Saving Metropolis:

body and city in the *Metropolis* Tales

Lawrence Bird, History & Theory of Architecture, McGill University, Montréal

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"It is at the level of the interference of many practices that things happen, beings, images, concepts, all the kinds of events..."

Gilles Deleuze[1]

"...the two maps are complete, and yet they do not merge into one."

Maurice Merleau-Ponty[2]

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[1]Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson & Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 280.
[2]Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "The Intertwining—The Chiasm" in *The Visible and the Invisible; Followed by Working Notes*. (Evanston [Ill.]: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 134.

Abstract

The image of the destruction of the city has a long history, and resonates disturbingly with current events. It seems to question the very possibility of creating an architecture – that is, of giving the world a form and thereby a meaning. This thesis charts mutations of that imagery as it emerges in three visual narratives punctuating the last century: the *Metropolis* tales. These are Fritz Lang's film of 1926, Tezuka Osamu's *manga* or graphic novel of 1949, and the 2001 work of *anime* or Japanese animated film by director Rintarô. Despite their differences, these tales exhibit a fundamental overlap of concern: each deals in its own way with crises in modern conditions of life, crises articulated not only in the imagery of the city but also in that of the broken bodies central to it. The thesis argues that this imagery, hovering at the brink of and ultimately passing beyond the line of apocalypse, articulates an undiminished human yearning to engage in a life project. In our time this yearning, this desire, takes on a new form in which the city and the body adopt a precarious and problematic relationship to their image. But perhaps the seeming instability of this condition as articulated in disrupted bodies and cities is a more faithful reflection of the fundamental human anxiety reflected in myth, and the more foundational destructuring involved in our perception and making of the world, than any whole and healthy body, than any utopia.

L'image de la destruction de la ville a une longue histoire et évoque aussi malheureusement des événements récents de l'actualité. Cette thèse retrace les transformations de cette imagerie dans trois récits visuels qui ont marqués le siècle dernier : *Metropolis,* le film de Fritz Lang (1926), le *manga*, une bande dessinée de Tezuka Osamu (1949), et le film d'animation japonais *anime* dirigé par Rintarô (2001). Malgré leur différences, ces trois récits partagent une préoccupation profonde : la crise de la condition de vie moderne. Cette crise est représentée par l'imagerie de la ville mais aussi par celle des corps brisés qui y habitent. Cette thèse interprète ces images qui gravitent toutes autour du risque de l'apocalypse pour finalement y échapper comme la persistance du désir humain de se réaliser dans le monde. De nos jours, ce désir prend une

forme nouvelle dans laquelle la ville et le corps adoptent une relation instable et problématique. Cependant, la précarité apparente de cette condition qui s'exprime par les corps détraqués de la ville et de ses habitants traduit peut-être plus fidèlement la condition humaine que les représentations de villes utopiques ou que l'apparence d'un corps sain et entier. Cette thèse postule que l'imagerie moderne de la ville en destruction offre une représentation des anxiétés fondamentales de l'homme, qui rappelle l'imagerie des mythes anciens et la déstructuration nécessaire dans tout projet de perception et de création.

Acknowledgements

Though its flaws remain my responsibility alone, any strengths this thesis might have are the result of support and insight gained from many at McGill's School of Architecture and elsewhere.

At the forefront of these is my thesis supervisor, Dr. Alberto Pérez-Gómez, for the openness and generosity he has shown in supporting the development of this research. He was kind enough to see merit in my original proposal and provided crucial guidance and support as it progressed. As I struggled to understand the stakes involved in the phenomenology of the *Metropolis* tales he encouraged me to follow my own path of investigation, while providing corrective guidance crucial to the completion of the thesis. In particular his suggestion of the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty as a framework has been particularly fruitful.

I am also indebted to the other members of my supervising committee for their generous support over the course of this thesis. The support and advice of Dr. Thomas Lamarre, Professor in McGill's Department of East Asian Studies, was crucial to any success I have had crossing the line between architecture and Japan studies. I am very grateful for his interest in and openness to the approaches of the History & Theory of Architecture. Professor Ricardo Castro of McGill's School of Architecture suggested important lines of inquiry; his shared passion for connections between film and architecture, and his unfailing support through the doctoral process have been truly appreciated.

I received important advice of various kinds from many others at the School of Architecture, including Director Michael Jemtrud, Dr. Martin Bressani, and my colleagues Christina Contandriopoulos, Lian Chang, Tsz-Yan Ng, Diana Cheng, Marc Neveu, Santiago Orduña, Sergio Clavijo, as well as many others who space will not permit me to name here. Dr. Louise Pelletier, Professor in the School of Design at University of Québec at Montréal, oversaw design work I developed alongside this thesis

and provided support crucial to the first conference presentation of early stages of this research. This entire project would have been impossible had it not been for the financial support of the Fonds québécois de la recherche sur la société et la culture and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

This thesis is built upon work carried out prior to my graduate studies at McGill. That began during my work as a research student at Kanazawa Institute of Technology, where my studies of the city were guided by Professor Azby Brown and supported financially by the Japanese Ministry of Education. The opportunity to develop my interest in visual studies was provided by a part-time teaching position at Kanazawa International Design Institute (KIDI), where I benefitted from the interest of Professor Cécile Kawakami-Andrieu, and Professor Stephen Talasnik of Parsons School of Design. The interest in the city and visual culture which began during this time underwent crucial development thanks to the insights of Dr. Richard Sennett, Ricky Burdett, Kathryn Firth and Roger Zogolovitch, as well as classmates in the London School of Economics Cities Programme. What I learnt in these environments has been enriched here at McGill.

I would also like to thank my own students. I believe that research, design, and teaching should support each other; the insights gained in a project of this kind should be tested against or played out in creative work by oneself and others and the discussion generated around it. It is for this reason that I have relished the opportunity to engage with the design interests of students here at McGill and earlier at KIDI, to gain new understandings through their work and, to the extent possible, offer some insight to them based on my own work. In particular I feel my own understanding of the implications of my research interests has benefitted greatly from exchanges with the design students I have advised in the past year: John Eraña, Ravi Handa, and Lucie Paquet.

My work has wandered, perhaps strayed, across several fields and foci over the course of this project, as was perhaps inevitable. An understanding of the arts of manga and anime is still under development, and requires insights from several fields. If I have been able to apply a diverse range of interests to this project, I have my family to thank for this: my

parents David and Gillian Bird, my wife Maria Amagasu who has accompanied me through the many adventures which have ultimately produced this line of research, and my children Akio, Maya and Sasha whose curiosity (though they are interested in another brand of anime) has fueled mine at the same time my work has taken away from time spent with them.

I think it is fair to say that in some sense I also owe these diverse interests to McGill's School of Architecture as a whole. I see each of its several foci of research reflected in the subject of this project as well as the disciplinary approaches with which one can variously approach it. Indeed I do not think that any of these approaches can be excised from either the study or the making of architecture: social, cultural, and technical bodies of research meet up as one in the body of architecture. My wager has been that phenomenology is crucial to the understanding of this subject, of the city, and of studies in media and culture generally. There it supports, enriches and lends depth to the other fields impacting upon the city and architecture. This is the reason I have so appreciated the opportunity to develop this research in the School of Architecture's History and Theory program. It is also the fundamental insight the program has offered me, and one for which I am profoundly grateful.

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Introduction

Unsettled Cities

This thesis examines three important instances in visual culture of one of the most compelling and disturbing of images: the apocalyptic destruction of the city. This phenomenon has been with us since early in the history of cinema, and it has become ubiquitous in recent years, in a disturbing resonance with contemporary events. One of the most compelling manifestations of this image is its emergence in Japanese anime (animated film) as well as manga (comics or graphic novels). This thesis examines three related but distinct visual narratives to which this imagery is central: one cinematic, one in manga, and one in anime.

It might be argued that this imagery only incidentally involves architecture and cities, that they are merely the convenient focus of a nebulous desire for violence: they are merely symptomatic. But the assertion on which this thesis is based is that this imagery echoes a human crisis whose playing out in architectural imagery emphasizes the centrality of architecture to human capacities for being, making, and dwelling. The imagery of urban destruction, disturbingly, suggests a denial of the prospect of any sort of *architecture*, any attempt to give the world a form and, by implication, a meaning. It suggests the fundamental impossibility, in our times, of cities and what they can and should stand for – a meaningful shared existence.

It is of profound importance to architects whether or not architecture and city-building are in this sense possible, and if so, what we can contribute to them. The argument which follows is intended to demonstrate that they are and we can. The destruction in these images is evidence rather of a fecundity which arises despite the deadening effect of certain important aspects of modernity. Creative destruction is about much more than mere change of form or the erasure of the past to make room for the future – the modern *tabula rasa.* It is instead integral to the fundamental process by which we make things

and make sense in one and the same action: the act of *poeisis*. It implies a taking apart of the world concommitant with its putting together, a clearing which is also a setting-up, a transcendence which is also a falling into the world in a moment which is not about chaos or construction but about their enigmatic coincidence.

Consistent with this focus, rather than emphasizing, as many studies have done, the psychological, psychoanalytic, political, or social significance of this phenomenon – approaches which are important but which tend to treat the image as a symptom – this study will work through its poetics. A principle of phenomenology is that sense (meaning) and sense (perception) are inseparable; the significance of a tower cannot be isolated from the way it looms over us or the vertigo it inspires in us. This thesis will attempt to give voice to our experience of the images in these stories, particularly the experience of bodies in their cinematic and drawn spaces, in an attempt to draw out their meaning. That meaning will be found to be related to social, political, and historical conditions, but in addressing these my emphasis will be on the existential crises they generate. These existential preoccupations are articulated in a poetics to which the expression of depth, of movement, of colour and of darkness, are central. It is often a terrifying and seductive imagery and these very qualities suggest that there is potential here for a poetics which can inform architecture in a more than trivial way. In the second half of the thesis, in an unexpected way, this will bring us back to the phenomenon as symptom, but a symptom granted a poetic validity.

Modern and Cultural Context

This imagery has both a historical specificity and a generality. There is little doubt that its emergence in the Japanese context, for example, can be linked to traumas Japan suffered and contributed to during the Second World War, as well as to the country's engagement with modern political and economic conditions, particularly in the post-war era[3]. But the

[3]Takashi Murakami, "Earth in My Window," in *Little Boy: The Arts of Japan's Exploding Subculture*, ed. T. Murakami (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 98-112; Thomas Lamarre, "Torauma Kara Umarete: Akira to Shihonshugi Teki Na Hakai Yôshiki " *Shingenjitsu*, no. 4 (2007): 29-52; Susan Napier, "Panic Sites: The Japanese Imagination

fact that this imagery also emerged (as we shall see) in Germany between the wars, and holds a fascination in many cultural settings today, demonstrates that the significance of these traumatic images goes much deeper than merely events specific to Japan's setting. They can be considered instances of a general trauma wrought upon the world by its embrace of modernity.

Japan, however, has in many ways epitomized the embrace of the modern by the non-European world. Japan embraced aspects of modernity and resisted others, and was the first non-Western culture to surpass the West on its own terms (through rapid industrialization in the 19th century, defeat of Russia in 1905, outright defiance of the United States in 1941, and rapid economic development post-WWII). Indeed war trauma was in important ways a consequence of Japan's resistance to Western influence.

The condition of Japan in the modern world always raises key questions about relationships between the "West" and the rest of the world, and these are historical questions. They relate to the dissemination of a European model of knowledge across the world over the past centuries, and the difficulty of fitting this model to other settings. Indeed, that very difficulty suggests the shortcomings of the European model of knowledge to describe and enable a truly human condition of being. One aspect of that European model of thought is the production of the technological as the transparent tool of reason, as the implement which allows a global mastery rendered necessary by the (seemingly irreparable) divorce between man and the world that model of knowledge implies. Whether or not it is a subtle enough description of the situation to say that this mode of thinking disseminated in only one direction is debatable; critics have argued for a more complex understanding which recognizes, for example, the early applications of the technological/rational mindset first outside Europe rather than inside[4]. But what is less debatable is that this framework represented something modern, something based on the divorce through technology of man from nature, something made possible by the

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of Disaster from 'Godzilla' to 'Akira'," in *Contemporary Japan and Popular Culture*, ed. J. W. Treat (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996), 235-64.

[4]William Mitchell, "The Stage of Modernity," in *Questions of Modernity*, ed. William Mitchell (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 1-34.

historical development of Western metaphysical thinking from Plato through to the Enlightenment, and something whose impact on the rest of the world has included numerous profound cultural, social, and often physical traumas – among which can be counted the carpeting of the world in a modern architecture which effaces any sense of place. Caught up in this condition are the relationships of modernity to tradition and of the West to the rest of the world, this last a relationship itself mediated largely through technology, weaponry, communications, and technicized systems of management. Hence technological cities, destroyed technologically.

The *Metropolis* Tales

If the intention of this study is to articulate the significance for architects of the destructive imagery of cities and bodies, in the context of the modern relationship of man to technology and to the technicization of life and of cities, it would make sense to examine instances of the imagery of the city threatened with destruction which appear not only in the Japanese but also European contexts, and also instances from different points in the development of modernity.

There is in fact a set of three narratives which do meet these criteria. This is a sequence of three tales, all named *Metropolis*, all sharing the themes of the threatened overcoming of man by technology / modernity, a fascination with the future which corresponds to a fear of it, and the embodiment of this future of the human community in the form of the city. The first of these is of course Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*, a silent film in black and white from Germany (first released in 1926)[5]. The second is a manga (comic book) by Tezuka Osamu published in Japan immediately after the Second World War (first published in 1949)[6]. The final tale is a work of anime (Japanese animated film) by the director and screenwriting team of Rintarô and Ôtomo Katsuhiro (Japanese and global release in 2001)[7]. The different narratives occupy distinct points on a historical trajectory which

[5]Fritz Lang et al., *Metropolis* (New York, NY: Kino on Video, 2002), videorecording.
[6]Tezuka Osamu, *Metoroporisu* (Tokyo: Kadokawa, 1979).
[7]Rintarô et al., *Metropolis / Metoroporisu* (Culver City, Calif.: Columbia TriStar Home Video, 2002), videorecording.

itself engages with the key themes of historical conflict, east-west relations, and modern subjectivity.

The narrative link between the *Metropolis* tales is far from direct. At the time Tezuka's manga was drawn, its creator had seen only a single still from Lang's film; thus his story develops quite differently from Lang's, though it shares with Lang's film a preoccupation with the dangers of technology and modernization. Rintarô's anime folds together these two earlier stories. As we shall see, it owes much to both Tezuka's and Lang's works, each on their own way so different.

While the connection between these tales may be looked upon as broken and convoluted, there are notable commonalities. For example, connections are made over the thesis between the respective poetic engagements of Expressionism and anime. Shared preoccupations and modes of expression will suggest that, if these works are valid pieces of evidence, we do not live in an age which has simply left behind the past of the 1940s, the 1920s, or indeed the much earlier tales to which all these stories refer. This is why Lang's and Tezuka's stories were seen as interesting enough by animators in Japan at the turn of this century that it was worth making something of them.

Indeed this is not the only example of the confluence of Japanese popular culture and classical European cinema (a confluence which would likely be seen as obscure to mainstream North American cinema, let alone North American animation). There are frequent references in animated film to the silent film era and resonances with the concerns of Germany between the wars (for example the anime and manga *Harlock Saga,* based on Wagner's *Rheingold*[8]; the many references in anime to the tropes of the Golem, the Homunculus, and the vampire; the appearance of Fritz Lang and of Adolf Hitler's book *Japan and the Japanese* in *Full Metal Alchemist – Conqueror of Shambala*[9]; references to silent film in the short film *Labyrinthos*[10] by the animated *Metropolis'* own

[8]Jinchiro Koyama et al., "Harlock Saga," ([New York, N.Y.]: U.S. Manga Corps, 2001).
[9]Seiji Mizushima, "Gekijô-Ban Hagane No Renkinjutsushi: Shanbara Wo Yuku Mono," (Japan: Shochiku, 2005).
[10]Rintarô, "Meikyû Monogatari / Neo Tokyo," (Japan: Selecta, 1987).

director Rintarô; to name a few). And these references do not seem to be in one direction only. The first chapter will touch on the image of the Oriental in Lang's Metropolis; Lang's film and even more so some of the imagery of the novel *Metropolis* which accompanied the film seems to anticipate the imagery of so called “cyberpunk” culture and its preoccupation with a threatening and vaguely Asian embodiment of the future. While the thesis will address each of the tales in chronological order, in the end they cannot be seen as merely distinct sections on a one-way road through the experience of modernity. Rather they interpenetrate each other; they are reflected in each other as they refract through themselves more ancient mythologies.

Cities imagined, cities inhabited

The subject of the thesis is the imagined city. But the imagined city is not autonomous of the real city. Each of these tales, to a greater or lesser extent, refers explicitly to real urban conditions, contemporary debates about urban conditions, or imaginations – urban visions – intended to engage with the realities of urban life; and all of these implicate the existential circumstances and corresponding poetics which are the subject of this thesis. Though they are not the direct focus of the thesis, connections to real cities will be commented upon over the course of the thesis. They feed into the phenomenon from two directions: informing the story-tellers' vision of imagined cities, they inspire the background to the events of the films; and as our own real environment, they are the bed of our problematic condition, the medium by which the modern problem acts upon our bodies.

I have already commented upon the modern tensions articulated in these tales. In the context of these observations, we can identify a key condition which emerges in both real cities and the *Metropolis* tales. This is the dichotomy of, on the one hand, the technicized aspect of the city – its rationalized, or planned aspect – and, on the other hand, that aspect apprehended first and foremost by the body through its experience of the city's sensuality, scent, subjective sight, hearing, movement and touch. Lang's city for example is in one sense a modern machine; in another sense it represents the opposite, a dark and twisted

labyrinth offering refuge from the modern city and at the same time threatening to undermine it. Rintarô's city hybridizes the grid of a modern plan (as it happens, Le Corbusier's *City for Three Million Inhabitants*) with an immense, collage-like labyrinth crammed with scenes of everyday life. Tezuka's manga city also speaks of this tension: it springs up in the ruins of any urban organization Tokyo and other Japanese cities had prior to the war, and from the ruins of Japan's early attempts to engage with the technologies of modernity. His *Metropolis* represents a mangled but also fecund destabilization of the modern city at political, social, and physical levels. The tension between city organized to serve a modern project on the one hand, and those aspects of the city which escape from this process on the other, forms the background of the chapters discussing each of these tales.

It can be argued that the first of these cities, the technicized city, finds its origins in the following words from the second part of René Descartes' Discourse on Method:

> "...those ancient towns which were originally nothing but hamlets, and in the course of time have become great cities, are ordinarily very badly arranged compared to one of the symmetrical metropolitan districts which a city planner has laid out on an open plain according to his own designs."[11]

Descartes proposes here what might be taken as the basis of modern attempts to rationalize the city. The shortcomings of the notion that rational planning of the city would lead inevitably to an improvement in the human condition have been acknowledged for several decades by a number of writers[12]. The phenomenological stance of the thesis – its emphasis on "readings" of the tales over the application of a single analytical strategy, its focus on subjective experience and the potency of the imagery, and

[11]René Descartes, *Discourse on Method and Meditations*, trans. Laurence J. Lafleur (Indianapolis ; New York: Liberal Arts, 1960), 10.
[12]Including recent work: Barbara Rahder and Richard Milgrom, "The Uncertain City: Making Space(S) for Difference," *Canadian Journal of Urban Research* 13, no. 1 (2004): 27-45; Leonie Sandercock, "Planning in the Ethno-Culturally Diverse City: A Comment," *Planning Theory and Practice* 4, no. 3 (2003): 319-23.

ultimately the position taken that perception and embodied movement matter most to the interpretation of the imagery – aligns with the desire for an alternative to the notion of cities as merely planned spaces. Thus it concords with cinema's – and I would argue anime's – particular sensitivity to the liminal and experiential aspects of the city. As will become clear over the following pages, the resistance to the notion of the city as machine is articulated with particularly strength in these fantastic tales of the city, with great intensity and with an imagery which foregrounds the engagement of the body with the city.

Technical Body

This engagement of the body with the city tends to be articulated in the figure of the technicized human body: the robot or cyborg. As is typical of science fiction, the bodies central to these stories are very often technical. Their humanity may be supplemented technically; or it may be stripped away, reduced to a silhouette surrounding a bundle of technicity. This is of interest to architects because it has implications for modern architecture's unavoidable use of technologized components and systems of construction. It evokes one of the most fundamental relationships in architecture: that of body to building.

Architecture is always created through and for the human body. It is through the lived experience of the body that we engage first and most intimately with architecture. One of the problems of modern architecture has been the disruption of the body/built form relationship, both in terms of architecture’s making and our experience of it. That is, where we once made buildings with our own hands and through the efforts of a community, we now use machines to assemble factory-made components through a system of production which is organized according to the principles expedient for the smooth running of larger organizational structures for the manipulation of technology, capital, and social management. I do not intend to promote nostalgia or a sense of hopelessness in the face of these forces; meaningful building does still happen, but generally speaking it must be pushed with great effort against the current of the times.

Similarly, where our primary experience of the world, including the world we build, was through a direct sensorial and even sensual perception of space and materials (themselves worked by the body) which lent to every perception a synaesthetic richness and complexity and which embedded these experiences in a social matrix that leant meaning to them, today it can be argued that our experience of mass-produced materials designed for the consumption of an atomized society is relatively impoverished: that in fact the body matters less and less to our engagement with the things we use and live with, and that the form of disembodied sight implied by the various forms of media with which we survey, compare, and buy these products matters more and more. Again, this is not to imply an irrevocable loss; toward the end of the thesis I will argue for a potential redemption in these very forces of mediatization and commercialism that offers some sort of hope for architecture. But such a redemption is only possible if the dangers in these processes are acknowledged and faced.

This situation is part and parcel of a broader divorce in modern Western culture between embodied being and the world as object to be manipulated, in Heidegger's words, "standing reserve". The divorce between body and building is a consequence and one aspect of the technicization of the world[13]. In response to this situation architects have wavered between a technical fascination with the modern building, and a desire to somehow put a human face on it. This desire to recover the body-building relationship can be identified as a tension in the *Metropolis* tales. The metaphorical and sometimes literal coupling of the (technical) body with building and city is central to these three stories; indeed the image of the body as kernel of urban destruction is seen frequently in certain kinds of anime. The transformation of body, building, and city *together* clearly matters. It is as though something in us wants to put bodies and buildings back together again, though we only know how to do this in the crassest of ways, by making our bodies

[13]Alberto Pérez-Gómez, *Architecture and the Crisis of Modern Science* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1983), 285-90; Alberto Pérez-Gómez and Louise Pelletier, *Architectural Representation and the Perspective Hinge* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997), 328; Alberto Pérez Gómez, "Charles-Étienne Briseux: The Musical Body and the Limits of Instrumentality in Architecture," in *Body and Building : Essays on the Changing Relation of Body and Architecture*, ed. George Dodds, Robert Tavernor, and Joseph Rykwert (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002), 189.

into robots and turning our buildings into organisms; “jacking” them together or making them physically transformable into one another. Consistent with my earlier point about creative destruction, there are several related questions: whether this all implies the impossibility of being and dwelling in the modern world, in the context of a technicized contemporary culture; whether it means the end of the human, or implies somehow a mending and a recovery of the human; following from this, whether these stories really call for a rejection of technology (as Lang's seems to), or whether they suggest some kind of accommodation of it; and thus whether the coming apart of bodies, buildings and cities implies an end to things, or whether something redemptive is to be gleaned from this imagery. The implication of existential crises in the poetics of these films justifies a tentative addressing of these questions through this thesis. The thesis will assert that bodies and buildings, if they cannot be brought back into a seamless alignment, at the very least continue to evince a yearning for a condition in which that might be so.

Structure of thesis

The thesis is broken into two parts. In the first, the more extensive, I will address each of the *Metropolis* tales in turn.

Each chapter will be prefaced with a brief discussion of the technical body appropriate to that tale. These prefaces will place that figure loosely in a cultural and historical context; but this examination is not intended to be exhaustive. Its key purpose is rather to set up the discussion in the coming chapter of the given version of *Metropolis*.

The body of each chapter will form a reading of one of the *Metropolis* tales; I will discuss the methodology of this in the section Modes of Understanding below.

The first two chapters will be followed by a postscript. Each forms a link to the next chapter, but its focus varies from chapter to chapter. The postscripts draw the discussion out from the given tale into the to the city in general, developing connections to the real city which are underdeveloped in the chapter proper, for the reasons laid out above in the

section “cities imagined, cities inhabited”. The postscripts where appropriate also elaborate theoretical points made in the body of the chapter in order to help carry that point through to the next or subsequent chapters.

Part 2 might be taken as the postscript for Chapter 3, and in fact for the entire thesis. It will elaborate the discussion of the relationship of our bodies (including architectural bodies) and their images, with several goals:

1) The overlaying of Merleau-Ponty's and Deleuze's thought which I employ in the discussion of the tales has implications for the field of anime. In the chapter “Other anime: the thick flat”, I will make the case that animated film articulates a condition in which the stakes of the *Metropolis* tales are raised, their concerns accentuated, in a manner which, contrary to some understandings of anime, does not negate the body.

2) This same overlaying has implications for our relationship to technology which are important to architecture. The chapter “Technology and poeisis” develops these implications. Its conclusions are based on the relationship of body and image sketched out earlier in the thesis, and so it draws on a related argument from Georges Didi-Huberman to call for the destructuring of architectures which I believe is implied in these stories.

Finally, the chapter “Architectures” provides some instances of built architecture which echo the concerns raised in this dissertation. That is, it offers concrete examples of buildings which embody certain of the relationships between body and image that my investigation of the Metropolis tales suggest are to be sought after by architects. While Part 1 forms the body of the thesis, the chapters in Part 2 in effect sketch out foci for further work.

Modes of Understanding

It will be seen that there are some inconsistencies between the approaches used to address the different stories. This is because they are *different* stories and each calls for a focus of

analysis appropriate to itself. This is consistent with notions of hermeneutic and phenomenological study as put forth by Gianni Vattimo: that one's approach to an object of research should address the object *as it is*, rather than applying an arbitrary analytical machine to it[14].

Nevertheless a particular area of consideration (which calls for the employment of different overlapping approaches) does arise naturally from these objects of study. This is the consideration of the body's engagement with perception and action, particularly the connection between the two. This is a fundamental pivot in our experience of and engagement with the world, and a problematic one. How do we move from perception to action? What mystery must this involve? Our experience of life tells us that we do so constantly, and that our action does not just occur in response to perception, just one more link in a chain of determination. Indeed our own dual condition as objects in the world and perceiving subjects seems to be inherently contradictory. They must be so under the Cartesian project, and the imagery of the technical body crystallizes these problems.

Merleau-Ponty

Maurice Merleau-Ponty proposed a model of perception and action in the world which aspired to a reconciliation of these problems. For him it was in the study of perception that one could find an alternative to the epistemological framework of Cartesianism. The body was the ground where human beings *became*, the (magical) mirror in which the truth of their being was revealed, and the crucible in which the incomprehensible mixing of matter and mind occurred. For him this took place in a thick time ("The lived present holds a past and a future within its thickness"[15]) and across depth, the dimension through which we engage in and palpate the world, rather than measure or manipulate it: "(Depth) is the dimension in which things or elements of things envelop each other, whereas

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[14]Gianni Vattimo, *The End of Modernity : Nihilism and Hermeneutics in Post-Modern Culture* (Cambridge: Polity, 1988), 145-63.
[15]Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (London & New York: Routledge Classics, 2002), 321.

breadth and height are the dimensions in which they are juxtaposed."[16] This depth, though, is not within us: it lies between us and the world. Merleau-Ponty's "new psychology" looked for the truth of the human being not in the subconscious but played out upon the face, the movement of the limbs, the disposition of the body. For Merleau-Ponty cinema, which communicated through the study of surfaces and through an almost pure focus on "the sign language of gesture and gaze"[17], was a medium exceptionally well-tuned to this understanding. As he put it, "a movie is not thought, but perceived"[18]. And his work has been crucial in the theoretical search for a new basis of architecture which could go beyond the shortcomings inherent in the mechanistic and functional rhetoric of Modernism.

I have already mentioned that the imagery of urban and corporeal destruction can be considered traumatic: it is violent and frightening, and it is related to social, historical, and also physical traumas. Merleau-Ponty had a great interest in the imaginary perceptions of trauma victims. He wrote of these in his discussions of the phenomenon of the phantom limb: that is, limbs which a patient imagines to still exist after an arm or leg has been lost. He denied that such fantasies (or any other perceptual phenomena) could be explained simply through physiological mechanisms, in response to neurological conditions. Rather, the phantom arm revealed an unchanged human yearning toward the patient's life project or the movement of their being toward death:

> "What is in us which refuses mutilation and disablement is an *I* committed to a certain physical and inter-human world, who continues to tend toward his world despite handicaps and amputations and who, to this extent, does not recognize them *de jure*."[19]

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[16]Ibid., 308.
[17]———, *Sense and Non-Sense* ([Evanston, Ill.]: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 58.
[18]Ibid.
[19] Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology of Perception, 93.

This thesis will assert that consistent with Merleau-Ponty the traumatized imagery of human bodies replaced and reconstructed – while it is evidence of a modern condition which might be characterized as broken, or torn, or difficult – is also evidence of an undiminished human drive to engage in a trajectory which creates a world. This is a viewpoint which is heavily rooted in the notion that we are engaged in a movement toward death; and that our lives and their meaning are circumscribed by the horizon of this movement.

Gilles Deleuze

There is a secondary set of works also important to this thesis. This is the writing of Gilles Deleuze on cinema. His writing is a significant understanding of cinema and related arts including (I will assert in Chapter 1.2) arts of the sequential image such as manga. It is often taken to be at odds with the position of phenomenology. Deleuze frames the dichotomy of "mind" and "body" in terms of "image" and "movement." This is the position of one preoccupied with the cinematic image[20]. As Deleuze puts it "The cinema can, with impunity, bring us close to things or take us away from them and revolve around them, it suppresses both the anchoring of the subject and the horizon of the world."[21] This seems to contradict Merleau-Ponty's understanding that the individual must be oriented towards the world within the bounds of a horizon and in engagement with a life project. In short, Merleau-Ponty appears to be centred on the subject (if a pre-reflective subject), while Deleuze appears to not be.

However, my assertion is that, despite important differences, the work of these two thinkers represents not just a distance but also coincidence – an overlap – which is just broad enough to allow a play back and forth between their independent understandings. This play illuminates important aspects of the *Metropolis* tales as well as, I believe, the ideas of Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty themselves. Indeed the recent work of a number of

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[20]Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson & Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 56.
[21]Ibid., 57.

critics[22] has focused on coincidences in their thought. I cannot examine these arguments in detail here. My concern is the material of the *Metropolis* tales themselves; I am approaching the ideas through the flesh of the works. But my assertion is that these works provide some evidence for the mutual relevance of these two thinkers. This thesis is not a work of philosophy; I will not be able to elaborate all the implications of the spread between these two thinkers. But to support this case I include below a few observations about the divergences and convergences of Merleau-Ponty and Deleuze.

Deleuze himself underlined the difference between his articulation of the world as an assemblage of images not dependent upon a seeing subject (citing Henri Bergson), and the position of phenomenology thus:

> "…the eye is in things, in luminous images in themselves. 'Photography, if there is photography, is already snapped, already shot, in the very interior of things and for all the points of space…'
>
> "This breaks with the whole philosophical tradition which placed light on the side of spirit and made consciousness a beam of light which drew things out of their native darkness. Phenomenology was still squarely within this ancient tradition: but, instead of making light an internal light, it simply opened it on to the exterior, rather as if the intentionality of consciousness was the ray of an electric lamp ('all consciousness is consciousness *of* something…')."[23]

But this is an inadequate understanding of (at least) Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology. In the chapter "Experience and Objective Thought: The problem of the body" in *Phenomenology of Perception,* Merleau-Ponty examines what it means to see from a

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[22]For example Leonard Lawlor, "The End of Phenomenology: Expressionism in Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty," *Continental Philosophy Review* 31 (1998): 15-34; and Elena del Rio, "Alchemies of Thought in Godard's Cinema: Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty," *SubStance* 34, no. 3 (2005): 62-78.
[23]Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 60-61.

particular place, from a specific body, and whether that needs to be considered as a limitation of phenomenology's validity. As he puts it: "We must try to understand how vision can be brought into being from somewhere without being enclosed in its perspective."[24]He is dealing precisely with the substance of Deleuze's criticism of phenomenology, though of course this was written long before Deleuze's work on cinema. Merleau-Ponty discusses the view of a house: is our understanding of the house, he asks, not always limited by our point of view onto it? Is it not more accurate to consider, with Leibniz, that the true house can be found not in any view of it but rather in "the perspectiveless position from which all (possible perspectives) can be derived, the house seen from nowhere."?[25] Merleau-Ponty's response to this notion is that our gaze onto the house always implies a myriad of other gazes onto the house, and within the house, from and to all the objects in the world:

> "Thus every object is the mirror of all others. When I look at the lamp on my table, I attribute to it not only the qualities visible from where I am, but also those which the chimney, the walls, the table can 'see'; but the back of my lamp is nothing but the face which it 'shows' to the chimney. I can therefore see an object in so far as objects form a system or a world, and in so far as each one treats the others round it as spectators of its hidden aspects and as guarantee of the permanence of those aspects. Any seeing of an object by me is instantaneously reiterated among all those objects in the world which are apprehended as co-existent, because each of them is all that the others 'see' of it. Our previous formula must therefore be modified; the house itself is not the house seen from nowhere, but the house seen from everywhere. The completed object is translucent, being shot through from all sides by an infinite number of present scrutinies which intersect in its depths leaving nothing hidden."[26]

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[24]Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 78.
[25]Ibid., 77.
[26]Ibid., 79.

We find here an unexpected echo of Deleuze's position; and vice versa. Deleuze does not speak of an absolute viewpoint, but of multiple viewpoints; this is what distinguishes cinema from orthographic projection. And according to Merleau-Ponty's own words, his vision implies not one but a multitude of subjects: an intersubjectivity. This multiplicity of viewpoints intersects with the richness of our own, individual, experience of perception. While united in one subject, our perception always implies a multiplicity of experiences and sensations, a blurring around the edges of perception, and the multivalencies and interferences which make synaesthetic experience possible.

This is consistent with the arguments of the critics I alluded to above. Leonard Lawlor for example asserts that Merleau-Ponty's notion of subjectivity, especially in his later work, is articulated in a vocabulary which implies, rather than just a singular subject, a subject engaged in an (embodied) experience of infinity[27]. Merleau-Ponty speaks in his later work of a body which, stretched as it is across a gap, is at once whole and burst asunder; at once a kernel of intimacy and connected with all things[28]. The passage I have quoted above suggests a trace of this even as early as the *Phenomenology of Perception*. Similarly, Elena del Rio makes the case that even the deterritorialized Body Without Organs articulated, as Deleuze argues it is in Godard's *Histoire(s) du Cinéma*[29], always implies a coalescing into one single body[30]. I cannot go further into these arguments here; as I have said I think the evidence lies in the flesh of the works themselves and their resonance with the words and images employed by both Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty. But while acknowledging the differences of these two thinkers, it can still be said that their distinct understandings have the capacity to hang together; this thesis makes use of that capacity.

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[27]Lawlor, "The End of Phenomenology: Expressionism in Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty," 28.

[28] "If, at the center and so to speak in the kernel of Being, there is an infinite infinite, every partial being directly or indirectly presupposes it, and is in return really or eminently contained in it." Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Signs* ([Evanston, Ill.]: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 149. Quoted in Lawlor, "The End of Phenomenology: Expressionism in Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty," 29.

[29]Jean Luc Godard et al., *Histoire(S) Du Cinéma* ([Paris?]: Gaumont Video, 2007), videorecording.

Foci of concern

These modes of understanding suggest specific foci of concern: depth and movement through it; perception; the body's relationship to its spatial frame; by analogy, the related relationship of the shot and its movement to the cinematic frame; the relationship of contents to frame generally and of surface to those things hidden behind surface; and the rupture of these relationships. These concerns are not developed to the same extent or in the same manner in either the works themselves or my treatment of them. For example in Lang's case the relationship of frames to contents is articulated in an interplay of light and dark (which frame and interpenetrate each other). As we'll see Merleau-Ponty's discussion of motility and its relationship to depth, supplemented by Deleuze's comments on Expressionist film, form a productive lens for the interpretation of Lang's *Metropolis*. In the case of the manga similar stakes are expressed in the pathos of cartoon faces. The manga seems to call for a discussion in terms of Deleuze's understanding of the movement from perception to action through affect played out on surfaces. It also invites a reflection on the manga's status in the context of a post-war Japanese popular culture which has been described as leading to a flattened existential condition that fits in many ways into Deleuze's notion of a crisis in cinematic action. My discussion of the third, animated, *Metropolis*, brings together both Merleau-Ponty's and Deleuze's understandings in an examination of the use of movement, space, surface, and colour in this last version of the story. In all cases the shared fragility of cinematic, manga, and animated frames and surfaces – their propensity to be ruptured – is important, especially in light of the damage to the city which coincides with such effects.

Another notion will be of particular importance in the latter half of the thesis. This is the notion of the *invisible*, which has distinct meanings for these two thinkers. As I will explain in the body of the thesis, for Merleau-Ponty the most intimate ground over which our relation to the world takes place is the gap in human experience he referred to as the *chiasm*. The chiasm exists, as it were, on the surface of our skins: this is the location of the gap we cross in every moment that we grasp and are grasped by our own perception.

[30]del Rio, "Alchemies of Thought in Godard's Cinema: Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty," 73.

In this condition visibility and invisibility are coiled around each other. Merleau-Ponty's *invisible* is that which is cloaked by our skins but which is nevertheless, as Merleau-Ponty puts it, "crammed with visibility". The intertwining of visible and invisible binds into the knot of a pre-reflective subjectivity our conditions of object (that which can be manipulated in the world) and subject (that which cannot, but in whose capacity we experience the world in all its sensorial and sensual qualities). These notions are key to this thesis, which argues that the *écart* (spread or shift) between the body as subject and the body as object is forcefully articulated in certain works of cinema and anime.

Deleuze too was preoccupied with an invisible*,* one distinct from Merleau-Ponty's. In Deleuze's case the invisible refers to what it is in the cinematic view which remains out of sight of the lens. For him the darkness beyond the cinematic frame is emblematic of what it is in the world which can never be illuminated; the Open, the "ungiven and ungiveable" whole which both endures and is ever new[31]. For Deleuze we experience the Open as *durée*[32] or duration. Cinema is about the articulation and modulation of *durée* through the changing moment. Perception grants us the experience of this in the cinematic flow of "mobile sections" or "movement images": images of which movement is always already an integral part. And in a resonance with Merleau-Ponty's foregrounding of the notion of becoming through movement into depth, the mobile section too implies depth: "… duration, by changing qualitatively, is divided up in objects, and objects, *by gaining depth*, by losing their contours, are united in duration."[33]

Our experience of the Open is always shifting and always obscure, dark rather than clear; rather than exposed to our view, it is always there in what is hidden from the lens. For Deleuze the history of cinema is marked by the movement of this invisible from the space outside the frame to the spaces between frames and finally within the frame. As I will explain in the second part of the thesis, the recent mutations of the moving image (which include anime) make possible an ever-mutating shifting of this "beyond". And,

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[31]Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 10.
[32]He takes these notions from Henri Bergson's first and third theses on movement. Ibid., 1-12.
[33]Ibid., 11. My emphasis.

remarkably, the same technologies (I will argue) imply a shifting outwards of Merleau-Ponty's own invisible.

The study of the *Metropolis* tales thus leads to the notion that the two invisibles which form the horizons of Merleau-Ponty's and Deleuze's independent work, while not equivalent, do in contemporary circumstances impinge upon each other. They never align entirely, but they do catch at and perhaps even caress each other. We sense this in the effects of cinema, anime, and new media in which bodies and things come apart, slip relative to each other, sometimes revealing a darkness – only to coalesce again, to rematerialize. In conditions of modernity, body, building and city seem to bear a problematic relationship to their image which can be identified in and articulated in terms of this convergence of invisibles. When I discuss this relationship of body to image, I will make the argument that it seems to call for (in the words of Georges Didi-Huberman) something like a semiology which is also a phenomenology, in which the image and the thing, despite the spread between them, are thrown back into each other.

These several disjunctions and violences – which also imply embraces and envelopments – are the ultimate implications of the imagery of the undoing of bodies and cities (our most intimate geographies and extended skins), with implications for architecture. But we will get to these conclusions indirectly, across the readings of the three *Metropolis* tales which follow.

Part 1: The Tales

1.1 Lang: Arc

> "…the psycho-physical event can no longer be conceived after the model of Cartesian physiology and as the juxtaposition of a process in itself and of a *cogitatio*."[34]

Preface to Lang: automaton to robot

Maurice Merleau-Ponty articulated one of the most poignant critiques of the modern division of the human mind from the objective world, a division on which our technological mastery of the world is based. Merleau-Ponty's understanding of human experience replaced Descartes' split between the subject and the objective world with a *chiasm* within the human being itself. In the shift or spread between the capacities of the hand as object and as vector of the subject lay the mystery of depth:

> "…if I can, with my left hand, feel my right hand as it touches an object, the right hand as an object is not the right hand as it touches: the first is a system of bones, muscles and flesh brought down at a point of space, the second shoots through space like a rocket to reveal the external object in its place. In so far as it sees or touches the world, my body can therefore be neither seen nor touched."[35]

For Descartes, these two hands could never have been one. The hand which projected through space, which directed to an object, belonged to the mind. The hand of bones, muscles and flesh belonged to the object-world: it was the anatomical hand, the hand that in Descartes' time was starting to resemble, in the imagination, the hand of a machine.

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[34]Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 102.
[35]Ibid., 105.

The anatomical hand shared the pages of the 18th century Encyclopedia with mechanical bodies: automata. While illustrating scientific principles, these were also objects of wonder, spectacles, works of theatre, *thaumata*. But somewhere between the Enlightenment and high modernity, the wonder which had moved the hand of the automaton dissipated and left behind it a hand from which all trace of mind or spirit had been evacuated. This was the hand of the robot. Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* revolves around a robot originally designed as a labouring object to replace the city's workers with a perfect, untiring body.[36] But as we shall see, though it is in one sense a realization of the Cartesian object, bereft of soul, it becomes over the course of the film what might be seen as a distortion of the last phrase of Merleau-Ponty's words above: a body which can be seen but not touched, a phantom.

[36]Von Harbou's novel makes this clear: Thea von Harbou, Metropolis (Boston: Gregg Press, 1975).

Lang's gaze

In 1924 Fritz Lang and his wife and scriptwriter, Thea von Harbou, visited New York in the company of Eric Mendelssohn. According to Lang, their first night in America was spent offshore, "as illegal aliens"[37], awaiting visa clearance. It was from this vantage point that Lang first saw Manhattan at night, an experience which captivated him and during which he first conceived the story of *Metropolis*. From its conception, then, the tale spoke of the condition of being held in the thrall of a city emblematic of modernity.

In 1926 von Harbou published a novel[38] under the title *Metropolis*, based on her and Lang's treatment of the story. A first version of the film was released in the same year. It was criticized for the two-dimensionality of its characters and its trite resolution, and for what many critics saw as the sacrifice of subtlety to the demands of spectacle. The plot was seen as too complex for international (particularly American) release, and the film was heavily edited, changing important aspects of the story line (eliminating for example a love triangle between Joh Frederson, Rotwang the inventor, and the mother of Freder Frederson, which had made the character of Rotwang more complex and empathetic). The film was released internationally in 1927. Despite the extensive editing it was not a financial success, given its immense production costs. Lang's production was in the end to bankrupt the studio which had produced it (UFA: Universum Film AG). For the more than eighty years between the film's release in the Americas and 2008, roughly one quarter of the film was considered lost; it has only recently been rediscovered. Despite this a definitive restoration of the film was completed in 2002[39], based on all versions of the film which were then known, the original script, and the original score. It comes close to reproducing the 1926 film. According to reports the rediscovered missing footage[40] is

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[37]Jean-Louis Cohen et al., *Scenes of the World to Come : European Architecture and the American Challenge, 1893-1960* (Paris, Montreal: Flammarion; Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1995), 86-87.
[38]Von Harbou, *Metropolis*.
[39]Lang et al., *Metropolis*.
[40]Fritz Lang, "Metropolis (Lost Footage)," (2008).

consistent with the 2002 restoration, and it is on the 2002 version of the film that the following analysis is based.

Lang synopsis

The film begins with the aphorism: “The Mediator between Head and Hands must be the Heart!” Through the opening sequence we learn that Metropolis is an immense city run for the benefit of a wealthy elite who inhabit an above-ground city that is a wonder of modern architecture and infrastructure. Below ground the powerless workers live in austere tenements and work in immense machine rooms to support the extravagance of the above-ground world.

A young member of the elite, Freder Frederson, has lived a life of luxury and privilege until a chance encounter with Maria, a woman who cares for the workers’ children. He is infatuated and pursues her into the depths of the Metropolis where he sees for the first time the conditions of the workers. Witnessing an industrial accident, he hallucinates that one of the machines turns into Moloch, devouring workers.

Overwhelmed, he travels through the city’s canyon-like streets to the building at the centre of the city, the New Tower of Babel, from which his father, the autocrat Joh Frederson, runs Metropolis. Freder confronts his father with his story of the workers’ suffering. His father is unmoved. Freder flees back to the depths. Feeling a responsibility toward the workers, he takes the place of one of them at the base of an immense clock-like control of the Paternoster Machine, which runs the elevators of the New Tower of Babel.

Joh Federson is preoccupied with maps that have been found on the bodies of two of the dead workers. He takes the maps to Rotwang, an inventor on whose quasi-alchemical science the technology of the Metropolis depends. Rotwang lives in a bent house, hunched beneath the superstructure of the city. There Rotwang reveals to Joh his new

creation, the Machine Man[41]. We understand that the creation of such devices has led to the loss of Rotwang's arm, which is now mechanical. Rotwang deciphers the maps, and leads Joh to the entrance beneath Rotwang's house into a maze of underground tunnels.

Meanwhile Freder has found another map in the clothes of the worker he replaced. With the other workers he follows the map to a chapel-like grotto. Rotwang and Joh watch from a hidden chamber above. Here Maria, as though preaching a sermon, tells the workers the story of the Tower of Babel to illustrate the injustice of their situation. She tells them to expect a coming "Mediator" who will reconcile the cold-hearted ruler with his suffering people. After the sermon, she speaks to Freder, and realizes that he is destined to be this Mediator. Spying from above, Joh instructs Rotwang to give the robot Maria's appearance, that he might substitute the robot for her and thus defeat both Freder's love for her and the worker's hope of justice.

Rotwang hunts down Maria in the tunnels, terrifying her with a spotlight; she flees before it up through the labyrinth until he has cornered her in the maze of identical doors in his house. There she is trapped. As Rotwang declares to his Machine Man that he will destroy Joh Frederson – "him and his city and his son," Freder wanders through the city. He enters the city's ancient cathedral, where a priest warns him an apocalypse is nigh. Leaving the cathedral, he passes Rotwang's house and overhears Maria's screams for help. Forcing his way into the house, Freder becomes trapped in a courtyard before an array of identical magical doors.

In his laboratory, as Maria lies unconscious and immobilized, Rotwang transforms the Machine Man into her image. Become a False Maria, the robot leaves the house and goes to the new Tower of Babel where she meets with Joh Frederson. Released from the house, Freder goes to the New Tower of Babel too. Seeing the figure he believes to be Maria in Joh's embrace, Freder is overcome and takes ill. At a nightclub known as the Yoshiwara, the False Maria is presented to an audience of the young male elite. She performs a lewd

[41] The robot's primary purpose as labourer is implied but not explicit in the film. It is explicit in the novel which was published alongside the film. Von Harbou, Metropolis, 36.

dance. The young men are overcome with lust. Freder, at home in his bed, hallucinates that the statues in the cathedral step from their niches; one of them is Death. The False Maria appears as the Whore of Baylon. Night after night the False Maria performs at the Yoshiwara, and the young men fight each other for her favour.

Recovered, Freder descends to the underground to find the true Maria. He finds instead the False Maria preaching revolution to the workers: “Kill them – the machines!” Freder tries to convince the workers that this is not Maria, but they turn on him; he is left senseless. The False Maria gathers the workers from their tenements and ascends to the machine rooms where they begin to destroy the Heart Machine, on which the city depends. The sabotage causes a flood to erupt from beneath the tenements.

The real Maria has escaped from Rotwang’s house. She gathers the workers’ children (abandoned by their rioting parents) in the square at the centre of the tenements. The floodwaters rise. Freder arrives at the tenements and together with Maria leads the children up and out of the underground. Floodwaters pour down upon on the tenement buildings.

From his vantage point above, Joh Frederson overlooks the spectacle of the great city. As the rioting continues below its lights begin to go out. He is confronted with the prospect of his city’s ruin.

Below, machines lie in ruins, and the workers dance before them. But learning that the flood has filled the tenements below, they believe that their children are dead, and blame their leader, the False Maria. But she is back at the Yoshiwara; inciting the young members of the elite to riot, she leads them through the darkened streets. Coming across the true Maria, the workers begin to pursue her. The two rioting crowds, each pursuing one of the Marias, collide. In the chaos, the crowd of angry workers seizes the False Maria. They tie her to a stake atop a pile of debris on the parvis of the cathedral As she is immolated, her “human” skin burns away, revealing the mechanical body beneath.

Meanwhile, Rotwang has reappeared and pursues the real Maria, who has now escaped from the crowd. He pursues her atop the cathedral. Freder risks his life to rescue her and throws the inventor to his death. Seeing the near-death of his son, and the near-destruction of his city, Joh Frederson realizes the error of his ways. He is reconciled, through Freder's intervention, with the workers on the steps of the cathedral; he shakes hands with their foreman. The film ends with the words with which it began: "The Mediator between Head and Hands must be the Heart!"

Machine

Fig. 1.: stills of the underground from Lang's "Metropolis"

From the first images of the film we are presented with the city as an immense machine, and indeed Lang's point is ostensibly to demonstrate the essential wrongness of that circumstance: that in modern conditions human beings become cogs in the working of a mechanism.

The city-machine is divided into upper and lower levels, and the lower levels are divided further into worker tenements and machine rooms. The architecture of the tenements is consistent with the austerity of Modernist architecture and with the lack of grace of much building generated by modern conditions of industry and capital. In the machine rooms the workers attend to regimented rows of dials and panels. They are slaves to these machines, their movements dictated by the discipline of the clock. Their movement from tenement to workplace is similarly disciplined: they walk one heavy pace after another down long tunnels as though chained together; they are transported vertically by elevator

like goods. The lynchpin of this city, and its fulcrum, is the building known as the New Tower of Babel. It is the “central intersection for all traffic in the city... all the different means of transport were to flow together in the building's lower stories, and batteries of elevators, partly visible on the outside, would also connect it to the central airport on the tip and to the halls for the machinery underground.”[42]

This is thus a city conceived as machine, emblematized by the New Tower of Babel. But as is suggested by the very embodiment of modernity's mechanisms in a mythic architecture, this film is all about what it is in a machine which is more than technological. This is apparent from the first images of the film, which cast webs of chiaroscuros and shadowy diagonals across the city's freeways and machine rooms, suggesting an opacity and a malevolent threat. Indeed the first time Freder descends into the lower city he witnesses an industrial accident, and hallucinates that one of the machines transforms into the god Moloch. All of these machines, it seems, are potentially monsters; this city is haunted.

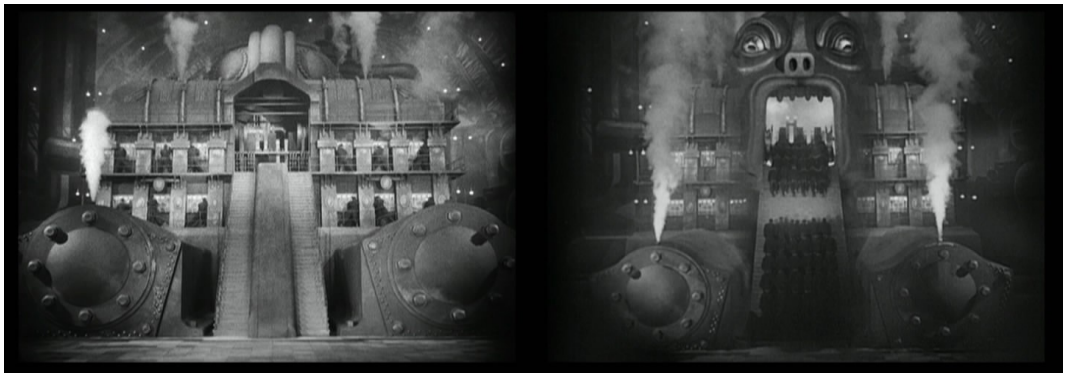

Fig. 2.: “M-Machine” transforms into Moloch

[42]Dietrich Neumann, "The Urbanistic Vision in Fritz Lang's Metropolis," in Dancing on the Volcano : Essays on the Culture of the Weimar Republic, ed. Thomas W. Kniesche and Stephen Brockmann (Columbia, SC, USA: Camden House, 1994), 148. Von Harbou’s novel makes clear what the film implies, that there is a direct vertical mechanical connection between the Tower above and the machinery below (through the Paternoster Machine).

Immediately after this scene, Freder rushes to the office of his father, Joh Frederson, high up in the New Tower of Babel. From here Frederson surveys the city below, from vast windows whose panes cut up the view like the cells of a Cartesian grid, and by video and telephone connections that also allow him to command the events below.

Fig. 3.: shadow insinuating into light

The very images which convey the apparatus of technological control suggest its undermining. The rational grid which frames the view is surrounded by darkness; blackness wells up in the upsurge of the dark, curving desk; pushes in from the corners where the desk sinks into the dark frame; a dusky shadow slips down from above even over the immense window; thick dark curtains frame the window and, as the scene progresses, close heavily over it. Even the whites in this image contribute to the opacity: the glass surface is a mist obscuring the view. In the subsequent image Joh Frederson's hand is poised above rows of identical white buttons, each standing at attention. The lightness of its touch, reflected in the polished surface of the machine, emphasizes the sensitivity and the waiting potential of the controls. But the pale white hand is set off by a darkness which crowds around the edges of the frame, creeping into the panel and around

it. Indeed the hand itself casts a long shadow which bleeds into the opaque black at the frame's border. This dark edge permeates the entire image, slipping into the shadows cast by the white buttons, sliding beneath the desktop, turning the extents of panel, desk, figure into one dark field. In the final image too, shadows seep in at the edges. Like the obscuring mist of Frederson's window, a pale opacity has slipped across the video screen on which the image of Frederson's foreman appears; rather than connecting them it acts as a true *screen*, separating the two. Consistent with this, the worker's agitation has no impact on Frederson's impassive figure; they are separated rather than united by this distant vision.

These images hint at the real nature of Lang's city, something which takes form in a shadowy web beneath the city that obscures the transparency of modern space.

Labyrinth

Intertwined with the spaces of the machine-city is a dark maze of twisting passageways and tunnels: a labyrinth folded beneath and around the modern city and its systems of order and discipline. The ambiguous relationship of frame to contents suggested in these first images – in which frame starts to take over its contents – is the rule which governs the Labyrinth.

One of the first images of the Labyrinth we see takes the form of a scribbled map handed from worker to worker. The map is covered with meandering lines, diagonals and numbers, but they make no sense, they seem random. Even the points of the compass are skewed. These lines reframe the rational attempt at mapping as an exercise in futility. This map undermines all maps and the notion of optical omniscience they represent. In transposing the grid of Frederson's window atop the New Tower of Babel onto the folds of a piece of paper, Lang tears and frays the rational frame; its sharp edges now become shaded pleats. Nevertheless it is clear to us that there are multiple identical copies of these maps. This suggests a complex meditation on the implication of systems of mechanical

reproduction in their own undermining – a capacity which we will see shortly in the figure of the magical robot.

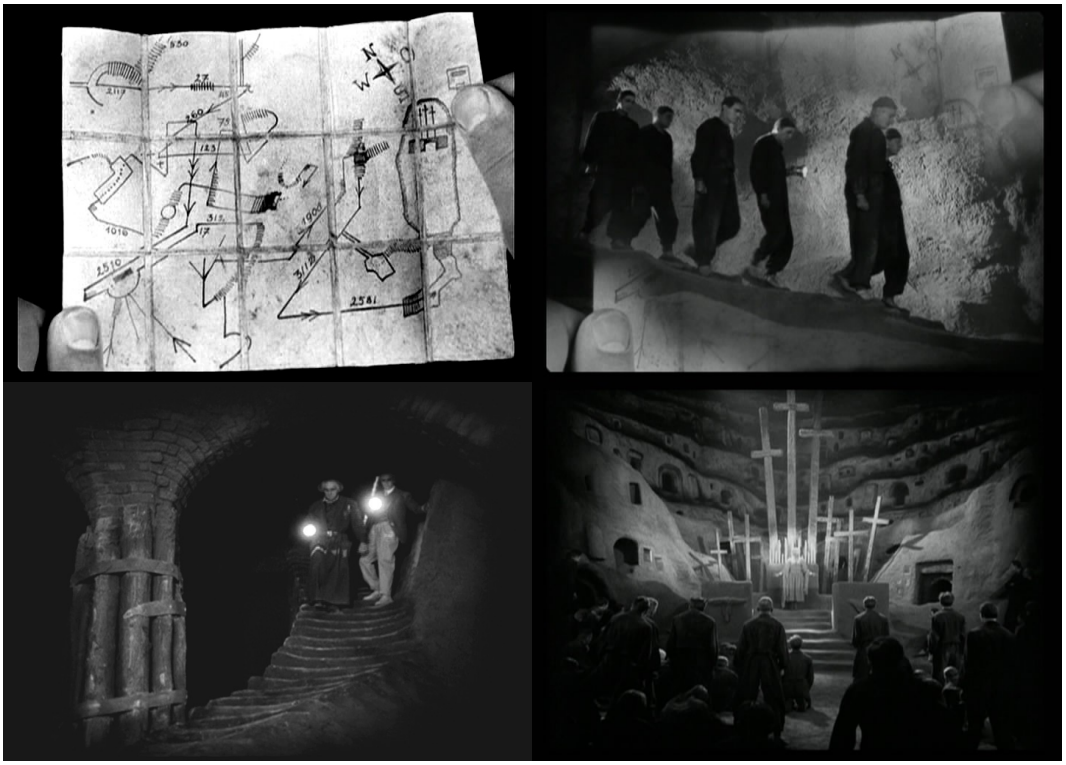

Fig. 4.: images of the Labyrinth

Like the corrupted cells of this map, in the Labyrinth frames don't simply contain, they encroach, bleed into, bend over, well up beneath, smother in labial folds, or are even propped up by their contents. Their contents in turn slip out, shudder across their margins, scatter across the torn hem of the image. In this context, darkness and light frame each other ambiguously. Black encroaches upon white, light trespasses upon darkness; in both cases they slip into each other. It is a space characteristic of Expressionist film, which in Gilles Deleuze's words speaks of a transformation of the machine:

> "It does not invoke the clear mechanics of the quantity of movement in the solid or the fluid but a dark, swampy life into which everything plunges, whether chopped up by shadows or plunged into mists…[t]he non-organic life of things, a frightful life, which is oblivious to the wisdom and limits

> of the organism… valid for the whole of Nature, that is, for the unconscious spirit, lost in darkness, light which has become opaque, *lumen opacatum*."[43]

For Deleuze this light embodied a condition in which animate and inanimate became indistinguishable: what he terms inorganic life. While as we shall see, my understanding of the wild and violent force – a "life" of another and perhaps related sort – made present through this light is distinct from his, I employ Deleuze's term here to help pinpoint the qualities of this condition. Through it,

> "…natural substances and artificial creations, candelabras and trees, turbine and sun are no longer any different. A wall which is alive is dreadful; but utensils, furniture, houses and their roofs also lean, crowd around, lie in wait, or pounce. Shadows of houses pursue the man running along the street..."[44]

The murkiness of this labyrinth, its darkness which nevertheless includes enough light to entrap, opens up a potential for machines to cross the line they usually defer to but always throw into question: the line between the inanimate and the animate. Through the labyrinth the animate and the inanimate blur into each other in a manner which overflows limits; the world is threatened and yet simultaneously brought to life. Toward the end of this chapter I will reconsider this in terms from Merleau-Ponty which have a different implication from Deleuze; what they have in common is the sense that established limits and separations (between light and dark and, as shall suggest, between subject and object) are breached in Lang's city and through the operation of his labyrinth.

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[43]Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 50-51.
[44]Ibid.

Fig. 5.: opacity / an interplay of light and shadow

The opacity of this dark light shrouds even the architecture of machinery, as we've already seen. It implies considerable ambiguity as to the distinction between good and evil, desire and fear. Darkness in the labyrinth threatens yet also offers refuge. In one sequence, for example, though Rotwang lurks in the dark margins of the labyrinth to catch Maria, it is through light that he actually traps her. His spotlight pierces through the darkness like a weapon, both pushing her away and pinning her in place. As she tries to flee into the shadows, her own shadow flees before her, seeking refuge in the dark.

Fig. 6.: Maria's flight through the Labyrinth

In this sequence Maria displays a movement generated out of the Labyrinth and its tortuous relationship to the light. The upright Maria shudders, shrinks away, twists, and recoils as she flees; by turns she is panicked, and then paralysed, pinned in place by fear, by Rotwang's eyes, by the glare also of the spotlight. This is typical of the effect of the Labyrinth upon the movement of bodies: it twists them, or perhaps they twist it. Those who are not fleeing in frenetic deviations trip in broken paces down crumbling steps, or

twist down spiraling staircases. The labyrinth contains and creates bodies which are themselves, in their movements, labyrinthine.

One body born out of the labyrinth is Maria's robot double. She originates in the bent house of Rotwang the inventor, itself a labyrinth within a labyrinth. His hut forms one issuance of the underground tunnels; and it contains its own labyrinth, an array of identical magical doors which trick and trap visitors. Here Rotwang first creates the Machine Man, who is upright, poised, stately. But then he traps Maria here (her chaste, upright body adopting, through paroxysms of fear, the twisted form of the labyrinth), and applies her appearance to the robot. As the transformation of robot into counterfeit human takes place, Maria's own terrified contortions are stilled. Now in the form of the False Maria, the robot is presented to the world at the Yoshiwara, a nightclub named for Tokyo's pleasure district[45]. In order to seduce and provoke she takes on the stance Maria's body had earlier adopted in fear: a body which twists and hunches, leering and winking asymmetrically. Thus the Labyrinth is transferred, through the body of Maria, to the body of the robot, and from there to the above ground city. The body of the robot, the False Maria, is ultimately to instigate riots which threaten the city; the labyrinth insinuates the city above. Once again there is a blurring between frames: good and evil blend into each other, overlap; straight line and bent line change places again and again; body and space melt into each other.

Fig. 7.: Rotwang's laboratory, the trapped Maria; the False Maria in the Yoshiwara.

[45]Which had been destroyed by fire the year prior to Lang's trip to Manhattan, after a devastating earthquake in 1923.

Babel

This dissolution (or envelopment) of one thing into (or by) another does not only effect human figures, but also works of architecture. The city has a number of architectural figures, each of which has a mythic status. Each of these mythic architectures blurs into the others, and into the labyrinth, the means of their merging. We have already been introduced to Rotwang's house, the labyrinth within a labyrinth. This bent hut, we are told, was built long ago "by a man from the East"[46]: it shares thus its provenance with the Biblical Tower of Babel and metaphorically with the New Tower of Babel in the centre of the metropolis. Appropriately, the machinery of the New Tower of Babel originates here, in Rotwang's workshop, as does the most remarkable of Joh's pieces of machinery, the False Maria. The False Maria is presented to the public for the first time in the Yoshiwara, where the young men of the upper city gather around her, competing for her affections. Deep in the labyrinth the workers gather around the body of first Maria, and then the False Maria, in the underground chapel. There is a third gathering-place above, which shares with the chapel great age and the presence of the cross. As a medieval cathedral, this structure inherently echoes both Biblical tower and labyrinth; it is in some sense a double of the other building which dominates Lang's city, the New Tower of Babel: both of them upright, both centres of community[47]. The Cathedral brings us back again to Rotwang's house, also ancient and as a half-timbered (apparently rural) hut, resonant with Goethe's definition of the hut as the historical predecessor of the gothic cathedral. The extent to which these architectures overlap with each other is emphasized by the fact that they all share a common geometry: the pentagon. The top of the New Tower and the square at the centre of the tenements are pentagons in plan. Rotwang's hut, the entrance of the Yoshiwara, and the Cathedral façade are all based on the pentagon. A pentagram is inscribed on the doors in the maze of Rotwang's house, and forms the backdrop to our first view of the robot. Thus the bodies which move within this city also share in its

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[46]von Harbou, *Metropolis*, 55.

[47]As is detailed in the postscript to this chapter, in German urban planning circles at the time the gothic cathedral was seen as a properly German model for the modern tower – the skyscraper. Neumann, "The Urbanistic Vision in Fritz Lang's Metropolis," 149-51..

geometry. There is an implicit shifting of each architectural and corporeal form onto or through all the others. We are reminded of Merleau-Ponty's words that, when experienced in the fullness of depth, in which things envelop each other, "every object is the mirror of all others."[48]

Fig. 8.: New Tower of Babel; Rotwang's Hut; Yoshiwara; the Cathedral

These spaces intermingle as dark and light do in the labyrinth. Together they form a primal architectural figure: Babel, the tower/world/city which foregrounds the superimposition of the upward movement of towers and the twisting movement of the labyrinth; and which also suggests the primal hut, the centre of community, and the origin of foreignness. Babel is the emblem of the city or building which has built into it its own destruction. Rather than an emblematic foundation of architecture, as it was for most of European history, the labyrinth finds itself simultaneously intertwined with and at war with architecture.

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[48]Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 79.

Frame and Surface

The story of Babel is recounted by Maria in a sermon to the workers in the chapel at the heart of the labyrinth. It evinces an interesting mis-telling of the Babel story, for in Maria's version, rather than God destroying Nimrod's tower, the ruler's suffering workers overthrow it. Lang's *Metropolis*, the first of the *Metropolis* stories each of which distorts its predecessors, articulates here that it too is a distorted re-telling. Maria's parable is of interest for a number of reasons, but here we will focus on the representation of the tower itself, for it introduces what appears to be a relationship between surface and frame which will be important when we look at the final, animated *Metropolis*.

The Babel story itself is framed by radiant lines, setting it off from the rest of the film as a "tale within a tale." Lang presents us, within this frame, the Tower of Babel itself. But then he immediately reveals to us that the Tower before us is in fact only a model; he shows us this by framing it again, this time by the bodies of the conceivers who are imagining and designing the actual Tower by building a model of it. The story continues with a sequence of images that illustrate the construction of the Tower and the conflict that leads to its downfall, and it concludes with an image of the Tower in ruins. But the ruined edifice is again represented in a way which emphasizes that this is not in fact an image of the Tower at all, but an image of a model of the Tower. It would seem obvious to present the ruined Babel as a honeycomb of spaces, as a work of architecture built up and buttressed, with interior divisions, spaces, structures – in short as some kind of perforated mass as it has been shown through most of the history of its pictorial representation. But instead Lang represents the ruined building as a hollow shell, something which would make no sense if this were actually a tower. (The hollowness is emphasized by the irony of the words written in the sky above.) This Tower is not presented as a tower at all but a work of artifice, merely a model, empty of contents. It is not a building but a wall, a surface.

Fig. 9.: the Babel story sequence

Such anomalies in Lang's means of representation suggest a heightened sensitivity to the artifice of film articulated in the depiction of object as surface. Other instances would include the elevator descent of workers to the depths of the city, cutting from an image of living workers against a (flat) painted backdrop, to a shot of painted (flat) human figures against a (built, three-dimensional) model of the city. The image we have already seen of the window in Joh Frederson's office, which is a flat surface which frames a view onto the city – a city which is in actuality a painted backdrop – also fits this pattern.

Fig. 10.: surface/frame: descending elevator, Frederson's office.

Elsewhere the film makes extensive use of painted backdrops and matte paintings, part of studio film-making technique. In this film these techniques tend to be associated with scenes of the upper city and of machinery; they are less appropriate technically to depicting curving forms like the labyrinth. But beyond the technical question, we can see here a play with the relationship between the condition of *surface* and the condition of *frame*. In these images, frames *are* surfaces.

These are not the only cases where Lang's *Metropolis* emphasizes the vulnerability of surfaces, the possibility of them turning into frames. In one instance, at a given moment the water of a subterranean river breaches the surface of the ground in the workers' city. It erupts upwards and then spreads across the floor – water first breaks through a surface, and then becomes a surface itself, before going on to rupture other surfaces and frames – breaking through the tenement walls, it gushes through the city, submerging it.

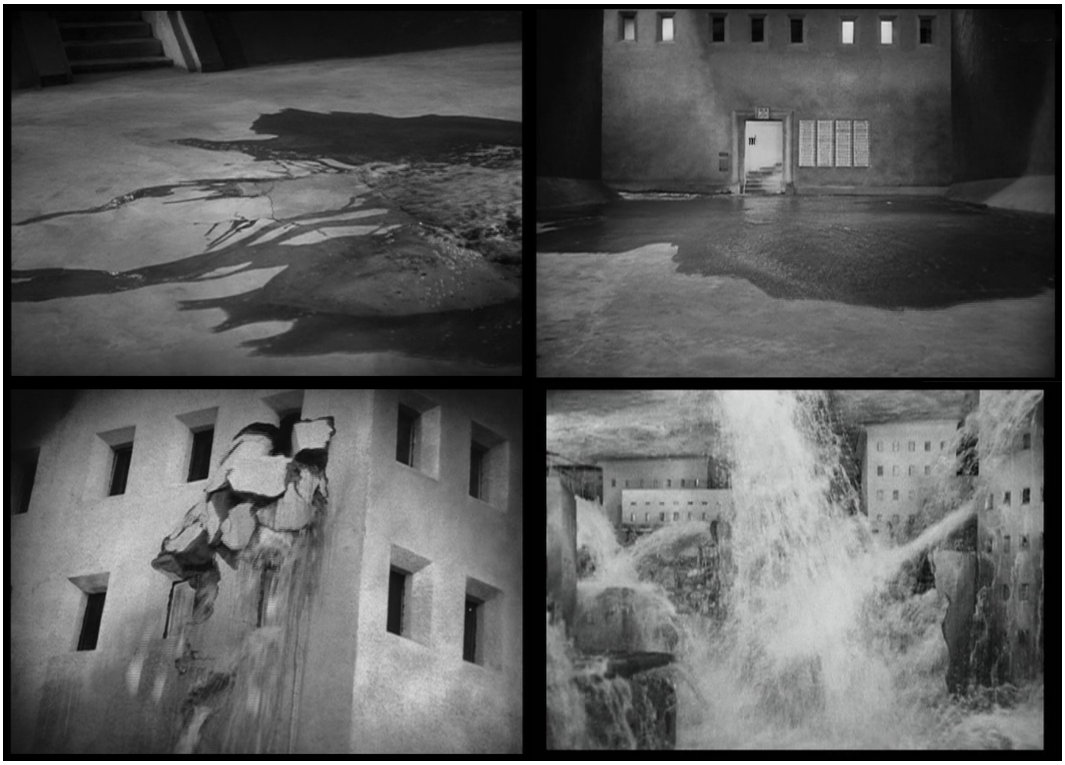

Fig.11.: ruptures & surfaces

This is the opposite gesture of the two images in Fig. 10, in which frames turned into surfaces. In the case of Joh Frederson's window, for example, a frame is in reality a surface, not just in terms of the technique of its construction, but in terms of the opacity we identified earlier in this chapter, which it shared with the tele-vision screen. Ostensibly frames enabling a view through, these were in actuality surfaces which separated here from there.

This play of surface and frames is significant. The act of framing can eliminate depth by pushing it back away from our bodies, turning it into just another dimension. Frederson's window does this. It can also engage with depth by playing with our perception of the barriers between us and things beyond, moving us into and out of them by turns, so they envelop us and our bodies envelop them. The labyrinth frames this way. Surfaces both separate us from things beyond, and offer the potential of their rupturing, breaking the skin of the world. This ambivalent gesture both moves us into depth, but also implicitly flattens it. Frame and surface both guard and allow us to cross the boundary between inside and outside, subject and object, from order to disorder, from the thickness of things to their unraveling, almost across the line of the apocalyptic moment.

We can identify the same threat of rupture with regards to human skin. The face of Maria, for example, seems imperturbable in the image below (where her arms embrace the children who in turn frame her), but fear changes that. As her body is bent by the labyrinth, so shadows and the dark movement of fear crosses her face, like ripples across a surface of water. Behind her is cast the distorted projection of another frame: a window. Her face is of course the same skin – though applied to the False Maria – which is burnt away at the end of the film.

Fig.12.: surface/frame: descending elevator, Frederson's office.

Once again, there is a play here of the capacity for surface to hide and to envelop, to engage with depth, and for its breaching to reveal and to annihilate depth. These notions will become important in our study of the animated version of *Metropolis*, which evinces its own play of frames and surfaces.

The transformation of surfaces and frames into each other has a more than superficial relationship to the mingling of light into dark already discussed, as well as to the transformational violence to the city and the body threatened in this tale. Deleuze offers an interesting note on the potential violence implied by the interaction of opacity and light which he identifies as another characteristic of Expressionist film:

> "In contrasts of black and white, or in the variations of chiaroscuro, one might say that white is darkened and black is toned down. It is as though two degrees were apprehended in an instant, points of accumulation which would correspond to the upsurge of colour in Goethe's theory: blue as lightened black, yellow as darkened white… Goethe explained precisely that the two fundamental colours – yellow and blue as degrees – were grasped in a movement of intensification, which was accompanied in both cases by a reddish reflection. The intensification of the degree is like the instant raised to the power two, which is expressed in this reflection. The reddish or glowing reflection will pass through all the stages of intensification: shimmering, glistening, scintillations, sparkling, a halo effect, fluorescence, phosphorescence. All these aspects punctuate the creation of the robot in *Metropolis*, like that of Frankenstein and his bride."[49]

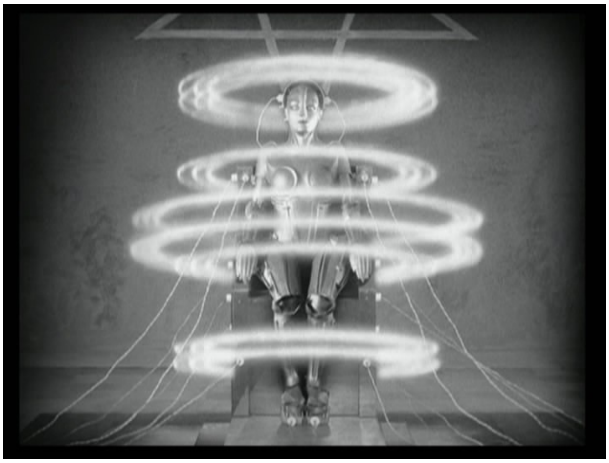

Fig.13.: the transformation of Machine Man into the False Maria

[49]Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 52.

Such moments, in which monsters emerge, were central to Expressionist film. For Deleuze they were the moments which "simultaneously announce the arrival of the Devil and the wrath of God."[50] In them black and white "culminated in a vivid red… pure incandescence or blazing of a terrible light, which burned the world and its creatures."[51] This movement through *lumen opacatum* to a point of (brilliantly coloured) intensity which threatens all of creation implicates a complex and strange relationship between colourism on the one hand and black and white on the other, and also between depth and flatness:

> "Depth is the location of the struggle, which sometimes draws space into the bottomlessness of a black hole, and sometimes draws it towards the light. And of course, a character may become strangely and terribly flat, against the background of a luminous circle, or his shadow may lose all its thickness, by backlighting [*contre-jour*], on a white background; but it is by an 'inversion of the values of light and dark', by an inversion of perspective which puts depth to the forefront... The shadow extends to infinity." [52]

In this condition surfaces and their capacity to admit or resist rupture become particularly important, as we have already seen. The surface of the face, for example, matters: "The Expressionist face concentrates the intensive series, in both forms which disturb its outline and deprive it of its features..."[53] As we will see this condition can be identified in

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[50]Ibid., 53.
[51]Ibid.
[52]Ibid., 112 In footnote 32 on page 225 Deleuze quotes Bouvier and Leutrat's *Nosferatu*, pp. 135-6: "Light spots which describe a white circle behind the characters, such that forms seem to be excluded by their own movement more than they are determined by it, chased from a bottomlessness [*sans-fond*] or from a background more native than that of their rear-ground which is in this way drowned in light [....] By this rupture, what is actualized in front of this spot of light, and bursts forth, a phantom divorced from the background... This is the source of the frequently flat character of the figures illuminated this way, and of the feeling that they are the heirs, by their very nature, of the shadow *without romantically getting their nourishment from it.*" (Deleuze's italics).
[53]Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 92-93.

mutation in the subsequent versions of Metropolis, both manga and anime. In the animated *Metropolis* we will see that the opposition of darkness and light, intensity of colour, a simultaneous resistance to and propensity for rupture, and the emergence of monsters occur together in an analogous condition to that point of accumulation which threatens Lang's *Metropolis* — a threatened apocalypse both demonic and divine, occurring in an "instant raised to the power two" – but in the case of the anime *Metropolis*, realized.

Labyrinth/machine

The demonic intensity of Expressionist film would imply for Deleuze the complete overwhelming of the difference between the organic and the machine, and a corresponding disintegration of the boundaries of the body. Though in Deleuze's case this is about the manifestation of inorganic life, in the terms I lay out here (and I would suggest not necessarily in contradiction with Deleuze[54]) this dangerous intensity might be understood as the return of the spirit evacuated by Descartes from matter, motivating it and bringing it back to life – but forced by circumstances (of modernity) into a monstrous, threatening, form. And consistent with this, we can consider this exchange in terms drawn from Merleau-Ponty.

As a twilight in which neither light nor darkness remain pure, a space whose folds and convolutions envelop their contents and each other, the labyrinth is evocative of what Merleau-Ponty referred to as the "flesh of the world," which was also opposed to the machine and what it stood for:

> "Neither purely transparent nor completely opaque, the flesh is an

[54]Deleuze's term might actually be seen as consistent with a pre-Cartesian condition in which there is no sharp distinction between the organic and the mechanical. This pre-Cartesian condition is discussed in Joseph Rykwert, "Organic and Mechanical," *Res.: anthropology and aesthetics* 22, no. Autumn (1992).

interplay of dimensionalities, of light and shadow"[55]

The labyrinth, as both a refuge and a trap, an enveloping space in which objects no longer keep their distance, also fits Merleau-Ponty's definition of what brings about hallucinations and myths: "a shrinkage in the space directly experienced, a rooting of things in our body, the overwhelming proximity of the object, the oneness of man and the world…"[56] In these conditions, machines, tools, and the other things we make are no longer merely our works, they come to possess us, as the robot comes to possess Maria's skin. In Merleau-Ponty's words: "... the things have us... it is not we who have the things."[57] The exchange between machine and human also takes form, in addition to the relationship between Maria and the robot, within Rotwang's own body. His mechanical arm, attached to a human body, corresponds to Maria's human "skin" slipped over the mechanical body of the robot. Both suggest a blurring of and a blurring across frames and frameworks, a strange reversibility between human and machine, and between machine and spirit achieved through the labyrinth.

Such transformations can be understood in terms resonant with but distinct from Deleuze's. Hans Blumenberg writes of the seething Chaos of the *Theogony,* the mythic space of metamorphosis he sees as "the pure metaphor of the gaping and yawning open of an abyss, which requires no localization, no description of its edges or of its depth, but is only the opaque space in which forms makes their appearance…"[58] For Blumenberg myth emerges in response to what he calls the "absolutism of reality", the condition of anxiety before a world which is always a potential and living threat. He equates this with, following Freud, "the complete helplessness of the ego in the face of overwhelming

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[55]Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind," in The Primacy of Perception, and Other Essays on Phenomenological Psychology, the Philosophy of Art, History, and Politics ([Evanston, Ill.]: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 172-73. quoted in Pérez-Gómez and Pelletier, Architectural Representation and the Perspective Hinge, 336.
[56]Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 339.
[57] Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Claude Lefort, The Visible and the Invisible; Followed by Working Notes (Evanston [Ill.]: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 194. quoted in Pérez-Gómez and Pelletier, Architectural Representation and the Perspective Hinge, 336.
[58]Hans Blumenberg, *Work on Myth* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1985), 127.

danger as the core of the traumatic situation."[59] In response, "Out of the night, all sorts of awful and formless things can emerge, to occupy the edges of the abyss..."[60]. For example: the robot generated out of the labyrinth that haunts the human world, a doppelganger of sorts. As I have already pointed out, the social and political condition from which Lang's *Metropolis* emerged could be characterized as traumatic in a number of senses. It was, for one thing, a condition of helplessness as a consequence of military defeat followed by unending economic instability. And in the terms set out by the film-makers themselves *Metropolis* was a response to a more general condition of modernity: helplessness before modern technological and economic conditions.

Merleau-Ponty had a great interest in the fantasies which emerge in response to trauma. His interest was not in the fantasy as symptom of what had been lost, but as an addition whose presence suggests what survives:

> "We must take substitutions as substitutions, as allusions to some fundamental function that they are striving to make good, and the direct image of which they fail to furnish."[61]

For him fantasies like the phantom limb can be read as "modalities and variations of the subject's total being"[62]; they reveal that direction or trajectory on which the subject's "total being" was engaged as a life project or a movement of their being toward death:

> "What is in us which refuses mutilation and disablement is an *I* committed to a certain physical and inter-human world, who continues to tend toward his world despite handicaps and amputations and who, to this extent, does not recognize them *de jure*."[63]

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[59]Ibid., 5.
[60]Ibid., 127.
[61]Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 123.
[62]Ibid.
[63]Ibid., 93.

This *I* continues in the pursuit of a life direction *through* the phantasm, the *intentional arc*:

> "the life of consciousness – cognitive life, the life of desire or perceptual life – is subtended by an 'intentional arc' which projects around about us our past, our future, our human setting, our physical, ideological and moral situation, rather which results in our being situated in all these respects."[64]

The phantom arm is evidence, rather than a truncated human potential, of an unchanged yearning of the human being/body. Indeed the phantom limb, in articulating this movement, can be seen as a projection of Merleau-Ponty's second hand discussed in the preface to this chapter, the one which "shoots through space like a rocket to reveal the external object in its place."

If it can be said that the robot and the mechanical arm in Lang's film do haunt modernity, there is a remarkable irony that the imagination of the robot, that epitome of the *res extensa* side of the Cartesian mind/body dualism, has become bound up with the flesh of a human figure in an emblem of pre-reflective subjectivity. This movement from body to machine and machine to phantom is enabled by the labyrinth. Wrapped up together in the folds of the labyrinth, the doubled figures of Maria and the False Maria become emblematic of the incomprehensible pairing of Merlau-Ponty's two hands. Maria's skin, applied to the robot, seems to go some way to becoming its real flesh. The tower of Babel, with its intertwining of straight and bent lines, and the city itself, machine and labyrinth, can be read in a similar way. And all this works through the transformation of frames into surfaces and back, and a corresponding movement back and forth through depth. The ruptured frames and surfaces of Lang's buildings, allowing as they do a penetration and a movement from here to there, a welling-up of flesh across the boundaries of the machine, can be understood as the means by which the phantom moves into the city.

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[64]Ibid., 157.

But the film is clear that this condition implies, to transpose Deleuze's term, a “frightful flesh”. The loss of spirit entailed in the movement from automata to robot has been so extensive that it can only be recovered through a haunting and the threat of apocalypse – an apocalypse which must be averted at all costs. And thus while this might be what the flesh of Lang’s film (embodied in the images themselves) proposes, in the end the film cannot stomach its own proposition. The blurring of organic and machine is unacceptable: the plot is resolved only through the eradication of any trace of humanity from the machine, and its elimination from human space. The inventor too, who is part machine, is killed – thrown from on high. Through this purification of the city, community is saved. A reconciliation between “Head” and “Hands” is proposed and a simple duality is restored, mind and matter joined by a weak “Heart”. It is a restoration of the organic – both in the sense of the elimination of the mechanical and in the sense of Deleuze’s use of the term, an ordered, healthy, holistic world which, in the sense I have taken it here, suppresses the up-welling of myth. The coiling of the two bodies together across the chiasm is undone. The fecund mythic potential of the labyrinth is eliminated. The urge to recover depth is repressed, and depths' interplay with flatness ends. We will see in the final *Metropolis* that that play returns; we will be able to understand flatness better then (again in terms from Merleau-Ponty) as essential to the nature of depth. But for now the shimmering surface is something to be burnt away. We are left with both city and body purified, everyone back in their proper form – the true Maria, for example, is again demure, upright, chaste; radiant. Without a shadow.

Fig.14.: the burning of the False Maria

Postscript to Lang: tower/cathedral

I will soon turn to the next chapter of the *Metropolis* tales, which emerged in Japan just after the Second World War. That discussion will assume the importance of the specificity of Japan's cultural context, and that specificity (though I do not claim its uniqueness) will matter to the conclusion of my thesis. But to do that discussion justice Lang's film should also be treated in its sociocultural context, which was just as important to it. Lang's Metropolis can be considered a litmus-paper for the tensions in German society between the wars. In Siegfried Kracauer's words, Lang's *Metropolis* was "rich in subterranean content that, like contraband, had crossed the borders of consciousness without being questioned."[65].

The German nation at the time was crippled by punitive war reparations, a condition which generated resentment, economic instability, and ultimately contributed to the rise of the Nazi party. Indeed, the imagery of Lang's Metropolis has been tied explicitly to that movement by Siegfried Kracauer, who compared the immense set-pieces and choreographed crowd scenes to the Nuremberg rallies. There is substantial evidence in the film to support such a reading: the equation of oriental spaces (the Tower of Babel, Rotwang's bent hut built by a magician from the East, the nightclub known as The Yoshiwara, machines inhabited by foreign and usually Eastern gods) with a lurking evil; the overtly racist tone of certain passages in Von Harbou's novel; and a plot resolution in which an inhuman Other is immolated, purifying the city and restoring it as one folk united under a single father-figure. Of course what is implied here is all who fall under the rubric of "oriental", from "easts" far and near. There were many such people in Germany at the time: there were, for example, over three million Polish guest workers in Germany, many of them in Berlin[66]. Goebbels was in fact to write an essay in 1928 in

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[65]Siegfried Kracauer and Leonardo Quaresima, *From Caligari to Hitler : A Psychological History of the German Film*, Rev. and expanded ed. (Princeton, N.J. ; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004), 164.
[66]Anton Kaes, "Babel in Metropolis," in *Visualizing the City* (University of Manchester: 2005).

which he condemned the foreign pollution of Berlin's streets, opposing to it the image of a cathedral (the Kaiser Wilhelm Gedachnichtskirche) which so resonates with Lang's that it seems likely to have been written after a viewing of the film[67]. We know that in fact Hitler and Goebbels were enamoured of Lang's *Metropolis,* and were to invite the director to head the film industry of the Third Reich. Lang refused this offer and left for Hollywood; his scriptwriter and wife Thea Von Harbou chose to stay and work for the Nazis.[68]

All of this turmoil had an impact on the urban imagination. In particular the two key architectural figures of Lang's film, the tower and the cathedral, resonate with the political tumult in Germany at the time. In the 1920s, gothic cathedrals were seen in German architecture and planning circles as the basis for a truly German model for organizing urban form. The idea was that one massive central building in each city was preferable to the American model of unbridled individualism and commercial growth realized in the forest of skyscrapers which Manhattan was becoming and on which Lang's skyline was based. The cathedral would thus represent a "Germanization of the skyscraper"[69]. According to Dietrich Neumann, this desire spoke of "a desperate nationalism and the idea that a monumental symbolic gesture could demonstrate the emergence of an unvanquished German will…"[70]. Thousands of buildings based on this principle were designed as projects in the 1920s, including Otto Kohlz' federal office building in Berlin; and Haimovici, Tshcammer, and Caroli's trade fair tower in Leipzig (both 1920)[71]. They all drew to some extent on the memory of Bruno Schmitz' Völkerschlachtdenkmal, the

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[67]Joseph Goebbels, "Around the Gedächtniskirche," in *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, ed. Anton Kaes, Martin Jay, and Edward Dimendberg (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).
[68]William Friedkin. "Conversation with Fritz Lang", on Fritz Lang et al., M ([Irvington, NY]: Criterion Collection,, 2004), videorecording.
[69]Rainer Stommer, "Germanisierung des Wolkenkratzers: Die Hochhausdebatte in Deutschland bis 1921," *Kritische Berichte 3* (1982), 36-54, quoted in Dietrich Neumann, "Before and after Metropolis: Film and Architecture in Search of the Modern City," in Film Architecture : Set Designs from Metropolis to Blade Runner, ed. Dietrich Neumann, et al. (Munich ; New York: Prestel, 1996), 35.
[70]Ibid., 36.
[71]Ibid., 35-36. and Neumann, "Before and after Metropolis: Film and Architecture in Search of the Modern City," 102.

memorial commemorating Napoleon's defeat at Leipzig, which also informed the design of Lang's New Tower of Babel.[72]

More generally, the cathedral was seen as an example of a building tradition which offered an authenticity and an appropriateness to human living which no modern architecture (it was argued) could offer. Indeed even one of the proponents of the Modern movement in architecture, Walter Gropius, expressed doubts about the use of a modern, technologized architecture: "Now, however, the ancient forms of human life, as they come to expression in household functions, have little in common with what has transpired in technology, and to seek in industrial forms a tuning fork for this aspect of life, not to mention machines, is neither particularly clever nor correctly felt on an instinctual level."[73] One might compare the only building in the film which actually looks like a house, Rotwang's bent hut[74], to the austere forms of Lang's worker housing. The message seems to be that even the house of a madman was better than the modernism that was starting to appear in Germany at the time, most often in the form of worker housing resonant with the tenements of Lang's *Metropolis*. That modern architecture of course shared, at least in principle, the technical control and optical transparency of Lang's central Tower.

These observations concern the tensions specific to the German context between the wars. In this chapter I have proposed a related reading of the tower and cathedral as the product of a more general modern trauma embodied in a rendering of Merleau-Ponty's two hands, each haunting the other and bound together in the form of the building which is at once Labyrinth and Tower: Babel. This is consistent with the doubling of tower and cathedral which had been part of the definition of cathedral since the middle ages; it is no coincidence that the cathedral of Lang's film is Gothic. The context-specific tensions

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[72]Neumann, "The Urbanistic Vision in Fritz Lang's Metropolis," 150.
[73]Walter Gropius and Paul Schultze-Naumburg, "What Is Right? Traditional Architecture or Building in New Forms," in *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, ed. Anton Kaes, Martin Jay, and Edward Dimendberg (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).
[74]In fact it echoes the form of a rural hut, with a corresponding intimation of tradition and national identity.

based on social difference which permeate Lang's *Metropolis* resonate with the themes of division and difference integral to the Babel story. This dimension of meaning manifests in the doubled relationship of Tower and Cathedral as well as the refraction of that condition, through various degrees of difference and repetition, in the interpenetrating, echoing forms of Rotwang's Hut, the Yoshiwara, and Maria's underground Chapel already touched upon.

Babel, both monument and its undermining, resonates with several visions of the city implied or foreshadowed in Lang's film -- the bleak anti-heroic city of Film Noir, the heroic cities imagined by the masters of modernism, the horrifying distortion of the heroic city which was to be the work of Albert Speer, and the delineations of Hugh Ferriss, heroic yet brooding. These visions of the city, which would have been familiar to Lang (with the obvious exception of Speer, who for Kracauer was foreshadowed in Lang) , were among the resources drawn upon for the creation of the animated version of *Metropolis*. In the animated film the doubling of Tower and Cathedral becomes much more explicit through the superimposition of Christian cross and Cartesian axes in a single building. But we are only to arrive there after consideration of the manga version of Metropolis, in which the neither cathedral nor tower have a role comparable to the one they play in Lang. We begin that journey by turning back again from city to body.

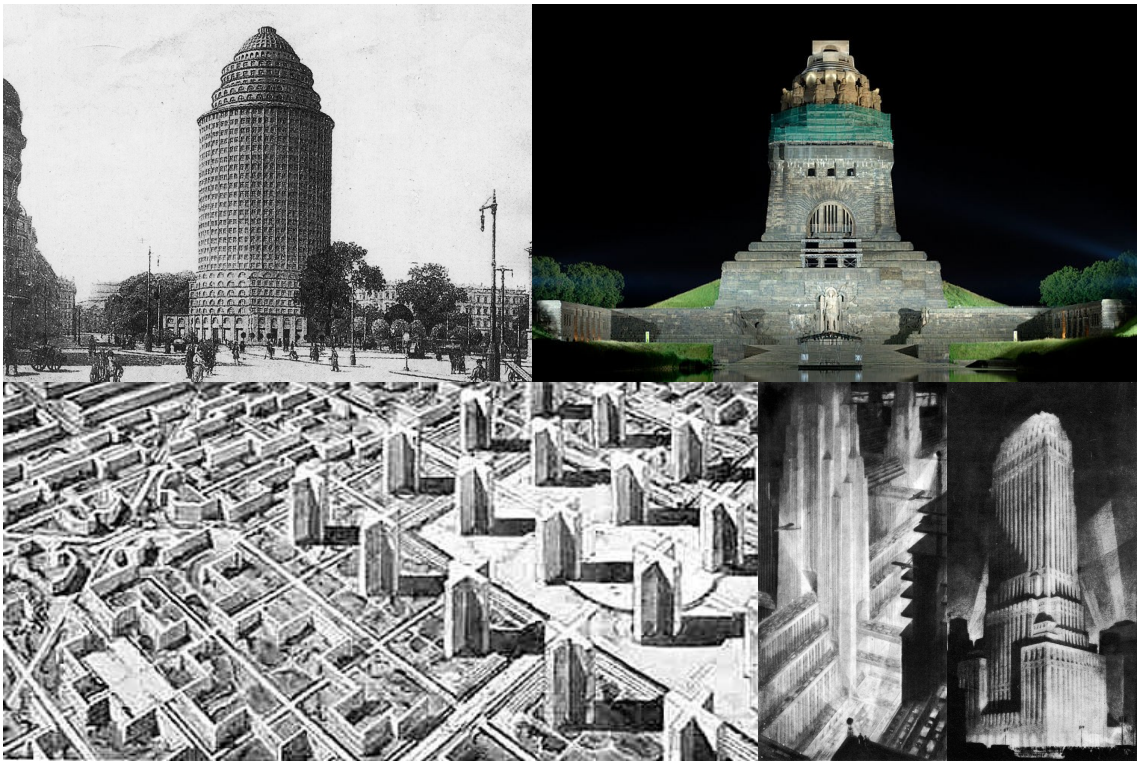

Fig.15.: top, L to R – Haimovici, Tshcammer, and Caroli, trade fair tower, Leipzig, (1920); Bruno Schmitz, Völkerschlachtdenkmal (1913); bottom, L to R – Le Corbusier's City for Three Million (1922); Hugh Ferriss, images from The Metropolis of Tomorrow (1927).

1.2 Tezuka: Affect

> "…there are two kinds of signs of the affection-image...: on the one hand the power-quality expressed by a face or an equivalent; but on the other hand the power-quality presented in any-space-whatever. And perhaps the second is more subtle than the first, more suitable for extracting the birth, the advance, and the spread of the affect."[75]

Preface to Tezuka: automaton to *karakuri ningyô*

The bodies which populate works of manga and anime have two origins. One is in Japanese tradition, especially the vernacular arts including Edo-era ukiyo-e (woodcuts) and medieval comic art. The other origin, an influence which began to be felt in the 1930s, was Western comics and animation and in particular the work of Disney.[76] There is one articulation of the technical body from the Japanese past which is particularly relevant to this discussion as I have situated it, interpreting the robotic figure as an inflection of the model of the human body implied in the Enlightenment automaton. A related inflection of this body, but one with different implications, can be identified in the Japanese context. My intention is not to suggest that this is the only source of the artificial man depicted in the manga version of *Metropolis* by Tezuka Osamu, but that for this thesis it is an important one[77].

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[75]Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 110.
[76]Ôtsuka Eiji, "Disarming Atom: Tezuka Osamu's Manga at War and Peace," in *Mechademia: Limits of the Human* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 116.
[77]Today's anime and manga artists, all of them acknowledging a debt to Tezuka, make frequent reference to *karakuri ningyô* – for example Mamoru Oshii et al., *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence* (Universal City CA: Dreamworks Home Entertainment, 2004), videorecording – as well as traditional dolls – Satoshi Kon, *Paprika* (Sony Pictures Entertainment, 2006), videorecording.

If the coincidence of dramatic and scientific wonder which still remained during the Enlightenment took form in the marvels of automata, but the reduction of that world view to a mechanistic model of the world was to later find its emblem in the figure of the robot, we can trace yet another attitude toward knowledge in what was to become of these automata when they made the journey across the world in the hands of Dutch traders at the end of the 18th century. They became the basis of Japanese mechanical dolls, or *karakuri ningyou,* and were recorded in two major works, Hosokawa Yorunao's *Illustrated Miscellany of Automata (Karakuri Zui)* published in 1798, and Tagaya Kanchûsen's *Instructional Illustrated Catalogue of Automata (Karakuri kummo kagamigusa)* of 1730. While these were treated as mechanical wonders, they were so with a significant difference from their European counterparts. According to Kurokawa Kisho the wonder of the Japanese dolls did not derive in any part from the revealing of complex mechanisms or the re-enactment of biological processes. Rather that wonder lay in a concealing: these dolls embodied a mystery. As evidence of this, Kurokawa gives an automaton illustrated by Hosokawa: the tea-serving doll (or *chahakobi ningyou*). These mechanical dolls, like the automata recorded in Diderot's Encyclopedia, are some form of *thaumata*; but unlike the automata of the Enlightenment, if Kurokawa is correct, no aspect of these dolls were dedicated to illustrating or revealing their workings or the workings of the natural body. Rather their role was closer to the traditional role of Japanese dolls and puppets: they served a ritual function, as is the case in this instance, even if this involves (as is so often the case in the Japanese context) ritual which is in various ways secularized, socialized, and aestheticized. These dolls cloaked technology rather than revealing it, they were faces to it rather than explicators of it, with an opaque relationship of container to contents.

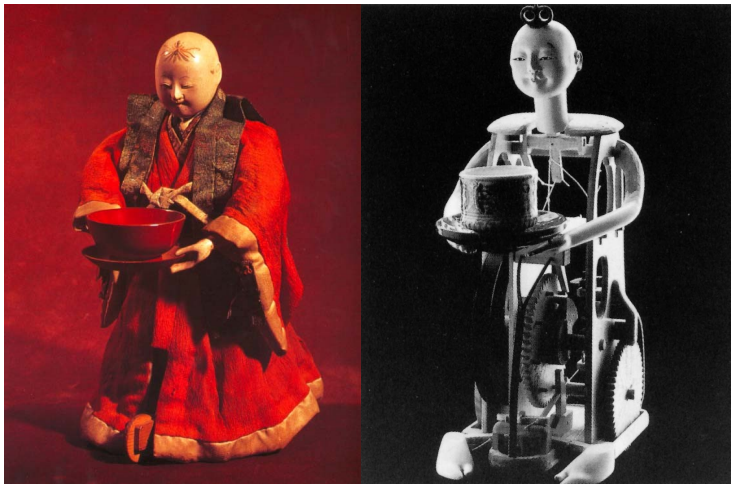

Fig.16.: photos (by Ishimoto Yasuhiro) of chahakobi ningyou, reproduced from Kurokawa, Kishô. "Intercultural Architecture : The Philosophy of Symbiosis". Washington, D.C: American Institute of Architects Press, 1991 pp. 128-129

If Kurokawa is right (and it must be admitted that there are those who count his writing among the works of *nihonjinron*, or theories of Japanese uniqueness), unlike the European automata, these dolls were not on their way to becoming robots, emblems of pure function. As the spirit left the body of the European automaton, it became a phantom – which appears in Lang's film as the robot itself. But in Japan, at least that aspect of Japanese life which continues to engage with a non-Cartesian framework, robots and other mechanical devices are still potentially imbued with wonder.

A caveat must be added, however. Japan is not the only country in which the epistemology of Cartesian modernity is intertwined in daily life with frameworks which can be characterized as (depending on one's stance) pre-modern, post-modern or trans-modern. Thus some trace of the automaton remains in the European or American – as well as the Chinese and Korean – robot. And without a doubt Japanese robots can also haunt maliciously. But it is probably still fair to say that the relationship to technology in Japan today (though not uniquely in Japan) retains some trace of a pre-(or un-)Socratic condition which permits technology's integration with cultural, natural, and human worlds in a manner which is often represented as less inherently problematic than in "the West". This at least is Kurokawa's argument. For him the mystery of the doll implied an

integration or mingling of the worlds of the technological and the human[78]. I will return to this point, and related caveats, in Chapter 2.2.

A happy acceptance of technology has served the modernization of Japan and the political projects which have promoted that goal; it is not therefore merely a result of a cultural leaning, but one exploited for political purposes. And in fact Japanese have been among the well-known victims and perpetrators of technological disasters whether in peacetime or wartime, from Minamata disease to atomic radiation. The monsters of Japanese popular culture, beginning with Godzilla, have been explicit symbols of such dangers, and the robot of the next *Metropolis* tale is one of these. But as we will see it does seem to embody something like the relationship to technology sketched above: it is a wonder. And if it is a threat it is only so accidentally, unlike Lang's robot which is distinctly evil. Certainly the relationship it implies of the technological to the human, and of face to contents, resonates with the *karakuri ningyô*. It seems also to imply an innocence, as though this robot on some level does not partake of the original modern sin in which the mind stepped away from the world. Perhaps for this reason, in contrast to Lang's robot whose questioning of those boundaries had to imply malevolence, this one is empathetic, and pathetic. As we will see, if Lang's robot was above all about the attempt to adopt a flesh, and this was articulated through a play and breaking down of surfaces and faces, Tezuka's robot speaks first of all about face, about affect.

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[78]"Technology became an expression of humanity to be integrated and internalized, just as material things were considered extensions of the spirit and part of the same undifferentiated existence. In Edo-era Japan the ‘workings’ (*karakuri*) of technology were not set apart from humanity, but rather humanized as something intrinsically mystical."Kisho Kurokawa, *Rediscovering Japanese Space* (New York: Weatherhill, 1988), 51.

Tezuka's gaze

In 1949 Tezuka Osamu, the most important figure in the development of modern Japanese comics and a very important figure in the development of anime, published a comic book entitled *Metropolis*. The title and a key event in the plot (the creation of a robot) were taken from Lang's *Metropolis*. Tezuka recalls having seen a single still from the film, of the creation of the robot, but claims he had no other knowledge of the movie before he created the manga. The specific still has not been recorded, but the creation of Tezuka's robot Michi bears considerable resemblance to the image of Maria prone as her appearance is copied onto Lang's False Maria:

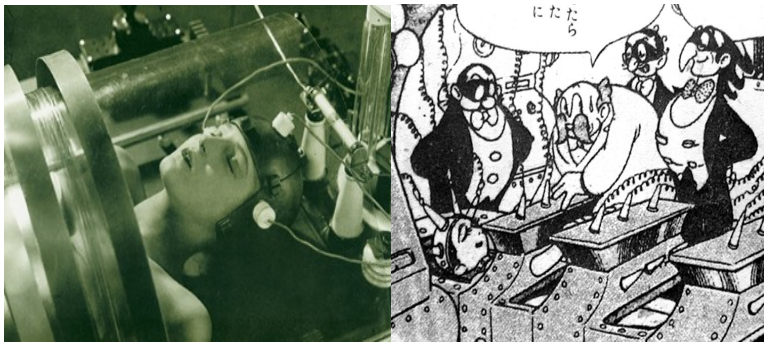

Fig.17.: left, Maria immobilized as her appearance is transferred to the robot; right, in Tezuka's manga, the creation of Michi.

This almost accidental relationship to Lang's film is interesting. Like Lang's first conception of *Metropolis*, it suggests a distance from the foreign object of fascination, a distance which in itself forms an important part of that fascination. Tezuka's imagination of the city drew also on his own imagination of the American city, gained from film and comic books. Clearly, for him as for Lang the American city was an emblem of the future city. These attitudes suggest both a preoccupation with messages received from abroad, and a disregard for or a selective acceptance of their content: indeed, a great freedom with respect to the foreign. This attitude provides Tezuka with the opportunity to articulate a relationship of the body to technology which is different from that avowed by Lang's film.

Tezuka saw and spoke of the modern city through the medium of comics. Comics are, even more than film, popular entertainments. *Metropolis* in particular is amusing, playful, and unpretentious. Yet as I will argue, it bears a heavy weight of significance. This is in part political and social; it was created in a country only recently defeated at the end of mankind's bloodiest conflict, and it can be understood as a working-through of the trauma of those events. It does so through an amusing and fantastic tale, but one imbued with a pathos and a fear that have a resonance with the more overtly traumatic images appearing in popular culture today.

Comic books are in many respects cinematic; they share with cinema the use of montage and the depiction of movement, the framing of sets and their relations to a larger whole in the context of change over time, all concerns of Deleuze's analysis of the cinematic image. Furthermore they represent time through the distribution of images in space, and therefore offer the potential of viewing multiple moments in time *at the same time* and multiple aspects of one moment in time *in adjacent spaces*. They therefore potentially convey what Deleuze referes to as the "time-image", perhaps even better than cinema itself. If Merleau-Ponty's fascination with depth was an effective way to approach the *Metropolis* of tower and labyrinth, we will see that for these reasons certain notions in Deleuze are helpful in understanding the nature of this, different, city.

Tezuka synopsis

The comic book is prefaced with a lecture by a Professor Bell on the evolution of life from the age of dinosaurs to the present day. This sequence ends with a meditation that frames the story: that humans may one day "become too advanced and, as a result of their science, wipe themselves out."[79]

As the story proper begins, the United Nations Police are on the hunt for a criminal Duke Red, leader of "The Red Party", who is in disguise at the International Scientists

[79]Tezuka, *Metoroporisu*, 13.

Conference. Duke Red is not found, but during the conference a different discovery is made: mysterious black spots have appeared on the surface of the sun, associated with an unexplained rise in radiation levels. This increase in radiation incidentally provides the missing ingredient to complete the work of Dr. Lawton, one of the scientists at the conference: the creation of artificial life. But no sooner have Lawton's artificial cells become animate than Duke Red himself appears at Lawton's door and forces him to mold his artificial life form into a superhuman. Its appearance is based on a beautiful statue of a winged figure, female or androgynous, bearing a bow and arrow, entitled "The Angel of Rome". As Lawton puts it "if I complete this work, it will be no more than a devil in disguise as a beautiful woman."[80] He brings the artificial human to life but steals it away from Duke Red, destroying his lab behind him. He names the creature Michi for, like it, the name is "neither male nor female"[81]; similarly, Michi "is neither human nor animal nor plant nor mineral."[82]

Michi goes to live with Dr. Lawton. He is disguised as a young boy and believes Lawton is his father. In order to avoid giving away his true nature he can only go out in public when wearing a mask. One day in frustration at this, the creature seriously injures Lawton and flees into the city. Thus Duke Red discovers for the first time that Michi still exists. Seeking Michi, Red shoots Lawton but is driven off by a visiting Japanese detective, Hige Oyaji (Detective Moustachio in the English translation of the manga). Lawton's last will and testament reveals that he is not in fact Michi's father, and Michi is heartbroken.

The detective and his nephew Ken'ichi become Michi's new protectors. Investigating some mysterious killings with an international (yet again) team of detectives, the detective is set upon by giant rats; fleeing from them, he crashes his car and upon regaining consciousness discovers a mechanical tree that hides a stair down to the secret underground lair of Duke Red. There, Hige Oyaji discovers, Red rules a population of suffering robot slaves serving the Red Party which, he also learns, "is made up of people

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[80]Ibid., 29.
[81]Ibid., 51.
[82]Ibid., 84.

from every country! It's a sinister worldwide conspiracy!"[83] Red is responsible for the blackening of the sun; he has made it the target of a superweapon, which fires at it the fictional but vaguely radioactive-sounding element Omothenium. The intention is to heat up the earth and thus bring world leaders to their knees. Michi is an accidental result of this process, as is the mutation of small harmless creatures into large dangerous ones – including the giant rats, which we learn are of the species Mikimaus Waltdisneus.

Hige Oyaji befriends one of the suffering robots, Fifi, and together they attempt to escape. But they are trapped by Red who, separating Fifi into his own cell, pumps in deadly Toron gas which dissolves the robot. Captured, Hige Oyaji is told that if he hands over Michi the Red Party will leave Metropolis forever. But the detective refuses, and Duke Red puts him in a steel chamber and prepares to fill it with Toron gas. The rats appear again, this time to Oyaji's benefit: one eats its way into the chamber, incidentally freeing him; fleeing from the rat, Oyaji accidentally kills it and dons its skin to escape in disguise. He leads the robots in a rebellion against Duke Red, destroying the "Electric Pillar" through which Red controls them, before escaping back to Metropolis.

Meanwhile, Michi has learned that he has super powers, including the ability to fly, which he uses to save a classmate from one of the mutated creatures: a giant wasp. The classmate turns out to have been in the employ of Duke Red. Red discovers Michi's whereabouts again, and in order to disguise Michi, Ken'ichi presses the button (at the back of Michi's throat) to transform him/her into female form. They flee. Oyaji, returning to Metropolis, reveals that one member of the international team of detectives is actually Duke Red in disguise; as it turns out, fully half of the police force are actually members of the Red Party. Michi escapes to a luxury ocean liner, *The Atlantis*, but it turns out that the captain of the ship is in fact Duke Red, in yet another disguise. Michi realizes: "Now I see! The Atlantis is the Red Party's ship. By disguising it as a stately passenger vessel, they're able to come and go freely at ports around the world…!"[84] She is taken prisoner by Duke Red, who transforms her back to a boy and tells Michi he was there at his/her

[83]Ibid., 69.
[84]Ibid., 126.

birth. Misunderstanding, Michi begs Red to admit to being her real father, but Red laughs at her and reveals that she is in fact fatherless, an artificial being.

Suddenly made aware of her real nature, Michi goes berserk and leads the robots in rebellion against Duke Red (apparently killing him, though he returns in subsequent stories by Tezuka) and then, blaming all humans for the robots' plight, leads the robots toward Metropolis. Meanwhile, Ken'ichi discovers the source of the sunspots, the superweapon on Longboot Island; he destroys it. Chaos breaks out in the city of Metropolis as the robots topple buildings and destroy Red's Toron gas cylinders. The gas is released: it "destroys human brains and makes people like animals."[85] Ken'ichi, returning from Longboot Island, parachutes into the chaos of urban destruction. He confronts Michi atop a clocktower but she refuses to listen to his plea for peace; they fight each other. It seems hopeless for Ken'ichi, but Michi's body suddenly begins to smoke and falls from the building. Professor Bell reappears and announces to the populace that Michi will soon die and "the city will once again be at peace."[86] Michi's synthetic cells depend for their animation on the sunspots, and as those dissipate, so will her life. Michi melts into a formless mass, as the statue on which her form was modeled is brought forth for the admiration of the citizens. Finally, even her heart melts away, and we are left with Professor Bell pronouncing again the words with which the story began: "Perhaps, might the day not come when humans also become too advanced and, in actuality, as a result of their science, wipe themselves out?"[87]

[85]Ibid., 151.
[86]Ibid., 158.
[87]Ibid., 162.

Flat city

Fig. 18.: Tezuka's city

One of the first images of the city Tezuka presents to us is the one above, and it prefigures the city as we are to come to understand it over the course of the manga. Composed with little hierarchy, a depth reduced to superimposed planes, with no centre, divided roughly in two but in a manner which wraps the two halves around each other without defining a shared focus, and obscuring the actual centre of the image with dialogue bubbles, it includes many local centres in a very loose global composition. Events occur all over the page, many relating to the plot, but usually obliquely. Movement is similarly unfocused: a

train speeds by, cars drive through in opposing directions, people jump from windows or run down the street; but the sum of these movements is zero. In short, this image conveys the activity of a large modern city (as did many scenes in Lang's film), but without suggesting a distinct form. It is animated by a kind of Brownian motion as though a result of the mixing of two liquids: agitated movement, locally directed but overall random, moving in the direction of entropy.

Over the course of the manga the image of the city becomes no more focused. We have seen that Lang's film subverted the city as machine, turning it into a labyrinth and recovering, in a form which in conditions of European modernity could only take on the colouring of evil, a pre-Cartesian relationship of body to mind. It achieved this through a vertical structuring of the city which separated the "head" and the "hands" (the mind and the body) and then had the body infiltrate the entire city. Tezuka offers nothing like as clear a diagram of the city. Unlike Lang's Metropolis, Tezuka's city has no apparent centre, no master or autocrat running its machinery from one point. There is no central building, nor indeed are any of the works of architecture which appear in the comic book developed as mythic or iconic figures. Some might be considered latently so; for example, the final battle takes place atop a clocktower; but unlike Lang's New Tower of Babel it has no explicitly mythic character. Nor is it central to the city; it does not contribute to the formation of any hierarchy. Similarly, some of the manga's events occur in subterranean tunnels, but unlike Lang's they have no clear relationship to the overall organization of the city, they neither infiltrate it, undermine it, or intertwine with it; nor do they have any specific diagram of their own, however irrational (Lang's map). Tellingly, they connect with the above-ground world via a mechanical tree, a *karakuri* of sorts. But this is their only link with it, as far as we can see; they spread beneath it but do not form part of a coherent structuration of the city's space; they form no relationship of depth with it. They seem rather to float free of the city; indeed this is characteristic of many of the spaces of Tezuka's manga. Some episodes even take place at a distance from the city: aboard an ocean liner, or on a distant uncharted island. The city itself does remain as an emblematic figure, and is repeated in several forms (for example, the ocean liner *The Atlantis*, the reference to the *Angel of Rome*). But it is a city unstructured by

other emblematic figures of architecture. Unlike Lang's vertically stratified city organized around the lynchpin of the Tower and undermined by the labyrinth, this manga city is unstructured, dispersed, lumpy, unfocused, horizontal.

This image also evinces another difference from Lang's city: its relationship to the rest of the world. In Lang's *Metropolis* the rest of the world appeared only within its bounds, in certain scenes which posed the oriental as a threat (even more pronounced in Von Harbou's novel), suggesting a claustrophobic absorption of the world in the modern city, one aspect of the imagery of Babel. The exorcism of the technical body with which the film concludes also suggests an expunging of the alien from the city. In contrast, Tezuka's Metropolis opens to lands beyond the ocean (one of the main characters hails from Japan), to other spots on the planet (events in the city have effects elsewhere), and even the heavens. We have a suggestion of this in the image above, in which we learn that the United Nations police have failed to track down the Red Party (resonant with the threat of international communism[88]) and their leader Duke Red who have infiltrated the International Scientists Conference. The presence of the foreign in this city is ambivalent, as indeed it would have been in Japan at the time. The American occupation was both a humiliation and a relief to many Japanese. The country had come through many years of deprivation and loss (which it had of course also inflicted on its neighbours). Much of its urban fabric had been obliterated, not only as a result of the atomic bombings but more extensively as a consequence of incendiary bombing. This left its urban fabric as a patchwork of ruin and reconstruction not dissimilar from the disjointed, uneven matter of the manga city. Yet the country which had inflicted this damage – the United States – had also provided rice to a hungry population and seemed to be on their side against a looming Soviet threat.

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[88]Tezuka himself made this clear: Ibid., 164. In the closing months of the Second World War, there had been a real possibility that the USSR's advance toward Japan might divide the country as Korea ended up being divided by China. As the United States developed its post-war policy to contain the influence of its USSR, soviet communism became a bugbear in Japan as it did in the United States.

This formlessness, while historically specific, has some cultural specificity also: the traditional Japanese city is often characterized as lacking form, lacking for example a strong distinction between figure and ground.[89] In many respects the comic book format itself encourages such a depiction: it itself is flat, broken up into images with a two-dimensional relationship to each other, usually structured by a linear narrative but inherently offering the possibility of reversals, ellipsis, digression initiated by the reader. It has been pointed out that Japanese comics in particular, in part because they draw on a culturally-specific tradition of elliptical narrative, exhibit a looser, more emotive play of images than do European and American comics[90]. Among the tropes exploited by Japanese comics are a tendency to "fragment the moment", or to use several panels to present several views of a moment in time; a propensity for labyrinthine, obscure plots; and the employment of the interval between images to evoke the passage of time, an unseen event, or a psychological tension. They tend towards the depiction of relationships and psychological tension even in the context of action stories, and to do this they make use of what opacity is available in a flat medium: the space between images. The rest of Tezuka's oeuvre offers many illustrations of these strategies; *Metropolis* employs several of them. This story progresses through numerous loosely-connected episodes, some with only a very indirect relationship to the narrative flow. Its plot is lumpy, diffuse, and changes direction numerous times – as loose and ambiguous as is the city.

Darkened sun

The story does have a centre of sorts, but a displaced one. We are first made aware of it in an image similar to the one we have just looked at: frenetic activity, numerous local centres among the mass of writhing bodies, in this image flattened further by the alternation of small centres of black and white derived from evening dress. This is an observatory at the International Scientists' Conference.

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[89]Yoshinobu Ashihara, *The Aesthetic Townscape* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1983), 56.
[90]Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics : The Invisible Art*, 1st HarperPerennial ed. (New York: HarperPerennial, 1994), 74-81.

Fig. 19.: sunspots identified at the International Scientists' Conference

The conference is interrupted by the appearance of frightening black spots on the surface of the sun, observed here by numerous foolish scientists. We later learn that radiation from these spots is implicated in the creation of Michi (among other mutations). In fact the impetus for all of the events in the story—the creation of Duke Red's robot army, unsettling events around the world, Duke Red's defeat at the hands of Michi, and the eventual demise of Michi—stem from this darkening of the sun. The sun is in many ways the centre of the story, even more so than Michi, yet we never see it in the centre of any image. It only appears far away, off to the side, and darkened.

Of course in the Japanese context the sun has an unmistakable significance, one which would have been even more pronounced in 1949. Until only four years previously official doctrine had maintained that the Emperor of Japan was a direct descendant of the sun goddess Amaterasu. One of the conditions of surrender after Nagasaki had been the

Emperor's renunciation of this claim to divine status. A consequence was the restructuring of the Japanese government and constitution – both of which were in a state of reconstruction at the time the manga was written, much like the Japanese city. A relationship to science is also implicated in this condition. The conflict which had resulted in this situation had arisen in parallel with or, as many would argue, as a consequence of Japan's attempts to aggressively absorb modernity, including modern scientific knowledge, on Japan's own terms. Many would also argue that Japan's ultimate defeat had been a result of its failure to adequately ensure technological superiority over its Western rivals. And of course the final events which led to this defeat, the atomic bombings, were probably the most overwhelming demonstrations of destructive technological power in history. The sun of Tezuka's manga therefore represents two suns, or a sun with two faces: the face of science, the object of international scrutiny; and the mythic face beneath which Japan's Empire had once lain, still capable of throwing the rest of the world into disarray. The mythic face is now dark and distant, far from the city, polluted. As though to reinforce this, and in contrast with Lang's film, there is no sign of a leader in Tezuka's Metropolis, a fact consistent with the lack of a physical or architectural centre. The historical seat of power has been divorced from the city. There is only an illegitimate, criminal pretender to power—Duke Red, the man responsible for polluting the sun. Myth has departed from this city; but it is about to be reborn in it.

Ambivalent body

Fig. 20.: Michi's flight over the city

The darkening of the sun provokes the birth of another creature composed of equal parts technology and myth. This is the artificial human, Michi, seen here swooping over the city after discovering his power of flight. His smooth, sweeping, free movement is in stark contrast to the twisted movement of Lang's False Maria through the dark interwar *Metropolis.* Michi's own flight speaks rather of freedom and the fresh power and speed of the modern world[91]. There is a hint that the aerial view to which it corresponds is

[91]Creatures emblematic of these qualities were to populate much of Tezuka's later work, for example *Astro Boy (Tesuwan atomu)* Tezuka Osamu, Right Stuff (Firm), and Mushi Productions, Astro Boy (Des Moines: distributed by The Right Stuff Inc., 1991), videorecording.

threatening: the population is in panic; or perhaps awe-struck. But the presentation of Michi himself at this moment is as a clear, bright face looking down upon the city, unclouded by the dark side of modern technology. He is, as he says of his own flight, something "marvelous" (*subarashii* in the Japanese original).

The translation of this word matters. In everyday speech *subarashii* refers to a wonderful or remarkable thing. In the manga this word is written in *hiragana* (phonetic script), as everyday expressions often are; and "marvelous" or "wonderful" is a good translation of the word in this context. But the ideograms with which the word can be formally written (素晴らしい) provide further insight. The first character 素 refers to the image of undyed cloth, something naked, unpainted, bare or in its natural state. The second one 晴 means clear, fine, fair, unclouded. There is a nuance therefore of something untrammeled and bright. The suggestions of nakedness and clarity however do not suggest a "revealing" of something hidden. In fact, as the reference to cloth suggests, they imply a condition in which shining forth in one's natural state does not imply an unclothing. Michi is a wonder or a marvel in a sense which implies a simultaneous revealing/concealing, or to put it in another way, a condition in which those terms are not oppositional. This is fairly consistent with Kurokawa's assertion of the "humanity" of the Japanese automaton.

Michi is, then, a wonder. Unlike Lang's robot, he is not evil, but is capable of causing harm (or in this case, panic) accidentally. Both love and violence seem to be latent in him, and he shares this with many Japanese (though not exclusively Japanese) movie monsters: Godzilla for example. Michi's ambiguity extends to his ontology: he is not made of any of the normal stuff. He is "neither human nor animal nor plant nor mineral."[92] Created from man-made cells, he is not natural; but neither is he simply a mechanism. He is "neither male nor female"[93]; In fact he can transform from one gender to another at the touch of a button at the back of his throat:

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[92]Tezuka, *Metoroporisu*, 84.
[93]Ibid., 51.

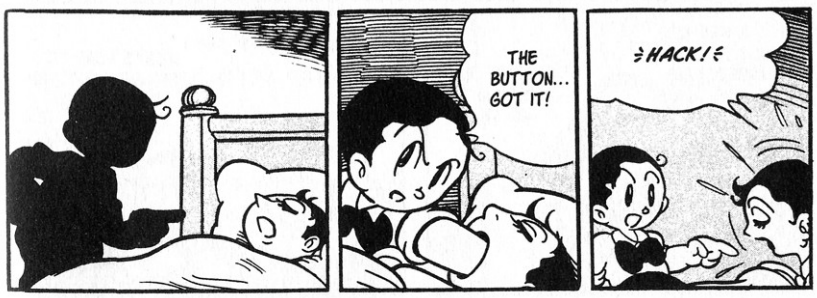

Fig. 21.: Michi transforms

Michi seems to have no definite being which can be pinned down; he/she is very much whatever we want him/her to be. Many qualities coexist in his body, and he oscillates between several of them: male/female, creative/destructive. In this he shares something of the mythic nature of the hermaphrodite, and that nature seems to invite a kind of violence. Despite Michi's cheerful, almost utopian aspect, there is something labyrinthine to him, a dark complexity which emerges from time to time in the events that surround him, however amusingly presented.

Michi shares a bond of love with Ken'ichi, the nephew of Hige Oyaji. It is unclear whether this is the love of a brother (they are both surrogate children of characters who are in many respects parallel: the inventor and the detective) or a lover (they are a boy-girl pair at least some of the time, they are affectionate toward one another, and they are not actually related[94]). It is also a passion which flips into the mode of hate at the end of the story, when Ken'ichi ends up battling Michi in an attempt to stop the robot attack on Metropolis. At the point of throwing Ken'ichi off the building, Michi begins to dissolve (we soon learn the reason: the sunspots, the source of her life, are disappearing).

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[94]There is a certain resonance here with the Japanese creation myth, in which a brother/sister pair become lovers and produce the gods as their offspring [see: Norinaga Motoori and Ann Wehmeyer, "Kojiki-Den : Book 1," in Cornell East Asia series (Ithica, N.Y.: East Asia Program, Cornell University, 1997), 15-39.] The two are associated with (like this tall clocktower) a phallic object, a spear which is dipped into the ocean; brine dripping from its tip forms the Japanese archipelago. The argument can be made that this resonance becomes more pronounced in the animated film.

Fig. 22.: Michi begins to dissolve

She falls to the ground and begins to melt away into a formless mass. On her death-bed, crowds of people come to pay their respects. This sequence reinforces two aspects of her nature. First, her being is still unstructured: she does not come apart into components. In contrast to Lang's robot whose true nature was revealed at the end of the film when its human skin was burnt away, there is no hidden core here to be revealed. In fact, the exact

opposite of Lang's immolation occurs: as Michi's body melts away, the statue on which she was modeled is brought out to be admired. This is illustrated in a single panel which places the melting body and the shining image on two opposite sides of the frame.

Fig. 23.: the death of Michi.

Rather than the human image being burnt away leaving behind a machine, here the whole body melts away leaving, as though magically preserved and transposed, the image, as a kind of shining face. This reminds us that in fact she is not a machine, but a fleshy body; and it implies quite a different relationship of inside to outside than did Lang's robot. There can be no straightforward exorcism of a ghost here, no simple return to the Cartesian model of robot: inanimate, flesh stripped away.

Michi is beloved, of Ken'ichi and also the populace. This seems to be related to her formlessness, the extent to which she offers a supple object of affection. It also seems to be a consequence of her capacity to suffer—it is in response to her suffering that first Ken'ichi and later the people become enamoured of her. She is in short a pathetic figure. Or more precisely: one of the qualities enabled by her multivalent nature and her dual capacity as image and fleshy body, is pathos.

I have already observed that Michi's multivalence invites some kind of violence, and this is clearly tied to her capacity for pathos. We saw this in the image above which shows us two figures, male and female, embracing in a battle to the death; two figures who for most of the story were protectors of each other. Figure 21 showed Ken'ichi as a shadowy figure who looms over Michi's bed and then thrusts a hand violently down her throat in an act

which violates as it protects (in that case Ken'ichi is changing her gender in order to disguise her appearance, that she might evade Duke Red). This disturbing gesture is repeated toward the end of the book, this time by Duke Red who wants to bring Michi under his control. Red, we will remember, is one of her father-figures: it is his pollution of the sun which brought her to life, and it is the end of that pollution which will bring about her death. He is brutal, but he like everyone else wants Michi. With this gesture he makes his most violent and violating attempt to become master of things, to be more than just a pretender, to instead truly possess the mysterious power of the sun manifested in Michi's body.

Fig. 24.: Duke Red transforms Michi's gender

Michi, Ken'ichi, Duke Red, the populace, and the distant sun, are locked in a complex relationship in which love, violence, intimacy, admiration, and pollution are all implicated. Michi's wondrous nature serves as a channel for a pathetic relationship that spans the distance between nation (or people, or race) and individual. This potentiality is consistent with the notion of a human technology suggested by Kurokawa. That is, a machine can become human without implying evil; instead, pathos is open to it. Another instance of the pathetic robot is worth visiting to reinforce these points.

The pathetic robot

In the image below, which appears roughly half way through the manga, Hige Oyaji and his robot friend Fifi are captured while attempting to escape from the lair of Duke Red.

Tezuka, unusually for this particular manga, makes use of the space between images to emphasize the sudden division which is about to be drawn between the two characters. The gutter between panels becomes a portcullis which slams down, cutting them off from each other. Following from our previous insight that the sun in Tezuka's manga has two faces, we might surmise that this division could be read two ways (we note that, as one of Duke Red's robot slaves, Fifi's head is a copy of the darkened sun). One, with reference to man's relationship to the world known scientifically; it sets up again the division of man from matter, the Cartesian model of the robot. But two, it employs the robot as a figure of pathos (Once again we see that a technical body in this context *melts away* rather than *comes apart*).

Fig. 25.: the death of Fifi

The extended process of dissolution of the robot on the left is accompanied by an equally drawn-out agony on the part of the human being on the right. One might contrast Hige Oyaji's empathetic response to the suffering robot on the other side of the gutter to the impassive reaction of Lang's Joh Frederson to his agitated servant (his "hands") across another screen in the image we examined in the previous chapter (Fig. 3). The robot here is both empathetic and an object of empathy.

The intimate relationship Tezuka depicts between man and robot has a political nuance consistent with the second face of the sun. Below can be seen two similar panels taken

from a wartime drawing by Tezuka. Natsume Fusanosuke, in the book *Manga to "sensô"*, argues for the poignancy of Tezuka's imagery, suggesting that his work evokes the sadness of death, and thereby the bittersweet quality of life, as does the work of no other manga artist. As one illustration of this, he cites the 1945 manga 幽霊男 (*Yuureiotoko*)[95], in which a race of artificial humans is dedicated to living and labouring not for themselves, but for the human race. In this manga Tezuka employed a similar scene to the one we have just examined:

Fig. 26.: the death of Pupo

This imagery, Natsume explains, appeared during wartime when the audience for this comic book (an audience made up of children or teenagers) would not have expected to reach adulthood. They would have seen in this imagery their own imminent death on behalf of people and Emperor. This condition also expresses a relationship of intimacy, for in the context of the representation of the Emperor of Japan during wartime, the Japanese individual was seen as bearing an intimate relationship to this emblem of the

[95]From Tezuka Osamu, "Yuurei Otoko," Asahi shinbun 1945. reproduced in Fusanosuke Natsume, *Manga to "Sensô"* (Tokyo: Kôdansha, 1997), 15.

country[96]. The technical body in this tale represented not a machine, nor an evil, but a wonder, an object of love, and a pathetic subject[97].

The affective robot

Lang's film dealt with the subject/object division in a particular way, attempting to bring back the machine into the realm of subjectivity (and implicitly into the role of actor), but in the end shying away from that gesture. Tezuka's story, drawing on a tradition which had not pushed away so definitively the subject from the machine, the mind from the body, finds it easier to assimilate the robot to the role of subject. But it can only do so to a point.

These robots are certainly more than object, for they suffer pathetically. They perceive, but for most of the manga they respond to events only ineffectively. Childlike, Michi for example cannot at first control her power of flight. None of the robots can initiate actions on their own. It is only at the instigation of human beings that they take part in any positive action, whether that is to obey or to rebel. They thus are something more than objects with regards to actions directed toward them, yet something less than subjects in terms of their own ability to initiate action.

This condition can be understood in the terms from Merleau-Ponty set out in the previous chapter. For Merleau-Ponty the movement of the subject into the world is achieved through engagement of the intentional arc; these robots, in failing to act, fail to engage in the arc of intention, or nearly so. The robot emblematizes a human condition brought about by modernity. Deleuze identifies a similar failure to move to action in his own

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[96]One illustration of this is the Japanese national anthem, *Kimi ga yô*, in which the intimate personal pronoun *kimi* (comparable to but more intimate than *tu* in French) is used to refer to the Emperor, suggesting an intimate relationship of love.
[97]This is not to say that artificial bodies in European narratives do not ever have these capacities. Lang's False Maria does not, but Wegener's *Golem*, for example, does (notably, his is also an artificial body which cannot be reduced to parts).

writing, but he frames it in slightly different terms which may help us in understanding and reformulating our notion of the pathetic robot.

Deleuze describes the movement from perception to action in terms which, in the early stages of that movement, are not dissimilar from Merleau-Ponty. For him perception frames out part of the world, and forms a horizon for things. Perception then passes to Action through an intermediary condition, and that condition is Affect.

> "There is an in-between. Affection is what occupies the interval, what occupies it without filling it in or filling it up. It surges in the centre of indetermination, that is to say in the subject, between a perception which is troubling in certain respects and a hesitant action. It is a coincidence of subject and object, or the way in which the subject perceives itself, or rather experiences itself or feels itself 'from the inside'…"[98]

Affect is, notably, between a "troubling" perception and a "hesitant action". Affect is perception not yet quite transformed into action; it floats in the gap between the two. It must float, for it does not correspond to a direct mechanical connection; that would produce mere Response (that would be the purely Cartesian robot). Rather "…it is precisely in affection that the movement ceases to be that of translation [of movement] in order to become movement of expression…"[99]

For Deleuze the emblem of affect is the face, and he illustrates this with reference to two faces: the human face, and the face of a clock. The human face, he says, has two limits. On the one hand is the tendency to define a face as a whole, to grasp or set its outlines (faceification or *visagéification*); he associates this with the passion referred to by Descartes and Le Brun as *admiration*, that is, the state of wonder. The other limit marks the tendency for that whole to break up through "fragmentary and broken lines which indicate here the quivering of the lips, there the brilliance of a look, and which involve a

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[98]Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 65.
[99]Ibid., 66.

content which to a greater or lesser extent rebels against the outline: these are the traits of faceicity [*visagéité*]"[100]; this he associates with the passion of *desire*. Admiration is the immobile face; desire the restless face "inseparable from the little solicitations or impulsions"[101] which move it "toward a limit or [until it] crosses a threshold"[102] The face of a clock, he says, shares these limits:

> "On the one hand it has hands moved by micromovements, at least virtual ones, even if we are only shown it once, or several times at long intervals: the hands necessarily form part of an *intensive series* which marks an ascent towards…or tends towards a critical instant, prepares a paroxysm. On the other hand it has a face as receptive immobile surface, receptive plate of inscription, impassive suspense; it is a *reflecting and reflected unity*." [103]

The face of admiration, of reflecting and reflected unity, expresses what Deleuze terms "a pure Quality"[104]. The face of desire, the "intensive face" which "prepares a paroxysm" ascends in the direction of Power, the movement or "qualitative leap"[105] to a new condition; for example in Eisenstein "from the anger of the soldiers to the revolutionary explosion; from the stone to the scream…"[106] For Deleuze, following Eisenstein, the

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[100]Ibid., 88. Deleuze cites Heinrich Wölfflin, Principles of Art History: The Problem of the Development of Style in Later Art ([New York]: Dover Publications, 1932), 41-43.
[101]Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 88.
[102]Ibid., 89.
[103]Ibid., 87.
[104]"that is to say a 'something' common to several objects of different kinds ... [Quality] is common to several different things (the object which carries it, the body which submits to it, the idea which represents it, the face which has this idea…). The reflecting faces of young women in Griffith can express white, but it is also the white of a snowflake caught on an eye-lash, the spiritual white of an internal innocence, the dissolved white of a moral degradation, the hostile and searing white of the iceberg where the heroine will wander…"Ibid., 89.
[105]Ibid.
[106]Ibid. Deleuze refers to Dreyer's *Passion of Joan of Arc* as the affective film *par excellence*, and cites it thus: "It is the anger *of* the bishop and the martyrdom *of* Joan; but, all that will be preserved from the roles and situations will be what is needed for the affect to be extracted and to carry out its conjunctions – this 'power' of anger or of ruse, this

Affect is epitomized by the face and by the close-up shot, which imply each other: "there is no close-up *of* the face, the face is in itself close-up, the close-up is by itself face and both are affect, affection-image."[107]

The notion of the face as emblem of affect throws some light on the observations made so far on figures of pathos in Tezuka's manga. Each of these figures, on second consideration, can be seen as a face, usually literally a face, which tends either toward the limit of admiration (Michi flying over the city), or toward the limit of desire/dissolution (the pathetic robot melting away into a formless mass). Indeed the sun itself, which we have already characterized as having two faces in another sense, can also be seen this way: a pure disk broken up by the shifting stains that darken its face, implicitly sorrowful, potentially wrathful. Of course all of this must be read through the form of representation native to this manga, with its exaggeration, melodrama, excess, comedy, and vulgarity; but these limitations are no less present (in varying degrees) in the instances of cinema Deleuze cites (Griffiths, Eisenstein, Lang and others).

Fig. 27.: the faces of Tezuka's city

The affective city

While for Deleuze affect is epitomized by the close-up of the face, it is not limited to it. It can be manifested in other shots and views and other cinematic objects which are of great interest to architecture. Effectively it extends from the face into space, and Deleuze posits an affective space which he calls "Any-space-whatever" (*espace quelconque*)[108]. This is a

'quality' of victim or martyrdom." ———, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 106.
[107]Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 88.
[108]Ibid., 109.

space which is not localizable ("no longer a particular determined space"[109], but neither is it an abstract or universal space in the modern sense ("not an abstract universal, in all times, in all places"[110]). Rather it articulates a singularity which has a universal significance; from or through it, in his words, "linkages can be made in an infinite number of ways". It partakes of a Quality in the same sense a face does: every face is individual, yet a face can partake in Love or Hate or Fear.

I will eleborate slightly on what is meant by a universal singularity because it underlines another coincidence with phenomenology. Deleuze relates affect to the idea of Firstness, from C.S. Peirce (the founder of semiology). In a footnote Deleuze himself notes the similarity of this notion to that of the material and affective *a priori* produced by Max Scheler and developed by Mikel Dufrenne[111]. We can intuit this connection ourselves from the following description of Firstness: it is something "felt, rather than conceived: it concerns what is new in experience, what is fresh, fleeting and nevertheless eternal." It "is that which is as it is for itself and in itself."[112] Being in itself and for itself, it is not yet, or not yet completely, in the world. "Firstness is thus the category of the possible…it expresses the possible without actualizing it, whilst making it a complete mode." And this is also the description of affect, as it "surges … in the subject, between a perception … and a hesitant action.": "Now, this is exactly what the affection image is: it is quality or power, it is potentiality considered for itself as expressed..." Like Firstness, "(t)he affect is impersonal and is distinct from every individuated state of things: it is none the less *singular*…"[113]

When actualized in a particular state of things, a specific place or a person, Firstness becomes something else: Secondness, that which exists not in "what it is" but rather when "what is, is what it is in relation to a second".[114] Thus the presencing of quality or affect in

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[109]Ibid.
[110]Ibid.
[111]Ibid. Deleuze refers to them in footnote 16 on p. 231.
[112] Ibid., 98.
[113]Ibid.
[114]Ibid.

the world not only gives it a specific place or body, but it also implies an opposition to another, an opposition which is also a binding together: “Everything which only exists by being opposed, by and in a duel, therefore belongs to secondness.”[115] There is a remarkable resonance here with the images we have looked at so far of opposing beings bound together in pathetic embraces. The emergence of potentiality and affect in the world and in the form of Michi thrusts her inevitably into a relationship to a Second, Ken’ichi, to which she is tied by the relationships of love and hate[116]. There is a kind of a primordial struggle going on here, the emergence of Firstness into the world but also its failure to do so.

Through this struggle Affect emerges from the body of the robot into the city. As Tima and Michi embrace, the city around them falls apart, enters a paroxysm, producing a number of images of dissolution any one of which could form a final image in the series of faces above. Without a doubt each of these is a remembrance, however deceptively cartoonish, of the destruction experienced by Japanese cities at the end of the war.

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[115]Ibid.
[116]Relation is Peirce’s notion of Thirdness, but our discussion does not require an extension to this point.

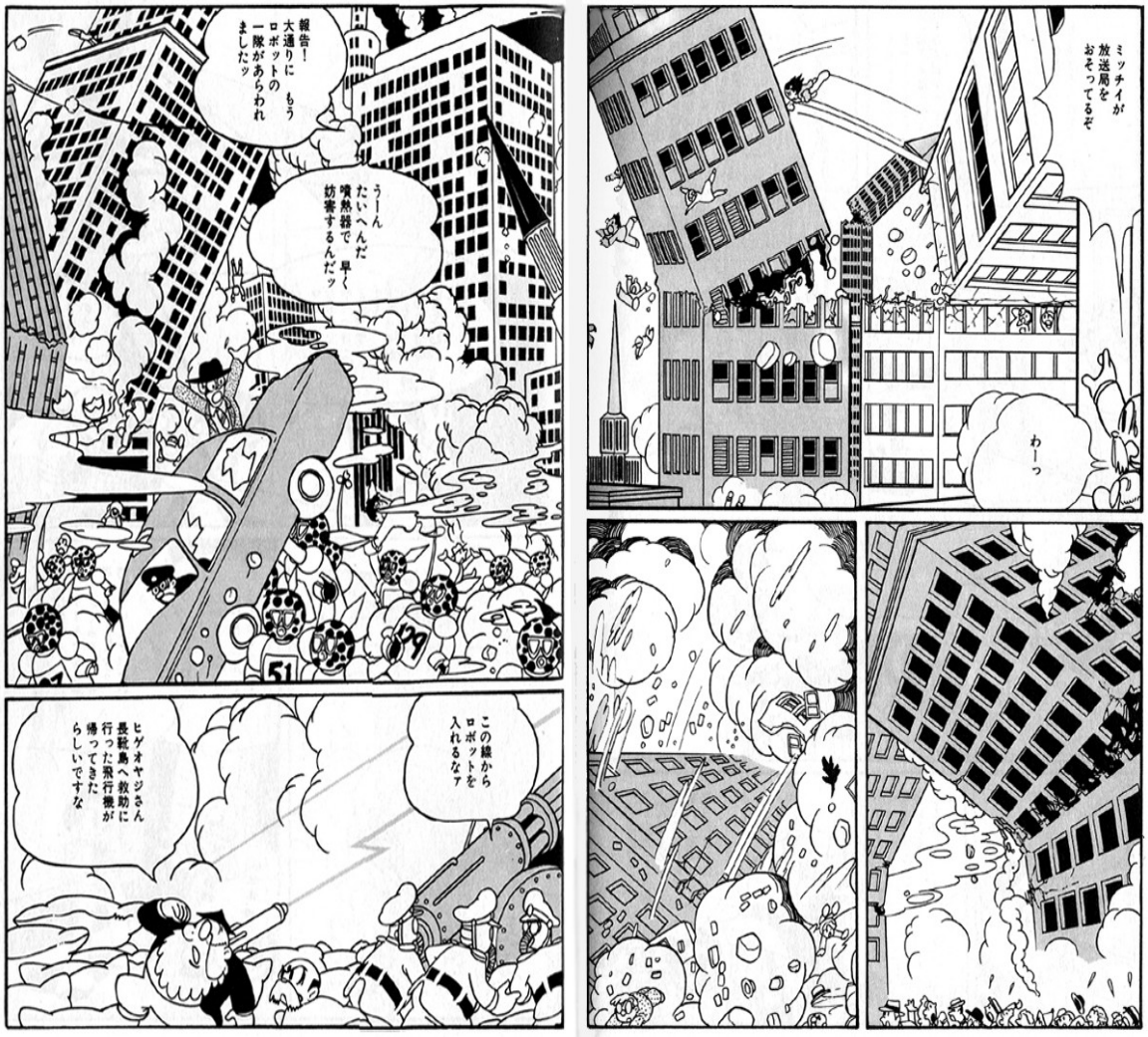

Fig. 28.: Michi attacks the Metropolis

Michi and her rampaging robots, Firsts grappling with their human Seconds, produce for two pages a landscape which in many respects recalls the image of the city with which this chapter began. Like that bustling modern city, we have here an array of images of activity, a zero sum of movements back and forth, a flat composition which suggests only a loose hierarchy if any at all. The images are barely in sequence, they could all be happening at the same time, even at the same location. Motion whirls around, but there is no centre. All is lost in dissolution: in the image with which this chapter began, it was a dissolution of activity; in these two pages, a dissolution of destruction. There seems to be

little distinction between the city in the throes of destruction and the everyday city, the "normal" city.

We saw in the first chapter that Lang's robot embodied, even generated, his Metropolis. Her nature as mechanical armature covered with human flesh corresponded to the Metropolis's character of machine insinuated by labyrinth. This was conveyed by Lang's Expressionist use of light and dark, two realms which invaded each other in alternating tides, light infringing on darkness, then shadow on light. These tides came close to submerging Lang's Metropolis in depth, despite its aspiration to Babel's height. It was further articulated by an interplay of frames and surfaces, in which frames became surfaces and vice versa.

A similar correspondence of robotic body and city occurs in Tezuka's manga, but with a different result. Tezuka's loose, unstructured city corresponds to the ambivalent, hermaphrodite robot who lived there. As Lang's robot infiltrated his city through the "intensive series" of the interaction of dark and light in depth, Tezuka's enters his city through appearance of Affect on face and urban space in one plane. The exaggerated features and excited movement of the manga characters and cityscapes, their depiction through flattened, high-contrast images (with only a limited use of grays), is not dissimilar from the cinema of pathos from which Deleuze draws his notion of Affect. This cinema privileges the face and, as Deleuze suggests, can turn objects and spaces (clocks, machines, even landscapes) into faces. Lang's Metropolis forms part of that cinema, and the play of surface in his film includes, as I have noted, images of faces perturbed and disrupted. But as I have also argued, there is a difference. Lang's film offers in response to a modern condition the recovery of the flesh and of depth, a recovery which in its context could only be pathological, evil, and which in the final analysis was to be exorcised. Tezuka's story, in contrast, remains on the surface, expressing there the battle provoked by the modern condition. It plays back and forth over the surface, from one pole to another of Deleuze's notion of face. Indeed each manga image might be taken as a face suspended somewhere between the two limits of admiration and desire. Every pale panel is framed by a slim clean line, defining the boundary of a surface. Playing across that plane, frenetic

action and contrasting figures of black and white always push toward the limit of dissolution, threatening to burst the boundaries of the face. Thus even the means of representation in the manga supports the affective face of Tezuka's robot, and the city as face: a flat emblem always moving in the direction of dissolution, towards the break-up its very wholeness implies[117].

Tezuka's paroxysm is allowed to progress further than was Lang's. Perhaps the Japanese city in 1949 was not as tightly wound, as highly strung, as had been the German city in 1926. But like the cinematic *Metropolis*, the manga city pulls back from the brink. It is left for the animated version of *Metropolis* to take the last step over.

Fig. 29.: detail of the fragmenting Metropolis

[117]It is an expression consistent with the disconnect between inside and outside, or more precisely put, the absence of a causal link between inside and outside, articulated in Kurokawa's interpretation of the automaton: instability is played out over a surface rather than breaking through to an interior.

Postscript to Tezuka: "Superflat" as *any-space-whatever*

At the end of the last chapter I suggested that, for Deleuze, the affective face finds a spatial correspondence in any-space-whatever. As Deleuze puts it:

> "…there are two kinds of signs of the affection-image, or two figures of firstness: on the one hand the power-quality expressed by a face or an equivalent; but on the other hand the power-quality presented in any-space-whatever. And perhaps the second is more subtle than the first, more suitable for extracting the birth, the advance, and the spread of the affect."[118]

I wish here to examine in a little more detail this notion, the emergence of such spaces and the significance of that emergence in the context of animated film.

The first instance Deleuze gives of cinematic any-spaces-whatever is the space of Expressionist film: "a space full of shadows, or covered with shadows, becomes any-space-whatever."[119] As we will recall, this space was characterized by its great, if frightful, fecundity: the primordial "non-organic life of things". In fact fecundity is inherent in all such spaces. They are polysemic:

> "Space is no longer a particular determined space…they (any-spaces-whatever) are as old as the cinema itself. Any-space-whatever is not an abstract universal, in all times, in all places. It is a perfectly singular space, which has merely lost its homogeneity, that is, the principle of its metric relations or the connection of its own parts, so that the linkages can be made in an infinite number of ways. It is a space of virtual conjunction, grasped as pure locus of the possible. What in fact manifests the instability,

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[118]Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 110.
[119]Ibid., 111.

> the heterogeneity, the absence of link of such space, is a richness in potentials or singularities which are, as it were, prior conditions of all actualization, all determination…."[120]

Other instances of this kind of space (Godard's unfinished apartments, Antonioni's deserts) are voids, wastelands. Ripped from their moorings, the relationship to the world around them broken, they can connect anywhere; they are full of potential, at once barren and potentially fecund: fallow.

Deleuze identifies these spaces with the ruined wastelands left behind after the war:

> "…after the war, a proliferation of such spaces could be seen both in film sets and in exteriors, under various influences. The first, independent of the cinema, was the post-war situation with its towns demolished or being reconstructed, its waste grounds, its shanty towns, and even in places where the war had not penetrated, its undifferentiated urban tissue, its vast unused places, docks, warehouses, heaps of girder and scrap iron…"[121]

There were of course many such spaces in Japan, and they formed the settings of many post-war Japanese films. As was the case in Japan, where their connection to a broken society was unmistakeable, any-spaces-whatever in European and American film were not merely imitative of a physical condition; they emerged in response to a much deeper crisis in cinema and in the human condition.

Deleuze referred to the cinematic aspect of this crisis as the crisis of the action-image, the action-image being one of three key forms of cinematic image, with perception-image and affection-image. Deleuze argues that classical cinema had two basic formulas for engaging action. Through one,[122] action modifies situation; through the other[123] action

[120]Ibid., 109.
[121]Ibid., 120.
[122]S-A-S' situation-action-new situation
[123]A-S-A' action-situation-new action

discloses a situation which produces a modified action. For Deleuze, neither of these structures suffice to describe what happens in post-war cinema (which he terms "modern", as opposed to classical, cinema). In modern cinema, and according to Deleuze this is true also of the human condition in the post-war era, action and situation are decoupled: "…the line or fibre of the universe which prolonged events into one another, or brought about the connection of portions of space, has broken."[124] In these circumstances:

> "We hardly believe any longer that a global situation can give rise to an action which is capable of modifying it – no more than we believe that an action can force a situation to disclose itself, even partially. The most 'healthy' illusions fail. The first things to be compromised everywhere are the linkages of situation-action, action-reaction, excitation-response, in short, the sensory-motor links which produced the action-image."[125]

Of course this crisis corresponds precisely to the disruption of the movement from subjectivity to action, the disruption of concern for Merleau-Ponty, located in the gap rendered problematic by Cartesianism: between mind and body, perception and object.

The cinematic image and narrative are no longer about globalizing situations; they begin to be about dispersion. As we wander lost through the spaces of desolation, narrative takes the form of stories in parallel or intertwined, stories broken off and then taken up again, episodic structures:

> "... Ellipsis ceases to be a mode of the tale, a way in which one gets from an action to a partially disclosed situation: it belongs to the situation itself, and reality is lacunary as much as dispersive. Linkages, connections, or liaisons are deliberately weak."[126]

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[124]Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 207.
[125]Ibid., 206.
[126]Ibid.

Tezuka's narrative fits this pattern, as do the ambiguous relationships of its characters. His space, too, corresponds to this looseness: disconnected, open, unstructured. In fact if we contrast his flat and unfocused city (with no apparent leader, only an illegitimate pretender to power) with Lang's vertical Metropolis (which coalesces at its conclusion around the figure of Joh Frederson), we find a resonance with Deleuze's description of the cities typical of post-war cinema:

> "The city and the crowd lose the collective and unanimist character… the city at the same time ceases to be the city above, the upright city, with skyscrapers and low-angle shots, in order to become the recumbent city, the city as horizontal or at human height, where each gets on with his own business, on his own account."[127]

As its endless activity suggests, there is still great potential here, it is a city always growing and in which a force of life wells up, though a polluted one. Related to this, its rootlessness, lack of form and boundaries, the tremendous potential for diverse and free connections with other parts of the world and between parts of the city itself, are all characteristics it shares with any-spaces-whatever, spaces of affect.

I have mentioned the social and cinematic contexts Deleuze identifies behind the development of this phenomenon. These include:

> "… in no particular order, the war and its consequences, the unsteadiness of the 'American Dream' in all its aspects, the new consciousness of minorities, the rise and inflation of images both in the external world and in people's minds, the influence on the cinema of the new modes of narrative with which literature had experimented, the crisis of Hollywood and its old genres…"[128]

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[127]Ibid.
[128]Ibid., 206.

Here Deleuze locates the condition in terms of American culture ("the 'American Dream'"), but he asserts that this phenomenon is universal. There is certainly a correspondence with post-war conditions in Japan – social, political, and artistic.

In fact these spaces and our relationship with them correspond closely to what Murakami Takashi terms "Superflat": the characteristic quality of the popular arts of manga, anime, video games, television, print media, and digital media: a non-hierarchical flattened spatiality with no centre, no edge, multiple changing foci, a fundamental emptiness[129]. For Philosopher Azuma Hiroki the same term implies the condition of Japan's post-modern condition: a society without structure, horizontal rather than pyramidal, a condition of routine and listlessness[130]. Despite Japan's retention of social structures which can be characterized in an important sense as hierarchical, this is arguably a fair description of contemporary urban society in Japan, certainly in comparison with the situation three decades ago. When the comparison is made to Japanese society before the Pacific War, or before the Meiji restoration, this statement is even more valid. Indeed the relationship of the hierarchies that have dominated Japan since the war (work, education, government) to the people of Japan is articulated most poignantly now in the detachment of these hierarchies from the increasing number of those groups and individuals who have abandoned – or have been abandoned by – them.

The term Superflat has been used to characterize contemporary built form related to these social conditions: "superflat urbanism" with an ambiguous relationship of figure to ground, alternating between featureless banality and multiple spectacles seemingly without hierarchy or organizing principle, occupied by nothing substantial—only flows of people, image, capital. And it has been applied to a corresponding architecture of surface,

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[129]Murakami, "Earth in My Window," 151-61.
[130]Hiroki Azuma, "Super Flat Speculation," in *Superflat*, ed. Takashi Murakami (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 139. He cites as an indicator of this levelling the 1999 art exhibit "Ground Zero Japan" art the Contemporary Art Gallery, Art Tower Mito, curated by Sawaragi Noi.

of the “2.5 dimensions”, an architecture in which design tends to be limited to the building envelope and in which this fact is taken to be an indication of superficiality[131].

Murakami associates the formal qualities of Superflat with what he sees as the impotence and childishness of Japanese society today, according to him rendered incapable of achieving adulthood by Japan’s post-war condition. In the terms from Deleuze employed in the last chapter, the Japanese float in a state of Affect, failing to move to action; that is to say, they are enervated by modern circumstances, unable to take initiative. They are like the robots of Tezuka's manga. Murakami pins the blame for this condition on the Americans, and one consequence of it is an inability to chart a political course independent of the United States. But other interpretations are possible: that this was the result of decisions made by the Japanese government before, during, and after the war; or a consequence of a larger patterns of modernization. But what is less debatable is that this was the condition under construction in Japan at the time Tezuka’s manga was written, and according to my interpretation many of these themes can be identified in the manga Metropolis. Of course Tezuka was the seminal creator from whose work the entire body of contemporary Japanese popular arts might be seen to spill; it is not surprising that many of the characteristics of Superflat, and therefore of Deleuze's crisis of the action-image, can be identified in embryo in his work.

Thus, in post-war Japan perhaps even more so than in America

> “characters were found less and less in sensory-motor ‘motivating’ situations, but rather in a state of strolling, of sauntering or of rambling which defined pure optical and sound situations. The action-image then tended to shatter, whilst the determinate locations were blurred, letting

[131]Taro Igarashi, "Superflat Architecture and Japanese Subculture," in *Japan. Towards Totalscape : Contemporary Japanese Architecture, Urban Planning and Landscape*, ed. Moriko Kira, Mariko Terada, and Nederlands Architectuurinstituut. (Rotterdam, New York, NY: NAi Publishers; 2000), 97-101.

> any-spaces whatever rise up where the modern affects of fear, detachment, but also freshness, extreme speed and interminable waiting were developing."[132]

The modern affects lain out in the final sentence above, particularly the last three of them, are prevalent in the products of Japanese popular culture, particularly in manga and anime.

There is a shortcoming, though, in the characterization of Superflat as a form of *any-space-whatever.* The notion of superflat implies as I have said the evacuation of meaning, and as an artistic direction it can be criticized for an indulgence in impotence and the failure to move to action. In contrast, an important aspect of Deleuze's notion of *anyspace-whatever* is that such spaces imply fallowness; indeed if they are to offer any sort of model for architecture, they must. It is their very "deconnected" condition which allows a plethora of connections across time and space, and from it derives their Janus-like character: one spatial figure is an emblem of both desolation and of potential. My interest then is in identifying the characteristics necessary to generate this condition: a true *anyspace-whatever*, rather than a non-place. Superflat fails to provide such a model. But my argument will ultimately be that certain works of anime do articulate a vision which, rather than flattening, accentuates what depth there is in our condition. They work with flatness to add just "a 'fraction' of dimensionality to our experience..."[133]and therein lies both the (necessary) weakness and the efficacy of their overcoming.

In a similar vein, it would be overstating the case to equate the scenes of disaster in Tezuka's comic book to the poetic, empty spaces of Antonioni or Godard. Tezuka's city does however occupy one limit of a topology of dislocated spaces which include both it and the poetic spaces of these film-makers. That topology might be said to stretch across the range of Affect from paroxysm to dissolution, and from desolation to potential. Lang's

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[132]Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 120-21.
[133]Pérez-Gómez and Pelletier, *Architectural Representation and the Perspective Hinge*, 376-77.

work, too, occupies this topology; the recognized poetic shortcomings of his Metropolis (its trite resolution and melodramatic flourishes) might place it in some respects closer to Tezuka than to Antonioni. The same could be said of Rintarô and Ôtomo Katsuhiro's animated Metropolis, though I obviously think there is something to be learned from it. In Part 2 I will identify works of anime which begin to approach more closely the poetic potential of anyspace-whatever (I'll also identify some works of architecture which can be read as instances of this, and I'll suggest what it is that enables them to operate in this way). Tezuka's city in the throes of destruction (or life), and Rintarô's which follows on from it, might be seen as opening up the possibility for such imagined and real spaces.

1.3 Rintarô: Void

> "There is a mythical space in which directions and positions are determined by the residence in it of great affective entities."[134]

Preface to Rintarô: robot to *spiritual automaton*

The relationships of depth implied in Lang's film (which called for an understanding in Merleau-Ponty's terms) resonate with the new conditions of time which are the subject of what Deleuze terms *the time-image;* that is, images focusing especially on relationships of time not mediated by direct action, in which action's role in driving forward the story has been superseded. I have already mentioned this kind of image in connection with the characteristics of comic-book narrative; it can also manifest in images which employ extreme depth-of-field, as for example in the work of Orson Welles. The time-image is a correlate of the disruption of our engagement with the world. As in what Merleau-Ponty refers to as depth, the stakes here are our own humanity.

Merleau Ponty, for his part, identifies a number of pathologies related to the (modern) disruption of our body's perception of and engagement with the world which manifest themselves in a relationship with and through depth. The imagination of the phantom arm can be seen in this way; but it was redemptive, for it demonstrates our unaltered yearning to complete ourselves in the world. I interpreted Lang's Metropolis in the terms of that pathology.

The metaphor of the phantom arm can be applied just as well to the imagery of Rintarô's Metropolis; it too is full of technical bodies, each in some sense prosthetic, in some sense representing the pain of an absent limb. But I will also make a connection to Merleau-Ponty's reference to another pathology paradigmatic of modernity. This is the agoraphobic

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[134]Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 332.

experience of subjects whose movement from subjectivity to action Merleau-Ponty identified as broken: aphasics and schizophrenics. For some of these subjects the disconnect with the intentional arc is manifested in the disruption of the experience of space: they feel as if they are puppets, thrown from one space to another without volition, and with a distorted sense of the relationship of their bodies to space. As I will show below, for Merleau-Ponty, this experience amounts to the awareness of our contingency amplified by conditions of modernity,

Deleuze referred to a similar condition with his turn of phrase *spiritual automaton*, which referred to the body rendered immobile by the machinery of modernity, a machinery which also renders the world senseless. As Deleuze puts it:

> "This is the description of the ordinary man in cinema: the spiritual automaton, 'mechanical man', 'experimental dummy', Cartesian diver in us, unknown body which we have at the back of our heads whose age is neither ours nor that of our childhood, but a little time in the pure state."[135]

For Deleuze this is the quasi-human figure which appears again and again throughout the history of cinema, in the form of the vampire, the mummy, the robot, and perhaps most pertinently the somnambulist: the figure who drifts aimlessly, awaiting a reawakening. In this formulation we can see a new potential reading of the robotic body in the *Metropolis* tales, to overlay the ones I have in the preceding chapters. In Lang's film, I argued, the Cartesian robot (and city as machine) was overrun by the flesh of the world and so (almost) inverted itself. But this desire to recover the flesh was stamped out at the end of Lang's film. Tezuka's robot offered in contrast an undifferentiated flesh behind a shimmering surface shared with its city and mode of representation; it never implied a purely Cartesian condition, but it too proved unstable. The myth which promised or threatened to return through the body of Michi proved too dangerous for the city. As we shall see the transformation of the city promised but withdrawn in the earlier tales is finally achieved in the animated film in a gesture which both destroys and founds the city.

[135]Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time Image*, 169.

The following pages will argue that the stakes implied in the last of the *Metropolis* robotic bodies, particularly in light of its relationship to this animated city and the qualities of that city, are the following: like the *spiritual automaton* it floats above a void which is all about the problematic modern relationship between subject, perception and action. It seems to imply a modern excision of whatever connects perception to action, subject to object (as though a scalpel had separated the chiasm forever). But this body is ambiguous and ambivalent. It takes part with the city in a moment of simultaneous destruction and creation – I will call it a dehiscence – which turns that void into a source of potential, turns a vacuum into flesh.

Rintarô's gaze

Rintarô's animated film was an explicit homage to Tezuka Osamu's comic book (it was marketed in Japan as *Tezuka Osamu no Metoroporisu* – "Tezuka Osamu's *Metropolis*"). For the most part the characters have names and appearances based on the comic book, though the animated film is distinctly darker in tone than the manga. While Rintarô has denied any intentional reference to Lang, he does admit that Lang's *Metropolis* is one of his favourite films[136]; as we shall see his film in fact owes much to Lang's. The animated *Metropolis* includes many elements of plot (for example the human revolution from beneath the city) and of spatial scheme (the highly structured verticality of the city) which are present in Lang but absent from Tezuka's comic book. The animated film must be considered a complex folding together of the two earlier versions of *Metropolis*. The animators also drew on images from the interwar years, including those of Hugh Ferris and Le Corbusier, which would also have informed Lang's own vision of the future city.

All three of these stories might be considered to share one setting: Manhattan in the 1940s. What changes is their vantage point. In the 1920s the world yearned for a great and modern city of the immediate future; that is, the Manhattan of just-around-the-corner. Lang drew much of his Metropolis from his fascination with this city. Tezuka drew his

[136]Cited in interview in Ôtomo Katsuhiro, Metoroporisu (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shôten, 2001), 114.

imagination of the modern city from contemporary comic-book and cinematic images of American cities. His view is lateral, to the city from which came Japan's conquerors. Rintarô modelled his city on New York of 1941; the year of the bombing of Pearl Harbour and consequent outbreak of war with the United States; and also the year of the director's birth. Manhattan is thus for all of these tales a touchstone, as indeed one could argue it is for all major cities of the last century. The stories turn toward it in either anticipation (Lang and Tezuka) or (in Rintarô's case) a complex mixture of nostalgia, resentment, and regret.

Rintarô synopsis

The film begins with the inauguration of a building, a tower at the centre of the city Metropolis: the Ziggurat, which a newsreel-style clip tells us represents the culmination of the destiny of the people of Metropolis, who can now "reach to the stars". It has been built by Duke Red, a very wealthy man, who we see at the ceremony with the head of state President Boon and the Minister of Defense. Dialogue during the ceremony lets us know of ongoing social unrest over robot labour, which has left many humans unemployed. During the ceremony the symbol of a group known as "the Malduks" is projected on the building (later we learn that the Malduks are a conservative paramilitary group funded by Duke Red, and led by his adopted son Rock). Fleeing the scene, a robot is shot and destroyed. After the ceremony Duke Red confronts Dr. Lawton, who is supposed to have completed someone referred to only as "she" (to coincide with the inauguration of the Ziggurat), but has not. Following this meeting Duke Red reprimands Rock for allowing the incident at the ceremony to occur.

Later, a visiting detective, Ban Shunsaku, and his nephew Ken'ichi, request help in their search (sponsored by the International Human Rights Committee) for a criminal scientist wanted on vivisection and other charges. They are supplied with a robot assistant, a detective model. Uncomfortable with the assistant, Ban gives it the nickname "Pero", after his dog. Pero advises them that Dr. Lawton is probably hiding beneath the city, in

Zone 1. They witness another a robot shot; we learn that this happens when robots are caught outside of their assigned Zone. They descend to Zone 1.

Duke Red enters the laboratory of Dr. Lawton. “She” is still not finished. We learn that “she” is a robot, according to Dr. Lawton, “my masterpiece!” Her appearance is modelled on that of Red's deceased daughter. Lawton promises to complete her within the week. Rock appears and declares he is here to protect his father by killing this robot. Lawton declares her role is to sit on the throne of power atop the Ziggurat. Rock shoots Lawton and the robot. The laboratory catches on fire as Ban Shunsaku, Ken'ichi, and Pero arrive. The fire is put out. Ken'ichi finds the robot, a glowing white figure, in the ruins of the building, and drags her from it. The two fall through the collapsing floor into darkness. Ban finds the dying Lawton, who points out a book with his scientific notes in it.

Red looks out over the city from his office in the Ziggurat, the sun is low in the sky. He learns from Red of the end of Lawton and the robot. Below ground again, a wandering garbage robot (Fifi) comes across the unconscious Ken'ichi. Tima stands looking far up towards a beam of sunlight filtering through from the levels high above. Ken'ichi attempts to teach Tima to speak; in her broken speech she confuses their identities “I am—you”. She does not know her name, but she learns Ken'ichi’s.

Atop the Ziggurat a weapon is tested. It fires a beam at the sun; sunspots appear there. These have the effect of interfering with robot communications, and robots in the above-ground city go berserk. The president is advised to respond to this by charging Red with treason. The Minister of Defense pledges the military’s support for the president's plans.

Rock descends to Zone 2 and then Zone 3 to search for Tima. Coming across her and Ken'ichi, Rock shoots at them. Fifi protects them and they escape by hiding in the bodies of other garbage robots. Rock discovers them again and shoots Fifi. Tima and Ken'ichi flee up to Zone 1, pursued by Rock. Finding a tricycle, they ride through the passages, tunnels, streets, immense arcades of the underground, finally falling into a pit full of

garbage. There Tima finds an old transistor radio. She turns it on, and it plays a nostalgic tune; they are almost discovered.

Finally they are taken in by a band of revolutionaries led by Atlas. Their goal is to overthrow the government for the benefit of the unemployed humans. Atlas tells Ken'ichi of the poor conditions of the unemployed living in Zone 1, and recounts the story of Babel, saying that it is a morality tale about the abuse of power; and presages the downfall of Duke Red. Tima, practicing her writing, recalls her own name. Ken'ichi gives her an old set of Atlas' clothes to wear.

Led by Atlas' band, the poor humans gather for the revolution. Pero stands in their way, pleading against the use of violence. Atlas agrees with him, but says that without confirming their emotions humans cease to exist; he shoots Pero. The revolution begins. Above ground, the military sides with Duke Red; the Minister of Defense, announcing "I am merely history's agent", has the President shot. Civil war ensues. Both revolutionaries and elected government have been betrayed; the revolution fails and martial law is imposed. In the aftermath Tima and Ken'ichi come above ground and come across Ban Shunsaku and the dying Atlas. Rock confronts them and, attempting to kill Tima, shoots Ban. Duke Red appears and, learning for the first time that Tima has actually survived the fire in the laboratory and that Rock has hidden that fact, disowns Rock. Rock says that only Red should rule Metropolis, not a robot; this is the first time that Tima hears she is a robot. Red takes Tima with him; her transistor radio is left behind, forgotten in the snow.

Ban Shunsaku comes across Rock and follows him. Rock arranges a meeting with Tima and reveals to her again that she is a robot. She refuses to believe it. He tells her that, if she is human, she should have a father – who is her father? She answers: "Ken'ichi." Rock laughs scornfully. He disables Tima and steals her away to an abandoned pool hall where he prepares to dissect her. Ban Shunsaku, who has been following him, appears and knocks him unconscious. Using Lawton's notebook, he repairs Tima and helps her to hook up to the Ziggurat's information network. She confirms that Ken'ichi is a prisoner in

the Ziggurat. Her connection with the network causes a city-wide blackout. Tracing the source of the problem, Red's forces find Ban and Tima and capture them.

Red brings Tima and Ban to the throne room atop the Ziggurat. He tells Tima that she is destined to rule the world from here. The unconscious Ken'ichi is brought in; seeing his condition, Ban threatens to call his embassy. Red laughs, saying they are not important enough for anyone to care. Tima asks if she is a robot or human. Red proclaims that she is a robot, but one far above humankind, a superbeing. Rock, disguised as her nurse, announces again that a robot should not have such power, draws a gun and shoots Tima. Ken'ichi awakes as Tima, wounded, stands up and staggers to the throne. As it links to her via pulsating cables, the Ziggurat's machinery starts to malfunction, and robots begin to attack the building. Ban says "Thus God destroyed the Tower of Babel."

The throne rises up on an immense red globe. Tima announces she will soon be connected to a worldwide network with the world's major cities as its target and the destruction of the human race as her goal. Ken'ichi attempts to stop her, climbing up the globe, as an array of cables threatens to close around her. He drags her from the throne. She is disconnected from the building; broken cables drag behind her. The two emerge outside the throne room, atop the Ziggurat's superstructure, and fight each other. Inside the Ziggurat, robots advance on Red and Rock. Rock, rather than see his father killed by robots, presses the building's self-destruct button. The Ziggurat begins to collapse. Tima throws Ken'ichi from structure to structure but in the end falls herself and dangles from one of the cables attached to her back. Ken'ichi attempts to pull her up, but the cable unravels, finally snapping. As she hangs from his outstretched hand, he calls her name. As though seeing him at last, Tima recalls her first lessons speaking – when she confused their identities: "I am—you." With the final words: "Who—am—I?" she falls from the Ziggurat. Waves of destruction radiate through the city from the foundering building.

The city lies in ruins, occupied by bands of humans and robots. A motley crew of robots, including a reconstructed Fifi, bring parts of the destroyed Tima to Ken'ichi. Tears well up in his eyes. Rather than returning home, Ken'ichi decides to remain in the city. He

wanders with the robots through the shattered but colourful landscape as his uncle's plane ascends to the sky. The camera pans down to a place deep in the rubble, where we find Tima's lost transistor radio repeating the question: "Who—am—I?"

At the end of the Japanese release of the film, we see a still image of Tima and Ken'ichi working together in their own bicycle shop.

Labyrinths of movement

We turn first to a consideration of movement through the animated Metropolis, as the crux of my discussion lies in the difficulty of moving to action. I begin by laying out what movement meant for Merleau-Ponty, a thinker who as we have seen believed that we do still move to action despite all obstacles, even the disruption of our own mechanisms for movement.

As we know, for Merleau-Ponty, movement is neither incidental to the body, nor to the spatial world with which it engages. Drawing on evidence from a set of experiments which show the remarkable flexibility and adaptability of human perception in the face of a distorted visual sense[137], Merleau-Ponty argues that neither body nor space have an a-priori, objective, directionality or orientation. Rather the body and the world gain direction through the body's development of its relationship to the world, a development achieved through movement of the body and its parts. In fact, in an important sense movement is no different from perception:

> "...perception presupposes in us an apparatus capable of responding to the promptings of light in accordance with their sense (that is, in accordance with their direction and their significance, which amount to one thing[138])... This apparatus is the gaze, in other words the natural correlation between

[137]When made to wear glasses which invert or reverse vision, the human system of perception adjusts to enable action coordinated through the new perception. Therefore action is not based on an awareness of the body as absolutely oriented or as an absolute orientator, but as an origin of a negotiated system of orientations.

> appearances and our kinaesthetic unfoldings, something not known through a law, but experienced as the involvement of our body in the typical structures of a world."[139]

Through sight, as through touch, we "feel out" the contours of the world. Sight is "... a sort of knowledge machine..."[140] "a natural instrument analogous to the blind man's stick. The gaze gets more or less from things according to the way in which it questions them, ranges over them, or dwells on them..."[141].

Our eye's mapping of the world occurs through the engagement and creation of objects or frames ("anchors") onto which our perception, pre-rationally, latches and from which its sets off its relationship to the world. Engagement of perception with these anchors leads to the orientation of the body toward the world and the organization of the world with respect to the body: the establishment of "levels", the negotiated emplacement or definition of certain things as "up" and others as "down", with respect to which we move. The orientation toward the world thus established is never absolute, certain nor final: it is contingent upon our exploration of the world and precedes any thetic ordering.

This understanding informs the following discussion of movement, in which the animated Metropolis is conveyed by a gaze overwhelmed and overthrown by its experience of the city. It is a newborn gaze, as is that implied by Merleau-Ponty: the gaze of someone for the first time trying to come to terms with their world whether as a result of birth, due to a sudden disorientation resulting from some kind of trauma, or an attempt to perceive with phenomenological honesty from first impressions/ It is the gaze of Tima, born traumatically in the depths of the Metropolis, and of Ken'ichi, a newcomer to the city. The two of them wander the city, trying to feel it out as they flee their pursuers, but failing.

[138]the translator notes that Merleau-Ponty here employs the French *sens,* which has this double meaning.
[139]Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 361-62.
[140]Ibid., 307.
[141] Ibid., 177. Indeed one could argue that our eyes' disposition to perceive movement as a phenomenon even anterior to being is precisely the capacity exploited by animation to create the illusion of movement.

Their experience is encapsulated by a chase sequence from early in the film. This sequence is set up by Ken'ichi's rescue of Tima from the blazing ruins of the laboratory in which she has been created. At the end of the rescue, the two fall through a collapsing floor and disappear into the blackness below. The void into which they drop here is important to my argument, and I will return to it at the end of this chapter.

Fig.30.: falling from Lawton's laboratory; learning to speak.

When we come across them again, they are in a labyrinth of sewer pipes. Regaining consciousness, the first question Ken'ichi asks is "koko-wa, doko?" (*Where is this place?*); so from the beginning we know he is trying to orient himself spatially. This is immediately related to a questioning of identity. There in the darkness, Ken'ichi attempts to teach Tima to speak; she keeps confusing the words "I" and "you"; for the moment she gets no further than "watashi-wa, dare?" (*Who am I?* or *I – who?*). This connection of the questions "where?" and "who?" underlines that both spatial frame and subject are at stake here. From this point the two set off to find their way out of the maze of sewers and machinery, with the help of Fifi[142], a garbage collector robot. They take refuge from Rock in the bodies of other garbage collector robots, and we move on to the chase sequence.

[142]Named for the robot Fifi who forms the empathetic Other of Hige Oyaji, as discussed in the previous chapter.

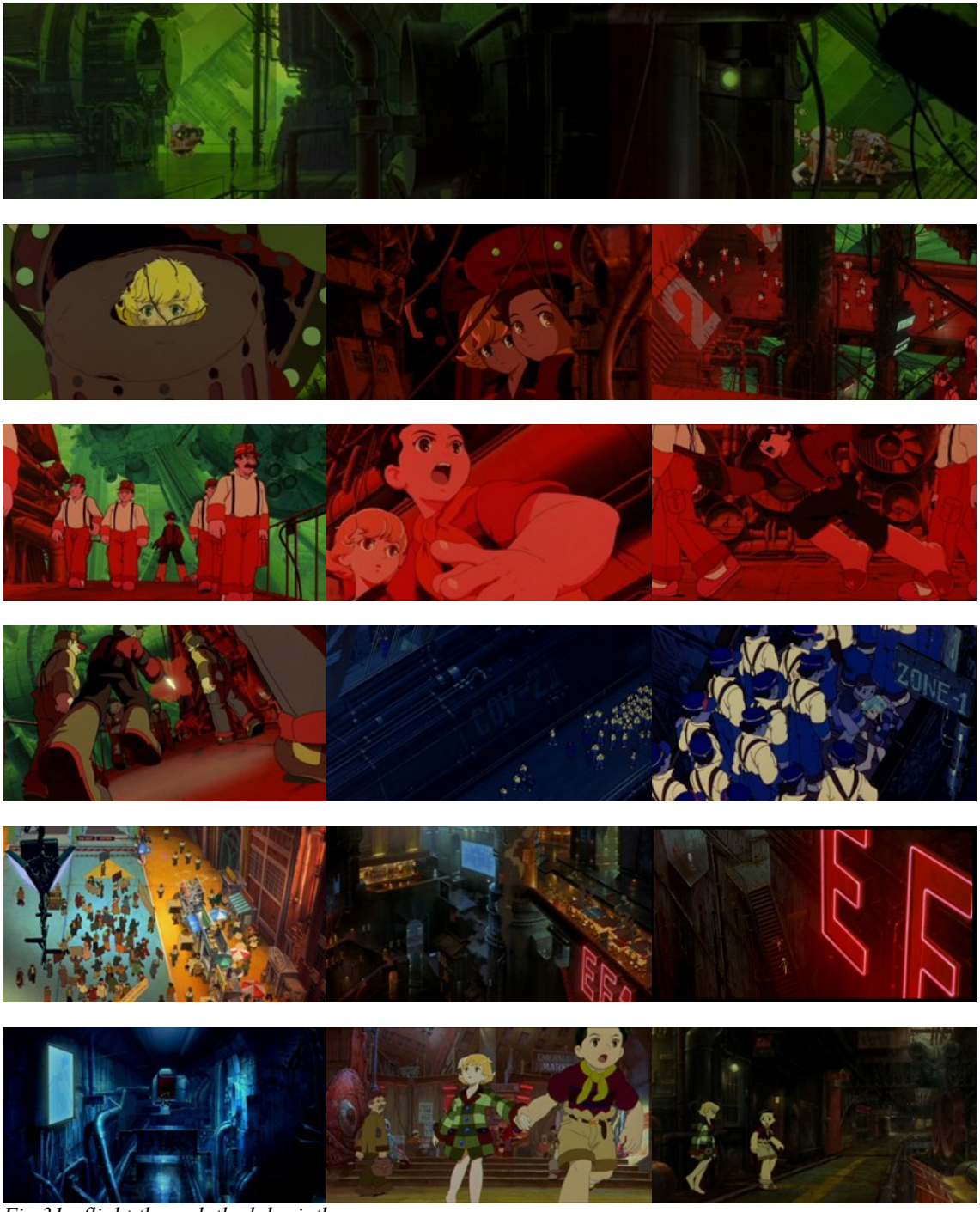

Fig.31.: flight through the labyrinth

Fig.32.: flight through the labyrinth

As the sequence begins, Tima and Ken'ichi emerge from the bodies of the robots onto the catwalks of the underground city, where they again encounter Rock. Fleeing from him again, they begin an ascent through the underground city; in the first half of the sequence their movement is always upward. They twist and turn through convoluted spaces, through collages of architectures from around the world and from many eras, until they finally emerge in a vast arcade. During these perambulations they repeatedly burst into or race by scenes of everyday life. Unlike Lang's dark, austere and regimented undergound, this underground is full of colourful activity. Their movement through the city is punctuated by expansions and contractions of space through which they climb, run, crawl, walk, slide, jump and fall. They are repeatedly enframed by technology during these events: whether by the immense machinery of the waste treatment plants, the dripping interiors of the sewers themselves, or the small-scale circuitry and panelling that encloses their hiding places. They are several times encapsulated within or become attached to the bodies of machines: at the beginning they are literally within the cleaning robots, which hold them inside, maternally. During their pursuit they become attached to a tricycle, another machine, if one intimately related to the body. It is in fact more accurate to describe it as a rickshaw; it therefore represents *riku* or human strength at the service of a vehicle, *sha*; their movement is in some sense extracted from the rickshaw's[143]. As though to emphasize this, part of this sequence is not “shot” just from the rider's point of view but from the rickshaw's: from within its chassis. As they flee on it, their upward movement turns downward: they fly down stairs and ramps in a series of jumps. Finally they once again fall from a height into a pile of refuse, where they remain hidden.

Their movement through this sequence describes an arc in which, rather than moving with intention, they move in response (to Rock's pursuit); and in which they swerve from one location to another without establishing a direction or attaining a higher level, in the end returning to a position which is in many respects the same as the one from which they

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[143]There is also perhaps a political significance to this choice of vehicle: when Japan first fully opened up to the processes of modernization in the 19th century, resentment at foreign influence crystallized in the form of opposition to the callous use of Japanese drivers in games of rickshaw polo played by teams of Westerners.

began. In the terms from Merleau-Ponty discussed above, the passage of these two through the city defies a latching onto anchors, the discovery of levels. Or rather: there are so many potential anchors (edges of colour, buildings, landmarks, signposts, spaces) and so many divergent levels (passageways, elevators, platforms, staircases, catwalks) that none of them stick. The experience of space unfolded by Tima and Ken'ichi's movement through the animated Metropolis defies the formulation of any system of ordering. This despite the fact that the animated Metropolis is itself highly organized. Its plan is centralized around a tower which forms the Cartesian origin of the urban grid and which pierces vertically through the entire city, dividing it into layers or Zones, which are all (as is obvious from this sequence) technicized. The totalizing view which would seem to be posited by the Ziggurat, its rigid partitioning and rendering of the city as machine (which is obviously derived from Lang), is elided by the actual experience of the city through which the characters wander, as lost as our gaze.

The broken arc of this sequence can be seen as one segment of Tima's larger movement throughout the film. She is born in the depths of the underground, in a building which to begin with is surrounded by waste and is furthermore destroyed in a fire, reduced to rubble, underlining its condition as wreck. She drops from this building into the depths beneath its crumbling foundation; then emerges from the guts of the city and begins the long, wandering, episodic ascent of which this sequence forms one step. And at the climax of the film she again falls, and is again buried in wreckage, her body scattered among the ruins. So the arc of the chase sequence reflects the larger arc of her movement through the film. It also corresponds to the arc of her life and her own body. As Deleuze identified a "global movement" in every film, so Merleau-Ponty identified a discernable arc or gesture in every body. Here they are the same. One can either ascend or fall from a tower; one wanders or flees along a convoluted path through a labyrinth. These are the forms of movement proper to the bodies which inhabit the animated *Metropolis*, and the gestures proper to the film itself. Together the gestures of ascent, meander, and descent – which one could argue find their most complete realization in the twisting bulk of a ziggurat – construct a quivering arc or circle which delineates Tima's movement through the city, and indeed through almost every scene of the film.

Not only is action disrupted here, the agent is too. As Tima's catch-phrase "I – who?" underlines, this convoluted movement and the failure of the plan of the city to coalesce into one form or one experience corresponds to a problematized subjectivity. This condition is an instance of the modern crisis of action, reflected in the body of Tima. She can only incompletely move to action, she stumbles across the thresholds of life. This is made apparent in the resonance – and dissonance – between her lifespan and another: that of the Ziggurat. The animated film begins with the inauguration of the Ziggurat, and it ends with its destruction. Tima's birth is intended by Duke Red to coincide with the birth of the building, but it is first delayed and then aborted: she is born both too late (after the inauguration) and too early (before Lawton has finished her). Rather than ascending directly to the top of the Ziggurat as she is meant to do, she wanders the labyrinth beneath it, unaware of her identity or destiny. As we will see, even when she does finally ascend to her proper place atop the building, she is torn from it by Ken'ichi. The consequence is her own destruction along with that of the building; it is an end of sorts, but not a completion. So these two lifespans, intended to be united, are out of phase, inseparable but displaced with respect to each other. They form an out-of joint condition at the heart of the film.

We can also usefully look at Tima's movement through the film as charting out a specific kind of space, distinct from the ordered space laid out by the Ziggurat. It resonates strongly with a kind of space described by Deleuze as one product of the crisis of the action-image and the excess of motion which can result from it. When movement becomes wild, unhinged, directionless,

> "the successive situations, each of which is already equivocal in itself, will form in turn with one another, and with the critical instants which give rise to them, a broken line whose path is unpredictable, although necessary and rigorous... like a knotted rope, twisting itself with each take, at each action, at each event... a quite different space is formed: a *skeleton-space*, with missing intermediaries, heterogeneous elements which jump from one to the other, or which interconnect directly. It is no longer an ambient space,

> but a vectorial space, a vector-space, with temporal distances. It is no longer the encompassing stroke of a great contour, but the broken stroke of a line of the universe, across the holes. The vector is the sign of such a line."[144]

Tima and Ken'ichi's frenetic movement, associated with a disconnected and new-born condition, resonates with this description of a skeletal, vectorial space defined by broken lines of movement. I will elaborate upon the qualities of this space below; as the argument develops we will see this space is very much created "across the holes", and I will discuss what is implied by that.

The colour of movement; the colour of space

If Tima's movement articulates the problematic modern condition, colour does too. In this and other sequences, motion is inflected through colour, it takes on an intensity and a nuance according to colour. Merleau-Ponty refers to the "motor physiognomy of colour"[145]:

> "The gesture of raising the arm, which can be taken as an indicator of motor disturbance, is differently modified in its sweep and its direction according to whether the visual field is red, yellow, blue or green" [146]

This is not to say that any colour has an *a priori* significance which is given to the movement. On the contrary, the point is that neither colour nor movement have a significance independent of their experience in the world.

> "The motor significance of colours is comprehensible only if they cease to be closed states or indescribable quantities presented to an observing and

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[144] Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 168.
[145]Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 243.
[146]Ibid., 242.

> thinking subject, and if they impinge within me upon a certain general setting through which I come to terms with the world; if moreover, they suggest to me a new manner of evaluating, and yet if motility ceases to be the mere consciousness of my movements from place to place in the present or the immediate future, and becomes the function which constantly lays down my standards of size and the varying scope of my being in the world."[147]

In other words, our experience of movement through colour and imbued with colour has a significance colour or movement alone do not bear; it emphasizes and intensifies our orientation in and of the world.

Deleuze speaks in similar terms:

> "There *is* a symbolism of colours, but it does not consist in a correspondence between a colour and an affect (green and hope...). Colour is on the contrary the affect itself, that is, the virtual conjunction of all the objects which it picks up... and absorb[s] not only the spectator, but the characters themselves, and the situations, in complex movements affected by the complementary colours.... the dream is only the absorbent form of colour."[148]

And for him the intensification brought on by colour implies a violence:

> "If states of things become movement of the world, and if characters become the figure of a dance, this is inseparable from the splendour of colours, and from their almost carnivorous, devouring, destructive, absorbent function..."[149]

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[147]Ibid., 244.
[148]Ibid., 117-19.
[149]Ibid., 119.

Hence, colour can collapse space, or blow spaces wide open. It intensifies the experience of passage through the city, and the experience of flight through two types of space: claustrophobic and agoraphobic. These are the two limits of technological space moved through by the characters as they run from crevices into cavernous spaces, alternately compressed and dwarfed by the vast scale of the underground city.

Neither of these kinds of space provide the kind of room Merleau-Ponty identifies as conducive to healthy human action:

> "Besides the physical and geometrical distance which stands between myself and all things, a 'lived' distance binds me to things which count and exist for me, and links them to each other. This distance measures the scope of my life at every moment. Sometimes between myself and events there is a certain amount of play (*Spielraum*), which ensures that my freedom is preserved while the events do not cease to concern me. Sometimes, on the other hand, the lived distance is both too small and too great; the majority of the events cease to count for me, while the nearest ones obsess me. They enshroud me like night and rob me of my individuality and freedom. I can literally no longer breathe; I am possessed."[150]

These spaces represent rather "morbid deviations from the normal."[151] In Lang's film we saw specific manifestations of a claustrophobic space as a result of what Merleau-Ponty refers to as "the shrinkage of lived space"[152] which corresponded to man's possession by things:

> "What brings about both hallucinations and myths is a shrinkage in the space directly experienced, a rooting of things in our body, the

[150]Ibid., 333.
[151]Ibid., 334.
[152]Ibid.

> overwhelming proximity of the object, the oneness of man and the world..."[153]

If Lang's great strength was in his depiction of such claustrophobic spaces (to the extent that one might read even his vast cityscapes as claustrophobic – for the city they depict seems to have no outside, there is no possible escape from it), Rintarô and Ôtomo excel in their representation of agoraphobic space. In their film it is the wide open spaces which become carnivorous, attacking the smaller spaces.

Such spaces, to which polychromy contributes, are one register of the city's non-totalizability, its multiplication of points of view without connection (that the protagonists can find). And the vast expanses of the animated city, with tiny bodies, flat puppets, moving or floating through them, accord with Merleau-Ponty's descriptions of another kind of pathological space, in which *Spielraum* has grown far too great:

> "Under mescalin it happens that approaching objects appear to grow smaller. A limb or other part of the body, the hand, mouth or tongue seem enormous, and the rest of the body is felt as a mere appendage to it. The walls of the room are 150 yards apart, and beyond the walls is an empty vastness. The stretched-out hand is as high as the wall, and external space and bodily space are divorced from each other to the extent that the subject has the impression of eating 'from one dimension to another'. ... The subject is alone and forlorn in empty space, 'he complains that all he can see clearly is the space between things, and that this space is empty. Objects are in a way still there, but not as one would expect...' Men are like puppets and their movements are performed in a dreamlike slow-motion...."[154]

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[153]Ibid., 339.
[154]Ibid., 328-29.

Such experiences are evidence of the failure to grasp the world. If Lang's film strangled the wide modern city with claustrophobic spaces generated in response to the modern condition, the same conditions in the animated film often have the opposite spatial effect: the immense spaces, achieved through the explosive effects of colour, in the end render the claustrophobic spaces open, deconnected, composed of layers which alternately flatten and slide apart. I will elaborate on this below.


Fig.33.: claustrophobic space

Rintarô's small spaces share something of Lang's many depictions of small interior spaces and enclosures. Lang's labyrinth wrapped up his characters, nearly smothering them in the folds of the frame in an attempt to recover a “lived distance” which in the end proved unsupportable; Rintarô's film does the same, but is most interesting when it evinces its own specific operations of enclosure, which tend to employ colour. Contrasts of colour emphasize profiles (and thus the enclosing “negative space” which surrounds them); and the difference between foreground and background planes (accentuating the space between, through which the bodies pass). Changes in the colour scheme can collapse such gaps, when background and foreground are suddenly rendered in the same colour, erasing the distinction between them, flattening space onto the bodies that move through it.

One instance of this kind of effect occurs at the beginning of the chase sequence I discussed above, and it demonstrates an important interaction with movement. This part of the sequence alternates between, on the one hand, spaces framed in depth by two planes of colour (red and green); and, on the other hand, images permeated by just one colour (red) whose singularity has the effect of flattening space into one intense plane of

action. This coincides with a moment in which time is interrupted, as the characters react in slow motion to the shock of Rock's sudden appearance, and his drawing of a weapon. Their affective reaction, distended in time, occurs in parallel with a technical reaction which is implicitly instantaneous: the triggering of Rock's firearm. In the space of a few distended seconds there is a compression of planes through colour, a suspension of time, the failure of an agent to move forward (a break in the sensory-motor connection of the characters), the triggering of a technological response (machines clicking right into action), and the undoing of a (technical) body (the robot Fifi is "killed"). The colour also has the effect of intensifying the affective response[155]. This intensification of affect occurs, though, in the context of an inability to act upon the emotional response, a suspension of movement one might term dream-like. Thus there is a curious coincidence of the inability of an agent to act and the effectiveness of machinery to do so: Affect and effect unfold as it were on separate planes, one suspended visually while the other is carried forward by a racing soundtrack.

Fig.34.: claustrophobic space

[155]as Deleuze points out: "By suppressing 'atmospheric' perspective... Flattening the third dimension..." one can put "two dimensional space into an immediate relation with the affect..." Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 107.

At other key moments in the film a similar pattern occurs: the slowing/stop of movement, often associated with a technological trigger: the pressing of a button, the drawing of a weapon, an implement or tool, an instrument of violence, accompanied by an intensification of affect through a use of colour (or other graphic effect) which in one sense or another undoes space; all of this associated with the undoing of a body. A technological engagement is thus implicated in the interruption of time, and the dissolution of a body through it. The set of such moments culminates in the climax of the film, with the collapse of the Ziggurat, itself an emblem of technicity in which the bodies of the characters end up caught. The dissolution of Tima's body and the Ziggurat in that sequence are implied in all of these earlier sequences.

These distortions are not only about the contraction of space through flattening; in fact that contraction is only one half of an often-violent vibration set up by the vivid colour in this film: a vibration between contraction and dilation, flattening and separation of planes, which threatens (and in the end succeeds in) the shaking apart of the city. We sense this in the violent contrasts of colour in the chase sequence. In contrast to Lang's city, taken over and choked by the claustrophobic spaces of the labyrinth, the opposite operation is taking place here. Small spaces are invaded and pried open by the great spaces. One consequence of this is that a vastness is opened up behind them, in a process which might render the city hollow.

Surface: the hollow machine

The disjointed, vectorial movement of bodies generate a space which is vast and intensified by colour. It has other implications too: it is a space of surface. The film emphasizes surfaces in two ways. One is through a technique which has a long history in animation: our gaze pans across broad, flat tableaux, scenic backdrops. Of course flat surfaces like this can fake depth; nevertheless their use in the animated Metropolis, while clearly intended to convey the impression of large, cavernous spaces, also emphasizes surface and the planar effects of pattern, colour, and text. One effect of this is to emphasize the meandering of the characters across what appears to be an impermeable,

resistant, two-dimensional surface.

Surface is also emphasized through the use of digital modelling, which as it is used in the film tends to emphasize surface over volume and over mass. We can see this emphasis on surface in the reflective glass and metal surfaces, and in the use of pattern and detail which de-emphasizes mass. Even the Ziggurat, for example, which could have been designed to emphasize all the mass and presence of a pyramid (indeed one might have expected such an approach), is instead broken into several slab-like elements linked by a thin superstructure (buttresses). In certain scenes we see that its surfaces are decorated and covered with text. As we learn later in the film the building or at least its pinnacle is implicitly hollow, for it is an immense piece of machinery. We are taken through this machinery in one sequence which follows Red and his scientists up to the muzzle of the superweapon. And at the climax of the film as we will see the characters move (falling) through an even more profound emptiness, framed by a skeletal superstructure which emphasizes the absence of mass. Consistent with this, the eventual destruction of the building consists largely of its delamination, its surfaces peeling off and becoming a rain of floating panels, flakes of steel, plastic and glass.

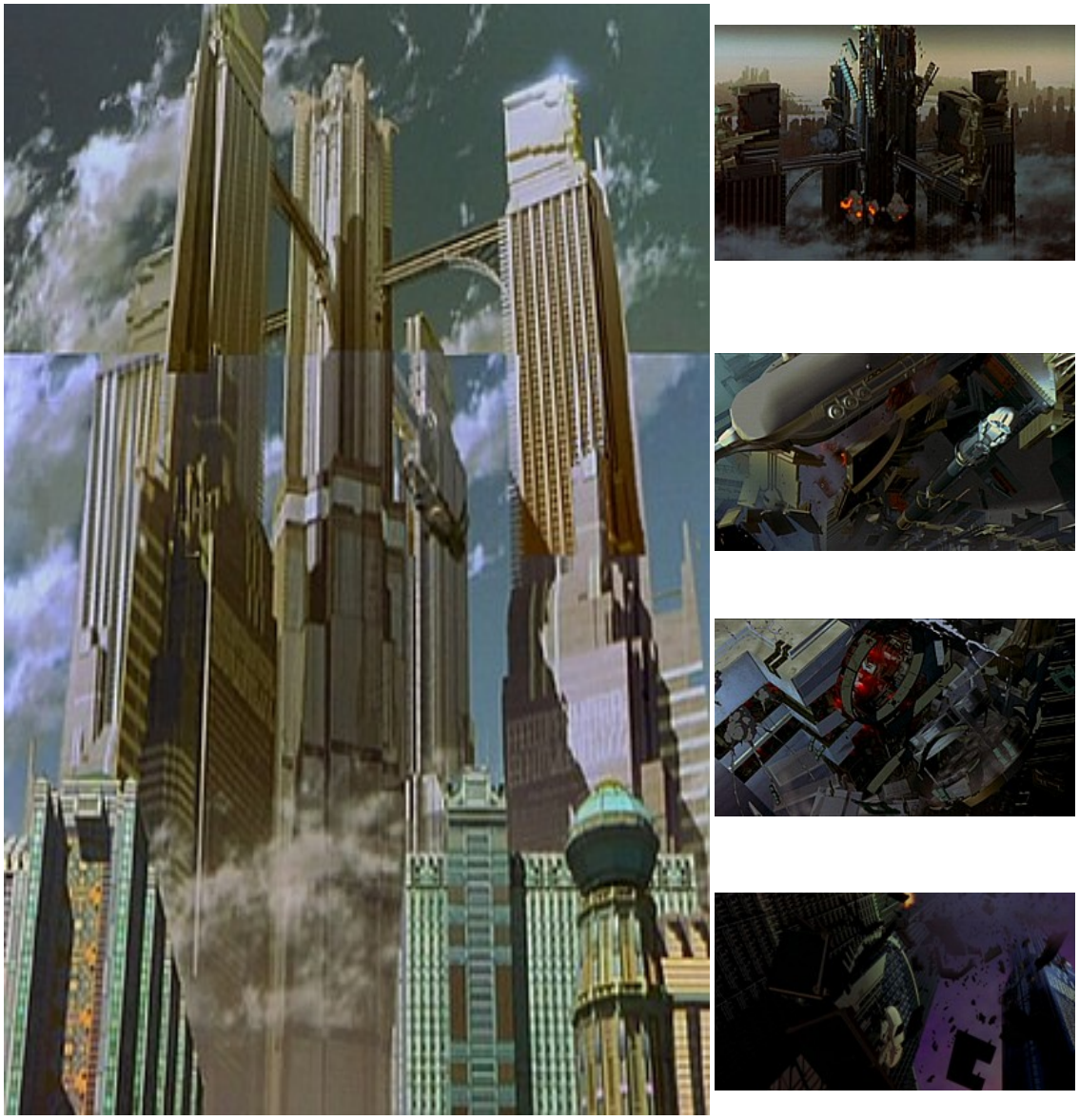

Fig.35.: delamination of the Ziggurat

The emphasis on surface is consistent with Merleau-Ponty's understanding of the disconnected, pathological space experience by the body out of touch with the arc of life. As he puts it: “Paris for me is not an object of many facets...” [156] The animated city is, at least in one of its capacities, a faceted object; this is a correlate of its immensity shot through with vectorial movement.

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[156]Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 327.

This is all resonant with the representation of Babel as a surface as already discussed in Lang's film. However, while the gesture of Lang's film was toward the interflowing of content and frame, black and white, here a different operation is implied. In Lang's film, black had a substance which rivaled that of light; the two changed places incessantly until their combined intensity came close to generating a blazing darkness. In contrast, a more precise reading of Rintarô's black identifies it as an absence behind the colourful flesh of his film. It is as though a "super-black" underlies everything in the animated film: a black which emerges in the full range of shades from a highly attenuated dust to intense, bottomless shadow.

The colour of black

This notion is supported by another telling sequence from early in the film. This sequence, like the chase scene I analysed above, can also be understood as a stage in the discovery of the city. In it, Ban Shunsaku, Ken'ichi, and their companion robot Pero are on their way to the underground city in search of Dr. Lawton. On their way they observe an incident in the above-ground Metropolis: a robot illicitly out of his zone is found in hiding atop a dancing mechanical figure (which is in the form of a Radio City Music Hall chorus girl). The trespassing robot is shot at. Hit by bullets, the chorus girl's face falls slowly and finally hits the ground, raising a pile of dust. The robot falls to the ground after it. This scene is presented via a tableau of the kind described just above: our gaze pans across a backdrop which emphasizes a flat condition; but suggests also something lurking behind.

In the chorus girl incident, flatness and surface are reinforced in several ways, most powerfully through colour. The image involves both intense midtones and desaturated highlights: it is at one and the same time shallow and deep, weak and vibrant. In the dancing sign the motion of the chorus hall girl (the model this is based on, the chorus line dancer, itself represents a form of mechanization of the human body) is reduced by the mechanism of the sign to movement in a single plane: it is flattened. The point of view from which this image is drawn also imposes flatness upon it: it is presented in

Fig.36.: chorus girl

axonometric view. Accumulation of detail adds to this effect. The contrast of desaturated colour with shadow reinforces the impression of flatness, while the contrast between colours destabilizes the surface. The immense technical body suffers through an attack which ruptures her face, detaching it so that it falls to the ground. The face is thus revealed to be mask-like, which again reinforces the notion of flatness. In important

respects this figure can be taken as the city itself: it obviously refers to the robotic figure of Tima, but it throws her up to immense scale, set against a clear reference to New York (the music hall) before rupturing her face (as Tima's is ruptured at the end of the film) and bringing it crashing down to the ground (as she falls into the city at the film's climax). An ironic reference to Paradise (the name of the theatre) backgrounds the scene about to unfold before it.

The impact of this scene is reinforced through the treatment of shadows, which fade from a light dusting at the top of the image to dark at the bottom and finally very deep shade far behind and beneath the feet of the doll. The colours are pushed forward by the sharp contrast of shadows. The darkness seems to be derived from the very brightness of the pale sun shining on it from above. Shadows are rendered more intense under the bright light of the sun which desaturates the colours of the above-ground city, giving the impression of colour floating above an empty space. This image is at once about superficies and depths, about triviality and a shrouded horror. It also renders in a few moments a motif I've already identified: the deployment of a technological trigger which undoes a body in a moment of distended time. Significantly, related intensifications of contrast between white and shadow, distortions of colour, and accentuations of surface – all of these modulations of the effect of the bright light of the sun – occur at other important moments of triggering in the film, particularly in those moments when the sun is attacked. As in the delamination of the Ziggurat discussed above, the emphasis on surface corresponds to a technical attack.

Fig. 37.: the firing of the Ziggurat

Despite the difference of this operation from Lang's, we will see that they share similar stakes and the same eventual effect: a complex relationship between flatness and depth which I identified earlier. This relationship amounts to a correspondence and even an interpenetration disavowed, I implied, by the conclusion of Langs film but fulfilled, I will suggest, in this work of anime (and others). It also operates through colour:

> "Now we must consider yet a third procedure, colour. This is no longer the space of Expressionism or the white space of lyrical abstraction, but the colour space of colourism... The principal forms of this image – the surface-colour of the great uniform tints [*grands aplats*], the atmospheric colour which pervades all the others, movement-colour which passes from one tone to another – perhaps originate in the musical comedy and its capacity for extracting an unlimited virtual world from a conventional state of things." [157]

For Deleuze colour, like shadow, can be the means –even, in modern cinema, the primary means – by which the evocative gaps he termed *anyspaces-whatever* are engendered: "It is therefore shadows, whites and colours which are capable of producing and constituting any-space-whatevers, *deconnected or emptied spaces*..." including those of "the postwar situation with its towns demolished or being reconstructed, its wastegrounds, its shanty-towns."[158] In the light of these passages, the effect of the seemingly contradictory coexistence of over-saturated and desaturated colours with intense blacks and glaring whites becomes more comprehensible. Colour, the carnivorous colour of the kind discussed earlier, is now a means by which any-space-whatever can be articulated. Indeed there are instances of this in live-action Japanese film from the immediate post-war era; Deleuze cites for example Akira Kurosawa's *Dôdesukaden*[159], which exploits polychromatic effect and the shanty-town architecture which grew up in the wake of the

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[157]Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 117-18.
[158]Ibid., 120.
[159]Akira Kurosawa, *Dodes 'Ka-Den* (Los Angeles, Calif.: Embassy Home Entertainment,, 1986), videorecording.

war. The chromatic palette that film (and other arts) exploit is associated in the Japanese context with the arts of the “low city”, the city of the merchant class and ordinary citizens (as opposed to the upper classes). The animated Metropolis might be said to do the same, articulating its own basis in such popular arts as well as citing directly the music hall tradition referred to by Deleuze.

If we recall Deleuze's words about the movement, through contrasting shades of black and white which assimiliate to Goethe's colours, to an intense red which heralds a monstrous presence and the unleashing of chaos into the world, it will come as no surprise that the intensities of colour in the animated *Metropolis* build upon each other (often through contrast – the chase sequence cited earlier offers several instances) to a climax which heralds and unleashes both of these. This climax, which involves an assimilation of face, body, and city through their mutual destruction, was in fact foreshadowed in the falling face of the chorus girl sequence. I turn now to the final intensification of our movement through the Metropolis.

Face

The final event of the film reinforces our conclusions thus far and develops them further. Tima and Ken'ichi's path through the labyrinth has led them finally up to the tip of the Ziggurat, where a struggle over Tima's fate ensues. Shot by Rock (another technological trigger), her skin penetrated by the bullet, she realizes she is a robot rather than a human being and mounts up on the throne designed for her at the tip of the Ziggurat; she was originally designed to complete the building's machinery, the last missing part of the weapon. But Ken'ichi pulls her from the throne; the two of them fall out of the throne room into the open air of the Ziggurat's superstructure where they struggle together. Within the Ziggurat, Rock presses the self-destruct button on the Ziggurat: yet another trigger. As the building begins to come apart beneath them, beginning with as I have mentioned its skin, they fall in a series of broken arcs through the collapsing steel structure. Ken'ichi repeatedly tries to remind Tima of her identity as she wavers between trying to kill him and embracing him. Finally, she dangles from the remnants of one of

her umbilical cables; Ken'ichi grasps it and tries to pull her to safety. But the cable gives way, as we see in a series of shots of its unravelling. When the tether finally unravels it is as though the final thread holding together the city snaps. Tima slips from Ken'ichi's grasp and falls into the burning city below. This last event unleashes a wave of destruction across the entire city.

Fig. 38.: the end of the Ziggurat

This sequence recalls the repeated use of triggers in the film as tools to stop or slow down time placing the movement of the characters, as I have already argued, in a distension of time related to their technicity. The tower of course is a weapon, the most immense and powerful weapon imaginable. As a weapon it is emblematic of all tools, and of

technology; this is reinforced by its deployment through a complex unfolding of machinery. The cross it forms in plan functions not just as a cross-hair, but also as the origin of the city's Cartesian grid; it is thus the organizer of the metropolis' urban space. The Ziggurat can thus be seen as a tool several times over. Tima and Ken'ichi's struggle carries them through the steel trusses and flying buttresses which support the Ziggurat. The outlines of the trusses and the wide voids of space between them further emphasize the building's affinity with the mechanical; it is as though Tima and Ken'ichi are flying through the workings of an immense clock. An apparatus always implies in its form some kind of trajectory, but the broken path of these two figures through the machine undoes that trajectory. They lurch this way and that, and fall in several disjointed arcs through the superstructure, replaying the arc of Tima's movement across the city/machine through the centre and emblem of that machinery: the Ziggurat.

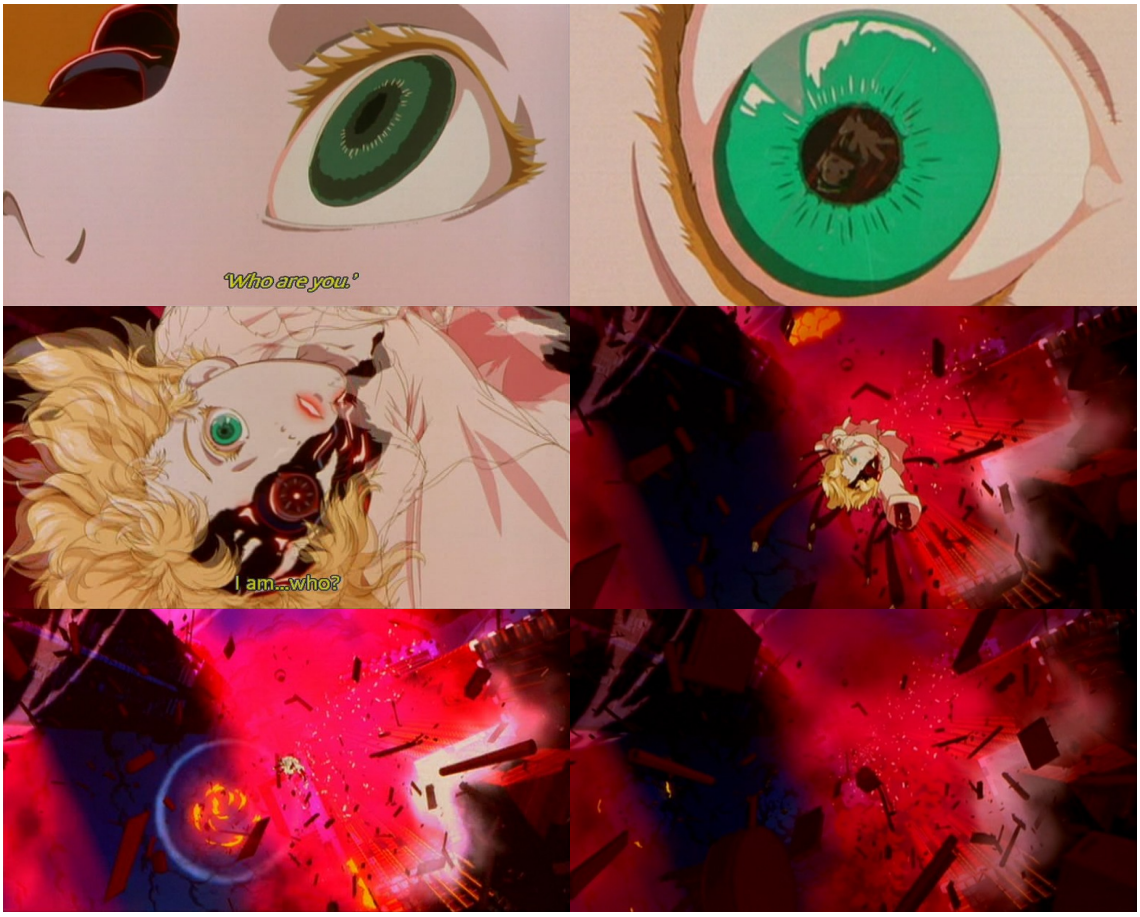

Fig. 39.: Tima's fall

Tima's fall occurs after an extreme close-up of her face, then her eye with Ken'ichi reflected in it, then an aerial view of the base of the Ziggurat. Repeating her tag-line "Who am I?", and with Ken'ichi's face reflected in her pupil, she falls into the burning city below; the close-up disappears into the aerial view. We cannot help but recall Deleuze's words cited earlier: "The affection-image is the close-up, and the close-up is the face…"[160] The human face, like the face of a clock or any other metaphorical face, accumulates multiple micromovements or elements of "intensive series" as it "prepares a paroxysm"[161]: the moment when its surface breaks up into movement, to give over to desire, to love or to hate. In this case that occurrence goes a step further, fulfilling other capacities of the close-up:

> "a single close-up can simultaneously join several faces, or parts of different faces (and not only for a kiss). Finally, it can include a space-time, in depth or on the surface, as if it had been torn away from the coordinates from which it was to be abstracted: it carries off with it a fragment of the sky, of countryside or of an apartment, a scrap of vision with which the face is formed in power or quality. It is like a short-circuit of the near and the far."[162]

Ultimately, for Deleuze the cinematic dissolution of the face completes its "face-ness" through its effacement[163] and with the potential to extend affect from the extreme close-up to the landscape. In this sequence precisely this happens. City, face, and eye become a single, cracked emblem; Tima's face takes the city with it.

We will remember that Expressionist film engaged a complex interplay of darkness and light, flatness and depth, in which "a character may become strangely and terribly flat", a "shadow may lose all its thickness", there is an "inversion of the values of light and

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[160]Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 87.
[161]Ibid.
[162]Ibid., 104.
[163] "The facial close-up is both the face and its effacement." Ibid., 100.

dark"[164] corresponding to an apocalyptic moment in which a monster (he speaks here specifically of Nosferatu)

> "... does not merely pass through all the aspects of chiaroscuro, of backlighting and of the non-organic life of shadows, he does not merely produce all the moments of a reddish reflection, but he reaches a climax when a powerful light (a pure red) isolates him from his shadowy background, making him burst forth from an even more direct bottomlessness, giving him an aura of ominipotence which goes beyond his two-dimensional form."[165]

There is a remarkable resonance between these words and this final sequence which superimposes Tima's eye (a surface which itself, while circumscribing a space no larger than a nutshell, might be seen as the margin of a void of infinite depth), face (its mask-like nature revealed as the workings of her body penetrate out through it) and body (a mere slip of paper, a flat animated cel, a human skin over a mechanical body, a surface to be ruptured) as they collapse onto and into the city (a city of surfaces supported above a great darkness by the thinnest of technical superstructures and laid out flat before our eyes in the aerial view of this climactic fall). Tima here reminds us of the numerous creatures over the course of the animated film, all flat in one sense or another, who are caught in search lights, flattened by the glare of the sun, plummet from heights, and have their paper-thin bodies ruptured in moments of suspended violence. All of these seem to presage this climax. Lang's surfaces ruptured and transformed into frames, and Tezuka's quivering faces, have also prepared us for this moment. As did Lang's and Tezuka's robots, Tima (in her hollowness) has a remarkable resonance with the conditions of her own city. But she differs from the two earlier technical bodies in an important way. They were in the end pushed away from their cities. Tima falls into her city, she becomes one with it; and in this gesture she plummets into herself.

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[164]Ibid., 112.
[165]Ibid., 53.

Void

Fig. 40.: the void

In the last images of the climax the void implicit in the city's vividness is suddenly manifest. We are reminded of the following words:

> "It is as if a second sky, black and boundless, were penetrating the blue sky of evening. This new sky is empty, 'subtle, invisible and terrifying'. Sometimes it moves in the autumn landscape and at other times the landscape too moves. Meanwhile, says the patient, 'a question is being constantly put to me; it is, as it were, an order either to rest or die, or else to push on further'."[166]

[166] Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 334-35.

This is Merleau-Ponty's description of a schizophrenic patient who, looking at a mountain landscape, suddenly feels the entire landscape snatched away from him as if "by some alien force." This is the culmination of the agoraphobic experience of the animated *Metropolis*. According to Merleau-Ponty, the schizophrenic experiences the world as "amazing, absurd, or unreal, because it appears to itself in all its contingency and because the world can no longer be taken for granted."[167] Thus the schizophrenic, precisely because he cannot traverse this gap himself, becomes aware of the void across which the arc of intention runs, and in which affect "surges in the center of indetermination"; until affect has taken over his entire landscape. Rather than the world forming part of a lived project, he is pushed over a void by his detachment from his own lived experience, and the reduction of everything to contingency. This contingency is articulated in these lines from Merleau-Ponty, which also echo the broken bodies of the climax, suspended in space and time:

> "Now, if the world is atomized or dislocated, this is because one's own body has ceased to be a knowing body, and has ceased to draw together all objects in its one grip; and this debasement of the body into an organism itself must be attributed to the collapse of time, which no longer rises towards a future but falls back upon itself. 'Once I was a man, with a soul and a living body (*Leib*) and now I am no more than a being (*Wesen*).... Now there remains merely the organism (*Körper*) and the soul is dead... What is the future? It can no longer be reached.... Everything is in suspense...."[168]

This contingency is provoked by our subjection to the modern machine. Modernity, at the same time that it dissimulates our contingency with the promise of technical achievements which will answer all needs for us, raises that contingency to an acute state, by reducing us to a condition of components in a technical system and by the implicit

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[167] Ibid., 335.
[168] Ibid., 329-30.

invasion of technicity into the core of the subject[169]. Both of these capacities of technology can be represented by the towers and robots of these and other science fictions. As technology is inserted into the banalities of the everyday, the tower/weapon/tool generates a great void which it harbours within the city: modernity builds the Ziggurat for us only to thrust us out over a chasm.

For Gilles Deleuze, however, that machinery has built into it a redemption of sorts, which is worked out through the body suspended in a void. This may not be enough for us, but we can understand it if we turn to an examination of one of his preoccupations: the notion of the *out-of-field.*

The out-of-field refers to that which is "neither seen nor understood, but is nevertheless perfectly present"[170] in the film. It refers to the unseen space beyond the edges of the frame; but this out-of-frame itself is about the disturbing, open elsewhere always beyond our experience, outside of the order of the visible: the greatest thing, the "ungiven and ungiveable", "the Open"[171] which both endures and is always new and experienced by us in its modulation through the cinematic movement-image which is the "mobile section" of a greater temporal *durée.*

The out-of-field equates with the out-of-frame only in classical cinema. Even in classical cinema the out-of-field is fluid: the camera can turn to it, making the invisible visible, and displacing the out-of-field elsewhere. In modern cinema (since the Second World War), that displacement becomes acute. Cinema after the crisis of the action-image moves the out-of-field phenomenon into the cut, the space between images. In classical cinema the cut put two images into relation. It could connect them or oppose them, but it always supposed a relationship between them. In modern cinema, in contrast,

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[169]Blumenberg, *Work on Myth*, 269-70.
[170]Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 16.
[171]Ibid., 10.

> "What counts is on the contrary the *interstice* between images, between two images: a spacing which means that each image is plucked from the void and falls back into it."[172]

Every image is rounded by a little night, a space which disconnects it from others. That space, that absence of image, now becomes

> "the constitutive 'and' of things, the constitutive between-two of images. The whole thus merges with what Blanchot calls the force of 'dispersal of the Outside', or 'the vertigo of spacing': that void which is no longer a motor-part of the image, and which the image would cross to continue, but is the radical calling-into question of the image..."[173]

Maurice Blanchot, to whom Deleuze refers above, employed a term of Antonin Artaud's to describe the new condition of the image: "unlinked"[174]. This unlinked image no longer speaks of a whole but of a hole, a crack in the world. "As long as (Artaud) believes in cinema, he credits it, not with the power of making us think the whole, but on the contrary with a 'dissociative force' which would introduce a 'figure of nothingness', a 'hole in appearances'."[175] Thus, "What comes first is not the *fullness* of being, but the crack and the fissure..."[176]

The cut/fissure can now open up to include the entire screen:

> "The cut may now be extended and appear in its own right, as the black screen, the white screen and their derivatives and combinations: hence the great blue image of night, where little feathers or corpuscles flutter at

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[172]_____, *Cinema 2: The Time Image*, 179.
[173]Ibid., 180.
[174]quoted in Ibid., 183.
[175]Ibid., 167.
[176]Maurice Blanchot, "Artaud," in Le Livre À Venir ([Paris]: Gallimard, 1971), 59., quoted in footnote 22 to p.168 Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time Image*, 183.

various speeds and in various arrangements..."[177]

The suspension of the world finds literal expression in images of suspension: "dancing grains which are not made to be seen, the luminous dust ... the flakes of snow and blankets of soot..." These speak of the "inchoate quality" of the world and of thought, and reveal to our thought the "initial incoherence" preceding existence.

These various reformulations of the "beyond the frame" can be read as the basis for the void which underlies Rintaro's *Metropolis*. The animated film presents us repeatedly with images of bodies falling into fissures, cracks, pits, and vast spaces over which dust, snow, sparks float. The chase sequence we examined earlier begins and ends with such moments. We will recall that that sequence followed on from a scene in which Tima was ripped in an un-timely way from Lawton's laboratory, and fell with her rescuer Ken'ichi into the depths of the city. As they fall sparks scatter and float in the blackness around them. Numerous images in the film emphasize the gaps into which they fall through the dust, debris, snowflakes, which hang in the air around them. The gaps, spaces, arcades full of hanging ashes, mist, snow, dust all presage the final void, full of floating debris and drifting flakes which surrounds Tima as she hangs over the city at the climax of the film.

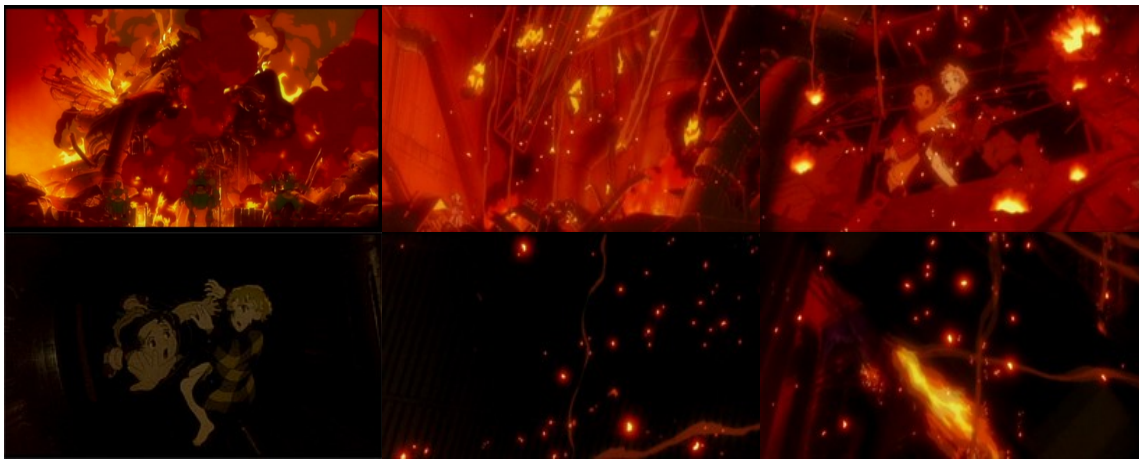

Fig. 41.: cinders

[177]Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 214.

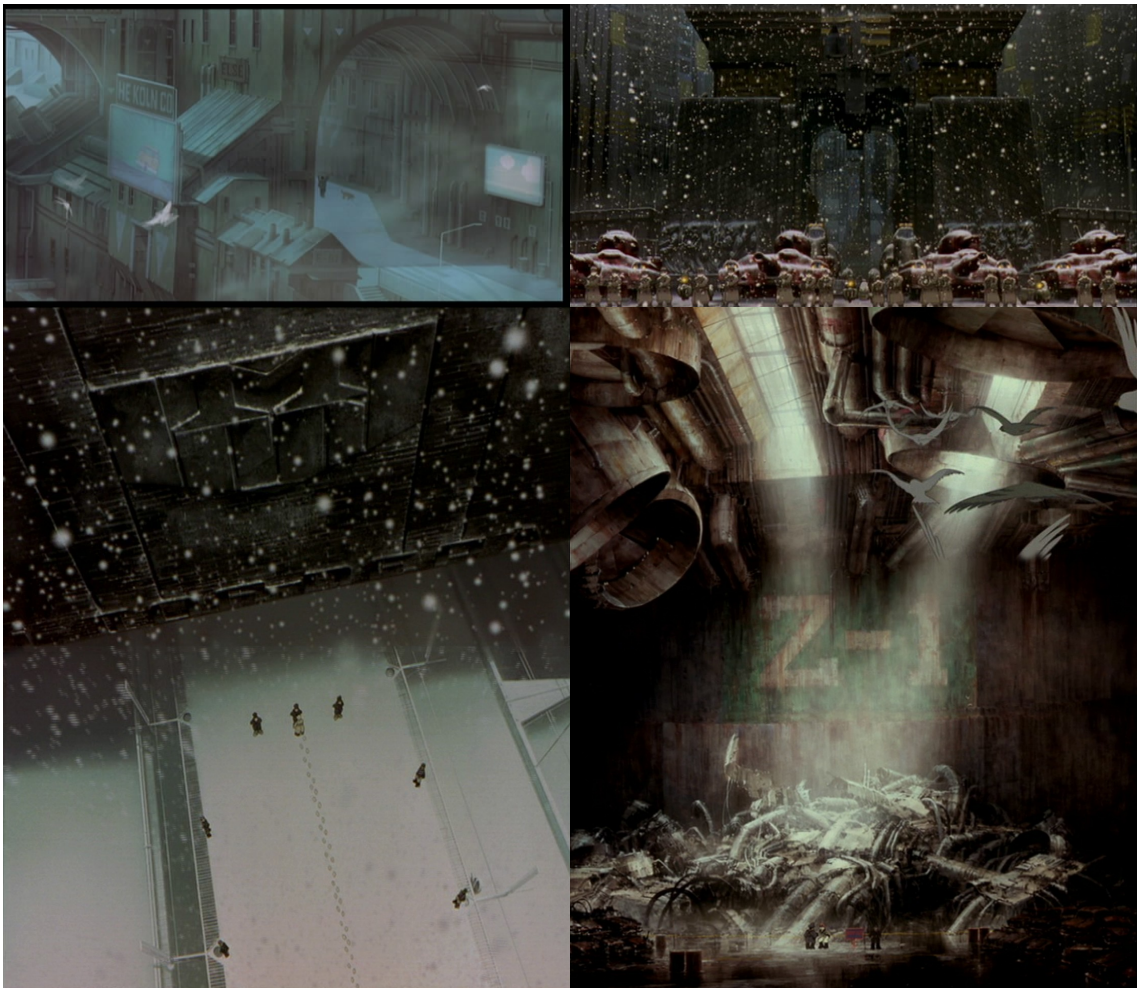

Fig. 42.: mist; snow; dust

These effects are reinforced by the use of colour. In the labyrinth and the above-ground city colours juxtaposed both tear apart the images and set them off against or frame them within one another, so here colour becomes one aspect of the *déchirement* of the image. I noted before the play of colours and planes which tears open the close-ups that constitute Rintarô's rendition of claustrophobic space. Those planes overlay and clasp between them a dark void; I intimated this before in my assertion that in an inversion of Lang's condition, in which the labyrinth strangled the city, in the animated film the void which underlies the city and is articulated in its open spaces pries its way into even its smallest nooks and crannies. The tearing apart of the movement-image and the various forms of disassociation associated with it also have an aural dimension: in the 'pathetic distance'

between music and images: “an incisive or fast music for a passive or depressing image, the tenderness or serenity of a barcarole as spirit of place in relation to violent events which are happening...”[178] This is precisely the effect employed during the climax to Rintarô's film, when a love ballad forms the soundtrack to the destruction of the city. It rips open a horizontal plane between action and sound track, and this plane too looks into the void of the Metropolis.

The chasm around the frame has moved past the interstice between frames *into* the image itself, until finally it lurks behind every object on the screen, behind every colourful facade, behind every mask, in any gap, and from which it can at any point increase in intensity until it swallows the entire screen. Every inch of this Metropolis thus implies the city's end. This is the invisible beyond the screen, the obverse of the cinematic image, the void underlying the Metropolis finally unveiled in the climax. And as I have argued it is not a void limited in its significance to cinema: it is the void implied and accentuated by the modern condition, a void particularly important to architecture and to which cinema is particularly sensitive. This is the gap “in which affect floats”, suspended between perception and action, the gap problematized by instrumental models of the subject/object relationship.

The void and the flecks and fragment adrift in it are also all instances of the phenomenon which Deleuze identified in the modern cinema: the domination of action by time, which I have already mentioned in my discussion of Tezuka's manga. The emergence of the time-image has a specific and profound effect:

> “In the first place, the cinematographic image becomes a direct representation of time, according to non-commensurate relations and irrational cuts. In the second place, the time-image puts thought into contact with an unthought, the unsummonable, the inexplicable, the undecidable, the incommensurable. The outside or the obverse of the images has replaced the whole, at the same time as the interstice or the cut

[178] ———, *Cinema 2: The Time Image*, 240.

has replaced association."[179]

The "suspension of the world" opens up space for "a disturbance, which, far from making thought visible, as Eisenstein wanted, (is) on the contrary directed to what does not let itself be thought in thought, and equally to what does not let itself be seen in vision."[180] Deleuze terms this *the power of the false;* through it thought "is brought face to face with its own impossibility, and yet draws from this a higher power of birth."[181] It is in this contact with the "unthought" that Deleuze sees redemption:

> "Which then, is the subtle way out? To believe, not in a different world, but in a link between man and the world, in love or life, to believe in this as in the impossible, the unthinkable, which nonetheless cannot be thought: 'something possible, otherwise I will suffocate.' It is this belief that makes the unthought the specific power of thought, through the absurd, by virtue of the absurd."[182]

For Deleuze the impossible of thought becomes possible through the body:

> "Whether we are Christians or atheists, in our universal schizophrenia, *we need reasons to believe in this world...* Our belief can have no object but 'the flesh', we need very special reasons to make us believe in the body... We must believe in the body, but as in the germ of life, the seed which splits open the paving-stones, which has been preserved and lives on in the holy shroud or the mummy's bandages, and which bears witness to life, in this world as it is. We need an ethic or faith, which makes fools laugh; it is not a need to believe in something else, but a need to believe in this world, of which fools are part."[183]

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[179] Ibid., 214.
[180]Ibid., 168.
[181]Ibid.
[182]Ibid., 170.
[183]Ibid., 172-73.

It is in this context that Deleuze thinks the “spiritual automaton”, the creature which, despite its impotence, offers some kind of escape from the modern project. For Deleuze, the long line of mummies, vampires, somnambulists which populated Expressionist film become instances of this kind of body, a body which continues despite everything and through the absurdity of its condition to speak of the flesh and through it of the leap across the unthinkable. The False Maria might be seen as one of these, as she tries to recover flesh by being covered in it; so too might Michi, who is not machine at all but flesh pure and simple. Tima might be read the same way, as one more somnambulist, who is wrested away from Lawton's laboratory (ceasing thus to be merely his experimental dummy), who wanders aimlessly from scene to scene pushed this way and that by disconnected events, who is torn from her seat on the Ziggurat, who lurches violently across its superstructure, and yet whose broken body in the end seeds the city.

But this film implies another vantage point, as its resonance with Merleau-Ponty's imagery might already imply. Rather than just a view onto a void in which dust, ashes, bodies drift, it sets up what might be seen as a simultaneous collapse, explosion and filling-up of that void. As my argument develops it will become clear that if this assertion is correct, it will imply the undiminished importance of the subject in contemporary conditions. That is, our bodies are not necessarily impotently suspended in a condition of impossibility, floating in voids, broken apart and scattered. They rather have and require a situation, and they must be bound together, no matter how problematic that necessity becomes in our times. As I have already suggested in the introduction, I suspect that the apparent opposition between these two positions is a false one. Deleuze's and Merleau-Ponty's work might both be said to imply a (problematized) subject, and this is crystallized in the two readings possible of Tima's highly ambiguous body. This case will be supported when I reach beyond this tale in the second part of the thesis. But there is evidence to support my case even here, and it turns on the argument that the foundation of the subject implies an inherent instability.

We can understand this if we turn again to Merleau-Ponty and his words from *The Visible and the Invisible* which propose, paradoxically, the fusion of the world in the very experience of its fission.

Flesh

Merleau-Ponty's understanding of the body entails his own notion of the "invisible". For him our broader experience of perception of the world is an instance of our fundamental turning around and about the invisible of our own bodies:

> "...the coiling over of the visible upon the seeing body, of the tangible upon the touching body... is attested in particular when the body sees itself, touches itself seeing and touching the things, such that, simultaneously, *as* tangible it descends among them, *as* touching it dominates them all and draws this relationship and even this double relationship from itself, by dehiscence or fission of its own mass."[184]

There are two notions here important to Merleau-Ponty's understanding of the flesh. The first is the idea that as we move to "dominate" things, we also "descend among" them, we are at their mercy. Our belonging to things includes our being pushed hither and thither by them.

As we seek out and explore we necessarily become lost; this was the experience of Tima and Ken'ichi's exploration of the labyrinth. The situation of our bodies always implies a disorientation even as it moves towards orientation. This condition is potentially either productive – the experience of a newborn child, of one engaged in an exploration – or pathological – the experience of a broken body, or one whose landscape has been pulled away, leaving him or her hanging over an abyss. Merleau-Ponty writes of our confrontation with contingency with his own use of the term "unthinkable" :

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[184]Merleau-Ponty and Lefort, *The Visible and the Invisible; Followed by Working Notes*, 146.

> "Space and perception generally represent, at the core of the subject, the fact of [man's] birth, the perpetual contribution of his bodily being, a communication with the world more ancient than thought. That is why they saturate consciousness and are impenetrable to reflection. The instability of levels produces not only the intellectual experience of disorder, but the vital experience of giddiness and nausea, which is the awareness of our contingency, and the horror with which it fills us."[185]

Our exploration of depth has a role in making something of this terror; it is our way of "coming to grips" with the world. For Merleau-Ponty this experience is not about our submission to pure contingency, chaos[186] – because it always expresses intention, the intention which is part and parcel of perception. Both intentionality of movement (prior to a thetic knowledge of the thing toward which one moves) and perception (again, prior to a thetic knowledge of the world) are about engaging with the world rather than submitting to chaos.

Nevertheless it is important to acknowledge and even celebrate the condition of being lost. At the risk of taking Merleau-Ponty's words out of context: "Ambiguity is'good'."[187] He warns that man builds up over his life, and the life of civilizations, levels and anchors which block out the view to that first experience of the body and the world: "The positing of a level means losing sight of this contingency..."[188]. If we are not to lose that fundamental experience,

> "...we have to rediscover beneath depth as a relation between things or even between planes, which is objectified depth detached from experience and transformed into breadth, a primordial depth, which confers upon the

[185]Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 296.
[186]Merleau-Ponty and Lefort, *The Visible and the Invisible; Followed by Working Notes*, 146.
[187]Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Philosophy and Non-Philosophy since Hegel," in *Philosophy and Non-Philosophy since Merleau-Ponty* (New York: Routledge, 1989), 52. quoted in Lawlor, "The End of Phenomenology: Expressionism in Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty," 29.
[188]Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 296.

> other its significance, and which is the thickness of a medium devoid of everything... a depth which does not yet operate between objects, which, *a fortiori*, does not yet assess the distance between them, and which is simply the opening of perception upon some ghost thing as yet scarcely qualified."[189]

What are the characteristics of this depth experienced by the new-born child, for whom others loom up across an immense distance through "a medium devoid of everything"? What kind of thickness can it be said to have? It is a thickness which is at once infinitely deep and infinitely shallow: in which surface and void become one in the same sense that visible and invisible imply each other. To understand this dimension, we must think not in terms of perspectival depth, but of a topological space of the type Merleau-Ponty posits in the following passage:

> "Take topological space as a model of being. The Euclidean space is the model for perspectival being, it is a space without transcendence, positive, a network of straight lines, parallel among themselves or perpendicular according to the three dimensions, which sustains all possible situations... The topological space, on the contrary, a milieu in which circumscribed relations of proximity, of envelopment, etc. is the image of a being that, like Klee's touches of color, is at the same time older than everything and "of the first day" (Hegel)... it founds the *wild* principle of Logos—it is this wild or brute being that intervenes at all levels to overcome the problems of the classical ontology (mechanism, finalism, in every case: artificialism)."[190]

This is the depth of a ghost, a depth which is a mere "fraction of dimensionality". It resonates with the flat silhouette of Nosferatu and other monsters discussed with

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[189]Ibid., 310.
[190]Merleau-Ponty and Lefort, *The Visible and the Invisible; Followed by Working Notes*, 210-11.

reference to Lang's *Metropolis*. This depth exists not at any point along a line into a perspectival image, where it can be identified and located; what is essential to depth is that it be in a displaced position and, precisely, never found. Thus depth can exist even potentially on a surface, provided that its exploration implies a never-ending displacement, an ever-postponed movement-towards, lost in the folds of the surface, or in its play of transparency and opacity, or in the ranging of the eye across a resisting patterned plane, or in the incessant tearing-apart and rearrangement of its fabric. This is the ultimate condition of interiority. According to this formulation, depth lies on the surface of the body:

> "The body interposed is not itself a thing, an interstitial matter, a connective tissue, but a sensible for itself... a set of colours and surfaces inhabited by a touch, a vision... that divergence between the within and the without that constitutes its natal secret... It is the body and it alone, because it is a two-dimensional being, that can bring us to the things themselves, which are not flat beings but beings in depth, inaccessible to a subject that would survey them from above, open to him alone that, if it be possible, would coexist with them in the same world."[191]

In fact this is the kind of depth which plays across the surfaces of many of the traditional Japanese arts from which manga and anime evolved. The animated Metropolis, despite but also consistent with the presence in it of a void which in certain respects is about our failure to grasp depth in modern conditions, offers us a surface which can accommodate the kind of topological depth described above. It does this by forcing our eye to range across its surface unsatisfied, by introducing gaps and fissures into the surface which catch at our vision, hinting of a depth beneath, and by the vivid play of colour.

I will reinforce this point by discussing the second notion raised by the lines quoted at the beginning of this section: the lines which state that our body in engaging with the world "draws this relationship and even this double relationship from itself, by dehiscence or

[191]Ibid., 136.

fission of its own mass."[192] Implicated in our perception of the greater world is the experience of our own invisible, and this involves a fission which requires some discussion.

Merleau-Ponty's understanding builds an instability (or an uneasy stability) into existence. Our palpation of the world is the origin of our own division such that, as he mentions elsewhere, we and the world form nested circles which are not concentric but slightly displaced. We yearn for their alignment, but the reversibility of touch and touching is "always imminent and never realized in fact. My left hand is always on the verge of touching my right hand touching the things, but I never reach coincidence; the coincidence eclipses at the moment of realization..."[193] Being is about displacement. In Merleau-Ponty's own phrase, we are not a single "atom of being". But by the same token, displacement is in its turn not about nothingness, but about Being:

> "...this incessant escaping, this impotence to superpose exactly... is not a failure. For if these experiences never exactly overlap, if they slip away at the very moment they are about to rejoin, if there is always a 'shift', a 'spread' between them, this is precisely because my two hands are part of the same body..."[194]

What lies between the two leaves of our experience "is not an ontological void, a non-being"[195], it is rather a hollow enfolding a shadow. Our being is "that certain divergence, that never-finished differentiation, that openness ever to be reopened between the sign and the sign, as the flesh is, we said, the dehiscence of the seeing into the visible and of the visible into the seeing,"[196] My assertion, based on Merleau-Ponty's own words on the paradoxically flatness of primordial depth, is that this is what is offered by the colourful labyrinth of the animated film. Its colour tears things apart, forces things away from each

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[192]Ibid., 146.
[193]Ibid., 147.
[194]Ibid., 148.
[195]Ibid.
[196]Ibid., 153.

other before throwing them back into each other. The city is caught in a vibrating to-and-fro upon which its life is based.

The sovereignty of Rintarô's and Ôtomo's colourful labyrinth over its city shares much with the power of Lang's. Lang's labyrinth operated through the surging of a tide between dark and light, across the border between life and the machine. I have read this labyrinth, as I think Merleau-Ponty would have done, as representing the flesh of the world: a flesh ultimately expunged from the city through the immolation of the robot. The subterrain of the animated Metropolis also represents a flesh. But unlike Lang's, which operated through the encroaching of dark onto light and vice versa, Rintarô's labyrinth (building on Tezuka's capacity to do just this) operates *in* that margin, in its colourful surface. It undermines the city more completely, from within rather than from around, by insinuating its vast spaces into the small spaces and surfaces which modernity attempts to reduce to zeros. A fraction of dimensionality insinuated into the zero-dimensional gradations of a Cartesian grid is enough to blow it entirely open. Perhaps for this reason, rather than being eliminated from the city at the end of the animated film, it is the colourful labyrinth, carried by its vector Tima, which brings the Ziggurat to its end. At the end of the film the tower has fallen, the cross-hair is a tangle of twisted metal. The labyrinth stands torn open, full of light: it has become the city. But it has not cleared a *tabula rasa*; the new world is hybrid, populated by bands of humans and robots, sewn together out of the fragments of the old. Tima herself is recovered from the ruins, pieced together in bits and pieces, a flesh implicitly rejoined but complex, layered, problematic.

Deleuze speaks of a cinematic space somewhat like this: the Originary World,

> “Empedocles' world, made up of outlines and fragments, heads without necks, eyes without faces, arms without shoulders, gestures without form. But it is also the set which unites everything, not in an organization, but making all the parts converge in an immense rubbish-dump or swamp, and all the impulses in a great death-impulse. The originary world is therefore

> both radical beginning and absolute end; and finally it links one to the other, it puts the one into the other... (with) all the cruelty of Chronos."[197]

This world is implied in the rubbish dumps into which Tima falls repeatedly in the animated film, and the final jumbled labyrinth/city into which she plunges at the climax. Something comes of these conditions: a community is recovered, and bodies are given form. I have already suggested the resonance between this kind of imagery and Blumenberg's seething chaos, from which gods and monsters emerge. Out of such conditions we draw the figures who populate our stories; by telling their tales we order the world and draw out of raw experience, out of a wild force of life, a world which we can inhabit as human beings and as citizens. But the very process which bestows meaning involves a *déchirement*. And this tearing-apart is precisely what is implied in Merleau-Ponty's understanding of the operation by which we perceive (and pre-thetically conceive) the world.

The void is the abyss from which monsters arise. Its break between us and the world and across which we act is the fundamental, inexplicable division in our experience of things. Modernity widens this void; this both torments us and paradoxically contributes to our fundamental humanity, which is to precisely *not* be complete. If we are not to remain aphasics or schizophrenics[198], we have no choice but to cross this gap. But this gap is also the source of life, and necessary for all of our creations of world, our worldings, to remain open, to not become towers or turn the world into grids. We need the giddiness and nausea which well up from such spaces. Thus as our repeated re-crossings sew together the world, we must, on every passage back across that gap, endeavour to rip open its wounds again. This rebirth ensures that the world is forever fresh. In this sense the void of the animated *Metropolis* implies a flesh which both unites and divides in the same

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[197]Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 124.
[198]As Deleuze says with regard to the new constitutive power of cinema: "...a cinema of constitution, one which is truly constitutive: constituting bodies, and in this way restoring our belief in the world, restoring our reason... The price to be paid, in cinema as elsewhere, was always a confrontation with madness." ———, *Cinema 2: The Time Image*, 201.

moment; in the same sense that, as Merleau-Ponty put it, depth lies on a surface. This is the significance and fecundity of the great explosion which rips apart this (as so many other) animated cities: the dehiscence or bursting-open of things in the moment of their reconception. Things come together in coming apart, before things are named. And at the heart of that experience, as to Merleau-Ponty's schizophrenic, “a question is put to me”: one of the original three questions: Who am I? Where do I come from? And where am I going?

Fig. 43.: originary worlds

Part 2: Beyond the Tales

2.1 Other anime: the thick flat

I chose to focus this thesis on the Metropolis tales in order to place the phenomenon of interest in terms of a general modern crisis which implicates, as well as architecture, both the fields of cinema and anime. There is not space or need here to elaborate in detail on the full range of this phenomenon in anime. But given its prevalence and currency I devote a few pages to demonstrate the relevance of the discussion so far to other works of anime and to trace a preliminary sketch of the relevance of both the ideas and anime itself to architecture.

There is a particular significance to this in light of the discussion in Chapter 3. There I argued that the animated *Metropolis* engages through surfaces with the void of technology: surface can offer both depth and hope; the colourful labyrinth, at once vast and shallow, is about that. This argument involved a discussion of Merleau-Ponty's notion of the dehiscent subject which implied but did not develop its semiological or linguistic implications. If there is a spread or shift in perception and it is inherent in our condition as subject/object, it seems to invite an interpretation in terms of the deconstruction of texts. But Merleau-Ponty makes the following observation:

> "If my words have a meaning, it is not because they present the systematic organization the linguist will disclose, it is because that organization, like the look, refers back to itself: the operative Word is the obscure region whence comes the instituted light, as the muted reflection of the body itself is what we call natural light. As there is a reversibility of the seeing and the visible, and as at the point where the two metamorphoses cross perception is born, so also there is a reversibility of the speech and what it signifies..."[199]

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[199]Merleau-Ponty and Lefort, *The Visible and the Invisible; Followed by Working Notes*, 154.

In other words, if there is a deconstruction going on here it is one in which speech folds back onto the object of which it speaks; signs signify "always in virtue of the same fundamental phenomenon of reversibility which sustains both the mute perception and the speech and which manifests itself by an almost carnal existence of the idea, as well as by a sublimation of the flesh."[200] If the body is displaced through our perception of it, our imaging of it, it is folded back onto itself through its image. Implied here is not a game merely of texts but a game of texts and bodies, in which the two envelop each other, and the real stakes of being are in play. We might say that within this framework the body and its image are always thrown back into each other.

This is a transposition of Merleau-Ponty's fundamental structure of human Being, in which subject and object similarly envelop each other in an incessant oscillation between touching and being touched. In chapter 2.2 I will echo Didi-Huberman's call for a semiology which is also a phenomenology; such a framework would share this bivalency. That such a proposal is possible is suggested by another resonance between Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty, which becomes apparent in Deleuze's discussion of the cogito of art. Deleuze, though working as it were from the opposite direction from Merleau-Ponty, articulates an understanding of the relationship between myself as subject and myself as actor which resonates with Merleau-Ponty's own notion of the two leaves of being:

> "there is no subject which acts without another which watches it act, and which grasps it as acted, itself assuming the freedom of which it deprives the former. 'Thus two different egos [*moi*] one of which, conscious of its freedom, sets itself up as an independent spectator of a scene which the other would play in a mechanical fashion. But this dividing-in-two never goes to the limit. It is rather an oscillation of the person between two points of view on himself, a hither-and-thither of the spirit...' , a being-with."[201]

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[200]Ibid., 155.
[201]Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 73-74.

Deleuze's focus here is on the cinematic rendering of subject and object; but the point is made. Looking back from these words to the earlier chapters, we can see that the relationships between Tima and Ken'ichi, Michi and Ken'ichi, and Maria and the False Maria might be said to bring together Deleuze's notion of being-with and Merleau-Ponty's notion of intertwined subject and object. This might in fact be what is implied by the very figure of the robot: it is our other leaf. Merleau-Ponty hints as much in the following words on heautoscopy[202]: "The patient has the feeling of being the double outside himself, just as, in a lift which goes upwards and suddenly stops, I feel the substance of my body escaping from me through my head and overrunning the boundaries of my objective body. It is in his own body that the patient feels the approach of this Other whom he has never seen with his eyes..."[203] The robot or monster of anime can be said to be this to us; as the animated city is to our real cities.

The notion of image as always implying a body is of great interest to us as architects, whose work always builds on the materiality of the world. I maintain that Rintarô's *Metropolis* does imply this, in its play of surfaces which while emphasizing flatness also implicates an existential hollow, all conveyed through an imagery to which the body is central. But certain other works of anime more explicitly address the shift implicit in perception. I will address these shortly.

The assertions of meaning I have made above are in stark contrast to the assumptions at the basis of a prominent understanding of anime, manga, and related arts I have already discussed: *Superflat*. This term is used to characterize a specific cultural and historical condition, a condition with which any work of anime, or in fact any work of popular visual culture, intersects: a relative absence of social structure and a condition of uneventful routine, listlessness, meaninglessness. At the risk of caricaturing Superflat, we can say that the notion implies a view from an infinite distance, a kind of super-aerial orthogonal view, a flattening of experience: view *without* viewpoint, without a position. Animated bodies and architectures, in this conceptual space, can be interpreted as

[202]The hallucinatory experience of seeing one's own body at a distance.
[203]Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 238.

trivializing the mythic qualities of narrative: reducing gods and heroes to cartoon characters, evacuating meaning from them, flattening them. It seems to be a world preoccupied by, rather than depth, its absence.

But in fact the play of depth matters to anime. This can take the form of depth nursed from the thinness of a piece of paper, through the overlay of moving surfaces, through the use of intense colour and movement, often suspended movement. I have argued that this is the case with the anime *Metropolis*. I will consider below several sequences in a single work of anime which develop this play of surface and colour in a manner which suggests something closer to the notion of the thing and image thrown into each other. A similar argument could be made drawing on other works of anime (for example Oshii Mamoru's *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence*, or *Patlabor*; or equally, Studio 4˚C's full-length feature *Mind Game* or animated short *Beyond*), but I choose this film because as will be seen below it invites comparison to the animated *Metropolis*. The film is *Tekkon Kinkreet*, by the animation studio Studio 4˚C[204]. This is another anime based on a manga – here the source is the manga *Black and White* by Taiyo Matsumoto[205]. As the title of the manga suggests it too is preoccupied with two leaves: two siblings abused, separated and thrown back together again by circumstances. The title of the film is a distortion of the Japanese term for reinforced concrete; the reference its explicitly architectural. The translation into an animated film was developed by American director Michael Arias and screenwriter Anthony Weintraub, so it cannot be considered a purely Japanese production; like *Metropolis* it implies a mutual infiltration of sensibilities.

The animated Metropolis concludes with the destruction of a city which, if it implies personal crises, plays them out on the stage of a fantastic city; it presents them as actual events in an imaginary world. *Tekkon Kinkreet* in contrast ends with an apocalypse which, while it is triggered by the burning of an amusement park at the centre of a city, is entirely intimate and personal in focus; its apocalypse plays out within the imagination of a

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[204]Michael Arias, *Tekkon Kinkreet* (Culver City, Calif.: Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, 2007), videorecording.
[205]Taiyo Matsumoto, *Black and White* (San Francisco: VIZ Media, 2006).

central character. The film concerns the relationship between the siblings Black and White and their attempts to defend the legitimate possession of their enclave of the city against encroaching forces of criminality and development (implicitly equivalent in the terms of the film). The crisis of the film involves the burning of an urban development (an amusement park at), but we are carried outside of this event into the dream-like experience of one of the characters as he confronts an embodiment of his own tendency toward violence. This sequence employs distortions which resonate with important tropes and images from the climax of the animated *Metropolis*; but their expression is freer and, one could easily argue, also more closely aligned with the lenses I employed to understand the animated *Metropolis*. These tropes and images in the climactic sequence include: the superimposition of eye, face, and city and corresponding short-circuiting of near and far; the distortion of the human figure and its dislocation in space; the broken grasp and wounded hand/arm; the fall from a great height into an abyss which is at once internal to the character and at the scale of the city; the collapse of the world and the connection of a personal undoing to a cosmological one including, in the case of *Tekkon Kinkreet*, a rain of stars which assimilate to tears.

Fig. 44.: intimate apocalypse

This intimate apocalypse is expressed in an imagery consistent with that examined over the course of this thesis and can be understood as consistent with the terms I have set out above, relating a personal crisis to crises of modernity with the promise of some kind of recovery. The difficulties inherent in this condition are articulated over the course of the film through an uneasy and discomfiting depiction of the human body in relationship to the city which works through the imaging of the body's carnality – as well as the carnality of architectural and urban space.

One aspect of this uneasiness is the ambiguity of the body's mass, and this is exemplified by its treatment in sequences of jumping, falling, flying, floating, drifting. Bodies seem alternately massive and weightless in these sequences: at times they plunge from great heights; at other times, launching themselves from rooftops, they drift down like leaves.

In this condition bodies can both float and sink at the same time. There is little logic to the alternation between these two forms of descent, but it emphasizes the body's dual condition in film as an image and a haptically grasped thing, a condition which is accentuated in the medium of animation, where the body is a wafer thin cel upon which mass is bestowed by the skillful manipulation in order to engage with the kinesthetic empathy of the audience. This is consistent with Merleau-Ponty's notion that mass and movement are fundamental aspects of the thing and inseparable from each other; the flight of a stone through the air and the stone's weight cannot be separated. In anime the body is both separated from its mass, yet thrown back into it through the engagement of our bodies (via the eye) with the movement of the image. Bodies rendered alternately massive and massless engage with the discourse of embodiment and image sketched above, and the problematization of that condition in a visually-oriented modernity.

Fig. 45.: falling, flying, floating

If bodies can both float and sink in this world, they can be both textured and sleek, massive and hollow. The film employs texture-mapping of three-dimensional models of architecture and objects in a manner which renders them both material and immaterial. An instance is the car where the two siblings live; its rusty, stained surface contrasts with the flat surfaces of the two figures that inhabit it. The depiction of glass, with a complex play of reflectivity and transparency, emphasizes its materiality – but also its nature as a surface. The pocked and stained car door emphasizes materiality through texture, yet when it opens that texture is displaced in space in a manner which articulates a

contradictory two-dimensionality. Aurally a similar effect is emphasized through the sound of car doors opening and closing: an effect which as employed emphasizes their mass. With sound combined as it frequently is with the movement of the car frame and a coordinated movement of the “camera”, the car's condition as a body is again emphasized. There is a similar play with the gravel and concrete beneath the car in this still. The shot both accentuates tactility and contradicts it via the slight sheen given to the surfaces, the planar composition of the image (ground/side of car/car door), the flat cel-drawn pole about to project through the door, and the image of the eye scrawled on the concrete surface and shattered with the concrete (the image undone through materiality).

Fig. 46.: deep/flat, rough/sleek

In the next image feet advance across a textured landscape. That texture is blurred by motion and the angled point of view; the ground is thus emphasized as both material and image. This genre of distorted mapping of texture onto an angled plane, like that of the textured vehicles and buildings, might be considered anamorphic[206]; according to my argument it involves similar stakes. The trouser legs are planar, yet a shadow is projected on them around the ankles; in the context of the scene we perceive this as the shadow of another figure walking behind, putting those legs into a three-dimensional embodied relationship with the ground and other figures outside the frame. There is little variation in darkness across the shadow on the trouser legs, and its edge is blurred; this emphasizes the legs as flat surfaces rather than sculpted, yet denies us the opportunity to read them as merely flat. The shadows of the feet are cast on the ground, again setting up the moving legs as objects in three-dimensional space; yet the lack of any variation of intensity across their breadth and their projection upon the distorted texture of the ground emphasizes their planarity and their lack of connection to the earth. The cumulative effect is of an uneasy oscillation between three dimensions and two, materiality and immateriality; the body and its image vibrate about each other, alternately slipping past each other and back together again.

This imagery is developed more explicitly in two other sequences. In the first image below, one of the siblings faces the embodiment of his own anger. The scene is set in an amusement park, and the carousel in the background employs an effect typical of that site's phantasmagoria. It and other parts of the city are represented with a vivid but blurred colour reminiscent of failed offset printing, in which the different layers of colour which compose the image are slightly displaced, slightly off-register. This produces a cloud-like effect in which the figures of the horses start to dissolve. The film plays upon a nostalgia for the past, a perceived earlier era before the city became merely a property to be bought or sold, and before it began to be taken over by an incessant process of construction and destruction; the lower-quality printing implied by these effects recalls this vaguely-defined earlier era. But it is also resonant with similar effects observable in

[206]See Pérez-Gómez and Pelletier, Architectural Representation and the Perspective Hinge, 138-49.

popular publications in developing countries today; indeed the film is full of graphic references to the cities of developing societies, particularly asian cities, mingled together with references from Japan's own past. It employs for example a plethora of languages (as did the animated *Metropolis*) and writing systems worked into the signs and murals of the city. Thus a memory of the past and a perceived more humane era, before the problems of modernity had become accentuated, blurs into the imagination of cities today perceived as retaining something of that era; this message is mediated by an imagery from a profoundly modern medium (printing), but a broken version of it. This discourse is carried out at another level in the rows of golden horses, a conveyor-belt or assembly-line of dreams (we will recall the references in the animated *Metropolis* to chorus lines). Each horse is identical but they are slightly displaced relative to each other; we know that if the carrousel was in motion we would read them as a blur. They are stilled however by the breakdown of the amusement park, blurred instead by the evocation of off-set printing. The cumulative effect is of a blurring of bodies and a contradictory building-up of clouds of colour into bodies: a visual machine which undermines machines. These effects build upon the use of text, graphics, and vivid colour in *Metropolis* (we note also the highly patterned surface of the ground) to produce a cityscape resonant with the labyrinth of that film: an urban setting which employs collage and a convoluted plan to overthrow our eye so that we wander lost amidst a plethora of images. But in this case there is a much more powerful experience of the labyrinth's tactility, and emphasis on the sense of space as a thing embodied. A complex play of textures evokes this embodied condition; and a play of surfaces at times denies it.

A related effect can be identified in the subsequent image, which reinforces the centrality of the interplay between the image and the body. This image is taken from the point of view of a minor character. As he sways, the body before him moves in and out of focus; once again ambiguity is introduced as a crisp two-dimensional figure becomes blurred around the edges, sharpens, and then dissolves again. In the background, the interior of the room is covered with eyes; each is printed or painted on a separate slip of paper. The sheets of paper are all of the same size, but every eye is different, and each slip of paper is skewed slightly and inconsistently relative to the others creating cracks between the

images; when a door closes the sheets of paper on it move independently. The wall is thus given substance in the form of images of eyes which are tactile as well as paper-thin; the hard-edged character in front of this array dissolves into immateriality. The eye, whose melting into face and city ushers in apocalypse in this film as well as *Metropolis*, is of course where the body meets the image.

Fig. 47.: texture/weight

As in the instances of texture-mapping cited above, these effects are not mere artefacts of the technology used, nor are they accidental. They are consciously sought out by the film-

makers. The animators have spoken about how they strive to make images “blur... just a little bit more.”[207]or pursue the figural quality of *rittaikan* (立体感), a Japanese word derived from the vocabulary of free-hand drawing. It can be translated as “three-dimensionality”, suggesting a platonic solid and as well as painterliness a potent sense of embodiment: it is written with the Chinese characters which signify “to stand”, “body” , and “feeling”; the pronunciation of “feeling” (*kan* 感) is homophonous with that of “space” (*kan* 間) . The filmmakers intentionally search for effects which convey a slipping between embodiment and disembodiment. Blurring, “camera movement”, carefully choreographed animation of figures, and changes in point of view place us kinesthetically within the characters' bodies. We feel their movement; though that movement is at times sickening and disorienting, pushing us against the edges of our own skin.

Fig. 48.: car & electrical facility

Technology is always there in the background of this film, as a productive and destructive force, and as a frame within which the characters are caught. The abandoned car which serves as the siblings' home, for example (a glance back at Figure 45 reveals the French words “technologie de Tokio” stencilled on the car door), is set between an electrical substation and an immense factory of undefined function. There is also a recurring imagery of construction equipment at work;. The filmmakers have made it clear that for

[207]Arias, *Tekkon Kinkreet*. Filmmakers' commentary.

them the construction and destruction which goes on in the film refers to both the economic forces through which cities like Tokyo are put through the wringer of development and redevelopment, and the violent acts of destruction which are provoked by the stresses and strains of these processes of modernity[208]. The forces of political violence and cultural evacuation are the same that Deleuze identified as the generators of the post-war physical and existential landscape which cinema turned into *any-spaces-whatevers*. The landscapes of anime like this frequently employ the image of wastelands in a manner which, I would assert, can be considered *any-spaces-whatever,* for their depiction of these landscapes engages them as embodied. They occupy a variety of locations on the topology I proposed in Chapter 1.2 which stretches between dissolution and potential. In the sequence below, for example, the relative movement of an out-of-focus foreground, a washed-out background, several middle-grounds whose very planarity suggests the presence of screens of dust hanging in the space between, and human figures moving across the wasteland, all generate an evocative play of depth and motion, care and concern. The desolation in these scenes implies the very moments I have identified as dehiscent and therefore creative.

[208]Matsumoto, *Black and White*, 5-7. Transcript of conversation between Michael Arias and Anthony Weintraub.

Fig. 49.: desolations

The cumulative effect of all of these images is of a sometimes agitated, sometimes poignant evocation of the modern condition articulated in an imagery that engages with depth. It throws into question the relationship of the body to its image in a manner which resonates with the discussion at the beginning of this chapter. These effects do not minimize the importance of the body. If the body was something to be left behind, we would feel nothing when we experience these exaggerated textures and distended moments, there would be no kinesthetic effect upon us from the image of a floating body, no sympathetic twinge at the sight of a wounded hand. There is always a subject, if a problematized one: aerial views for example are taken through the eye of a bird, of a human being perched precariously atop a pole, or another falling through the air; sometimes we are ripped form one of these points of view to another. Rather than denying

the importance of the body, what such images do is to problematize its relationship to the image. But they do this entirely consistently with Merleau-Ponty's discussion of the "spread" or "shift" between the seeing and the seen body. They throw us into the body (hence we are moved), at the same time that they present it before us as a displaced image. These twin capacities of embodiment and perception are incessantly shifted relative to each other, blurred, and brought back into alignment across the ground of the film.

Many of these effects are not exclusive to anime; while this is a popular art form, it shares many tools and a visual language with branches of new media, video, and experimental cinema. Even if this language is often articulated within a popular art form, there are numerous instances of other work in anime and manga which bleed into art. Even those works which are popularly-oriented play with our "need to redefine the distance between the world an its representation"[209] as I have tried to demonstrate here. The play of space and body, played out in narratives which offer something more than simplistic commercial fare and place demands on the watcher greater than many live-action films, do "deconstruct the homogeneous, geometric space of technological enframing, the 'context' of the pathologies associated with life in the postindustrial city. By adding or subtracting a 'fraction' of dimensionality to our experience..." this art form "evokes the experience of an embodied, subjective spatiality, and it thus may be construed as the experience of architecture as it 'could be'."[210] If the modern problem is the failure to move to action because we have either become machines or because we have become mere seers, could the solution lie in a new image/body relationship: their throwing into each other and their mutual envelopment – the body and drawing, architecture and film, the city and its image?

Anime is a popular art form. It is a fair criticism of some of these works that they indulge in a vulgarity, perhaps even crassness, which might seem to evacuate them of meaning:

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[209]Pérez-Gómez and Pelletier, *Architectural Representation and the Perspective Hinge*, 376.
[210]Ibid., 376-77.

they resort to cliché and pathos, they are often trite. They might be said by some to reduce the body to a shell, the city to spectacle, seeming to remove all sense of depth or weight. But underlying their noise and shallowness we can find a stillness and depth, revealed in moments of silent suspension of movement, scenes of an everyday which is also otherworldly, or poignant observations of human behaviour. At times, the enhanced experience of space enabled by animated film articulates a condition in which a state of disembodiment colludes with a depiction of the opacities of the body to suggest a return to an experience of "thick" space, an experience which is not about transparency but which engages a mytho-poetic dimension.

The "new" thick body is always problematically so. Its materiality is emphasized through the interrogation of that materiality. This is consistent with the particularly modern inflection of the fundamental human experience in which our lives are never held together as complete wholes. And, perhaps for this reason, mythic imagery replays again and again the fragility of the body in an apocalyptic moment. The emblematic destruction of the city corresponds to an experience of the body (as a thick object) which is often achieved (in an apparent contradiction) through its dissolution and re-assembly. Despite this fragile, hybrid condition—a traumatic condition—a human trajectory does endure, for these stories always generate a rebirth: the body seeds the ruins of the city. This is precisely what occurs at the end of the animated *Metropolis;* the closing image of *Tekkon Kinkreet* depicts an apple tree sprouting next to the abandoned car of the two siblings.

These capacities of anime suggest a development of the play of time and depth first made possible by cinema. Considering the increasing hybridity of cinema and anime, my intention is not to place them in opposition to each other. As the Metropolis stories interpenetrate each other, so do these art forms. But I would suggest that what animated film can perhaps add to the cinematic is the entry into the moment which cinema first opened up. If for Walter Benjamin cinema changed the artist from magician to surgeon, perhaps the fact that animation allows the fanciful creation of a world from within the moment – whereas cinema proper could only take the given moment apart – makes possible a return to the role of magician.

The relevance of film to architecture and urbanism is well-established; an appreciation of anime's, or some cinema/anime hybrid art form's relevance for architecture is developing. Anime makes frequent and quite intentional use of architecture both spectacular and banal, as a perusal of the work of a few directors and studios easily shows. This fascination with architecture on the part of animators is not just accidental. As I hope this thesis goes some way towards illustrating, anime can be considered a machine for the creation of depth. So also is architecture. They should both be interested in each other.

2.2 Technology and poeisis

Implied in a discussion of the body and its image are those forms of imagining which deal with our manipulation of materials: tools, technology, and architecture. I will now address more directly the question of technology which is central to the *Metropolis* tales and to anime. We will see that it brings us back again to the body, and the blurring of its edges. The discussion will develop the notion of the approach of the two invisibles introduced earlier, which will turn out to provide a more solid theoretical confirmation of the observations made in the last chapter about anime's throwing of the body and image into each other.

As argued by Jacques Ellul[211] one of the fundamental experiences of modernity has been the invasion of human life by technicity and the technological. This invasion is a key preoccupation of works of anime and science fiction. A consequence of technicization in the field of architecture has been the divorce of body and building, as discussed in the introduction. In response to this condition architects have adopted variously a rhetoric which, in the early decades of the last century, proposed technical optimization as the fundamental goal of architecture; and in the last decades of the 20th century rejected the technical as a legitimate focus of architectural endeavour.

Of course the truth has always been more complex and subtle than either of these two positions. As had been remarked in a warning against a nostalgic return to a pre-technological architecture, “the issue of architecture as a clearing for dwelling cannot be restricted to the cabin in the black forest, or a masonry bridge built by the Romans...Our world as technology is unavoidable, the only way to determine the quality of a building conducive to dwelling must be through technology itself...”[212] If in modern times “a

[211]Jacques Ellul, *The Technological Society*, [1st American ed. (New York,: Knopf, 1964), 387-94.
[212]Alberto Pérez-Gómez, "Dwelling on Heidegger: Architecture as Mimetic Technopoiesis," http://www.tu-cottbus.de/BTU/Fak2/TheoArch/Wolke/eng/Subjects/982/Perez-Gomez/perez-gomez_t.html.

building as dwelling must be construed through technology"[213], that technology must be addressed critically. To argue otherwise is to suggest the sort of overcoming of the past on which an uncritical modernism was based; what is called for is rather, in Vattimo's words, a "weak overcoming" (*Verwindung*) which twists and reworks the technological rather than annihilating it.

The *Metropolis* tales reinforce this understanding. They present an explicitly critical position on technology, articulating a blatant fear of the technological, from Lang's evil robot onward. Yet they suggest, in that very fear, an appreciation of what it is in the technical which is more than technological – articulated in the cinematic machine's capacity to inspire terror, to become mythic. Central to the imagery of all these stories is the notion of the technological become flesh. We see this in the False Maria's body, enchanted vector as it is for the labyrinth. We see it in Michi, the artificial being which is not a machine but a fleshy creature and a manifestation of a mythic source of life, if a polluted one. Both these figures imply an inversion of Ellul's formula: they suggest the invasion of the machine by the body. This is an unexpected reformulation of what is usually taken to be the meaning of figures like robots or cyborgs, and suggestive of a productive monstrosity.

The final figure of the series, Tima, is more ambiguous in our terms. If we follow Deleuze she implies with other spiritual automata a resistance to the machine, but an ambiguous resistance. We see clearly inscribed in her body the mechanical condition of the Ziggurat: a colourful flesh stretched over an existential void. Is she not in this sense about the hollowing out of flesh? Might she not imply the final victory of the machine, a victory which can only be averted through some apocalyptic act of destruction as occurs at the end of this and so many other works of this type, offering no solace to us? Or does she imply as I have argued (through Merleau-Ponty) the contradictory but undeniable recovery of the flesh?

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[213]Ibid.

As I stated in the introduction, I do not understand the *Metropolis* tales as a one-way trip through the last century; the stories, rather, interpenetrate each other, indicating a commonality of concerns which re-emerge over the course of the century as certain modern aporias remain unresolved. But this final version of the story does seem to bring to a head the ambiguities latent in the others, as articulated in the questions: can a way around technology be found through technology?

This question can be approached, appropriately to the argument which has gone before, through a discussion of another intersection of Merleau-Ponty's and Deleuze's two invisibles, an intersection which has meaning for the extent to which an implication of the technological in the gaze is acceptable. This tension is played out on the ground of cinema and anime, which themselves can be seen as machines for the gaze.

As I discussed in the introduction, Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty are often distinguished by their position vis-a-vis the subject. Merleau-Ponty is considered subject-centred, Deleuze is not; but in the introduction I outlined several passages from these writers which suggest that this distinction is problematic. Another instance reinforces this point and is particularly relevant to a discussion of the implications of technicization. This is the importance of those moments when, in cinema, the image-capturing mechanism (the camera) is used to represent the point of view of a moving subject. It is an instance particularly important to us because it again superimposes one part of Deleuze's *out-of-frame* (everything behind the camera and therefore invisible to its view) upon Merleau-Ponty's own invisible (our interiors, at the back of our eyes, our blind spot); and it incorporates movement with all its significance as a modality of perception and engagement with depth.

When the camera moves in the place of a subject the modulation of duration is not abstract but always implies modulation *through a body*. The assimilation of the camera to the subject brings Deleuze's eye close to Merleau-Ponty's; but it also separates them, for in the case of the moving shot the modulation of movement is technologically articulated. In Deleuze's words the moving camera “extracts movement” from the various kinds of

moving things on which it is mounted: whether that mean a cinematic “dolly”, a car, a bicycle, a boat, a train, or a human being[214]. We will recall as an instance of this the flight of Tima and Ken'ichi through the labyrinth: mounted on a rickshaw, in a viewpoint taken from within the rickshaw's structure, they fly through the air down a flight of steps, unable to find their level. In the case of anime and in this example in particular, there is of course no actual moving camera, but the representation of movement from the point of view of a vehicle, the imagery of the technical body, and the use of the machinery of anime creation (material or digital) all implicate the technical in the human viewpoint. The gaze is given a subjectivity; but in that the body becomes a vehicle, the condition of the human subject is technologically adulterated.

The seeming discordance with Merleau-Ponty is mitigated if we look closely at his writing on the relationship between sight, touch, and implements. He says specifically that one of the capacities of the human engagement with the world through movement and sight is to incorporate elements of the world into the body:

> “Visible and mobile, my body is a thing among things; it is caught up in the fabric of the world, and its cohesion is that of a thing. But because it moves itself and sees, it holds things in a circle around itself; they are incrusted into its flesh, they are part of its full definition; the world is made of the same stuff as the body.”[215]

Elsewehere he gives as an example of this condition the blind man's cane, which becomes like an antenna, becomes an element of sight – in fact, in its concrete emanation from the body it could be seen as a realization of the extromissive gaze. A vehicle like a car also, he says, becomes absorbed into the body of its driver, becomes an extension of the body:

> “The blind man’s stick has ceased to be an object for him, and is no longer perceived for itself; its point has become an area of sensitivity, extending

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[214]Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 22.
[215]Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind," 163.

> the scope and active radius of touch, and providing a parallel to sight…To get used to a hat, a car or a stick is to be transplanted into them, or conversely, to incorporate them into the bulk of our own body"[216]

The edge of the body, according to this understanding, is not a merely physical place, it is "where we act"[217]. If sight is not just visual but also haptic, about how we caress or "palpate" the world through our gaze, in the most important sense the edge of our body is the edge of the visible: as far as the eye can see. This is consistent with the assertions made above about the equivalence of Deleuze's and Merleau-Ponty's two invisibles. Indeed following from this we might be tempted to refer to the boundary of Deleuze's invisible through an inversion of one of Juhaani Pallasmaa's phrases – "the eyes of the skin" becomes "the skin of the eyes". While the objection might be raised here that the camera only sees, does not touch, smell, or taste, we know from our experience of cinema that indeed an image can synaesthetically evoke these sensations. This is because the camera remains a tool employed by a human body. And this is precisely my point: a technological instrument, manipulated rightly, can engage with a human body in a manner which enriches experience.

If we accept these points, the door is opened for a problematization of the distinction between body, the tool, and the machine, and a prostheticization of the body which amounts to its extension out into matter, in service of the intentional arc. Merleau Ponty says as much in later writing: "Our organs are no longer instruments; on the contrary, our instruments are detachable organs."[218] Indeed it is worth remembering in this context that the exclusion of the mechanical and the organic from each other is a modern invention, dating only from the 18th century[219].

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[216]Ibid., 165-66.
[217]"What counts for the orientation of the spectacle is not my body as in fact it is, as a thing in objective space, but as a system of possible actions, a virtual body with its phenomenal 'place' defined by its task and situation. My body is wherever there is something to be done." ———, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 291.
[218]———, "Eye and Mind," 178.
[219]Rykwert, "Organic and Mechanical," 12-18.

Though it is not at the centre of my thesis, I have touched above on the cultural context of the last two *Metropolis* tales. It is of some interest to us that the argument has been made that the Japanese cultural context supports the blurring of body and machine, and that this can be done with reference to thinkers for whom Merleau-Ponty was an important reference. One of these is Yuasa Yasuo, who in his work *The Body*[220] draws on the writing of Kyoto School philosophers Watsuji Tetsuro and Nishida Kitaro to argue for a distinctly Japanese or Asian notion of the body. There are many caveats to claims for cultural uniqueness, but there is something to be gained nonetheless from the articulation of this alternate model for the relationship between the mind and the body.

Yuasa characterizes the Western conception of the body, whose origins he traces from St. Augustine to Descartes, as implying an oppositional relationship to the soul or mind. This he argues is the derivation of the modern epistemological division of subject and object[221]. In contrast to this he posits a Japanese framework as articulated by Watsuji Tetsuro, in which there is an implicit unity of body and mind (*shinjinichinyo*) and of subject and object. According to this formulation one should exist not as in the Western model despite or even *in spite of* one's body, but as in Watsuji's words, "by virtue of one's body; I exist in my body, occupying the spatial *basho* [place] of here and now"[222]. Consistent with this formulation the body (any human body) is contextualized in a heterogeneous space which in turn is focused upon it or is inflected by its presence; in Merleau-Ponty's terms we would say the body is *situated* there, not *positioned* in an abstract, homogeneous, Cartesian space.

Consistent with this conception of the body as always contextual is the inclusion of the physical surroundings which are the subjects of the body's attention: not only its space, but its instruments, or what Heidegger referred to as *Zuhandenes* ("things at hand"). This

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[220]Yasuo Yuasa and Thomas P. Kasulis, *The Body : Toward an Eastern Mind-Body Theory*, Suny Series in Buddhist Studies (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987).
[221]Ibid., 40.
[222]Ibid., 39.

is a notion developed by Nishida Kitarô in his writing on acting-intuition, and based on it Yuasa argues that "… the body itself can be said to be a kind of instrument"[223]:

> "Man has not only things, but also his body, as his instrument. Along with having a bodily existence, man possesses his body as an instrument… We see ourselves objectively through and through and yet we always transcend the world of objects. Therein lies our human (subjective) being."[224]

Yuasa continues his discussion of the body with an examination of the notion of "cultivation". He makes the argument that in Western culture the notion of perfectibility implies a continued, even amplified, division of body and mind. Mechanical perfection in this framework implies the elimination of the human body; one is left with the mind on the one hand, which provides instructions to an inhuman mechanical system on the other. Again, for Yuasa this is the consequence of the long history beginning with Greek disdain for labour, through the scholastic view of the body as in opposition to the divine, through Cartesian division of mind and *res extensa*, to the modern machine. It is epitomized by, as I have already asserted (though he does not), the technical body: the robot. Physical or mechanical perfectibility drives mind and body further apart; and this is one aspect of modernization. In contrast, for Yuasa the Japanese model of the body/mind relationship implies that physical perfection is obtained by the closer integration of the body and mind: the perfection of their unity, a perfection usually achieved by disciplining the body (for example in the martial arts, or crafts), with according to Yuasa different implications from those entailed by modern, Western, discipline. Significantly, this discipline is very often achieved in the Japanese context through a manipulation of prosthetics: the instruments of Tea, weaponry, calligraphic brushes, costume, puppets, to name only a few. If the body/mind relationship in Japan is always cultivated through the discipline of instruments, including the body, the prosthetic is always potentially more than a ghost, a trap, or an enemy of the body. It is rather, potentially, the body's complement, its

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[223]Ibid., 54.
[224]Kitarô Nishida, *Nishida Kitarô Zenshu*, 3rd ed., vol. 8 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1979), 283. cited in Yuasa and Kasulis, *The Body : Toward an Eastern Mind-Body Theory*, 54.

extension – it is the body itself. Hence, as I argued with the preface to Chapter Two, the Japanese robot – or mechanical doll – can be seen as implying a culturally-inflected significance for the imagery of the robot.

This argument could be extended further, if we accept some part of Yuasa's claim to a culturally-specific philosophical disposition. My discussion of the animated *Metropolis* suggested something like the simultaneous condition of fullness and emptiness implied by notions of the Buddhist void, and a corresponding relationship of body to place. If a concordance is really possible between Merleau-Ponty's destructuring perception, the coming-apart which brings-together, and Deleuze's suspended, disintegrating-coalescing bodies, the ground in which this alignment takes place would resemble in some sense the seemingly contradictory substance of that void – indeed that could well be a productive way of rendering the void behind the animated *Metropolis*. But I hesitate to make this argument, because to do so calls for a close look at how this Buddhist outlook is inflected today, in the course of Japanese life, influenced as it is by the attitudes from Shinto (nothing new there) but also notions of divinity and ritual absorbed from Christianity, as well as secular attitudes adopted with modernity (each of those arguably implying their own hidden spiritual agendas); and all of these coming into collision at not just one but at multiple historical junctures. The situation is complex.

Indeed the problem with Yuasa's argument is his oversimplification of the Western and Japanese or Asian relationship: the opposition he sets up between what he characterizes as Western and Eastern frameworks. It seems to dismiss the more complex relationship to the body implied in, for example, the carnality of much Catholic imagery. How can one argue that Christianity pushes away the flesh when every Sunday the flesh of God is manifested in ritual? Today in the modern Western context as well as the Japanese, one can identify a yearning for a pre-Socratic relationship of body to machine; indeed this is one of the conclusions of Chapter One of this thesis. Obviously the condition is more complex than Yuasa portrays it. But if one brackets out its implications of cultural and national uniqueness, it can be accepted for its articulation of a way of being in which the

body and its implements are not opposed. Yuasa achieves this in a manner which is consistent with and in fact draws upon Merleau-Ponty.

This line of argument can be extended further. While it is clear that for Merleau-Ponty humanity must be embodied, as I have argued there is an ambiguity about where the limits of the body lie. If the edge of the body is not a merely physical place, if it is rather "where we act", the potential is opened up here for the virtual to become engaged with the physical body: for the flesh to infect the virtual. There is even the hint of this in some of Merleau-Ponty's final writing, in notes from 1959, which both suggest this possibility and articulate the fundamental caveat which must be borne in mind in any proposition of this kind. These words were written a decade after their subject, information theory, was established as a discipline[225]. This field was to provide the foundation for today's virtual environments. Despite the young age of the field it was already of interest to Merleau-Ponty for its implications for perception and our existential condition. He wrote the following notes in anticipation of the task he saw for himself with regard to this area of knowledge:

> "Show...
>
> that information theory applied to perception, and operationalism applied to behaviour – is in fact, confusedly glimpsed at, the idea of meaning as a view of the organism, the idea of the flesh...
>
> that the perception-message analogy (coding and decoding) is valid, but on the condition that one discerns a) the *flesh* beneath the discriminating behaviours b) speech and its 'comprehensible' diacritical systems beneath the information."[226]

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[225] The seminal work for this discipline is Claude E. Shannon, "A Mathematical Theory of Communication," Bell System Technical Journal 27 (1948).
[226] Merleau-Ponty and Lefort, The Visible and the Invisible; Followed by Working Notes, 200-01.

These notes suggest the potential concord between this developing field and a perceptual taking of the world consistent with Merleau-Ponty's thinking. They emphasize that a condition of flesh must be found to permeate the informatisation of the world, as it were, from beneath, in a manner which recalls the imagery of the first *Metropolis*. The condition of flesh remains fundamental to our experience and must be articulated as such in our incorporation of the technological in our makings.

The limits of technology

What are the specifics of this caveat? What strategies are required if the use of technology in architecture is to articulate this condition? The answer, which I will elaborate below, is that technology must be engaged with "an imaginative 'destructuring' that may endanger our presumed existential safety..."[227]. In the terms set out in this thesis, we would say that we must undermine the Ziggurat; that we must reveal the abyss which it dissimulates, if we are to make that abyss flesh..

I've argued after Merleau-Ponty and Deleuze that this instability is a part of our makeup as humans, and also that in modern times the technological contributes to it. This section builds on that argument and draws implications by drawing on the work of Georges Didi-Huberman, in his work *Confronting Images.* This work focuses on the history of art; it is of interest to us for its implications for poeisis. While the book deals largely on the depiction of the human figure, there is no contradiction with the focus of this thesis; what has become clear over the preceding pages has been the shared fate of architecture and the human body as depicted in images. We will see that the same is implied in Didi-Huberman's work.

What is of interest to our argument is Didi-Huberman's discussion of what he refers to as the *pan*, a term derived from both the French word for a patch or splash of colour, and the homophonous "pan!", an onomatopoeic term suggesting the sound of an explosion or a

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[227]Pérez-Gómez, "Dwelling on Heidegger: Architecture as Mimetic Technopoiesis."

blow[228]. He uses this term to refer to the phenomenal effect of (for example) the colour white in Fra Angelico's *The Annunciation* (c. 1440-41), or the yellow wall in Vermeer's *View of Delft* (1658-60). The potency of this white and that yellow works constantly to undermine our resolution of them into "a wall" or "a figure"; rather they vibrate back and forth before our eyes between these two capacities. As he puts it, each of these works "operates constantly in the intertwinings, even the imbroglio, of transmitted and dismantled knowledges, of produced and transformed not-knowledges", in other words of incomplete or incommensurate semiological and epistemological systems. These can only be engaged through an incessant and unresolved dialectic between the descriptive *rendering* of the works' content and meaning on the one hand, and their *rending* or rendering incoherent, inexplicable but existentially and phenomenologically potent on the other.

He discusses this model of understanding with regard to the painted image, particularly the human figure in the conclusion to this book. There is, is he says,

> "a constant work of oscillation – of ebb and flow – ... between a dialectical operation and a symptom of a rend, between a figuration always posed and a disfiguration that always interposes. It is a complex interplay of imitation and incarnation. Before the first we grasp worlds, as we see...Before the second, the ground collapses. Because there exists a place, a rhythm of the image in which the image seeks something like its own collapse. Then we are before the image as before a gaping limit, a disintegrating place... Then we are before the image as before the unintelligible exuberance of a visual event. We are before the image as before an obstacle and its endless hollowing. We are before the image as before a treasure of simplicity, for example a colour, and we are there-before – to quote the beautiful phrase of Henri Michaux – as if facing something that conceals itself. The whole

[228]Georges Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images : Questioning the Ends of a Certain History of Art* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), 246-60.

> difficulty consisting in being afraid neither of knowing, or not-knowing."[229]

It is telling that the instances of the *pan* he cites implicate architecture and the human body in equal parts: a bright wall, the interior of a cell, the body of Christ, a girl's lips. For him both architecture and the body offer opportunities for, and are most themselves, when they are implicated in what he calls "sovereign accidents" which bring into question the nature of figuration itself. In painting this is achieved in a number of ways in which the effect overwhelms the detail including "zones of *accentuation*"; "*folds*"; details "de-perspectivized", "existing only in the flatness of their function as pure colour"; figures which merge with shadow, swatches of cloth become limitless areas of colour, threads turned into rivers of blood. These are moments when the figure is "disfigured by a gush of paint, when a "pictorial 'moment', in its character as colored intrusion, presents us with a stain and an index rather than with a mimetic or iconic form in Peirce's sense. With a material and accidental cause rather than a formal and final cause".[230] As effect overwhelms detail and the image is subsumed in the material of representation, the *pan* is revealed as "the limit-state of the iconic sign, in the sense that it constitutes its catastrophe... its existence in perception has more to do with what Riegl called 'haptic' space—supposing the collapse of planes and a quasi-touching—than with a purely optical existence."[231]

There is a great resonance between Didi-Huberman's discussion and the imagery of our stories, with their machines overrun by labyrinths, spaces once ordered in light then devoured by myth or carnivorous colour, cities destroyed and overwhelmed by gestures which, uniting human figure and architectural icon, dissolve both into dark mists or seas of fire. This strongly suggests that his observations on painting have a relevance for our stories. One aspect of this relevance is that his work allows us to take the step from an

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[229]Ibid., 228.
[230]Ibid., 254.
[231]Ibid., 270.

understanding of the stakes in these stories to the beginnings of a clarification of their implication for poeisis in general and architecture in particular.

This can be found in the passages above which refer to the undermining of formal or final cause by phenomenal effect and by material and accidental cause. Didi-Huberman proposes in fact an overdetermination of causality. If one applies this understanding to architecture, it leads to an interrogation of modernism's privileging of efficient or final cause. The interrogation goes further, though, than merely a questioning of engineering or function: it applies to all systems which attempt to determine, to order by totalizing. If "the *pan* is to be defined as the part of painting that interrupts ostensibly, from place to place, like a crisis or symptom, the continuity of the picture's representational system"[232], so architecture must interrupt the continuity of those systems which pretend to organize a building univalently – only thus can it engage with meaning in a rich and complex way. This implies an undoing of codes, of patterns, a dis-figuring of plans whether architectural or urban, a disruption of icons, types, styles. As in these films emblematic or iconic figures of architecture (Tower, Cathedral, Labyrinth, Hut, City), overlain upon the human figure, envelop and are both destroyed and born in each other, so architecture must undermine the drive to articulate itself as a whole, whether that wholeness is derived from typology (Rossi), symbolic social function (Krier), function (the modern movement), organism (Wright), or mathematics and social structure (Alexander).

In this formulation the role of the materiality of the painting in disrupting its representational system can find an answer in the materiality of the building, the technical and technological stuff of which it is made. If the *pan* subsumes the organization of the image in the materials of representation, subverting formal cause with material cause, the materials of a building can subsume the building's organization and its structural logic used to interrogate the notion of efficient cause. All of which suggests a productive use of monstrosity.

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[232]Ibid., 266.

Didi-Huberman refers to the events which disrupt the representational system of a painting as *sovereign accidents*, by which he means to implicate a psychoanalytic interpretation: “The image which gushes “no longer 'speaks' to us in the conventional element of an iconographic code, *it makes a symptom,* in other words, a cry or even a mutism in the supposedly speaking image.”[233] They correlate with symptoms in response to trauma, the body in “the aberrant, critical state of hysterical convulsions, of extravagance in every movement and posture: gestures (which) have suddenly lost their 'representivity', their code: the extremities become contorted and entangled; the face horripilates and becomes distorted; relaxation and contraction radically intermingle... in short, such a body *no longer resembles itself,* or no longer resembles; it is nothing but a resounding, paroxysmal mask, a mask in Bataille's sense: a 'chaos become flesh'.”[234] But for Freud, despite the apparent chaos of this situation, such moments far from conveying chaos do *mean*; they “convey meaning, engage a destiny”: in this sense especially are they sovereign. I put the study of these films as social symptoms aside at the beginning of this project when I chose to focus on the poetics of these works. But here the notion of the symptom returns to the project, its phenomenological validity buttressed by Didi-Huberman's observation that such sovereign moments are “situated precisely on the boundary between two theoretical fields: a *phenomenological* field and a *semiological* field.” The act of destruction here is engaged in a destiny as the pain felt in the phantom arm was implicated in an intentional arc.

In this sense apocalypse is not just a narrative trope, nor just a response to a vague lust for violence. Rather it reveals a symptomatic event, at the greatest scale, which articulates the need to *destructure* within the act of structuring. All of these tropes suggest an architecture become, if not necessarily physically like, in every other meaningful sense like the Babel of these tales: the building which undermines itself, in a clearing which is also a setting-up. None of this suggests simply a clever game of texts; rather this destructuration engages us in a game with stakes, it is about the ascription, the re-

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[233]Ibid., 210.
[234]Ibid., 260.

presentation, the summoning of, the opening up to meaning through perception[235]. That is why it matters.

What this also suggests is an architecture which does something like what I have claimed for the "thick flat" in anime: which destabilizes the body, which throws the image back into the (human and architectural) body, which inserts us within the moment and through depth in a suspension of time which may be framed technologically but which implies the destructuring or playful use of that technology. There are instances of architecture like this, and a number of them are Japanese.

[235]"If my words have a meaning, it is not *because* they present the systematic organization the linguist will disclose, it is because that organization, like the look, refers back to itself." Merleau-Ponty and Lefort, The Visible and the Invisible; Followed by Working Notes, 154.

2.3 Architectures

The intention of this thesis has been to identify specific issues of concern to architects raised by a confluence of specific works of cinema, manga and anime. It has never been to present an exhaustive survey of works which might be considered to share qualities with anime; nevertheless in order to give a more concrete sense of the kind of architecture which accords with the relationships of architecture, body and image I have sketched above, I include a few instances below. The point is not to present buildings influenced by specific works of anime or anime in general; nor to defend as exemplary each of these spaces or places in all of their architectural qualities. Nor is the intention to present an exhaustive analysis of each building. Each is rather a concrete citation of one or more qualities of form given to us as of architectural concern in the preceding chapters. This chapter is intended to give concrete illustrations of the architectural gestures one might imagine concordant with the stakes outlined in the thesis. It concludes with a return to the notion of *anyspace-whatever*: a brief discussion of how contemporary architecture can be located with respect to that notion in a manner which goes beyond the mere replication of a superflat condition. The points raised in this chapter suggest avenues for further work to elaborate more precisely the implications of my conclusions for built architectural and urban form.

These examples all happen to be Japanese. The relationship of a “Japanese” architecture to a “modern” or an “international” architecture is a complex one[236] and my intention here is not to elaborate that discourse, nor to claim a unique status for Japanese works. Nevertheless, if the following examples are well-representative of the kind of architecture discussed above, that might be taken as evidence that this culture has a particular though

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[236]Torben Berns, "The Paradox of a Modern (Japanese) Architecture" (Thesis (Ph D), 2002), Hajime Yatsuka, "Internationalism Versus Regionalism," in *At the End of the Century : One Hundred Years of Architecture*, ed. Richard Koshalek, et al. (Los Angeles New York: Museum of Contemporary Art, Harry N. Abrams, 1998).

by no means unique inclination toward a phenomenological and visual or symbolic sensitivity, which often privileges the mutual envelopment of the body and its image.

Several of these works can be characterized as embodying a condition of suspended violence which works through technological gestures that overthrow technology. In these gestures a force which seems to threaten the world is held in suspension. This suspension articulates a threat: something looms, a blow is about to fall. Yet this very threat gives the world a significance and brings it to life. It shares something with ritual, which cuts open the flesh of the world, in order that life bleed into it. But this very act threatens to destroy the world, and introduces an instability crystallized in a form which is both dynamic and static. These words might well be applied to Maki Fumihiko's Kaze-no-oka Crematorium, below. Such buildings seem to have been cut from a space other than our own, opening our world onto it. This is often done with an almost surgical precision, yet not following any merely rational principle; and very often with technical virtuosity, even with what might be described as technical or technological ostentation. Yet it never makes the form of the building subservient to technology (in opposition to, for example, British “high tech”). In Matsunomiya Natural Science Museum by Tezuka Architects, a form mimetic of technological installations (implying both smokestack and train carriage) undoes the presumed hegemony of such installations by rendering the form limp, exhausted: it lays itself out along the ground like a broken snake. The corten steel cladding invites rust, speaking literally of technology's undoing. A more playful strategy might also be followed, as in the distortion of structure in Nishizawa Taira's To-machi Forestry Hall, whose basket-like roof/wall framework undermines a simple “structuralism” on more than one level. The irregular structural assembly performs the function of covering the building's largest space. But the framework articulates, rather than a straightforward functionalism, the deeper structure of the mountainous landscape in which the building is set[237]. The structure of the landscape thus undermines the hegemony of technology, and it does so by moving into – inhabiting or perhaps possessing – that assembly. Technological

[237]Taira Nishizawa, "Research on the Natural World," *Japan Architect,* no. 71, Autumn (2008): 12.

expression is not merely discarded here; it is transformed, and through that transformation it actually becomes the privileged means of expression for the landscape.

Fig. 50.: Maki Fumihiko, Kaze-no-oka Crematorium; Tezuka Architects, Matsunomiya Natural Science Museum; Nishizawa Taira, To-machi Forestry Hall

Such architectures involve a profound and interesting contradiction, a twisting of the meaning of technology. Technology goes from being something to do with means and ends, something which does a job, to something quite different; it remains, but it speaks of something more than the technological. Shirai Seiichi's NOA Building represents an urban instance of this weak overturning of technology. Its play of allusion overlays industrial installation or component upon tombstone or stela. Its mute monumentality inverts notions of memorial. Its stained and darkened surface speaks of the passage of time and, implicitly, of the undoing through time of technology's capacity as means to an end. In a strange twisting, the intensity of its resistance to a technological discourse is

derived from the manifesting of technology itself, and in this it shares something with bent hut of the first *Metropolis*. Like that building it represents an upwelling of flesh into the city.

Fig. 51.: Shirai Seiichi, NOA Building

Today the greatest violence which can be done to us is technological: both in terms of damage to our bodies, and the evacuation of our humanity through the technicization of the personal, the social, and the political realms. Technology is here in a strange double condition. It is on the one hand the thing which most threatens us, the most perilous source of violence. In this sense it replaces the rawness of the world, the violence of nature and of the gods, as the locus of our fear. This is very much the message of the *Metropolis* tales. On the other hand, in replacing these things it also restores them. No longer about mere function, nor just a threat to our humanity, it becomes the new thing which brings forth old things into the world.

The double condition of technology emerges in works of popular culture in which technology is both the object of fear and fascination: they involve at once a technophilia

and a technophobia. Technology is the thing which promises, in a sense much more profound than its potential effects on our bodies, to both kill us and save us. Our job is to undo it; to breakdown its hegemony in one way or another. Another building, this one very urban, manages to do this despite its profoundly technological articulation and its capacity as a space of commerce, transit, and publicity. This is Kyoto train station (Kyoto Eki) by Hara Hiroshi and Atelier Phi. A building of this type is of necessity dependent upon technology, and this work makes that explicit. It is organized as an array of bays, articulated by the architect as "the matrix", which ensure soil stability and the spans necessary to accommodate the extensive system of rail tracks and platforms. Seen above, in axonometric, the building can be seen as some kind of robotic machine serving a technical agenda. But the experience of the building belies this. One's movement and gaze are fragmented and overthrown by actual experience, in which the function of building as a machine is rendered secondary to its other capacities. An immense staircase (to the right in Fig. 50) leads not to the train tracks but up to the sky through a steel canopy bent and splayed out to let the sun and the rain in – hardly the normal function of a roof. Both the movement of our bodies and the movement of our gaze up are indirect and deflected. The staircase is skewed and its orientation renders the symmetrical entryway of the station, on second glance, asymmetrical. Our eye is twisted by the play of reflection and bracketing of views by the placement of objects, walls, mirrors and frames. This staircase seems to have no functional justification other than the creation of something like a "space of appearance", in which people present to each other in a complex interplay of the banalities of everyday life (greetings and farewells) as well as games of erotic attraction and power. The intention of all this play seems to be to, in a way necessary to and perhaps only possible in a public building, in Merleau-Ponty's words "change things into spectacle, spectacles into things, myself into another, and another into myself"[238]. The cleverly choreographed manipulation of spatial experiences – staircases, escalators, platforms, walkways, podia, open spaces, "anchors" and "levels" of various kinds – seems to allude intentionally to the work of Piranesi. It undoes the experience of the building as a machine, and remakes it as a labyrinth. And it does this with a language

[238]Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind," 168.

which resonates in particular with the animated *Metropolis;* from the fragmenting skeletal roof structure opening onto space, to the fracturing of the "matrix", the machine become mother.

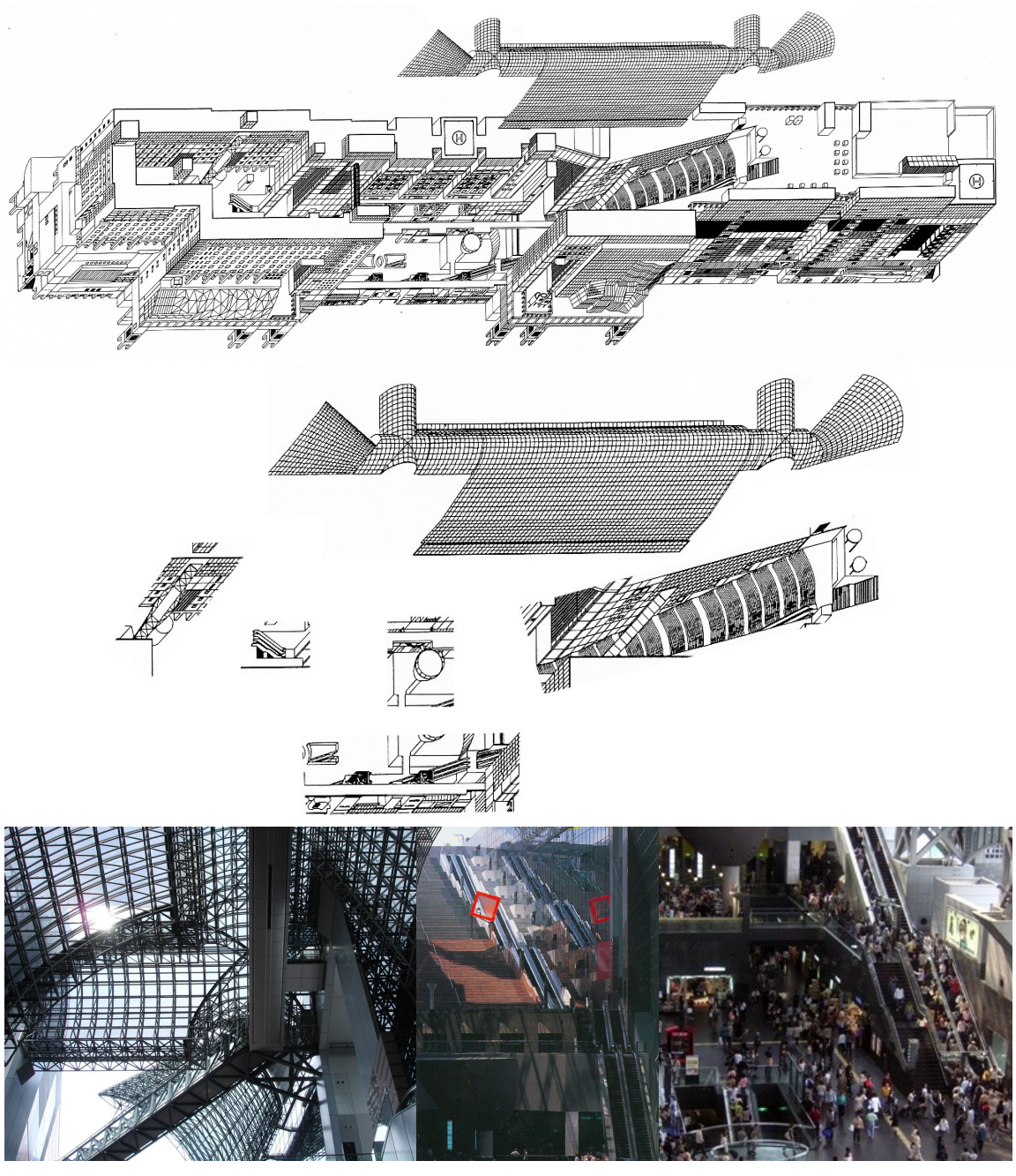

Fig. 52.: Kyoto Station, Hiroshi Hara & Atelier Φ

This is the contemporary Japanese city writ large, in one of its better-informed manifestations. It is an environment in which, formally and socially, surfaces matter; and any visitor to a large Japanese city will remark on the plethora of signs, screens, mechanical installations which adorn the city, what Ashihara Yoshinobu refers to as its "secondary profile"[239]. These are dominant in large social spaces, and there they often fail to represent either a critical use of technology or a development of a surface as more than surface. But there are instances of architectures which transform surfaces into depths – or translate depth into surface – through a play of transparency, opacity and texture.

Aoki Jun's work on the skins of buildings speaks of an embodiedness which is also about lightness, thinness, a flesh translucent yet clouded, stained. In his creation of mists in which one can nevertheless tangle one's fingers, he seems to achieve something like Merleau-Ponty's materiality which is ideality: idea as sublimation of the flesh[240]. The façades of his buildings turn screens into bodies. Hasegawa Itsuko uses an explicitly technological articulation to related effect. In her Yamanashi Fruit Museum a collection of warped lattices are clad in steel mesh: a skin which is cloud-like and whose curving geometries, non-Euclidean distortions of fruit forms, offer a witty twisting of technological geometries which make of their materials something more than material, and less. Ito Toyo is also famed for his play of surfaces; though his work might be said to work in the opposite direction, turning bodies into skins. In the Sendai Mediatheque, for example, he turns the building's structure into a screen of columns which undoes the sense of structure, yet makes of it something more significant than the mere erasure of mass represented by a curtain wall. The model which won this competition loses nothing in its translation to built form; this might well be taken as an instance of image and body interpenetrating each other on more than one level, of body slipping into image and back again into body.

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[239]Ashihara, *The Aesthetic Townscape*, 73-76.
[240]Merleau-Ponty and Lefort, *The Visible and the Invisible; Followed by Working Notes*, 145.

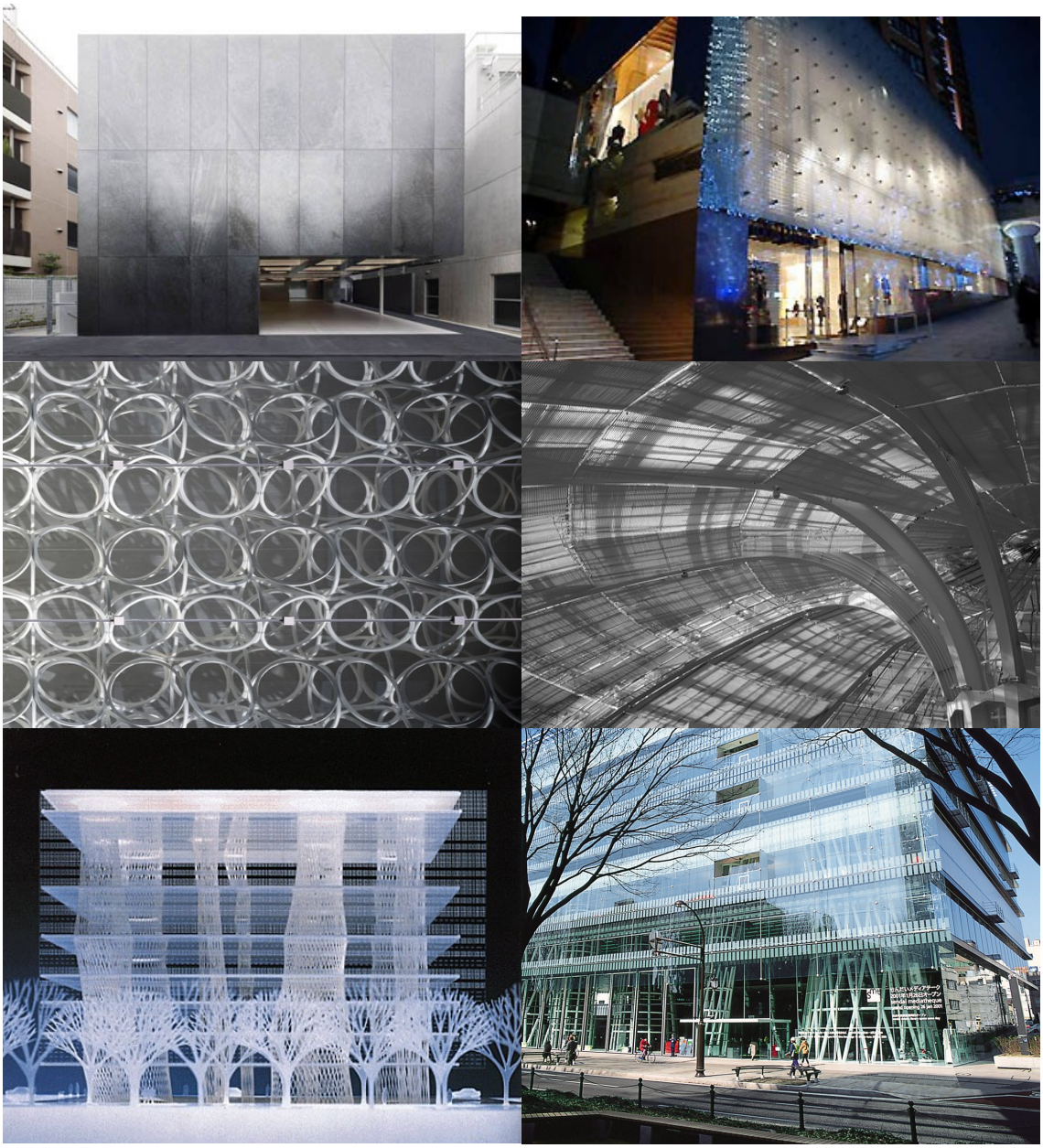

Fig. 53.: Aoki Jun: Go Sees Hiroo; Louis Vuitton, Roppongi Hills, Tokyo; wall detail, White Chapel. Hasegawa Itsuko, Yamanashi Fruit Museum. Ito Toyo: Sendai Mediatheque model and front facade.

Anyscapes

Several of the projects cited above suggest evocative desolations of the kind Deleuze identified as a key articulation of the cinematic *anyspace-whatever*. But these spaces are not merely reproductions of those spaces Deleuze identified as among the origins of the *anyspace-whatever* condition: the devastations of war or the post-war "carpeting in modern architecture" mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, which took form in Japan as what Igarashi termed superflat urbanism. Instead they suggest a twisting of the banalities of the modern city, a twisting analogous to the transformations of technology discussed above. Without pretending to a totalizing view of current architectural discourse in Japan, it is possible to identify two theoretical preoccupations in the architectural engagement of the city relevant to my discussion.

For one thing, there is an obssession with the banal cityscape characteristic of the technicized city. One architect with this interest is Baba Masataka, who has pointed out that "(in) Tokyo, there are many instances of chopped up vestigial space, which are a byproduct of city planning. In such places that have been neglected because of their abnormality, we discover architecture that could not exist elsewhere."[241] His studio, Open A, identifies such spaces, generates a narrative around them, and proposes for them an "abnormal" architecture, some kind of monstrosity, which channels poetry into the gaps within the technicized city. In Baba's words "through this process we arrive at an architecture that a specific space desires – an architecture that can only come into being in one very specific place."[242] Architects like Baba find that such landscapes, injured by modernity, nevertheless hold the promise of a weak overcoming of it; that promise is made possible by the very broken quality of the spaces.

Other architects focus on the centrality of embodied experience to our apprehension of the city. Ando Tadao is of course one renowned example; but I will focus here on the

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[241]Masataka Baba, "Searching for the Architecture a Place Desires," *Japan Architect*, no. 71 (2008): 82.
[242]Ibid.: 76.

words of Kita Norio regarding his own approach to design research: “When assembling knowledge it is important to always take one's own physical perspective as a reference point. Knowledge informed by the sense of physical scale and dimension one derives from the interinfluence of one's own physical size, movements, sense of spatial scale and time scale, physical cognition of the world, and schema of physical experience of all kinds, I call 'knowledge-scape.' ”[243] This form of knowledge is distinct from the technical and technological knowledge which allows architects to engage with the construction industry, with the city as planned object, and with the machinery that finances architectural projects. It focuses on the embodied experience of the city.

Such statements, taken together with the architectural projects cited earlier in this section, articulate both a poignant fascination with the broken condition of today's cities, built up as they are across the holes left by modernity, and a lingering concern for narrative, for the body, and for the phenomenological experience of space. The concern for the banalities of the modern city is shared with a number of animators, for whom the seeming emptiness of everyday life is the ground for stories which themselves can be read as a criticism of these conditions. What is important to recognize here is that this focus on “an architecture that a specific space [or body] desires” suggests that such broken spaces engage with a complex of our own and the city's undiminished yearning: a phantom arm of sorts. Such work both overlooks the abyss, and turns it into more than that: rendering a flesh from hollows of the modern city. It implies, rather than the subjectless view arguably characteristic of superflat urbanism, a view always *through* a subject, though a subject problematized – as are the subjects of our tales.

[243]Norio Kita, "Five Circuits, for Example," *Japan Architect*, no. 71 (2008): 93.

Conclusion

This thesis has explored several ways in which modern crises are elaborated through the poetics of three visual narratives: the *Metropolis* tales. This imagery involves the destruction of bodies and cities, but its most poignant impact might be said to be not upon these (represented) objects but upon the flesh of the medium which represents them. Instances of this include Lang's tides of light and shadow; the quivering planes of Tezuka's manga surfaces; the colourful flesh and dark void of Rintarô's film. The meaning of these tales is borne out by their poetics.

The tensions thus voiced are related to the technicization of man and the problematic divisions of man and world, body and soul, subject and object characteristic of the modern age. The robotic body so important to these stories is, at first glance, the emblem of the Cartesian body. But its use in these tales suggests a continued struggle within us to recover the flesh – a struggle which is played out also on the ground of the city. Our cities as much as our bodies are technicized today: planned, engineered, caught in and reduced to flows of technology and capital. They too seem to yearn for a return of the flesh in some form. These tales imply a reformulation of the city. They imply a movement towards, on one hand the breaking up of the hard forms deposited by the forces of political power and capital (monuments, *grandes allées*, towers, capitols), and on the other hand the disruption of the smooth technical processes designed to maximize fluidity and profitability. They suggest that the city calls for a flesh composed and recomposed in a never-ending cycle of exploration and tentative penetrations of the city's invisible: those aspects of urban life which cannot be planned for.

The approach of the two invisibles implies as I have suggested, and consistent with Merleau-Ponty's writing, an interpenetration or mutual envelopment of the thing and its image. There is an uneasy relationship between these two, involving a spread or shift and a simultaneous spanning which is always – a bit of a stretch, almost ready to break up just as it comes together. This is where human yearning comes from. It always implies a loss,

something bittersweet; and this is indeed the sense played upon by the more poignant works of cinema and anime. There is a loss of the body even as the work of art struggles to recover it. The *Metropolis* tales chart well that condition, and certain works of anime develop it. I am convinced that in our time that recovery is made possible by the mutual approach of the two invisibles, by virtue of which image and body can be thrown back into each other. Neither one can or should escape from the other, but neither can they entirely map onto each other; and hence it is always a weak recovery. There is violence as well as a fulfillment implicit in that condition, and it is voiced by these films.

In making this proposition I have worked from the poetics of these works as I see them, with the help of Deleuze' and Merleau-Ponty's writings on perception. Others are more capable of unpacking the metaphysics implied in this convergence. I do not mean to suggest an easy reconciliation of the understandings of the world on which Deleuze' and Merleau-Ponty's thinking is based; there are certainly important differences between them. But despite that their shared ground has been helpful in developing my understanding of this phenomenon. Deleuze made the observation in a footnote to his work *Cinema 1* that:

> "The only resemblance between Bergson and Heidegger – and it is a considerable one – lies here: both base the specificity of time on a conception of the open."[244]

In the context of this thesis, this is indeed a considerable resemblance between the philosophers whose work formed important bases for Merleau-Ponty and Deleuze. Heidegger's Open, and the concordant notion of a setting-up which is also a clearing, a presentation which is also a concealing, is inseparable from Merleau-Ponty's intertwined invisible and visible. The experience of perception, always dragging or drawing the raw material of experience into an organized (but pre-thetic) formulation, implies the drawing of earth (never merely a neutral "standing reserve") into the form of a world. As perception is a never-ending reformulation of levels and anchors which allows us to

[244]Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, 219. fn 15 to Chapter 1 (p. 10).

recreate our World even in the aftermath of terrible trauma, so our worlding of the Earth implicitly draws permanence out of and into ephemerality. Bergson's Open (and again, I do not mean to minimize the distinctions between them) is also about the ever-new which yet-endures. We experience it in the "mobile section" of film and our experience of change in the world. In both of these frameworks things endure only through destructuring and re-formation over time. Architecture must engage with this, and to do so it needs to embrace a wholeness and a precision which is also about incompleteness and perhaps imperfection.

I have made the argument that the *Verwindung* which we seek implicates the use of technology through its twisting; and I have suggested that this applies also to the emerging art forms such as anime. This is why many contemporary visual representations that seem to include their own undoing in the form of fragmentation, artefacting, imperfect flows of image, can seem so interesting. They articulate the remaking of the world which is a part of being. They are instances of the mingling of that invisible of which Merleau-Ponty spoke with the invisible which Deleuze charted in its movement from the out-of-frame to behind every object on the screen. And my argument across this thesis I think suggests the continuing centrality of an investigation of such phenomena of representation to the project of understanding and designing the city.

In these circumstances flesh is problematic: it can be threatening (Lang's), polluted (Tezuka's), rent or undermined (Rintarô's). It cannot escape these qualities; they are a part of its convalescence, the healing which is also a sickness. I would suggest here that another implication of that problematic condition is the presence, even in the works of art and architecture which speak to us of the most important aspects of our existence, of the very forces against which we strive: capital and commercialism; and conversely, the presence, in some of the popular and in certain respects failed products of these forces, of a voice which nevertheless speaks to us of our human condition. This is why even in the popular arts it is possible to glean something important of use to architects. One might argue that Didi-Huberman did exactly this in appropriating the vernacular objects which decidedly fail to be works of art, Florentine *bòti* or *ex votos*, as key pieces of evidence in

his criticisms of Vasari and Panofsky[245]. Certainly Lang's Metropolis, one of the most influential films ever made and whose poetic images are widely recognized as such, indulges in its share of melodrama and bombast. It and its offspring are pieces of popular culture, not entirely intentional yet expressive of our humanity.

And consistent with these seeming contradictions, depth can be achieved on surfaces, and affective spaces can be nurtured out of desolations. There is something here from which architecture can learn, and from which it must learn if we are to ensure that what makes us come apart – can also be what saves us.

[245]Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images : Questioning the Ends of a Certain History of Art*, 222-27.

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