Zeitschrift: gta papers

Herausgeber: gta Verlag

Band: 2 (2018)

Artikel: Haunted by war : the strange encounter of Paul Virilio and Bernard Rudofsky

Autor: Scott, Felicity D.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-853317

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Siehe Rechtliche Hinweise.

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. Voir Informations légales.

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. See Legal notice.

Download PDF: 08.02.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, https://www.e-periodica.ch

Haunted by War:
The Strange Encounter of Paul Virilio and Bernard Rudofsky
Felicity D. Scott

Felicity D. Scott is Professor of Architecture at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation.

In his 1976 book *L'Insécurité du territoire*, Paul Virilio made a brief but insightful and highly symptomatic reference to Austrian émigré architect Bernard Rudofsky's *Architecture without Architects*. [1] Made up of over two hundred black-and-white photographs of vernacular architecture and other preindustrial or so-called "primitive" structures, this pivotal exhibition first opened at New York's Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in November 1964 before traveling nationally and internationally for the next eleven years. fig.1 If Rudofsky's exhibition was (and remains) often received as a nostalgic attempt to recuperate or even revive "authentic," autochthonous, or premodern architectural forms—as appealing, in effect, to desires for a secure nexus of architecture, place, and identity—Virilio rightly recognized traces of distinct, even counter-provocations. He noted, in the first instance, that the exhibition served to disrupt the mode of "passive contemplation" of "masterworks" heretofore dominating architectural discourse, including an epistemic segregation of urban and rural domains. [2] In the second instance, however, Virilio surmised that far more was at stake in Rudofsky's refusal of institutionalized codifications and demarcations of architecture through formal, semantic, or functional lenses, that they shared a critique of architecture's inscription within a wider constellation of technical, economic, political, and other territorializing forces then informing the thoroughgoing militarization of the human milieu.

fig.1 Installation view of the exhibition *Architecture without Architects*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, November 11, 1964 through February 7, 1965. Photograph by Bernard Rudofsky.

This recognition of shared interests appears to have been mutual. Among his papers, Rudofsky kept a copy of Virilio's "Bunker Archeology," as it initially appeared in September 1966 in *Architecture Principe*, the magazine Virilio coedited with Claude Parent. From the prevailing reception of Rudofsky as seeking a more "authentic" or "humane" form of architecture, it is unlikely to be evident why Virilio's publication on the German antiaircraft blockhouses built during the Second World War along the French littoral might have appealed to him. [3] But if we shift lenses, we find two quite evident affinities. First, both Virilio's photographs of defensive redoubts and the images Rudofsky included

1 Paul Virilio, *L'Insécurité du territoire*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1993), 196. Paraphrasing Rudofsky, Virilio explains, "It is useless, in effect, to search for traces of rural habitations in the sumptuous encyclopedias of buildings, and when, in 1965 [sic], Paul Rudowsky [sic] organized the exhibition *Architecture without Architects* at New York's Museum of Modern Art, it had the effect, at the time, of both a revelation and a provocation."

2 Ibid.

3 This reception of Rudofsky dates back to the 1960s, but for more recent examples see, for instance, Karsten Harries, *The Ethical Function of Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997); Andrea Bocco Guarneri, *Bernard Rudofsky: A Humane Designer* (Vienna: Springer Verlag, 2003); Architekturzentrum Wien, ed., *Lessons from Bernard Rudofsky: Life as a Voyage* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2007).

in *Architecture without Architects* were chosen for their ambiguous aesthetic and semantic logics, their ability to shift back and forth from one resonance to another. Appealing to architects and designers while researching photographs for the show, Rudofsky repeatedly insisted he was not looking for picturesque images of vernacular architecture but for photographs that resonated with a modernist aesthetic. To Alfred Roth, for instance, he wrote, "I would say that we are looking for either contemporary or old examples of architecture that appeal to the modern architect and an audience with an awareness of modern design." [4]

Many critics recognized the veiled modernist references. Douglas Haskell compared the photograph of the medieval, partially subterranean monolithic church in Saint-Émilion to Le Corbusier's church in Ronchamp, and an Italian hill town to Paul Rudolph's "Italy-in-New-Haven," arguing (incorrectly) that Rudofsky—simply looking "backwards"—failed to see that such "primitive" precedents were already present in modern architecture. [5] Virilio, too, mobilized potentials for semantic slippage, noting that his bunker photographs sought to evoke supplementary readings. Referring to "implicit" and "involuntary" formal affinities with "cryptic architecture," he pointed to "Mayan palaces devoid of windows and chimneys, the impenetrable forests of Egyptian columns, catacombs, the oval-shaped underground networks of the *Cathares*, the Viet-Cong sanctuaries, Faust's hermetic home, the copper mines of the Swiss mountains or the bunker." [6] Operating through such semantic resonances, we find a second, less evident affinity, a shared fascination with territorial insecurities that emerged during the violent wars of the twentieth century, wars forcibly impacting built environments and the forms of life they might sustain. This connection to wars originating in Europe was foregrounded in Virilio's reading of German bunkers as the territorial correlates of military strategy and ballistic technology. But, in retrospect, we do not have to look far to see that Rudofsky, too, had been musing for decades on the nexus of architecture and wars. Indeed, the subtext of war was evident in *Architecture without Architects* if one cared to pay attention.

Rudofsky's cameo appearance in Virilio's *L'Insécurité du territoire* was far from incidental. The French architect and theorist recognized the degree to which Rudofsky's invocation of vernacular forms at MoMA was launched (or relaunched) not just as a dismissal of architectural canons and modernist narratives of progress—although these were certainly targets—but served, additionally, as ciphers for territorial insecurity and war. When Virilio cited *Architecture without Architects*, it was because the exhibition was thoroughly haunted by war, as evident in Rudofsky's

4 Bernard Rudofsky, letter to Alfred Roth, ETH Zurich, October 22, 1962, in Curatorial Exhibition Files, Exh. 752, *Architecture without Architects*, November 11, 1964 to February 7, 1965, The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York. I detail this claim in a longer, unpublished version of this research on Rudofsky. Rudofsky wrote to, among others, Bruno Munari, Josep Lluís Sert, Max Bill, Enrico Peressutti, and Ernesto Rogers.

5 Douglas Haskell noted, "As I understand the message is not directed at name architects—they are just the decoys—but at the modern world." Douglas Haskell, "Main talk at the Fine Arts Festival," manuscript for lecture at Michigan State University, Lansing, July 20, 1965. Mixed yellow note pad paper and typescript, n.p. Drawings and Archives, Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University, New York, Douglas Haskell papers, box 91, folder 2.

6 Paul Virilio, "Architecture cryptique," in "Bunker Archeology," special issue, *Architecture principe* 7 (1966), reprinted in Paul Virilio and Claude Parent, *Architecture principe 1966 et 1996* (Besançon: Les Éditions de l'Imprimeur, 1996), n.p. See also Paul Virilio, *Bunker Archeology*, trans. George Collins (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1994).

ruminations on war and their reappearance in his 1964 exhibition. Haskell was not mistaken in recognizing formal affinities between the photographs of Italian hill towns and Rudolph's Art & Architecture building at Yale University. What he did not recognize was that Rudofsky chose the former not just to allude to disciplinary battles within architectural circles but to speak to a long history of architecture operating as an *offensive* medium. His enigmatic caption in the catalogue reads, "It was both more dignified and more esthetic to fight intramural battles from the vantage points of an appropriate architecture than from rooftops or in streets, as is the custom in our day." 7/fig. 2 This argument dates back to 1934, when Rudofsky first offered a counternarrative to architects' fascination with Mediterranean vernaculars. While figures like Josef Hoffman and Edwin Cerio had celebrated the island of Capri for its unified vernacular architecture and anticipatory

7 Bernard Rudofsky, *Architecture without Architects* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1965), n.p., caption to figs. 61–66.

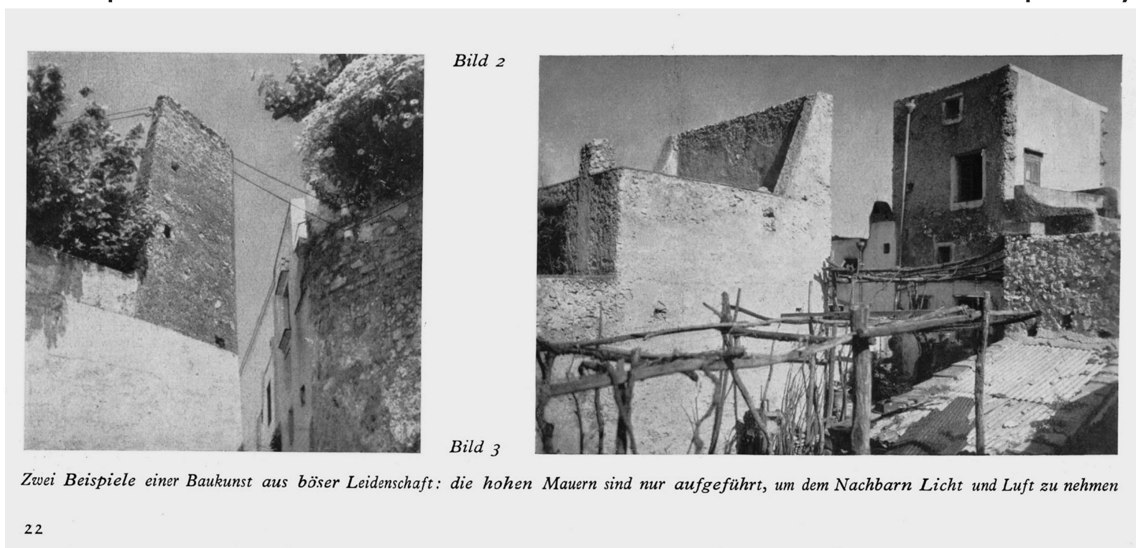


fig. 2 Bernard Rudofsky, photograph of Anacapri, Italy, 1934.

modernity, Rudofsky spoke instead of urban contestation and architectural warfare. Appropriating Cerio's term *Dispetto architecture*—an architecture of vexation or discontent—Rudofsky mused on the practice of piling up walls and towers to deprive the neighbors of "light and of the glow of the sun," reading the much-loved built landscape as "monuments of human malice." The walls, he remarked, "are as naked as the enmity of their designers and everyone can see that they serve no other purpose than to embitter their neighbor." 8 They were material manifestations of human enmity, battles calcified in stone.

Rudofsky's most poignant reading of architecture and war appeared in *Domus* in April 1938, the moment he fled Europe to Latin America in the wake of Nazi Germany's annexation of Austria. Entitled "Fine della città" (End of the city)—or, in the German manuscript, "Das Ende der europäischen Stadt" (End of the European city)—it stands as his most overt account of the environmental and geopolitical legacy of war and of its impact on

8 Bernard Rudofsky, "Capresisches, Anacapresisches," *Monatshefte für Baukunst und Städtebau* 18, no. 1 (1934): 22–4, here 22. Translation by the author. Rudofsky uses the German "Dispettoarchitektur," attributing it to Cerio but not citing his source.

architecture. Ruminating on the impending return of warfare in Europe, Rudofsky juxtaposed an autochthonous, or earth-bound form of dwelling (exemplified by a photograph taken by Giuseppe Pagano of vernacular dwellings excavated from rock in Matera, Italy), with what he called a "new mobile habitation," or industrial trailer home. With no location specified, the trailer marked the antithesis of an autochthonous dwelling. After chastising architects' lack of attention to the prospect of "total war," he turned to environmental insecurities born of the First World War, noting that "With the introduction of two new types of aggressive arms or weapons, the Air Force and poisonous gas, the World War has initiated the beginning of the end of urban development." [9] Given transformations in military strategies and with civilians now targeted for destruction, cities, he posited, no longer offered refuge or protection from ballistic weaponry, their very raison d'être undermined. In Rudofsky's words,

"An aerial photograph of any city convincingly demonstrates the fate of the city dweller. Military strategists pronounced their verdict long ago: One cannot, in the future, count on an effective defense of the city. The possibilities of defense cannot keep pace with offensive weaponry, precautions and defensive measures imposed on open cities have not produced improvements, nor have serious studies followed." [10]

As Rudofsky knew well, the history of European cities was one of transformations in defensive strategies—from walls, moats, and other fortifications to new materials and construction technologies—in response to new ballistic technologies and other forms of matériel. All such strategies, he suggested in "Fine della città," were redundant when weapons could be delivered from the air or when the air itself was under attack. In his estimation, "The European city will become a theater prop or historical curiosity, like the feudal castle. The ruins may find conservationists and enthusiasts—but they will no longer be suitable for inhabitation." [11]

Furthering his dialectic of rootedness versus displacement, Rudofsky speculated that the next generation of Europeans would have to choose between two dwelling options: the habitable cave and the mobile home, updated versions of the "primitive" troglodyte and nomadic structures such as tents. (In "Fine della città" this dualism serves as an allegory of distinctions between the fixity of trench warfare or fortification, such as the ill-fated French strategy of the Maginot Line, which Rudofsky parodies as a giant troglodyte city, and the mobility pursued by the British through tanks and rapidly deployable prefabricated structures.) Rudofsky was not advancing the cave or mobile home as prescriptions for how architects might respond to war, but as a dialectic pointing

9 Bernard Rudofsky, "Fine della città," *Domus* 16, no. 124 (1938): 20–21, here 20. Translation by the author, derived from the Italian publication and German manuscript in Bernard Rudofsky's personal archive.

10 Ibid, 21.

11 Ibid., 20. On architecture and aerial warfare, see Jean-Louis Cohen, "The Menace from the Air," *in Architecture in Uniform: Designing and Building for the Second World War* (New Haven: Yale University Press; Montreal: Canadian Center for Architecture, 2011), 141–79.

to conditions of environmental (and psychological) insecurity born of modernity and a continuing state of warfare. Hence, it would be a mistake to imagine that he prioritized the embeddedness of vernacular rock dwellings over the uprooting suggested by the industrial trailer or that the trailer promised a more modern or emancipated life. Rudofsky's own "answer" to such a condition of territorial insecurity would take the form of a courtyard house that could drift, a house offering a degree of psychological security that he ominously likened to a stockade, a technology of colonization. [12]

In his ruminations on nomadism, Rudofsky first invoked the lifestyles of European Roma, presenting them as living anachronisms and noting of their political system that they "describe themselves as a nation and come together in the Hungarian lowlands to elect their king." After situating "gypsies" as a "primitive tribal stage" of nomadic civilizations (Rudofsky was often this insulting in his figuration of alterity), he turned to their American counterparts:

"The inhabitants of the United States already refer to themselves as 'The Nation on Wheels.' This epithet is not based simply upon the pride of ownership of a few million automobiles. It refers, rather, to a population striving toward nomadism. Hundreds of thousands of families have abandoned house and land in order to create for themselves new possibilities for living in a permanent state of travel. The government of the country has not tried to prevent but rather promotes this movement." [13]

Without the experience of a recent war on their soil, but with governmental encouragement, millions in the United States, Rudofsky posited, sought life as a permanent voyage. Acknowledging that technology for mobile dwellings had not arrived in Europe to the same degree, he argued that the incentive for their use was, nevertheless, in place. In this context, he noted that "the impending destruction of cities [might] get the most sedentary people to adopt the life of continuous movement." [14]

It was not just the bombing of cities that drove such uprooting and displacement of European populations during the first decades of the twentieth century. Having grown up in Austria-Hungary, at the edge of Eastern Europe, Rudofsky was all too familiar with the massive and violent displacement of minority populations and the plight of refugees following the redrawing of European political borders after the First World War, including the breakup of European and Eurasian, land-based empires: Austro-Hungarian, Tsarist, Ottoman. Born into a formerly Jewish family (his parents converted to Roman Catholicism in the late nineteenth century), he was also no stranger to the

12 On this reading of Rudofsky's courtyard houses, see Felicity D. Scott, "Not at Home," in *Émigré Cultures in Design and Architecture*, eds. Alison J. Clarke and Elana Shapira (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017), 221–34.

13 Rudofsky, "Fine della città" (see note 9), 21.

14 Ibid.

violence of anti-Semitism. In the first months of 1938, however, he might not yet have known of the massive rise of stateless people, *Heimatlosen*, or of *apatrides*, those having no home, nor homeland to which to return, that erupted in Europe at this time as Nazi Germany targeted minority groups such as Jews, Armenians, and Roma for exclusion and even for denaturalization and deportation to concentration camps, prior to their ultimate mass murder. [15] Rudofsky's exaggerated poles of rootedness versus deracination—the troglodyte's extreme identification with the soil and the mobile home's radical dislocation—would, however, take on additional valence in the wake of that revelation, appearing as a key subtext of *Architecture without Architects*.

A quizzical note from the *Domus* editors, "End of the City?," pointed to a paradox that Rudofsky indeed would puzzle over in the decades to come: it stressed the importance of his observation that, while cities in the United States did not seem threatened with the immanent tragedy of war, a spirit of modern nomadism had developed there that warranted attention. If European populations were threatened with further uprooting and dislodgment on account of rising tides of nationalism and other forms of hatred nd violence, what, the editors asked, in the absence of the threat of war and territorial claims, sponsored such a drive toward mobility in America?

Following his emigration from Brazil to the United States in 1941, this constellation of architecture, war, caves, and nomads—one wavering ambivalently between archaisms and forces of modernity—surfaced over and over. For instance, we find it in Rudofsky's long-standing study of the house that began in the late 1940s under the title "Are Houses Modern?" before splitting into his 1955 book *Behind the Picture Window* and the exhibition *Architecture without Architects*. fig.3 Early outlines for "Are Houses Modern?" included topics such as: Migratory trends in history and modern time; insecurity and its relation to war-making; the limits of modern hospitality; shelter, not industry, the main target in modern war; density of population and dispersion; the "rooted" versus the abstracted house; and, return to primitive dwelling types—Fuller house, Nissen, and Quonset hut. In another version of his outline dated January 1948, he added a note, "Hiroshima. Cave dwellers. Maginot line", updating the nature of the perceived threat of attack from the air to include atom bombs. *Architecture without Architects* included references to all of these tropes. For example, we

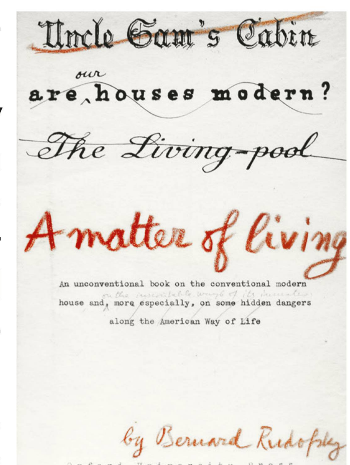


fig. 3 Bernard Rudofsky, sketch for book cover, c.1954.

15 On this violent history, see Hannah Arendt, "The Decline of the Nation State and the End of the Rights of Man" (1951), in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Schocken Books, 2004), 341–84; Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000).

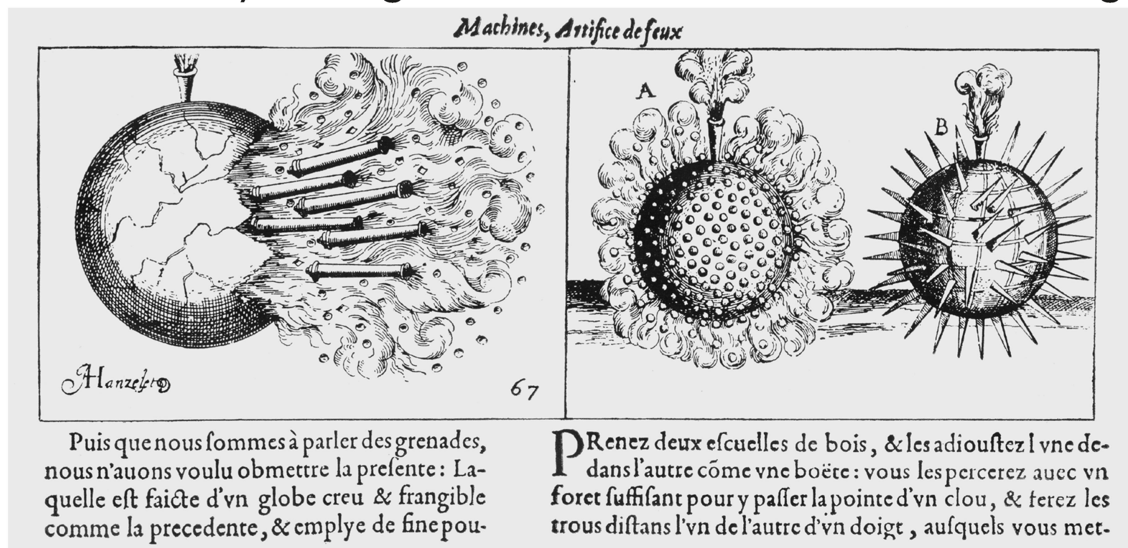
learn that in China "about ten million people live in dwellings hollowed out from loess," [16] ominously continuing, "having been among man's earliest shelters, [caves] may turn out to be his last ones." [17] With reference to Cold War divides, and with less irony than is warranted, he suggested of aerial photographs shot by a Nazi Luftwaffe pilot that "with current restrictions on the movements of the citizen" it would be impossible to "duplicate the aerial views of Chinese underground communities obtained by a German pilot in the early 30s." [18]

16 Rudofsky, *Architecture without Architects* (see note 7), caption to fig. 16.

17 Ibid., caption to fig. 3.

18 Ibid., page opposite fig. 6.

By the height of the Cold War, Rudofsky had incorporated a new matrix of technologies, economic paradigms, and geopolitical shifts within his ruminations about troglodytes and nomads. In addition to speaking of people not tied to the soil or even the conventional nation-state—wavering ambivalently between figures of liberty and legacies of aerial warfare—mobile dwellings


Machines, Artifice de feux

67

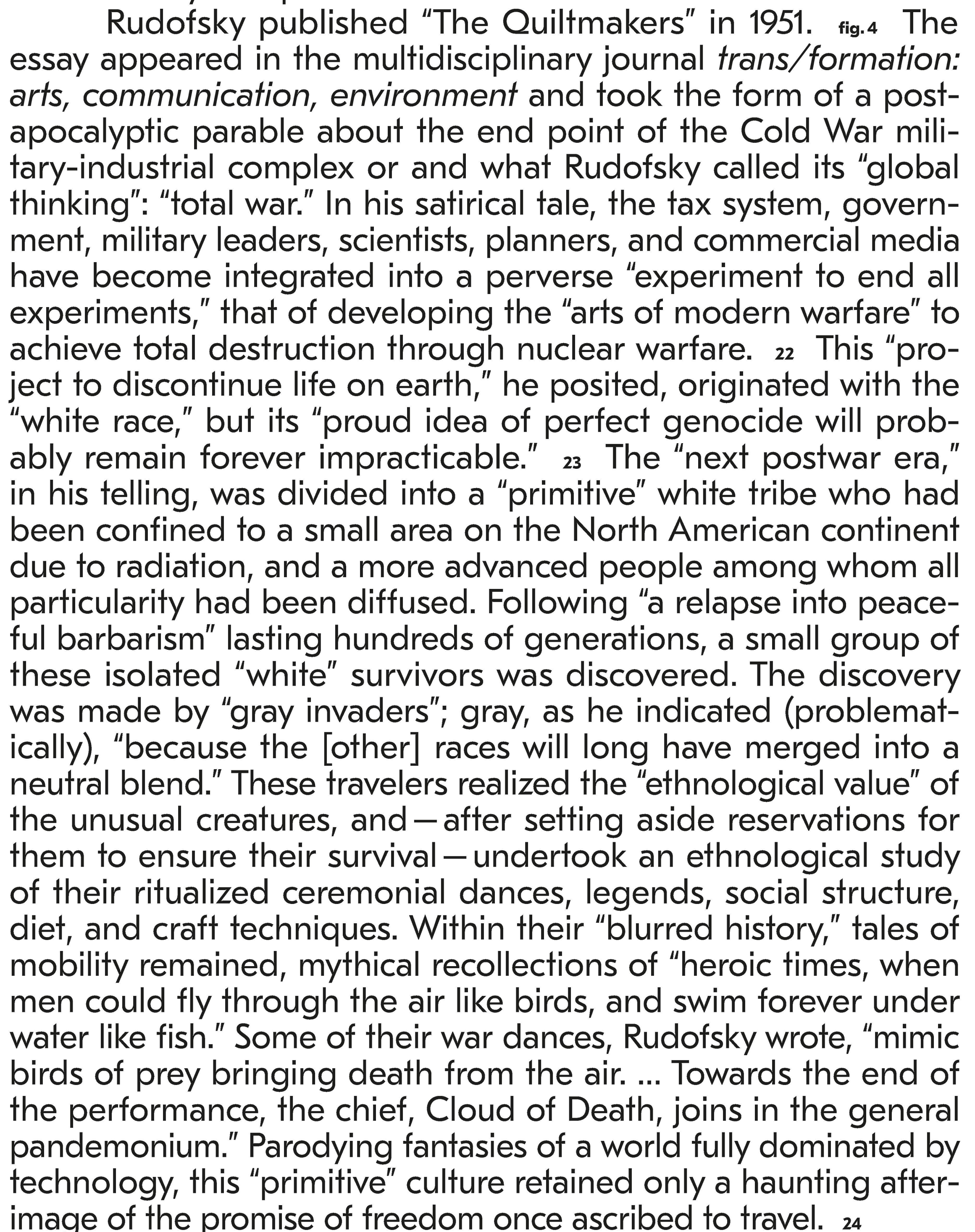
Puis que nous ſommes à parler des grenades, nous n'auons voulu obmettre la preſente : Laquelle eſt faicte d'vn globe creu & frangible comme la precedente, & emplye de fine pou-

PRenez deux eſcuelles de bois, & les adiouſtez l'vne dedans l'autre cõme vne boëte : vous les percerez auec vn foret ſuffiſant pour y paſſer la pointe d'vn clou, & ferez les trous diſtans l'vn de l'autre d'vn doigt, auſquels vous met-

fig. 4 Jean Appier Hanzelet, "Machines, artifice de feux," c.1620 and 1630.

appear now as ciphers of the insecurity born of the circulation or drift so necessary to the globalizing logic of postwar capitalism. It was not, that is, just aerial warfare or developments in ballistics that rendered domestic, urban, and national boundaries outdated. As *Behind the Picture Window* made evident, at stake was recognizing the invasion of domestic life by technoscientific and economic paradigms born of military research launched during the Second World War—from advances in communications technologies and computerization to social scientific knowledge bent on psychological and environmental control—along with an expanded consumerism and its dispersed regulatory apparatus. [19] While he did not use such a vocabulary, Rudofsky recognized that the house played a key role within emergent forms of national and global governance, serving as perhaps the most intimate site through which micropolitical forms of power operated upon the body and psyche both of individuals and populations. Yet, in defiance of such forms of subjective regulation

19 See Felicity D. Scott, "Instrumentos para vivir," in *Bernard Rudofsky: Desobediencia critica a la modernidad*, eds. Mar Loren and Yolanda Romero (Granada: Centro José Guerrero, 2014), 106–24, plus English text 328–34.



and environmental conditioning, Rudofsky continued to assert possibilities for modes of desire and intimacy or even simply aberrant behaviors somehow not yet colonized by such an apparatus.[20] This was an intimacy conceived not in the service of authenticity or a more humane form of architecture but rather as a tactic for cutting across such vectors and techniques of power, as attempts to interrupt or otherwise rearticulate those dominant forces and techniques as they met the body. “It is not that life has been totally integrated into techniques that govern and administer it,” Michel Foucault reminded his readers: “it constantly escapes them.”[21]

Rudofsky published “The Quiltmakers” in 1951. fig. 4 The essay appeared in the multidisciplinary journal *trans/formation: arts, communication, environment* and took the form of a post-apocalyptic parable about the end point of the Cold War military-industrial complex or and what Rudofsky called its “global thinking”: “total war.” In his satirical tale, the tax system, government, military leaders, scientists, planners, and commercial media have become integrated into a perverse “experiment to end all experiments,” that of developing the “arts of modern warfare” to achieve total destruction through nuclear warfare.[22] This “project to discontinue life on earth,” he posited, originated with the “white race,” but its “proud idea of perfect genocide will probably remain forever impracticable.”[23] The “next postwar era,” in his telling, was divided into a “primitive” white tribe who had been confined to a small area on the North American continent due to radiation, and a more advanced people among whom all particularity had been diffused. Following “a relapse into peaceful barbarism” lasting hundreds of generations, a small group of these isolated “white” survivors was discovered. The discovery was made by “gray invaders”; gray, as he indicated (problematically), “because the [other] races will long have merged into a neutral blend.” These travelers realized the “ethnological value” of the unusual creatures, and—after setting aside reservations for them to ensure their survival—undertook an ethnological study of their ritualized ceremonial dances, legends, social structure, diet, and craft techniques. Within their “blurred history,” tales of mobility remained, mythical recollections of “heroic times, when men could fly through the air like birds, and swim forever under water like fish.” Some of their war dances, Rudofsky wrote, “mimic birds of prey bringing death from the air. … Towards the end of the performance, the chief, Cloud of Death, joins in the general pandemonium.” Parodying fantasies of a world fully dominated by technology, this “primitive” culture retained only a haunting afterimage of the promise of freedom once ascribed to travel.[24]

20 On this other intimacy, see Felicity D. Scott, “Underneath Aesthetics and Utility: The Untransposable Fetish of Bernard Rudofsky,” *Assemblage* 38 (1999): 58–89.

21 Michel Foucault, “The Right of Death and Power over Life,” in *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1, *An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Random House, 1990), 143.

22 Bernard Rudofsky, “The Quiltmakers,” *trans/formation: arts, communication, environment* 1, no. 2 (1951): 62–64. On *trans/formation*, see Anna Vallye, “The Strategic Universality of *trans/formation*, 1950–1952,” *Grey Room* 35 (2009): 28–57. Rudofsky was not alone during this period in imagining nuclear warfare returning human beings to a “primitive” state. See Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb’s Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994).

23 Rudofsky, “Quiltmakers” (see note 22), 63.

24 Ibid., 64. If quilt-making was, on the one hand, a vernacular handicraft of the early settlers of the Northeastern seaboard, it is also identified with the African-American practice of sewing stories in this form. It is not clear which tradition Rudofsky is referencing, but I suspect the former.

Rudofsky's parody of man's quest for total domination over nature aimed to upturn conventional hierarchies but ultimately did not undermine the myth of racial superiority. Only the "white race" retains cultural specificity, albeit so radically transformed as to retain only haunting traces of technologies, habits, and customs once wielded to such violent ends and on asymmetrical playing fields. Deconstructing hierarchies is not, of course, as simple as turning them on their heads. Racism, along with other forms of violence, power, and exclusion work in more complex ways, and Rudofsky's writings, particularly those of the 1960s, are characterized by an almost total lack of attention to racism in America or to anticolonial struggles and wars of national liberation. "The Quiltmakers" is a rare exception to this elision, albeit an ambiguous one. And what of the "end of white man's civilization?" he queried in this context.

fig. 5 Installation view of the exhibition "Architecture without Architects," Museum of Modern Art, New York, November 11, 1964 through February 7, 1965. Photograph by Bernard Rudofsky.

"May we not take the abdication of the Dutch in Oceania, or the British in Asia and Egypt as a portent of the approaching self-effacement of the white race? A white skin does not make a better man. We have had our time—a long, beautiful and bloody stretch of time. This time is running out; we know it and no foolish talk is going to stop us from our noble sacrifice." [25]

25 Ibid.

Rudofsky's thoroughgoing eurocentrism, even when performed with irony, reminds us that his much-celebrated opening of architectural canons to vernacular forms, and its purportedly "global view," was far from politically progressive. [26] What Rudofsky recognized, however, was that if one sought an image of an end point, a negative condition to the total domination of "profit and progress," it might be recognized in the threat of total nuclear war and its global effects.

26 The term *global view* is used in Victoria Donohoe, "Striking Architecture Shows," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 9, 1966, clipping courtesy of Berta Rudofsky.

I want to return, now, to Virilio's citation of *Architecture without Architects* in *L'Insécurité du territoire*. **fig. 5** Theorizing the complex and shifting relationship of wars and environments, Virilio argued that "Total world war," a war without limits or end, a war without respect for national boundaries, had warped into "total peace." Driven by the neoimperial logics of the United States and mobilizing the language of "freedom," that supposed peace, he detailed, had adopted lessons from the Second World War. Mirroring the economic calculus and technological

rationalities and developments, as well as the geopolitical logics of total war, the total peace engineered by the United States sought to perpetuate the nation's global dominance in the wake of widespread decolonization. Tracing a historical trajectory from the use of mustard gas in Europe and its colonies to the defoliation or ecocide then taking place in Vietnam, Virilio concluded that "the war of milieu is succeeded by war waged on the milieu—nature, society." [27] In his opening chapter, Virilio had invoked terms familiar from Rudofsky's long-standing fascination with troglodytes. For this fear of the environment had given rise to men " 'who burrow, who dig ... who deprive themselves voluntarily of air, who come to love the night.' Everywhere there is recourse to the crypt, to the subterranean, to the underwater, to the cave." [28] But *L'Insécurité du territoire* was also where Virilio introduced the interrelated concepts of nomadism and deterritorialization, more familiar to most from the second volume of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's work on "capitalism and schizophrenia," *A Thousand Plateaus*. [29]

Within the paradigm of liberalism Virilio sets out, the ability to circulate and the provision of basic amenities sustaining biological life appears "in effect *like the ultimate tangible support of liberties, of the citizens*." [30] Yet this was not how such a system of circulation and assistance functioned. Quite the opposite. Virilio recognized in this historical transformation a dramatic shift in the relation of a subject to its milieu. This took the form of a de- and reterritorialization that strategically replaced a political relation to territory—a relation based on law, rights, or citizenship—with a subject's reduction to an "anonymous organism" for whom the state provides for the minimal satisfaction of needs considered "indispensable to life" while inscribing them within a system of technocratic management operating in the service of the U.S.-led global economy. Recalling Rudofsky's concerns, Virilio posited that nowhere was this pernicious logic more evident than "in the context of the legislation of space."

"It is this disinterested character which guarantees in fact the right to circulate or to stop ... allowing the inhabitants to move about at will, that is to say, to pre-exist in an everyday state, to recreate it at leisure, inalienably, in simply pitching a tent or parking a camper. We know what sorts of persecutions these dynamic notions of social space entail: for example, the diverse forms of nomadism, objectified by totalitarian states, the treatment of the gypsies and the bohemians under the Third Reich, and, today, the laws of assistance which force them to settle." [31]

Recognizing a new paradigm of sovereignty at work in "the unique precariousness" of subjects inscribed within this apparatus,

27 Paul Virilio, "Suicidal State," in *The Virilio Reader*, ed. James Der Derian, trans. James Der Derian, Michael Degener, and Lauren Osepchuk (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1998), 30. Initially appeared as "L'État suicidaire," in *L'Insécurité du territoire* (see note 1).

28 Virilio, "Suicidal State" (see note 27), 35.

29 See Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

30 Virilio, "Suicidal State" (see note 27), 38. Emphasis in original.

31 Ibid.

he remarked, "for the man thus exposed, assistance has become survival, non-assistance a condemnation to death." [32]

32 Ibid.

Virilio did not speak directly to Rudofsky's obsession with war. Rather, Rudofsky provided him with a model of escape from regulatory overcoding, both semantic and functional. Virilio turned to *Architecture without Architects* in a chapter titled "Habiter l'inhabituel," pointing to a desired deterritorialization of a dwelling's intended or normative function, manifest as a critique of architectural functionalism and other forms of rational calculation as they impacted a subject's relation to the milieu. Rudofsky was obsessed with possibilities for refusing the dictates of fixed or functionalist relations between a subject and its milieu, repeatedly railing against all forms of forced integration within an environment. To Virilio, too, the functionalist ethic had effectively eliminated or "quenched" open-ended potentials at play within architecture. Functionalism was, he remarked, a "desperate endeavor to intervene in affective space," to submit space to a normative ordering or organization. [33] "Faced with the ongoing suppression of the aleatory and the indeterminate," Virilio had scoffed earlier in the book—reminding us of a connection to war—and with the "progressive annihilation of the independence between: Time/Space/Subject,"—as most violently expressed in the warfare launched by the Third Reich—"the analysis of transgression of use is imperative." [34] In excavating this "dialogue" between Rudofsky and Virilio, the point is not to suggest that Rudofsky theorized such concerns in advance of Virilio but that his attempts to navigate the nexus of architecture and war, and the manner in which it continued to haunt him into the mid-1960s, afforded him a type of historical insight that was legible to Virilio and that is, once again, worthy of revisiting, no matter how problematic Rudofsky remains.

33 Virilio, *L'Insécurité du territoire* (see note 1), 198. Translation by the author.

34 Virilio, "Suicidal State" (see note 27), 41.