The Dark Side of the *Domus*

This paper offers a critique of the concept of 'dwelling' which has become something of a dominant paradigm within architectural theory. The paper explores the philosophical underpinnings of the concept in the work of Martin Heidegger. It makes connections with the notion of 'heimat' in National Socialism, and argues that not only does 'dwelling' have a dark side, but it is also ill-equipped to deal with our contemporary cultural conditions. The paper concludes that architecture must look to a more flexible theoretical model, more in tune with the fluidity, flux and complexity of our contemporary modes of existence.

Within recent architectural theory architecture as 'dwelling' has become something of a dominant paradigm amid calls for a regionalist architecture and celebration of the concept of *genius loci*. This is an approach which emanates from the work of the German philosopher, Martin Heidegger, and which has been pursued by those who have developed his thought — architectural theorists such as Christian Norberg-Schulz and philosophers such as Gianni Vattimo.[1] Many have looked to an architecture of 'dwelling' as a means of combatting the alienation of contemporary society and of resisting the homogenising placelessness of International Style architecture. What I wish to argue, however, is that taken to an extreme 'dwelling' itself — the logic of the *domus* — can have negative consequences. There is, I would maintain, a negative side to 'dwelling' — a dark side to the *domus*.

According to Heidegger, one's capacity to live on this earth — to 'dwell' in the phenomenological sense — is an essentially architectural experience. The very Being of being is linked to one's situatedness in the world. This is the thesis that comes out most clearly in his essay, 'Building, Dwelling, Thinking'. As the title of this essay infers, for Heidegger there is a clear link between 'dwelling' and architecture. The whole concept of 'dwelling' is grounded in the architectural. For Heidegger a building should be on and *of* the soil, *of* the location on which it is built. He illustrates this with the example of a Greek temple, which sits so naturally within its setting it is as though it has been 'brought forth' by its setting. Throughout Heidegger's thinking there is an emphasis on the soil, on the earth, and this applies especially to the question of architecture. Buildings are not buildings in the abstract, but they gain their very sense of presence through being situated where they are, through their *Dasein*. 'Does not the flourishing of any work of art,' he asks, 'depend upon its roots

[1]Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture*, London: Academy Editions, 1980; Gianni Vattimo, 'The End of Modernity, The End of The Project?', trans. David Webb, *Journal of Philosophy and the Visual Arts*, Academy Editions, pp.74-7.

in a native soil?'[2] This evocation of the soil, this call for a 'situated' architecture, can be read as an evocation for the *heimat*, for the homeland. And for Heidegger it is not in the cities but in the countryside — where one is most in touch with nature and tradition — that the sense of homeland may flourish:

> Homeland is most possible and effective where the powers of nature around us and the remnants of historical tradition remain together, where an origin and an ancient, nourished style of human existence hold sway. Today for this decisive task perhaps only the rural counties and small towns are competent — if they recognise anew their unusual qualities, if they know how to draw the boundaries between themselves and life in the large cities and gigantic areas of modern industrial complexes.[3]

This appeal to the homeland would appear to be part of a consistent nationalistic outlook in his thought, which is echoed in a series of forced etymological strategies in his writings which attempt to lend authority to the German language, by tracing the origins of certain German words to ancient Greek. All this would seem to infer that there is a potential nationalism that permeates the whole of his thought, a nationalism which, in the context of pre-war Germany, shared something in common with fascism.

It would be wrong to associate Heidegger's thought too closely with the excesses of fascist ideology. There is much to be praised in his work, and one could argue that his philosophy need not necessarily lead to a nationalistic outlook, and that to judge his thought solely at the level of the political would be to do him an injustice. Indeed his work is open to a variety of interpretations, and the complexity of his thought defies any neat categorisation. But equally, the point should be made that his work *lends* itself to a nationalistic outlook, and that his own life was *inscribed within* a nationalistic outlook. Thus it hardly seems inconsistent that a philosopher such as Heidegger should have belonged at one stage to the National Socialist party, a stand for which he has been highly criticised.

It is in 'The Self-Assertion of the German University', his rectoral address of 1933, that Heidegger most closely associates his thoughts with the aspirations of National

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[2] Heidegger, *Discourse on Thinking*, trans. J. M. Anderson and E. H. Freund, New York: Harper and Row, 1966, p. 47.

[3] Heidegger, 'Homeland', trans. Thomas Franklin O'Meara, Listening, Vol. 6, No. 3 (autumn, 1971), pp. 231-238, cited in Michael Zimmerman, *Heidegger's Confrontation with Modernity*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990, p. 71.

Socialism. He unequivocally links the question of Being to the '*soil and blood* of a *Volk*':

> . . .[S]pirit is the determined resolve to the essence of Being, a resolve that is attuned to origins and knowing. And the *spiritual world* of a Volk is not its cultural superstructure, just as little as it is its arsenal of useful knowledge and values; rather, it is the power that comes from preserving at the most profound level the forces that are rooted in the *soil and blood* of a Volk, the power to arouse most inwardly and to shake most extensively the Volk's existence.[4]

Similar themes are echoed in Heidegger's speech in honour of the German nationalist hero, Albert Leo Schlageter, who had been executed in 1923 for acts of sabotage against the French army of occupation. Here the 'soil' is specifically identified with the Black Forest:

> Student of Freiburg! German student! When on your hikes and outings you set foot in the mountains, forests and valleys of this Black Forest, the home of this hero, experience this and know: the mountains among which the young farmer's son grew up are of primitive stone, of granite. They have long been at work hardening the will. The autumn sun of the Black Forest bathes the mountain ranges and forests in the most glorious clear light. It has long nourished clarity of heart. As he [Schlageter] stood defenceless facing the rifles, the hero's inner gaze soared above the muzzles to the daylight and mountains of his home that he might die for the German people and its Reich with the Alemannic countryside before his eyes.[5]

And it was precisely in the soil of this Alemannic countryside that Heidegger declared his own thought to be rooted:

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[4]Martin Heidegger, 'The Self-Assertion of the German University' in Richard Wolin (ed.), *The Heidegger Controversy*, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993, pp.29-39. Other examples of pro-Nazi rhetoric on the part of Heidegger are to be found in this volume.

[5]Martin Heidegger, 'Schlageter' in Richard Wolin (ed.), *The Heidegger Controversy*, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993, p.41.

> The inner relationship of my own work to the Black Forest and its people comes from a centuries-long and irreplaceable rootedness in the Alemannian-Swabian soil.[6]

The very evocation of the soil in Heidegger echoes a consistent trope within fascist ideology. As Klaus Theweleit has argued in the context of pre-war German fascism, this evocation can be understood in psychoanalytic terms as a need to reinforce and protect the ego by identifying with a larger body.[7] This larger identity would be constituted in a social order, and would be embodied in a figurehead, and a physical location: *ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer*. Identity therefore becomes territorialised and mapped on to a geographic terrain. The individual becomes one with the land in a process of identification which is itself mythic, and this process is often supported by other myths of identification. In this dissolving into nature, difference is suppressed and a new identity is forged with mother earth. Thus we find constant references to natural phenomena — storms, blood and soil — in fascist ideology. As Ernst Jünger, a figure who exerted a great influence on Heidegger, wrote of prewar German fascism:

> What is being born is the essence of nationalism, a new relation to the elemental, to Mother earth, whose soil has been blasted away in the rekindled fires of material battles and fertilised by streams of blood.[8]

And it can be seen that it is precisely in the context of an identity rooted to the soil, that those groups not rooted to the soil become excluded. Traditionally, Jews and gypsies are both 'wanderers', although each for different reasons: the gypsies largely by choice, the Jews mainly by necessity. Neither are rooted to the soil. The 'wanderer' does not fit within a concept of situatedness or rootedness to the soil, and therefore does not fit within the philosophy of the *heimat*. The 'wanderer' is the element that cannot be controlled, cannot be domesticated, cannot be contained within the logic of the *domus*. The 'wanderer' is therefore treated as the 'other', the excluded one, and is perceived as a threat to the nation. Just as nationalism forms a

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[6]Martin Heidegger, 'Schneeberger', p. 216, trans. Thomas Sheehan, cited in Sheehan, *Heidegger: The Man and the Thinker*, Chicago: Precedent Publishing, 1981, p.213.

[7]Klaus Theweleit argues in the case of German Freikorp soldiers that it is often precisely the underdeveloped and 'not-fully-born' egos young males within a particular constellation of social and political circumstances that this 'need' is most acute. Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies, Vol. 1*, trans. Stephen Conway, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987; *Male Fantasies, Vol. 2*, trans. Chris Turner and Erica Carter, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989.

[8]Cited by Theweleit, vol. 2, p. 88. For the influence of Jünger on Heidegger, see Michael Zimmerman, *Heidegger's Confrontation with Modernity*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990, pp. 66-93.

symbolic identification with the soil, so it also generates an antagonism towards all that cannot be identified with the soil. For it is precisely the fear of flows and movements which cannot be stemmed, as Klaus Theweleit has observed, that characterises the fascist obsession with control.[9]

The *Domus* and the Megalopolis

Heidegger's involvement with the National Socialists has been known to German intellectuals for some time, but it was not until the publication in 1987 of Victor Farias's *Heidegger et le nazisme* that the full extent of his involvement with the organisation and his anti-semitism became known to French intellectuals. This event fanned the flames of what was to become known as the 'Heidegger controversy'. Those who have attempted to defend him for his political indiscretions have claimed that he was either politically naive or that his own philosophy is essentially apolitical.[10] Others, such as Jean-François Lyotard, have been less charitable towards him. In his book, *Heidegger and 'the jews'*,[11] Lyotard uses 'jew' with a lower case 'j' to signify not just Jews themselves, but all minority groups who might be perceived as the 'other': outsiders, non-conformists, artists, anarchists, blacks, homeless, Arabs and anyone else who might be perceived as alien and potentially threatening. For Lyotard, the crime in Heidegger, and so too in all thought, lies in the forgetting, and the forgetting of the forgetting. It is in what is left out, what is excluded, what is in effect 'repressed', that his thinking is at fault. And this more general forgetting includes the more specific forgetting: the failure on the part of Heidegger to acknowledge and apologise fully for his support of National Socialism.[12]

Lyotard picks up the problem of Heidegger's thought in the context of architecture in his piece, '*Domus* and Megalopolis'.[13] Lyotard contrasts the traditional *domus* with

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[9]Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies, Vol. 1*, pp.229-435.

[10]See, for example, Fred Dallmayr, *The Other Heidegger*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993; Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger, Art and Politics*, trans. Chris Turner, Oxford: Blackwell, 1990.

[11]Victor Farías's work was translated into English in 1989, as *Heidegger and Nazism*, trans. Paul Barrell et al., Philadelphia: Temple University Press. Jean-François Lyotard, *Heidegger and 'the jews'*, trans. Andreas Michel and Mark Roberts, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990.

[12]These questions are discussed at length in Richard Wolin (ed.), *The Heidegger Controversy*, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993. See especially the exchange of letters between Herbert Marcuse and Martin Heidegger. Other books on this subject include Hans Sluga, *Heidegger's Crisis*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993.

[13]Jean-François Lyotard, *The Inhuman*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Rachel Bowlby, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991, pp.191-204.

our present condition, that of the megalopolis. In other words he is contrasting two models of existence, two ideals of living. Although the one, the *domus*, is associated with the simple homestead, and the other, the megalopolis, with the city, he is not contrasting the homestead with the city, so much as the *condition* of the homestead with the *condition* of the city. He is contrasting the myth of the *domus* — the phenomenon of 'home' — with the more alienated model of 'city-life' within the age of the megalopolis.

The traditional *domus* has been presented as a bucolic idyll, where all you do is serve the *phusis* — the natural order — and place yourself at the service of its urge. The traditional *domus* has its natural rhythm which contains and controls everything. The domestic hierarchy of the *domus* likewise has its natural order, with the master and mistress, the *dominus* and the *domina*, and the *ancilla*, the female servant. Yet this image of the bucolic idyll, for Lyotard, remains but an image. Since the time of Virgil, the *domus* has no longer been possible. 'Domesticity,' Lyotard comments, 'is over, and probably it never existed, except as a dream of the old child awakening and destroying it on awakening.'[14] For the current *domus* is but a myth, a product of the megalopolis, the nostalgic yearning for what can now only be a mirage. For Lyotard there can be no more *domus*; the megalopolis has now stifled the *domus*, and has 'gnawed away' at the *domus* and its community. With the advent of the megalopolis the traditional values of the *domus* have been transformed, and the hegemony of the natural order has been supplanted by the artificial.[15] But the crucial point for Lyotard is that the *domus* constitutes a form of myth. It is not that myths — 'the myths we live by' — are in themselves bad, but rather that there is something potentially deceptive about myth, because its own identity *as* myth is often concealed. And it is precisely in its reliance on the mythic that Heidegger's own thought is most suspect.

In such a context the values of the *domus* likewise become facades. They can never be invoked, but only be mimicked as in the case of the Nazis. Thus, for Lyotard, the 'service' of nature in the original *domus* leads inexorably to the 'service' — *dienst* — of Heidegger's rectorship address — a hollow and ironic sense of 'service', where 'knowledge service' is treated at the same level as 'labour service' and 'military service'.[16] The *domus* here has a different 'take'. For in the age of the megalopolis — in an age when the god-nature has been doubled as an anti-god — when there is no

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[14]Lyotard, p. 201.

[15]For Lyotard what takes over from the 'control' of the *domus* in the megalopolis is a form of techno-science which offers a new form of control, one that is no longer territorialised and historicised, but computerized.

[16]Lyotard, p. 195. See Martin Heidegger, 'The Self-Assertion of the German University' in Richard Wolin (ed.), *The Heidegger Controversy*, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993, p.35.

'nature' to serve, service is incorporated within a generalised system of exchange — business — whose aim is profit, and whose governing principle is performativity. Under this new condition the violence of the *domus* is exposed. Everything that was ordered and contained within an hierarchised structure, which served to replicate and repeat the cycle of domesticity, all that was once tamed and controlled — 'domesticated' — within the *domus,* is revealed for what it is in the figure of modern man, *homo re-domesticus* (redomesticated man). To quote from Lyotard:

> The undominated, the untamed, in earlier times concealed in the *domus*, is unleashed in the *homo politicus* and *homo economicus* but under the ancient aegis of service, *Dienst*. . . *Homo re-domesticus* in power kills in the street shouting 'You are not one of ours'. . . The ruin of the *domus* makes possible this fury which it contained and which it exercised in its name.[17]

What masquerades as the *domus* in fact constitutes 'domestication without the *domus*'. It contains a violence repressed within it. 'The untameable was tragic,' for Lyotard, 'because it was lodged in the heart of the *domus*.'[18] And here we might recognise a Freudian moment within Lyotard. Indeed the house itself, as Freud suggested, can be taken as a model for repression. The terms which Freud uses in this context — '*heimlich*' (homely) and '*unheimlich*' (uncanny) — are terms with clear architectural resonances.

For Freud the *heimlich* contained the *unheimlich* repressed within it:

> For this uncanny is in reality nothing new or alien, but something which is familiar and old-fashioned in the mind and which has become alienated from it through a process of repression.[19]

It is as though the very foundations of the house and of all that is homely are built on the repression of its opposite, the *unheimlich* buried deep beneath the *heimlich*. Yet *heimlich* and *unheimlich*, it would seem, are terms that fold into one another. As Freud comments: 'This *heimlich* is a word the meaning of which develops in the direction of ambivolence, until it finally coincides with its opposite, *unheimlich*.'[20] Thus any definition of the term *heimlich* made 'against' the term *unheimlich* is clearly

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[17]Lyotard, p. 197.
[18]Lyotard, p. 202.
[19]Sigmund Freud, *Art and Literature*, Penguin Freud Library, volume 14, trans. James Strachey, London:Penguin, 1985.
[20]Freud, p. 347.

a false one. The very ‘opposition’ that is posited denies the reciprocal tension that binds the two terms together. This denial constitutes a form of conscious repression which always threatens to be unleashed in the realm of the unconscious. The ‘fury’ of the uncanny haunts the home like a ghost.

The Myth of ‘Place’

The *domus*, then, can be seen as a myth of the present, and it is within this framework that we can now also begin to understand regionalism as a movement grounded in myth. Thus what purports to be a sentimental evocation of traditional forms can be seen as part of a larger project of constructing and reinforcing a regional or national identity. We might therefore recognise within regionalism not only the potential dangers inherent in all such calls for a regional or national identity, but also the essential complicity of the concept within the cultural conditions of late capitalism. For regionalism is presented as a movement which has arisen in opposition to the homogenised space of late capitalism. The very placelessness of contemporary society has prompted a fresh interest in ‘place’ as ‘difference’. But against this it could be argued — in line with Fredric Jameson — that it is late capitalism itself that has in part sanctioned these developments.[21] In a world dominated by all-consuming capitalism ‘difference’ itself can be seen to be a product of the market. As such Jameson’s views can be understood within the framework of Lyotard’s remarks on the *domus*. Postmodern calls for ‘place’ echo postmodern calls for the *domus*. If the countryside — the realm of the *domus* — is seen increasingly in terms of tourism and vacation, then ‘place’ as difference could be understood in equally cynical, ironic terms, as the site of the ‘exotic’. Just as the call for difference can be understood as spawned by — and not resistant of — global capitalism, so ‘place’ becomes another commodity in the marketplace.

These values are particularly suspect in an age when there has been a fundamental shift in the ways in which we relate to the world. Not only must we question the primacy of a concept such as ‘dwelling’ as a source of identification, but we must also ask whether a concept which is so place-specific can any longer retain much authority.

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[21]See Fredric Jameson, *The Seeds of Time*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1994, pp.189-205.

For Lyotard, in the age of the megalopolis even the concept of dwelling is marked by a form of passage. 'Lost behind our thoughts, the *domus* is also a mirage in front, the impossible dwelling', so that we are trapped in a form of passage between an awakening, in the form of a phantom-like remembrance of the lost *domus*, and the re-inscription of this awakening in the future:

> So only transit, transfer, translation and difference. It is not the house passing away, like a mobile home or the shepherd's hut, *it is in passing that we dwell*. [my italics][22]

Thus for Lyotard it is not the mobility of the house *per se*, so much as the endless reinscription of the concept that constitutes the 'passage' of dwelling. To claim otherwise would be to subscribe to the myth of the *domus*. Yet equally one might point towards more concrete manifestations of the transiency of dwelling. For it could also be said that the 'mobile home' remains the condition of the present, if by 'mobile home' we understand a flexible range of indexical markers on which identity might be cathected as a form of symbolic 'grounding'. Not only has the home been largely redefined as property, so that what was once a stable point of origin has become a commodity, exchangeable in the marketplace, — located within a price range, if no longer constrained by place — but, arguably, there has also been a shift in the way in which we relate to the world.

The possibility of such a shift is afforded by an age which constitutes its identity less through notions of place — place of origin, birth place etc. — and increasingly through more transitory phenomena, such as jobs and possessions. These possessions may include even technological objects, such as cars and computers. Indeed technology, far from being the necessary source of alienation, as Heidegger had supposed, may itself offer mechanisms of symbolic identification. For what thinkers such as Heidegger overlook is the fundamental capacity for human beings to accommodate and adapt to new conditions. This chameleon-like tendency ensures that human beings eventually absorb technology as part of their symbolic background, to the point where they may grow attached to and identify with technological objects.

Furthermore advances in technology have themselves influenced the way that we relate to 'place'. Technological developments in transportation have caused physical distance to be largely displaced by 'time-distance'. Meanwhile, developments in

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[22]Lyotard, p. 198.

communications technology have deeply affected the space of inter-personal relationships. In an age where the actual space of the cross roads is giving way to the virtual space of the internet, the hegemony of the physical is being progressively eroded.[23] This is not to deny the necessity of place. Rather it is to recognise the possibility of a shift in mechanisms of symbolic identification. In a society that is constantly mobile, and whose archetypal space is the transport interchange or the airport lounge, identity can be defined increasingly in terms of departures and impending arrivals. The concept of the *domus* as the stable site of 'dwelling' therefore comes across not only as a myth, but as a *nostalgic* myth.

Indeed calls for the *domus* and for regionalism share something of the nostalgia for a lost tradition — a lost paradise — that is embodied in other contemporary projects to recapture the past. In an age whose fashions are often dominated by 'retro' imagery, reproduction itself — whether furniture, clothes or architecture — must be viewed within this context. As such the distinction between 'authentic' reproduction and postmodern 'retro' pastiche begins to be effaced. Indeed it is precisely against the charge of 'inauthenticity' that so-called 'authentic' appeals to the past must defend themselves most virulently, while — paradoxically — claiming their authority in their very 'authenticity'.

Inevitably any architectural approach which is grounded in a Heideggerian framework must be based on terms such as 'authenticity'. Yet it is precisely for its '*jargon* of authenticity' that Theodor Adorno criticises the whole of Heidegger's work.[24] For Adorno 'authenticity' in Heidegger amounts to little more than the *aura* of authenticity — the myth of the authentic. This evocation of 'authenticity' becomes particularly suspect in our contemporary cultural condition if, as Fredric Jameson has argued, 'authenticity' is prone to collapse into its opposite.[25] Calls for an 'authentic' regionalism may themselves share something of the 'inauthenticity' of Disneyland, and other patently artificial worlds. And it is precisely the model of Disneyland that offers us a crucial insight into the mechanisms at play in this evocation of 'authenticity'. For Disneyland, in Jean Baudrillard's eyes, is complicit within a broader deception. By declaring itself 'unreal' in opposition to the 'real' world outside, Disneyland is presented as a device to lend authority to that 'reality'. Yet, as

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[23]On this see Paul Virilio, *The Lost Dimension*, trans. Daniel Mosheberg, New York: Semiotext(e), 1991.

[24]Theodor Adorno, *The Jargon of Authenticity*, trans. Knut Tarnowski and Frederic Will, London: Routledge, 1973. For Adorno, Heidegger's thought hides behind contentless jargon. It represents a self-referential system which, by failing to address the real political and economic framework of society, serves only as an ideological mystification of the actual processes of human domination.

[25]Fredric Jameson, 'History Lessons', p.?

Baudrillard argues, Disneyland is in fact precisely part of the reality — or hyper-reality — of the world outside.[26] A similar mechanism in reverse underpins contemporary claims of 'authenticity' or 'reality'. By positing themselves in opposition to the 'inauthentic' or 'unreal', they claim an authority which is itself suspect. As such calls for regional identity can themselves be seen to be the mythic products of a postmodern age. Questions will always remain as to what constitutes an 'authentic' architectural tradition — the distant past or the immediate past — and whether indeed there can ever be any such thing as a 'return' to a tradition of the past. In this context we might ask, for example, whether the concrete tower block does not itself now constitute an 'authentic' architecture for a city such as Hong Kong, and whether attempts to revive vernacular forms are not in themselves 'inauthentic' attempts to reconstruct a mythology of the past.

Towards the Cosmopolis

What, then, are the consequences of this for architecture? In a tradition of architectural theory which has too often championed the *domus* uncritically — from the simple homestead to an architecture of regional identity — one should be aware of the negative side of this ideal. For the *domus* in the age of the megalopolis — in the age of performativity — can never be the true *domus*. The *domus* today is but a mirage, a myth of the *domus*. There is much that is seemingly powerful and seductive in this myth of the *domus*, much that responds to fundamental human desires, and that presents itself as the source of genuine comfort. Vaclav Havel evokes this in his 'dream' for the future of the Czech people beyond the 'shock' of freedom:

> Life in the towns and villages will have overcome the legacy of greyness, uniformity, anonymity, and ugliness inherited from the totalitarian era. It will have a genuinely human dimension. Every main street will have at least two bakeries, two sweet-shops, two pubs, and many other small shops, all privately owned and independent. Thus the streets and neighbourhoods will regain their unique face and atmosphere. Small communities will naturally begin to form again, communities centred on the street, the apartment block, or the

[26] Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulations*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser, Michigan: Michigan University Press, 1994, p. 12.

> neighbourhood. People will once more begin to feel the *phenomenon of home* [my italics].[27]

Havel depicts a gingerbread world of bakeries, sweet-shops and pubs, a world seemingly unsullied by the grim reality of life in the factories, a world where the 'phenomenon of home' is allowed to re-exert itself. Havel's dream reads as a utopian fantasy. Yet it is precisely as a fantasy that — paradoxically — it has most authority. For, as Renata Salecl has argued, a country is always already a kind of fiction, and the homeland a fantasy structure.[28] And herein lies the apparent danger, for it is in dreams that the unconscious is most readily revealed, and it is precisely in this dream — the fantasy of the homeland — that the repressed may be unleashed. If, after the events of 1989, freedom itself was a 'shock', there was a greater shock in the unexpected neo-nazi violence that accompanied the rise of nationalism in the East. But it was a shock that might perhaps have been anticipated. Within the *heimlich* of the homeland there lurks the *unheimlich* of nationalism. And the very 'phenomenon of home' contains a potential violence.

For our present society we should be open to an alternative model of architectural theory more congenial to the complexities of modern society, a model which likewise avoids the domination and exclusion implicit in the *domus*, and which can accommodate the more flexible modes of existence that characterise our contemporary condition. Perhaps, then, rather than continuing to champion the *domus* — the architecture of 'dwelling' — which, it has been argued, is the mythical product of a postmodern age, we might look instead to more appropriate models suggested by the megalopolis — the city — itself. And it is to the specific model of the city *as cosmopolis* that I wish to turn. For just as there is a dark side to the *domus*, the cosmopolis provides an acceptable face to the megalopolis. The cosmopolis as a form of 'city life' offers an ideal that deserves to be reappraised.

For the city constitutes the condition of the present, and urbanity, as Iris Marion Young has observed, remains 'the horizon of the modern, not to mention the postmodern condition'.[29] If, furthermore, we are to understand our current condition as largely that of a transitory, fleeting society, the predominant — if not universal —

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[27]Vaclav Havel, *Summer Meditations*, trans. Paul Wilson, London: Faber and Faber, 1992, p.104.

[28]Renata Salecl, 'The Ideology of the Mother Nation in the Yugoslav Conflict', in Michael Kennedy (ed.), *Envisioning Eastern Europe*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994, pp.87-101.

[29]Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, p. 237.

mode of existence, it could be argued, is often precisely that of the 'wanderer'. The Jew, then, the gypsy, the 'other' of society provides in some senses the model for the contemporary moment — rootless, international, mobile, deterritorialised.[30] This is in opposition to the rooted, the nationalistic and the static. If the *dominus*, the stable and controlling master of the *domus* is the creature of the traditional community, the 'wanderer' represents the freedom and flux of the city. As such the 'wanderer' is the archetypal creature of our contemporary condition, a creature whose existence reflects the very transiency of the city.

Often commentators of modernity criticised the city as alienating, fragmentary, violent and disordered. Georg Simmel, for example, observed how the metropolis spawned the modern *blasé* individual whose disinterested existence within the city evokes the circulation of capital itself. The modern city dweller has developed a form of anonymity, itself a defensive cocoon against the overstimulation of life in the metropolis. Yet this very anonymity breeds a certain tolerance. The city, for example, tends to accept difference, and to accommodate the 'other'. Traditionally the city has provided a refuge for minorities: it is the city where the Jew, the outsider, the 'wanderer' has often found a haven. 'City life' is the ideal where 'difference' is acceptable and on occasions even celebrated, to the point where minority interest groups have often been spawned by the city.

By comparison, the 'community' — the figure of the *domus* — can be seen to be an homogenising, universalising model, which absorbs and therefore denies 'difference'. The notion of 'community' is based on a myth of unmediated social relations. It assumes that all subjects are transparent to one another, and that somehow each can fully understand the 'other'. 'Difference' is therefore collapsed into a single totalising vision, which itself breeds a certain intolerance to whatever does not conform to that vision. It is only when the city mimics the village, when it fragments into 'neighbourhoods' which constitute autonomous individual units that this model begins to break down. Within 'neighbourhood watch schemes' and other exclusionary mechanisms the principle of the city — the heterogeneous, open cosmopolis — is supplanted by the principle of the village — the homogeneous, closed *domus*. And, as the extreme of this condition, we might cite past examples of sectarian and political divides within cities such as Belfast, Beirut or indeed Berlin.

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[30]Manchehr Sanadjian explores the concept of 'deterritorialisation' in 'Iranians in Germany' in *New German Critique*, 64, Winter 95, 3-36; see also Caren Kaplan, 'Deterritorialisations: The Rewriting of Home and Exile in Western Feminist Discourse', *Cultural Critique*, 6, Spring 87, 191.

‘City life’ — the life of the cosmopolis — offers an alternative to the model of the *domus*. The cosmopolis retains the germ of an ideal more in tune with our contemporary cultural conditions. It suggests a possible model for living together in a form of interdependency, a model which can allow for the fluidity and flux, the complexities and multi-faceted solidarities of contemporary society, and which is characterised by a non-oppositional, non-hierarchical openness to the ‘other’. Writ large, the *cosmopolis* suggests a model for a pluralistic, open society, free from the exclusions of nationalism.

And if our contemporary society is to be an open, *cosmopolitan* society, then surely we require an architecture whose language and forms match such an ideal: an architecture which transcends the rigid constraints of the *genius loci* — that ‘ultimate onto-theological component of Architecture Appropriated’ as Daniel Libeskind has described it — and which resists the nihilistic unfolding of tradition — an ‘open’ architecture. Perhaps then we should be envisaging not ‘architecture’ so much as ‘architectures’ — unpredictable, flexible and hybrid ‘architectures’, as Libeskind calls for;[31] architectures which match the fluidity, flux and complexity of contemporary existence, an existence that is epitomised by the cosmopolis; architectures that might therefore be described as ‘cosmopolitan architectures’; architectures born of the spirit of the cosmopolis, but not limited to the cosmopolis: *cosmopolitan* architectures for a *cosmopolitan* society.

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[31]Daniel Libeskind, ‘Traces of the Unborn’, p.