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Death Becomes Her: transgression, decay, and eROTicism in Bernard Tschumi's early writings and projects

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Architecture only survives where it negates the form that society expects of it. Where it negates itself by transgressing the limits that history has set for it. *Bernard Tschumi, Advertisements for Architecture, 1975.*

Introduction

In 1975 the young French-Swiss architect Bernard Tschumi published the first of his *Advertisements for Architecture* in *Art Forum* (Fig. 1), and in 1976 he wrote two seminal essays 'Architecture and Transgression' and 'The Pleasure of Architecture'.¹ In these writings Tschumi critiques architectural Modernism (in particular functionalism), establishing his own theory of an eroticised and transgressive architecture. In short, an architecture that exists between the ideal and the real, and that pushes and transgresses established ideological limits. His critique of Modernism and his desire for the discipline to cross the boundaries of what is proper is unsurprising given the context of his own early socio-political formation as an architecture student in Paris in the late 1960s. He was directly involved in the takeover of the École des Beaux Arts during the Paris uprisings in May of 1968, and his subsequent intellectual identity is solidly based upon the Situationist writings which had helped inspire the French student and worker uprisings of that year,² the work of Georges Bataille, and the philosophy and theory of post-structuralist philosophers and critics such as Henri Lefebvre, Roland Barthes, and Michel Foucault. Given this background, he almost had to choose a

critical stance toward the dominant architectural power structure: Modernism. Thus, in his writings and projects of the 1970s and early 1980s, Tschumi continually questions and challenges the notions that are the keystones of Modernist architectural ideology: hierarchy, purity, functionalism, and formalism. This paper discusses concepts of decay, eroticism, and transgression in the early writings of Tschumi as he critiques Modernism in the mid-1970s, and as he begins to use the work of Georges Bataille, and in particular his understanding of eroticism, violence, and death, as a theoretical framework against which to offer architecture an alternative and provocative articulation of the complex and dialectical relationship between the ideal (the conception of space) and the real (the experience of space) in architecture.

Transgression

'Architecture seems to survive in its erotic capacity only wherever it negates itself, where it transcends its paradoxical nature by negating the form that society expects of it. In other words, it is not a matter of destruction or avant-garde subversion but of transgression.'³

With the publication of his essay 'Architecture and Transgression' in 1976, Tschumi clearly stated his sources: he begins the essay with a quotation from the French writer and occasional Surrealist Georges Bataille's *Eroticism: Death and Sensuality* (1957): 'Transgression opens the door into what lies beyond the limits usually observed, but it maintains these

limits just the same. Transgression is complementary to the profane world, exceeding its limits but not destroying it.⁴ For Tschumi, when architecture transgresses — when it goes past the form that society expects of it — it represents the convergence of the real and the ideal. He writes: 'Limits remain, for transgression does not mean the methodical destruction of any code or rule that concerns space or architecture. On the contrary, it introduces new articulations between inside and outside, between concept and experience.' To understand Tschumi's construction of the erotics, limits, and transgression of architecture, one must look to the writings of Georges Bataille — particularly his work on the history of eroticism and theories on violence, excess, and death.

Bataille and eroticism

Bataille's *Erotism* (1957) examined the concept of *Eros*⁵ and its constituent elements of taboo, sacrifice, transgression, death, and pleasure. Bataille was caught up in the rhetoric of both the renewed mid-century interest in psychoanalysis and the impending sexual revolution. For his study of eroticism he turned to the Kinsey Reports *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (1948) and *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (1953).⁶ He dedicated an entire chapter of *Erotism*, entitled 'Kinsey, the underworld and work', to the subject of our sexuality and the animal exuberance that persists in us all. Bataille states 'Eroticism, it may be said, is assenting to life up to the point of death.'⁷ Bataille saw violence and eroticism as being intrinsically linked. 'In essence, the domain of eroticism is the domain of violence, of violation.'⁸ Eroticism is the

transition from a normal state to one of erotic desire, and 'it presupposes the partial dissolution of the person as he exists in the realm of discontinuity...Eroticism always entails a breaking down of established patterns, the patterns... of regulated social order basic to our discontinuous mode of existence as defined and separate individuals.'⁹ As the Bataille scholar Paul Hegarty notes: '... Bataille's thought on eroticism flows directly from his writings on community, whether in terms of losing the self in the other, or in the more precise term-continuity he proposes for such a phenomenon... Bataille opens up the erotic as both deadly and where life actually is at its height... The individual must be threatened with their own dissolution, and this is what is meant by eroticism being about violation.'¹⁰

In the chapter of *Erotism* entitled 'Transgression', Bataille argues that the rational world creates irrational taboos that provoke people to transgress their prohibitions. He proposes that taboos exist in order to be violated. Man had confined his violent urge to maintain order and to curb nature. 'When he confined the violent urges of his own nature within the bounds he thought he had done the same for the violence in the world outside himself.'¹¹ To break out of the rationalising tendency of the world (and society in particular) man uses transgression.¹² Bataille uses Roger Caillois's theory of taboo and transgression to explain that transgression is usually within a limit and does not over-reach its bounds.¹³ When man realises that the barriers that he has set up against violence have lost their significance, his suppressed urges are unleashed and he is no longer able to control his sexual exuberance and no longer fears performing publicly acts

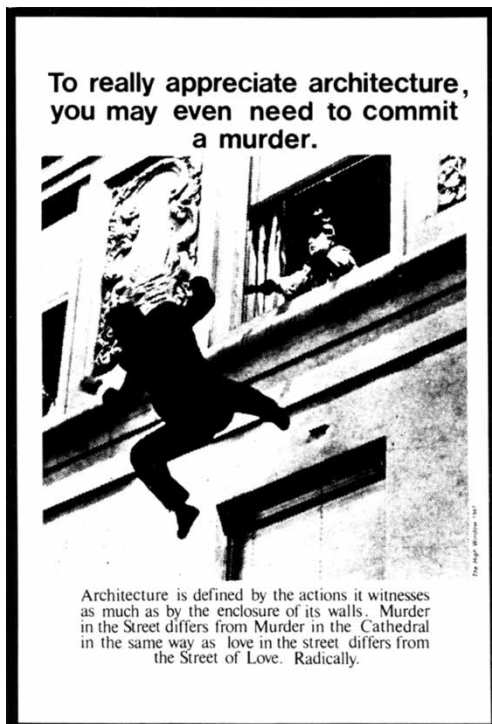


Figure 1. Advertisement for Architecture: Murder. (Courtesy of Bernard Tschumi, Architect.)

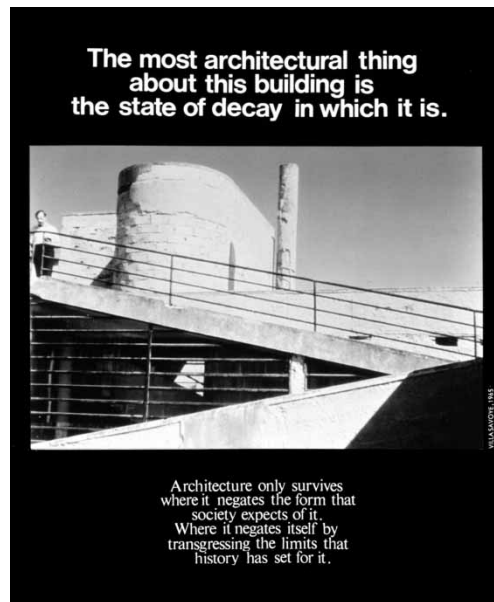


Figure 2. Advertisement for Architecture: Decay. (Courtesy of Bernard Tschumi, Architect.)

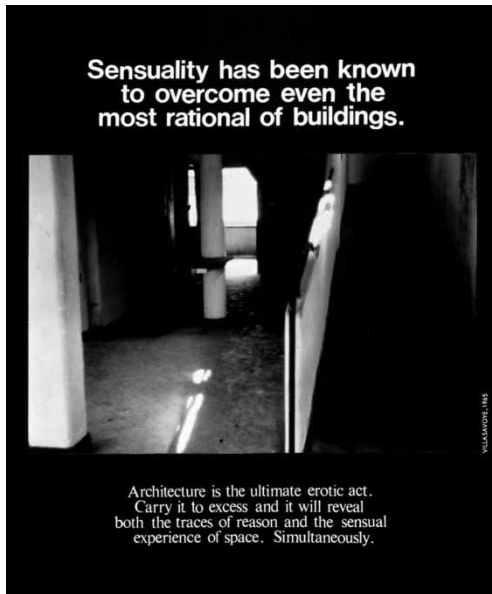
that are constructed for us by the dominant power structure, and it serves as a form or method of release from the imposed binds of reason.

that he once only performed in private.¹⁴ Taboo and transgression have an economic function in the same way as the pleasure principle and the reality principle. Taboos are there to make work possible because work is productive; transgression is a controlled form of release. Therefore, feast-days, carnivals, and holidays are a type of transgression from the production of everyday life. Ultimately, transgression serves to critique reason and the boundaries and limits that we construct for ourselves, or

Violence and transgression

To illustrate his theory of eroticism, transgression, and limits, Tschumi's 'Advertisements for Architecture' of the mid-1970s focus on the decaying and rotting Villa Savoye, designed by Le Corbusier from 1929 to 1931 (Figs 2, 3). The reference to and exaltation of the now decaying and dirty masterpiece of modernism seems sacrilegious at first, but makes sense within wider debates on Modernism emerging within intellectual and academic circles around that

Figure 3. Advertisement
for Architecture:
Sensuality. (Courtesy of
Bernard Tschumi,
Architect.)



time.¹⁵ In addition, Tschumi uses his knowledge of post-structuralist French literature and philosophy to create a new theory of architecture. He proposes a critique of the limits of architectural thought and space through the transgressive act of finding pleasure and beauty in the rotting corpse of Modernism's first born.

Defilement is never an isolated event. It cannot occur except in view of a systematic ordering of ideas. Hence any piecemeal interpretation of the pollution rules of another culture is bound to fail. For the only way in which pollution ideas make sense is in reference to a total structure of thought whose key-stone, boundaries, margins

and internal lines are held in relation by rituals of separation.¹⁶

Violence and transgression became the concepts through which Tschumi began to critique and 'release' Modern architecture from its reasoned language, and the unpredictable human body from its bind in space (Fig. 4). For Tschumi, violence was not a form of brutality, rather 'a metaphor for the intensity of a relationship between individuals and their surrounding spaces.'¹⁷ Tschumi's argument was that any relationship between a building and its users was one of violence because use of any nature would mean the intrusion of a human body into a given space.¹⁸ When an individual enters a space they violate the space and disturb the purity of its architectural order. Tschumi describes this act as erotic: 'Bodies carve all sorts of new and unexpected spaces, through fluid or erratic motions. Architecture, then, is only an organism engaged in constant intercourse with users...each architectural space implies (and desires) the intruding presence that will inhabit it.'¹⁹ The body (the victim) is seen to inhabit and inscribe in the imagination, in the unconscious, the place that it inhabits — a space of possible bliss.²⁰ Spaces are inscribed with violence: narrow corridors are violent toward large crowds, Palladio's *Villa Rotunda* incessantly repeats and through this repetition it stimulates some strange desire that then turns sadistic, violent, and impossible.²¹ However, Tschumi has learned his lessons of violence well. Violence is our recourse to animal instincts (as Bataille would have it). It is a kind of pleasure that comes from pain (a sublime pleasure), from extreme conditions, physical or psychic trauma: the noise one experiences at a loud



rock concert, or the clash of bodies in sport. This pleasure, for Tschumi, as for Bataille, is an ancient pleasure that has been repressed through reason, a pleasure that responds to violence, and to transgression. It is the violence, the pleasure of pain, a sadistic pleasure, so delicious it hurts.

Tschumi contends that if violence is a metaphor for the intensity of a relationship, then architecture transcends this metaphor by its very physicality. The underlying violence of architecture exudes a deep sensuality 'an unremittent eroticism', through which forces are put into play 'rational forces-irrational forces'.²² The contention is that if we

integrate violence into architecture (or admit its existence) then we will admit the possibility of a new pleasure too. The violence of architecture (like any violence) contains the possibility of change, of renewal. In much the same vein as his intellectual forbear, Henri Lefebvre,²³ Tschumi recognises and distinguishes between two types of violence. The first is the conflict between objects: the violence of form versus form (Kurt Schwitters's *Merzbau*, the rotting Villa Savoye); the violence and disruption inflicted by any new construction on its surroundings, this is a contextual violence. The second type of violence (perhaps described as formless) is programmatic and encompasses 'those uses, events, and programmes that, by accident or by design, are specifically evil and destructive. Among them are killing, internment, and torture, which become slaughterhouses, concentration camps, or torture chambers.'²⁴ This form of violence has no boundaries, no limits, and cannot be tolerated or enjoyed. This is the programmatic violence of hate and of destruction. Tschumi is concerned with the first (metaphorical) form of violence in architecture. This reading of violence can lead us to a new pleasure that comes out of conflict, disjunction, and rupture.

The Paradox

In his 1975 essay 'The Architectural Paradox', Tschumi begins to theorise what one might call his 'double bind'. He recognises that the ameliorative utopianism of the early twentieth century has not materialised and that the split between illusion and reality is complete. The essential idea here is that if we agree that space is like a constructed mental

Figure 4. Advertisement for Architecture: Ropes. (Courtesy of Bernard Tschumi, Architect.)

space (or *cosa mentale* as he describes it), whereby there is an unconscious that is repressed by the rationalising tendency of the modern, then space can be analysed through a method of play²⁵ and displacement, *détournement* and wandering that may reveal unconscious (erotic) forces, and express the essential disjunctive nature of the constructed language of architecture and the city. For Tschumi the gap between ideal spaces (the product of mental processes) and real space (the product of social praxis) needs to be bridged through the production of space, a concept that he borrows from Henri Lefebvre.²⁶

The oppositional space between rationality (ideal) and irrationality (real) can be bridged by first seeing architecture as made of two terms that are interdependent and mutually exclusive (the paradox), and then engaging in a play of dissociated terms. Architecture constitutes the reality of experience while this reality gets in the way of the overall vision. Architecture constitutes the abstraction of absolute truth, while this very truth gets in the way of feeling. The concept of space is not space itself.²⁷ For Tschumi, the only way to reach a depth of experience of and in architecture and space is to engage both the rule and the subject: that is, to understand the tension of eroticism where one needs both system and excess. This is the double bind. '[S]o the solution of the paradox is the imaginary blending of the architecture rule and the experience of pleasure.'²⁸

In the opening paragraph of 'Architecture and Transgression', Tschumi paraphrases Bataille's argument regarding taboo and transgression. 'One issue rarely raised in architecture is that of taboo and transgression. Although society secretly delights

in crime, excesses, and violated prohibitions of all sorts, there seems to be a certain Puritanism among architectural theorists.... However, my purpose here is not to criticise the notion of rules, nor to propose new ones. On the contrary, this essay will attempt to demonstrate that transgression is a whole, of which architectural rules are merely one part.'²⁹ He reiterates a point made in 'The Architectural Paradox', that architecture is both a product of the mind, and the sensual experience of space and spatial praxis. He sees architecture caught between sensuality and a search for rigour, between a perverse taste for seduction and a quest for the absolute: the double bind.

The paradox of architecture is explored in the idea of its correspondence with eroticism. eROTicism (as Tschumi graphically expresses the term, perhaps to express the paradox of something both sensual and rotten at the same time) is defined as the pleasure of excess, rather than the excess of pleasure. Eroticism is not merely sensual, the pleasure of the senses, but also a conceptual construct... '[E]roticism means a double pleasure that involves both mental constructs and sensuality'.³⁰ In the same way architecture is not merely a sensual spatial pleasure, but is both conceptual and experiential. 'At the possible/impossible junction of concepts and experience, architecture appears as the image of two worlds...'³¹ The act of architecture reveals both the traces of history and of its own immediate experiential truth. By using the concept of eroticism, Tschumi points to what he sees as architecture's double excess, the excess of its rationality and the sensual pleasure of seeing the building as a process of decay.

For Tschumi, the second correspondence for architecture is between the ideal and the real, or the constant battle between *eros* and *thanatos*,³² that is, the life and death instincts. He writes: 'Death is tolerated only when the bones are white ... Young life and decent death, such was the architectural order.'³³ Bataille contemplates death in *L'Histoire de L'Erotisme*, written in the late 1950s and published in France in 1976 as part of his *Oeuvres Complètes*.³⁴ It is most probable that Tschumi's 1976 essay is responding directly to Bataille's essay. Bataille writes:

For primitives, the extreme dread of death — above all a dread of the distressing phenomenon for the survivor, more than of personal annihilation — is linked to the phase of decay: for them, whitened bones no longer have the intolerable look of decomposing flesh. In the confusion of their minds they attribute their loathing putrefaction to the cruel rancour and hatred visited upon them by death, which the mourning rites are meant to appease. But they think that the whitened bones signify an appeasement: these bones are venerable for them; they finally have the look of death's solemn grandeur: it is to their form, still fearsome, dreadful, but without the excess of decay's active virulence, that the worship of ancestors, becoming guardians at last, is addressed.³⁵

In what seems to be a response to Bataille regarding the relevance of his work to architecture, Tschumi sees modernism as having pushed the hygienism and denial of the putrefaction of death to its architectural metaphor with the decay of Le Corbusier's *Villa Savoye*. Society represses and

domesticates its deepest fears about the forward march of decay toward death. In much the same vein, Mary Douglas, in her classic anthropological study of pollution, *Purity and Danger: an Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (1966), discusses cultural aversions to dirt and decay and reminds us of the definition of dirt as 'matter out of place'. She writes 'It implies two conditions: a set of ordered relations and a contravention of that order. Dirt then is never a unique, isolated event. Where there is dirt there is system.' This statement or observation is remarkably similar to Tschumi's assessment of the paradox of architecture as both a rational system and the haptic sensuality that threatens to subvert that order.

In 'Architecture and Transgression' Tschumi ruminates on the heroic period of Modernism in the 1930s:

Life was seen as a negation of death — it condemned death and even excluded it — a negation that went beyond the idea of death itself and extended to the rot of the putrefying flesh. The anguish about death, however, only related to the phase of decomposition, for white bones did not possess the intolerable aspect of corrupted flesh. Architecture reflected these deep feelings; putrefying buildings were seen as unacceptable, but dry white ruins afforded decency and respectability ...³⁶

Tschumi's 1975 *Villa Savoye* 'Advertisement for Architecture'³⁷ illustrated his point regarding the repression of decay and destruction in architecture, and the pull of the life force as an aid in keeping society's unconscious fears of death at bay. Tschumi felt that the *Villa Savoye* was never as

beautiful as when the plaster was falling off its concrete blocks. This isn't the beautiful, pristine, and whitened ruins of the Acropolis to which Schinkel, Le Corbusier, and Mies pay homage. Those bones are clean of putrefying flesh; they are deemed acceptable to the survivor and retain no memory of life. For Tschumi, the moment of architecture is 'when architecture is life and death at the same time.' The eroticism was its double excess, the excess of its rationality and the sensual pleasure of seeing the building as a process of decay.

As Tschumi continues to contemplate the paradox of the decaying building, he reminds us that his mentor Bataille sees eroticism as the point where life moved toward death — where reproduction is no longer possible, where sex is only for pleasure, that is, eroticism. 'Hence death and eroticism were implicitly linked, and eroticism, by substituting a sense of continuity for divided existence, was monstrous, replete with taboo.'³⁸ The decaying Villa Savoye is erotic because it no longer represents the great white hope of Modernism — the machine in the garden as ideal, clean, pure, functioning, and potentially reproducible. It can no longer reproduce. Its decay signals its transgression — its movement from life toward death. It is at the same time the sum of the rationality that created it, and the real and immediate experience of the space itself. When architecture transgresses, when it goes past the form that society expects of it, when it negates itself, is when architecture meets at the convergence of the real and the ideal.

Tschumi reminds us: 'Limits remain, for transgression does not mean the methodical destruction of any code or rule that concerns space or architecture.

On the contrary, it introduces new articulations between inside and outside, between concept and experience. Very simply it means overcoming unacceptable prevalences.'³⁹ Transgression exposes and plays with the rules and begs the participant (in the case of the decaying Villa Savoye) to move beyond the expected clean and rational experience toward another type of experience — unexpected, visceral, sensual, even dirty. In this, Tschumi echoes and substantiates Bataille's description of the movement from life to death in *The Accursed Share* (1967):

This passage from authority to impotence, from the uprightness of being to absence, from the negative, position of the living to the endless denial of limits heralds the return, the triumph even, of neglectful, reckless, capricious life, full of tender abandon and obscure disorder. Violence responds to decay, which calls it forth; the nothingness of decomposition, relative to the enormous abandon of disorderly passions, is analogous to that aura of sacred terror that tragedy radiates... A power of annihilation, underlying a power of proliferation, of renewal, of freshness, is announced by a putrefaction inevitably full of life: would there be a young generation if the cemeteries did not fill up to make room for it?⁴⁰

For Tschumi, the transgression, eroticism, and the pleasure found in the decaying, dirty, and defiled Villa Savoye is a sadistic pleasure, and a pleasure gleaned from the Oedipal situation that he finds himself in as he grapples with the end of high Modernism and his possible future trajectory. He learned what he needed from the Masters and assimilates the power of the rational with its systems of production, reproduction, and function with the

sensual erotics of the irrational, the particular, and the momentary. It is somewhat like the Surrealist pleasure found in the idea of 'A green so delicious it hurts'. How does one quantify the delicious pleasure of the irrational experience found within the rational system? It is this pleasure that represents the possibility of a future for Tschumi. The dirty and rotting Villa Savoye represents the end of a regime, the end of clean mechanical reproduction, the end of the new order, and the beginning of a new conception of space.

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Notes and references

1. 'Architecture and Transgression' originally appeared in *Oppositions* in the Winter of 1976 and 'The Pleasure of Architecture' originally appeared in *Architectural Design (AD)* in March, 1977.
2. For an in-depth analysis of Tschumi's intellectual formation and particularly his relationship to the work of Henri Lefebvre and the Situationists, please see my PhD dissertation entitled 'Models of the Mind: A Theoretical Framework for the Continental Radical Avant-garde in Architecture around 1968' (Ann Arbor, Michigan, UMI Press, 2001).
3. 'Architecture and Transgression' in *Architecture and Disjunction* (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1994), p.78.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 65.
5. Although he does not quote or mention the Frankfurt School sociologist Herbert Marcuse in this work, it is essential to note that Marcuse's groundbreaking critique of Freud, *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*, was published in 1955, and that Bataille credits a 1955 translation of Sigmund Freud's 'Totem and Taboo' as being essential to his argument.
6. The Kinsey Reports marked a turning point in attitudes about sexuality. The Kinsey Report on male sexual behaviour was a dry social scientific report that had sold over 250,000 copies by 1953 when the report on female sexual behaviour was published. The report shocked the American population by exposing the truth about what Americans were doing behind closed doors. It pointed to the gross distinction between what we condemned in public, and what we did in private. The report was called a menace to society and seen as undermining the American moral code of behaviour. It single-handedly helped to start the sexual revolution of the 1960s, and the coming to terms with the covert and the overt. By 1963 the term sexual revolution was in general use. David Susskind's television programme scheduled a panel discussion on 'The Sexual Revolution in American' for the Autumn of 1963, but his television network cancelled it. It was not shown until another channel aired it nationally. For more information on the Sexual Revolution of the 1960s see Beth Bailey's 'Sexual Revolution(s)', pp. 235–262, in David Farber, *The Sixties: From Memory to History* (Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 1994).
7. Georges Bataille, *Erotism: Death and Sensuality*, trs., Mary Dalwood (San Francisco, City Lights Books, 1986), p. 11.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 17–18.
10. Paul Hagerty, *Georges Bataille: Core Cultural Theorist* (London, Sage Publications, 2000), pp. 104–106.
11. Michel Foucault continues Bataille's work on transgression in 'A Preface to Transgression', 1963. The essay first appeared in 'Hommage à Georges Bataille', in *Critique*, a journal that was founded by Bataille, and to which Foucault was a frequent contributor. In 1973 Foucault assisted in the publication of Bataille's *Oeuvres complètes*. Foucault's description of transgression is remarkably close to Tschumi's language, and one might suggest that Tschumi was aware of this essay.
12. Transgression is the action of passing over or beyond, of going beyond the bounds or limits prescribed by a law, command, etc. It is to break, to violate, to infringe, to trespass against. (Oxford English Dictionary, pp. 402–403.)
13. Bataille, *Erotism: Death and Sensuality*, *op. cit.*, p.67.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
15. Here we can point to the critique of Modernism most heatedly debated between The Whites and The Grays in the US and later by the emergent Postmodernist architects in the US and Europe.
16. Mary Douglas, *Purity & Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution & Taboo* (Florence, KY, USA, Routledge, 1984), p. 42.

17. 'Violence of Architecture' in *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 122. Originally published in *Artforum* (September, 1981).
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.*, p. 123.
20. 'Violence of Architecture' in *Architecture and Disjunction*, *op. cit.*, p. 124.
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Ibid.*, p. 130.
23. See Henri Lefebvre, *The Explosion: Marxism and the French Revolution*. Originally published as *L'irruption de Nanterre au sommet*, trs., Alfred Ehrenfeld (New York, Modern Reader Paperbacks, 1969).
24. *Ibid.*, p. 134.
25. Here, it is necessary to note that play is beginning to take on a number of concepts. First, we can understand it as the ludic, which Tschumi would get from his understanding of the Italian Radical Avant-garde and Marcuse, from Bataille who is reading and citing Roger Caillois on both taboo and leisure, and finally from the post-structuralist notion of play and language, whereby meaning in a text is not stable or fixed, and that by playing with the signifiers one can open up or decentre the hegemony of the text.
26. See Henri Lefebvre, *The Explosion: Marxism and the French Revolution*, *op. cit.*
27. Tschumi, 'The Architectural Paradox', *op. cit.*, pp. 47–48.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 66.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 71.
31. *Ibid.*
32. Freud uses Eros and Thanatos (Life-instinct and Death-instinct) in his final instinct theory to connote the whole of the life instincts as opposed to the death instincts. For Freud, Eros was very close to this idea of sexuality which he did not see as being identical to genital function. It is important to note that Freud never used the word Thanatos in his writings, but Freud's translator and interpreter E. Jones notes that he occasionally used it in conversation. See entries for these terms in Laplanche and Pontalis, *The Language of Psychoanalysis* (New York, W. W. Norton & Company, 1973). I am indebted to the architect David Harlan of New Haven CT for our stimulating conversations regarding the concept of Eros in Freudian theory.
33. 'Architecture and Transgression', *op. cit.*, p. 72.
34. The text here is from the translation by Robert Hurley in the book entitled *The Accursed Share*, vol. 2. 'The History of Eroticism' was found among Bataille's papers for the published book *L'Érotisme* from 1957. In 1953–54 he planned a 3-part volume called *La Part Maudite* (the accursed share), of which the history of eroticism was to be a part. It was published posthumously as *Oeuvres Complètes* in 1976.
35. Georges Bataille, *The Accursed Share*, Volume 2, trs., Robert Hurley (New York, Zone Books, 1991), p. 80.
36. 'Architecture and Transgression', *op. cit.*, p. 73.
37. The 'Advertisements for Architecture' were metaphorical masks for architecture. The usual function of advertisements is to trigger desire for something beyond the page itself. To use the thing advertised as a mask for the desirous concept that lies behind it. Tschumi sees this as analogical to the Lacanian notion that the unconscious is structured like a language. He writes in the 'Pleasure of Architecture' that there are some things that cannot be reached frontally (by this he means through their apparent or immediate signification), and only through the method of analogy or metaphor. 'For instance, it is through language that psychoanalysis uncovers the unconscious. Like a mask, language hints at something else behind itself.

It may try to hide it, but it also implies it at the same time.' Thus, the advertisements act ironically as their medium connotes a masking of something while at the same time they are advertisements for the production of architecture.

38. Kate Linker, 'Bernard Tschumi: Architecture, Eroticism, and Art', *Arts Magazine*, 53 (November 3rd, 1978), p. 108.

39. Bataille, *The Accursed Share*, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 99.