

Heterotopias of Illusion; From Beaubourg to Bilbao and Beyond.

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Introduction.

Walter Benjamin in his *Berlin Childhood around 1900* describes the telephone arriving in his parents house as this alien object that threatened and disturbed the calm order of his childhood family home, allowing strange voices to enter into this privileged enclave. The telephone was an illicit intruder in the bourgeois household. It was hidden in the corner of a dark back hall of the apartment, a crude black object with a mouth piece and separate earphone, both “as heavy as dumbbells.” Benjamin writing with the clarity of hindsight was able to identify this new contraption as a harbinger of a new age of mechanization, bringing individual freedom, person-to-person communication, promoting a new form of feed-back and networking in modern life in the metropolis (Benjamin 2006: 48-50).

Three Heterotopic Systems.

Urban actors create cities through negotiations that employ shared, symbolic intermediaries, creating a commons or shared space for activities. This commons may take the form of an enclave, an armature or a heterotopia. Cities are made up of shifting, recombinant relationships between these three elements:. The enclave is predominant in the archaic, hierarchic (Asian, Islamic, Medieval European) spatial order of localization. The armature is predominant in the spatial order of extension in the infrastructure or public spaces of the modern industrial city and the heterotopia predominates in the network space of the post-industrial city. These three organizational devices are fundamental to the activities of urban actors, who need shared, common, communicative, collective,

conceptual models in order to create and operate the city successfully (Shane, 2005:176-227).

We can read the shifting function of heterotopic systems in the city in light of Foucault's history of space that corresponds to Kevin Lynch's three city models (the "City of faith", the "City as a machine" and the "Organic city", aka Eco-City (Lynch, 1981: 71-98). In this reading the three sorts of heterotopia Foucault distinguishes can be tied to his three spatial systems or stages in his 'history of space'(his lecture stopped short from doing so) : the medieval hierarchic "Space of emplacement "" where the "heterotopia of crisis" is hidden, the modern "Space of Extension" where new urban actors create the "heterotopia of deviance" outside the city initiating an urban network, and finally the network as the "System of relations ", where urban actors enjoy "heterotopias of illusion" that display shifting, mobile relationships within the network (Foucault, 1967: 265). We commonly call these three urban and informational systems the pre-industrial, the industrial and post-industrial city. The terms Archi Citta, Cine Citta and Tele Citta (IsoCaRP, 2001) have the advantage that they emphasize the communication systems and symbolic intermediaries used by different generations of urban actors. Furthermore they echo Jean Baudrillard's three, informational "Orders of Simulation" where the first order of simulation consists of hand crafted originals, the second of mechanical reproductions, and the third of simulacra and hyper-reality (Baudrillard, 1983, 166-184). In the "Third Order of Simulation" (Tele Citta) there is "no original and no copy" and new originals ("the real") can be created "from miniature units, matrices, memory banks and control modules" and ceaselessly circulate in the media and society in an "ecstasy of communication" that he both welcomed and feared (Luke 1994: 216-219). Foucault investigated how the "heterotopia of deviance" promoted the modern shift from Archi Citta to the Cine Citta, from the medieval to the industrial city with the rise of the mental asylym, the hospital and the

prison (Foucault, 1975: 300), . Fast-paced “Heterotopias of illusion” now facilitate the shift to the “Third Order of Simulation” in the Tele Citta.

In the elaboration of his “heterotopology” Foucault spoke of the miniaturization involved in the creation of heterotopias, as well as their mobility moving between set points (his perfect heterotopia was the ship “moving from port to port, from brothel to brothel”) and their feed-back capacity in terms of multiple, “mirroring” codes. Heterotopias were always complex, ambiguous and multi-cellular structures, capable of containing exceptional activities and new urban immigrants because of their flexible codes and their unusual, multiple compartments. The codes of heterotopias mirrored and inverted their host societies, discipline and illusion being balanced in the “heterotopia of crisis”, discipline dominating in the “heterotopia of deviance” and illusion dominating in the “heterotopia of illusion” (Shane, 2005: 246:251:259).

It is not hard to cite built examples of these three types of heterotopias. In the Archi Citta the Oxford College or the Belgian Beguinage are non-punitive sanctuaries inside the city block for people in crisis and transition provided by institutions as acts of communal charity. In the case of the Medieval Oxford College the professors provided itinerant teenage students with rooms in houses on a staircase where they themselves lived and taught as tutors. Later the professors moved to a “quad” (courtyard) to share facilities like a chapel, dining room, library, infirmary and guard in the gatehouse. Wealthy Medieval Leuven provided a similar miniature city of small houses with gardens for pious women within its own walled enclave, with its own church, common rooms and hospital inside the city. The inhabitants were free to go in and out, but knew they would be safe at night within its walls (it is now a student hostel and a UNESCO World heritage site)

In the Cine Citta hospitals, clinics, asylums, cemeteries, prisons, schools, universities and military barracks (as well as colonies and ships) correspond to Foucault's category of "heterotopias of deviance" that urban actors moved outside their host cities. Foucault's prime example was Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon where rigid, "scientific" disciplinary codes (invented by specialized professionals) shaped the living arrangements and built environment to compensate for the criminals failure to honor the codes of a modern, just and egalitarian society (Evans, 1971: 58-69 and Foucault 1978: 95-228). Later scholars added other examples of highly regulated places of "alternative social ordering" including factories, warehouses, docks, and port facilities (Hetherington, 1997: 109-138). Robert Owen's New Lanark, Scotland, the largest cotton mill in the world in the 1780's, is exemplary of this expansion of the "heterotopia of deviance" to include a small industrial town with its many "philanthropic" regulations, company store, schools, hospital, chapel, owners house and workers housing blocks (Bentham was an investor, it is also now a UNESCO World heritage site).

Foucault gave as examples of the "heterotopia of illusion" gardens, theaters, cinemas, world's fairs, stock exchanges, bordellos, casinos and museums where space and time could be collaged at will (in museum period rooms or on stage) and codes of behavior and fashion could change very rapidly. The French Crown, for instance, considered theaters s threat to public order, subjecting them to censorship and restricting them to peripheral locations, like the Theatre de L' Odeon (1770's) by the Luxembourg Palace. The privileged aristocratic enclave of the Palais Royal in the center of the city beside the Louvre, provides an excellent, early example of a "heterotopia of illusion" that included all of Foucault's list and also served as an incubator for the French Revolution in the 1780's. The Duc D'Orleans, owner of the Palais convinced the King, his cousin, to allow

commercial activities on the site, which was already exempt from the rules of the City of Paris as it was royal land (Geist, 1983: 445-460: 522-29).

The resulting “heterotopia of illusion” at the Palais Royal was a handsome courtyard of apartments above clean, long shopping arcades of expensive shops, banks, money exchanges, book stores, galleries, high fashion stores and excellent restaurants. The first French stock market was located here. At night the theater, an underground circus, shadow puppet shows, cafes, gambling and prostitution set the tone in the well-lit, arcades. Private police and private street cleaners provided the disciplinary and hygienic components. The world’s first, wooden, glass-covered shopping arcade the *Galleries du Bois* appeared here (1786-1788), behind the Duke’s palace, leading to the side of the newly constructed Theatre Palais Royal. It was in this spectacular, heterotopic enclave that the Revolutionary pamphleteers established themselves beyond the reach of the Paris police and here that incendiary speeches in the courtyard led to a group of women revolutionaries bringing the royal family back from Versailles (to be imprisoned in the Temple, another extra-legal enclave within Paris belonging to the Knights Templar from the Crusades) (Geist, 1983: 59-64).

Heterotopias of Illusion: Cine Citta, Beaubourg and Modern Urbanism.

Foucault pointed to fairgrounds, markets, arcades, department stores and world’s fairs, the show places of capitalism and global production, as “heterotopias of illusion”. Walter Benjamin saw these places as supporting the urban dream world of the bourgeoisie, his “Phantasmorgoria”, fed by advertising and marketing promotions, creating a frenzy of consumption and commercial fetishism about objects of desire. Advertisers attempted to

brand a preference for their products on the collective unconscious of consumer's to influence their purchases in the spectacular showplaces of global production and luxury (Benjamin,1937: 147-162).

Both “heterotopias of deviance” and those of illusion depended on networks. The project of the modern city presumed that engineers would provide networks of clean drinking water, proper sanitation, good paved roads, efficient railways, electricity, telegraph and telephone services everywhere. The services that we now take for granted in the industrialized North began as local networks and then expanded to form national and international networks. Every nation state sought to bundle together modern urban services and to provide them as a package with near universal coverage. Sometimes the state itself would intervene to achieve economies of scale, as when the UK government underwrote the construction of a National Grid for the distribution of electricity in Britain. The US Government similarly encouraged the creation of large private communication monopolies, like the Bell telephone system or national television networks in America, to service the new, sprawling suburban growth. (Graham & Marvin, 2001: 44-89)

In Post-war America Walt Disney demonstrated the essential mechanisms of the “heterotopia of illusion” in the TV age when he built Disneyland in the orange groves of Anaheim on the edge of Los Angeles in 1954. Disney added several new features to the traditional “heterotopia of illusion”, such as the world fair. First TV media coverage was essential to success. Disney struck a deal with the NBC television network to show his cartoons to the children the fast expanding suburbs of America (40 million people moved in 15 years) in exchange for financial help building his theme park. Second control of the image of the park was crucial, both in terms of its record of safety and security, but also in terms of its compensatory, nostalgic themes. The new suburban frontier might inspire

cowboy themes, such as Frontier Land and Future Land, but Disney was savvy enough to scale the entrance through the Main Street armature of Disneyland at 2/3 scale. Children felt empowered and parents felt like giants. The simulacra street, with its hidden underground realm containing the “City as a machine”, compensated for the newness of suburbia as its historic facades symbolized a lost community. This “heterotopia of illusion” attracted 12 million visitors in its first year of operation (Marling, 1997: 86-139).

American developers, confronted with the emptying city cores, were slow to learn Disney’s lesson. In their view the center of the city stood for blight and decay, while Guy Debord was busy collaging together his “Naked City” map (1956), cutting out the fragmentary “atmospheres” of the central Paris and connecting them with red arrows of desire. In the U.S. the downtown “Festival Mall” only slowly caught on after the initial success of Ghiradelli Square in San Francisco (Halprin, 1964), followed by James Rouse’s heavily subsidized Quincy Market, Boston (Thompson, 1978) that attracted 12 million people a year like Disneyland. European planners were quicker to rediscover the potential of historic cores, as Copenhagen began the long process of pedestrianizing its central area in 1962 (Gehl, 1996: 59). In London protesters fought against the demolition of Covent Garden Fruit and Vegetable market and won in 1973, allowing the GLC to develop the area as “Festival Mall” (1980). French groups protested the demolition of Baltard’s steel and glass structures at Les Halles markets but lost to an underground mall (now being rebuilt), resulting in the promise of a new art center in central Paris. In the same period artists transformed Soho in New York into a new arts quarter, after the defeat of Robert Moses highway plans (1968). Each New York artist studio acted as heterotopic cell inside the decaying, cast-iron factory buildings that had been slated for demolition. In an unusual case of bottom-up, cell-by-cell transformation of the city from the inside (reminiscent of the “heterotopia of crisis” when change was hidden inside the city), artists hid their existence

in the lofts behind blacked out windows at night until they were legally recognized as occupants (Zukin 1981: 2-17).

The 1971 competition organizers for the Pompidou Art Center presumed that arts lead development would transform the surrounding Les Marais district. Renzo Piano and Richards Rogers' winning design looked like a modern factory inserted into Central Paris to contain art collections in a giant, flexible, loft-like art palace. A gridded fragment of the modern Cine Citta machine stood in deliberate and stark contrast to the historic district, a "social condensor" descended from the Russian Constructivists theory of inserting a new social facility to reverse the code of the feudal Archi Citta. This new building was intended as a new wired, electronically connected commons, with its associated, slopping plaza. It promised to plug the impoverished inner city neighborhood into the universal, global city network of the Tele Citta. The project attracted over 5 million visitors in 1977 its first year, beating the Louvre into second place as a tourist attraction (the ride up the escalators to the spectacular view from the roof-top terraces was free until the 1997-99 renovations) (Sudjic, 1995: 55-65).

Beaubourg, as the Pompidou Centre was renamed by the Parisians, helped re-center Paris and renewed the tradition of the 'heterotopia of illusion' in a city that had forgotten the role of its arcades, its theaters, world's fairs and art galleries. Learning lessons from the 1960's avant-guard theories of Cedric Price and Archigram in London, the Pompidou Center appeared to be a miniature fragment from an advanced, hyper-modern, network city. The designers deliberately exposed its giant trusses, exterior escalators and elevators on the façade, as well as the gigantic service pipes on the rear. The winning competition drawings included huge video screens and ticker tape displays on the façade serving "the society of the spectacle" (Debord, 1967: 35-40), with movable platforms

suspended in the large, long-span, unobstructed interior galleries. The designers topped out the entire confection, a perfect 'heterotopia of illusion', with a large, prominently displayed, satellite dish acting as a high-tech, symbol on the roof (Sudjic, 1995: 22).

In the "Beaubourg Effect" (1982) Baudrillard condemned the new museum as a "monument to disconnection" that brought the 'hyper-reality of Disneyland' to central Paris and killed the art that it displayed. He argued the museum was a mechanical dinosaur and monument to mechanical flows that attempted to freeze the city's artistic production and circulation. The museum was dangerous because it represented "the model of all future forms of controlled "socialization"; the re-totalization of all the dispersed functions of the body and of social life (work, leisure, media culture) within a single homogeneous space-time". In his view the single space-time of this reintegration destroyed the freedom of artistic creativity and replaced it with the frozen domain of the hyper-real simulacra (Baudrillard 1981: 3-13).

Heterotopias of Illusion in Global Networks: Bilbao and Beyond.

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Heterotopias of illusion, as Baudrillard feared, proved potent engines for urban development of simulacra in the Tele Citta, whether in the Disney theme park version or the European cultural heritage version. In Florence, the Uffizi Gallery, the biggest cultural attraction in Europe (12 million visitors) expelled the tourist busses and parked cars from its street armature and the Piazza della Signoria (repaved in 1980), leading to the pedestrianization of all of downtown Florence as an enclave (which became a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1982). In America Disney built Disney Land, Florida on 25,000 acres of swampland, beginning in 1967, opening the Magic Kingdom (1971) replica of Disneyland and the Experimental Planned Community of Tomorrow (EPCOT, 1982).

Disney demonstrated here his belief in the global power of communication systems and branding name places. The Atlantic Telephone and Telegraph (ATT) Pavilion in a vast Buckminster Fuller dome on axis at the entry commanded the circular pond beyond, around which Disney placed at intervals small urban of streets representing cities, such as Paris with the Eiffel Tower, Venice with the Piazza San Marco, Tokyo with a wooden temple. The global system telecommunications tied the world of urban fragments together connecting individuals together. Everyone was still connected equally by a state regulated, global, corporate service provider, represented here by the now defunct ATT global system (Marling, 1997:140-189).

This vast "heterotopia of illusion", Disneyland, is now the largest single employer in the US with 58,000 "cast members" hosting 42 million 'guests'. After the Magic Kingdom Disney established a global brand, starting with EuroDisney outside Paris (1975) that attracted 12 million visitors a year by the late 1990's. Tokyo Disneyland (1983) followed to become the world's most visited theme park (until 2003). In 1993 Disney invested in the New Amsterdam Theater at Times Square on Manhattan's 42nd Street, guaranteeing the rebirth of that street armature as a spectacular tourist attraction (42 million tourists visited New York in 2005). Hong Kong Disneyland (2005) expects 10 million people a year on completion of its second themed enclave.

Thomas Krens, who became the Director of the Guggenheim Museum in New York in 1988, fulfilled Baudrillard's worst fears, transferring the corporate branding concept of the Disney global network to the art world, merging it with the national Beaubourg model, to propose the Guggenheim as a 'global brand' of art museums. In Italy, Peggy Guggenheim's palazzo on the Grand Canal (opened to public 1979) represented an accidental, initial outpost of this empire. Before his appointment Krens had proposed the

Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Arts (Mass MOCA) in an enormous abandoned factory in North Adams, Mass. (it opened with state funding in 1996). Based on a similar public-private hybrid model, Krens built a global chain, from the Berlin Guggenheim (1997) to the Las Vegas Guggenheim in the Venetian Casino, (Rem Koolhaas, 2001- closed 2003). Krens proposed branches in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (Jean Nouvel, 2002) and Guadalajara, Mexico (Enrique Norten, 2005). In addition Krens dreamt of an Asian branch in Hong Kong (designed by Foster) or Taiwan (designed by Zaha Hadid), but in 2005 Peter B. Lewis, the Chairman of the Board and largest donor in the museum's history (\$50million) resigned. Lewis opposed the global brand strategy, saying he wished the Museum would "concentrate more on New York and less on being scattered all over the world." The original NYC building was in a state of bad disrepair. The following year Krens announced an Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates Guggenheim to be designed by Frank Ghery (Krens, 1999: 106–107).

Krens was not alone in this effort, as state museum directors also sought to establish mini-brands and networks. The French state planned Mediatheques as smaller heterotopic versions of the Beaubourg in provincial cities, like Norman Foster's Carre D'Art (1984-1993) beside the Roman temple in Nimes. In England the Tate Gallery under the leadership of Sir Nicholas Serota established a national brand, converting old industrial buildings to art gallery use. The British Tate Gallery (built on the site of the former, panoptic Millbank Prison) established branches in Liverpool Docks (1988), St Ives old gasworks (Cornwall, 1993), in the Baltic Warehouse, Gateshead (2002) and, most successfully in the old Bankside power station on the South Bank, London, the Tate Modern (2000) that drew 5.2 million visitors in its first year.

Ghery's hybrid recombination of models from the Beaubourg and Frank Lloyd Wright created a striking global attractor for Bilbao Guggenheim (1997), establishing the brand and a positive "Bilbao Effect" for the city (1.3 million visitors in 2005). Krens realized that the Keynesian global monopoly system was breaking apart in the 1970's and a two-tiered system was emerging in the Thatcherite, neo-conservative model of private utility service corporations that operated for a profit in place of the 'public good' monopolies. Using the Pop icons of the 1960's and 70's as a cover, Krens pitched his Guggenheim brand at the emerging, global middle-class. In this period the World Bank and other global institutions also shifted their paradigm of development away from Keynesian state run monopolies to multiple private or private-public partnerships, often creating state-supported oligopolies. In terms of global service provision the utopian, universal formulation of Disney broke down into a system of 'by-passes' where private service providers left out poor areas that could not afford the more profitable, high premium services (Graham and Marvin, 200:138-177). Disney World implicitly incorporated a two-tiered system of global tourists from the "First World" (global north) and invisible inhabitants of other strange lands in the "Third World" (global south) later exploited as attractors in theme parks like *Safari Village* (1998-2000).

The Bilbao Guggenheim represented a new hybrid. The museum represented both Krens' global ambitions and those of the Basque province to reassert its presence on the world stage after years of repression by General Franco (Guernica, the subject of Picasso's painting is located closeby). In contrast to the original New York Guggenheim and Beaubourg, this museum was located on the edge of downtown, in a river flood plain where it formed part of a plan for apartments and new commercial district to connect across to a pre-existing, regional theater. Ghery articulated the building in two parts, an upper tower and atrium-like structure with small interior balconies reminiscent of Wright's

spiral ramps, and a long, low shed beneath reminiscent of Beaubourg in its scale and column free interior. One part addressed the reaction against the machine aesthetic represented by Wright's Organic theory and emphasis on the individual. The other part gloried in the mass-scaled machine aesthetic of Beaubourg, pushing it to its new, CAD-powered, fragmented conclusion as a flexible, single story factory shed diminishing the individual below its huge roof. Hiding the junction between these two parts and scaling the building to its position in the tight valley section, the multi-faceted titanium skin created a shimmering, signature profile, wrapping around the elegant bridge that crossed the river.

Heterotopias and New Hybrids in the Urban Future.

The emerging two tiered system was facilitated in the same decades that Krens tried to build his empire of "heterotopias of illusion" by a global communication revolution that empowered individuals within some American, European and Asian cities, creating conditions of similar to those envisioned by Foucault' in 1967 in his "system of relations" (with mobile, interconnected urban actors whose interactions form temporary "sites"). Beginning with *The Well*, a Silicon Valley subscription bulletin board in San Francisco in the late 1980's, the virtual social network movement on the Internet grew enormously in the 1990's and by 2005 extended to voice, text and video images on mobile devices like cell phones. Edge Cities, rural-urban Citta Diffusa and megalopolitan Network Cities of the global north all depend for their efficient operation on such systems that include person-to-person communication enabling swarming and clustering of individuals in groups, forming "sites". In the privileged realm of the Network City a tiny minority of the world's population has an unprecedented connectivity that forms a complex, responsive urban feed-back system, where citizens can influence each others choices through self-organization and the media. Citizens can meet each other, arrange assignments and

make dates, trade and communicate, all through a virtual network that intimately shapes their image of and movement through their city.

The second tier of this global system emerged in the same past 15 years as the largest migration to cities in human history took place in South America, Africa, India and China. The result was that the UN estimates that this year, for the first time in human history, half of the world's 3 billion population now lives in cities, with one third of the urban population (half a billion) living in poverty in 'slums'. The UN expects the number the world population to double in the next 15 years in yet another urban explosion with the number in slums going as high as 2 billion. Meanwhile every shanty-town sprouts with antennas or satellite dishes and a third of the world's population is estimated to have cell phones, even as people carry water into their houses (UN Habitat 2003:xxv-55).

Like Disney in the 1970's, Krens in the 1990's depended on communication networks and the growth of global tourism, promoting leisure and pleasure activities centered in specialized "heterotopias of illusion". Disney has been proven right that communication media, images and the television networks can support enormous "heterotopias of illusion" at a new global scale despite AIDs, poverty and disease. 4 of the 5 largest malls in the world are now in Asia, the largest three times the size of the 1 million square foot *Mall of America* (Jerde, 1991) (Barboza, 2005, *NY Times*). Dubai will soon host the largest mall in the world and the Emirates a Guggenheim. Such "heterotopias of illusion" will play a role in the future modernization of Asian cities, in India and China, as well as cities in the Islamic world. These heterotopias have always drawn people to the city in search of a better life and mixing with strangers. As in Europe, the US and Japan, "heterotopias of illusion" and their supporting networks will play a role in the development

of new, local, modern hybrids that facilitate the shift towards a more performative, flexible and mobile urbanism of “sites”.

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