

M NIFEST

1

LOOKING INWARD

Looking Inward 3
ANTHONY ACCIAVATTI,
JUSTIN FOWLER,
DAN HANDEL

Wuthering Immensity 12
JOHN R. STILGOE

The Unfinished Bargain 20
MICHAEL WALZER

ABSTRACTIONS

The Enumerative
Institution 28
ROBERT PIETRUSKO

Leveraged Urbanism:
An Introduction to the
Aesthetics of Finance 39
PATRICK HAUGHEY

Counting Chickens:
The Landscape of Poultry
Production in the
American Broiler Belt 48
FORBES LIPSCHITZ

Architectures of a Peaceful
Revolution: Containing the
Amazonian "Green Hell" 54
LUIS CASTAÑEDA

The Cloud of Unknowing 64
DAN BORELLI

Climate And Region:
The Post-War American
Architecture Of Victor
And Aladar Olgyay 68
DANIEL A. BARBER

SAMPLES

Consolidated Space
in the Great Plains 76
DAVID KARLE

Deserta, by Design 84
PEDRO IGNACIO
ALONSO

Field Transmissions
from West Texas 96
GRNASFCK

Marfa 104
FLORIAN HOLZHERR
& MICHAEL MALTZAN

Illustrating the American
Community: Village and
City in 1850s Residential
Pattern Books 114
FRED ESENWEIN

Modern Dynamics 1:
Chicago 125
ADAM MICHAELS
& SHANNON HARVEY

PROJECTIONS

Usonia, Americanized:
Gunnar Birkerts
Goes Underground 134
JAMES GRAHAM

The Work of Diagrams:
From Factory to
Hospital in Postwar
America 154
JOY KNOBLAUCH

IAUS 164
DIANA AGREST

A Theory of Disturbance
(in Public and Private) 170
JUNE14 MEYER-
GROHBRÜGGE &
CHERMAYEFF

Therapeutic Frontiers:
The Tremaine Houses
in Santa Barbara 178
VOLKER M. WELTER

The Amplifier 188
ROBERT LONGO

Thomas Pynchon's
115th Dream 200
ENRIQUE RAMIREZ

LOOKING INWARD

BY ANTHONY ACCIAVATTI, JUSTIN FOWLER, AND DAN HANDEL



It is safe to say that for the majority of mankind the superiority of geography over geometry lies in the appeal of its figures. It may be an effect of the incorrigible frivolity inherent in human nature, but most of us will agree that a map is more fascinating to look at than a figure in a treatise on conic section—at any rate, for the simple minds which are the equipment of the majority of the dwellers on this earth.

—Joseph Conrad, 'Geography and Some Explorers,'
National Geographic (March, 1924).

On June 26, 2012 I found myself in the middle of a U-Haul parking lot outside Trenton, New Jersey, standing next to a fleet of large and extra-large trucks stamped with the slogan "Explore America." Signs abounded. Red, white, and blue flags sauntered in the wind while bumper stickers affixed to Toyota Avalon's declared "America First!" A friend, out of the blue, asked why I felt compelled to co-create a journal on American architecture and urbanism.

While waiting for his truck, and not given to throat clearing, I completely ignored my typical response of listing just how big and diverse America is, and, oh, yes, I could have recited poems by Walt Whitman and Federico Garcia Lorca or something to show great erudition. Instead, I found myself saying the following: America has, and continues to be, a potent and incompletely understood laboratory for architecture and urbanism. A people(s), a continent(s), a symbol(s), America is a complex and convoluted human terrain. Just where America begins and ends looks and sounds very different depending on whom you ask and when you ask them. Whether built by Spanish colonialists or Midwestern industrialists or platted at the crossroads of regional or continental commerce, the inscription and form of American settlement, from the gridded Plan of the Indies to national park systems, and from industrialized farming to office parks, each displays the rough and rogue artifacts of a New World gone awry.

The colonial legacies of language, patrimony, religion, and planning all destabilize the rigid shapes and political boundaries found in national maps. And yet, while American Studies has spent over five decades examining the United States from sea to shining sea to give some coherence to an otherwise motley mass of people and land, we have no comparable tradition of focused investigation into the built environment of the Americas. We know very little about what unites and divides these environments of our nebulous New World. If anything, this new print journal—Manifest—will explore and traverse these amalgamated Americas.

As the sun beat down and I blotted my forehead, my friend (a sociologist trained in political science with a preternatural penchant for architecture) asked me to elaborate on what I meant by the idea that there exist different Americas. I complied: Ask someone from Argentina, United States, Brazil,

Mexico, Guyana, Ecuador, or El Salvador what country they are from. Odds are each person will state their nationality. But they will shortly follow with explaining where they are from using a geographical reference, say Central America, South America, or North America (particularly in the case of Mexico). Low-hanging fruit as this may be, this is a peculiar phenomenon worth reflecting on, and one that has a history.

I mentioned the work of historian Susan Schulten, whose scholarship shows not only how conceptions of what constitute America have been institutionalized in everything from the use of Mercator projection maps and National Geographic to geography text books and political cartoons, but also how geography mediates the ways we interpret the space of cities and states, nations and continents. If Schulten presents how the braid between geography and history shaped popular conceptions of America in U.S. discourse, geographer Neil Smith's work looks at how this same braid, between geography and history in the work of geographer Isaiah Bowman, was used to assert U.S. power and legitimacy in the Americas in the first half of the twentieth century.

As we moved into the shade and continued to wait, my friend asked what this had to do with looking inward, for it sounded to him as though we might be looking outward. I answered his question with a question: would a farmer or miner in the Arizona Territory, prior to 1912 when President William Taft accepted Arizona as a state, have said s/he was American? And if so, would we think what it meant to be an American then what it means today, even though the Jeffersonian grid was tattooed across the Sonoran desert long before Arizona was a state? Looking inward, I claimed, means we must look to American histories, for U.S. expansion has not been simply a westward movement to the cliffs of San Francisco: The U.S. occupied the Philippines for half-a-century after Spanish cession in 1898; the Panama Canal Zone split the newly independent nation of Panama in half and remained a U.S. territory until 1979 when a transition from U.S. to Panamanian control took place. Guam, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico along with Alaska, all dis-contiguous domains of the U.S., attest to a scattered body politic.

Each of these examples of territorial expansion and contraction has a history and raises questions about how conceptions of America as a political and cultural space have changed over time. How and where have these changes marked the land, cities, buildings, and social mores are important questions. How does imperialism, both European and American, figure into the history of America? Was there not a time when the Arizona Territory was as seemingly alien to U.S. citizens as was the Philippines?

Still waiting for the U-Haul truck, the sociologist politely, if reluctantly, agreed that America did merit some kind of reevaluation. He was sympathetic to our goal of exploring what might strike many as a clear and well-trodden path. However, he asked me what we hope to achieve or unearth

by looking at America? My answer: Our goal is to challenge what constitutes the American city. This is intimately tied to present perceptions of what defines America coupled with the history of territorial expansion, which suggest, at least for me, that in order to look at what distinguishes America, we must go beyond the Old World versus New World dichotomy. We must reevaluate how different spatial, political, linguistic, and social boundaries of what constitute America have changed over time—how professional, legal, and technological expertise does not only travel in drawings and legal documents, but in the lived experiences of people.

And while Manifest may very well focus primarily on the U.S. as an evolving laboratory for reconfiguring the relationship between the polis and the people, ignoring the Americas and only focusing on the U.S. is like gazing at Cassiopeia and missing the Big Dipper. From Daniel Burnham's plans for Chicago and Manila (Philippines) to, once again, using ecological metaphors to redefine urban forms and processes, looking inward should recast the history of American expertise and values.

Regardless of whether he believed it to be true, the social scientist smiled approvingly, perhaps relieved that the topic of conversation had come to an end, just as the U-Haul attendant walked out to give us the keys to the truck. A short stop at a desolate Polish bar and a thirty-minute drive gave me plenty of time to reflect on the importance of geography and history in the making of the Americas. It possessed me to revisit novelist Joseph Conrad's "Geography and Some Explorers," and reminded me of how important it is to not accept what Benedict Anderson called the "map-as-logic" in his Imagined Communities. Like explorers, we hope to find some new things, even in that which seems so familiar and self-evident. "Of all the sciences," noted Conrad, "geography finds its origin in action, and, what is more, in adventurous action...."

After getting out of the truck and saying goodbye to my friend, I noticed an illustration on the driver side of the truck where the profiles of a Native American and wildcatter face an oil derrick while a sailboat glides by above the caption: "America in its Native State."

—AA

"From the old-world point of view, the American had no mind; he had an economic thinking-machine which could only work on a fixed line. The American mind exasperated the European as a buzz-saw might exasperate a pine forest."

—Henry Adams

Striking through each fragile alibi in a formidable set of possible justifications for project America is as much an act of self-flagellation as it is the product of a series of failed extractions from the past whose sole purpose seems charged with frustrating any concrete projection into the future. Between triumphalism and apologia, there is less ground than one might otherwise think. "I don't hate it...;

I don't hate it ... I don't hate it...; I don't. I don't! I don't hate it! I don't hate it!" Pinned down inside a dormitory along Harvard Yard by a typically unforgiving New England winter, Quentin Compson, the prodigal Faulknerian proxy for an Old South unable to escape itself meets with enraged mantra his Canadian roommate's casual inquiry: "Why do you hate the South?"

Forward a number of decades, history is momentarily complete, and America, finding itself now at the helm of a cultivated Western Civilization that had long kept it at arm's length, makes a trek back to the Old World to study "abroad" on a continent whose cultural landscape was already in the throes of surrender to McLeviathan and finds not only that apologies are demanded, but that they issue forth willingly as though a purge of the unconscious. Were history simply the global record of our journey toward some inevitable cosmopolitan horizon, would it not undercut the need for extended apologetics? Or, is the nature of "inevitability" still up for grabs? As America is defined as much from without as from within, we're faced with an inheritance; and as with any inheritance, taxes must be paid and the rest should be invested wisely. Re: America, "I don't hate it." It's a start.

I lead here with Adams, but it could well have been Whitman, Melville, Fitzgerald, or McCullers: "It is a curious emotion, this certain homesickness I have in mind. With Americans, it is a national trait, as native to us as the roller-coaster or the jukebox. It is no simple longing for the home town or country of our birth. The emotion is Janus-faced: we are torn between a nostalgia for the familiar and an urge for the foreign and strange. As often as not, we are homesick most for the places we have never known." It seems that anyone who attempts to define America is fated to embrace the crutch of cliché or poetic grandiosity, be it agrarian, metropolitan, or personal. I see your Emerson: "Miller owns this field, Locke that, and Manning the woodland beyond. But none of them owns the landscape. There is a property in the horizon which no man has but he whose eye can integrate all the parts, that is, the poet. This is the best part of these men's farms, yet to this their warranty-deeds

give no title." ...and raise you a Bellow: "Skyscrapers are not raised simply to conceal mice." Ellison would call the bluff: "And the mind that has conceived a plan of living must never lose sight of the chaos against which that pattern was conceived. That goes for societies as well as for individuals." The common thread here is ambivalence and, as a question of character, it is to my mind the most accurate way to define American-ness. If the American mind is indeed a "buzz-saw," it is perhaps because mind, in this case, is a rhetorical vestige of the "old" world that conceals the perpetual oscillation between action and imagination present in the "new." Within one framework, the American mind is unstable; from another, it's a powerful vector fueled through the confluence of dueling forces.

The American belief in the malleability of the present frees us from the straight-jacket of history, while still permitting our entrenchment into conventions of our own making. We set boundaries so we might exceed them. As Michael Walzer suggests, "Liberalism is a world of walls, and each one creates a new liberty." America is a land of "checks and balances," a strong conception of negative liberty, and the separation of church and state, yet, in the words of Andrew Delbanco, "we are ill-equipped to deal with the idea that we have limits." Beyond the sacrosanct myth of individualism whose rhetorical use value does not seem to have waned with the passing of Manifest Destiny; for every naive tale of American exceptionalism, there is a mirroring narrative of hope that is the territory unified through the eyes of Emerson's poet or the utopian charge that for Richard Rorty would allow American intellectuals to overcome the paralysis of Foucauldian "knowingness" on the path to "achieving our country."

Poised at the turn of the last century, Rorty's tract suggested that America suffered from an excess of irony, or at the very least, that irony had engendered a passive politics that stunted the country's forward motion. Writing nearly three decades earlier in *American Architecture and Urbanism*, as postmodernism was gaining a foothold over the collective imagination via architects such as Robert Venturi, Vincent Scully lamented

the American distaste for irony, noting that in fact, the country was steeped in it:

The principles of compromise and multiplicity ... have never been popular in America, despite the pluralism of the American condition. It is undoubtedly because of that very heterogeneity that Americans have so often preferred "unifying," homogenized solutions. The self-righteousness of American puritanism, which must see alternatives in terms of black or white, also continues to play a part. Irony, especially, tends to be venomously resented; and "accommodation" requires and is sweetened by irony, which is aware that nothing is final and perfect and that human beings must give and take a little all the time. One cannot really live in a city (or, in the modern world, for that matter) without it, as the Greeks, for all their heroic aggression, understood perfectly well.

Where Rorty saw in the aftermath of irony's ascension the erosion of common conviction, Scully perceived irony in the very condition of the American cultural landscape with its disconnect between word and deed. Where Scully moralized, "life is calling the United States to face its realities now," Rorty had borne witness to an America trampled by those realities, and which lived to fight another day only by virtue of its provisional construction of an "unreal" (to use Ada Louise Huxtable's term) version of itself. As Delbanco suggests in *The Real American Dream*:

Something died, or at least fell dormant, between the later 1960s, when the reform impulse subsided into solipsism, and the 1980s—two phases of our history that may seem far apart in political tone and personal style, but that finally cooperated in installing instant gratification as the hallmark of the good life, and in repudiating the interventionist state as a source of hope. What was lost in the unholy alliance between an insouciant New Left and an insufferably

smug New Right was any conception of a common destiny worth tears, sacrifice, and maybe even death.

Occupied as it was with the pursuit of self-awareness at the expense of everything else, the modern American mind would be incapable of negotiating the parallel strands of thought and action, while the Reaganite legacy of greed-as-good could hardly serve as a model from the deed end of the spectrum. Balance, as suggested from both the post-historical and pre-modern vantage points, could only be achieved through an appeal to character, or rather to a mind in possession of an ambivalent temperament with the capacity to hold irony and conviction, knowingness and spirit, in equal measure.

From Jefferson to Riesman to editorialists in every newspaper of record, the American concern with character is something of a collective obsession, yet it endows this nebulous quality with the force of matter. Jefferson was an ardent believer that self-government could only be perpetuated by individuals of a temperate disposition. At the same time, however, such inward responsibility was invariably conditional and required fortification through appropriate forms of spatial and political organization. As suggested by the dialectic manifest in Emerson's evocative panorama, while the agrarian ideal was ostensibly greater than the sum of its parts, the rhetorical continuity of the whole could only be upheld through the precise delineation of those parts. Like a legal framework, spatial legibility—the Commissioners' Plan of New York, Penn's Philadelphia Plan, or the Jeffersonian grid—would act as a check against momentary lapses in character, while also, perhaps regrettably, instantiating property as its primary medium of expression. Irrespective of the elegance of the framework, however, the city as a dense body or collection of people, always posed some manner of threat to the temperate. The city demanded residents with extraordinary reserves of character; if the quality lagged here, so too would the ideal of self-government. It was in large part over concerns such as these that the Virginian Jefferson's Manhattanite foil, Alexander Hamilton tended to prescribe a greater

mediating role to executive authority, so as not to abdicate to chance the persistence of a tentative balancing act between character and territorial form.

But, the latter is just one of the balancing acts we're interested in. Given the expected ascendancy of post-national and global city triumphalism, what does it mean to train one's sights on "America" with the desire to define boundaries rather than accept a default narrative of erosion, or triumph via erosion? The very idea of "looking inward" would at first glance appear to be little more than a line drawn in the sand, yet few would argue that the forms and scales of urbanization in America are interchangeable with that in Europe or East Asia. Lacking the ingrained welfare tradition of the former and the sheer force of the latter, America is poised both literally and figuratively as a hinge point between conflicting states of being. Against narratives of American decline, it is worth remembering that America's urban culture remains in its infancy. Never in history has a geo-political body been offered so little time between birth and assumed death in which to prove its value to the world. And while one could argue that American culture has irrevocably shaped the global cultural landscape and merged itself with the world, the fact remains that "America" (North or South) as a specific bounded entity has not yet dissolved. We apologize, therefore we are. At the same time, our geographic limits are exhausted and our cities and our internal political boundaries are poised to become the next frontiers.

Following the case of that peculiar, and not always exemplary, American gentleman-scholar Henry Adams, the act of "looking inward" is a path toward education. As William Jordy suggests, Adams was perpetually straddling the gulf between scientific and literary temperaments, striving in each

Perhaps one cannot hope to really know America. Nevertheless, we try.

The first thing I noticed when I moved to the United States was the fact that the size of the standard plates one would buy at Crate &

Barrel or IKEA was substantially larger than what I knew from back home. This distortion, I soon realized, was matched by larger knives and forks, glasses, serving sizes in restaurants, the interiors of American cars, and

text to bring them into alignment under the banner of "history." In effect, the American narrative was a character struggle writ large where personal and global concerns played out across an American backdrop. Both frame and site, the America of Henry Adams required the perpetual assertion of boundaries, straw men, and theories in service of their own violation. Here, Adams, "did not laud the inevitable superiority of the United States to every other nation as such; rather he reserved his praise for what he conceived as the superiority of certain ideas and institutions larger than the geographical boundaries of any country, but best observed in the United States. To this extent, the United States served Adams as the test tube served the scientist."

Just as Walzer identifies an "art" to the practice of separation in liberalism, so too does Jordy see in Adams' frustrated attempts at crafting a scientific history of America an artfulness indicative of an "aesthetic" practice: "To fit the pieces to some whole: this became his goal for history. In this sense, his goal for history paralleled his wider quest in life. He failed in both. In the *Education* he tells us that the odds were from the start against his success in life. From the start, too, the odds opposed his finding the synthesis which he sought in history." While Adams' "failure" is a self-deprecating literary conceit, it speaks to the fundamental ambivalence of American character, and by extension, America itself. Ultimately, the desire to look inward is fueled by a belief in the artfulness of American ambivalence and in America's persistent capacity to construct its territorial and political character through the material of an anxious imagination.

—JF

Bills, aggressive “get big or get out” policies, truck sizes, and millions of acres of transforming hinterlands all had, and still have, a role to play.

In the gradual process of uncovering the chain of transactions, technological breakthroughs, political handshakes, and impoverished farmlands that associated remote regions to a one-bedroom in a university town I became aware of the inherent ambivalence latent in the constitution of America as both a physical territory and a socio-political construction. What “makes America what it is,” wrote Gertrude Stein, is the notion that “there is more space where nobody is than where anybody is.” Whether through familiarity or estrangement, the centrality of space was a founding element in the formation and relentless reformation of the American subject and in what may be called an American experience.

But awareness and understanding are two very different things. Even as the size of the plate eventually grew on me, so to speak, appearing after a while to be completely normal, I could not easily claim that I really got it. After all, it may be possible, as John Stilgoe writes in this issue, that the apprehension of American space has become the exclusive capacity of the elites one would categorize under “old-money,” with the rest of the world, including this author, left on the sidelines to capture only glimpses of the real thing, with its inner working always hidden from sight.

However, in parallel to the perspectives of these privileged few—the ultimate insiders—one could refer to a long-standing tradition of outsiders who circumscribed from without what we think constitutes American-ness. These strangers came in all degrees of assimilation into the great flow of American life: from foreigners Alexis de Tocqueville or Reyner Banham who sketched its characteristics in relatively short trips across the country, to immigrants Hannah Arendt or Rudolf Schindler who highlighted its essences in relation to the Old World, to new citizens Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur or Victor Gruen who explored and built on its potentials, and to strangers in their own land such as Joseph Smith or Chip Lord and Doug Michels, who reflected on and finally challenged its core principles.

The striving towards a definition predates, and in many respects is independent of, the United States as a historical phenomena and a political organization. In some cases it shares more with what is today Canadian territory than with an ostensibly similar neighboring state, and so feeds the ambivalence already mentioned, which also resonates throughout the pages of this journal. De Crèvecoeur, in his 1782 *Letters from an American Farmer* writes: “He becomes an American by being received in the broad lap of our great Alma Mater ... here individuals ... are melted into a new race of men, whose labors and prosperity will one day cause great changes in

the world. Here the rewards of his industry follow with equal steps the progress of his labor; this labor is founded on the basis of self-interest; can it want a stronger allure-ment?” With this well-known statement, written in Orange County NY several years before independence, the sheer process of Americanization, with all of its social and political ramifications, is already spatialized to become innately associated with a new kind of involvement with the land; a transformative and potentially redeeming undertaking of the individual in the New World.

As self-interest becomes the general interest, the idea of a public, and the spaces it is meant to inhabit and use, acquire forms that are essentially different from the ones that shaped architecture, cities, and landscapes in other contexts. Again, outsiders were instrumental in highlighting this divergence; whether it was Rem Koolhaas, summoning the ghosts of Coney Island to claim a role in a city that was never his, or the entourage of Manfredo Tafuri and Francesco Dal Co, historicizing urbanism in the United States as a definite source of modern architecture in Europe. These accounts flirted with the question of how is one to grasp the phenomenon of the American city, with each, in his own way, failing to present a unified statement on the subject. Whereas Koolhaas proposed a heterogeneous (yet sterile) field of ideological experimentation as a partial solution to this problem, the Italian writers

subverted it completely by presenting competing narratives for its development in the same volume. The American city emerged out of these attempts as American cities in the plural; a multitude of controlled experiments which result in a great number of spatio-political propositions. Places with histories, but without a theory.

With the risk of sounding like a Pragmatist, and hence somewhat like an insider, one could say that space in America is an experimental method of inquiry, used for the evolution of political form. In the process, realities are being transformed: not through confrontational struggles between ideal projections and actual subjects that would fail or refuse to share the enthusiasm of the visionary, but through the practical reformation of the existing through new terms. This does not mean the American space developed peacefully. On the contrary, its chronicles are packed with the most violent clashes between natives and colonizers, different immigrant groups, rural and urban, haves and have-nots, developmentalists and conservationists, Republicans and Democrats, all claiming their share. It just means that, much like in the delicate art of business, the ultimate definition of space is never final, always open to negotiation.

The inquiry of American space, much like the (successful or failed) incorporation of its foreign apostles, is continuous, dynamic and ever changing. That is because, as Michael Walzer, also

contributing to this issue, argues, unlike other nations America did not get its name from the people that inhabit it. From this follow that it is “still a radically unfinished society, and for now, at least, it makes sense to say that this unfinishedness is one of its distinctive features.” Being unfinished allows for outsiders, with all the merit and disadvantages of their fascination, ungrounded beliefs, or misunderstanding of the subject, to be integrated in the body politic and material culture of the land, to negotiate their position, and offer new perspectives on what is perhaps America’s only founding principle that is not imbued in ambivalence—its relentless, naïve, and practical obsession with future development.

—DH