desire cohabitate in Loos's project.

The Body of Knowledge
The link between applied knowledge and the body in architectural drawing is complex. It would be misleading to infer from Schinkel's version of Pliny's myth that, since tracing a person's shadow precedes building, figure drawing is the origin of architecture. Indeed, one could argue that Pliny's body-centred example of projection is tenuously related to architecture, as it deals with figural representation rather than buildings. For example, in his own discussion of the story of Diboutades, Stan Allen distinguishes architecture's situation from that of painting: 'In architecture there is no preexisting object to imitate: no body to cast a shadow.'[14] It may be true that the lines traced in architectural drawings usually correspond to the inert matter that constitutes buildings rather than to the body's fleshy envelope. However, insofar as an architectural drawing derives sense by evoking the body's scale and perceptual capacities, one cannot conclude that it does not reproduce the body in its own way. It is an imitation of the body not as form, but rather as an ensemble of sensing and motile capacities.[15] (For that matter, figure painting is not only a matter of imitating people's shapes.) In other words, the drawing appears architectural precisely because it makes reference to a corporal dimension. As soon as a drawing is recognized as the configuration of the built environment, it swells with evocations of the body's characteristics. Even the driest plan contains the matter necessary for its author or reader to imagine what might be felt - in and through all the senses - by a body occupying 'the reality that will end up outside the drawing'. The very notion that there is reality beyond the drawing only makes sense if that real world is understood to possess qualities that lend themselves to perception. While Allen's observation that 'architecture tends to imitate pre-existing architectures' may be accurate, it does not necessarily exclude the body's role in architectural drawing. The body is a strong source of imitation in architecture. The imitation is simply not usually figural, and occurs more like a generous negative cast of movement and sensation.

This is where the matter of body knowledge arises. The hand that draws a plan is coextensive with a body that, from birth, has felt the cold radiate from a massive wall, seen distant fields framed by a window, heard footsteps descending a
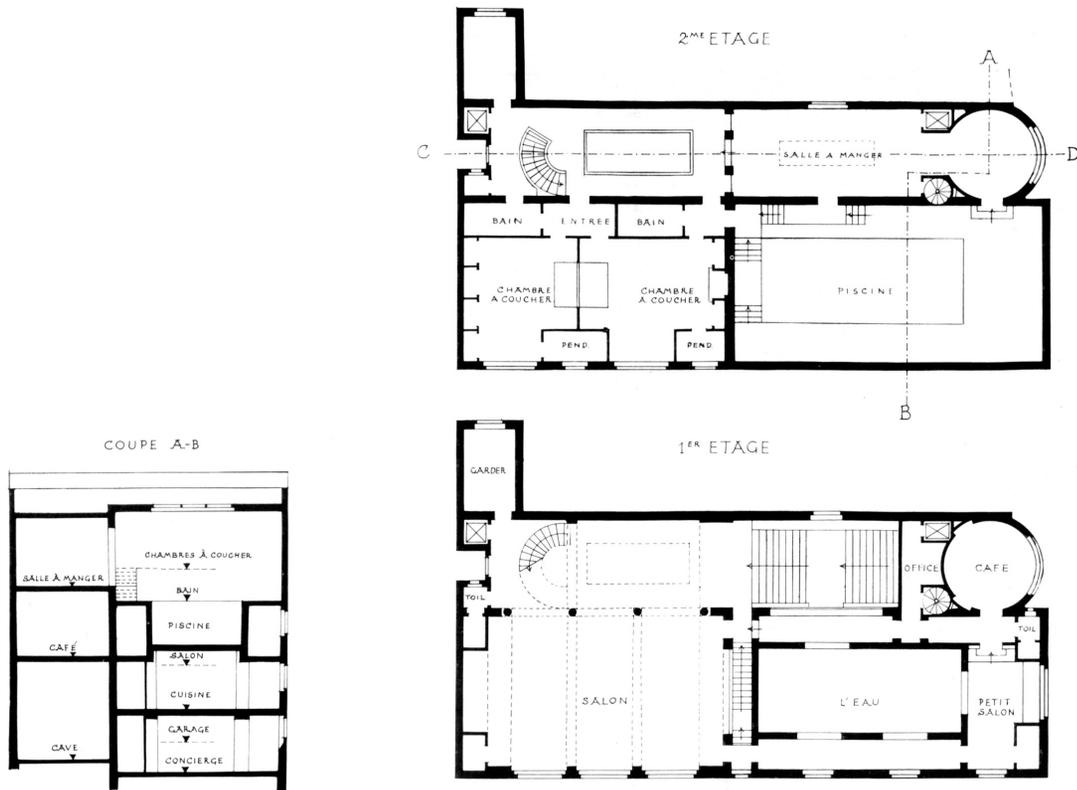
Fig. 1: The Josephine Baker House, Paris, by Adolf Loos, 1928. Plans and sections.
Image courtesy Thames and Hudson. Source: Ludwig Munz and Gustav Kunstler, *Adolf Loos: Pioneer of Modern Architecture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1966).

wooden staircase, or crossed countless thresholds. That kind of inductive body knowledge informs the drawing and can be stirred up by it. Simultaneously, knowledge about the body's size, movement, and sensation deduced and formalized through more objective methods is also at play. The most obvious examples of this deductive knowledge are the dimensions found in Architectural Graphic Standards or Neufert's Architect's Data, but it also resides in rules of thumb and norms related for example to air temperature and humidity.[16] Notwithstanding the many other sciences at play in architecture, much of the knowledge mobilized in architectural drawing pertains to the human body: how it perceives, how it moves, what it requires for comfort and even for survival.

Evans's observations about architectural drawing find resonance in a broader field. Michel de Certeau defines the combination of code and action as a general phenomenon of knowledge production in modernity:

[F]*or the last four centuries all scientific enterprise has included among its traits the production of autonomous linguistic artifacts (its own specific languages and discourses) with an ability to transform the things and bodies from which they had been distinguished.*[17]

We need not construe architecture as a purely scientific undertaking to recognize that architectural drawing functions like one of these 'linguistic artifacts'. Nor need we drift into a debate about the similarities and differences between architecture and language to admit that, more specifically, architectural drawing has linguistic properties insofar as its conventions allow us to share ideas. For the issues at hand, let us retain that de Certeau's definition corroborates the idea that the body is a site where architectural drawing's twin qualities of system and transformation intervene. This stems no doubt in part from de Certeau's careful reading and

commentary on Michel Foucault's writings (notably *Discipline and Punish*). But it is also corresponds to a central concern in much of de Certeau's research, found in his most-cited book in architectural discourse, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, as well as in his work on historiography, mystics, cartography, and sociology. That concern, which he calls of the 'erotics of knowledge',[18] will help to identify some meeting points between architectural drawing's moments of desire and knowledge.

Elaborating that point requires explaining why we should be concerned with body knowledge in architectural drawings. Why, in other words, does Loos's story of an architect who, through good intentions, impoverishes his client's life not seem entirely far-fetched? Why should we be wary of progressively refined knowledge of how one sees one's surroundings and ascends stairs, of what forms, colours, and textures can be associated and to what ends, how an object is held, how a chair is occupied? Much good stems from this body knowledge, not the least of which is that we can walk through doors without twisting our shoulders. However, a more pessimistic assessment is also possible, in particular in light of Foucault's genealogy of disciplinary and regulatory societies.[19]

Discussing architectural drawing is a good opportunity to shift focus from the spatial aspects of Foucault's ideas to what he called a 'power of writing'. While strong insights about architecture and power have come from the focus on Foucault's spatial metaphors, their relevance tends to be constrained to historical conditions that no longer exist. As a result, they distract from how writing, understood broadly, still constitutes a relationship between the body, knowledge, and power with significant social consequences.

For Foucault's description of the body's ensnarement in power relations, the ability to document is fundamental: 'A "power of writing" was constituted

Fig. 2: The Origin of Painting, by Karl Friedrich Schinkel, 1830. Image courtesy of the Von de Heydt Museum in Wuppertal.

as an essential part of the mechanisms of discipline.'[20] Tabulating information about bodies is the prerequisite for prescribing the movements, imposing the exercises, and creating the body-based mechanisms that multiply the forces that go into them.[21] For Foucault, a variety of graphic and textual representations of the body - what it is and could be, what it does and could do - are critical components of anatomo-politics, the power that invests the body as a machine. Writing is the medium by which a discipline's knowledge of the human body circulates in the absence of bodies, in particular those bodies that were observed in the 'drawing up of tables' and those for which the written prescriptions are intended.

Architectural drawing is a form of body knowledge that operates as one such 'power of writing'. The corporal dimension of 'power/knowledge' grows not only through a spatial choreography in which real bodies see and are seen (as in a panopticon), but also through media that record information about the body, including architectural drawing. In a disciplinary or regulating mechanism involving the built environment, drawing provides the continuity of knowledge when the body is a memory or an anticipated return. Here, it is not a matter of how the architectural object's physical structure makes vision both coercive and informative. Where a ring of cells around a central tower is understood to have power effects when there are bodies in the cells (but not necessarily in the tower), the writing hypothesis suggests that architectural drawing sustains the penetration of knowledge/power into human experience, even when there are no bodies to observe.
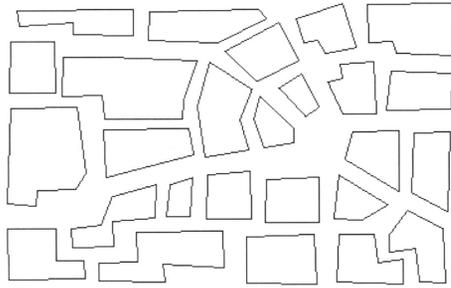
The Body Conceived in Drawing
The critique underlying Foucault's argument is that the body is taken up into the micro-techniques of power towards utilitarian ends. Giorgio Agamben highlights this aspect in his elaboration of Foucault's notion of the 'apparatus'. Agamben traces the French *dispositif* through its Latin usages back to the
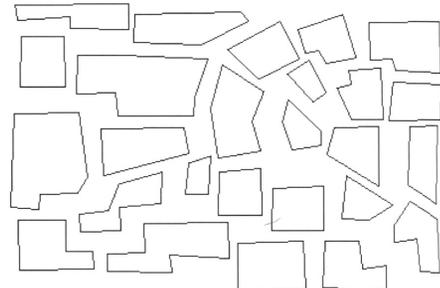
Ancient Greek *oikonomia*, the *nomos* of the *oikos* or organization of the household. Thus it carries the trace of 'a set of practices, bodies of knowledge, measures, institutions that aim to manage, govern, control, and orient in a way that purports to be useful for the behaviours, gestures, and thoughts of human beings'.[22] The apparatus is that which models, contaminates, or controls individual lives in the spirit of utility. That spirit is what is at stake when the body is grasped by the apparatuses that extend the reach of disciplines and regulation.

For Agamben, the most ancient of apparatuses is perhaps language itself, 'one in which thousands and thousands of years ago a primate inadvertently let himself be captured'. I prefer 'to grasp' over Agamben's 'to capture'. The concern is not that the law enforcement agents or renegade machines (as in the film *The Matrix*) will physically seize individual bodies and place them where they are needed. The body is grasped by power relations because it is conceptualized in certain ways and not in others. Thinking the body in terms of how it should move, what it should perceive, what it should be able to do is an efficient way of coordinating it as a means to an end. The panopticon is no longer the appropriate architectural figure for Foucault's model of disciplinary and regulatory societies. Architecture's ability to implement the social programmes once served by circular prisons and hospitals has been superseded by other techniques. However, architectural drawing, as a critical tool in the science that studies the body in its natural and artificial environments, maintains an ever-expanding reach over the body.
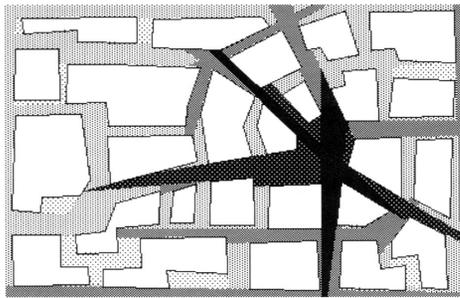
Bill Hillier's investigations of space syntax and the social logic of space provide an interesting example.[23] Hillier's analytical process evaluates the nature of sight lines in plan drawings of spatial configurations in order to articulate conclusions about the space's relative 'integration' and 'intelligibility'.[24] The drawing supports the projection of imaginary bodies into the represented space and
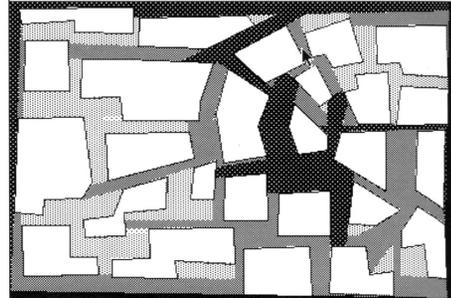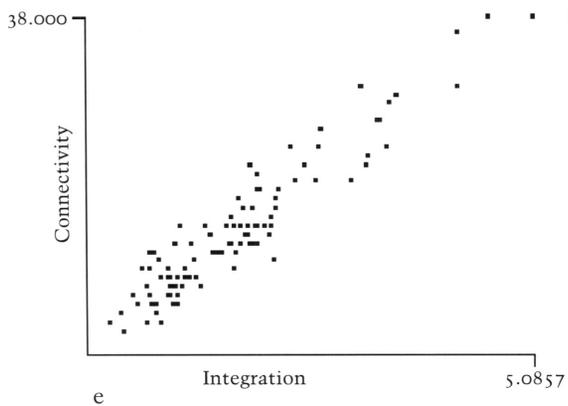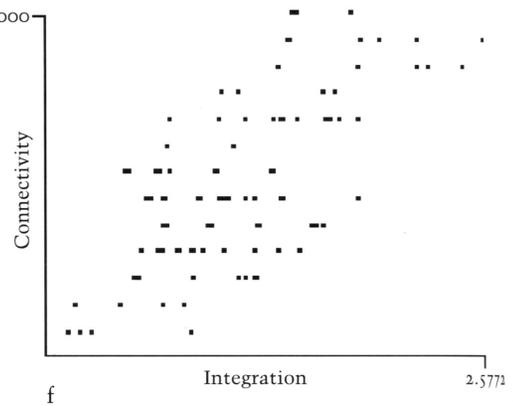
Fig. 3: Space Syntax Diagrams, by Bill Hillier, 1996.
Image courtesy Bill Hillier. Source: *Space is the Machine: A Configurational Theory of Architecture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 126.

returns information about what can or cannot be seen from any given point. [Fig. 3] Plotted onto a scatter chart, that information gives a visual representation of the configuration's properties. In this case, the analysis results in assertions about how intelligible a plan of urban blocks is for the fictional people that are projected into the drawing - people that any architect can imagine there.

For Hillier, the link between a graphic-based analytical method and lived experience is clear:

[S]*tudies have shown that the choices that people make in selecting urban spaces for informal activities, such as eating, drinking, talking and sitting, reflect proximity or adjacency to areas with strong visual fields that are well integrated into the system as a whole. Such spaces are ideally suited to what seems to be the favourite occupation of those using urban space informally: watching other people.*[25]

Hillier's argument expresses the belief that architectural drawing can be used in association with analytical methods to determine the spatial configuration necessary to achieve specific ends, in this case a certain form of urban sociability. Here, the spirit of utility is double and mutually reinforcing: physical space is useful for individuals, who are themselves useful for a social project.

Applied during the design process (as Hillier and his team did for Norman Foster Associates' King's Cross redevelopment master plan in London), this drawing method may well help to create urban environments with 'an intelligible pattern to the space structure', where the 'integration core' is strongly defined, in short, in which one easily finds one's way. But it also produces and perpetuates a few ideas about lived experience: that spatial orientation is primarily a matter of vision; that seeing things in a certain way corresponds to a specific way of understanding them; that vision may be used to get people to behave certain ways. Pulled into a network

of elements oriented toward acting on the world - that is, an apparatus confident of its usefulness, which here takes the form of architectural discourse - this drawing privileges vision to the detriment of other senses, associates things seen to specific ways of thinking, and grasps the body-as-seeing-device towards anticipated results. It participates in reducing the conception of the body's relationship to experience in terms of usefulness. The body is grasped by power because the drawing's knowledge of lived experience is part of an apparatus that can alter the world outside it. As a consequence, architectural drawing helps to define which body attributes are important, what their parameters are, and how they can be harnessed towards specific ends.

Hillier's space-syntax method seems remote from more familiar design practices. However, the conviction about the relationship between architecture, bodily capacities and drawing that underpins it is very common. In the *El Croquis* presentation of the 'Bordeaux House', designed by Rem Koolhaas and the Office for Metropolitan Architecture (Floirac, France, 1995-98), a very compelling drawing reproduces the bedroom floor plan three times in order to articulate how the porthole windows correspond to visual effects for different positions and states of motion [fig. 4]. The accompanying text distinguishes a variety of situations - moving, sitting, washing, lying down, standing adult, standing children, wheelchair position - and relates them to horizon views ('dynamic holes'), remarkable views ('revealing holes'), and 'anti-claustrophobic' views ('relative views').[26] The sight lines in the drawing help to determine not only each window's position and height, but also the nature of its cut through the wall: as perpendicular cylinder, oblique cylinder, or cone. I will not address the house's status as a work designed for a disabled client, despite its undeniable relevance for a discussion of architecture and the body. It must suffice to note that the drawing records in a very precise way the spatial
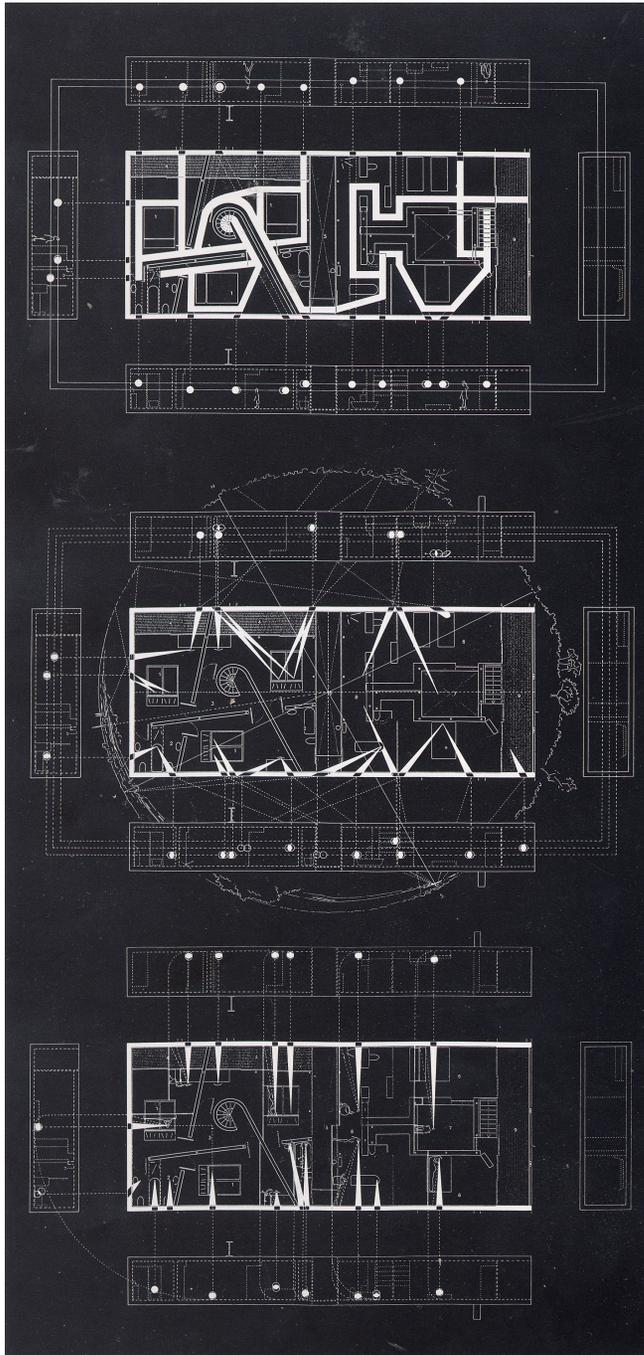
Fig. 4: The Bordeaux House, Floirac, France, by Rem Koolhaas and OMA, 1995-98. Plans of upper floor. Image courtesy OMA. Source: *El Croquis* 79, 1996, p. 174.

correspondence between a variety of bodily states and specific visual stimulants. It associates specific forms and locations with positions and movements, emphasizing visual perception and literally framing how experience in the house should be conceived. It furthermore applies and generates a more refined knowledge of the body than in Hillier's example, regrettably echoing Foucault's argument that the power of normalization does not so much homogenize as introduce 'all the shading of individual differences' in order to render these differences useful.[27]

The danger is neither the desired effect of clarity and sociability (in Hillier's case) or of visual pleasure and orientation (in that of Koolhaas); it is rather the side effect of perpetuating a utilitarian way of imaging the body's movement and sensation that is pernicious for everyday life. My reference to Foucault's arguments does not stem from a fear of secret forces seizing unwitting bodies, but rather from a preoccupation with how architectural drawing is tied to ways of thinking about the body - what he called *epistémè*. In that light, it is interesting to recall John Dewey's century-old observation of the inadequacies of conceptualizing the relationship between sensation and action as a mechanical cause and effect arrow. With reference to the 'child-candle' example of perception and movement in psychology, Dewey challenged the ordinary interpretation that 'the sensation of light is a stimulus to the grasping as a response, the burn resulting is a stimulus to withdrawing the hand as a response and so on'. In a turn of phrase that seems like a precursor of deconstruction, Dewey counters that, in fact, to understand the child's experience of the candle, one must realize that that 'the burn is the original seeing'.[28] When architectural drawing is understood as the application of body knowledge to produce specific results, it follows the cause and effect model of human perception and action, and neglects the nuance that Dewey attempted to bring to the matter. Regarding Hillier's use of drawing to

apply knowledge about lived experience in the built environment to proper ends, we might argue that getting lost is the original mode of perceiving space.

Drawing and Desire
The debate about design and life, which occupied European architects around 1900, seems to have been unaware of the contemporaneous debate regarding the psychology of experience in which Dewey participated. If the two debates had been brought together, one might have observed that the problem in Loos's anecdote is not that the architect designed too much and left no room for others to 'furnish' the rich man's life, but that the thinking involved in furnishing the rich man's life - whether the architect's thinking or that of the loved ones that offer him gifts - conveys ideas about use, comfort and beauty that limit interpretations of experience. The rich man is perhaps not unhappy because everything in his life has been designed once and for all, but rather because he cannot imagine that wearing the bedroom slippers in the living room is a relevant experience. It is not surprising, then, that Dewey's formula foreshadows such alternative paths to spatial knowledge as the situationist psychogeography and *dérive*.

Architects would characterize their practice as anything but an impoverishment of daily life. Yet it seems that getting closer to the lived experience of others through drawing necessarily feeds the parallel process in which knowledge/power thrives off the drawing's science to better grasp the body in all its diversity. The challenge is therefore to imagine a drawing practice that acknowledges and fosters the architect's profound motivation to affect others without contributing to the impoverishment of experience. In other words, how can architectural drawing touch the body without grasping it?

Michel de Certeau's notion of an erotics of knowledge provides material for reflecting on the coincidence of moments of knowledge and desire in

writing practices. In the well-known chapter 'Walking in the City', which begins with us 'Seeing Manhattan from the 110th floor', the World Trade Center is a metaphor for the tools and techniques - including drawing - that would transform what they allow us to observe.[29] I will refrain from dwelling on de Certeau's 'tacticians' or 'walkers in the city' in order to explore how his rendition of 'the strategist' can help to understand better the architect's predicament.

For de Certeau, standing on the tower's viewing platform transforms the city 'into a text that lies before one's eyes'. 'It allows one to read it, to be a solar eye' - like Schinkel's sunbeams streaming past the posing figure. 'Looking down like a god' from on high, one sees 'the analogue of the facsimile produced, through a projection that is a way of keeping aloof, by the space planner urbanist, city planner or cartographer'.[30] One sees the 'texturology' of a 'concept city'.[31] As with Evans's view of architectural drawing and Foucault's power of writing, constructing such a text, for de Certeau, depends on being isolated from that which it would alter. Writing fashions 'on its own, blank space ... a text that has power over the exteriority from which it has first been isolated'.[32] That power serves the ambition 'to reform' the 'reality of things'.[33] The whole image of Manhattan is analogous to that of the planner not only through resemblance, but also because it places the viewer in the distant position from which its alteration can be projected.

This maligned aspect of the planning professions is joyfully attacked in references to de Certeau's celebration of the spatial practices that elude discipline. The temptation to oppose the 'theoretical' picture of the city with the 'reality' of lived space is indeed strong. However, where Foucault's description of the power of writing is disincarnate, de Certeau insinuates problems of the flesh into his model of applied knowledge. For de Certeau, seeing the city from this height gives way to an

'ecstasy of reading' tied to an 'erotics of knowledge'. He himself takes 'voluptuous pleasure in it', recognizing that 'the fiction of knowledge is related to this lust to be a viewpoint and nothing more'.[34] The vilified strategist is therefore also driven by a kind of desire. The planner's human condition is pushed even to mortality: 'The voyeur-god created by this fiction ... knows only cadavers.'[35] Just as the architect in Loos's moral tale now only has affairs with a client who lives with his own corpse.

Reflections on this coincidence of knowledge, desire and mortality appear in numerous places. For example, in Michel Houellebecq's recent novel *La Carte et le Territoire*, the artist protagonist has a moment of revelation in which disincarnated rationalization and human frailty coincide. Looking at a Michelin map in a roadside store, Jed Martin is stunned by its beauty:

He had never contemplated an object as magnificent, as rich with emotion and meaning as this 1/150 000 scale Michelin map of the Creuse in Haute-Vienne. The essence of modernity, of a scientific and technical apprehension of the world, was mixed with the essence of animal life. The drawing was complex and beautiful, of absolute clarity, using only a restrained colour code. But in each hamlet, in each village represented according to its size, one felt the palpitation, the call of dozens of lives, of dozens or hundreds of souls - some destined to damnation, some to immortality.[36]

Houellebecq captures here the paradox whereby the abstraction of a cartographic drawing can elicit emotion. He echoes de Certeau, for whom the inseparability of writing's impassioned motivations and rationalizing tendencies dates from the first hints of modernity. On the one hand, as we mentioned earlier, de Certeau attributes to four centuries of scientific enterprise 'the production of autonomous linguistic artifacts' that 'transform the things and bodies from which they had been distin-

guished'.[37] On the other hand, in *The Mystic Fable* de Certeau characterizes modernity as a slow but inexorable transformation of faith into eroticism. In the passage from the medieval period to the Renaissance, religious demythification is mirrored by the mythification of erotic love. The object of love is less and less God, while the body of the Other is increasingly evoked in expressions of longing. That 'adored body' is 'as elusive as the vanishing god': 'It haunts writing, which sings its loss without being able to accept it.'[38] It is also a motor: 'Despite the change of scene, the One does not cease organizing by its absence a "Western" productivity.'[39] That drive to produce advances in the form of 'proliferating conquests destined to fill an original lack'.[40] In the place of religion, modern historiography continues the task of producing 'the relationship that a society maintains with its dead',[41] while an explicitly erotic literature continues this 'work of mourning', exemplified in Don Juan's adventures, which only 'repeat the absence of the unique, inaccessible "woman"'.[42]

Georges Vigarello has gone so far as to suggest that this 'nostalgia' drives the human sciences' production of knowledge about the human body. That dynamic would have the body become 'the site of potential completeness and totalization' for the actors of science, sustaining 'an illusion of "recovered" plenitude, as though the lack could finally be neutralized'.[43] For Vigarello, the operations at work in ostensibly objective pursuits are homologous to those at work in the mind that suffers its inaugural split, as though individual longing had amplified itself to the scale of scientific production.[44]

In *Built Upon Love: Architectural Longing After Ethics and Aesthetics*, Alberto Pérez-Gómez, who would perhaps not characterize architecture as a human science in Vigarello's sense, also argues that the human being's inherent lack is a drive: 'Throughout our lives we constantly look for "something", something that is missing and that might complete us - be it the physical presence of another, the acquisition of knowledge, or the experience of art and architecture.'[45] Unlike Vigarello, however, Pérez-Gómez holds out the promise of reconciliation through poetic making. The lack 'does not disappear with the fulfilment of practical needs or with the possession of goods', but it may be reconciled 'only within the cultural realm of *poïesis* and its metaphorical imagination'.[46] Like literature for de Certeau, architectural drawing would be a site where a human being can cope with his or her existential condition. Unlike literature, however, it also carries what Houellebecq appropriately calls the 'scientific and technical apprehension of the world', concerning in particular the body and its functions. Loos's project for Josephine Baker might again illustrate one such coincidence of knowledge and desire, where standard norms regarding human perception and motion are carried by (or carry) one person's longing for another.

Before concluding with the prospect for a drawing practice that acknowledges desire without ignoring its dangers, we should note that drawing's desiring facet may be understood other than in terms of lack. Mitchell explains the contrast between 'the Freudian picture of desire as lack and longing for an object', and the Deleuzian idea of 'a "desiring machine" characterized by a joy founded in (but not disciplined by) ascesis'.[47] Where Freud's model has desire seeking pleasure, the 'anti-Freudian, Deleuzian picture of desire is interrupted by pleasure, not driven by it'.[48] Mitchell finds an early example in William Blake's notion of the dialectic of binding and unbinding, which is figured in 'the drawn line that leaps across a boundary at the same time that it defines it, producing a "living form"'.[49] Blake provides a specifically architectural example of this movement in his drawing of the creator-god Urizen [fig. 5]. The drawing shows the compass-wielding demiurge reaching beyond a circle in which he has inscribed himself, only to begin drawing another circle. As Mitchell observes: 'One could hardly ask
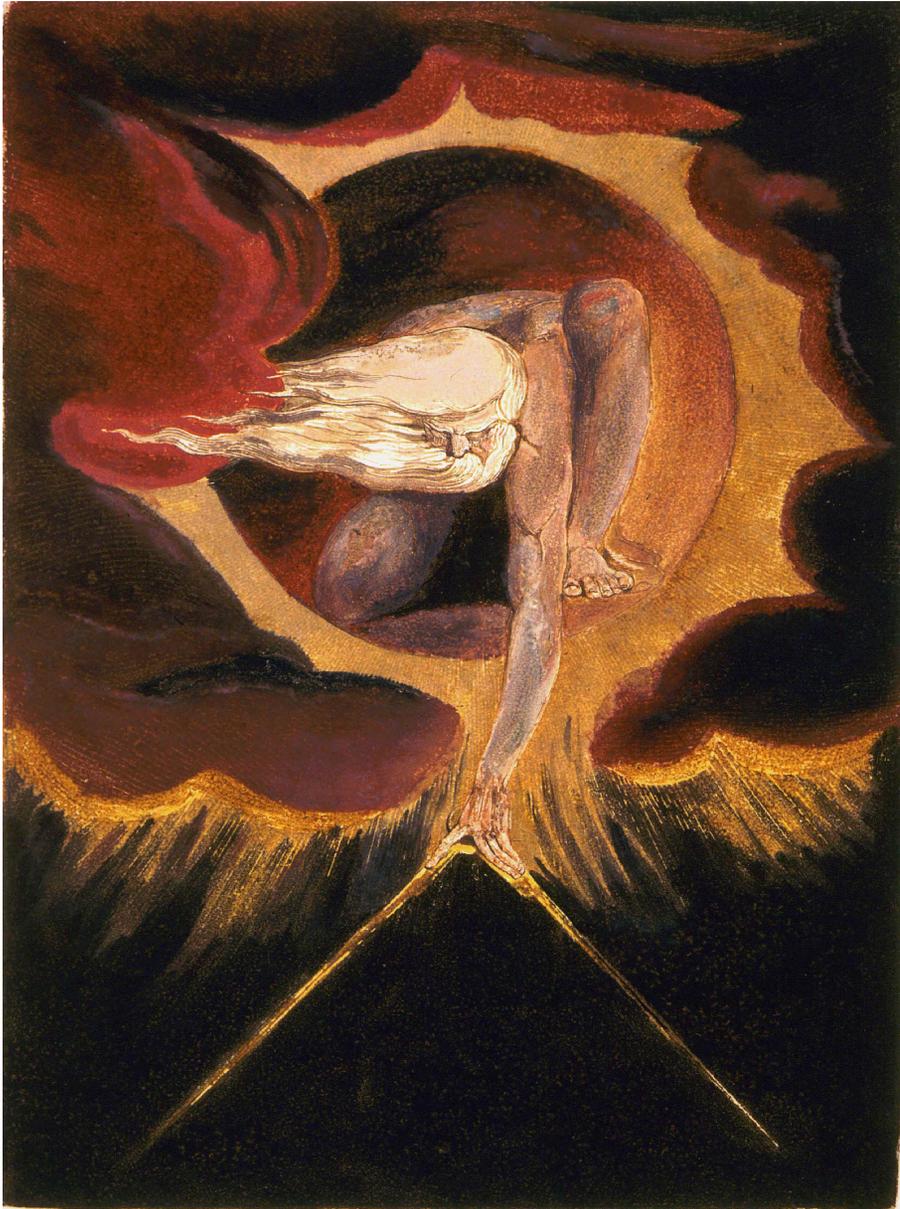
Fig. 5: The Ancient Days, by William Blake. Frontispiece to *Europe: A Prophecy*, 1794. Copyright British Library Board.

for a more vivid depiction of what Blake calls the "bounding line", the line that binds, confines, and determines a boundary, and the line that leaps over a boundary, like a gazelle "bounding" over a fence.'[50] It shows the architect's 'infinite desire for orderly, rational boundedness reproducing itself'. The '"binding" and "unbinding" of desire are fused in a single image': a picture of the architect drawing his own body between knowledge and desire.

Lost-Body Drawing

Whether we take desire as lack or desire as binding and unbinding, architectural drawing plays a role, either as the phantasm of an absent body or as one piece of the assemblage that sustains the pleasure of deferred satisfaction. Neither mode can separate itself from the rational dimension of knowledge that the drawing also carries. To formulate an ethic of writing that assumes this double status, de Certeau returns to Montaigne's essay 'Of Cannibals' (first published in 1580).[51] He finds in Montaigne's travel account a contrast between Western knowledge and savage speech, between the writing technology of a conquering culture and a society organized around acts (the savage has 'no knowledge of letters', but his practice of cannibalism and polygamy corresponds to an economy of speech acts). The European tries to represent the other, that is, to give the other a place, a tradition prefigured in Herodotus's attempt to define the nomadic Scythians in opposition to the Athenian city-dweller. This cartography of bodies in space - drawing, writing - both produces an image of the other and establishes its own status as knowledge of the other. Like Herodotus's *Histories*, Montaigne's 'linguistic artifact' builds its science on a constantly receding subject. But the text is haunted by another absence: Montaigne's dearest friend Étienne de la Boétie (1530-63), 'the only true listener' who 'is no longer'. For de Certeau, 'Of Cannibals' demonstrates how writing production in modernity occurs between two absences: the 'speech acts' it reports but which remain radically other to the fixity of text, and the reception it antici-

pates. One folds into the other: 'The cannibal (who speaks) and La Boétie (who listens) are metaphors for each other.' And both are present in the text as an inaccessible other.[52]

If speech is not only verbal 'sayings', but also wanderings, uses of space, or tactics whereby individuals appropriate the planned environment, architectural drawing is analogous to Montaigne's essay. 'The place of the other' is literally what architectural drawing articulates. Speech is nothing other than the life that drawing tries to grasp as knowledge, and reception is the touch anticipated at the drawing's destination. Under the conditions of modernity, authentic presence as exemplified by the cannibal's 'speech acts' is no longer possible. For de Certeau, 'if one cannot be a cannibal, there is still the option of lost-body writing',[53] a practice he attributes to Montaigne. He situates his own work in that tradition. If we consider the dedication at the beginning of *The Practice of Everyday Life*, the book appears less as an argument in favour of users over designers than as a conflicted work of knowledge and desire:

To the ordinary man.
... In invoking here at the outset of my narratives the absent figure who provides both their beginning and their necessity, I inquire into the desire whose impossible object he represents. What are we asking this oracle whose voice is almost indistinguishable from the rumble of history to license us, to authorize us to say, when we dedicate to him the writing that one formerly offered in praise of gods or the inspiring muses?[54]

Lost-body writing stems from an unquenchable desire and questions the authority through which it takes 'the place of the other'. It may be a model for a lost-body drawing that is a reflexive practice conscious of the 'ruins' that inhabit its lines: the ruins of the life that it can never quite seize but that disturbs its order, and those of the author him- or

herself, the 'I' of any text or drawing that appears as a 'multiple, iconoclastic passer-by' in a fragmented work.[55] Such drawing would not retreat from the objectification of lived experience through which it articulates architecture's potential effects. But its incorporation of the architect's longing for others - from the past and in the future - might disturb its grasp of the body, and perhaps prefigure an architecture that touches us in unexpected ways.

Postscript: An Ethics of Seduction

In the end, the drawing circulates freely. Mitchell observes that images 'both "express" desires that we already have, and teach us how to desire in the first place'.[56] If non-painters enjoy looking at portraits, perhaps non-architects can also learn about desire by looking at architectural drawings. A further possibility arises when we neutralize the directional line that points from the producer to the receiver, from the architect to the client or the anonymous user. We can imagine that the ethic of the architect who practices lost-body drawing is doubled by an ethic of the drawing's other, the absent body that haunts it. One whose presence is evoked in the drawing, who would be touched, may be wary of architecture's reach and hesitate giving oneself up to it.

Jean-Luc Nancy distinguishes between two ways that one can give oneself up to others. The first is as something to grasp (*empoigner*), 'an appropriable commodity'. In that case, 'I, "myself", remain behind that thing and behind the gift, I watch them and set myself apart from them' - like an unhappy man condemned to living with his own corpse. The second way is 'by averting the touch, thereby inviting to look further or elsewhere'. One cannot prevent another's lost-body drawing, but all is not lost: 'I do not control this gift, and he or she who touches me and withdraws, or who I stop before the touch, has truly drawn from me a shimmer of (my) presence.'[57] Pérez-Gómez argues that architecture's fundamental responsibility is to engage desire through

seductive projects.[58] But who seduces whom? Are architects not seduced by the body whose place they articulate in drawing? I am tempted to say that Josephine Baker understood what Loos's poor rich man did not.

Notes

1. Adolf Loos, 'The Story of the Poor Rich Man [1900]' in Ludwig Münz and Gustav Künstler, *Adolf Loos: Pioneer of Modern Architecture* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1966), pp. 223-24.

2. I hasten to make reference to a recent book whose title suggests that the present topic may be related to it, but that in fact deals with a different aspect of desire in architecture. In *Architecture's Desire: Reading the Late Avant-Garde* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2010), K. Michael Hays deploys a thorough reading of Lacan to personify architecture alternately as a project capable of desire and as desire itself, and considers specific manifestations in the work of Aldo Rossi, Peter Eisenman, John Hejduk, and Bernard Tschumi. While there are interesting links to establish between my topic and Hays's historical argument, the present study is not ready to undertake that task.

3. For a thorough discussion, see George Baird, 'Chapter 1: Life as a Work of Art' in *The Space of Appearance* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1995). See also Hal Foster, 'Design and Crime' in *Design and Crime and other Diatribes* (New York: Verso, 2002).

4. Writing in the early 1990s, George Baird discerns 'astonishing evidence of the enduring lure of the total work of art. [...] Even the younger generation oriented so decisively to an architecture of critique seems not entirely able to resist the tendency to radically fetishize the objects of its own creation'. Op. cit. pp. 53-54. Many of today's vocal 'younger-generation' architects

eschew the relationship between design and critique, and I suspect that this is not unrelated to the increasingly strong allure of designing every scale of human experience.

5. Farès el-Dahdah, 'The Josephine Baker House: For Loos's Pleasure', *Assemblage* 26 (April 1995), p. 75.

6. William J. T. Mitchell, *What do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), p. 66.

7. Ibid.

8. Leonard Cohen, 'True Love Leaves No Traces', *Death of a Ladies' Man* (Sony Music Entertainment, 1977).

9. Robin Evans, 'Translations from Drawing to Building (1986)', in *Translations from Drawing to Building and Other Essays* (Cambridge MA: The MIT Press, 1997), pp. 163-66.

10. Ibid., p. 164.

11. We also note that Schinkel's rendition of the myth reverses the gender roles by casting a man as the person drawing and a women as his subject. Furthermore, another woman seems to be directing the scene, one hand positioning the model's head and the other gesturing to the artist. In light of architecture's constitution as a male-dominated profession and discipline, these aspects merit discussion that, aware as I am of their relevance for the subject of desire, space constraints prevent me from developing here.

12. Evans, p. 165.

13. Stan Allen, *Practice: Architecture, Technique and Representation* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 5.

14. Ibid. Allen qualifies his remark with a comparison between the corrections that might be brought to a student's work in a painting studio and in an architecture studio. In the former case the teacher could point out that the arm is too long, in the latter that the window is too small. For Allen, these are completely different registers with different relationships to abstraction; but I am not certain that a teacher who corrects arm length is teaching painting.

15. The body has of course also figured as a more literal source for architectural form. For a discussion of such cases in late 20th-century architectural projects, see Anthony Vidler, 'The Building in Pain: The Body and Architecture in Post-Modern Culture', in *AA Files* 19 (1990), pp. 3-10.

16. Charles George Ramsey and Harold Reeve Sleeper, *Architectural Graphic Standards* 11th edition (New York: Wiley and Sons, 2007); Ernst Neufert et al., *Architect's Data* Third Edition (London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2002). In his sometimes humorous, sometimes thoughtful book *101 Things I Learned in Architecture School* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2007), Matthew Frederick's ninety-sixth entry is a rule of thumb that sums up the argument about body norms rather well: 'Summer people are 22 inches wide, winter people are 24 inches wide.'

17. Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History,* trans. by Tom Conley (New York : Columbia University Press, 1988), p. xxvi.

18. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. by Stephen Rendall (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1984), p. 92.

19. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (New York, NY: Vintage, 1995), and *The History of Sexuality Volume 1*, trans. by Robert Hurley (New York, NY: Vintage, 1978).

20. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 189.

21. Ibid., 167.

22. Giorgio Agamben, *What is an Apparatus? and Other Essays*, trans. by David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), p. 12.

23. See Bill Hillier, *Space is the Machine: A Configurational Theory of Architecture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Bill Hillier, 'Specifically Architectural Theory: A Partial Account of the Ascent from Building as Cultural Transmission to Architecture as Theoretical Concretion', in *Harvard Architecture Review* 9 (1993) pp. 8-27; Bill Hillier and Julienne Hanson, *The Social Logic of Space* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

24. See, for example, Hillier, 'Specifically', p. 16.

25. Ibid., p. 17.

26. 'Casa en Burdeos', in *El Croquis* 79 (1996), p. 174.

27. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 184.

28. See John Dewey, 'The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology', *The Psychological Review*, III (July 1896), pp.

357-70.

29. de Certeau, *Practice*, p. 91.

30. Ibid., 92-93.

31. Ibid., 95.

32. Ibid., 134.

33. Ibid., 153.

34. Ibid., 92.

35. Ibid., 93.

36. Michel Houellebecq, *La Carte et le Territoire* (Paris: Flammarion, 2010), p. 54. My translation.

37. de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, p. xxvi.

38. Michel de Certeau, *The Mystic Fable Volume One: The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, transl. by Michael B. Smith (Chicago, IL and London: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 5.

39. Ibid., p. 4.

40. Ibid.

41. de Certeau, *Mystic Fable*, 11. For de Certeau, Christianity's missing body is both specific and general: that of Jesus and that lost in the break with the tradition of blood filiations in Judaism: 'Christianity takes place on the absence of a body, on an empty tomb. This absence is formed specifically in the loss of Jesus's body, which was supposed to have taken the place of all others. But it also has a general form in the detachment that separates Christianity from its ethnic origin and from the biological, familial and hereditary reality of the Jewish body. The Evangelical discourse, the *Logos*, is based on this loss and, in contrast to ancient Semitic speech, it must take on the production of bodies of ecclesiastical doctrine and sacrament that substitute for the "missing body".' With the wane of religion, modern historiography takes over the latter problem of a coherent social body: 'Scientific history is only a late variation of this work, which henceforth attempts to construct, through discourse, social bodies - nations, parties, groups.' Michel de Certeau, 'Histoires de corps', interview by Georges Vigarello and Olivier Mongin, *Esprit* 62 (February 1982): 179-85. My translation. Perhaps, then, the tradition of amorous or erotic literature took over the specific task that Christianity had addressed through Christ's incarnation of God, the One.

42. de Certeau, *Mystic Fable*, 4.

43. Georges Vigarello, 'Le Laboratoire des sciences humaines', *Esprit* 62 (February 1982): 90-106. My translation.

44. Juliet Flower MacCannell discusses a similar telescoping from the individual to the collective for the desire to become One in her book on what she call Lacan's 'cultural criticism'. Juliet Flower MacCannell, *Figuring Lacan: Criticism and the Cultural Unconscious* (Beckenham: Croom Helm, 1986).

45. Alberto Pérez-Gómez, *Built Upon Love: Architectural Longing After Ethics and Aesthetics* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2008), p. 6. Interestingly, Pérez-Gómez's book does not contain a single image or drawing, aside from its cover.

46. Ibid., p. 42.

47. Mitchell, p. 61.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid., p. 63.

50. Ibid.

51. Michel de Certeau, 'Montaigne's "Of Cannibals": The Savage "I"', in *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other*, trans. by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), pp. 67-79.

52. Ibid., p. 79.

53. Ibid.

54. de Certeau, *Practice*, p. v.

55. de Certeau, 'Montaigne's "Of Cannibals"' p. 79.

56. Mitchell, p. 68.

57. Jean-Luc Nancy, *Noli me tangere : Essai sur le levé du corps* (Paris: Bayard, 2003), p. 82-83. My translation.

58. Pérez-Gómez, p. 5.

Biography

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