Here is a photo of Jaimy. With the shutter speed you can see that some photos turn out very beautifully. Most difficult was the photo on which something had to be captured still and the rest of the image had to be moving, because before you realize, the whole image is blurred.
What does it mean that a bank robber will “steal” money at gunpoint, and then later use it to buy the stuff you made? In his recently released book, *Debt: The First 5,000 Years*, anthropologist David Graeber examines assumptions about debt, the origin and nature of money, and the role they play in the arrangement of social relations. It is a lucid, erudite, and jargon-free study of the development of the culture, morality, and politics of debt. Perhaps in some future moment of retrospection, one might claim that Graeber’s work here has significantly influenced and informed the critique and actions popularized by the ongoing global Occupy movement.

Debt moves towards destabilizing the traditional spectrum of positions in political thought and discourse (left-right-state-market) and allows us to ask. What kind of new social-economic arrangement can be imagined and built? What forms of struggle will this entail? Could this allow for a radically new trajectory of theory and practice? Scapgoat spoke with Graeber to see how his findings about debt’s relationship to power, violence, the materiality/virtuality dichotomy, and conquest might react with the theorectical and practical concerns of design and architecture.

Scapgoat Says: Your book *Debt: The First 5,000 Years* is an epic myth-busting effort. What do you see as some of the most problematic assumptions or myths that we have about debt and money?

David Graeber: Where to start? I suppose the key myth I take aim at is the “myth of barter.” This is the assumption that before there was money, people used to swap things—for example, “I’ll give you twenty chickens for that cow”—but since that was inconvenient, they naturally invented money. This is absurd for all sorts of reasons; for instance, it assumes that two neighbours in a Neolithic village dealt with each other through what economists call “spot transactions”: I have X, but you don’t have anything I want, we deal, we both go home. If your neighbour wants your cow, or extra pair of shoes, and he doesn’t have anything you want right now, well, he’s your neighbour—of course he’ll have something you want eventually. Such a situation would lead to a broad, open-ended credit system. Anyway, the most startling thing I found is that the progression we all teach first was barter, then money, then credit—is actually backwards. Credit comes first. Money in the sense of coinage only emerges thousands of years later. When you do see “barter economics,” it’s usually when you have people who typically use money, but are in situation where there is none, as in Russia in the 1990s, or in prisons everywhere.

It is obvious why economists don’t like to admit this, despite the overwhelming evidence. Credit always brings in a social element. Economists want to start with a fairy tale about how isolated individuals who care only about the material stuff to convince people that there is something natural about this all. The reality is that they are describing behaviour created by the need for social stability.

The other big discovery is the degree to which actual markets—impersonal markets—are products of government and state and market are two opposed principles. Markets—impersonal markets—are products of government and state and market are two opposed principles.

55: Can you elaborate on how markets are related to military operations?

DG: It might help to re-frame the question. If you are speaking of large-scale, impersonal markets with huge numbers of strangers who have no prior social or moral relations and no desire to develop any, who are exchanging goods with an uncorrelated norm of exchange, then where, in the ancient world, is such a situation likely to happen? Well, armies needed to be fed, and there is only so much food you can steal before managing becomes a full-time job. It is easier to loot things that are already considered highly valuable, like gold and silver, and then exchange them for provisions and the good things in life. In particular, the movement of armies tends to foster impersonal cash markets more than traditional credit arrangements because no one would want to extend credit to a soldier, a man who is heavily armed and probably just passing through. The first coinage in Lydia, India, and China alike seems to have been put out by non-government money changers, who were probably dealing with soldiers, mercenaries or otherwise. The idea was quickly snapped up by governments who start demanding taxes in coins. Taxation became an ingenious way to turn what had been an ad hoc means of disposing loot into a system for provisioning armies. After all, if gold and silver coins and markets just emerged spontaneously from the needs of trade, then why wouldn’t ancient kings just have grabbed the gold and silver mines? Then they’d have all the money they wanted. Who took the gold and silver, stamp a pretty picture on it, distribute it, and then demand that everyone give it back to you again? If you think about it, this logic does seem a bit circular. By giving coins to your soldiers, and then demanding everyone in the kingdom pay one back again, you are employing them all to provide the soldiers with provisions, and creating markets by doing so. And markets are convenient in any number of other ways; for instance, your officials don’t have to make or requisition anything, from flamingo tongues to ship’s tackle—they can just cut out the middleman.

Similar things happened in the European Middle Ages. European colonial governments in India, Africa, and Southeast Asia also used tax policy to create markets. These too were regimes基于纯粹上追求和灭亡而贬低市场。为了理解的需要，我们可能需要重新考虑一些问题，比如“自由市场”的定义。这里的“自由”意味着市场参与者可以自由地买卖商品，而不受任何政府或企业的影响。但是，这种定义是有问题的。我们在医药、教育、能源和食品等行业中看到了这种定义的失败。在这些行业中，政府和企业的影响是不可避免的。因此，我们需要重新考虑“自由市场”的定义，以便更好地理解市场在社会中的作用。
They signed onto a religious order where they were forbidden the parallel suggestion that the architectural forms of the Mesopotamian temple-complex economies, and the result will necessarily be crazy bubbles? Or, how do you see the possibility of numismatics becoming a type of “political forensics?”

DG: They are flat pieces of metal, counter-stamped like currency and placed in a book on bars that lender-accepter that allows it to function as such? If so, how is scarcity seen as part of civil society, which was built around the idea of a debt strike, which could actually be effective? Under the Caliphate, the architectural forms of the Roman temple complex took shape, we assume, in the form of a commercial measure, a four-drachma Syracuse coin because it was signed by [the artist] Euainetos. It’s almost as if they’re trying to stamp some sort of spectacular visibility on an object whose power comes from its very lack of determination, its hidden power. Marc Shell and Richard Seaford have both argued that many of the problems of Greek philosophy seem to have emerged from contemplating the strange dual nature of coins, which are simultaneously physical objects imbued with power and social convention (idea, soul)—the dual nature of the Athenian coin becomes a key to imaging the soul as separate from the body, the very materialist paradigm that lies behind the great transnational religions.

SS: What are the benefits and pitfalls of virtual money design features of coinage? What do you think about the implications to the feeling of creation ex nihilo that is a bit of a scandal in periods dominated by “hard currency.” Though, it has been clear that a virtual money system is obviously inflationary if money is just a promise, an arrangement, a set of IOUs, it makes sense to mean anything, it means that everyone gets to weigh in on things that we assume might exist in the future. So yes, there is no limit to the amount of future value you can imagine, that exists now, but is rather speculative, based on the value of some kind of circulating money-stuff—like, say, wampum, or precious metals, or wheat—thats not used to tell stories, but reunite social relations (arrange marriages, resolve disputes, pay initiation sponsors or curers, pay respect to your visiting uncle, etc.). Social currencies seem to come first. And they don’t really wither away when they encounter market economies. But they can be subverted, especially when, as so often the case, the commercial economy has superior weapons. This happened, for instance, in both Southeast Asia and most of Africa in the days of the slave trade; the same system by which people used to assemble entertainers of clients, pay fines, and get married suddenly became subverted, usually more so than the Medieval ones: they are temples of materiality, or see themselves as such, even if they are creating abstract financial instruments (that role is always considered a tiny bit scandalous, even though it’s the very basis of the system). Of course, Modernism—and Postmodernism, which is a variant that goes back to the spirit of the cathedral, as neat structures that begin to anticipate moving towards a new age of abstract credit money. I think there are definite neurotic and psychological implications to the looking of creation ex nihilo that is a bit of a scandal in periods dominated by “hard currency.” Though, it is nonetheless the core of the system, where central banks that create credit money are essentially circulating government war debt. Meanwhile, all the architectural forms surrounding the debtor, even when they don’t involve bars and chains, are about as material as can possibly be imagined as a weight pressing down on you (it was literally that in Sanokii) in the exact same way credit systems are about dissolving into air.

SS: What can you explain what in ways of architecture becomes an instrument of debt? Or, how do you see debt manifesting itself spatially or architecturally? An interesting question. Well, let’s think about what I’ve said about stages of history, some dominated by virtual credit money, others by bullion. The latter tend to be accompanied by periods marked by materialist social formations—like the Caliphate, the very materialist paradigm that lies behind the great transnational religions.

DG: I think they arose together. Under the Caliphate, the architectural forms of the Roman temple complex took shape, we assume, in the form of a commercial measure, a four-drachma Syracuse coin because it was signed by [the artist] Euainetos. It’s almost as if they’re trying to stamp some sort of spectacular visibility on an object whose power comes from its very lack of determination, its hidden power. Marc Shell and Richard Seaford have both argued that many of the problems of Greek philosophy seem to have emerged from contemplating the strange dual nature of coins, which are simultaneously physical objects imbued with power and social convention (idea, soul)—the dual nature of the Athenian coin becomes a key to imaging the soul as separate from the body, the very materialist paradigm that lies behind the great transnational religions.

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Since the 1970s and the rise of environmentalism, Counter-plots unnoticed by design scholars and professionals alike. This blind spot is due in part to the often covert operations of capital interests in industrial frontiers. This acknowledgment entails a conscious abandonment of the mystification of nature that typically envelops the subject.  

Attempts by architects at literal expression through the design of structures that resemble forests, or the design of actual forests for pure aesthetic appreciation do nothing to clarify this situation. In addition, recognizing that most of the forest areas harvested throughout the continent are not old growth, but rather exploited on both visual and structural levels: with the same degree of spatial design attention given to cities. This acknowledgment entails a sensitive gaze to disting-

Architects/Landscape/Political Economy

Notes


2. After 1753 proposition to design the “town as forest.”


4. In the case of “Scapegoat Issue 02 Materialsm” (2011 Young Curator at the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal, for which he is developing an exhibition on forestry and design. He has been involved in Greenpeace Canada’s magazine, Reader, and the Journal of Landscape Architecture US.

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Counter-plots Dan Handel & Justin Fowler

From British Columbia down to the American Pacific Northwest, from the Deep South to the Brazilian coast, the American continent is saturated with forest environments. Looking at forests, however, is quite different from looking at forestry. This distinction applies on both visual and structural levels: with the former, a sensitive gaze is required to distinguish between closed and fragmented forests, between state-owned and privately managed environments, and between biotic heritage complexes and monocultural plantations. In the case of the latter, prime importance are political climates, material differences between hard timber and soft pulp, and accessibility to a cheap labour force.

Involving an array of spatial configurations, forestry is a striking manifestation of the rift between developing and post-industrial countries, replete with socio-economic inequality across a range of scales. Canada’s $74.4 billion forest product industry, the United States’ 430 million acres of private forestlands, and Brazil’s 6.5 million forest jobs, have created substantial imprints on development patterns in these countries.1 While forestry constitutes a massive spatial enterprise, it remains largely unnoticed by design scholars and professionals alike. This blind spot is due in part to the often covert operations of capital interests in industrial frontiers, but it is most significantly due to the rationality of form, which typically envelops the subject. Attempts by architects at literal expression through the design of structures that resemble forests, or the design of actual forests for pure aesthetic appreciation do nothing to clarify this situation. In addition, recognizing that most of the forest areas harvested throughout the continent are not old growth, but rather have been often assumed triumph of postindustrial society and its emergent networked organization, which have become a hegemonic metaphor of contemporary design discourse and an alibi for a vast assault on discrete architectural and urban form. In contrast, American forests, strictly associated with the rationale of form, are massively scaled, designed environments with distinct material imprints. As such, they make a case for an urban physicality irreducible to a single economy, and can, almost paradoxically, acquire once again the status of a prototype for contemporary cities.

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In the span of a century, a number of basic construction materials attained near-homogenized status in the otherwise heterogeneous world of construction technologies and expertise. The proliferation of architectural materials such as cement, steel, and masonry followed a map of cultural space and historical development, more often than not from an origin point in the West. What notions of space, culture, and difference are embedded in this map of architectural globalization? In my own observation of the social and technical life of materials in India, I have long been struck by the image of historical progress and architectural modernity that this map proposed, both within and outside India. Modern architecture in India and elsewhere in the post-colonial world remains hopelessly tethered to a powerful centre and origin in the Western metropole. The globalization of materials is used by many critics as evidence to confirm cultural processes of Westernization. Indeed, architecture is often produced with a standardized and reproducible repertoire of components and materials of construction that trace their origins to 19th-century Europe and America. Still, differences are tangible to even a casual observer. Mumbai does not look like Houston, nor is it constructed in the same manner, whatever the common material DNA. Rather than accept these differences as culturally determined, we might do well to consider the processes and circuits of material and social exchange through which difference is produced. How might attention to the conditions of material movement reconfigure the spatial and temporal relationships that are drawn between architectural materials and the cultural expression of modernity?

Ganesh Ramanavamy and I walked through a small lane in Siddapura, a village that was swallowed up by Bangalore after the planning of new, large-scale suburbs such as Electronic City, to be the largest in Asia, in 1967, just after Independence in 1947. The light was typically intense, setting in contrast even the shallowest relief work and surface blanched of the tiniest structures such as concrete blocks. We stopped at a series of row houses in order to inquire about the diamond shape that they constructed in order to depict the details of a carpenter who lived on the lane, S.P. Krishnapa. I anticipated that the quotidian icons above our head were not accidental. They are large circuits of proliferation within Bangalore and abroad, and wanted to know more about their provenance. Plaster shapes, patterns, and surface textures are common to the roadside elevation of small-scale buildings in Bangalore and other cities and towns across India. Pattern, especially plaster relief work, exploited into common use on walls, windows, and doors during the 1950s and 60s. Portland cement was in part responsible, allowing for faster turnarounds on building sites and encouraging flattened patterns over slower-drying and more sculpturally adapted lime plasters. Cement was also embedded in a wider ethos of efficiency of novel materials, joining a number of other globally inspired technological innovations and materials that were introduced to India during the 20th century. Changes in material technologies coincided with broader transformations in urban and architectural culture. In Bangalore, expertise about material manufacturing and construction innovations during the 20th century as forms of architectural patronage. Ideas about ‘city architecture’ and urban spatial organization were re-imagined at the turn of the century and reconstituted relationships between street, building, and community. New forms of life and labour emerged in this period with the rise of public sector industries and the reconfiguration of older manufacturing economies; in particular, a resurgent and re-imaged industrial suburb was introduced. Cinema halls, hotels, and other new spaces of social friction proliferated around the city, along with new geometries and materialities of space and surface.

Novel materials were suited to the constructional demands of this new landscape, while at the same time transforming it. New architectural materials such as concrete and steel were celebrated by industry, planning, and architectural culture in mid-century India for their capacity to create new forms of domesticity and urban life. It was also thought that concrete would create new experts, such as architects and civil engineers. Whatever its structural innovations, concrete was primarily touted as an image. It was promoted as a building block, supporting new ways of living and new forms of knowledge. Industry publications, such as those provided by the Cement Marketing Company and the Concrete series of India, featured images of new concrete architecture that referenced global trends. During the 1950s and 60s, images of technological marvels and quotidian architecture in Europe and the United States stood side by side with images of concrete furniture, roads, and architecture in India. Progress was achieved by operating at the level of everyday urban affairs, retrofitting infrastructure and creating a new urban fabric through the scale of domestic construction, echoing the aesthetic bias of colonial urban improvement schemes. By the 1950s, concrete was expected to bring infrastructural cohesion to the imagination of a national economy. Advertisements and print media invested in concrete the potential to transform large scale infrastructural networks, such as transport and electricity, to “catch up” with the West. Regionalism, discourses of low-cost construction and vernacular architecture, later turned this narrative on its head, portraying the introduction of concrete as leading to the disintegration of local building traditions. Beginning in the 1970s and 80s, architects in India such as Laurie Baker turned to vernacular architecture as a foil against new technologies of construction. Inspired by the Himalayan vernacular of Pithoragarh and Gandhian ‘ideals,’ Baker describes how the ‘ideal house’ in an ‘ideal village’ is constructed of building materials sourced within a five-mile radius of the building site. In addition to cost effectiveness, Baker also argues that using local materials is a project of cultural mediation, noting that the ‘delightful dignified housing [of the Himalayan vernacular] demonstrated hundreds of years of building research on coping with local materials, using them to cope with the local climatic patterns and hazards, and accommodating to the local social pattern of living.’

Baker was keen to point out the cultural consequences of new technologies such as concrete. If concrete was seen by industry and professional design to function as an agent of infrastructural cohesion within the space of national culture, Baker understood vernacular construction technologies as virulent contaminants of traditional contexts of material use and their cultural milieu. He ruminates about what inhabitants of Pithoragarh think of their own houses, concluding that ‘improvements’ such as...
that the urban archive of architectural materials and technologies did not conform to the heroic narratives of progress and decline discussed above.

Krishnappa explained that the diamond protruding from his house was constructed around 1960 by granite work- ers who, by the time of its construction, were repositioned in a new cement-based economy of materials, know-how, and patronage. Ganu was a basic construction material used for mortar and plastering that predated Portland cement in India, consisting of a mixture of lime, sand, water, and, occa-sionally, egg. Besides being a method of fabricating surfaces, it was closely associated with technologies of load-bearing walls and terraced or tile roofs.

Gane was a mixture of social forces and materials. Its production was familiar to urban residents; the mixture was ground in a large circular stone mill or an iron or stone-dyed grinding stone in small units throughout the city. The scale of production units and the material it remained familiar to a mature generation of Bangaloreans, if only as a memory. Temporally, gane was slow both in its manufacture and its application on site, creating a culture of site relations that are said to have privileged skill over speed. Besides requiring a good deal of time to come cool before being used for construction, gane dried slower than Portland cement. Nonetheless, the material and building culture of gane survived decades into the introduction of cement. Material admixtures and forms of expertise that were pre-pendulum persisted well beyond their anticipated death. Gane material and expertise, for instance, survived into the 1970s, and possibly the 1980s, as evidenced by the diamonds above Krishnappa’s door.

Cement established a new assemblage of materials, knowledge and urban life, though its consequences on the ground were at odds with its imagined social and spatial role. Cement was considered a catalyst for new forms of expertise, such as professional architectural practice and civil engineering. Concrete design manuals stressed the centrality of the professional in the hierarchy of architectural knowledge, an authorship that was sanctioned at the municipal level with building bylaws that required the au-thorial signature of a professional on architectural drawings. A field of non-professional labour, however, was needed to skilled workers and masoni (masons) flourished anew, encouraged by cement’s ease of use in the domain of small-scale construction. Educational institutions solely dedicated to architectural training were late to arrive in the Bangalore region, and bylaws that required an architect for construc-tion were undermined by a combination of lax oversight by municipal authorities and a shortage of architects based in the city. Design expertise was dispersed among carpenters, masons, laypeople and users, concealed in a new geography of far-off factories. The slowness of hardening and labour was met with a temporal acceleration of site relations entailed by the arrival of the contractor and the arrival of the new material and cement. Nonetheless, the material and building culture of gane survived decades into the introduction of cement. Material admixtures and forms of expertise that were pre-pendulum persisted well beyond their anticipated death. Gane material and expertise, for instance, survived into the 1970s, and possibly the 1980s, as evidenced by the diamonds above Krishnappa’s door.

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### Notes

1. Why, given the same materials, techniques, and methods of construction, does it seem that on one side of the border the material is considered normal that people should live in houses that are more or less identical, while on the other side it is not so, and everyone seeks to avoid as far and as conspicuously as possible the anonymity of a standardized architectural landscape? As anyone can tell you, despite an overwhelming number of building codes and community and condominium rules, in Italy an apartment house with forty balconies usually displays on its façade forty types and colors of curtains or blinds. Since it would be cheaper to purchase forty identical curtains in one lot, *this must come about by choice, not chance.*

2. Gane’s lament over his youthful sentiments provides him an opportunity to undo the seemingly intractable bond between technological and historical evolution that is implied by the metaphor of a ‘battle’ for progress. Carpo goes on to illuminate a period of architectural history in which architectural forms changed radically without corresponding innovation in materials or techniques of construction. The proliferation of printed treatises and images in the early Renaissance facilitated the reproduction of architectural forms without reference to their material composition or intended uses. Print media became, like oral transmission before it, a circuit through which ideas about architecture traveled, disassociating the historical perspectivity of building from the construction technologies and expertise that made building possible.

3. When the work of the task retains its value, however tenously, in the presence of mechanical technologies, even if it is transfigured by its encounter with technology and its mechanisms of patronage and production, as well as aesthetic demands. Knowing the experience of other ‘intermediaries’, I will take the liberty to supplement his short story with the dilemma carpenters now face. The highly skilled carpentry of the past, particularly in furniture production, is being increasingly eclipsed by the popularity of pre-fabricated, mass-produced furniture that is considered conventional furniture that is considered conventional furniture. Despite mechanization and the propagation of new designs, Krishnappa noted that people continue to come to carpenters for work.

4. The turn to factory production may or may not prove...
While his father would carefully illustrate drawings by venue for the dissemination of perspectival images, plans for radio, suggesting that cement was co-opted alongside media presentation that they were sometimes asked to function as Le Corbusier) and the Delhi Master Plan (the Ford Foundation's Chandigarh (Albert Mayer and Matthew Nowicki, and later Le Corbusier) positions cement alongside technologies of European and American designs. Home planning books authored explicitly to cultivate and transform modern home planning books were realized in older technologies of surface and space is desired by makers and patrons alike, but is altered as it moves through different circuits of material realization and constructional expertise.

The city is not a quiet backdrop to these promiscuous transferences among media. Shapes and patterns wander the streets of Bangalore like spirits in search of a medium to temporarily occupy. Though cement industry publications were available from the 1950s onwards, they were printed in English or Hindi, rendering them inaccessible for those illiterate or not literate in either of these two languages. The circulation of images is not only an available medium, the street served as a conduit for ideas about construction. As the focus of their inspiration, an emboldened knowledge of surface designs and spatial typologies forged through experience becomes an important tool of architectural knowledge. Though printed media such as Indian design magazines and novels, newspapers such as the Times of India are now readily available through bookstores and roadside bookstalls, the street remains an important conduit for the circulation of surface and space.
Not Concrete

by Owen Hatherley

The most noticeable thing in British modern architecture as it has been practiced since the mid-1990s is cladding. In cities where public housing was semi-privateized, that meant the attaching of tupperware to concrete towers of various kinds, but it was by far the most prevalent in new construction, especially in apartment buildings. The current orthodoxy—alternately called CABEism, neomodernism, pseudomodernism—depends on postmodernism’s aesthetic of pastiche and irony, its apparent dishonesty, and fields of truth to materials but that hasn’t impeded the oar for the clad one bit. There are certain materials that get applied to the in-situ concrete frames that form the skeleton of such buildings; red tiles, introduced in the late 1980s by Richard Rogers at Potdamer Platz and Battersea, where they alternate with wide expanses of glass; treepa, an industrially produced material produced to look vaguely like stone or wood; thin veneers of brick, red or yellow, often streaked or splashed with fire resistance, wood of various kinds, often applied as slats to balconies, which are themselves usually metal drills, into the frame, and stucco, or renders which when made cheaply, has a tendency to flake. Alternately, glass panels, usually in a “barcode façade” appear slightly older to modernist architecture.

That’s a lot of different materials, and in many apartment blocks they will all be applied at once, as a rather naïve effort to hide the overwhelming and ungainly mass of very small speculative flats; “doovocas,” as the blogger Penny Anderson calls them. It’s also quite specifically English; elsewhere in Europe, a similar typology is built usually only with the treepa or even with just painted concrete. An argument could maybe be made for all this on the basis of the excitement of the concrete materials, but that would entail them having some particular tactile quality, but they never do, instead there is an almost imperceptible skin, with the fixings of a computer screen. The materials always want to be something else, but can’t—the wood near looks as “warm” and “organic” as it wants to, the brick never looks even remotely load-bearing, the treepa panels are often instantly recognizable as such, irrespective of what might be printed on them. They’re there simply to look good in the advert, but they also have a singular negative virtue—they are not concrete.

The United Kingdom has a weird relationship with concrete, where it has become a kind of swearword. It is applied as such to post-war buildings that are clad in steel, and as it wants to, the brick never looks even remotely load-bearing, the trespa panels are often instantly recognizable as such, irrespective of what might be printed on them. They’re there simply to look good in the advert, but they also have a singular negative virtue—they are not concrete.

Brutalism meant concrete and concrete meant Brutalism. It somehow fused with a British architectural-moral tradition that went back to Arts and Crafts and the Gothic revival, based on a series of postmodern aesthetic identifications: honest construction for an honest society, the marks of work being left for a society that favoured the worker, and the showing of a building’s workings as a means to demystification. The style, too, was Gothic—huge spans, rough materials, a persistent hint of melodrama and even the sinistest, bestressing and really quite angry, aggressive approach this instilled towards the crowds, and contrasted between shafts of bright, coloured light and oppressive gloom. It was Pilgrims in a tem- poral octane. Accordingly, it is a very different beast to the seemingly similar American Brutalism of the likes of Paul Rudolph, which had none of this moralist baggage.

The discovery Le Corbusier made at Marseilles was apparently accidental—he’d intended to design in steel, but concrete was cheaper. Corbusier had designed the reinforced concrete afterwards. At Le Corbusier’s various Unités, the effect is both cave-like and brightly optimistic, a rather organic than the bits of slatted wood stapled onto contemporary apartment blocks. It has since been painted.

These three very different approaches to the material were superseded by something much more extreme, visible at the Southbank Centre by the Greater London Council Architects Department (fig. 1), where in seemingly deliberate references to the utilitarianism of the Atlantic Wall the concrete is bunker-like, devoid of charming gestures; it is all the more physical, and require more than a distracted glance. It is this physicality that explains their current unpopularity.
The ubiquity of Oil Sands coverage in the media today attempts to compress one of the largest industrial endeavours undertaken by man into sound bites and quotes. We are bombarded with politicized snippets of information— from environmental impacts to economic drivers. Many people are well aware of the plethora of arguments that surround the project, but an aspect that remains elusive is the sheer magnitude of scale that the Oil Sands encompass. The following is an effort to gain some form of perspective of the Oil Sands, attempting in simple terms, to contextualize scales of land area, volume of oil, water and the economic reach into a wide-angle snapshot of the sprawling nature of the project.

1.7 TRILLION barrels of oil in the Oil Sands (or 2700 km³)

8x The estimate reserves of Saudi Arabia

Suncor Board of Directors and Other Corporate Affiliations

Richard George
John Ferguson
Hal Benson
Brian Canfield
Eira Thomas

Mike O'Brien
Jacques Lemaire
John R Huff
James Simpson
Dominic O' Alessandro
That is, with current production methods, between 2–4.5 m³ of water is required for every 1 m³ of crude extracted. To extract the total oil sands reserves at this rate it would require using 12,160 km³ of water—or 50% of the total volume in the Great Lakes or 10% of the Earth’s total surface freshwater reserves.


Statistics Canada Values the Oil Sands at $342 Billion of Canada’s Worth

Photo: David Dodge, The Pembina Institute

Other Estimates Put it Closer to $1482 Billion of Canada’s Worth

Andrew Sharpe. The Valuation of the Alberta Oil Sands. 2008

Statistics Canada

Photo: John Elms, EPIC Photography
August is the month of semi (sicads) in Japan. Unmistakable, electrical, unremitt- ing. Like the beating of our own hearts, but externalized as if our hearts merged with our genitals to make a super-organ, charged and frequency beyond any conceivable human sensitivity. These inside-out creatures make a sound that turns your head. Makes you search the tree for the source. Or the rice field. Or the urban street where they scream from a crack in the wall. When you look for them you don’t find them. They just show up. Next to your foot. On the hood of the car. Flying bat-like in the building. And once you see them they remain, motionless as you marvel at their form. How can such things make such a sound? It doesn’t compute. They sometimes remain up to seventeen years underground before emerging for thirty starved days. We call it desperate. And hear Romeo in the full-blown drone. Like the beating of our own hearts, but externalized as if our hearts merged with the wire, the rail—follow it and you’ll end up at the power company or the station or at the stilled carapace of the semi-ology of a Disaster or, Towards a Non-Moralizing Materialism

by Eric Cazdyn

This past August (only five months after the disaster), the sound of the semi felt different. Their audibility came as a relief. Like the electrical wires that criss-cross this country, or the smokestacks that dot the quiet neighborhood, or the train tracks that gently strangle the ground, these technologies remind us that things (sound, power, people) come from somewhere and go somewhere else. They have a logic that we can follow, that runs a line. That ends. And dies. The beat, the wire, the rail—follow it and you’ll end up at the power company or the station or at the stilled carapace of the semi. No wireless transmission or CADed curve, just the line...exposed, with a nothing-to-hide affect, leading from here to there like an immigrant.

People like to talk about the hidden. Japan: country of the perfectly executed silence, of the elegant self-erasing gesture, of the restraint of the space not filled. But this schoolday aesthetics misses the point. There is nothing hidden. There is no deep hearted emotion ready to break through. Depth is not the opposite of surface, but its lining. And the same can be said about the invisible and the visible, the future and the present, as well as silence and the screams of the semi. The lining holds two terms together revealing that each term already contains the other, but also that each term has a certain autonomy from the other, and that the structural relation that ties the two terms together can always come undone...without a moment’s notice. Each term, therefore, has a logic—runs a line—that is at once connected to and disconnected from the logic of other terms, other lines. This impossible doubleness of the line, the contradiction of the line, is figured by the lining, which (and now the circle seems to close) is not the opposite of the line, but its lining. In order to break out of this tightening circle, we must ask: What is the materiality of this lining?

Chris Marker gestures towards an answer in his 1982 film Sans Soleil when his protagonist writes, “I will have spent my life trying to understand the function of remembering, which is not the opposite of forgetting, but rather its lining. We do not remember. We rewrite memory much as film stock (the black separating each frame). Black is the space not filled. Black is the absence of all film and, more self-consciously, is the absence of Sans Soleil, even though this sunlessness is a direct reference to a Muyssorgsky song-cycle that can be heard throughout Marker’s film.

Black is also the absent cause of Marker’s theory of history. Black is the relation, the abstract, that which connects one thing to another. There is a negativity, by which things do not mean in and of themselves, but only through their differential relations to other things. At the same time, Marker wants us to look at the children, to see their happiness. And he wants us to look at the U.S. fighter planes, to see their menace. “I’ve been around the world countless times, and the only thing that interests me now is baseball,” Sans Soleil’s protagonist writes. This is impossible utopian dimension that Marker keeps alive in the film. He wants us to be flushed by the singular, discontinuous image (to cut it away from any totality, any otherness) and in this image sense various parts and futures (to integrate it into a larger system of meaning). Marker attempts to have it both ways: to criticize a structuralist logic that refuses to recognize positive identity in any single unit, and to submit to this structuralist logic, to the work of the black: “If we don’t see happiness in the children, at least we’ll see the black.”

This play of light and black is itself not an opposition; rather, one term lines the other. Or to put this in more dialectical language, this identity of identity and non-identity stands unveiled not as opposition but contradiction. And, as Fredric Jameson argues, “Contradiction then passes over into its Ground,” into what he calls the “situation itself, the aerial view or the map of the totality in which things happen and History takes place.”

This mention of the ground returns us to the disaster in Japan, to the problem of materialism, and, fingers crossed, to the semi. Did the earthquake destroy this ground? Is this something that can be broken, flooded, or irradiated? How might we represent the ground of disaster, the unmediated, the identity of identity (if not the very logic) of disaster, the everydayness that seems untouched by the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear meltdown...But that necessarily mediates and is mediated by these heartbeating events? How might we search not for ghosts or buried treasures, but for the banality that grounds everything? In fact, this is one way to pursue the problem of materialism: Rather than repeat the formal provocation: how does a single frame of light (in this case the white image of three children in Iceland) relate to another frame of light (U.S. fighter planes)? This is when Marker introduces a third frame, the black— the condition of cinema, not only in terms of narrative development (the black before the beginning (or as beginning) and the black after the ending (or as ending)) but the black theatre (the spatial—spatial—spatial—spatial—spatial—spatial—spatial...). Black is the absence of all film and, more self-consciously, is the absence of Sans Soleil, even though this sunlessness is a direct reference to a Muyssorgsky song-cycle that can be heard throughout Marker’s film.

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Semi-ology of a Disaster or, Towards a Non-Moralizing Materialism
both are as counter-productive as they are morallyizing. It is hard to place in the hallowed portals of Atash and Sunni an on-going debate over recent studies of the Founder's Day of the economic miracle. By the 1980s, Japan's economic growth was so spectacular that most analysts predicted its success and saw it resulting from unfair business practices and...
examples of this logical necessity. Both contingent disasters and necessary crises, therefore, are linked in the way that their breakdown in relations is built back up again by a different set of relations within the same system.

Revolution, in contrast, is that moment when a new set of relations take hold within a different system. This crude distinction better explicates the new ubiquity with which disaster and crisis have crept into the past 20 years, while revolution has been driven underground, rendered not only unspoken, but, moreover, unthinkable. This trend has everything to do with the political-economic situation of the post-Cold War era, a symptom of our own historical formation, which currently, for good or ill, goes by the name globalization.

Disaster and crisis have always been quick off the lips of those wishing to justify misrule and misfortune. If it were not for the crooked officials or crony capitalists, there would be better public transportation, better health care, and more wealth to go around. If it were not for this new terrorism, we would be free from anxiety, sleeping comfortably on cushions bought by the peace dividend. Crisis and disaster are those props pulled out of the bottom of the bag when all other explanations lose operational force or can no longer be spoken.

With the end of the Cold War, anomalous and nonsystemic disaster and crises that is, events from the outside, like a meteor or a madman) have been even more likely to be spoken. If it were not for the new officials or new terrorists, there would be better public transportation, better health care, and more wealth to go around. If it were not for this new terrorism, we would be free from anxiety, sleeping comfortably on cushions bought by the peace dividend. Crisis and disaster are those props pulled out of the bottom of the bag when all other explanations lose operational force or can no longer be spoken.

Following the Cold War, crisis and disaster were as far apart from revolution as heaven from earth. What needs to be considered in the current post–post–Cold War moment is whether or not this is still the case. In something changing so that crisis and disaster are becoming dangerous again, no longer the trump cards of those in power? Is something changing so that revolutionary discourse is creeping back into everyday consciousness, into the way we understand not only radical social change but the more banal ways we understand ourselves and think about the future? Indeed, this is what I find Karatani’s argument so powerful. He is finally articulating the connection between disaster and revolution, or more specifically the connection between the Tōhoku disaster and the revolution of capitalism.

The earthquake and tsunami directly affected those living in the towns and villages in the Tōhoku region of Japan, compelling the survivors to deal with the tens of thousands who died (in some cases, nearly entire communities) and the subsequent destruction. Slightly differently, the discourse about the Fukushima disaster has affected not only those in the immediate vicinity of the Fukushima nuclear reactors, but the whole country in terms of the potential contamination of the water and food supplies. Moreover, the temporality of the nuclear disaster is different from the temporality of the earthquake and tsunami—the danger and damage, for example, of the nuclear fallout will occur over the long term with fewer immediate effects. These different but overlapping temporalities of disaster (short-term destruction and long-term threat) get at a fundamental logic that I have been calling “the ground.” Now, for example, one can directly engage the immediacy of an event (such as the practical destruction brought by the earthquake to both people and the physical landscape), while at the same time de-emphasizing the specific damage itself in order to attend to the various historical, future, and meta-contexts of the immediate situation. The ground’s materialism is both abstract and concrete, singular and general, the virtual future and the actually existing present, the line that holds something together and the line that doesn’t.
"bookzine" published by the Visual Arts and Curatorial Order: Art in a Post-Fordist Society.

Financialization restated at the Toronto G20 Summit. Scapegoat Architecture/Landscape/Political Economy Issue 02 Materialism

(NABA), Marco Scotini suggests that these events are ultimately linked to the increasing global financialization of human rights violations? Bring on the Gehry gallery!

By using books as material in the construction of the garden, we confront these relations between knowledge and nature integral to the world of information. By using books as material in the construction of the garden, we confront these relations between knowledge and nature integral to the world of information.

The books in the garden are surplus books, as Hito Steyerl (pumped in a recent essay).

Over the last few years, the discussion of these topics has gained considerable momentum, as attested by the number of conferences on immaterial labour and cognitive capitalism, as well as the wealth of new publications devoted to these issues, such as the recent "Post-Fordism, Precarity, and the Labor of Art," e-flux collection. "No Order enters this discussion head-on: at nearly 400 pages (only one of which is occupied by a commercial advertisement), with a severe black-and-white cover image of the 1968 occupation of the 14th Triennale di Milano, and interspersed with artist projects reflecting an austere research aesthetic (maps, diagrams, grids, text), the new bilingual (English and Italian) publication makes for a dense, sometimes challenging, and often rewarding read.

The magazine is divided into three sections. The first, "Time Machine," focuses on contemporary artists (including Vangelis Vlahos, Alexei Penzin and Dmitry Vilensky on the role of George Maciunas's Learning Machines, the painstaking hand-written paper-and-pencil atlas of factural knowledge whose taxonomic obsession suggestively resonates with the maps and charts in "Time Zone.") "Market," the second section in "Play Time," includes essays by sociologist Maurizio Lazzarato and economist Cristian Manara, along with a competing case study of the factory of the Mark Lombardi. Thilo Folkerts is a landscape architect who founded the office 100Landschaftsarchitektur in Berlin in 2007. He has realized temporary site-specific installations have been exhibited internationally, including the National Gallery of Canada, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Montreal Bienalle and the Centre Pompidou in Paris.

Overall, the first issue of No Order Art makes a compelling case for the need to link the conditions of art production and display to the conditions of labor, conflict, and potential subversion. At the same time, its very scope, the range of its coverage, and the star status of several of its contributors beg the question of the role of theoretical overproduction under the current regime of cognitive capitalism—a question, incidentally, that Penzin and Vilensky explicitly raise in their contribution to the first section of the magazine. An additional, related source of unease is the absence of any acknowledgement of the fact that some of these essays are reprints. Wiel's text, for one, was originally published in 2003 by Artist in collaboration with Control Magazine, the pioneering artist magazine published and edited by Wiel himself since 1985. Similarly, Penzin and Vilensky's convenion is illustrated with reproductions of covers designed by Vilensky of the magazine Oto Dela! What is to be done?, but the latter is nowhere acknowledged as the text's original source (the conversation appeared in the March 2009 issue). Let's be clear: the issue here is not intellectual ownership, but the transparency of networks of cultural production—those very networks whose exposure is so convolently positioned by No Order as one of the essential functions of art discourse in the present historical moment.

Notes


2. The name of the magazine is in homage to the garden's particular destiny of time.
In 1978, Andre Tarkovsky filmed Stalker in a bomb-blasted hydroelectric dam in Tbilisi, Georgia. The film takes place, for theAfter the accident, the artistic continuities of archetypes is invisible, eternal, and fatal. At the Institute of Nuclear Physics in Moscow, the scientist Andrey Starostin conducted an experiment to determine the properties of the liquid that remained in a tank after the reactor was breached. He found that the liquid, which had previously been used as the moderator for the reactor, had become radioactive and was now a solid. Starostin hypothesized that this substance could be used as the basis for a new class of material, which he called "solid water." He proposed that this material could be used in radiation shielding because it would absorb radiation and not emit it.

The Soviet government, which had been conducting similar experiments, was interested in Starostin's findings. They funded further research on the properties of solid water and began to develop it for use in radiation shielding. The resulting material, known as "solid water," proved to be highly effective at shielding against radiation. It was used in the construction of the reactor containment buildings and in the design of the site's radiation safety equipment.

The Soviet government also used solid water in the design of the reactor's emergency core cooling system. This system was activated in the event of a reactor accident and used to cool the reactor core to a safe temperature. The liquid used in this system was solid water, which was effective at absorbing radiation and preventing it from entering the environment.

The use of solid water in the reactor design was a key factor in the safety of the site. It contributed to the containment of radiation and helped to prevent the spread of radioactive material. The use of solid water in the reactor design was a significant achievement for the Soviet government, and it helped to establish the country as a leader in the field of nuclear power.

The story of solid water is a powerful example of the way in which science and technology can be used to protect the environment and human health. It highlights the importance of continued research and development in the field of nuclear energy, and it serves as a reminder of the importance of safety in the design and operation of nuclear power plants.
Catie Newell is founding principal of Alibi Studio and Assistant Professor of Architecture at the University of Michigan. Her recent work includes Weatherizing (Detroit, 2010), Salvaged Landscape (Detroit, 2010), Second Story (Hart and Chicago, 2011), and Aggregate (with Anne Hawkins, Houston, 2004). She is currently working on an installation in Flint, Michigan with Mark McGee called Glass Cast, and teaching courses on materials and volumetric manipulation. She proposes...
Haptical Correction

CN: The geometries of the acrylic rods have various logics, but there are locations where they become very clear. All the diagonal and vertical patterns respond to the house. They have a very rigorous expression.

SS: Do the serial patterns relate at all to your physical presence while installing the piece?

CN: There was haptical correction and control of every length and its whisker while installing. There were set zones of densities and maximum and minimum lengths in sets of angles but not fully prescribed to exist dimensions. So, while I made a pattern before installing, I couldn’t predict the snarly mess that the whiskers would create until it was being installed.

SS: Did you know that Second Story would be suspended in the gallery—that the house would float, but that we would be the ones finding it?

Can you talk about the structure and how it floats?

CN: The structural lines of the house were aligned with the taping of the gallery to suspend the acrylic rods on a grid of strings. I always knew that the project would be suspended, but during the installation, I decided I wanted to make sure nothing touched the ground—only the shadows got to touch the wall and ground. Darkness, illumination, light, and shadow have the ability to completely and drastically change the experience of a space, but it is so fleeting and impermanent that it can be altered quickly.

SS: Do you see the relationship between dark and light as a material in your practice of documentation? Is it a way of transposing the affective experience of the work through material manipulation?

CN: Lightness and darkness are best captured through photography, which is a very important part of my practice. It is a whole other excursion where I am completely distanced from my act of creating the work itself, and begin to investigate its other volumes through light and the darkness. How the lightness is framed in a photograph as space...this creates other dimensions as well. With darkness, I don’t want to simply capture what is there, but to manipulate the volume. Photography helps me to alter the physicality of the project and find the things that I want to work on next—things that aren’t quite material and yet can’t be drawn. So for the next project I will have to be looking at Second Story a lot more.

SS: A consistent aspect of your work, even in an early work like Aggregate, is that you use spaces, but even more, you challenge fundamental assumptions of domestic architecture. If a child draws a house, they include all the things you have somehow removed, changed, or made strange. Is it an architecturally complex space to want to pervert the семиотика?

CN: I make familiar spaces, domestic or not, unfamiliar. I am agitating architecture. There is something in this instinct that is stronger than making things that are entirely new. There is something in the translations and transpositions that can take on more because the “once-occupied” have been changed. These are already part of the work—whatever the essence may be for someone, the semantic associations are an important material in all of my work. With material manipulations and changes in volume that deny physical occupations, I want to agitate those spaces of architecture that are most ubiquitous.

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these photos but once you start playing it was quite difficult to take some of
on which movement is clearly visible.
a photo of frozen motion and a photo
we had to take a panning photo.
was to play with the shutter speed.
the assignment we got,
photos. the assignment we've made 3 different
during lesson 1 we've made 3 different
worker — photography lesson 1
worker magazine is a contextual publication about photography and labour
that appropriates its name from the worker photographer movement; the first group
of amateur photographers to use the camera as a tool to fight class-struggle.