Design Issues, Volume 16, Number 1 (Spring 2000)

Introduction

Our editorial introductions attempt to provide a framework for understanding the variety of articles that are selected for each issue. Design studies includes diverse lines of inquiry in history, theory, and criticism, and the relationships are typically ambiguous and sometimes challenging. This is true of the current issue in particular, where the articles address a wide range of subjects. We decided to open with Carla Keyvanian's article on Manfredo Tafuri because, while the subject is architectural history, the design issue that attracted our attention is the difference between the critique of ideology and "microhistories." A microhistory, as Keyvanian explains, is "an in-depth analysis of a closely circumscribed field of inquiry capable of shedding light on broader historical issues." The article provides an insightful discussion of how a Marxist dialectician shifted his line of inquiry without abandoning the philosophic foundations of his vision. The issue is controversial within the history of architecture, but its exploration in the context of design history could provide useful insights.

Whether the next article could serve as an example of a microhistory should be decided by the reader, but one of the design issues that attracts our attention is the changing relationship between advertising and art. John Hewitt discusses poster art and the railways in Britain, with particular focus on the 1920s. His account provides an intriguing portrait of competing forces, interests, and tastes in a focused period of industrial communication. The article contributes to design history, but the reader may also find in it a useful perspective for considering the contemporary relationship of art and advertising design.

The next article, "Design's Own Knowledge," offers a philosophical perspective on design, continuing a theme addressed in earlier issues of the journal around questions of design research and the status of design knowledge. Luz María Jiménez Narváez discusses the concepts of "poiesis" and "noesis" and their bearing on design and social action. There are few philosophical discussions of design in the literature of our field, but articles such as that by Narváez begin to demonstrate how important it is to consider the foundations of design thinking with the resources of classical and modern philosophy.

Stuart Walker's "How the Other Half Lives" returns the reader to practical matters, but the focus is also philosophic and spiritual: the relationship between inner development and material culture. The "other half" is the other half of who we are—the spiritual side of our natures, struggling with a rich material environment. Walker argues that design is an activity that bridges the two sides of our nature, and he explores some of the concrete applications of this idea, particularly in the domain of industrial design.
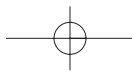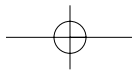
In the final article of this issue, Kevin Barnhurst and John Nerone discuss the visual culture of the American press, with special attention to the changing balance of illustration and photojournalism in the period of 1856 to 1901. Their account provides a useful framework for considering the place of design in mass communication, the relationship of words and images, and the diverse qualities of images serve to rhetorical purposes.

Richard Buchanan
Dennis Doordan
Victor Margolin
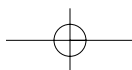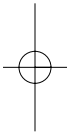
Manfredo Tafuri:
From the Critique of Ideology
to Microhistories
Carla Keyvanian

Manfredo Tafuri is interpreted and understood, especially in the U.S., almost exclusively in the light of two books he published, in the original version, in 1968 and 1973: *Theories and History of Architecture* and *Architecture and Utopia,* respectively.[1]

Later, fundamental developments in his thought generally are reduced to the notion that he abandoned the study of modern architecture in favor of what is almost perceived as a regression to Renaissance studies.

Even in Italy, where poor translations cannot be claimed as a justification, the development of his notion of history has been reductively read by many as an abandonment of a politically committed history in favor of an old-fashioned, erudite philologist's historiography. In the words of an Italian critic writing after his death, Tafuri sought refuge "in the past, in intelligence, and erudition. No longer remembering neither his nor our hopes in projects." [2]

The aim of this paper is then to better articulate and historically contextualize Tafuri's passage from the critique of ideology to a model of architectural history that I will propose as a fruitful one: a model that has a cross-disciplinary approach and for which philology is a fundamental methodological tool. At the same time, I will show that this passage does *not* represent an abandonment of his intention to write a politically committed history (provided we understand this as meaning "concerned with the contemporary"), but rather a shift in the tactics employed to achieve this aim.

I will begin with a brief outline of Tafuri's critique of ideology and then proceed to show how, in attempting to solve the problems posed by it, he modified his historiographic approach.

In 1973 Tafuri published *Progetto e utopia (Architecture and Utopia)*—published in a shorter version in 1969 in the review *Contropiano*—which earned him his undying reputation as a radical Marxist. Its central thesis—that architecture, since the age of the Enlightenment, had been the ideological instrument of capitalism and that it could not, therefore, any longer hope to have any "revolutionary" aims—raised cries about Tafuri's nihilism and his having declared the "death of architecture."

But Tafuri's message, an extremely clear one, was that one could not hope to reveal the ideologies that were represented by architecture through the production of an *alternative* architecture.

1   M. Tafuri, *Teorie e storia dell'architettura.* (Bari: Laterza, 1968). Eng. trans. *Theories and History of Architecture.* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980); M. Tafuri, *Progetto e utopia. Architettura e sviluppo capitalistico.* (Bari: Laterza, 1973). Eng. trans. *Architecture and Utopia. Design and Capitalist Development.* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1976). All dates of publication will henceforth refer to original Italian versions.

2   Antonino Saggio, Review of "Il Progetto storico di Manfredo Tafuri," *Casabella* 619–620 found in *Domus* 773 (Luglio/Agosto, 1995): 104 [my trans.].

3   According to orthodox Marxist thought, real change cannot occur until the underlying conditions of production are changed. Any attempt at reform in a single sector (such as architecture) constitutes therefore a serious error as it only hinders the advent of real change. For a clear instance of this critique, see Tafuri's analysis of the reasons why the experiments in social housing of the 1920s and '30s in Germany failed Manfredo Tafuri and Francesco Dal Co, *Architettura Contemporanea* (Milano: Electa, 1976). Eng. trans. *Modern Architecture* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1979), 1. See Ch. XI: "The Attempts at Urban Reform in Europe Between the Wars," esp. 156–57.

4   M. Tafuri, *La sfera e il labirinto. Avanguardia e architettura da piranesi agli anni '70* (Torino: Einaudi, 1980), 16 [my trans.]. Eng. trans. *The Sphere and the Labyrinth. Avantgardes and Architecture from Piranesi to the '70s.* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987).

5   W. Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History" first published in *Neue Rundschau* 61:3 (1950). Eng. trans. in *Illuminations. Walter Benjamin. Essays and Reflections.* Hannah Arendt, ed. (New York: Schoken, 1988), 253–264. Abundant traces of the influence exerted by Benjamin, and by this essay in particular, remain. From 1964 to 1972, Massimo Cacciari and Marco De Michelis published *Angelus Novus,* a journal inspired by the Paul Klee painting to which Benjamin refers to in this essay. Cacciari published in *Nuova Corrente*, in 1975, "Di alcuni motivi di Walter Benjamin (da Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels a Der Autor als Produzent "[On some motifs in Walter Benjamin from Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels to Der Autor als Produzent]). Tafuri makes explicit and frequent references to Benjamin's ideas. For an accurate critique of this book, see Tiedemann, Rolf, "Historical Materialism or Political Messianism? An Interpretation of the Theses 'On the Concept of History'," in Gary Smith ed., *Benjamin* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).

6   M. Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture,* 141.

Architecture had been such an integral part of the capitalist project that it was an illusion to hope that it could critique it with a *counter project.*[3]

Architecture could not, therefore, be "political." It was, instead, *history* that would have to become the systematic revelation, and critique, of the ideologies that architecture embodied. It was the "historical" project rather than the design one that had to become "capable of calling into question, at every instant, the historic legitimacy of the capitalist division of labor." As he still stated very explicitly years later, in 1980 in "Il Progetto storico" (The Historical Project) the introductory chapter to *La Sfera e il labirinto (The Sphere and the Labyrinth).*[4]

The idea of a historiography that has political potential was neither new nor peculiar to Tafuri. His position was a common one among Italian left-wing intellectuals of the '60s and early '70s. It was based upon Antonio Gramsci's and Benedetto Croce's ideas (Gramsci's in more radical terms) on the need for a history that was "alive." That was, in other words, directly connected to the present by its ability to perform a critical role in awakening consciousness and bringing about social change.

Another important source for this idea was Walter Benjamin whose works started appearing in Italian translations in the very early '60s. A short essay, the "Theses of the Philosophy of History," in which Benjamin advocated an unmediated connection between a revolutionary present and the past, proved crucial not only for Tafuri but for the whole group of the so-called School of Venice.[5]

Tafuri's aim undoubtedly was to write a history that would have political significance. The central problem, then, was that of writing such a history without transforming it into an operative one. Operative history, practiced in Italy by historians such as Bruno Zevi and Paolo Portoghesi, had been radically attacked by Tafuri in *Theories and History* in 1968. In this book, Tafuri declared operative history to be an:

> analysis of architecture (or of the arts in general) that, instead of an abstract survey, has as its object the planning of a precise poetical tendency (…) derived from historical analyses programmatically distorted and finalized. By this definition, operative criticism represents the meeting point of history and planning. We could say, in fact, that operative criticism plans past history by projecting it towards the future.[6]

Operative history, in other words, applied a deforming filter to specific ages of the past, transforming them into mythical ones endowed with ideal values in order to designate them as models for design.

Tafuri certainly had no intention of writing a history that could be of any direct use to designers. Principally for the reasons

we have seen, that architecture could not become the instrument for change and because history had other tasks, the unveiling of ideologies.

But writing a history that was very much concerned with the contemporary situation, a history that had *political* aims, involved the same risks as that of writing one aimed at designers: that of deforming the past in order to suit these aims. And this risk was very clear to Tafuri. In 1966, in the preface to his book on Mannerist architecture, he declared:

> While it is true that every history worthy of being called such, after Croce and Gramsci, is always "current" history, it is also necessary to emphasize that it principally has to be history: a free investigation of the events of the past, enriched by a *contemporariness* that is part of the historian's culture, but not subjected to the demonstration of preconstituted theses.[7]

But Tafuri himself had come very close to the possible deformations caused by the "contemporariness" of some of his earlier writings. In a work published in 1961, for instance, he had argued that the baroque, seventeenth century interventions on the medieval town of San Gregorio, near Rome, had, in reality, been part of a unitary urban plan. His argument meant to critique "romantic attitudes" concerning "so-called 'minor' architecture" which, taken out of context was used as a model thus producing "deplorable architectural populism."[8] But in a much more recent interview regarding a different issue, Tafuri himself declared that there were no unitary urban plans for a city until the late eighteenth century, at least.

Again, in 1967, in an article on Borromini's projects for Piazza Carpegna, he proposed, through a reattribution of some drawings by Borromini and the publication of new ones, a different building sequence for the palace. He demonstrated refined scholarship but did not forget to point out, in the process, that Borromini, in his projects, always rejected the use of "models and types."[9] This was transparent reference to the proponents of the typological approach to design, Saverio Muratori and Gianfranco Caniggia, in those years teaching at Rome's School of Architecture. Tafuri and others, while still students, had so strongly opposed them that the school finally established a parallel, alternative, course of design taught by Carlo Aymonino, with Tafuri as one of his assistants.

Throughout Tafuri's writings of this period, one can clearly perceive the struggle with the need to write a history that would have political relevance, but that would avoid being distorted by this purpose.

A first solution was provided by the adoption of the idea that there is no such thing as "objective" knowledge, and that we can only hope to attain "fragments" of it; an idea that had been

7   M. Tafuri, *L'Architettura del Manierismo nel Cinquecento Europeo* (Roma: Officina, 1966), 6 [my translation].

8   M. Tafuri, "L'ampliamento barocco del comune di S. Gregorio da Sassola" in *Quaderni dell'Istituto di Storia dell'Architettura* 31:48 (1959/61); quoted by G. Ciucci in "The formative years," *Casabella* 619–620 (Jan.–Feb., 1995): 17.

9   M. Tafuri, "Borromini in Palazzo Carpegna: documenti inediti e ipotesi critiche" in *Quaderni dell'Isittuto di Storia dell'Architettura dell'Universit di Roma* 79:84 (1967): 85–107; 94.

circulating for some time, but which gained wide resonance with the works of Michel Foucault.

Tafuri adopted this idea from Foucault, but modified the "fragments" according to the meaning which Walter Benjamin had assigned to them. These had to be the remnants, the traces left by the voiceless, and the obliterated of history. With these fragments, Benjamin wanted to write a history that "brushed against the grain" of the one written by the victors, a history that would prove to be a *counterhegemonic* one.[10]

In "The Historical Project," Tafuri proposed a model of history that was a montage of fragments (which, in architectural terms, often meant unbuilt projects or anachronistic designs that resisted the dominant "style"). Each of the fragments inevitably would have been selected to the exclusion of others. This montage, a construct of the historian, obviously could not claim any absolute validity. Behind every history, including his own, there was, admittedly, a "project," an agenda. Deformations thus were inevitable for both operative criticism and his own history. But, he still claimed, it's a question of the ends one proposes.[11]

The acknowledgment of the inevitable deformations that the historian's interpretation imposes on historiography and the impossibility of attaining an "objective" historiography Tafuri owed mostly to Foucault. But this "solution" was not entirely satisfactory. Tafuri leveled a fundamental criticism at Foucault's notion of history. The belief that history (or reality) cannot be understood in any objective way entails, as its logical outcome, an abandonment of any project of change. To put it very crudely, Foucault's position could be summarized by the sentence "If we cannot even 'know' reality, how can we hope to 'change' it?"

For Tafuri, as we have seen, this was unacceptable. In 1977 he wrote, together with Franco Rella, Georges Teyssot and Massimo Cacciari, *Il dispositivo Foucault* [*The Foucault Mechanism*], an articulated critique of Foucault's ideas. In it, he asked:

> Is there really space, in the current political moment, for this operation of infinite fragmentation of the various practices of power, that certainly digs inside the intersections and the interstices—and herein lies our interest in the practices of Nietzsche, Derrida and Foucault—but in order to become a "dissemination" to the wind, in a sort of game devoid of rules that can be verified in their social effects?[12]

The need for a history that contains the potential for change was unquestionable for Tafuri and not only for him.

Carlo Ginzburg, the Italian historian, already had criticized Foucault's notion of history in the preface to *Il Formaggio e i vermi (The Cheese and the Worms),* published in 1976.[13] He proposed, instead of a history that is wary of attempting a recomposition and reading of the fragments of historical knowledge; and instead of a

10   Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," 253–264.

11   M. Tafuri, "The Historical Project," 15. To understand the full significance of the quote we also have to bear in mind that Zevi belonged to the same political tradition as Tafuris. Zevi, too, intended writing a "militant" history. Tafuri was attacking where he knew it would hurt most: one is certainly free to write such an operative history, he meant, but it will not have the "political" effects ours will: "It is a question of the ends one proposes."

12   M. Tafuri, "Lettura del testo e pratiche discorsive" in *Il dispositivo Foucault* (Venezia: Cluva, 1977), 45 [my trans.].

13   Carlo Ginzburg, I*l formaggio e i vermi. Il cosmo di un mugnaio del '500.* (Torino: Einaudi, 1976). Eng. trans. *The Cheese and the Worms;The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1980).

history that balks at interpretation because there is no "true," "objective" meaning, etc., a *microhistory.* A history that, through the careful analysis of clues, traces, and documents, does not shy away from attempting to understand the "true meaning" of a specific historical episode or artistic object.

Ginzburg had a deep impact on Tafuri for he showed how one could write a history that was profoundly political, even if it analyzed, as in *The Cheese and the Worms,* the story of an obscure miller tried, and eventually burnt, for heresy in the sixteenth century.

In the '60s, Ginzburg had declared—referring to the title of a book by Croce, *What Is Alive and What Is Dead in Hegel's Philosophy*—that he wanted to write a history that was "really dead," in obvious and polemical opposition to the views for a committed history, i.e. an "alive" one, held by the leftist intellectual milieu to which he himself belonged.[14]

Although the term "microhistory" was coined by Ginzburg, its concepts had been elaborated in the late 60s and 70s by a young group of historians who founded a review in 1966 the *Quaderni Storici,* that became a testing ground for new methodological approaches to history. Choosing almost randomly from works published in the review we read, for instance, of the story of Saccardino, a seventeenth century quack and charlatan who preached that religion, and especially the idea of hell, was a fraud whose only purpose was for "the princes to have their own way," and that people had to "open their eyes." Saccardino ended up duly hanged in Bologna's main market square, of course, but if this was Ginzburg's idea of a history that is "really dead," it is little wonder that Tafuri perceived its potential.[15]

Almost paradoxically, in fact, such accounts as in *The Cheese and the Worms,* that of the struggle that pitted the miller against his inquisitors; his "low" against their "high" culture and the inevitably ensuing clash of languages, cultures and mental structures, illuminated the power relations that articulated the social hierarchy of that time: a politically charged history if there ever was one.

For writing such a history "philology" was an indispensable methodological tool. One that would enable the microhistorian to dismantle previous historiographic constructs and elaborate different ones, whose validity would be firmly based upon the careful scrutiny of primary sources.

To those brought up in an entirely different scholarly tradition, this may not sound like a revelation. But, in Italy, philology had been repudiated as a valid instrument for writing history for a long time. Ever since, in fact, Croce had denounced nineteenth century erudite history that based its positivistic faith on the accumulation of often uninterpreted "documents." For Croce, history was to be based on "interpretation" just as the criticism of a work of art had to be based on "intuition."

14   B. Croce, *Ciò che è vivo e ciò che è morto nella filosofia di Hegel* (Bari: Laterza, 1907).

15   C. Ginzburg and Marco Ferrari, "La colombara ha aperto gli occhi," *Quaderni Storici* 38 (1978): 631–9. Eng. trans., "The Dove-Cote Has Opened its Eyes" in *Microhistories and the Lost People of Europe,* Edward Muir and Guido Ruggiero, eds. (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1991).

Italian historians, still imbued with Croce's idealism, consider with suspicion a "philological" history. As I mentioned at the beginning, the passage of Tafuri from a critique of ideology to an "old-fashioned" philological approach to history mostly has been perceived as a contradiction, or as the abandonment of a committed history after the political disillusionments of the last few years.

Alberto Asor Rosa, a literary critic and founder, with Massimo Cacciari, of the review *Contropiano,* provides us, instead, with a much more insightful explanation, seeing Tafuri's philological approach as the logical outcome of the critique of ideology. Although, he says, many might "find it difficult to understand:"

> The "critique of ideology" precedes and determines the discovery of "philology," and makes it both possible and necessary. Think about this: once no veil any longer exists, all that remains is to study, understand and represent the mechanisms of reality, for which one should refinedly use the instruments of an inquiry that is (clearly within certain limits), *objective.*[16]

Tafuri's philological inquiry—which extends itself not only to literary texts but also to architectural models, drawings, the built works themselves and their relationship to each other—is what enables him to write his "architectural" microhistories.

The elaboration of this microhistorical method will run parallel, for Tafuri, to the project that occupied him for the last decade of his life (from *L'Armonia e i Conflitti* of 1983, to *Ricerca del Rinascimento* in 1992): the rewriting of the Renaissance.

He listed the fundamental concepts of an architectural micro-history in the introduction to *L'Armonia e i Conflitti,* an as yet un-translated book on the sixteenth century Venetian church of San Francesco della Vigna:

> As far as we're concerned—he declared—the artistic object is to be questioned, rather than in its individuality, as a witness that can testify as to the roles that were assigned to it by the mentality (or mentalities) of the era to which it belongs regarding its economic meaning, its public func-tion, the means of production incorporated in it, the struc-tures of representation (= ideologies) that condition it, or of which it is an autonomous enunciator.[17]

Ricerca del Rinascimento, his last book, is a constellation of microhistories or of "monads," to use a Benjaminian term: a con-catenation of minute events of the past that are particularly signifi-cant to our present.

The book starts with an analysis of the urban plan for Rome of Nicholas V in the 1440s, and the role that traditionally is assigned to Leon Battista Alberti as the Pope's advisor and architect. Tafuri reads the Pope's urban strategy as part of a plan to consolidate the

16 A. Asor Rosa, "Critica dell'ideologia ed esercizio storico" [Critique of ideology and historical practice], *Casabella* 619–620 (Jan.–Feb. 1995): 33.

17 M. Tafuri, *L'Armonia e i conflitti. La chiesa di San Francesco della Vigna nella Venezia del '500* (Torino: Einaudi, 1983), 7.

papacy's secular power. To this aim, he wanted to build architecture that would demonstrate the "supreme and undisputable authority of the Roman Church" by seeming as if "built by God himself." [18]

Next, Tafuri philologically reconstructs the work of Alberti (both textual and architectural), and the ideas he came into contact with, penetrating his mental set with a procedure strikingly similar to that used by Ginzburg for his miller.

The Alberti that emerges from Tafuri's analysis is one who is highly sceptical of authority and is critical of the display of luxury and the rhetoric of power. How would "this" Alberti have aided the Pope in his intent to build architecture that would seem as if "built by God himself," Tafuri asks? Or, if he did, it would then be necessary to clearly distinguish the intentions of the Pope from those of the architect, in other words, analyzing the conflict that must have arisen between practices of power and artistic languages.

But a fundamental aspect of Tafuri's reassessment of Alberti lies in the awareness he claims for the Renaissance theorist, of the existence of a multiplicity of models of antiquity. In other words, Tafuri's Alberti was (and was aware of) constructing an artificial "tradition" founded, rather than on "the" model of antiquity, on a selection from the models available. Alberti and other humanists, in other words, were establishing the principles of an architectural language that was already perceived as self-referential, founded on neither "the" model of antiquity nor on a metaphysical concept of beauty.

The last chapter concludes with an analysis of an unbuilt project and three buildings in Venice by Jacopo Sansovino, who had left Rome after its sacking in 1527. Tafuri analyzes the struggle between Sansovino's "modern" Roman architectural language and the Venetian context in which he had to operate.[19]

The first project by Sansovino in Venice for Vettor Grimani, is one that never was built. Tafuri points out that the rotation of the axes necessary to achieve regular geometric spaces on an irregular site derives directly from the Roman tradition of Raphael, Bramante, and Sangallo. Other elements of this tradition include the monumental staircase, the lack of a portico, and the two connected courtyards. In the strained political climate between Venice and Rome, it was precisely the blatantly "Roman" character of the project, Tafuri asserts, that condemned it.

The following project by Sansovino, Palazzo Dolfin in 1536, Tafuri defines a hybrid: the facade, for instance, exhibits all three Roman orders: Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian. But the four bays on the *piano nobile* resting on the two lower arches mark the position of the traditional Venetian *portego,* the large central hall that would run across the entire building, from the front to the rear facade.

Palazzo Corner of 1545 is the most imposing and "Roman" of Sansovino's Venetian works. With its rusticated lower story and three arches, reminiscent of the so-called House of Raphael in Rome;
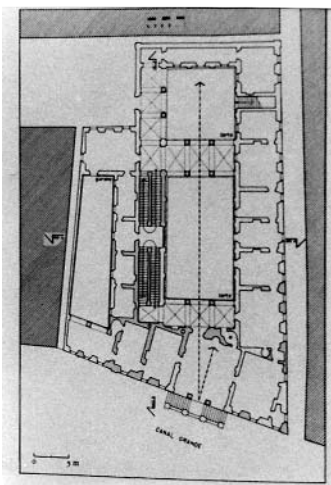

Figure 1
Palace for Vettor Grimani. Ground floor reconstruction (from M. Tafuri).

18   M. Tafuri, *Ricerca del Rinascimento. Principi, città, architetti.* (Torino: Einaudi, 1992), 38 [my trans.].
19   Ibid, 305–359.

with its paired columns flanking the upper story's arches, and its unusual isolation and prominence on the Canal Grande this palace spoke of its patron's unabashed display of allegiance to Rome.

After these projects, in which Sansovino struggles to reconcile, more or less successfully, the Roman and the Venetian tradition, Tafuri proposes a fourth project by Sansovino, a practically un-

known one, whose language is strikingly and unexpectedly entirely Venetian: the *Case* of Leonardo Moro in 1544.
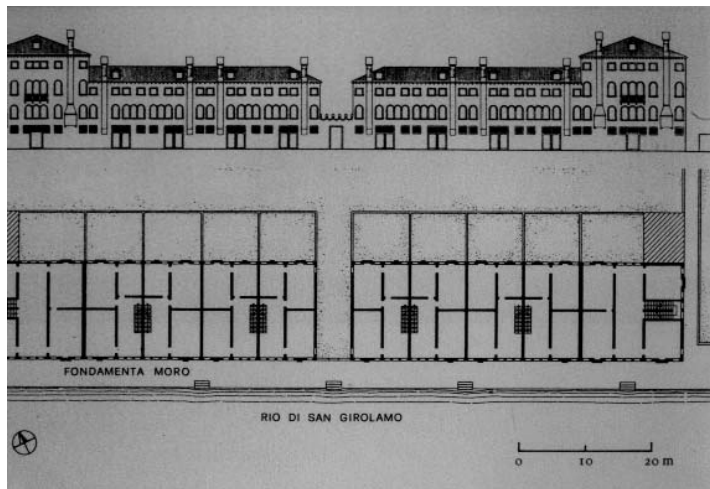
Tafuri analyzes the theological and political reasons of the patron, Leonardo Moro, one of the most wealthy members of a dogal family in Venice, and reads in this building the critique made by Moro of the display of luxury that marked the palaces of the rival Loredan and Corner families. The hiring of Sansovino, who was working almost contemporaneously at the Palazzo Corner, instead of any anonymous stonemason, is significant in this sense.

With regard to architect's intentions, Tafuri points out that with simple elements of vernacular architecture (the monofores and trifores, the chimneys, and the doors), the architect achieved a rhythm in the facade, closely connected to the tipology of the interior. The elevation, with the flanking towers, the horizontal central block, and the gate with its crenelations marking the entrance to the garden, reputed one of the most beautiful of the Venetian Cinquecento, for Tafuri, all point to a remarkable design effort that is all the

more significant because of its dissimulation, since the *Case* seem to submit entirely to the Venetian tradition.

Tafuri reads these houses as a critique of Sansovino to the dominant Roman classical language. The architect adopted in this project a local tradition instead of the "modern" one constructed by humanists such as Alberti, demonstrating how the certainties of the Roman "golden age" were anything but monolithic.

Tafuri tackled, single-handedly, the rewriting of the Renaissance by attacking its historiographic strongholds: the belief in the existence of a codified set of principles as elaborated by Rudolf Wittkower.[20] He demonstrated how these principles were anything but prescriptive. He dismantled the traditional model of the Renaissance as the age of the "return to antiquity" by showing the existence of a multiplicity of models of traditions operating simultaneously.

Above all, however, he showed how theorists such as Alberti, and architects such as Sansovino, were conscious that the architectural language they were forming was not based on universal laws of beauty or on the model of antiquity, but rather on "transgressions" of those laws that were regulated by "taste," ("a certain natural discernment and not any art or rule"[21]) or by the conventions established by the community of contemporary artists.

What comes to the fore, in other words, is the artists' awareness of the "self-referentiality" of architecture and, consequently, their lack of the much extolled "certainty" that supposedly derived from the belief that their architecture was solidly grounded on the models provided by a recuperated tradition, that of an age in which codified norms of proportion had been established once and for all, Tafuri describes the architecture of the Renaissance as expressing a "refined equilibrium between the pursuit of foundations and experimentation."[22] He points out the need for codified norms—the "need," and not their existence—that arose out of the Great Schism, the politico-social conflicts of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and the devastating plagues. But this was only in order to juxtapose this need to the humanists' willingness to make a leap towards the unfounded, that very same "leap in the dark" that he already had indicated in *Theories and History* as necessary for the designing of the new.[23]

At this point, the significance of the revelation of a Renaissance crisscrossed by contradictions, conflicting traditions, and architectural languages, characterized by the artists' awareness that they were critically questioning the models of antiquity, creating a "new tradition," becomes clear.

Tafuri's objective in undertaking the formidable task of rewriting the Renaissance is to understand the roots of the present crisis of architecture, the reasons for the unease, and the anguish that characterizes it. He indicates in the introduction to *Ricerca del Rinascimento* the modern thinkers that have most influenced him:

20 Rudolf Wittkower. *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism* (New York: Norton, 1962, 1971).

21 Baldassarre Castiglione. *Il Libro del Cortegiano.* (Venice, 1528). Quoted by Tafuri, *Ricerca…,* [my trans.].

22 Tafuri, *Ricerca…,* 9 [my trans.].

23 Tafuri, *Teorie e Storia…,* op. cit. p. 233.

Hans Sedlmayer, Walter Benjamin, Robert Klein, who spoke, respectively, of the "loss of the center," the "decay of the aura," and the "agony of the referent." This "agony," this "loss," the realization that architecture is not the physical expression of the order of the universe, was greeted as a liberation at the beginning of the century by the historical avant gardes, but considered with anguish since the '60s.

This is, in itself, a phenomenon to historicize, according to Tafuri, who does not see in this loss of the referent and a "foundation" of architecture a fatal occurrence but, rather, the completion of a process which it is useless to attempt to reverse by returning to a "golden age," because no such age ever existed.

In plunging into the Renaissance (the "long Renaissance," as he calls it), Tafuri unveils how early the loss of a sure foundation was. He points at the problematic relationship that the artists of the Renaissance had with their past in order to problematize our relationship to history, once more reasserting the impossibility of finding ready-made solutions in it. The most obvious and immediate target of his critique is postmodernism, but his critique also has a broader scope. While postmodernism had been dismissed in a few pages in 1986, the fundamental questions on the role of architecture and, therefore, the architect, remain.[24]

Attempting to answer these questions was Tafuri's lifetime endeavor. His whole production could be read as the struggle to clear the ground of illusions in impossible roles for architecture, in order to identify the possible ones. Thus, we can begin to perceive Tafuri's work as organized by "projects," which are all logically articulated parts of the same attempt to find an answer to the tormenting questions of the role of architecture, of that of history, and of the margins of possibility left to those who operate in the two distinct disciplines.

The main stages of this trajectory can be clearly identified in works such as *Teorie e Storia* (1968) and *Progetto e Utopia* (1969 and 1973), in which he attempted to define the roles and tasks of architecture, articulating and distinguishing them from those of history. While, in the first book, he dismissed all hope for a history from which to extract models for design, in the second he dismissed the possibility of a political role for architecture.

In *Storia dell'architettura italiana 1945–1985* (1982 and 1986), he examined the ramifications of a particular case, the Italian one, assessing the crisis of modern architecture against the background of the actual conditions of production of architecture, the disillusionment with leftist municipal administrations that governed some Italian cities from the late seventies to the mid-eighties, the policies adopted with regard the use and planification of the territory, and the failure of plans and projects in the very difficult reality in which architects had to operate.

24 See "La 'gaia erranza': ipermoderni (postmoderni)" in *Storia dell'architettura italiana 1944–1985*. (Torino: Einaudi, 1982, 1986), 230–4. Eng. trans. "'Gay Errancy': Hypermoderns (postmoderns)" in *History of Italian Architecture 1944–1985* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), 189–193.

The "Renaissance project" that unfolds itself in *L'Armonia e i Conflitti* (1983), *Venezia e il Rinascimento* (1985), *Ricerca del Rinascimento* (1992) and the important series of monographs, *Raffaello Architetto* (1984), *Giulio Romano* (1989), and *Francesco di Giorgio Martini* (1993), is only the logical conclusion of this process.[25]

In reply to the appeals for a "liberation from inhibitions" that the modern movement supposedly had imposed, and a "joyous return" to the past, or to the nostalgia for various "golden ages," Tafuri shatters all illusions in the existence of a time when the role of architecture, as the expression of the order of the universe, was clear and, consequently, so was the architect's as interpreter of that superior order.

It is significant that the first of the "Renaissance books" is *L'Armonia e i conflitti,* N. 6 in the Einaudi *Microhistories* series. At the basis of Tafuri's project, and inextricably linked to it, are his reflections on the tools and instruments of the historian. Wittkower already had analyzed the Venetian church, and had declared its design to be based on an iconological program written by one of the patrons. Tafuri proved, through his microanalysis, that the "program" did not precede but followed and justified the design. He scored a point against what he and Ginzburg called "wild iconology": the historiographical attempt to read architecture (especially Renaissance) as the physical expression of a preexisting literary or religious text.[26]

More important, he reassessed, in the same book, the role of the architect of the time: the image that emerged was not that of a fountainhead of creativity and acknowledged interpreter of the cosmic order, but as a professional figure that clashed, compromised, negotiated, attempted to resist, and had to come to terms with patrons, authorities, and political protagonists.

In other words, in *L'armonia,* he elaborates and tests a historiographic model while, at the same time, reconstructing a different Renaissance, dispelling the myth of an age in which architects had recourse to the safe harbor of history, or to preconstituted iconological programs, or to immutable laws of proportions from which to directly derive aesthetic principles.

In revealing the Renaissance as fragmentary, conflictual, struggling between a universal architectural language and the need for local diversity, and between the model of antiquity and the "transgressions" to it he shatters hopes with the existence of a happy condition we have to return to. There always was a crisis, he proclaims. We never were aided by an unproblematic faith in tradition, we always had a limited range of action, and always were in search of our role in society and only working at the margins, on the thresholds. The task which lies ahead of us is the exploration of the full extension of those margins.

The connections between Tafuri's projects thus appear clearer, if viewed in this light: the elaboration of a historiographic model

25 M. Tafuri, *L'Armonia…*, Venezia e il Rinascimento. Religione, scienza, architettura.(Torino: Einaudi, 1985). Eng. trans. *Venice and the Renaissance. Religion, Science, Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989); *Ricerca…*; Frommel, S. Ray, M. Tafuri eds., *Raffaello Architetto.* (Milano: Electa, 1984); H. Burns and M. Tafuri, eds.*Giulio Romano* (Milano: Electa, 1989); F. P. Fiore, M. Tafuri eds., *Francesco di Giorgio Martini* (Milano: Electa, 1993).
26 M. Tafuri. *L'Armonia…*, 9.

capable of indicating, albeit indirectly, a way out of the present crisis, follows logically the realization that it is "history" rather than "architecture" that is "political."

We have come a long way from the "critique of ideology." But the microhistorical model he defined—an in-depth analysis of a closely circumscribed field of inquiry capable of shedding light on broader historical issues—is the incisive instrument of a critique that is still, undisputably, very much concerned with the contemporary. That is provided, of course, the microhistories chosen do not constitute "philological gossip," as he called it, but are "capable of calling into question" our *present* historical condition.

Nowhere is this intent stated more explicitly than in the introduction to *Ricerca del Rinascimento.* Regarding the reflections that gave birth to this volume he declares, in what retrospectively sounds as his intellectual testament, that:

> Starting from what <u>today</u> constitutes a problem, they turn back, attempting a dialogue with the age of representation. (…) Starting from these [analyses] what will perhaps become possible will be an *elaboration of mourning:* The attempt is that of broadening—through the instruments that history can legitimately use—the significance of the questions that critically operate within <u>current</u> architectural culture. Remembering does not mean deluding ourselves with the sweetness of remembrance, nor is "listening" reducible to a mindless indulging in sounds.
>
> The "weak power" of analysis, in other words, is proposed as a step in a process that lets the unresolved problems of the past live, unsettling our <u>present.</u>[27]
> [My emphasis].

Nothing could be further from Tafuri's intentions than "seeking refuge in the past." What animates his whole work is the stubborn, relentless search for the possibility of a project, of a identifying a direction of march, the possible margins of operation left to architecture.

Many issues of Tafuri's historical project still need to be better articulated. But returning to a more careful reading of his writings might help us to construct a frame of reference, useful in understanding his work and its significance, in light of the various labels that have been heaped on him (Marxist, nihilist, etc.). These risk completely obscuring our reading of a thinker who posed questions, and struggled to find answers, that are at the very basis of our work as historians or architects.

27   M. Tafuri. *Ricerca …*, xxi.
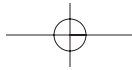
Posters of Distinction:
Art, Advertising and the London, Midland, and Scottish Railways
John Hewitt

Introduction

For more than a century, there has been a close association between advertising and art, particularly modern art. They share a common history. As Kirk Varnedoe observed, "…modern advertising and modern painting were born together in the late nineteenth century." [1] Each has drawn on the other at regular intervals ever since. This has been most evident in the close links between painting and poster designing.

Much has been written about the way modern artists have engaged with advertising. It is not just that artists from Manet to Hockney have produced poster designs, but that, from the beginning, the avant-garde, in particular, have used the content and formal strategies of advertising as a means of establishing a critical and ironic relationship to modernity. This is evident not only in the work of the neo-impressionists, the cubists, and the dadaists, but also in the post-war art of the independent group, American pop, and, more recently, in the very different approaches of Hans Haacke, Barbara Kruger, and Jeff Koons. [2]
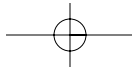
Much less has been written about the equally long history of advertising's engagement with art, particularly in Britain. [3] From Pears's use of Millais's painting for the poster *Bubbles* in the 1880s to the equally self-conscious deployment of art in the celebrated campaign for Benson and Hedges cigarettes a hundred years later, advertising has bought, commissioned, parodied, and pastiched art in a calculated strategy to enhance the value and attraction of a variety of commodities and services.

It is clear, however, that, for all their close association, art does not use advertising in the same way that advertising uses art. From the late nineteenth century, artists not only embraced advertising: they transformed it. It was raw material to be worked and reworked. For the avant-garde, it was a means of renewing, reinventing itself, as Thomas Crow has pointed out. [4] In this way, art was able to retain a critical function.

Advertising's exploitation of art could not have been more different. If art transformed advertising by working on it, advertising secured art by seizing it as a given, already constituted practice with its legitimate modes and relations of production and consumption. Art in advertising became a sign whose connotations of

1   Kirk Varnedoe, ed., *High and Low, Modern Art and Popular Culture* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1991), 232.

2   The most comprehensive account of the changing relations of art and advertising since the late nineteenth century is to be found in Varnedoe, ibid., 231–368.

3   John Hewitt, "The 'Nature' and 'Art' of Shell Advertising in the Early 1930s" in *Journal of Design History* 5:2 (1992). Art and advertising in the USA has been better served. See particularly Michelle Boagart, *Artists, Advertising and the Borders of Art* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995).

4   Thomas Crow, "Modernism and Mass Culture in the Visual Arts" in Francis Frascina, ed., *Pollock and After* (London: Harper and Row, 1985), 223.
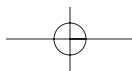
quality, taste, and discernment could be attached to the product or service being advertised. In its deployment of such signifiers, advertising emphasizes one kind of art practice above all others; one notion of production, that of untrammeled individual creativity; and one mode of consumption, that of the recognition of quality through the aesthetic gaze. It is not that the advert itself or the product for sale are presented as art, but rather that the art in advertising appears increasingly, in the twentieth century, as "artness," a reification of values defined elsewhere in different texts and rituals within a different discursive formation. It is because advertising needs those certainties, those shared assumptions about art and "artness" that it works so hard to preserve and not to challenge them. Nowhere is this more evident than in 1924, when the London Midland and Scottish Railway Company (LMS) commissioned Royal Academicians to design posters for it.

LMS and the Royal Academicians

In the Autumn of 1923, the artist Norman Wilkinson was asked by the LMS to produce three poster designs.[5] At the same time, according to his account of events written in 1969, he "had been asked by LMS Railways to go to Derby and discuss with their advertising manager what steps could be taken to improve advertising on the system." [6] He suggested that they commission designs for a new set of posters from some of the Royal Academicians. The LMS agreed with Wilkinson's idea and asked him to approach the artists for fear that the Royal Academy might turn the idea down "if it came from a railway company." [7]

   This strategy appeared vindicated by the outcome: of the sixteen Royal Academicians and Associates of the Royal Academy written to by Wilkinson on October 19, 1923 (See Appendix 1), only Frank Brangwyn declined the commission and that was because he was already producing work for LMS's rival, the London and North Eastern Railway Company (LNER).[8] In the end Augustus John was unable to deliver his design because he was in the United States at the crucial time.[9] To this initial group were added William Orpen and Stanhope Forbes, both of whom had accepted the commission by 1924.[10] There is a list of all the artists who contributed to the campaign with the subject matter of their designs in Appendix 2.

   I shall be looking later in some detail at the formal structure of the posters, but all were of a standard size, quadroyal (40" x 50"), with the illustration covering an area 35" x 45". The company undertook to ensure that the best reproduction of the original designs would be made regardless of expense. The artists were paid a fee of one hundred pounds, and five thousand copies of each poster were printed at a cost of seven thousand pounds.[11] While acknowledging the company's commitment to high reproduction values, one still needs to ask why such eminent artists accepted this blatantly commercial work so readily and, in some cases, so enthusiastically.[12]

5   Wilkinson had produced at least one poster design for the London and North West Railway (LNWR) as early as 1905. The LNWR was one of the constituent companies of the LMS. The poster is reproduced in J. T. Shackelton, *The Golden Age of the Railway Poster* (London: New English Library, 1976), 81.

6   Norman Wilkinson, *A Brush with Life* (London: Seeley Service and Co. Ltd., 1969), 104.

7   Wilkinson, *A Brush with Life,* 104.

8   According to Shaw Sparrow, Brangwyn was commissioned to do *Curzon Street Goods Depot, Birmingham.* See Sparrow, Walter Shaw, *Advertising and British Art* (London: The Bodley Head Ltd., 1924), 171.

9   August John's subject, according to Shaw Sparrow, was the Staffordshire Potteries, Sparrow; *Advertising and British Art*, 171.

10 Both artists' designs are included in the catalog published to accompany an exhibition of the designs in 1924. See *Posters by Royal Academicians* (London: LMS and Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1924).

11 *Memorandum to the Directors on Advertising and Publicity Arrangements,* May 1929, PRORAIL 425/7.

12 See the selections of replies from the Royal Academicians included in Wilkinson's autobiography, *A Brush with Life,* 107–9.
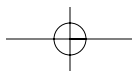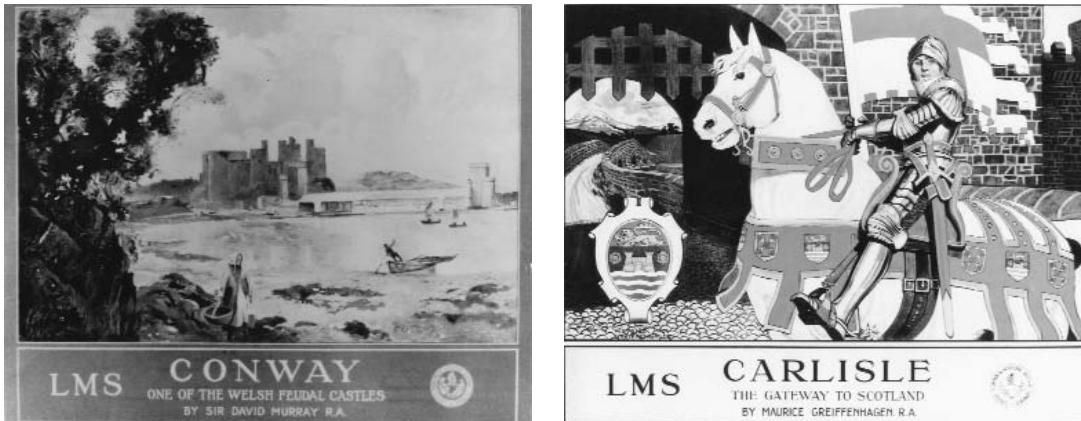
Figure 1
Sir David Murray, RA, *Conway Castle,* 1924,
copyright Science and Society Picture Library.

Figure 2
Maurice Greiffenhagen, RA, *Carlisle,* 1924,
copyright Science and Society Picture Library.

13 Wilkinson, *A Brush with Life,* 7.
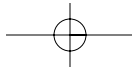14 Wilkinson, *A Brush with Life,* 44.
15 Wilkinson, *A Brush with Life,* 108.
16 Sadly, there is no evidence to support the
    assertion that a painting by Sir E.
    Landseer was used to advertise dog food.
    It was, however, common for soap manu-
    facturers to use Royal Academy pictures.
    Thomas Barrett's use of Millais's *Bubbles*
    is the most famous instance, but it was
    far from unique. See Edward Morris,
    "Advertising and the Acquisition of
    Contemporary Art" in *Journal of the
    History of Collections,* 4:1 (1992):
    195–200.
17 Sparrow, *Advertising and British Art,*
    165–9.
18 *The Studio,* 84, (1922).
19 *The Studio,* 88, (1924), 125.

Clearly Wilkinson's personal role was important. He had stayed with Talmage and Olsson at St. Ives in the 1890s,[13] and was a member of the Arts Club along with Stokes and Greiffenhagen in the early years of the century.[14] He also was a friend of George Henry.[15] There was, however, more to the artists' involvement than personal and professional contacts. By the 1920s, there were plenty of examples of Royal Academicians providing work for the hoardings. Before the First World War, it was more often a question of a finished painting being bought and then reproduced as a poster[16] but, increasingly during the twentieth century, and particularly after the war, artists began to produce designs specifically for the hoardings. Frank Brangwyn was already an established poster designer and, of the other Royal Academicians approached in 1923, Clausen, Sims, Greiffenhagen, and Cayley-Robinson had produced at least one poster design each for the London Underground.[17]

This engagement with commercial art on the part of fine artists was made easier by the fact that they were able to retain an independent role in the relations of poster production even as late as the 1920s. They were commissioned, not employed. While a subject might be requested, the treatment of that subject was left to the artist. Thus the style of David Murray's *Conway Castle* (fig. 1) differed in no way from that of his three landscapes on exhibit in the Royal Academy in 1924.[18] Maurice Greiffenhagen's heraldic design for *Carlisle* (fig. 2) was strongly reminiscent of his decorations for the Langside Library in Glasgow.[19]

In fact, since the 1890s, poster designs of a certain kind were seen as a form of applied art, and a number of the Royal Academicians had been employed in such art already. Greiffenhagen had produced book designs and Cayley-Robinson had provided theater designs. Thus, designing a poster was, for them, a legitimate extension of their activity as artists. In fact, there is a sense in which the artistic endeavors of the Academicians, at least as they were described in *The Studio,* often resembled the highly competent practice of skillful professionals rather than the original, creative and disturb-

ing work associated with the avant-garde. This view comes through in a review of an exhibition of Talmage's landscapes held at the Leicester Gallery in 1924. *The Studio* comments that they "had much charm as sensitive records of nature and as sound examples of robust direct craftsmanship." [20]

Such "robust direct craftsmanship" sounds eminently applicable to a whole range of endeavors in the applied arts, and would lend itself to producing works that did not challenge or undermine attempts by advertisers to attract customers. A more difficult and yet crucial question is why the LMS supported Wilkinson's scheme with such enthusiasm. I believe that there were two motives behind the campaign that were neatly contained in the title of this article, "Posters of Distinction." The word "distinction" can mean both "separate from" and "superior to." The LMS used the posters to give a distinctive image to the company, an embryonic corporate identity, while projecting it as an institution of discernment and civic responsibility. It is the pursuit of this company image that I now want to consider.

In 1923, the hundred and twenty-three separate companies that made up the pre-First World War British railway system were amalgamated into four large organizations, the LMS, the LNER, the Great Western (GW), and the Southern Rail (SR). The LMS took over a large number of the previously independent railways [21] and emerged as an enormous conglomerate, one of the biggest private enterprises in the world according to Bonavia.[22] It was huge, centralized, and somewhat autocratic in its management, and it faced immense difficulties in establishing a coherent identity in the face of local traditions, hierarchies, and loyalties that the constituent groups still retained. An attempt to produce a uniform livery for the company proved too expensive, and was only patchily carried out.[23] Yet, according to Ellis, the LMS searched for an image that would command public respect.[24]

What more effective and yet relatively inexpensive way to produce such an image than through a publicity campaign that could reach all parts of the new company? This motive might account for the posters' subject matter, which fell into three categories. The first two categories dealt with the industries served by the company, and the tourist spots reached by the company's lines clearly related to the freight and passenger services offered by all of the railways at this time. The third category was different. In posters such as, *The Permanent Way* or *The Night Mail* (fig. 3), it is the company itself and aspects of its work that are being projected.

The company also sought to distinguish itself from other railway organizations; not least the LNER, with whom it competed in various parts of the country. In this context, it is interesting to note, that in 1923, the LNER held an exhibition of forty-three of its pictorial posters in the Board Room of King's Cross Station. A catalog was produced, the introduction written by Collins Baker, Keeper

20 *The Studio,* 87, (1924), 330.

21 These included the London and North West Railway, the Midland Railway, the Caledonian Railway, and the Glasgow and South West Scotland Railways.

22 Michael Bonavia, *The Four Great Railways* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1980).

23 Hamiltion Ellis, *London, Midland and Scottish* (London: Ian Allen, 1970).
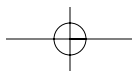
24 Ellis, *London,* 45.

Figure 3
Sir William Orpen, RA, *The Night Mail*, 1924,
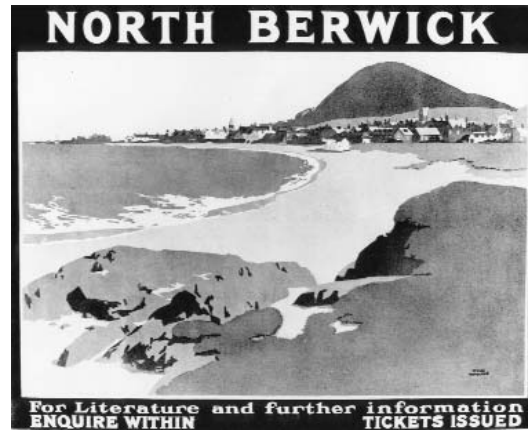copyright Science and Society Picture Library.

Figure 4
Frank Newbould, *North Berwick*, 1922, copy-
right Science and Society Picture Library.

25 *The Railway Gazette* September 14
(1923): 330.
26 Early in its history, the LNER worked in
conjunction with seaside resorts to
promote the towns and shared the
publicity costs. Their posters usually
referred viewers to the town hall or infor-
mation office for further information.
27 There are none of the direct references or
exhortations among the LMS posters of
1924.

at the National Gallery.[25] The posters were designed, in the main, by
commercial artists who showed a clear understanding of the
commercial and advertising necessities of poster design, as well as
its aesthetic possibilities. With some exceptions, they were rendered
in a flat, silhouetted, and simplified form using bright, relatively
unmodulated tones, in a style that became identified with the LNER
in particular during the 1920s and early 1930s (fig. 4). The LMS
campaign appeared as a stark contrast. The designs of the Royal
Academicians, with their painterly style contrasted strikingly with
the more commercial composition of the LNER posters. Whereas the
LNER posters were frequently specific in their references, and all
were concerned with places to visit,[26] those of the LMS were more
generalized, and less explicitly associated with the direct sell.[27] It is
difficult to believe that the LMS was unaffected by what had gone
on in the headquarters of a rival company in the year before its own
campaign was launched.

It is clear from the letter that Wilkinson wrote to the Royal
Academicians (Appendix 1) that the purpose of the campaign was
to advertise the LMS through an association with the best in art. For
a company seeking to establish an image of respectability and
worthiness, the choice of Royal Academicians is unsurprising. To
choose such artists and to give a public space for the work was
presented as an act of discernment and social responsibility. It was
in this way that the LMS sought distinction in the second sense of
the word. It is the company's emphasis on the artistic nature of its
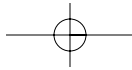advertising and the reasons for that emphasis that I now want to
examine.

Advertising as Art
If the tenor of Wilkinson's account and his letter to the artists repre-
sent accurately the attitude of the LMS, then it is clear that the
company wanted to gain respect through the artistic quality of its
advertising. Of course, the tone of Wilkinson's letter must be
accounted for, in part, by his concern to allay any unease the artists

may have felt about accepting such a commercial commission. Nonetheless, in their dealings with the artists and in the design of the subsequent posters, the company certainly appeared as patron of the arts. The artists were "commissioned," not employed. They were given a free hand in interpreting the subject given to them, and the finished work was to be reproduced as faithfully as possible.[28] In effect, they would be reproduced as nearly as possible like paintings. Their artistic origins are evident in the posters' structures. The careful way in which the illustration was framed reinforced these artistic associations. The brief text, limited to the artist's name and diploma, a description of the subject, and a succinct reference to the company, was placed below the picture like a label in a gallery. The only text on the poster's illustration was the artist's signature, the traditional signifier of artistic status. But if the origin of the poster lay in the artist's studio, it also lay in the printer's workshop, a fact that is literally marginalized. The name of the printing company is shown in the smallest print in the poster in the bottom right hand corner, where actually and metaphorically, it is outside the frame of art.

When Wilkinson, in his letter, asserted that the reason for using the Academicians was "to break fresh ground in an attempt to do something really artistic and worthy of so great a company," [29] he was describing the formative stages of a campaign that went with the grain of a powerful and critical discourse on the poster. This discourse was articulated in the heavyweight daily and weekend press,[30] in art and design journals including *The Studio* and *The Architectural Review*, in the publications of pressure groups such as the National Survey for Controlling the Abuses of Public Advertising (SCAPA), the Campaign for the Preservation of Rural England (CPRE), the Design and Industries Association (DIA), and in specialist books on advertising and the poster that were published in the early 1920s.[31] What such texts sought to do was to establish aesthetic, not commercial, criteria by which to judge posters.

This discourse represents a profound unease with advertising, and particularly outdoor publicity. In its deployment of blatant commercial strategies, its visual excess, outdoor publicity, in particular, challenged notions of taste, pleasure, and order by which sectors of the middle class secured their social status.[32] It is this that I now want to examine.

In 1922, when the first issues of *Commercial Art* appeared, the opening article by W. R. Titterton was entitled "Taste as a Commercial Asset." The author averred that "you must interest imagination in an attractive not a repulsive way. That is why beauty has its place in the art of the illustrated advertisement." [33] He and others who argued so vigorously the case for artistic advertising asserted that the poster was not successful by some artful trickery, but through an appeal to the spectator's taste.[34] In 1923, after the LMS decision was announced but before the first posters appeared, *The*

28   See Wilkinson's letter in Appendix 1.

29   Ibid.

30   These were *The Times, The Morning Post, The Observer,* and *The Sunday Times.*

31   Sparrow, *Advertising and British Art;* Edward McKnight Kauffer, ed., *The Art of the Poster* (London: Cecil Palmer, 1924); Sydney Jones, *Posters and Their Designers,* (London: *The Studio,* 1927); Percy Bradshaw, and *Art in Advertising* (London: The Press Art School, 1926).

32   Print advertising incurred none of the hostility reserved for outdoor publicity. This possibly was because it was less threatening to the middle class reader who came across such adverts in magazines and newspapers aimed at a specific audience, and in which advertising and editorial matters appealed to and helped to secure the reader's sense of self, not the least his/her taste. The poster was not only ubiquitous, it also was more indiscriminate in its appeal.

33   W. R. Titterton, "Taste as a Commercial Asset" in *Commercial Art* October (1922): 3.

34   "[advertising] so obviously 'designing' and 'artful' that [it] could hardly expect to impress a man of taste and education." Bradshaw, *Art in Advertising,* vi.
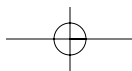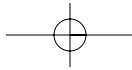
Observer already was celebrating the campaign "as a new chapter in the progress of public taste." [35]

Taste is being used here in the sense of correct judgment, the ability to recognize the intrinsic qualities in the object by means of some innate sensibility or acquired discernment. There is not enough space here to discuss the ideological nature of this view; but the universal and disinterested status of this taste could only be secured by bracketing out any consideration of its contingent nature and the interests it served.[36] Now, if taste supposedly is displayed by the capacity to discern quality attributed to the object, then the look of the thing is very important. In this notion of taste, not all objects are capable of tasteful consumption, not all had aesthetic quality. Thus, the more the poster looked like a painting, an object whose aesthetic quality had been validated elsewhere, in other sites and discourses, the more it was able to activate tasteful consumption.

All of the LMS posters clearly fell into this artistic category. Their aesthetic quality distinguished them from what *The Observer* referred to as the "painted cant" [37] of the hoardings. Moreover, by a series of strategies, the company sought to locate the posters more securely within the category of art. The posters *and* their original artwork were exhibited in England and New York in 1924, complete with a catalog that attested to their artistic virtues.[38] At the inception of the campaign in December, 1923, the artwork and posters were displayed in Wilkinson's studios in St. John's Wood, where they were reviewed by *The Times* art critic[39] and photographed for inclusion in the *Railway Gazette* of January, 1924.[40] (fig. 5)

Of course, few of the usual commodity posters could be categorized in this way as is evident by contrasting this Bovril poster (fig. 6) with any from the LMS campaign. The visual structures of such "painted cant" refused disinterested contemplation or tasteful discernment. They did not wait passively for their meaning to be exposed by the sensitive gaze of the connoisseur. Rather, they were active, grabbing the viewer's attention, pushing the product, and thereby treating the viewer as a consumer not a connoisseur. I will return to this when considering the issue of pleasure.

The growing presence of such commodity posters on the streets represented a threat to the sort of tasteful consumption that many of the middle class were trying to secure. This accounts for the aggressive, frenetic tone of attacks on them. That the critics were not able simply to ignore such "tripe," but instead sought to reform the hoardings, attests to the way they perceived taste in hegemonic rather than élitist terms, not as the birthright of the few but as something to be inculcated in all of us.[41] Thus, attention is deflected from the relative nature of taste. This approach is evident in Wilkinson's letter in his reference to the posters "educating public taste," a view echoed in *The Observer* [42] and repeated continuously in the inter-war period by " discerning" patrons such as Shell,[43] the LNER, and the London Underground.

35   *The Observer* (December 23, 1923): 8.
36   The most perceptive critique of taste as an ideological concept may be found in the work of Pierre Bourdieu. See in particular, Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinctions* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984).
37   *The Observer* (December 23, 1923): 8.
38   For the catalog, see note 10. It was introduced by Sir Martin Conway, who was an art critic and had been Professor of Art at Liverpool University during the 1880s, and at Cambridge from 1901–1904, *The Concise Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1192), 629–30. References to the venues of the exhibition are in *Commercial Art* November (1924): 19.
39   *The Times* (January 1, 1924): 10.
40   *Railway Gazette* (January 25, 1924).
41   At the beginning of the twentieth century in England, one can sense a tension in the debates around art and taste between the conflicting notions of aesthetic discernment as something which was innate or acquired. See Simon Watney, "The Connoisseur as Gourmet" in *Formations of Pleasure* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983), 66–83.
42   *The Observer* (December 23, 1923).
43   Hewitt, "The 'Nature' and 'Art' of Shell Advertising in the Early 1930s."
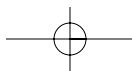
Figure 5
Railway Gazette, (January 25, 1924): 115,
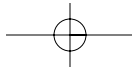copyright Science and Society Picture Library.

Figure 6
H. H. Harris, *Bovril Prevents That Sinking
Feeling,* 1920, copyright CPC (United Kingdom)
Ltd.

44 This notion of aesthetic pleasure is more
than an echo of Roger Fry's idea of "disin-
terested contemplation," and certainly
the rituals and discourses surrounding
the legitimate consumption of art empha-
sized the contemplative rather than the
active response.

45 Interestingly, Phillips Russell, in an essay
"The Poster as a Selling Device" in
McKnight Kauffer, *The Art of the Poster,*
does attempt to discuss how the poster
operates commercially. He deals with the
"circuits of desire," but goes no further
and settles for the thinnest of aesthetic
analyses in explaining the role of plea-
sure and desire.

I now want to look at the issue of pleasure and its relation-
ship to desire in accounting for the appearance of the LMS posters.
Looking affords a different kind of pleasure. That which was most
closely associated with tasteful consumption was aesthetic pleasure.
Such pleasurable consumption is seen as an end in itself. It is disin-
terested, contained, and does not prompt action.[44] By its nature,
the poster is plugged into a different kind of emotional circuit. The
pleasure it generates has to lead on to a desire which can only be
satisfied by purchasing the commodity or service being advertised.
In short, its visual structure prompts action, not disinterested
contemplation.[45]

What is more, such a poster addresses the viewer not as
connoisseur but as consumer. These two subject positions are diffi-
cult to reconcile and, in the 1920s, much unease generated by adver-
tising came about because the role of consumer threatened that of
connoisseur. The connoisseur could display certainty in his judg-
ment and confidence in his taste because such discernment was rati-
fied by an appeal to aesthetic absolutes. As a subject position, it
seemed impersonal and outside of history. In contrast, the consumer
occupies a contingent subject position as constituted in history. In
the way he or she is addressed, the consumer is classed and gen-
dered, seen to have specific needs and desires, to have "tastes" not
"taste."

The critics of advertising referred to above did not, and could not, deny the commercial purpose of the poster. Rather, they sought a way to make the poster a source of aesthetic pleasure without ignoring its status as publicity. Two strategies were used to achieve this. The first is succinctly summarized in the *Railway Gazette* of 1924, where the writer comments, "It must be remembered that the railway poster has a double function to fulfill: it must give information as well as aesthetic pleasure." [46] Thus, the commercial and aesthetic functions are kept apart giving us both information and pleasure in a civilized, unhectoring way. What is more, we receive the information because the poster is a pleasure to look at.[47]
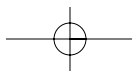
Some critics went a little further and dealt with the issue of persuasion, but not in a way that threatened aesthetic pleasure. The viewer, in this argument, became well disposed to the commodity or service being advertised by virtue of the artistic quality of the poster.[48] In this strategy, as in the previous one, the viewer is seen as connoisseur, in control, making his purchase as a reward for the good taste shown by the advertiser, and judged as such by the discerning critic.
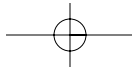
Finally, I want to consider the third element in this middle-class discourse on the poster, the issue of order. The most vituperative criticism of advertising was leveled at all forms of outdoor publicity including the poster. However, the focus of this censure was less on the posters as a medium for exploiting or manipulating our appetites, or corrupting our morals,[49] and more on its disfiguring and disruptive presence.

These attacks had intensified after 1890 as advertising became an increasingly assertive presence in town and country. The battle lines became more clearly drawn between (on the one hand) the users and producers of advertising—the manufacturer and advertising managers, the printers, agencies, bill-posting companies, and commercial artists—who welcomed and sought to justify the expansion of advertising, and (on the other hand) those sectors of the middle class who sought to contain its public presence. A measure of the progress of the battle can be found in the local and national legislation that was passed from the late nineteenth century onwards, and which was principally concerned to limit the visibility of such publicity.[50]

What seems to be at stake here is some idealized notion of a visual order that certain critics and pressure groups wished to impose on the city and the countryside as a solution to the urban and rural depredations that they saw around them. In the publications of pressure groups such as SCAPA, the CPRE, and the DIA, and in journals including *The Architectural Review*, the problems in town and country often were presented in aesthetic rather than social or economic terms, and thought to be amenable to aesthetic solutions.[51] Tidy these areas up, impose on them a visual order, and many of the problems would be overcome. To produce a city whose visual order

46 *Railway Gazette* (October 23, 1924): 436.

47 As Wilkinson commented about the LMS posters, "their artistic qualities will ensure their being studied," *Advertisers' Weekly* (January 4, 1924): 4.

48 A good example of this view is J. W. Haynes, "The Progress of Advertising Art" in *Penrose Annual,* (1925).

49 No legislation had been passed to deal with indecent or obscene outdoor advertising since the Indecent Advertising Acts of 1889. See Cyril Sheldon, *The History of Poster Advertising* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1937), 130–1. After 1889, most censorship was self-censorship operated by the various national bill-posters associations. See Maurice Rickards, *Banned Posters* (London: Evelyn, Adams and Mackay, 1969).

50 Sheldon, *The History of Poster Advertising*, 111–291.

51 The best example of this approach, although it is a little later than the date of the LMS campaign, is the DIA Yearbook for 1929–30. Harry Peach and Noel Carrington, eds., *The Face of the Land* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1930).

52 William Haywood, "The Citizen and His City" in *Architectural Review* (1923): 176–8.

53 A view expressed in the text and photographs of the DIA Yearbooks throughout the 1920s.

54 McKnight Kauffer, ed., *The Art of the Poster,* 39.

55 W. Shaw Sparrow quoted approvingly from an unnamed source who referred to commercial art as "vulgar peddling." See Sparrow, *Advertising and British Art*, 1. For Percy Bradshaw, crude commercial art was "so blatantly 'bounderish,' so transparently exaggerated, so obviously 'designing,' and 'artful' that [it] could hardly be expected to impress a man of taste and education," Bradshaw, *Art in Advertising,* vi.

56 *The Times,* (January 1, 1924).

57 This comment by the writer in *The Studio* (1922) typifies this approach. He points out that, though the poster has to attract attention there are socially acceptable ways of doing so: "It is possible to attract the attention of a passerby by stamping on his foot, but attention thus attracted is hardly calculated to fulfill the normal purpose of advertising. Dignity and refinement are essential, but are they not inconsistent with attractiveness and beauty, nor are they a bar to humour," *The Studio,* (1924): 183–4.

58 See the rather defensive articles in the *Railway Gazette,* October 3, 1924: 436 and the *Railway Times,* October (1924). The anonymous writers acknowledge the weight of the comments in the *Architect's Journal* and the *Westminster Gazette* about the unsightly exteriors of railway stations, with their collection of gaudy and crude posters. However, the writer in the *Railway Gazette* goes on to add "Just as the movement to prevent advertisements defacing scenes of natural beauty is strongly supported by the best advertisers, it is certain that our railway companies will not be behind hand in the appreciation of the necessity for artistic treatment of all forms of railway publicity."

was harmonious and beautiful would answer a deeply felt need "for a dignified setting to our common life" and would produce a happy populace.[52] Thus, the rampant and uncontrolled spread of outdoor publicity, and its disfiguring presence, represented a threat to this social and moral order.

If the critics of outdoor publicity found much of it disfiguring, they also found it disruptive. They sought to reform poster advertising by subjecting it to some overriding notion of artistic unity or by advocating, in its place, simple announcements of a restrained and dignified kind.[53] Such posters would "gain favorable attention…from desirable customers…by the exercise of good taste and sound craftsmanship." [54] These phrases are redolent of a notion of civilized conduct and social order that left many of the middle class secure in their position. That the typical commodity poster challenged that position, refused this social group the deference that it took as its due, is evident in the intensity of the language used to denigrate such publicity. The posters were accused of cadging and hustling.[55] They shouted out their message, and declared it in staring letterpress[56] in a way that would repel any person of taste.

Much of this criticism, as is evident from the comments above, was framed in terms of a discourse of manners. The poster is presented as actively transgressing the rules of social conduct secured by a notion of correct behavior and an acceptance of the proper rituals of social engagement.[57] The nature and intensity of the attacks on the bulk of commercial posters can be accounted for by the fact that middle class critics came into contact with most of these placards in one of the few unsegregated social spaces, the street. The poster's aggression, its visual excess, was a constant reminder of how fragile social order was in this urban arena. It was not only that the poster offended by its importuning: worse, it rejected those rules of behavior which secured and made acceptable real social power at the level of polite convention. The poster did not know its place. It was out of order.

Of course, the railway posters placed on the station platforms or in the waiting rooms, and not in the streets or countryside, could easily escape much of the hostility and censure leveled at outdoor advertising. Though even the railway companies were not immune from criticism of unsightly advertising particularly on the forecourts and on the approaches to stations.[58] However, the contention in this paper is that out of the unease and distaste generated by outdoor advertising in general, emerged criteria for acceptable outdoor advertising that the LMS was well-motivated and well-placed to meet.

Yet, if the commercial nature of the poster could not be denied, nor could its public presence. One way of containing its disorderly and disruptive presence that appealed to these middle class critics was to exhort advertisers to treat the hoardings as an outdoor picture gallery, to contribute to an "academy of the streets."
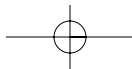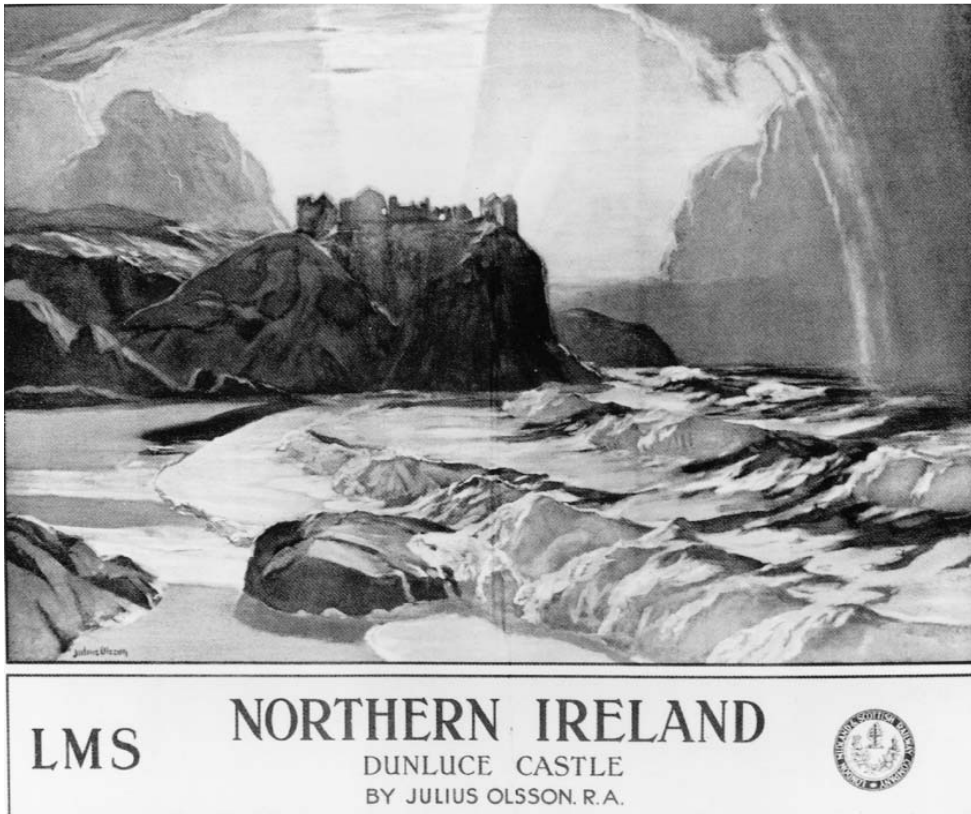
Figure 7
Julius Olsson, RA, *Dunluce Castle,* 1924,
copyright Science and Society Picture Library.

59 This was a view expressed in *The Poster* at its inception in 1898, and was still being expressed by Ashley Havinden, *Advertising and the Artist,* (London: *The Studio* Publications, 1956).

60 According to Tony Bennet, the aesthetic discourse can acquire a momentum and social purchase only when there is existing a "public artistic sphere." To transform the streets into such a public sphere would also give full vent to those dispositions and competencies possessed by certain class fractions which are celebrated in this aesthetic discourse. See Tony Bennet, "Really Useless 'Knowledge': A Political Critique of Aesthetics" in Jerry Palmer and Mo Dodson, eds., *Design and Aesthetics* (London: Routledge, 1996). Also, see Bourdieu, *Distinctions,* 28.

In fact, Wilkinson's letter proposes just that, but it was an idea that had been mooted as early as the 1890s, and continued to be proposed until the 1950s.[59] For the poster's critics, it was an ideal solution. It represented the poster as an art object, not as a purely commercial medium, and one that would be susceptible to the most legitimate modes of visual consumption.[60]

No worthier object could be found for the people's picture gallery, surely, than the posters produced for the LMS by those eminent Royal Academicians and Associate Royal Academicians. If the tenor of much middle class criticism of outdoor advertising could be expressed in the phrase "Why can't a poster be more like a painting?," then these posters came as close to paintings as reprographic technique would allow. They awaited the connoisseurial gaze. They informed the viewer about the company and its services in a discrete and unemphatic way. Theirs was no vulgar harangue, but a restrained appeal to the man of taste or, more responsibly still, a means of engendering taste in those without access to the best in art. The pleasure they afforded was aesthetic and disinterested. The landscapes and scenes of industrial activity they displayed were idealized and orderly. Clearly, a company capable of such responsible and disinterested patronage merited the public's support. Certainly, they received the plaudits of advertising's fiercest critics.
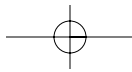
W. S. Sparrow commented, "How refreshing it would be to find among this cadging confusion one of the ample landscapes published by the London, Midland and Scottish Railway, such as D. Y. Cameron's noble, purple range of Scottish hills, or Julius Olsson's cloudy sunset." [61] (fig. 7)

In the same year, *The Illustrated London News* reproduced Cameron's design under the heading "The Royal Academy of the Railway Station. The Art of the Poster in Sublimated Form." [62] It seemed that here was a responsible company celebrated for the way it was able to raise its advertising to the status of art.

It is interesting that in the copy of *The Illustrated London News* referred to above, in *The Studio* and in the books by S. R. Jones, Shaw Sparrow and Bradshaw where illustrations of the LMS poster were displayed in the 1920s, only the central design was shown.[63] The posters were cropped to exclude the copy. The status of these posters as advertising was effectively effaced. However, to see this campaign as one of elevating advertising to the status of art is to compound this misrepresentation. Far more interesting is to see the campaign as an example of art being used as advertising.

Art as Advertising

Wilkinson's letter to the artists began by stating that the LMS was "anxious to advertise their system." [64] We must not forget that we are dealing here with an advertising campaign and not an act of enlightened artistic patronage. There is no direct evidence about the campaign apart from Wilkinson's letter, but it is possible to deduce a strategy from a particular reading of the letter and of the subsequent posters. It is clear from the letter that the LMS would "indicate the places or subjects they desire to advertise…" They did not want simply to gain prestige by displaying reproductions of the artists' works on their hoardings. Rather, the artists were advertising the company and its services. There was a need to attract freight and passengers, as well as to promote a positive view of the company, at a time when competition with the LNER was at the level of image, not price. Hence, the emphasis put on places of beauty accessible by LMS (fig. 8), or those heavy industries served by the company (fig. 9), and on the company itself (fig. 10).

Apart from the subject matter, everything else was to be left to the artist. This might suggest that artistic concerns predominated over advertising ones. But another reading of this campaign is possible. It is that the company was eager to secure the artistic status of the poster as a selling point, and that the freedom afforded to the artists was a way of securing that end. It was important that the artist carried out the company's ideas "in exactly his own way" because, through this personal style, associations with his fine art work were asserted and the artistic references in the poster reinforced. Thus, it becomes important that "no pains will be spared in

61 Sparrow, *Advertising and British Art,* 36.

62 *Illustrated London News* (1924): 100.

63 Jones, "Posters and Their Designers," 126–7; Sparrow, *Advertising and British Art,* illustrations to Chapters 1 & 2; Bradshaw, *Art in Advertising,* 281.
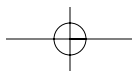
64 See Appendix 1.

Figure 8
Sir D. Y. Cameron, RA, *The Scottish Highlands*,
1924, copyright Science and Society Picture
Library.

Figure 9
Cayley Robinson, ARA, *Cotton,* 1924, copy-
right Science and Society Picture Library.

Figure 10
Stanhope Forbes, RA, *The Permanent Way*,
1924, copyright Science and Society Picture
Library.

the reproduction of these posters," and that the images remain free
of lettering; thereby underscoring the artistic links.

Once we accept this reading of the poster, a number of other
elements fall into place. Those signifiers that assert its artistic status
are emphasized in a process of redundancy; the framing of the
image and the "label," the reference to the artist and his diploma,
the artist's signature, even by the dignified typeface of the copy
which is so very different from "staring letterpress" or the cursive
script of much commodity advertising. Conversely, those elements
that draw attention to the poster's commercial status are played
down; the minimal references to the company, whose presence is
reduced to its initials and insignia, or literally marginalized in the
case of the printer's name, which is relegated to the bottom left
hand corner.

Thus, it is not a case of the patron making the work of the
best artists available to the public at large, but rather of the
company selling its services through "artness." The LMS was partic-
ularly well placed to adopt such a strategy. The posters were shown
on the station platform. They did not have to compete for attention
on the street hoardings, where their subtle coloring and complex
structures would have been swamped by the brighter and more
simplified designs of other commodity posters. They also could
retain dimensions more in keeping with the easel art with which
they sought association.

However, the posters *were* on hoardings and not easels. This
is important, for context is crucial for the reading of any image. The
fact that these posters were on the hoardings declared them to be
advertising, even if their formal structure sought to minimize that
fact. Where an image is shown affects our relationship to it, and
brings into play certain reading strategies in the form of certain
competencies which we acquire culturally. Move a poster from the
hoardings to a gallery or into the pages of an art book or history
book, and we read it differently. On the hoardings it is advertising,
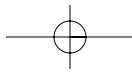
and we articulate its elements accordingly. We ask what it is selling, not who it is by.[65] Because we assume it is selling something, an advert need not be blatant in its visual structure. It can be oblique in its appeal, as recent cigarette advertising has shown. However, it cannot be too oblique or it becomes merely a puzzle. Nonetheless, posters such as those of the LMS could move a long way from blatant selling before risking their effectiveness as advertising. The "artness" of LMS advertising also was made possible because it could be perused at leisure on the platform or in the waiting rooms, and did not have to be absorbed instantly as one hurried by in the street. The latter circumstance required of posters that they be more direct and emphatic in their structure if they were to make the necessary impact.

The oblique mode of selling that the controlled environment of the railway station made possible was crucial to the strategy of the campaign. The posters could persuade without appearing to hustle. They could appeal as art, while operating as advertising. In fact, the more the posters looked like art, the more effective they were as advertising because they were appealing to that fraction of the middle class whose unease with the blatant commercialism of so much advertising was articulated so vociferously in the publications referred to in the previous section.[66]

Whether through gentrification, as Wiener suggests,[67] or as a consequence of professionalization, as Perkin contends,[68] there is general agreement that, during the late nineteenth century and certainly by the 1920s, large sections of the middle class had distanced themselves from direct involvement in commerce. This sector contrasted its own ideals of civic responsibility and public service with the self-interest and money-making associated with trade. Any advertising addressed to such a group had to acknowledge its distaste as well as its taste.

But what evidence is there to suggest that the campaign was addressed to such a group? In the absence of any clear policy statement from the company, the evidence is circumstantial though persuasive. First, there are the posters themselves. By the 1920s, advertising departments and agencies were familiar with the advantages of targeting particular audiences.[69] The LMS produced a great deal of publicity, much of it ephemeral. On any platform, passengers might expect to find stickers advertising cheap day excursions, workmen's specials, and special rates for football matches and the races.[70] These bills were functional and targeted at specific groups and interests. There is no reason to believe that the posters of the Royal Academicians and Associate Royal Academicians were any less specific in their address. Their visual structures suggest a dignified appeal to someone of civilized though traditional tastes. The artistic treatment of the subject matter distances the viewer from any direct contact with trade or commerce. In Arnesby-Brown's *Nottingham Castle*, (fig. 11) industrial activity is barely acknowl-

65 In effect, the poster was meaningful in terms of the role advertising was seen to fulfill at the time. This point is well made by Trevor Pateman, "How Is Understanding an Advertisement Possible" in Howard Davis and Paul Walton, eds., *Language, Image, Media* (London: Blackwell, 1983).

66 There were first class waiting rooms on the platform, and it is probable that the LMS posters were displayed there, thus providing an even more targeted social space. I would like to thank Beverley Cole at the National Railway Museum, York, for this information.

67 Martin Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit 1850–1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

68 Harold Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society: England Since 1880* (London: Routledge, 1989).

69 At the end of 1923, the new LMS Board of Directors already had decided to employ a journalist and an "advertising expert" to advise them on the company's publicity. PRORAIL 425/7.

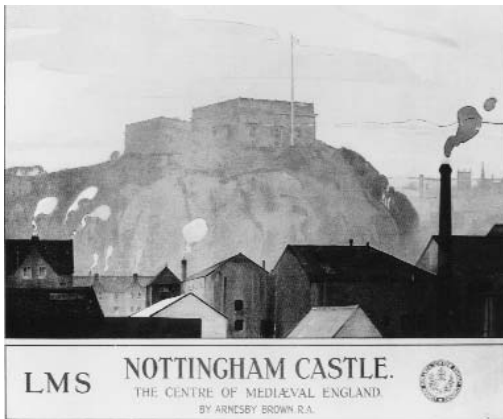70 See the list of advertising expenditures for 1923 from PRORAIL 425/7.
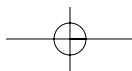
Figure 11
Arnesby Brown, *Nottingham Castle*, 1924,
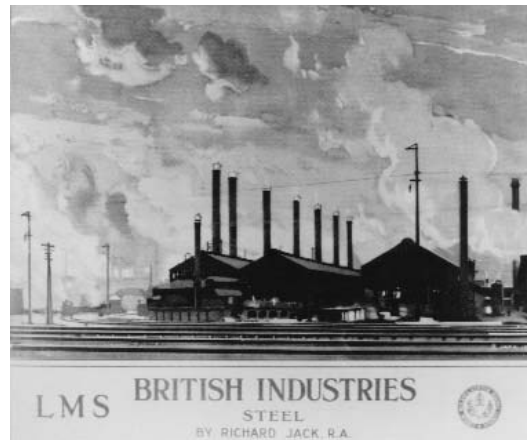copyright Science and Society Picture Library.

Figure 12
Richard Jack, RA, *Steel*, 1924, copyright
Science and Society Picture Library.

edged, and neither industry nor commerce is even alluded to in any of the other picturesque representations of town and country. While the subject matter of Orpen's *Night Mail* (fig. 3), Cayley-Robinson's *Cotton* (fig. 9) and Jack's *Steel* (fig. 12) is explicitly industrial, labor is made a source of painterly anecdote or effaced altogether in the rendering of the steel mill as an object of dramatic beauty.

There is other evidence to suggest that this campaign was aimed at the professional and upper middle classes. The company advertised its lines in *The Observer* and *The Times,* and in 1924, these advertisements were extolling the delights of the Lakes and the Derbyshire Dales as well as offering the "Royal Route to Scotland" with "useful trains for the Twelfth" (i.e. August 12th, the opening of the grouse shooting season).[71] Both papers carried pen drawings of D. Y. Cameron's *Scottish Highlands* and George Henry's *Edinburgh Castle* (fig. 13) done by the artists.[72] Thus, the poster campaign was linked through these pen drawings, themselves redolent of the same set of artistic associations as the posters, to a more fully defined set of services offered to a targeted readership of those papers which were already praising the artistic quality of this campaign.

The posters also drew attention to the heavy industries that the company served. In their mode of address, they seemed to acknowledge the taste of that class fraction referred to above and from whose ranks were drawn the shareholders and directors of these companies.[73] This same social group made up the substantial majority of the LMS directors,[74] and their views were clearly being acknowledged when the posters projected an image of a dignified and responsible company.

The middle class viewer of these posters would have found them comforting to look at. They did not leave him uneasy, as did the blatantly commercial placards in the street. They addressed him as if he were a person of taste, an art lover or connoisseur. It was not the only subject position on offer (one could make sense of the posters as an ordinary business man or tourist). It was, however, the

71   *The Times,* (February 3, 1924).

72   *The Times,* (January 6, 1924) and *The Observer* (February 17, 1924).

73   John Stevenson, *British Society, 1914–1945* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1984), 351.

74   *Memorandum to Directors on Advertising and Publicity Arrangements* May 29 PRORAIL 425/7.

Figure 13
George Henry, RA, *Edinburgh Castle* (Pen
Drawing in *The Observer* February 12, 1924).

subject position from which all the signifiers in the poster could be most effectively articulated. But it was not a position, that was available or attractive to anyone. Some would disdain the position and dismiss the kind of taste it assumed. Others would be intimidated by it. However, for many of the upper middle classes, it was a position that fitted them like a glove. It confirmed their taste, their status, and their sense of themselves. It also made them more amenable to the services LMS had to offer. Thus, by the careful deployment of certain artistic signifiers, the posters became more effective as advertising.
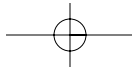
Conclusion

After 1924, no new posters were commissioned from Royal Academicians, and, while picture posters continued to be an element in LMS advertising, only Greiffenhagen's *Carlisle* of the original set was reprinted. Sir Charles Higham, who had been appointed by the LMS in 1927 to advise on publicity, declared in 1929 that the posters based on designs by the Royal Academicians were no longer the most effective way of publicizing the company.[75] The LMS acknowledged this and, while it wanted to retain "the services of a few eminent artists from time to time to maintain the high tone and standards of LMS poster art," it accepted Higham's suggestion that a greater variety of posters and other media should be used to advertise the company's services.[76]

The advice offered by Higham to the company about what was needed to improve its publicity was very different from that

75 Ibid., Appendix B.
76 Ibid.

77 Sir Charles Higham wrote extensively on advertising in the 1920s and 1930s, as well as running his own agency, Charles F. Higham Ltd. See Bradshaw, *Art in Advertising,* 114.

78 Terry Nevett, *Advertising in Britain: A History* (London: Heinemann, 1982), 153–6.

79 Apart from the main trade journal, *Advertisers' Weekly,* which began in April 1913 and continued until after the Second World War, there also was *Advertiser's Annual* that began in 1915.

80 *Advertising Display* began as a separate publication in 1927.

81 *Modern Publicity* began as *Posters and Their Designers* in 1924. See note 85.

82 *Commercial Art* began in 1922 before becoming *Commercial Art and Industry* in 1936.

83 By the late 1920s, these included *Advertisers' Pocketbook: A Useful Manual* (London: Kingsway, 1913); Charles Knight and Frank Norman, *Commercial Art Practice* (London: Crosby, Lockwood and Son, 1927); R. P. Gossop, *Advertising Design* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1927); B. C. Woodcock, *A Textbook of Advertisement Writing and Design* (London: Constable, 1922) and many others. *The ICS Reference Library* (Scranton, Pennsylvania: Scranton International Textbook Company, 1920) of books on advertising were available for correspondence students in Britain from 1920, even though they originated in the USA.

84 In the early editions of *Commercial Art* at the beginning of the decade, there was a series called "Artists Who Help the Advertiser." By the end of the decade, "art" as a category separate from commercial art is rarely addressed in connection with advertising.

85 This shift in the significance of the poster is amply demonstrated by the annual publication *Posters and Their Designers* of 1924 which, by 1925, had become *Art and Publicity,* then, in 1927, became *Posters and Publicity* before finally emerging in 1930 as *Modern Publicity.*

86 A good example of the continuing prestige of poster designing in commercial art is seen in the career of Tom Purvis. See John Hewitt, *The Commercial Art of Tom Purvis* (Manchester: Manchester Metropolitan University Press, 1996).
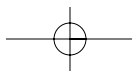
proffered by Norman Wilkinson six years earlier in 1923. If Wilkinson was the artist suggesting how the tone and distinction of LMS posters could be improved, Higham was the advertising man advising on ways to make the whole publicity of the company, including its posters, more commercially effective.[77]
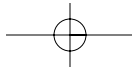
The differences evident in the opinions of these two advisers are indicative of a wider set of changes within advertising and in the attitudes towards it that emerged during the 1920s. The sector continued its rapid expansion in this period and, with this expansion, there developed specialized professional bodies[78] and trade publications[79] from which evolved a more sophisticated discourse on the nature of advertising and the kinds of services it could provide. Within this evolving discourse, a more specialized role for art was articulated. In the pages of *Advertising Display,* an offshoot of the principal trade paper *Advertiser's Weekly,*[80] *Modern Publicity,*[81] and *Commercial Art*[82] as well as in a whole range of handbooks, career guides, correspondence courses, and other specialized publications[83] this commercial art practice was defined and then located with an expanding advertising profession.

What these texts advocated was a particular kind of relationship between art and advertising. The two categories were not seen as distinct, with "art" coming to the aid of "advertising."[84] Rather, art was integrated with advertising, producing a distinctive visual practice whose effectiveness was measured in commercial terms. It was art with a purpose—commercial art.

This commercial art or "publicity" as it was frequently called, was less concerned with the poster as preeminent source of artistic skill and examined, instead, the potentialities of the whole of publicity from press ads and packaging to point-of-sale literature. The poster was one of a number of media on offer, not a thing apart.[85] Of course, one can exaggerate these changes. The emergence of commercial art did not imply the denigration of the poster or the poster designers. To believe that is to accept the crude division of "art" or "tripe" on offer in the writings of W. Shaw Sparrow, or the correspondents and writers in *The Times* and *The Observer.* Poster designing retained much of its prestige during the 1920s and 1930s; it was still something that young, ambitious commercial artists aspired to, but as something distinct from fine art.[86] Artistic criteria were still deployed when studying a poster's effectiveness, but it was its commercial effectiveness that was the issue.

The use of the Royal Academicians by the LMS appeared to clearly signify that separation of art and advertising alluded to earlier which, during the late 1920s, was being challenged. After all, the distinctive nature of fine art could not have been more explicitly manifested than in the work and the social position of the Royal Academicians. The distance between art and advertising surely could not have been greater. However, what has been suggested in this article is that this distance was more apparent than real. The

deployment of the Royal Academicians was motivated by advertising considerations, and by the need to produce an image for the company that would make it both distinctive and distinguished and so increase the appeal of its services to a specifically targeted audience. When the LMS dropped the policy of using Royal Academicians, it was not because it had been alerted to the virtues of active advertising after a period of sober and responsible public appeal, but because its advertising policy, like advertising in general, had simply moved on.
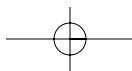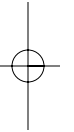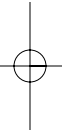
Appendix 1

40 Marlborough Hill,
St. John's Wood, NW. 8.
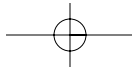Hampstead 3533.
19th October 1923.

Dear…

The London Midland & Scottish Railway Group being anxious to advertise their system with a series of pictorial posters, and at the same time to break fresh ground in an attempt to do something really artistic and worthy of so great a concern, have invited me to confer with them with a view to achieving this.

I made a proposal in which I hope you will see your way to assist. In effect it was this—that a series of seventeen posters should be commissioned from members of the Royal Academy with a view to obtaining the best possible work. It seemed to me to be a unique opportunity of giving a lead to pictorial advertising, which is badly in need of some such fillip, and at the same time providing a chance of educating public taste.

No pains will be spared in the re-production of these posters. The Railway Stations provide an excellent opportunity of exhibiting posters, and form what is in effect a great out-door Gallery, seen by thousands of people daily, on which should appear the best work obtainable. The Railway Company will indicate the places or subjects they desire to advertise, after which it will be left to the individual artist to carry out the idea in exactly his own way. In the event of travelling being necessary to obtain material, passes will be issued by the Railway Company and reasonable expenses paid.

Each artist's name and diploma will appear legibly printed below his design. The posters themselves will contain no lettering on the pictorial portion, and very little on the border. The outside size of each poster will be 50 by 40, the design to occupy roughly 45 by 35, and the price offered by the Railway Company £100.
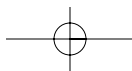
I attach a list of artists whom I have asked to assist in the scheme. On hearing from you that you are agreeable to doing one of these posters, I will supply you with full details early in November.

List of artists invited:

Frank Brangwyn, R.A.	Richard Jack, R.A.
J. A. Arnesby Brown, R.A.	Sir David Murray, R.A.
G. Clausen, R.A.	Julius Olsson, R.A.
M Greiffenhagen, R.A.	Charles Sims, R.A.
George Henry, R.A.	Adrian Stokes, R.A.
D. Y. Cameron, R.A.	Sir Bertram Mackennal, R.A
Phillip Campbell Taylor, A.R.A	F. Cayley Robinson, A.R.A.
Augustus John, A.R.A.	A. Talmage, A.R.A.

I should be glad if you would treat this matter as confidential for a few days, except amongst those in the above list.

Yours very sincerely

Norman Wilkinson

Appendix 2

The LMS Posters

Brown, Arnesby, R.A.	*Nottingham Castle*
Cameron, Sir D. Y., R.A.	*The Scottish Highlands*
Cameron, Sir D. Y., R.A.	*Stirling*
Clausen, George, R.A.	*British Industries: Coal*
Forbes, Sir Stanhope, R.A.	*The Permanent Way: Relaying*
Greiffenhagen, Maurice, R.A.	*Carlisle*
Henry, George, R.A.	*Edinburgh*
Jack, Richard, R.A.	*British Industries: Steel*
MacKennal, Sir Bertram, R.A.	*Speed*
Murray, Sir David, R.A.	*Conway Castle*
Olssen, Julius, R.A.	*Dunluce Castle, Northern Ireland*
Orpen, Sir William, R.A.	*The Night Mail*
Robinson, Cayley, R.A.	*British Industries: Cotton*
Sims, Charles, R.A.	*London*
Stokes, Adrian, R.A.	*Warwick Castle*
Talmage, Sir Algernon, R.A.	*Aberdeen: Brig o'Balgowrie*
Taylor, L. Campbell, A.R.A.	*The Peak District, Peveril Castle*
Wilkinson, Norman, R.I., R.O.I., O.B.E.	*Galloway*
Wilkinson, Norman, R.I., R.O.I., O.B.E.	*To Ireland: Seven LMS Routes*
Wilkinson, Norman, R.I., R.O.I., O.B.E.	*Grangemouth Docks*
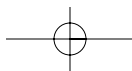
Design's Own Knowledge
Luz María Jiménez Narváez

Doxa: from the Greek, opinion, way of thinking. According to Parmenides, the world of *doxa* was the world of the opinions of mortals. When substituted by "what is" for what seems to be, or when mortals concur to manipulate things, or understand themselves, it becomes a falsehood or an error. Husserl held that all expressions are a doxic act in their full sense, i.e, a certainty, a belief.[1]

Introduction

The ancient Greeks divided thinking into two classes: one, the result of reflection, *episteme*; the other one, a result of daily living, *doxa*. Today, the limits between *doxa* and *episteme* have become more confusing and intricate, and less obvious. Pure sciences have developed into applied sciences, and knowledge has become habitual, usable, and practical. The ancient Greeks would be amazed to realize that *doxa*, daily-life thought or common sense, has become a science.

Scientific research, philosophizing, and thinking are activities unique to the human being. Solving questions and, principally, asking them—even when lacking an answer—is significant. The importance lies in inquiring and allowing time for reflection. By asking major and apparently simple questions, such as "Who am I?", or "What am I doing here?" to the most complex ones, such as the universe's own origin, we are encouraged to evoke through thinking everything that we are, everything we wish to be and achieve. This is the true significance of philosophy, the possibility we have to think about thinking, about ourselves, and even about why we think, create, and believe.

On the other hand, in science, we find an attempt to set apart subjective human condition, and to accumulate organized theoretical knowledge from our surrounding reality through the systematic and systemic processes of connecting concepts that will eventually lead to the construction of complex structural systems of models, projects, theories, and ideas. The historical development of human thought is closely related to scientific development. Western science already had been instituted four-hundred years ago as a formal structure, chiefly due to its use of the scientific method, which allowed, among other things, a generalized view of science as a rational, monomethodical, logical and positivist activity. Nonetheless, this conception of science has encountered severe stumbling blocks in recent years when dealing with reality. First,

1   Paul Foulquie, *Diccionario del lenguaje filosófico* (Barcelona: Editorial Labor, 1962), 42.

because of the reductionist and mechanicist nature of the theories proposed by this type of perspective.[2] And, second, because of the current awareness that the complexity of problems related to nature and humanity require several viewpoints, elicited from new tendencies and theories, such as the complexity theory, systems theory, self-organization theory, etc.[3] This essay will focus on the second aspect.

Unlike science, art involves a greater compromise to mirror social reality. *Techne*, as theoretical referent, already had been coined by the Greeks, to express their aesthetic sense of culture. Symbolic values that could be expressed by art were taken into account, and great historical synchrony was achieved in the quest for supreme artistic expressions, with strong institutional and ideological support. All artistic expressions, including architecture and craftsmanship, were encompassed in the Greek concept of *techne*. For instance, the construction of the Parthenon in the fifth century B.C., the main legacy of how Greek art was perceived at the time, represents, above all, a strong ideological sense of liberty and democracy. Some authors have even set forth a theory of idiosyncratic change that is evidenced in some of the bas-reliefs and sculptures found within the Parthenon, such as the self-portrait of Phidias and his protector, Pericles, on the shield held by the goddess Athena of Parthenos, or the portrait of Pericles by the sculptor Cresilas. These works appear to be a more visible testimony of a change in mentality from the religious to the ideological use of art. Since, in the ideological circumstances related to the Republic's Athenian hegemony, it was forbidden to create sculptures of human beings within temples, sculptural language to portray reality was born. This demonstrates that the evolutionary process of art expression is closely related to the social changes at that time, with institutional aid.[4] It is thus that art has been considered, since ancient times, an element of mythical and religious manifestation, as much as an instrument for social communication and the means to express the ideology or collective thinking of a certain era.

These philosophical, scientific, and artistic processes, common and inherent to human beings and their critical appreciation of nature and their surrounding elements since ancient times, lead us to inquire about design theorization. Many authors deem the use of the word "discipline" adequate to define design (just as in other domains of knowledge such as engineering, social sciences, technology, etc.). However, as a term, discipline does not compromise and eliminate the need to deal with the philosophical exercise concerning the existence of a theory, science, or philosophy of design. In the following paragraphs, I will attempt to define the main conceptual principles in this regard.

The general structure of this article is directed at solving some fundamental questions. Before moving on, the reader is invited to analyze some of these questions:

2   For further discussion on the critique of Cartesian science, see Morris Berman, *The Reenchantment of the World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981).

3   A brief description of these three theories and their scientific application is found in Edgar Morín, *Introducción al pensamiento complejo* (Barcelona: Editorial Gedisa, 1996), 39–84.

4   Support granted by social institutions to art also occurred in the Renaissance, according to a complete discussion in Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Creativity* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1996), 32–36.

1 Where is the place of the meta-structure of design?
2 Do design and its practice generate knowledge?
3 How may a model of design knowledge be structured?
4 Does design have a knowledge of its own?
5 Which are the basic categories of design knowledge?
6 Is design only knowledge?

The development of some of the answers will allow us to define the epistemological foundations of design and the possible methodological guidelines that may be relevant to broaden design's conceptual and academic limits.

1   Where Is the Place of the Meta-structure of Design?
The meta-structure of design is the global and holistic conceptualization of the actions of design in culture. Several studies and research works are found at this level, especially those by philosophers and anthropologists. These studies propose that the metaphysical viewpoint of design's global action lies in the foundations of current material production.

Ever since ancient times, human communities have attempted to impose reciprocal action on their surroundings, with the purpose of humanizing nature and creating their own environment for the activities to be developed within a community. Included among the many unavoidable material conditions that define the development of that society in time are geographical and natural conditions, and production means attained by the community and through population growth. This continuous process, called "social dynamics," [5] has resulted in two types of knowledge: the study of historical human activities and creations, and the study of social achievements and possibilities for the improvement of human life.

In general terms, this dynamic expression of society encompasses everything that is called "culture." As dynamic expression, culture incorporates two processes: the material process—which also is symbolic [6]—constituted by artifacts, tools, and environments produced by human beings, and the nonmaterial process, "an idealized cognitive system—a system of knowledge, beliefs, and values—that exists in the minds of members of society." [7] Nonetheless, both concepts are always interdependent; i.e., the presence of material culture relies on nonmaterial culture, and vice versa.

It is, therefore, necessary to locate design and the studies it may originate within the space-time framework of "material culture," i.e. the physical world and environment created by human beings and their social relationships associated with, in turn, the abstract and conceptual relationships that determine the generation of knowledge for the interpretation and externalization of the materiality of cultural products through their relationships with objects. Finally, the application of this acquired knowledge has, as its main objective, the improvement of the world; in the case of design, by

5   José A. Méndez, Santiago Zorrilla, and Fidel Monroy, *Dinámica social de las organizaciones*, 3rd ed. (Mexico: McGraw Hill, 1993), 9–10.

6   As evidenced in "cultural products as public utterances, ritual clothing, music, etiquette, dance, prohibitions, etc. All these productions have three main characteristics: their particular features, to a large extent, are unmotivated by immediate survival needs and often devoid of any practical purpose; they seemingly involve a capacity to 'reify' mental representations, so that certain communicative or memory effects can be achieved by producing material objects and observable events; and their features vary from one human group to another." Pascal Boyer, "Cultural Symbolism" in *The MIT Encyclopedia of Cognitive Science* Rob Wilson and Frank Keil, eds. http://mitpress.mit.edu/MITECS/ 1999.

7   Ronald Casson. "Cognitive Anthropology" in *The MIT Encyclopedia of Cognitive Science*.

balancing the relationships between society and industrial production governed by the rules derived from overwhelming technological developments.

Since the 1950s, design has mediated, promoted, catalyzed, and regulated the diverse conflicts that have emerged between society and industry. How has this been achieved? First, by its projectual activity of "humanizing environments."[8] In second place, by its reflexive and research activity, upholding a position on diverse conflicts while embarking on a proposal for design ethics—consequently, the ethics for human material activity. All of these studies and reflections are part of what we call the conceptual meta-structure of design.

2   Do Design and its Activities Generate Knowledge?

When viewed from the outside, from its relationship to cultural processes, we acquire a perspective of design that is part of its macrocosm. In contrast, if the trajectory is changed, we may find design's own study objectives within the conceptual microcosm of design. To this end, it is necessary to analyze whether there is a field of knowledge which is the product of design activities, and whether, parallel to the generation of new knowledge, we may discover research elements inherent to design—all of them indispensable for the definition of a theory of design.

The study object of many sciences, among them the physical and natural sciences, encompasses everything that is, in turn, their field of action whereas design, as its has been interpreted and particularly taught, reveals some differences. Ever since Bauhaus's theoretical foundation, design has been defined as a "mixture"[9] of art and craftsmanship (*techné*)[10] with technology conditioned by study of the human being, especially human factors, made by some sciences. These essential elements have become, in turn, study objects in design as a career, with some modifications with regard to how much has been devoted to one or the other, or to the approach used in each school.

Nevertheless, art, technology, and human factors are essential knowledge that all designers must acquire. Considering the relevance of these conceptual domains, they have to be contrasted with the *praxis* of design.[11] In design's current theoretical division, there is a radical split between study object and field of action, because the former encompasses isolated subject matters such as shape, function, technology, and social sciences, while the projectual development of ideas and products is included in its field of action.

When analyzing the university studies of designers, the main theoretical problem we encounter is the lack of a general conceptualization related to design *praxis,* leading to disconnection and the absence of a theory formulated through design proper. According to Dewey, in selecting a study domain "subject matter is then regarded as something complete in itself; it is just something to be learned or

8   Since the 1850s, with Henry Cole and William Morris, and, at the beginning of the 20th century, with Peter Behrens, Walter Gropius and their Bauhaus team. The problem of humanizing environments, including spaces and industrial objects, is and will be the fundamental problem in a theory of design. This conception of design is highly socialist—the prevailing ideology of the time—as evidenced in the cited authors' works. See William Morris, "Art and Society" in *Architecture, Industry, and Wealth: Collected Papers* (New York: Garland Publishers, 1978) and Walter Gropius, *The Bauhaus Manifesto.*

9   From a philosophical perspective, the term "mixture" describes a chemical combination, while questioning whether elements are really combined in as much as they preserve their own characteristics and individuality.

10   For the ancient Greeks, there was no difference between art and artisanship; both were considered equally. See Herbert Read, *Art & Industry* (London: Faber and Faber, 1956), 24.

11   *Praxis* is, by definition, opposed to theory. Greeks determined the *praxical* character of all actions, transactions, and human affairs. Nevertheless, Aristotle distinguished three classes of knowledge: theoretical knowledge, *praxical* knowledge, and poietic knowledge. The object of the first class is knowledge; the object of the second one is wisdom with respect to moral action (politics), and the third has productive action as its object. See J. Ferrater, *Diccionario de Filosofía* Vol. 2. (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1971).

known, either by the voluntary application of mind to it or through the impressions it makes on mind." [12] Therefore it becomes necessary to determine which elements may result in the designer's desirable willingness to intellectually and emotionally solve design problems that also may be consistent for all design problems encountered, "identical with all the objects, ideas, and principles which enter as resources or obstacles into the continuous intentional pursuit of a course of action."[13]

The study object of design should include all the decisive elements to master the "art of conceiving and planning products." [14] Attaining this projective quality will allow designers to solve different design problems, regardless of their diversity and complexity. Projective ability may, in turn, be developed by understanding the projective complexity and objectual complexity required to create a social context, because, "isolation of subject matter from a social context is the chief obstruction in current practice to securing a general training of mind." [15] For these elements to become study objects in design, we first need to generate specific knowledge and, secondly, to develop education and didactic strategies so that they may be effective within the classroom and in its application to society.

This knowledge may be achieved by studying the possible relationships between human beings and objects,[16] and between systems of objects [17] and the objects and their components. This would result in more profound knowledge, sufficient to understand the totality of projectual and objectual complexity, with the possibility to present efficient projective proposals.[18] Both classes of conceptual knowledge are combined in design; first, in design's own field of knowledge, physically transferred to objectual reality (*noesis*) and, secondly, in the practical application of design—its projective ability (*poiesis*). This process cannot be reduced to a simple "mixture." [19] Thus, we may say that conceptual synergy is required in these fields. A brief discussion about each of these fields follows.

Noesis[20] of Design: The Science of Thinking About Design

Husserl [21] makes a distinction between the material or hyletic level and the *noetic* level. The *noetic* level refers to the stage of the intentional being that shapes or forms materials into intentional experiences, giving sense, so to speak, to the flow of what has been experienced. *Noesis* is a configurative synthesis that becomes an internal consciousness of reason and the passage of time. This term has been widely used to designate the science of thinking in general, and will be so used throughout this essay to indicate the elements that must be considered when discussing knowledge created by design thinking.

For those who are faced with design's theoretical endeavor, the science of design thinking, as a reflective and propositional activity, is the activity that most effort, time, and energy requires.

12 John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* Institute for Learning Technologies. webmaster http://www.ilt.columbia/edu/academic/text/dewey/d_e/contents.html, chapter 10 (Dec. 5, 1997).

13 Ibid.

14 Richard Buchanan, "Rhetoric, Humanism and Design" in *Discovering Design* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 26.

15 Dewey, Chapter 5.

16 Object, as the visible and material result of design action. A design object has as characteristics of its own: exposition, the ability to demonstrate intentionality; an intentional content; a real physics; and a structure that is cognizable, recognizable, and subjected to judgments. All the possible relations between an object and human beings (planning, conception, realization, and utilization) are found in the design object.

17 The relationship between objects and objects is found in the theory of systems of objects posited by Jean Baudrillard in his book, *Le Système des Objets* (Paris: Gallimard, 1968).

18 According to Herbert Simon, these are the two sciences of the artificial: "[the] inventive sciences of design thinking" and "a science of existing humanmade products."

19 According to the description in footnote 9.

20 The Greek verb *noesis* means "discerning seeing," therefore its usual meaning of thinking. For Greek philosophers, it was used to designate an "intangible seeing" or "thinking seeing."

21 In his article "Hilético," 87–102. Quoted by J. Ferrater, in *Diccionario de Filosofía*, 291.

These efforts may be due to the short and vertiginous time design has enjoyed as an acknowledged profession, its differentially technological conceptual framework, its broad scope of development, the great number of views based on a productive context, and the industrial and technological developments that have been its driving force.

The main elements that have been part of this body of knowledge include the theory, critique, and history of design activity, as well as the results of designers' professional activities. The development of these theoretical, critical, and historical stances requires the use of disciplines equivalent to, chiefly, architecture and art, followed by technological studies. Likewise, disciplines such as semiotics, aesthetics, industrial sociology, and psychology, also have been used for its theoretical and historical analysis.

This demonstrates that design thinking is not an isolated activity from design itself, but rather a group of fields of knowledge which study and analyze the current social phenomenon of material production. Efforts behind design thinking assemble knowledge about the results of design's reflective and propositional action. Propositional actions, specially focused on a critical initiative of society to propose elements for its transformation (to be discussed later) undoubtedly has played a very important role in design and, thus, in design research.

Poiesis[22] **of Design or Designing**

The definition of *poiesis*, the process of achieving an idea, is comparatively similar to the design process. Designing thus is a *poietic* act.[23] This act as such can be defined as a scope of design thinking. In its structure, design thinking[24] blends intuitive, analytic, creative, imaginative thinking, as well as sensibility and expressiveness.

Design thinking is a holistic, synergetic, and continuous whole shaped according to the designer's personality and social influence which also relies directly on the sensible, expressive, or communicative abilities required to accomplish an idea. The material structure of this act is the design project. A design project not only is a plan or willingness to act; it is the action to project oneself, and it requires two fundamental aspects: understanding the design problem and the act of developing an idea, and defining "what needs to be done" with respect to social aspects.

In the 1970s the mastery of the project through design methods was strongly emphasized. Studies on design method and methodology made it possible to confront the complexity of design problems and their limited scope, when adopted as strict and radical restraints.

For a deeper analysis of design as a poietic act, we need to pause and find a summary of the theoretical activity of design in the essential arguments implied in a poietic act. By combining design *noesis* with *poiesis*, we must consider the following:

22 The infinitive form of this verb means "make," "form," "produce," and is used to define all disciplines directed at making or producing. This expression is related to creating or representing something. The word "poetry" comes from *poiesis* and has two essential characteristics: the notion of poetry as a doctrine of ideas that elevates it to the level of wisdom because it is the highest expression of language, and the notion of a wisdom representing sensitive aspects because it may "transappear" or "transluce" through the unintelligible. Ibid.: 441–2.

23 The acts of *poiesis* are poietic acts. Nevertheless, since the terms "poetry" and "poietic" are closely related colloquially in literary production, the term "poietic" is used in this essay. It could be said that design is the poetry of matter. Interestingly, the transposition of this concept comes from Greek philosophy and is used by Herbert Simon when dealing with the science of the artificial, an activity considered as the "inventive science of design thinking" by Buchanan in "Wicked Problems in Design Thinking," 18–19.

24 The term "design thinking" increasingly is being used, and has proved to be very adequate to assemble all of the thinking processes that are involved in designing. The most consistent theoretical referents within design are Peter G. Rowe *Design Thinking* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1987) and Richard Buchanan, *Rediscovering Design,* 5–21.

- Thinking about doing, which refers to the design process and project.
- Thinking about how to do, which refers to technological production problems.
- Thinking about the consequences of doing, the environmental and cultural impact of design.
- Thinking about the dependence of doing, the financial and productive submissivness of design.
- And, finally, thinking about "what needs to be done" to achieve institutional and social change.

3 How Would a Model of Design Knowledge Be Structured?

"The business of every art is to bring something into existence, and the practice of an art involves the study of how to bring into existence something which is capable of having such an existence and has its efficient cause in the maker and not in itself." [25]

According to Aristotle, artifacts are brought forth by two means: technological means and theoretical considerations. Technical means, which make products possible, are materialized in the physical structure of industry and factories. In these terms, an industrial product is subjected to productive and economic forces. However, more important than this, technology is in its being in turn subjected to the theoretical and ideological conditions of those who thought of it, conceived it, and outlined it; in other words, society and design. This point should be emphasized, because it depends directly on the designer or the community of designers. Habermas has said, "It is not the informative content of theories but the formation of a reflexive and illustrated habit among theoreticians themselves that ultimately produces a scientific culture." [26]

Consequently, it is important to construct a model of design knowledge [27] as a structured system of the theoretical and conceptual elements preceding the activity of design, alluding to the historical and social responsibility that must be assumed by the designer to overcome ideological paradigms. Through objects, artifacts, equipment, and building design also can contribute to the outline of a nonmaterial culture that will be more in accordance with principles pertaining to life quality and human well-being.

Jürgen Habermas has proposed that there are three fundamental categories in science research: the empirical-analytical sciences, the hermeneutical-historical sciences, and the sociocritical sciences. The following comparative table (Table 1) analyzes the principal elements that define this categorization.

The exact sciences and the physical or natural sciences are found within the empirical-analytical sciences whose approach to knowledge is based on dividing the systems that constitute the

25 Aristotle, "What Is Meant by Art?" in *The Ethics of Aristotle* Book Six, Chapter 4, Translated by J.A.K. Thompson (England: Penguin Books, 1971), 175.

26 Jürgen Habermas, *Ciencia y técnica como ideología* (original title *Technik und Wissenschaft als Ideologie*). (Mexico: REI, S.A. de C.V., 1993),161.

27 David Perkins discusses the formation of design concepts and new notions in his book *El conocimiento como diseño* (Bogota: Editorial Universidad Javeriana, 1989), English edition: *Knowledge as Design* (New York: L. Erlbaum & Associates, 1986).

Comparitive Table for the Classification of Sciences According to Habermas

Approaches	Empirical–Analytical Prediction and control	Hermeneutical–Historical Location and direction	Sociocritical Liberation
Focus and Attitude	Observation POSITIVISM	Analysis of historical events HERMENEUTICS	Social imbalance CRITICAL
Logical Procedure	Analytically breaks down systems to reconstruct them by means of relations and transformations.	Reconstructs isolated pieces of facts into a meaningful whole.	Discloses alienating situations or power manipulation in work and language. Supplies theoretical models for social action.
Purpose	• Analyze, explain, and predict. • Control over nature.	• Understanding and interpreting phenomena of all types, especially those of a social nature.	• Transformation and liberation through critical analysis. • Knowledge of reality to change it.
Method	Analytical	Synethic	Transformational
Cognitive Interest	Theoretical Techno-scientific	Praxic Meaningful	Emancipating or liberating

study object with the purpose of understanding the system by means of relationships and transformations. Their aim thus is directed to the collection of knowledge for predicting and controlling nature and its phenomena. Their sense is analytical and their interest is theoretical. This type of science and its results have had an influence on design, especially when attempting to understand the processes related to the physical and biological constitution of the human being, as well as to the technical and technological aspects of the production of design objects.

Historical knowledge of design involves the historical environment surrounding the birth of design, and the development and evolution of aesthetic trends, and those of industrial products. It may be classified as a historical-hermeneutical category. The procedure to approach knowledge consists in the holistic reconstruction of isolated pieces of facts, where history is the axis and its moments are interpreted. This type of knowledge is aimed at understanding and interpreting historical phenomena; its sense is synthetic and its interest practical.[28]

Nonetheless, design is very closely related to an attitude of change, a high sense of transforming reality according to the conception of society's welfare or progress. The knowledge and results of design objects ideally consist in improving the human condition. Habermas considers this kind of knowledge to be of a sociocritical nature, whose point of departure is based on the critique of social

28   "Practical action or experience through which man as subject tends to transform what is real." J.M. Mardones, and N. Ursua, 252.

imbalance, while its approach to knowledge lies in disclosing alienating or manipulative situations. Because of this pragmatic dimension, design belongs by origin and antonomasia to this category of knowledge. It also involves the theoretical elements to transform and act upon reality; ideally to improve it. Its sense is thus transformational, and its interest is emancipating. These sciences have the ability to distinguish how the foundations of socially dependent relationships have been ideologically established, yet also deriving the means to change these relationships. The legitimacy of their propositions is related to their ability for self-reflection, communication, and transformation.

4   Does Design Have a Knowledge of its Own?

The results of design activities, the *poiesis* of design, comply with and are ruled by laws governing the physics of our surrounding world and human beings—physical circumstances that may not be altered such as gravity, atmospheric pressure, and matter density in the case of the environment; human dimensions, limitation of motor activities, the perception thresholds of the senses, and the capacity for information storage in the case of human physical limitations and constants; and the constants implied in the productive process in the case of technology. Designs and designers must act in response to these unfailingly strict laws. This invariable knowledge is found within the framework of the empirical-analytical sciences; i.e., the natural, biological, and physical sciences. These are the domains of knowledge that designers must acquire and thoroughly understand when projecting.

Noesis of design, the most evident referent for design thinking, is derived from the social sciences that study human relationships and the human being itself. Some of these sciences, such as anthropology, archeology, history, economics, and, in general terms, the historical-hermeneutical sciences, study human beings in relation to their material culture.

Design produces material and nonmaterial culture; while studying it, it proposes it. The parallel between undertaking a perceptive work related to the environment and making a proposal about this environment is analyzed in Figure 1. This proposal also involves the elements that enable the environment to live, to mirror, present and project itself. Broadly speaking, it may be seen that culture as such accepts or rejects design proposals. To this extent, design is the result of "cultural phenomena."[29] Nonetheless, this may seem odd to many designers, given their generalized tendency to believe that they design but that it is society which actually does it in accordance with its material, productive, sensible, and cultural needs and hopes. Thus, we unravel the importance for designers to master the cultural phenomena of their times, and to be responsible for their proposals to change the fundamental structures of cultural phenomena.

29   A cultural phenomenon may be considered as the prevailing political ideology or the political will of the social, economic and industrial context. Papanek cites the well known case of the "Volkswagen" (people's car), whose design was a result of the strong political ideology of the National Socialist regime (see: Jay Doblin, *One Hundred Great Product Designs* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1970), while today "...in the United States, design is not overtly used in a political manner: rather it operated mainly as a marketing tool of big business." (Victor Papanek, *Design for the Real World: Human Ecology and Social Change* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985), 106–7.
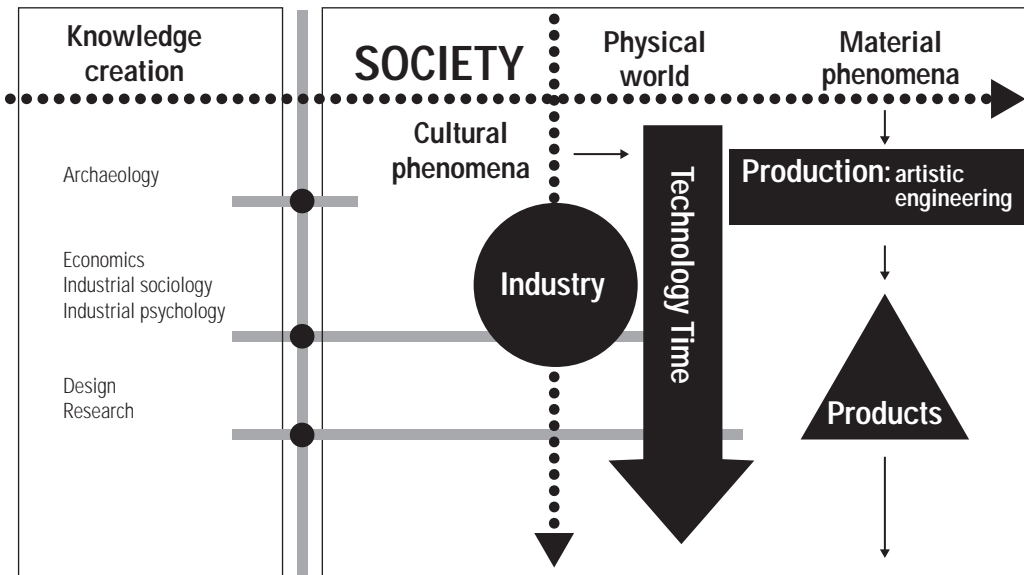
Design research is, therefore, basically directed to establishing an organized conceptual structure of design's own knowledge, whereas its foundations will rest on the immediate interpretation of material culture and the mediation between the material production of society and its diverse scientific and technological phenomena. The use of this knowledge will contribute to building a social ideal, and not only to the development of consumer goods and the broadening of the supply of products—mainly the end to which design has been used.

We will find design's own guidelines through the demonstrative exercise of contrasting design with archaeology. Archaeology is the study of the close relationships between the physical manifestations of a people and its culture; manifestations referring to objects representing the feelings of a community, such as art. When comparing design's interpretation of the world with archaeology, we find that their notion of time is different. Design sees the world almost at the same moment it is producing or creating, in a more immediate relationship, whereas, in archaeology, the view proceeds from technological processes and casts social processes into the background.
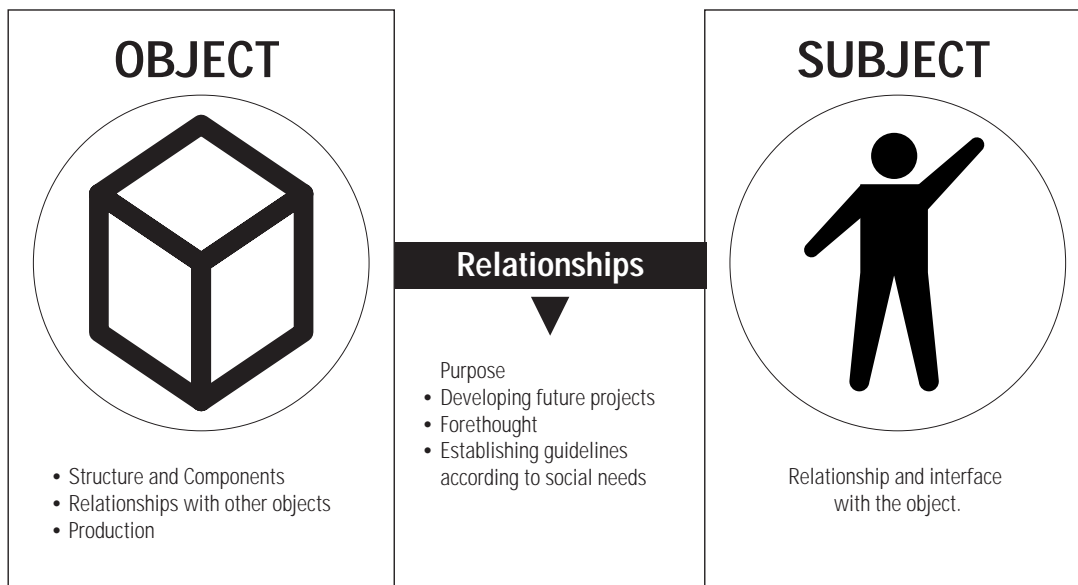
Material production and its interference with society thus are the foundations for design knowledge. Unlike other fields of knowledge, design retrieves [30] while creating, acts while it reflects. The constituent elements of this foundation include society with its cultural and material exchange; industry as the infrastructure currently in charge of material production; and human beings, particularly those who undertake activities and need this material production to achieve them.

The study of human beings is found in all human and social sciences. This knowledge also is used in design, but for the purpose

30   Retrieval of social values, attitudes, and habits that enable social coexistence.

of learning about the multidimensional essence of human beings in their relationship to objects so that objects as such, as complex systemic structures, will be in constant interaction and dialogue with human beings. Objects thus have been referred to accordingly as artifacts "from the Latin *art factus*, ...something characteristic of or resulting from a human institution or activity; ...a product of artificial character (as in a scientific test) due usu[ally] to extraneous (as human) agency." Or, according to Manzini, the "materialization of cultural contexts, of organizational forms, of technical systems, of economic interests and the will of projectionists and groups of designers, business people and the productive sectors."[31] A graphic outline of these relationships is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2
Studies Relevant to the Poiesis of Design

OBJECT

- Structure and Components
- Relationships with other objects
- Production

Relationships

Purpose
- Developing future projects
- Forethought
- Establishing guidelines according to social needs

SUBJECT

Relationship and interface with the object.

Design's own knowledge is the result of this relationship between human beings and objects; foremost from the observation of the world and the multiple perceptions generated by this observation. Next, there is an approach to different fields of study, depending on the theoretical place of the problem to be studied. Finally, there would be an objectualized interpretation of this analysis—a new factual answer that will be presented to society, based on the projective ability of design. The experience produced by design is interrelated to the knowledge of social response.[32]

The specific focus of design analysis generally is oriented in two directions. One draws on the influence of technology on material culture, while the other deals with physical phenomena involved in the production proper of objects. Thus, there is no self-governing management in the field of design knowledge since it relies on the sociohistorical context and on a space and temporality,

31 Quoted by Ezio Manzini, *Artefactos: hacia una ecología del ambiente artificial* (Madrid: Celeste Ediciones, 1992), 91–92.

32 There are several perspectives and discussions about this. Personally, I agree that "Social Forces Determine the Shape of Technology," as posited by Thomas Kuby, quoted by Pauline Madge, "Design, Ecology, Technology: A Historiographical Review" in *Journal of Design History* 6:3 (1993):158. Nonetheless, in design, it must be analyzed how this technology influences society directly.

in addition to cultural change processes derived from the liberating interests of society. Design knowledge is the intuitive knowledge of society, the

> material intuition which is not only understanding relations but the understanding of a material reality, of a suprasensitive object or fact... this material intuition may be of different kinds. Its diversity is based on the deepest psychic structure of Man. The spiritual being of Man presents three fundamental forces: thinking, feelings, and volition. Accordingly, we must distinguish a rational intuition, an emotional intuition, and a volitional intuition... The same categorization may be reached from the structure of the object. All objects present three aspects or elements: essence, existence, and value. Therefore, we may speak of an intuition of essence, an intuition of existence, and an intuition of value. The first one coincides with the rational, the second one with the volitional, and the third one with the emotional.[33]

5   What Are the Basic Categories of Design Knowledge?

By basic categories, I identify the fields of knowledge pertaining to design which enable the establishment of possible fields of research. They include:

Object

The object is the tangible materialization of the *poietic* act of design because it reflects the emotional, volitional, and cognitive interests of the designer. Furthermore, the material object is considered an object of knowledge for the perceiver, because it is cognizable, it is real; it has a sensitive and communicative existence that enables it to represent the constant dialectics between the ideological condition and value of the designer and the user.

Studying the object of design may involve the following studies that assemble the realities of an object: the first one, its analysis as physical element, studied by methods that could be similar to those used by the physical and natural sciences; the second one, its interpretation as a social and historical entity, where the subject matter would be the social significance of the object; and the third form, with the object as social transformer, to examine the social and individual changes it generates in habits and social values. The three perspectives are explained in Table 2.

Design, as a projective and communicative structure, must recognize among its highest ideals the design and development of products capable of transforming social reality. Its objects, as such, are directed at changing attitudes, values, and habits that are affecting society adversely so that they will become positive attitudes, values and habits for humanity's quality of life.

33 Johan Hessen, *Teoría del conocimiento* translated by José Gaos (Buenos Aires: Losada, S.A., 1997), 103–104. Originally published in *Leitfäden der Philosophie* (Köln, 1925).

Comparative Table of Possible Studies of the Design Object

Empirical–Anayltical	Hermeneutical–Historical	Sociocritical
Natural and physical sciences	Social sciences	Critical sciences
PHYSICAL OBJECT	**SOCIOHISTORICAL OBJECT**	**EVOKER-TRANSFORMER OBJECT**
The object is considered a physical entity; it is studied in itself and its components.	The object is considered within an interacting system, yeilding social signification.	The object is studied as a lever of social transformation.
Type of Knowledge Produced:		
• The physical • The mechanical • The organoleptic properties	• The sensorial and the perceptive • The semiotic • The communicative	• The paradigms changed by the object. • The attitudes, values and habits modified by the object.

The Project

> Design is related to the current situation of an era, to time, to the world. Today's world is characterized by being permanently in project. Modern civilization is something that men have made and, therefore, projected. Project quality is world quality.[34]

The project not only has been described above as a plan in as much as it is more than planning, arranging, or projecting. Existentially, the project defines the action of projecting oneself, and acting as a project in itself. The project depends directly on the experience of the individual who develops it and, consequently, relies on his or her knowledge and understanding of reality, jointly with the conception about possibilities of change. Knowledge derived from the project is of a *poietic* nature. Nonetheless, it may be defined in the following broad categories:
  • Development and encouragement of projection and ideation abilities.
  • Expression and communication of the project.
  • Proprio-perception of the project and its recording.
  • Social, environmental, and personal conditions for its development.

The Conceptual Meta-structure of Design

As initially analyzed, the meta-structure of design refers to a domain that is part of design knowledge. Although shared with other fields of knowledge, this domain encompasses all the studies of design objects and projects. Nonetheless, when attempting to define the course of design in forthcoming years there are essential categories that must be taken into account such as:

34   From the introduction by Wolfgang Jean Stock in Otl Aicher, *El mundo como proyecto* (Mexico: Ediciones Gustavo Gilli, S.A., 1994), 12. English edition: *The World as Design* Axel Menges, ed. Michael Robinson, trans. (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1994).

- The social and institutional role of design.
- The social changes produced by design, and, especially, those that need to be generated in the future to structure, in general terms, a theory of social change set forth by design.
- The reliance of design on technical thought which needs to be changed by a global perspective involving cultural and social aspects.
- Problems related to ethics and the changes generated by design.

6   Is Design Only Knowledge?

It should be first pointed out that the observation and differentiation of the elements that produce design knowledge do not imply that design is only knowledge. The development of a design project or idea evidently requires more than knowledge. Within design thinking, definitions of clear limits between rational and irrational aspects, objective and subjective aspects, and logical and creative aspects have been established. The fragmentation of the design process has prevented the understanding of both types of aspects, at times even with the tendency to adopt either one. This undoubtedly has led to undesirable extremes, as evidenced by an excess of logical, mathematical, and rational thinking in design or, on the other hand, an extremely intuitive, instinctive, or unreflecting approach.

The challenge in design teaching and practice therefore lies in balancing both aspects. All creative processes require profound previous knowledge of the phenomenon or product to be developed. Design thinking actually arises from incremental creativity rather than from improvised creativity. Incremental creativity [35] involves long-standing and significant knowledge, ripened through self-reflection, experience, and evaluation of the generated elements. The process of evaluating a product once it has been produced generates knowledge, whose accumulation results in the experience proper of design's daily activities.

7   By Way of Conclusion

Through the unplanned sociocultural consequences of technological progress, the human species has challenged itself to learn not merely to effect its social destiny, but to control it. This challenge of technology cannot be met with technology alone…. Only by elaborating this dialectic with political consciousness could we succeed in directing the mediation of technical progress and the conduct of social life, which until now has occurred as an extension of natural history;…. The redeeming power of reflection cannot be supplanted by the extension of technically exploitable knowledge.[36]

35 Incremental creativity is opposed to AHA!—creativity. R.W. Weisberg *Creativity: Genius and Other Myths* (New York: Freeman, 1986) is the author of the incremental activity theory.

36 Jürgen Habermas, "Technical Progress and the Social Life—World" in *Toward a Rational Society: Student Protest, Science, and Politics* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971): 61.

With our conceptual model it is now possible to build a process that will combine ideas and actions. The model may be applied to the academic, professional, and research domains related to designing.

When approaching the design project, the materialization of the *poietic* act, we obviously encounter the projectual research required to embark on a dialogue between reality, with its problems, and the designers' proposals. This is the main difference between a confusing situation—reality as such and the way we encounter it—and the definition of a design problem, which is already a conceptual elaboration where the designer adopts a position to face the problem and solve the plan of action initially materialized in the project and, consequently, in the object or product of this action. This type of research or acquisition of basic knowledge about the project is, what I call, primary projectual research. This is related to the subject matter of the design problem, and may be documented so that it will become an element of knowledge compilation. The documentation process will, in the long run, enable practice and its two fundamental objectives: documenting topics about design problems, and assembling the material required to describe the evolution of the products and the history of its design solutions. With respect to the design project, proprioceptions or personal reflections about the project also may be recorded and documented during the project itself, according to the essential mental processes for product development.

In general terms, the model of design knowledge categories allows a conceptual classification for different research studies in design and the efficient use of the available methodological tools, in accordance with the research process categories proposed by Habermas. Different cognitive interests converge in design-technical, practical, and emancipating interests. This is the reason behind the broad range of research which may transcend the object, project, or the conceptual meta-structure of design according to every interest.

Interrelating the fields of study with the cognitive results produces an overall view of the available fields of work in research design. This diagram shows that research design may transcend different social problems (Table 3). These new fields of study will enable us to balance an excessively technical or productive approach in design. It is true that when research studies related to historical-hermeneutical or sociocritical approaches are made, there is a risk of embarking on a social study as opposed to a design study. To overcome this inconvenience, we rely on "reflexive experience" [37] from the perspective of design which is, undoubtedly, the best point of reference. [38]

37 According to Dewey, reflexive expression is found "in discovery of the detailed connections of our activities and what happen in consequence… The deliberate cultivation of this phase of thought constitutes thinking as distinctive experience," *Democracy and Education,* chapter 7.

38 This is a problem I have had to deal with in doing research on creativity in design, so that it would not result in a psychology study. Although the theoretical referents came from the cognitive sciences, I managed to overcome the problem by focusing on the problems from my design experience. The author would like to thank the National University of Colombia for the fellowship assigned to the study of the Master's Degree in Industrial Design at the National Autonomous University of Mexico, as well as the ICFES-ICETEX Fund of Colombia for the 1996–1998 period.
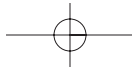
Table 3:
Research Areas in Design

DESIGN CATEGORY	COGNITIVE INTEREST		
	Technical	Praxic	Emancipator
OBJECT	Industrial product	ARTIFACT	Materialization of cultural changes DIALECTIC ARTIFACT
PROJECT	Resolution of technical problems	Source of personal and historical reflection.	Dialectics of reflection with society.
META-STRUCTURE	Rational nature of design	Subjective, historical and irrational nature of design.	Dialectic and sociocritical nature of design.

By way of conclusion, it should be noted that there is a very important relationship between design research and the theories of social action of philosophers John Dewey and Jürgen Habermas, both quoted in this essay. Their philosophical concepts are a free and comprehensive contribution for a conceptual framework of design. In addition, the application of their concepts to different classes of pedagogical theories will certainly be a part of future academic design programs in all school grades.

On the threshold of the 21st century, whether or not design is a science, as is the case of the human and social sciences, still is under discussion. Therefore, rather than restricting the definition of science to the knowledge produced by design, it is of vital importance to assess, encourage, and preserve these reflexive processes as a dialectical approach of design towards society.

How the Other Half Lives: Product Design, Sustainability, and the Human Spirit
Stuart Walker

Introduction

> "Long ago it was said that 'one-half of the world does not
> know how the other half lives.'"
> Jacob A. Riis[1]

In the nineteenth century, Jacob Riis wrote about the other half of
society—the weak and underrepresented. There exists a similar di-
vision in contemporary society and in the process of design—but,
in this case, the "other half" is not to be found externally, as a par-
ticular sector of society, but internally, as a facet of ourselves. The
other half of who we are—the creative, the imaginative, and the
spiritual—also is weak and underrepresented, compared with our
rational, instrumental side. The emphasis on utilitarianism, eco-
nomic efficiency, competition, and progress in today's societies and
today's world of design often has eliminated the poetry, elegance,
and creative austerity of our other side.

The suppression of this "other half" has led to a materially
abundant but spiritually impoverished world. It is argued here that
greater acknowledgment of this "other half" in industrial design can
lead to products that are expressive of a more balanced understand-
ing of human needs. Such a shift would not only contribute to a
culturally richer material environment, it also would allow us to
more effectively address the principles of sustainability.

This Half and the Other Half

There are numerous references to two sides of the human condition,
which have been characterized as inner/outer, higher/lower, and
physical/metaphysical.[2] These two facets also can be expressed as a
distinction in our ways of thinking and knowing, such as subjec-
tive/objective and intuitive/rational. There also are dualisms rec-
ognized in traditions such as Taoism, where *yin* represents emotion
and passivity, and *yang* reason and activity; *yin-yang* also represents
our inner/outer or heavenly/earthly facets.[3] Furthermore, distinc-
tions have been made between "scientific experience" and "aesthet-
ic experience," the former being characterized as transparent, ho-
mogeneous, and specific; and the latter as opaque, heterogeneous,
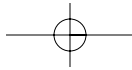and totalized.[4]

1 J. A. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives* (New
   York: Hill and Wang, 1957), 1.
2 E. F. Schumacher, *A Guide for the
   Perplexed* (Abacus. London: Penguin,
   1977), 47, 75 and 154.
3 Wing-tsit Chan (trans.) *Neo-Confucian
   Terms Explained by Ch'en Ch'un,
   1159–1223* (New York: Columbia
   University Press, 1986), 146.
4 R. A. Barilli, *Course on Aesthetics,* trans.
   by K. E. Pinkus (Minneapolis: University
   of Minnesota Press, 1993), 19.
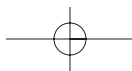
The public school systems in North America effectively ignore our inner, spiritual side.[5] Attention to our rational, scientific, and logical side prevails.[6] This emphasis also is dominant in contemporary societies—overwhelmed as they are by advances in technology, utilitarianism, and economic rationalism.[7]

Traditional teachings tell us that inner attention leads to true happiness. However, this whole concept of inner and outer dimensions to our humanness has become increasingly foreign as utilitarian, rationalistic understandings have developed and expanded. When the inner dimension is neither recognized nor understood, then inevitably we seek fulfillment and happiness through other means—such as increasing comfort and pursuing physical or sensory pleasures. This links directly to products and product design. Television, VCRs, DVDs, computer games, and a host of other products are created to cater to outer pursuits by providing entertainment and transient satisfaction. The use of these products, in turn, occupies our minds so completely that they become highly effective diversions that steer us further away from an inner course. This emphasis on seeking pleasure through objects and acquisition also is closely associated with spiraling consumerism, waste production, and environmental degradation.

It is important to consider how things might be if more emphasis were given to that part of us that contemplates purpose and meaning. For the designer, this poses important questions about the relevance and nature of products. How would we live, what products would be important, and how should they be designed? How *would* this other half live?

The Other Half, Art and Design
Our inner side, which can be cultivated to seek and appreciate the ethical, the spiritual, and the virtuous, also is the part of us that is imaginative, creative, aesthetically sensitive, and artistic. Murdoch has stated: "Art makes places and open spaces for reflection, it is a defense against materialism and against pseudoscientific attitudes to life…. Great art inspires because it is separate, it is for nothing, it is for itself. It is an image of virtue."[8] Similarly, Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs* has, at its lower end, physiological needs, while, at the higher end, are the personal growth needs of aesthetics, self-actualization, and transcendence.[9] Hence, metaphysical and psychological discussions point to an aspect of our being which, potentially, can lead us towards the "higher," and which is associated with artistic endeavor and aesthetics. It is somewhat removed from everyday *outer* activities and, therefore, can provide a counterbalance to our more worldly, materialistic pursuits.

Design also calls upon our imagination, creativity, and aesthetic sensitivity. There are commonalities in techniques, processes, and thinking that bring the design process and the artistic process close together. But, design is not art. Kant defined art in

5   N. Noddings, *The Challenge to Care in Schools—An Alternative Approach to Education. Advances in Contemporary Educational Thought* Vol. 8 (New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1992), 49, 83.

6   Sperry, in B. Edwards, *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain* (Los Angeles: J.P. Tarcher Inc., 1979), 29.

7   C. Taylor, *The Malaise of Modernity* (Concord, Ontario: Ansi, 1991), Chapter 1.

8   I. Murdoch, *Metaphysics as a Guide to Morals* (London: Penguin Books, 1992), 8.

9   Quoted by Huitt from W. G. Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs* (Georgia: Dept. of Psychology, Valdosta State University, 1998) (at www.valdosta.peachnet.edu/ ~whuitt/psy702/regsys/maslow.html, accessed 12:30 pm, Feb. 26, 1999).
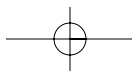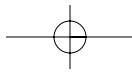
terms of "purposiveness without purpose" [10]—it has no empirical, practical, or utilitarian intent. However, design is purposeful and does have utilitarian intent; it is driven by social and/or economic motivators, and products are designed to be purposeful. The utility of the object together with the purposeful intent behind its conception is what distinguishes design from art. Good design is neither art nor barren instrumental device, neither wholly artistic nor wholly utilitarian, but an inseparable union of the two. Therefore, design can be regarded as an activity which, potentially, bridges the two sides of our nature and, when it does so, becomes an holistic endeavor that looks towards our inner self to bring meaning and aesthetic sensitivity to the design of functional objects. When this inner aspect is developed and brought to the design process, it can have significant implications for how we go about designing, and how we think about the nature of objects.

This more balanced approach allows us to consider the quantitative and qualitative aspects of material goods in relation to inner/outer accord. After basic needs have been met, the quantity of products an individual might see as desirable will be a function of many factors, including societal norms, but, beyond a certain point, further acquisition can start to detrimentally affect one's ability to develop inwardly. Too many material things can distract us from inner attention—this is a teaching of many traditions.

It also is important to reflect on what our "inner" side can tell us about how we might define the qualitative characteristics of material goods. This is not simply an issue of high or low quality, but one of *fitting* quality, such that the object is congruent with our inner nature. There is, it would seem, a level of "appropriate concern" to be found in the design of objects whereby the decisions pertinent to materials, form development, and detailing reflect an adequateness and avoid being immoderate, indulgent, or excessive. This notion of appropriate concern is critical if we are to take a more balanced approach—one that affords greater recognition of our inner selves, and that begins to address sustainable issues at a more fundamental level. To more fully appreciate this "appropriate concern," it is necessary to look more closely at our inner or other half.

How the Other Half Lives

To help us understand something of how the "other half" lives, there are many sources from history and from around the world. These give an impression of how a life dedicated to inner development regards outer material culture. This is not to suggest that we should all seek the life of an ascetic, but it does allow us to see our contemporary lifestyles in the economically developed countries from a different perspective. Probably our most extensive sources are the texts and traditions of the world's religions. While there are many examples of great opulence in religious artifacts, an important

10   Murdoch, *Metaphysics as a Guide to Morals,* 21.
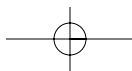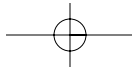
distinction can be made between objects of ceremony and objects for personal use. Moreover, if we look at the more ascetic traditions, where the pursuit of the inner life is, perhaps, more fully embraced, we see that possessions often are kept to a minimum. Many teachings suggest that material goods, and a mind that is preoccupied with such things, hamper inner development. We are told that the person seeking the inner path must seek it alone, free of possessions.[11] Buddhism regards possessions as a form of bondage that prevents enlightenment.[12] In Judeo-Christian texts, numerous passages declare the necessity of eschewing material possessions and personal wealth.[13] The Islamic faith tells us, "It is difficult for a man laden with riches to climb the steep path that leadeth to bliss," [14] and Chinese traditions say that a fixation on fine clothes, foods and possessions places one far from the inner way.[15] Monastic "rules" often are quite categorical about the dangers to spiritual progress of private ownership, preferring to share possessions.[16] Similar views on sharing, simplicity, and material austerity are expressed by other intentional communities dedicated to the spiritual life, such as the Shakers,[17] Amish,[18] and Hutterites.[19] Such communities also tend to reject decoration and embellishments, regarding unadorned objects more fitting to spiritual pursuits.[20]

It becomes evident that inner development can have a direct bearing and influence on both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of material culture and, *ipso facto*, environmental stewardship and sustainability. From the designer's perspective, the qualitative implications are particularly important.

Design and Appropriate Concern

There is no definitive "right way" to design products, but we can derive some impressions that encompass outer imperatives and inner potentials, and that might be helpful in our search for more sustainable ways forward. The notion of "appropriate concern," introduced earlier, is an essential element for developing this more comprehensive approach. Wittgenstein considers a similar idea when he discusses inconsistencies among the four Gospels. He argues that these inconsistencies are preferable or even necessary and gives the following analogy: "…a mediocre stage set can be better than a sophisticated one, painted trees better than real ones—because these might distract attention from what matters." [21] What matters are the actors, the dialogue, and the ideas being conveyed. So, in this example, and in the Gospel stories, the details of the tangible (i.e., the physical or the historical) are not so important. The account or artifact is necessary, but only in a rough or approximate form that is sufficient to provide the setting or the basis for what really matters; in the case of the Gospels, "the putative transcendent reality" to which all sacred texts point.[22] Schumacher, who pioneered appropriate-technology, with its inherent idea of adequateness, expresses a similar view: "To enhance our Level of Being, we

11 J. Mascaró, (trans.), *The Bhagavad Gita* (London: Penguin, 1962), verse 6.10.
12 J. Mascaró, (trans.), *The Dhammapada* (London: Penguin, 1973) verses 89, 355.
13 For examples: Proverbs 30, Acts 4:32, and Matthew 19:21.
14 A. S. Al-Suhrawardy, *The Sayings of Muhammad* (New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1990), 110.
15 G. Feng and J. English (trans.),*Tao Te Ching* (New York: Random House, 1989), verse 53.
16 A. Miel and M. del Mastro (trans.), *The Rule of St. Benedict* (New York: Doubleday, 1975), 10 and chapters 33 and 55.
17 J. Sprigg and D. Martin, *Shaker-Life, Work, and Art* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987), 22, 44.
18 W. M. Kephart, *Extraordinary Groups— The Sociology of Unconventional Lifestyles* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976), 15–16.
19 Ibid., 253–256.
20 Sprigg and Larkin, *Shaker-Life, Work, and Art*, 33, 72. See also, J. G. Shea, *The American Shakers and their Furniture* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1971), 33 and Kephart, *Extraordinary Groups*, 10 and 15.
21 L. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, trans. by Peter Winch (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 31e–32e.
22 J. Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 10.
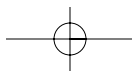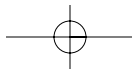
have to adopt a life-style conducive to such enhancement, which means one that grants our lower nature just the attention and care it requires and leaves us with plenty of time and free attention for the pursuit of our higher development." [23]

A shift toward appropriate concern or adequateness in the quantity of goods has the environmental benefits of reducing resource and energy use, reducing production of waste and pollution, and preserving habitats. A sense of adequateness in the qualitative characteristics of products has various implications for design, and for more sustainable ways of living. First, "adequateness" can be considered at a product's inception—the conceptual framework of a product can be examined with regard to its potential in creating conditions that allow for inner attention and development. Secondly, "adequateness" can be applied to a product's physical characteristics; that is, how the product is designed and defined. An "adequate" or "good enough" approach to product definition suggests a quite different set of priorities than we have come to expect in the fields of design and mass production. High precision, close tolerances, and perfect finishes are constantly strived for; but these are the priorities of a design and production system that is, by and large, unholistic—driven by economic rationalism, severely detrimental to natural systems, and often ethically questionable. Similarly, the notion of appropriate concern questions the approach of the Shakers, who sought precision and attention to detail through dedicated craftsmanship. Although emanating from a deep commitment to things inner, their approach could be criticized as reflecting an excessive attention to material goods and their definition. A counter argument here could be that the mode of work itself is a form of contemplation, and its product a manifestation of inner pursuits. It does, however, pose intriguing questions as to the relationship between inner development and outer expression; and it is, perhaps, a particular irony that products from a group dedicated to the inner life now command extremely high prices and often become objects of status. A similar example might be the products produced in the nineteenth century by William Morris, with the best socialist intentions. Here again, because of attention to detail, craft, and perfection, the products had to be sold at relatively high prices, thereby negating the egalitarian principles at the heart of their conception.

Hence, precision and perfection would appear to be, in many cases, contradictory to the evolution of conditions of adequateness so critical to inner development. In certain applications, precision is, of course, necessary to ensure that a product will properly function. However, it is frequently unnecessary and can impede inner development and sustainability.

A quite different approach to design and production is possible. The idea of "rough" products, imprecision, and adequateness would seem to be more in line with achieving an inner/outer

---

23 Schumacher, *A Guide for the Perplexed*, 153.
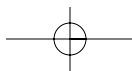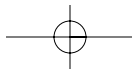
balance and sustainable ways of living. "Good enough" products can reduce "concern" in the making, use, and ownership of products to a level more conducive to inner development. Sustainability emphasizes local production and the provision of fulfilling, local employment. This contributes to environmental stewardship by evolving a locally-based industrial ecology, and to social equity which also is an essential element of *inner* teachings. Production that employs and values people rather than machines also implies a qualitatively different type of product. A machine aesthetic is obviously inappropriate. The human hand can produce items of beauty, but high tolerances and reproducibility are not its forte. Similarly, uniform finishes are well suited to automated production, while multifarious or even unfinished surfaces often are more appropriate and more achievable when using natural materials and human labor. Moreover, variegated, rough finishes allow the marks of use to be absorbed without spoiling the overall appearance—thereby contributing to product longevity and sustainability. Potentially, the production of such products at the local level, employing local people can be an economically viable alternative to today's mass-produced, largely unsustainable products. The "adequate" product can, because of its nature, and should, because of its intent, be relatively easy and quick to produce, making it an economically feasible alternative. Its viability and acceptability are, however, crucially dependent on imaginative and innovative design. Some examples of such products are illustrated in Figures 1–3. These explorations, conducted by the author, attempt to embody some of the principles
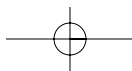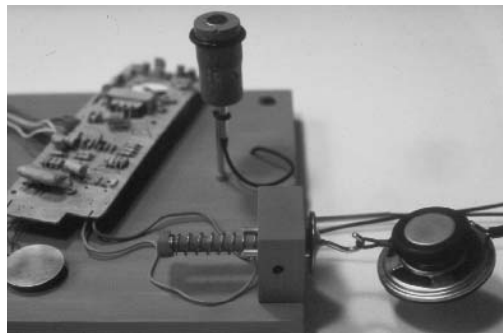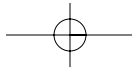
Figure 1 (top)
Low chair—rough finishes and reused materials.

Figure 2 (right)
Twig lamps—standard electrical parts plus "local" components.

Figure 3 (bottom right)
Wall telephone (detail)—standard circuit plus simple "local" product assembly.

discussed above. Figure 1 is a chair quickly and intuitively constructed from reused, unfinished materials. The triangulation in the geometry of the design ensures structural stability, and the "rough" nature of the finish results in a piece that is texturally rich, and which allows the object to absorb wear and tear without detracting from the overall aesthetic. The lack of traditional finish also allows speedy manufacturing utilizing reused materials and human labor. Figure 2 illustrates a pair of ephemeral lamps that combine off-the-shelf electrical components with a twig, a paper bag for the shade, and a small-cast concrete base. The electrical parts are simply "hung" on the forked twig—facilitating the reuse of these standard parts. Figure 3 is a detail of a wall mounted telephone. Standard electronic phone circuitry is painted and simply mounted on a board-design variations are infinite. This piece illustrates the potential for exploring low cost, locally produced design options for products that are normally capital intensive, mass produced objects.

Such a direction for design would acknowledge and foster our "other half" by redefining the nature of products; it would also make a fundamental contribution to the goals of sustainability. It has the potential of making our material world richer, multifaceted, locally appropriate, and culturally and spiritually significant which, compared to the global homogeneity arising from today's mass produced objects, is a prospect to be welcomed.
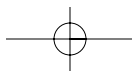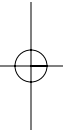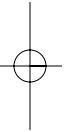
Civic Picturing vs. Realist Photojournalism
The Regime of Illustrated News, 1856–1901

Kevin G. Barnhurst and John Nerone

The visual culture of the American press developed from the printerly newspaper of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, through the Victorian newspaper of the late nineteenth century, and to the modern newspaper which had emerged by the 1930s. Both printerly and Victorian newspapers used a design sense that we call "vernacular," emphasizing apparent balance and symmetry, filling space with an increasingly varied typography.[1] Newspaper design was not given to establishing hierarchy or categorization; the news was largely unsegmented, presenting an impression of an unmapped and perhaps unmappable world. At first, even the boundary between advertising and editorial content was not clearly demarcated.

This syncretic presentation of content on paper expressed in visual form the habits of news workers. Newspaper design did not exist apart from the routines and practices of journalism, as it often does today, but as an extrusion of standard modes of news gathering. Thus, form followed practice. The active roles of reporting grew out of the more passive news-gathering tasks of colonial printers, who received correspondence and culled other sources, print or oral, to fill their pages. As the printerly age gave way to the age of Victorian papers, these roles coalesced, in fact if not in name, as the correspondent and the scavenger. The correspondent was a manly observer of events and personages in distant and (usually) powerful places; he (rarely she) was a persona, though usually pseudonymous, who conveyed subjective impressions with an air of authority and confidentiality, much like the colonial letter writer. The scavenger was not a persona, but a completely anonymous news hound, combing first the exchange papers then the police courts, the theaters, and the taverns for bits of information that might be conveyed in a sentence or a paragraph, or which might be turned into a story of a column or so. The correspondent was a gentleman, the scavenger a pieceworker, often paid by the line or the column-inch. The content of the news was miscellaneous, matching its presentation. Typography was the dominant voice of news, and images were interlopers, useful as respite and also as information,

1   Kevin G. Barnhurst and John Nerone, "Design Trends in U.S. Front Pages, 1885–1995," *Journalism Quarterly* 68 (Winter 1991): 796–804; John Nerone and Kevin G. Barnhurst, "Visual Mapping and Cultural Authority: Design Changes in U.S. Newspapers, 1920–1940," *Journal of Communication* 45:2 (Spring 1995): 9–43.

but always clearly separated from text, often by frilly bric-a-brac that indicated a conceptual boundary.

The modern newspaper, on the other hand, has assigned a different role to journalists by encouraging a stance of objectivity and expertise. Reporters, who were neither gentlemen nor wage workers, became professionals whose authoritative task was to classify and assign priority to events. Modern photojournalism complements that primary task of professional reporting, providing a sense of visual immediacy to go with the formally structured text. In both text and image, the modern newspaper requires the effacing of the persona of the journalist, who might have a name (registered in a byline) but who does not have a point of view, a set of values, or (usually) a style of writing. The modern journalist and photojournalist are experts, not authors. (The photojournalist is sometimes still a scavenger—a throwback to the Victorian newspaper—although the reporter is not.)

It often is assumed that photojournalism came out of the camera, fully-armored, like Athena out of the head of Zeus. This certainly is not the case. Contrary to the received history in which all techniques and styles of news illustration lead toward the photograph at the summit of journalistic representation, our previous research underscores the contingency of photographic styles and usages.[2] That photography might wed permanently with news was not obvious in the Victorian era. Its adoption or rejection depended not on technical barriers but on its usefulness to the existing regime of news illustration, dominated by typography, and its capacity otherwise to express the routines of news work. Available technology sometimes limited the styles and usages of photography, but this limiting was just that: a limitation. It did not amount to a photo-technological determination of the project of journalism. Within the larger regime of news illustration, moreover, photojournalism appeared tardily. Beginning in the 1830s, in England and the United States, newspaper and magazine publishers began to experiment with the use of various kinds of illustrations. This experimentation preceded the successful introduction of photography in the form of the daguerreotype in 1839.[3] The technologies available to illustrators were numerous and included woodcuts and wood engravings, various forms of metal engravings, and lithography. Eventually, these were combined with photography. But photography—much as it was talked about as supremely realistic and unauthored, as an epochal invention, a radically different and discontinuous tool of illustration—was used simply as one tool among many.

The key figure in this regime of illustration was the artist. Every news illustration had to be composed and rendered by an artist of one sort or another—usually either a sketch artist, an engraver, or both. These artists were journalists, like the textual journalists of the printerly and Victorian newspaper. And they fell into the same categories—correspondents and scavengers. Their jobs were the

2   Kevin G. Barnhurst and John Nerone, "The President Is Dead: American News Photography & the New Long Journalism" in *Picturing in the Public Sphere,* Bonnie Brennen and Hanno Hardt, eds., (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 60–92.

3   Patricia Anderson, *The Printed Image and the Transformation of Popular Culture, 1790–1860* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); and Joshua Emmett Brown, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper,* The Pictorial Press and the Representations of America, 1855–1889 (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1993).

same as the textual journalists—to provide intelligence about distant and important people, places, and events, and to provide a fulsome and engaging miscellany of deviant goings-on.

It is our aim in this article to analyze the regime of illustrated news in the United States in the period from the late 1850s to the assassination of President McKinley in 1901. This period begins with the establishment of the first successful illustrated newspapers in the United States, and ends with the full implementation of the photographic halftone. Culturally, it corresponds to the rise of a realist ethos, both in art and literature, and in the social sciences.[4] In journalism, it corresponds to the growth of a sense of literary professionalism that produced the great muckraking reporters, and also to the birth of press clubs, trade periodicals, and other institutions that would support the emergence of the occupational ideology of objectivity.[5] In terms of the media system as a whole, the period begins with a largely partisan newspaper press and a largely genteel range of nationally circulated magazines, and ends with an industrialized newspaper system with an increasingly routinized pattern of news production and a new range of mass circulation popular magazines.[6] Meanwhile, the readers of the print media had become more and more socialized into the "land of desire" that the advertisers in the media were helping to create.[7]

In this paper, we look specifically at two illustrated periodicals, *Leslie's* and *Harper's* These are easily the most important of the genre. They are similar in many ways: both were printed in New York, both were weeklies, both were national in circulation, both were established in the mid- to late-1850s, and both came of age during the Civil War. Also, as we shall see, both used similar techniques of illustration for similar content. But they were also different in important ways. *Leslie's* insisted that it was a newspaper, and maintained an emphasis on breaking news. It was the mainstay of the company that produced it, and sought out a large, heterogeneous readership (its circulation varied from approximately 50,000 to 200,000, with higher peaks for dramatic issues, such as assassinations, because much of its circulation was in single-copy sales).[8] *Harper's* was published by the nation's leading book publisher. It was aimed at a more genteel audience, was more concerned with literature and the arts, and recycled its illustrations in its other publications, notably novels and a monthly magazine. Where Leslie's was a newspaper, *Harper's* styled itself "A Journal of Civilization," a nomination that it took seriously. Our comments in this paper are based on a sample of representative issues from each taken at five-year intervals (1856, 1861, 1866, and so forth).

Techniques of Illustration

Nineteenth-century printing found picture reproduction challenging.[9] The basic technical difficulty was getting an image onto a material that could be locked into a printing form along with textual

4   Miles Orvell, *The Real Thing: Imitation & Authenticity in American Culture, 1880–1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990); and Walter Benn Michaels, *The Gold Standard* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988).

5   Michael Schudson, *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers* (New York: Basic Books, 1978); and Christopher Wilson, *The Labor of Words* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985).

6   Gerald Baldasty, *The Commercialization of News in Nineteenth Century America* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993); and Richard Ohmann, *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century* (New York: Verso, 1996).

7   William Leach, *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture* (New York: Vintage, 1993); and T. J. Jackson Lears, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1994).

8   See Brown, *Frank Leslie's,* Chapter 1.

9   Michael G. Carlebach, *The Origins of Photojournalism* (Washington: Smithsonian, 1992).

material. More than a dozen discrete solutions were found for this one problem. Of these, woodcuts and later wood-engravings were the favorite media for printers of news illustrations. Both, of course, required the hand of an engraver. Both also required a supply of suitable wood. *Leslie's* pioneered methods to meet both requirements.[10] The preferred wood for engraving grew in trees whose trunks were no larger than six inches in diameter, too small for a half-page or full-page engraving. *Leslie's* solution was to machine the wood into uniform blocks two inches square, which then were bolted together to form a smooth block of any desired size. This allowed for a routinization of the hand of the engraver as well. The outlines of a picture were engraved on a large composite block by a head engraver, then the block was broken down and the pieces distributed to specialist engravers who worked simultaneously. The various engravers had specific skills—one was good at faces, for instance, and another at architectural details—so that a complex division of labor was built into this methodology.

A similar routine existed for the composition of an engraving. Artists in the field—sketch artists and photographers, among others—would collect images. Then a chief artist in house would select the most appropriate pieces. Some, such as portraits of individual statesmen, would be engraved from one image or photograph. Others, including large-scale depictions of events, would be assembled from a large number of individual drawings, and combined into one continuous scene. These sometimes formed two-page panoramic centerspreads, more or less. The chief artist or engraver often would include a signature on these, in effect introducing the chief artist into the company of editors like Horace Greeley, cartoonists like Thomas Nast, and the pseudonymously bylined correspondents of major news organizations as journalistic personae.

The process of illustration in these weeklies thus was a collective and routinized one. Each illustration required the skilled intervention of several artists, in addition to going through a process of editorial selection and, often, composition. The artists' eyes and hands insured that the illustration would have clarity, and would convey a meaning of some sort. But this was applied art. Its production was mechanized to an extent that permitted predictable manufacturing schedules, and allowed the (believable) claim to authentic representation. A reader of *Leslie's* or *Harper's* could expect to see illustrations in each issue on about half the pages, and those illustrations presenting themselves as news would have their origin in "nature," that is, they would have been drawn or photographed at some point from life.

These illustrations, then, were quite a bit like the text that accompanied them. They almost never stood without comment (the exceptions being cartoons and editorial icons, which were themselves forms of commentary). Usually the text amplified and explained the illustration. A typical example is "The Port of

10   Brown, *Frank Leslie's,* 48–59.

Genesee, Lake Ontario." [11] The picture, by itself, is fairly mute: "Look at the pretty boats!" The text tells you more: "Our beautiful picture of the Port of Genesee is from an ambrotype by Whitney of Rochester," meaning it is reproduced from a photograph. Here, and throughout Leslie's history, a photographer typically was named, whereas a sketch artist rarely was. The photographer had an identity as a technician, we surmise, whereas the sketch artist, as a journalist, was meant to be anonymous. The text goes on to recount how recent engineering projects, especially the construction of one-half mile of piers, have made Genesee a keyport for Lake Ontario traffic. "There is here a pleasant and thriving village, called 'Charlotte,' which is yearly increasing in importance, owing to its lake position and connection with Rochester by means of a railroad, eight miles in length, and also to the fact that, from this point, the steamers, forming an international line, arrive and depart daily during navigation for Toronto and other Canadian ports." And so that's what all those pretty boats are up to! This text tells the reader what one would see if the illustration could be in color and in motion—that is, it amplifies the visual experience—but it also tells the reader what the picture means. It presents elements that could not be depicted no matter what tools were available.

Often, the relationship between text and picture was reversed. In these cases, the picture amplifies aspects of the text, adding emphasis or emotion to what already is a full textual account. This is the rare case for the illustrated newspapers. Usually, the paper was composed on the basis of what pictures were available; rarely, though notably in cases of monumental news such as an assassination, were illustrations found for a specific story. In the above example, the availability of an ambrotype of Genesee "suitable for engraving" drove the content, not any breaking news about Genesee.

No matter what the specific relationship of picture to text, the two elements were understood in the same way. Both were representations of real persons, places, and events, but neither was unmediated—both were authored, whether the author had a persona or not. The attraction of news depended on telling a good story, anchored in real events to be sure, but not merely reflecting them. The goodness of the story was in the telling. Text and picture both were held to standards based on the facility with which they advanced a narrative.

The regime of illustrated news did not point to photographic realism or to any other notion of unmediated realism. Instead, it insisted on clarity and lucidity. The images were expected to be articulate, not independently of course because the typographic text usually was indispensable, but certainly when amplified or contextualized by accompanying verbal reportage. Photographic realism was irrelevant to this kind of storytelling, a conclusion that is supported by the fact that neither *Leslie's* nor *Harper's* highlighted the photographic aspect of visual reportage nearly as often as we

11 *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* (July 5, 1856): illustration on 53 and text on 54.

expected. Engravings that obviously were done from photographs usually were not distinguished from others done from sketches. And this was not because they were stymied by the technological limits of early photography. When the aim was to present a grand landscape upon which human ingenuity takes on nature (the setting in imagery for many stories in text, to be discussed later), the long exposure times required for photography hardly represented a limitation. Nor would direct duplication of the photograph on newsprint necessarily limit the artist's eye and hand, working to help the text tell stories and make arguments and limn characters.

Genres of Illustration

Illustrated newspapers presupposed that their readers read daily newspapers. Therefore, they conceived of their own function as discrete from that of the daily press. The daily newspaper would cover breaking news, allowing its reader to monitor the day's events. The illustrated newspaper, appearing weekly, would build on the literacy generated by the daily newspaper, and allow the reader to have a vicarious experience of distant and important people, places, and events. The *New York Tribune* would tell people what happened at Lincoln's inauguration, for instance. *Leslie's* then would give its readers a visual sense of what it was like to be there. In this way, the illustrated press was a form of travel literature—a popular form of nonfiction at the time illustrated newspapers were invented. Leslie himself acknowledged this in an editorial in 1873.[12] Noting that daily newspapers provided verbal descriptions of events, Leslie pointed out that these are visually vague—from such accounts "a hundred artists…will produce a hundred pictures each unlike the others…" What his illustrated paper proposed to do was to provide an authentic visual image that fixed in the public mind Leslie's picture of the event. There was some sleight-of-hand in this argument, obscuring (while acknowledging) the artistry of illustrated news. Like all journalism, the project took its authority from events "out there." Illustrated news promised the sort of picture that one would have come away with had one actually been at the event—clear, with the force of memory. Readers could trust that the image actually represented the event because the artist had been physically present (even if only after the fact, as was often the case with breaking news). Illustrated journalism thus intended to intervene between readers and the world, and to provide them with an artificial archive of memory images—a primitive form of total recall of the sort that contemporary scholars ascribe to later visual media.[13]

The subjects of illustrations throughout the period we studied were the sorts of things that a sophisticated traveler might experience. We might denominate the subjects briefly as prominent people, the wonders of nature, the built environment, and noteworthy events. We might further divide the category of events into those of national political or military significance—the Battle of Bull

12   "Illustrated Journalism," *Leslie's* (Aug. 23, 1873): quoted in Brown, *Frank Leslie's,* 131.

13   Celia Lury, *Prosthetic Culture: Photography, Memory, and Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1998); and Susan Moeller, *Compassion Fatigue: How the Media Sell Disease, Famine, War, and Death* (New York: Routledge, 1999).

Run, or the assassination of McKinley—and those of more social interest—sporting events, for example. All of these categories represented "real" things. In addition, illustrations often presented images that were symbolic or iconographic. *Harper's* included the cartoons of Thomas Nast, as well as frequent illustrations for fictional material. (*Leslie's* carried serial novels in every issue through the bulk of its career, but these were almost never illustrated. Also, *Leslie's* carried few cartoons.) And both publications occasionally featured allegorical illustrations.

This subject matter was conveyed through a complicated arsenal of illustration techniques. We have identified seven modes of illustration in the two illustrated papers, here listed roughly in the order of their importance over the period:

- Sketches (emphasizing irregular shading, deep shadow as from ink washes, and the position rather than the edges of forms; all loosely drawn at first from life or eyewitness accounts, and later from photographs, but containing signs of the human hand, such as smudging and scribbling),
- Drawings or "fine drawings" (emphasizing precise tonal shading and perspective, drawn much tighter as a finished artistic work, with greater detail and surface finish that disguised overt evidence of the artist's hand),
- Photographs (emphasizing fine detail in a limited range of gray tones with shading in regular, repetitive patterns; all in a clean, mechanical rendering at first reproduced as engravings, and later as halftones),
- Cartoons (emphasizing outline rather than fill, which is limited to relatively small areas, and showing human forms with the tendency to caricature),
- Editorial icons (emphasizing silhouette and shape, rather than outline or tonal value, and giving the impression of woodcut and scratchboard techniques to project the allegorical and symbolic),
- Maps (emphasizing varying degrees of line, to show position, in plan, and sometimes also tonal shading in order to show what things look like, in elevation), and,
- Technical drawings (emphasizing outline and surface contour, rather than tonal shading and shadow, with great detail at the points of human interface such as knobs and handles).

All of these modes appeared in editorial content and were particularly tied to specific types of content. The sketch, for example, belonged to breaking news but also to fiction. Cartoons belonged to editorializing and entertainment. Advertising also employed many of these modes, but favored technical drawings for representing products and the more fully rendered drawings for representing scenes of the consumption, marketing, or manufacture
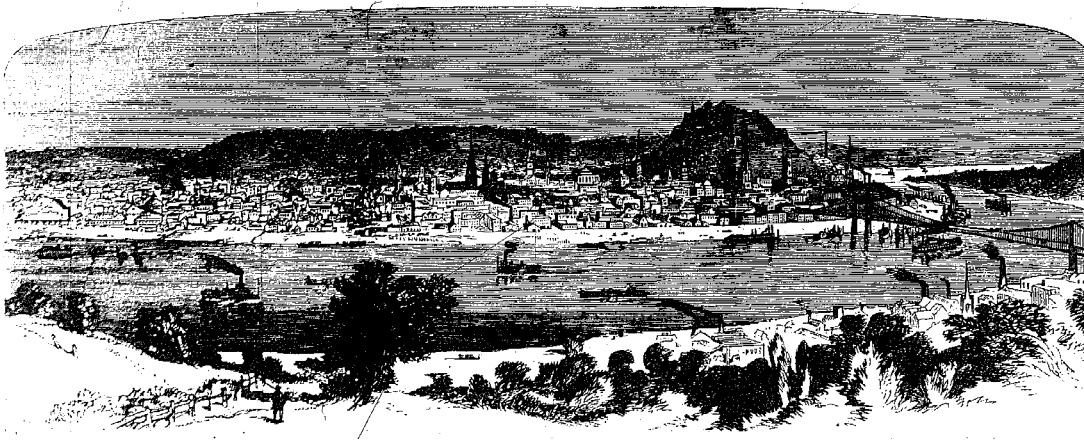
of products. Of course, the tie was not a physical one, as it would become later. Illustration could appear anywhere, without regard to the placement of the related text.[14]

These various modes did not move in an evolutionary continuum from drawing to photography, as one might expect, but were used side by side in an array. The different techniques complemented each other; they did not colonize or displace each other until the end of this period, when photography displayed imperial tendencies. The course of change cannot be summarized as the emergence of photography or the development of photographic realism—that is too neat and proleptic a narrative. The things represented and the modes of representation shifted over time in a complicated pattern. Instead of a shift in technique alone, what we discerned is a shifting notion of subjectivity that accompanies a shifting notion of didacticism, along with a shifting notion of the relationship of the individual to the polity. At the outset, the regime of illustrated news showed prominent personages as public symbols, attending to the grandeur of institutions and the built environment on a ground of natural splendor. At the end, it showed people regardless of their position of authority as indexes of ordinary life, closely observed in a range of emotional expressions and fleeting gestures meant to reveal an interior landscape of thought and feeling.

Built vs. Natural Environments

The built environment was one of the favorite themes of the first illustrated newspapers. This fits in with a sense of the mission of illustration to effect the virtual travel of middle-class readers. One could tour the great buildings of the world in the pages of *Harper's* and *Leslie's.* Early images emphasized the monumentality of human civilization (feats of engineering, architecture, and city planning), with people depicted as textures occupying the foreground like the grass growing around permanent structures. At first, the structures seem to grow organically out of the natural landscape. In a travel

14   See, for example, the illustration of a statue of Nathan Hale on 504 that refers to the story of its unveiling in *Harper's* (July 4, 1891): 494; and note that the story does not refer back to the illustration.
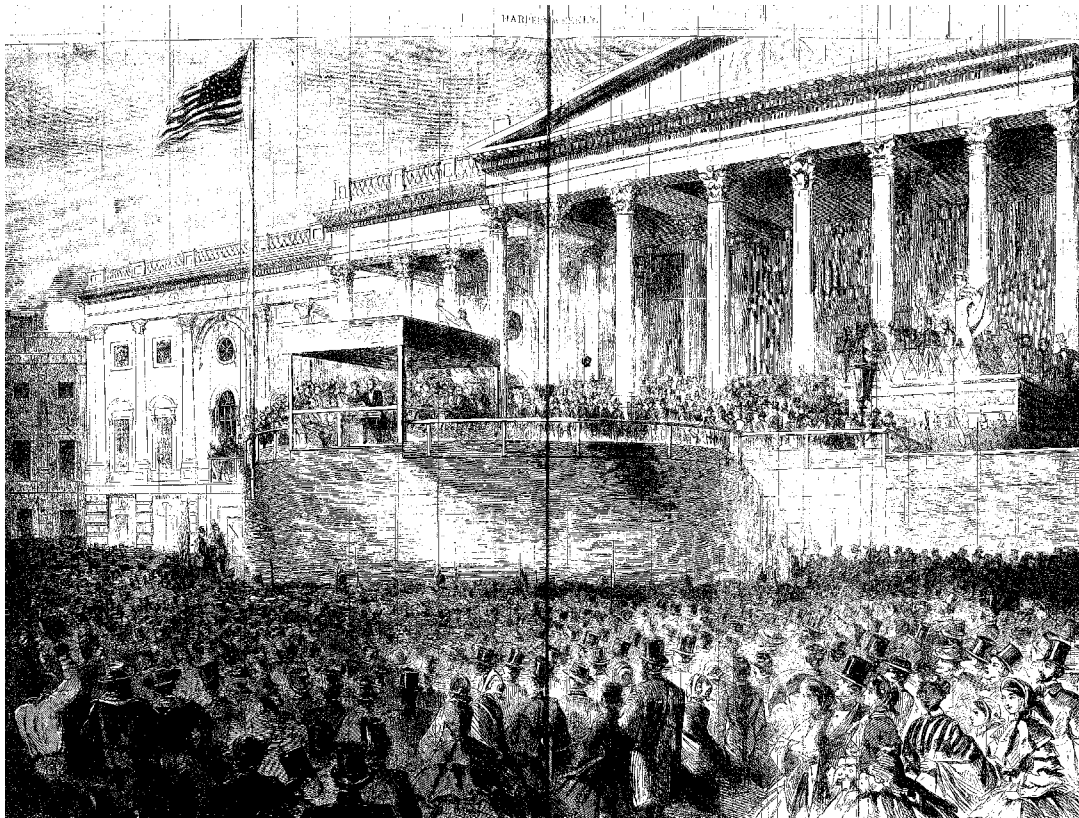
story, "A Railroad Pleasure-Trip to the West,"*Harper's* shows the growing city of Cincinnati, Ohio.[15] Cityscapes such as this one (Fig. 1) attest to the permanence of the built environment growing out toward equality with the overarching hills or surrounding waters. The simple quantities of space the two occupy in the picture plane reveal an interesting play that suggests a hope for growth (and ultimate dominance) by human constructions over the natural world.

Even great men were small in relation to the products of material culture. The emphasis on one or another was accomplished through techniques of composition, in which the elaborate vaults of a ceiling dominate the image showing men in the Congress.[16] A dramatic example of this is Lincoln's inauguration picture (Fig. 2), with the mass of humanity clearly dwarfed by the Capitol building and flag, which symbolize the republic.[17] Lincoln himself is smaller than the Capitol statuary and some of the closest spectators (a point we'll return to later).

A later moment of celebration for the built environment was the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, or world's fair. Especially for *Leslie's,* whose proprietor was president of the exposition board of commissioners, this was an occasion for rhapsodic treatment of the progress of human control over the forces of nature. The narrative of progress was made to dovetail with the political commemoration that the exposition enacted—the career of U.S. rep-
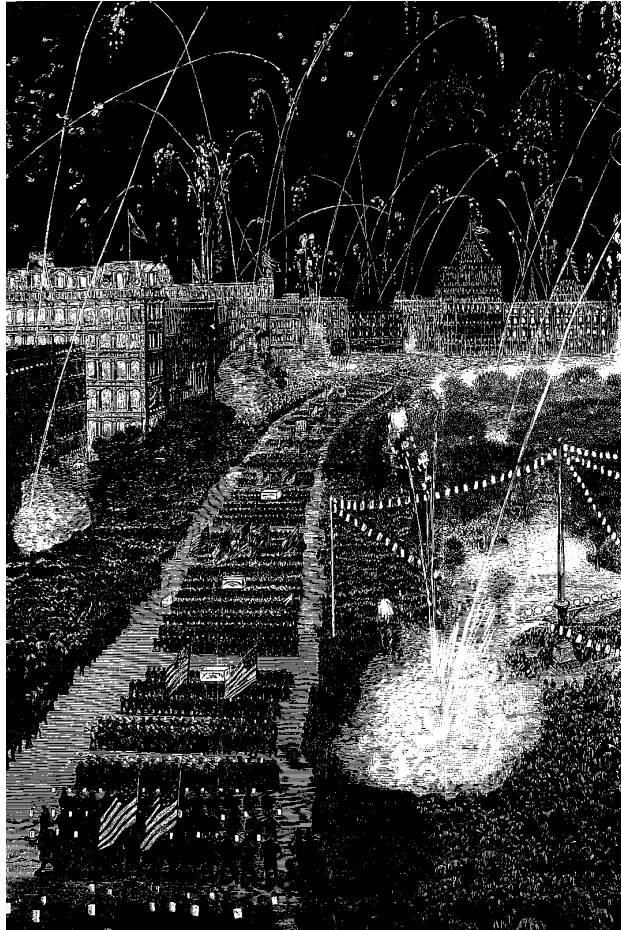
15 *Harper's* (July 4, 1857): 428.
16 *Harper's* (December 26, 1857): 792–3.
17 *Harper's* (March 16, 1861): 168–9.

resentative democracy and the career of industrial progress inter-
twined. So in one issue, on July 22, 1876, the centerspread (Fig. 3)
features a grand Fourth of July procession in which orderly crowds
of people traverse an urban panorama—Union Square in NYC—
while a later spread of illustrations features the Wilson Sewing
Machine Co. of Chicago, Illinois (engravings of the corporate head-
quarters and the factory, done from photographs, and another
engraving of the exhibit in Machinery Hall at the exposition, done
from sketches). *Harper's* similarly emphasized the buildings.[18]

The power of nature emerges later in the nineteenth century
and takes a place as the only equivalent of (and perhaps the supe-
rior to) these human monuments. From the initial tourist views of
Cincinnati, Ohio, of Jefferson City, Missouri, and of other western
towns, the imagery becomes more expansive. Consider, for exam-
ple, later aerial perspectives, whose acts of consummate imagina-
tion show human constructions marking the face of nature. The
railroad system of Boston (Fig. 4) shows a vast landscape contained
by the system of tracks.[19] In this sense, maps become the conceptual
tool of empire, and they were a staple for military coverage as well
as for stories on western expansion.

18   *Harper's* (July 22, 1876): 593.
19   *Harper's* (July 8, 1871, Supplement):
       636–7.

The destructive power of nature over human construction comes to the fore in various disasters involving weather and ships and especially in coverage of the Great Chicago Fire. An artist takes the aerial view published in the previous week's issue, and obliterates much of the city in black billows of smoke interrupted by tongues of flame.[20] The text exclaims, "The pathetic sketch by Mr. Reinhart, printed on our front page, conveys a more graphic idea than can be expressed in words of the privations and sufferings endured…."[21]

A particularly revealing example of change over time in styles of illustration is the treatment of humans in physical activity and sports. Images of annual regattas were a regular feature of the illustrated press and, initially, the mechanisms and objects dominate the action, with images of the sails against the ocean and sky. There are no participants, but spectators look on, and their depiction turns the occasion into a social and not a sporting event.[22] In the *Leslie's* drawing, "Regatta of the New York Yacht Club" (Fig. 5), the sails of the competing boats appear in the background, pictured against the

NEW COLLEGE (OXFORD) EIGHT AT BEGINNING OF STROKE, SHOWING EXTREME FULL REACH.

enough to renounce
strokes of years' standin
another differing in re.
too numerous
to mention.
But outside
of any such
consideration,
tions, the pict-
ures are very
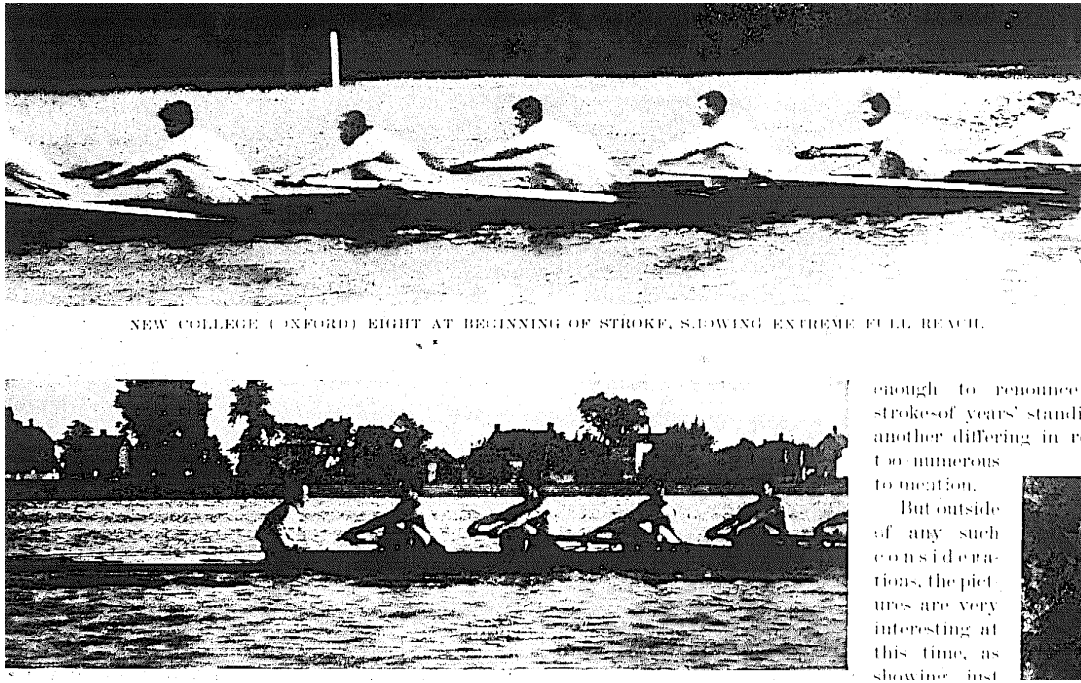interesting at
this time, as
showing just

Figure 6
Top, "New College Oxford Eight at Beginning
of Stroke, Nearing Extreme Full Reach,"
Bottom, "Yale Crew, With Johnson at Stroke,
Just About to Take Water," *Leslie's,* (July 9,
1896): top of 28.

cityscape, while the foreground is the shore occupied by fashionably dressed ladies and gentlemen.[23] The spectators appear in the exaggerated and stylized poses of painting, and the engraver highlights some elements—such as a pair of handsome, bonneted women—while leaving others only sketchily realized. In this case, the related text is devoted almost exclusively to a list of the boats and the times of their finishes.[24]

These presentations of the spectators for sport continue,[25] but increasingly are accompanied by presentations of the human body. For participants, sport moves from the action of man-made mechanism against the barriers of nature, to the delight of onlookers, and into another definition in which the human body competes, and perhaps increasingly against not nature but other bodies. The change parallels the emergence of the notion of the body as a human motor, one of the originating metaphors of modernity.[26] In *Leslie's* 1896 coverage of a rowing team competition against Oxford in England, "Form Shown by Yale's Opponents at Henley" (Fig. 6), a series of photos of the rowing techniques of the various teams are interleaved with text to form a detailed commentary. Here, the illustrations are meant to show men in action.[27]

The Civic Gaze
The evolving coverage of affairs such as boat races indicates a more general shift in the way events were depicted. The change seems rooted in the formulation of the subject position of the reader or viewer. Initially, subjectivity takes the position of spectator. That is, images are created to represent incidents as they would be viewed

23   *Leslie's* (July 8, 1871): 273.
24   Ibid., 276–7.
25   *Harper's* (July 4, 1891): 492.
26   Anson Rabinbach, *The Human Motor: Energy, Fatigue, and the Origins of Modernity* (New York: Basic Books, 1990).
27   *Leslie's (*July 9, 1896): 28.

by a citizen not directly involved, but paying close attention at a distance. These most assuredly are not ordinary or common viewers, but privileged ones who look from among the ranks of better society upon (and who at times look down on their social inferiors in the middle ground separating them from) the great men and events being depicted.[28] Most often, the faces clearly visible are of social peers. Examples from the coverage of the Civil War demonstrate this. In the "Grand Review of General McDowell's Corps d'Armee, etc.," the soldiers stand in an ordered mass receding into deep perspective, while leaders occupy the central ground on horseback. The largest figures are the well-dressed onlookers in casual poses, some of them in admiring clutches around military officers, their faces turned toward the reader.[29]

This privileged subjectivity was reinforced by the technique of composition. Images were composed by sketch artists who acted like correspondents. They gathered visual impressions as they walked around an event, then used them to construct a composite scene. This scene would compend the various detailed images that the artist had sketched in such perambulations. In the case of depictions of groups of important men—for instance, the meeting of the U.S. Senate (described previously)—recognizable faces seem to float on a flat surface of bodies and architectural details. Another example of this style of drawing (Fig. 7), is a *Leslie's* two-page illustration of President Garfield's inaugural ball.[30]

This positioning of the subject as privileged and perambulatory was well suited to narrative illustration. In their depictions of events, the illustrated newspapers often combined sketches that were temporally sequential into one illustration, allowing for the telescoping of a sequence of occurrences into a single, supposedly instantaneous depiction. *Leslie's* depicted Garfield's shooting, for instance, in a two-page illustration (Fig. 8) that shows the look of surprise on Garfield's face as the bullet hit and before he collapsed, the look of concern on the faces of bystanders, and the apprehension

28   See, for example *Harper's* (July 6, 1861):
     426.

29   Ibid., 424–5.

30   *Leslie's* (March 19, 1881): 52–3.

of the assailant—a temporal range that would have covered about a minute of actual time, and never could have been captured by a camera.[31] This drawing was based on the sketch artists' interviews with people on the scene; the journalists themselves had not been present but arrived two hours after the shooting.

The position of subjectivity changed quite dramatically. By the turn of the century, subjectivity floats in the air around great events—a fly on the wall, not connected to any identifiable social or political subject. The emphasis has moved from a public (being those with the franchise) to a more generic "public view" available at closer quarters, revealing emotion in the moment and emphasizing the human face and body frozen in action or reaction. When *Leslie's* illustrated President McKinley's assassination, the age of the photograph had arrived. It published dozens of photographs of McKinley in action, and of other figures associated with the administration, plus a haunting portrait of the assassin, Leon Czolgosz, behind bars, but there was no attempt to illustrate the shooting itself. The nearest thing was a shot of the scene of the shooting, with an *X* marking the spot where the deed was done. The viewers of these photographs could experience an emotional response to the depictions of human moments, but they could no longer read the president as a monumental personage or the image as a story unfolding before them, the citizenry, as public witnesses to grand spectacle.

From Personage to Person

The shift from personage to person can be seen best in another dimension of the pictures: the tenor or mood they convey. This is most evident in depictions of people. Initially, they occupy the picture plane as a "personage," that is, as a relatively fixed set of traits that spring from social class, race, position of power, physiognomy, style of dress, and personality. The illustrated journals appeared when notions such as animal magnetism and phrenology were current; the vogue of illustrated journalism coincided with the age of Darwin. The common sense of the day affirmed the importance of genetics and physiognomy to character, and it was assumed without much questioning (even by race reformers like Frederick Douglas) that there was a science to the relationship between race and behavior. Ordinary people, then, usually were depicted according to physiognomic stereotypes.[32] Ordinary people, however, were rarely, if ever, the subjects of portraiture; they appeared in crowd scenes, usually sketched, or they appeared as the appendages of machines and buildings. Portraiture was reserved for leaders, and to depict them as personages meant something more than mere racial or physiognomic characteristics.

The president and other political leaders (and their wives) were personages that moved into view but did not change, their poses remained stiff and their gestures, if any, theatrical signs.

31 *Leslie's* (July 16, 1881): 332-3.
32 For an extended discussion, see Brown, *Frank Leslie's,* Chapter 2.

Figure 9

"Embalming the Body of the Deceased, on the Morning of September 20th," *Leslie's* (Oct. 8, 1881): top of 85.

Figure 10

"The Great Fire in Chicago—Group of Refugees in the Street. Drawn by C. S. Reinhart. See Page 1010, *Harper's* (Oct. 28, 1871): cover.
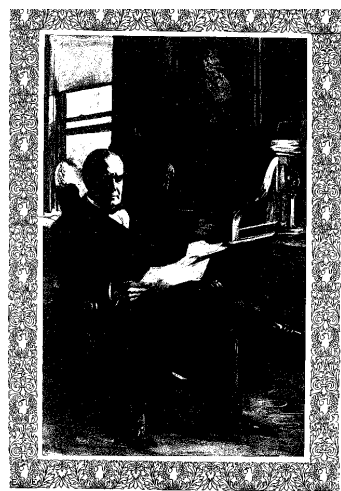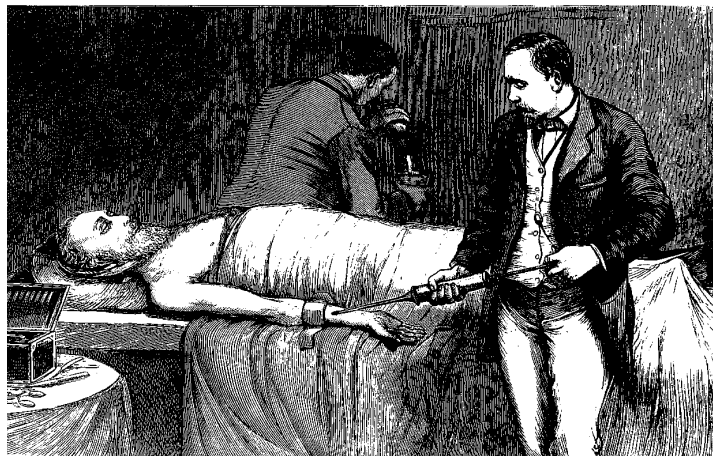
Figure 11

"William McKinley, President of the United States: Drawn from Life by Lucius Hitchcock," *Harper's* (March 9, 1901): 247.

33   *Harper's* (March 16, 1861): 165.

34   *Leslie's* (Oct. 8, 1881): 85 and 92.

35   *Harper's* (Oct. 28, 1871): cover.

36   *Harper's* (March 9, 1901): 247.

Again, this mode of depiction is not divorced from technique—most portraits were engraved from photographs, which initially required that the subject maintain a fixed position for several seconds of exposure time. However, these facial expressions and poses were stiff also because the sitter and photographer arranged them so: more casual poses were technically feasible and were used for lesser persons. Equally fixed were the accompanying texts, verbal descriptions of character, presenting a record of the personage's career and an account of his or her values, allegiances, and characteristics. Fixity was the point—the image was supposed to present the essence, the distilled character, of the personage. Even in sketch art, the brow, nose, and mole of Lincoln are as set as the faces of buildings presented elsewhere, as can be seen in "Presidents Buchanan and Lincoln Entering the Senate Chamber, etc." [33] Emotions are formulaic, like the masks of drama and comedy.

The fixity and materiality of the personage, even the character of great men, is quite alien to the photographic age. One index of this is a series of engravings following Garfield's death (Fig. 9)—rather gruesome depictions of his corpse being autopsied and embalmed.[34] No matter how intrusive the camera eye may be said to have become, such illustrations—so intimate and seemingly unconnected to the public interest—are unthinkable today. They relate more closely to the medieval concept of power invested in the king's body. They could illustrate only something larger than any mere person. Indeed, ordinary people usually appeared relaxed and unposed (Fig. 10), while in the same scene, men of substance took on theatrical poses.[35]

By the turn of the nineteenth century, the mood had changed utterly, because now even great people were possessed of emotional lives that are fleeting, and exist on a background that is no longer so clearly fixed and monumental. After his inauguration, *Harper's* shows McKinley in portrait (Fig. 11), not as the grand personage as in previous presidents' portraits, but in a private moment of reading and reflection.[36] The era that produced Freud and Einstein, in

Figure 12
"The Grant Monument to be Erected in Chicago. Drawn by T. de Thumibot. See Page 494." *Harper's* (July 4, 1891): cover.

which an invisible world came under the gaze of the new sciences, thus found cultural expression in the illustrated press.

Images meant for amusement or commentary did not follow the same course, remaining largely untouched by the realist ethos. The illustrations accompanying fiction consistently emphasized the characters in the stories as characters. Cartoons likewise always emphasized persons, and did not shift from personage to emotional person since they remained focused on the realm of satire. In *Harper's,* an 1861 cartoon called "A Dust-Storm in Broadway" showing two figures in vignette [37] does not differ that greatly from the vignette in an untitled cartoon from 1896.[38]

The Moment of Change
The year 1890 may be taken as a watershed, a moment of change in the practice of illustrated journalism, in much the same way as it marked a change in periodical literature more generally. By 1890, a new genre of middle-class, mass-market periodicals led by Edward Bok's *Ladies' Home Journal* had embraced a realist ethos, preparing the way for the great muckrake journals founded in the next decade. Photography was, of course, the picturing tool most congenial to the realism of the new periodical literature. The landmark moment in the marriage of social realism, journalism, and photography was the publication of Jacob Riis's *How the Other Half Lives* in 1890.

The illustrated journals were caught up in these changes. In Harper's in 1891, people appeared for the first time arrested in motion (Fig. 12), usually larger than the monuments near them.[39] Note the slicing off of the rider's horse in the foreground, in clear echo of the fleeting moment as originally visualized in the art of impressionism (such as Edgar Degas's *A Carriage at the Races* of 1873). By 1891, the stock regatta image is gone, replaced by an intimate view of people inside a boat watching the much-smaller regatta in the distance. People are also the center of imagery meant to cover the inauguration of a cold-storage facility. Interestingly enough, these changes occur just when type and image begin to have a different interplay, much more fluid, with type wrapping around images (an effect that occurred much earlier in advertising). In 1896, the images of battle scenes finally begin to show people in action; no longer does the coverage focus on the physical objects of war, as it did during the Civil War.

Travel coverage is an especially valuable indicator of the shift to realism. More than any other kind of reporting, it shows how "we"—the "we" of elite, civic society—see the world and, in the 1890s, what we usually see are faces, costumes, and gestures from faraway places. This focus on surface representation and fleeting subjectivity is true of the new sports photos as well, where, as we have noted, the human figure—sometimes in motion—has replaced the equipment as the center of pictorial attention. Even so, sketch art and drawings continued to be used, both for purposes of

37   *Harper's* (March 16, 1861): 176.
38   *Harper's* (July 19, 1896): 696.
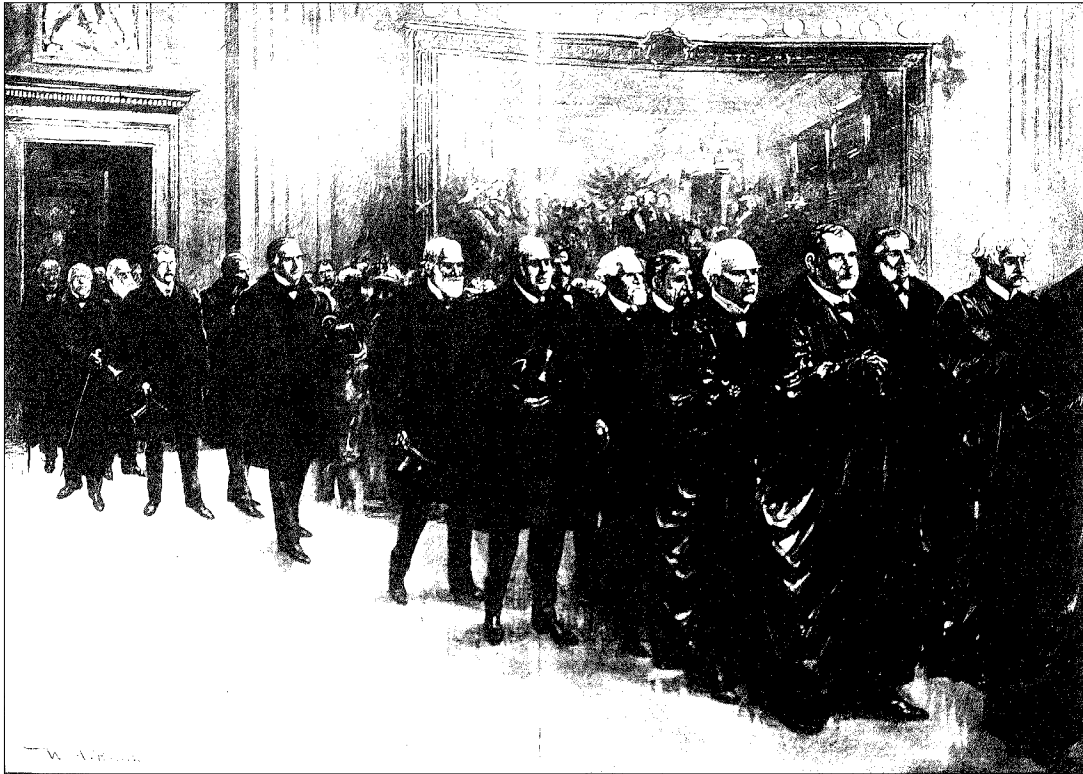39   *Harper's* (July 4, 1891): cover.

explanation and as a way of reporting with a point of view. In short, a change has taken place, and it is dramatic, but the old continues to coexist with the new.

Coverage of McKinley's swearing-in in 1901 is emblematic of this shift. The illustrations are realistic, and his portrait (described earlier) is not the standard monumental pose but a moment of contemplation. A new regime of typography also has taken over, with hierarchical clarity in type (gray text, heads made darker or larger to "pop" out, and distinctive display type—all elements of the emerging modern style). Even the illustration of the President-elect passing through the Capitol (Fig. 13), despite the old way of showing the building and the bodies with portrait-heads stuck on them, has people in motion.[40] Although this is a drawing, nevertheless, it clearly indicates that the goal of imagery has changed.

Meanwhile, in the photographs after 1890, we see an abandonment of the art of storytelling and a reversion to the lifeless portrait images of the 1860s. This had been the case throughout the introduction of photography in these publications. In Civil War engravings, those taken from photographs reproduce a very narrow range of grays, their interest lying primarily in their novelty, not in their content. In the *Leslie's* and *Harper's* coverage of the Great Chicago Fire, the stunning images are the sketches and drawings. One of these the editors tout (as quoted previously)—despite the presence of photographs on the adjacent page—for good reason.

40   *Harper's* (March 9, 1901): 260-61.
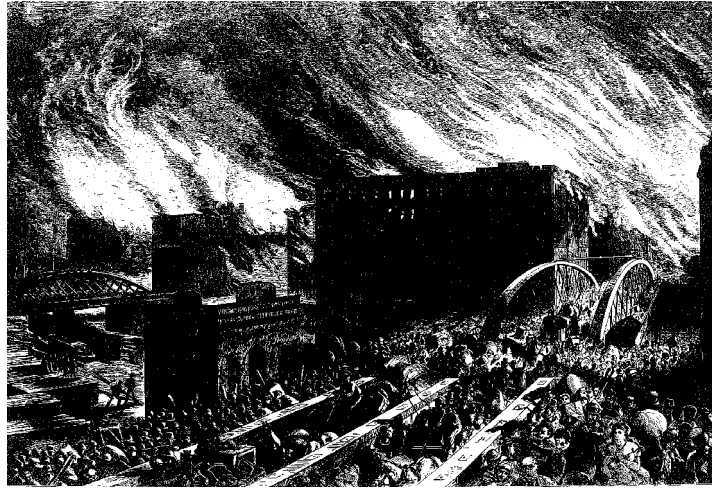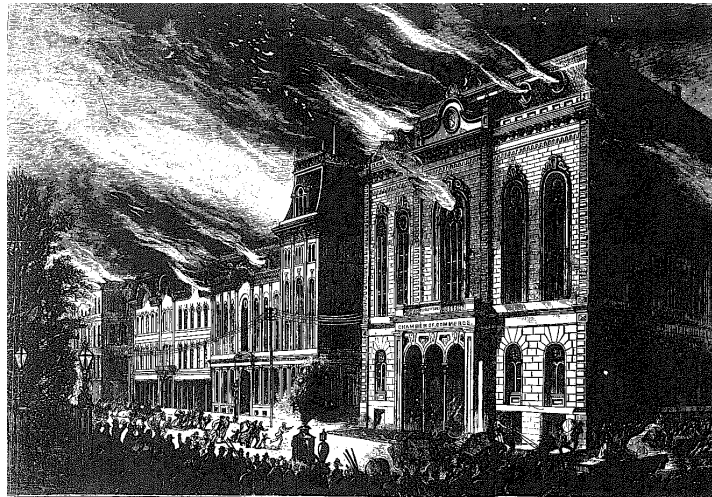
Consider two *Harper's* engravings in that week's issue (Figs. 14 and 15), one from a sketch (well to the front of the magazine) and the other from a photograph (both entitled, "Chicago in Flames").[41] In these examples, the photograph emphasizes precise mechanically-rendered details, producing a composition in which the flames seem incidental, whereas the sketch pits the flames against the fleeing crowd in a vee composition that uses the buildings in silhouette as the wedge between the two living flows. If the photos were always the more artless of the illustrations, then the era of press photography marked a triumph of artlessness, as well as the demise of an earlier notion of picture-enhanced storytelling. It is evident that the producers of illustrated journals had misgivings about this adventure in naiveté.

Editors understandably questioned and delayed the use of images that were clearly inferior in their narrative range. In the 1896 *Leslie's* example cited previously, the Yale rowing competition photos once again are not as lucid as the drawings. The same is true in the coverage of McKinley's death in *Harper's.* The drawings

41   *Harper's* (Oct. 28, 1871): 1004, top of 1012.

capture candid moments, but the photographs have an unskillful, snapshot quality. There is a wonderful retrospective in the same issue,[42] showing depictions of the deaths of Lincoln and Garfield. In the 1865 engravings, people appear as specks beneath the man-made ceiling and draperies as the casket lies in state, and again as mere texture covering the hills and beneath the trees at the burial. Even the more closely rendered citizens in the foregrounds are dwarfed by the monumental man-made and natural world. On the facing page, reproductions of the 1881 Garfield pictures are much the same, with arches, canopies, and hills dominating, but a candid quality is emerging, although tiny details are blurred in favor of focusing the scene. But the images of McKinley depend on photography and, as a result, revert to older forms, with small people and buildings emphasized, but here the old monumentality is lost, as the photograph renders everything in minute, dull, and inarticulate detail.

Conclusion

The new regime of realism embodied in photography is not a culmination of some process of development. It is a whole new regime in which the role of illustration is fundamentally recast. Photography, explained in the terms of realist ideology, became understood as the zenith in a long drive toward true fidelity, toward the capture of the real, unmediated by human artistry. This implied the simultaneous demotion of sketches and drawings which, in the twentieth century, are no longer credited with authenticity and instead become mere art. The condition for the rise of photojournalism, then, was the rejection of the regime of illustrated journalism, with its obsolescent (and perhaps too republican) collusion in the explicit artistry of storytelling.

Why the disappearance of the regime of illustrated news? Its fate was not simply determined technologically, by the superiority of photographic reproduction. The historical evidence cannot support that interpretation. To a certain extent, the failure of illustrated journalism was brought about by changes in media ecology. It became increasingly difficult for the illustrated weeklies to compete with the daily press. In the 1890s, papers such as Pulitzer's *World*, *Hearst's* and the *Chicago Daily News*, carried illustrations like those in *Leslie's* but on a daily basis and more cheaply. Newspapers effectively absorbed the franchise of the illustrated weeklies. The scale of newspaper manufacturing made it simpler and more efficient in the 1890s for a daily to print a photo than to create an engraving from it, justifying the investment in photographic technology.

The larger cultural environment also realigned the real with the technical, obscuring the centrality of human mediation. We reject the notion that photographs were simply inevitable because they were more truthful than engraved or woodcut illustrations. Nevertheless, along with new ideas about the unconscious and

42   *Harper's* (Sept. 21, 1901): 952-53.

about the possibility that invisible physical forces could be "seen" and measured by machinery, the rise of photo-as-realism did interfere with the ability of *Harper's* and *Leslie's* to proclaim the fidelity of their sketches. Illustrated journalism had a choice. It could adhere to art, or it could imitate its photographic competitors. But adhering to art had come to mean divorcing art from the notion of the real and, since its founding, illustrated journalism had married artistry to authenticity. Trapped in this contradiction, the illustrated papers imitated their more powerful competitors and eventually floundered.

What consequences flow from the loss of the regime of illustrated news? As a result of its marriage with realism, press photography embraced a notion of reportage that required the effacement of authorship. If photographers simply operate the machinery revealing reality, they cannot be held accountable for what the camera exposes. Unlike artists and authors, who hold responsibility for their vision of the world, photojournalists are witnesses and bystanders to events ostensibly beyond their control. Thus, the realist regime effectively removed any clear lines of responsibility, hiding news work in what has been called the fog of documentary force.

Realism in art welcomed into the canon of imagery the depiction of ordinary life, as opposed to great scenes from history, mythology, and literature—a move that preceded the shift we observed in the illustrated papers. In ordinary parlance, the real, of course, is that which exists whether you like it or not. This obdurate sense of realism springs from naturalizing conceptions of its rock-hard substantiality—as in Gustave Courbet's *Stonebreakers*—as well as from its origins as the incursion of the exotic other, the "ordinary" (read: the lower classes) ruled inadmissible into the canon of greatness for centuries but thereby rendered fixed and immutable. Journalistic realism, at the receiving end, projects an audience that can neither blame journalists nor take effective action in the public sphere. Thus, the regime of photojournalism contributes to a sense of powerlessness and fatalism in the face of intractable social problems that has been observed elsewhere.[43] Certainly a kind of visual intelligence disappears when readers forget about the authored artistry of pictures, and succumb to what philosophers call naive realism.

A more important loss was the disappearance of an implied model of citizenship. The new regime divides the reader or viewer from the world in ways normatively distinct from those of the old regime. Journalism driven by narrative carried along in its wake the reader, who anticipated sequence, emplotment, and resolution. Realist press photography trades away temporal narrative in exchange for other things, such as immediacy and emotional impact. Photojournalism is exciting and startling but, by doing more, it may, in fact, do less to bring readers into the storytelling of

43 Kevin G. Barnhurst, *Seeing the Newspaper* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994).

news. Although illustrated journalism projected the comforting belief that illustration can amount to a form of travel, annihilating time and space, it also offered vistas of great occurrences and personages. This removed a form of social distance, while reinforcing the notion of greatness. The distance from the reader was obviously diminished, and yet those illustrations of Garfield's autopsy and embalming also reinforced the President's body as a symbol of state. The viewer became an insider elevated to the citizen's vantage point. Seeing the President in ordinary moments of emotion obliterates both social distance and the civic posture, while calling for raw sentiment. The demise of the regime of illustrated journalism thus implies the loss of the republican ethos of citizenship.