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The Metropolis versus the City

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The case for the Metropolis:

> *"Over the past decade landscape has emerged as a model for contemporary urbanism, one uniquely capable of describing the conditions for radically decentralized urbanization, especially in the context of complex natural environments."* [1]
>
> — Charles Waldheim, 2006, *The Landscape Urbanism Reader*

The case for the City:

> *"We live today in cities and suburbs whose form and character we did not choose. They were imposed upon us, by federal policy, local zoning laws and the demands of the automobile. If these are reversed — and they can be — an environment designed around the true needs of individuals, conducive to the formation of community and preservation of landscape, becomes possible. Unsurprisingly, this environment would not look so different from our old American neighborhoods before they were ravaged by sprawl."* [2]
>
> — Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck, 2000, *Suburban Nation*

Both Landscape Urbanism and New Urbanism represent radical critiques of contemporary suburban development. They both

acknowledge the environmental and cultural destruction wrought by sixty years of planning that treats urban land as a commodity, resulting in placeless real estate spread across the North American continent. However, these movements view the origin and legacy of postwar suburban planning from differing perspectives. The implication of this is that, as the quotes above suggest, they argue for different responses.

Framed as a debate between opposing scales and speeds of urbanity, this essay will characterize these two models of urbanism in terms of the cultural and social imperatives that underlie their respective formulations and the spatial experiences that result. As competing proposals for repairing and creating settlement patterns, the arguments for both Landscape Urbanism and New Urbanism will be considered as distinctly different, but equally viable alternatives. Whereas Landscape Urbanism prioritizes the spatial ambiguity resulting from a conceptual merging of city and country (the Metropolis), and correspondingly, a speed of experience that Waldheim refers to as *automobility,* New Urbanism finds its muse and its moral imperative in the most traditional of urban types, the street, where a slower pace of movement commonly termed *walkability* is dominant (the City).

As in any debate there is an opportunity for rebuttal, where each of the urbanisms is viewed and critiqued through the lens of the other. The Landscape Urbanists view the New Urbanism's concern with street types and "place-making" as hopelessly naïve and passé, whereas the New Urbanists view the Landscape Urbanist project as a sophisticated form of sprawl.

The schism identified in this point/counterpoint leads to the conclusion that there is little space for overlap. True, there are examples of projects designed by Landscape Urbanists that sit within the kind of traditional urban environments favored by the New Urbanists, for example the "High Line" in Lower Manhattan. However, such parks are not full manifestations of Landscape Urbanism theory. They are framed by buildings and, ironically, the kind of civic spaces supported by the Charter of the New Urbanism. In such examples, Landscape Urbanism is manifested as an aesthetic theory, not a prescription for settlement. As alternatives for the contemporary and destructive pattern of suburban development, i.e., as recipes for city-making or regional planning, these two prescriptions for urbanism are irreconcilable as they do not originate from nor share the same ethical imperative.

Urbanisms at Differing Speeds of Habitation

Proponents of Landscape Urbanism view planning after World War II as a product of the forces of technological and economic modernity — characterized by mass communication, personalized and autonomous transport, and decentralized manufacturing, which necessitate vast logistical networks for warehousing, distribution and sales. In their eyes, the evolution of postwar planning parallels a timeline in which the corner store is supplanted by the supermarket and the latter by the warehouse club. As a result, Landscape Urbanists propose new, and one might say more open-ended, urban paradigms, including those that "challenge architectural conventions of closure and control…."[3] In other words, as will be shown below, they tend to promote urban or metropolitan morphologies that, among other characteristics, lack spatial definition and even celebrate *automobility.*

Charles Waldheim, James Corner, Alan Berger, and others make the case for a "Landscape Urbanism" that is vehicular in its scale yet fundamentally guided by a commitment to environmental restoration. These founding theorists aim at "expanding the scope and efficacy of the landscape project" [4] beyond any given site or program, beyond even such normative urban spatial typologies as parks and streets. In both an homage to the decentralizing forces of natural systems and a recognition of (some might say, fascination with) more than a century of industrial production and contemporary transport modalities as well as sixty years of postwar sprawl, Landscape Urbanism seems intent on diluting the fundamental distinction between city and country. In other words, from a human settlement point of view, it embraces the Metropolis with its boundlessness and corresponding speed of movement, rather than the City with its spatial limits and diversity of pace.

New Urbanists consider the past two generations of planning as an aberration, representing something of a self-imposed collective amnesia rather than a permanent change to the cultural episteme. Rather than representing the forces of modernity, they view the past half-century of planning in terms of the dominating influence of Euclidean zoning and traffic engineering, nothing more culturally significant than that. In fact, they would argue, traditional, pre-war urbanism has proven to be far more resilient in the marketplace than any other model precisely because of its continued cultural relevance. In contrast to Landscape

Urbanism, they argue for an urbanism that is spatially and temporally defined.

Andrés Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, Peter Calthorpe, and other advocates of New Urbanism make the case that pedestrian-scaled urbanism can help restore a sense of community. In both its opposition to the decentralizing forces of postwar sprawl and its recognition of the problems emanating from contemporary real estate development practices, New Urbanism aims to restore the fundamental distinction between city and country. This translates to an explicit embrace of a distinct typology that recognizes the neighborhood, the town, and, most significantly, the City.

Viewed according to this dichotomy, the words "metropolis" and "city" are not used here simply as terms denoting different scales of urban habitation. The term "metropolis" is not meant merely to connote an excessively large and sprawling urban mass, nor even a collection of cities and suburbs. Rather the Metropolis and the City represent different *speeds* of habitation, where different sizes and scales of the building blocks of urban construction are utilized. While the City is composed of neighborhoods defined in size by the pace of a pedestrian, bound together by corridors — e.g., vehicular thoroughfares, rivers, railway lines and the like — the Metropolis is characterized as much by the corridors themselves, i.e., the green, grey or brown swaths of land that connect neighborhoods and districts to one another, defined more by the pace of the automobile.

At the scale of the City, the highway may have a role only in linking city to city. The New Urbanists would eschew their necessity in linking neighborhoods to one another. A highway-less city is necessarily slower, more navigable by means other than an automobile. The ligaments connecting neighborhood to neighborhood will, of necessity, be experienced at a greater diversity of speeds. The City's form is often described in terms of its "walkability."

On the other hand, at the scale of the Metropolis, the highway becomes as much a place to "inhabit" as any other physical component of the urban milieu. Geographic scale is important, but mostly for the experience of place it necessitates, the miles and miles of in-between landscapes or "drosscapes," as Berger calls them," places that are mediated by the frame of a car windshield. And true to form, Waldheim describes the experience of the Metropolis in terms of its "automobility.[5]

Fast Urbanism: Spatial Experience at the Scale of the Metropolis and the Highway

Because Landscape Urbanism does not have an originating manifesto or defining charter (as New Urbanism does), it is challenging to characterize it succinctly. *The Landscape Urbanism Reader,* an anthology edited by Waldheim, is composed of a series of manifestos proposing a future in which the profession of landscape architecture emerges as the definer and shaper of the new metropolis. It is a collection of strategies aimed at ending the real or imagined marginalization of landscape architecture in the field of urbanism, to make landscape architecture as a profession the dominant player in the resurgent field of urbanism.[6] To accomplish this, Waldheim aims at promoting a "disciplinary realignment, in which landscape supplants architecture's historical role as the basic building block of urban design." Yet by oversimplifying the formal language of urban design rather than acknowledging that such design requires a language of buildings, blocks, streets, corridors, parks, landscapes, rivers, regions and more, Waldheim perpetuates an ahistorical and anti-empirical argument for the sake of advancing a highly speculative, theoretical position.

It is a ploy in which most of the contributors to *The Landscape Urbanism Reader* are happy to participate.[7] Allen Berger, for example, laments that "Landscape architects in academia give little attention to urbanization, often dwelling instead on the traditional areas of landscape history — site engineering, construction detailing, and project based design studio education." [8] He goes on to write that as a result, landscape architects tend to overlook the inevitable "waste landscapes," or "drosscapes," [9] those "in-between" sites that simply appear as a result of the normative process of real estate development. By expressing an urgent need for a particular breed of landscape architect to take the lead in the field of urban planning, Berger adroitly sidesteps the evidence that landscape architects are indeed actively engaged as designers, repairers and critical thinkers within the traditional urban milieu. This is because in the end, for the Landscape Urbanist, this is not a turf war but rather an ideological battle over the language of urbanism itself.

Aware that such ideological positioning needs some justification by way of its cultural relevance, if not inevitability, Landscape Urbanism offers circumspect evidence of its connection to American cultural and settlement traditions. In distinguishing Frank Lloyd Wright's Broadacre

City or Ludwig Hilberseimer's New Regional Pattern from eighteenth- and nineteenth-century urban parks, Waldheim asserts that they are "uniquely American typologies in which the fundamental distinctions between city and countryside, village and farmland, 'urbanism' and 'landscape' are dissolved in favor of a third term: a 'landscape urbanism,' for industrialized American modernity." [10]

However, this lineage ignores another set of American settlement traditions, from early New England villages to the French settlements around the Gulf of Mexico to the Spanish settlements of the Southwest, all of which incorporated spatially delimited public realms within defined villages and towns. These traditions continued throughout the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as hundreds of North American towns developed as compact spatial units. Under the Roosevelt administration, the US Resettlement Administration established the "greenbelt" new towns, loosely based on Ebenezer Howard's Garden City, using topography and a protective edge of forestland both to contain growth and as a didactic hieroglyph of community.[11] Even as late as 1957, Colin Rowe and John Hejduk were able to describe such western villages as Leadville, CO, Carson City, NV, and Globe, AZ, as "potent symbols of urbanity by reason of the emptiness through which they are approached."[12] While a case can be made that a "split personality" of sorts has always infused the American psyche when it comes to urbanism, this relegates the debate as merely a case of conflicting theories without acknowledging the well-known and longstanding urban traditions.

Landscape Urbanism correctly argues that the analysis of landscape should play a fundamental role in the making of urbanism, but this is hardly the first time this theoretical ground has been traversed. In *The Reader,* Christophe Girot characterizes Landscape Urbanism's principal goal: to "decipher what happened in city landscapes of the last decades and to consequently act upon them." While Landscape Urbanists are quick to align with mid-century American and European planning traditions, missing is the proper crediting of Patrick Geddes who, almost a century earlier, posited a theory of city planning that forged a relationship between the social and cultural structure of a community as synergistically integrated with its corresponding physical environment. Geddes was confident in his ability to map this relationship and to act upon it as it existed in situ. Urban form, architecture, and all

human settlement and cultural activity, he argued, derive from a region's resources and geography. For Geddes, the "regional survey" method he deployed "gave understanding of an 'active experienced environment,' … the motor force of human development [and] … the mainspring of cultural evolution."[13] This can be contrasted with the views of fellow Scotsman Ian McHarg, whose mapping techniques seemed to relegate human settlement to the leftover bits unfit for other use. Geddes' goal was a merging of human settlement activity with the natural landscape and geology of a place. This statement from *The Reader*, which provides no Geddes attribution, is nevertheless pure Geddes logic: "The promise of landscape urbanism is the development of a space–time ecology that treats all forces and agents working in the urban field and considers them as continuous networks of inter-relationships." [14]

In comparison to Geddes, however, the Landscape Urbanists observe their terrain with a considerably more jaundiced eye. They selectively identify the bits that seem the most interesting; that pique their muse. Eschewing nostalgic definitions of community, they prioritize both the post-industrial landscape, or "drosscape," and the suburban miasma of the metropolis, embodied in such iconic American locales as Houston.

Emphasizing its break from tradition, Waldheim distinguishes Landscape Urbanism from nineteenth-century urban landscape architecture, influenced as it was by the American landscape painters of the Hudson River School and as best observed in the work of Frederick Law Olmsted. He notes that contemporary Landscape Urbanists do not camouflage ecological and infrastructural systems with pastoral imagery. Instead their subjects are the infrastructural systems necessary for modern life (whether currently in use or as relics of a site's industrial past) and "the public landscapes" that result, "the very ordering mechanisms of the urban field itself."[15] Landscape Urbanists find "meaning" in these "enchanted" landscapes as organic and natural manifestations of industrial growth. They are the canvases upon which the Landscape Urbanists act.

Not only do the Landscape Urbanists reject the romantic subject matter of the nineteenth-century landscape painters and designers, they also eschew these artists' techniques for composing spatial experience. Waldheim and his colleagues reject the picturesque, or its cinematic equivalent, *mise-en-scène*, literally "putting in the scene." They view the idea of attempting to frame a set of experiences as one might find in

Central Park, for example, or in one of Frederick Church's expansive canvases, as an invalid technique for place-making. Instead, theirs is a concern for the spaces *in between* the places, what they might call the "black holes" or the New Urbanist might call the background. In his discussion of landscape design as sequence, Christophe Girot expresses his fascination with digital photography as it easily allows for evolving narratives, represented in motion as a characteristic that prioritizes experience over plan. Here we once again encounter the primacy of *dross*. The ability of the camera to frame, record and therefore focus one's perception on the leftover spaces of the metropolis, the "dross," is presented as an important analytical tool that allows the consideration of continuous landscapes. Once again it is the experience of riding in a car that is prioritized.

At first blush, this perspective does not seem to contradict the values of New Urbanism. One of the key analytical tools championed by New Urbanists is the "synoptic survey," a method for rigorous documentation of the particular characteristics of any specific locale.[16] But while the New Urbanists tend to employ in their urban analyses a ground floor vantage point at the speed of the pedestrian, the Landscape Urbanists seem to prefer the "windshield survey" and a detached, birds-eye perspective that only a high-rise tower or aerial photograph can provide.[17] The resulting differences in strategy are profound.

For example, bewildered by the Houston landscape that he observes from the twenty-eighth floor of an office building, Lars Lerup finds that he must rename such conventional concepts as foreground and background, which suppose a compositional strategy, into "stim and dross," i.e., areas of stimulation (shopping malls, high-rise buildings, iconic landscapes) and areas of, well, everything else, seemingly more arbitrary, and less the product of will (dross). In describing this landscape of stim and dross — the metropolis — Lerup warns that, "Urban threats prevail in this huge ecological envelope." Then in describing the dross, "Largely hiding out in the spaces between [the dross]," he contends that "the threats are kept away from the stims." By "threats" he means anything unscripted or circumstantial. In authoring one of the "most interesting manifestos about the urban landscape of the last two decades," according to Berger,[18] Lerup is more interested in the dross than the stim, and who wouldn't be, given such an intriguing characterization?

Lerup continues, noting that a nighttime view from his high-up vantage point may yield few visible patterns, "but the individual points [of light] and their various qualities and constellations are many …. the moving lights easily match the intensity of the far more numerous immobile ones, suggesting the monstrous possibility that none are definitely fixed. All is labile, transient, as if it were only a question of time before all these lit particles would move — billiard balls on a vast table." [19] For Lerup, the city is a place of movement, fast movement, the kind that occurs in a car or a high-speed elevator, a place to be filmed, not photographed. Lest there be any doubt about this, in a footnote, he clarifies, "The hegemony of the pedestrian, the plaza, the street and the perimeter block must be challenged not because the values they embody are no longer valid, but because they are suffused with a set of fundamental misconceptions about the nature of contemporary civilization and its outside, leading to a false understanding of the whole." [20]

Slow Urbanism: Spatial Experience at the Scale of the City and the Street

Others, however, have come to different conclusions about Houston. Writing about the city a decade earlier, Jaquelin Robertson is not so much bewildered as dismayed. Viewing the same iconic, figural structures and vast swaths of urban wasteland, Robertson argues for a relearning of urban ordering systems that had been normative only forty years earlier. Robertson's city is to be experienced at many speeds — walking, driving, by train, by bus. Cognizant of urban design's status as a metalanguage of sorts, a language of languages encompassing architecture, building typology, landscape architecture, hydrology, traffic engineering, and other collaborative disciplines, he argues for "replicable urban design devices, made up of some limited number of generic building types, or urban parts, which when aggregated will create a larger and more cohesive system than we now encounter on the road to the airport…. What we need today is a reasonably simple language of city building that is free of malignancy, is easy to use and has symbolic and ethical value." [21] It is a call for a normative design language that can be coded and institutionalized to create a predictable result.

These two manifestos by Lerup and Robertson, both deans of architecture schools, serve as prologues for the narratives of Landscape

Urbanism and New Urbanism respectively. While Lerup concludes that we must "close the book on the city and open the book on the metropolis," Robertson sees the promise for an "American 'order of things,'" an urbanism that is not at odds with its continent but is somehow inextricably tied to its landscape, an urbanism that embraces virtue and beauty. Both arguments posit a new way of looking at the city. One views traditional urbanism as a social and ecological anachronism, a longing for the return of the "bourgeois pedestrian," in some misguided hope that he/she will bring us a sense of community, while the other sees the city as an essential tool in reformulating humankind's relationship with the planet, arguing for an experience that is both abstract and representational; at rest yet dynamic, both old and new.

While it is important to avoid ascribing too much importance to singular authors, Lerup and Robertson do provide a window into fundamentally different perspectives on urbanism. Indeed, it is at the scale of the street where the most profound difference between the "isms" makes itself felt. In Houston, it is the lack of spatial definition that Robertson finds so distressing, what he refers to as the "Nagasaki Syndrome." Street design is not a simple matter. It begins by considering where the street falls within a cross-section of urbanism. Once context is established, the street is considered not only in terms of its capacity but also its character, including: the height-to-width ratio of building face to building face; the relationship of street trees to those proportions; and whether trees are necessary to further reproportion the space or the street; and the completion of this ensemble with private frontages that mediate between the public realm and the building façade. This composition of the street space must also be considered systematically as part of a larger typology of streets applied to an entire neighborhood or city.

The Metropolis Rebuts the City: Fast Beats Slow

The Landscape Urbanist would argue against such a typological methodology. Controlling the heights of buildings and maintaining the continuity of the street wall are viewed as tropes that come out of an idea about urbanism that overstates the social and environmental benefits of density and spatial definition. They would argue that urban form in North America has been and will continue to be driven by mass automobility, decentralized industrial networks, and private land ownership

rights. To consider reconstituting a "Great Street" would be to ponder the irrelevant, as fruitless as Don Quixote battling windmills. [22]

It follows that the Landscape Urbanists' characterization of New Urbanism as "nostalgic" derives less from the latter's predilection for traditional architectural styles and more from its faith in the city — in traditional urban spatial ordering devices such as the street and the square, which it uses as conveyors of cultural meaning and as the containers within which community structures form. Because New Urbanism fails to properly engage the "dross," it is slow (both temporally and intellectually) and hopelessly sentimental, ignoring vast swaths of the urban landscape while attempting to impose a "dead spatiality … to rule over history and process." Lacking this engagement, New Urbanism is also naïvely at the mercy of the processes "imposed by finance capital." [23]

So, while the manifestos of Landscape Urbanism openly criticize the inherent spatial formalism of New Urbanism, these same manifestos propose, ironically, an equally prescriptive formality. The difference is that dross formality privileges the horizontality of landscape architecture. And, despite Landscape Urbanism's rhetoric about the need for a multidisciplinary approach to urban design, it is a view of urbanism that would not likely emerge out of a more inclusive engagement with stakeholders: neighborhood residents, along with architects, landscape architects, planners, traffic engineers, civil engineers, politicians, lawyers, real estate developers, and even firefighters.

Because Landscape Urbanists are motivated by their ambition to work at the metropolitan scale, i.e., to make very big moves, the highway might be a more important constituent than a neighborhood resident. There are payoffs for this. The opportunity for any designer to create iconic gestures — figures or landscapes, observed at 60 mph — is seductive, if not powerful. Here the assertion that New Urbanists and Smart Growth advocates reject cars fits the narrative position that Landscape Urbanism provides a better, more realistic approach. As Tatom writes, incorrectly, New Urbanists have "demonized cars and the highways that serve them as the primary culprits in a perceived urban malaise and impending ecological disaster." [24]

Landscape Urbanists view the decentralized metropolis epitomized by Houston and reproduced across the continent as "natural," the inevitable result of industrialization and contemporary real estate development

norms. In this context, Landscape Urbanism aims to mediate complex natural and man-made environments and celebrate public infrastructure (highways) in a search for meaningful order in the metropolitan miasma.[25] While not necessarily accepting the status quo, their work is meant to find meaning within an existing template of suburban/urban form, devoid of any call for the transformation of regulatory regimes. There is no need to be concerned with the technical minutiae of built form (from curb–return radii to building heights). While the individual projects of Landscape Urbanism may require significant code variances, no alternative regulatory order is offered. Free from technical and regulatory requirements, the proposed order comes from a reading of place — its history, its ecology, its culture — but it is highly personalized. The City and the Metropolis are scenic stage sets upon which dramatic action takes place. Landscape can thus be viewed as a tool to "reproduce urban effects traditionally achieved through the construction of buildings simply through the organization of low and roughly horizontal surfaces." [26] This creates a significant, if rhetorical, advantage: it is a cheaper, quicker and more flexible way of making a human environment than filling in land with buildings.

This plays itself out in grand public works gestures, such as Barcelona's Cinturon, in which an ambitious circulation system, complete with its own set of decked parks and hyper-turning circles, is conceived as being autonomous from its adjacent urban structure. One is left wondering how such interventions become anything more than glamorized highways, the "black holes" reconceptualized as green holes, and the landowners along the route left to do whatever they please, given the futility of spatial enclosure.

This is not to say that large-scale, individual projects cannot have a transformational or restorative effect on a given place. The High Line in New York, for example, catalyzed an estimated two billion dollars in economic development along its path.[27] But such projects require an erudite and willing client, one who is able to control a sufficient quantity of real estate, with pockets deep enough to transcend the "decorative practices" of New Urbanism, and who can thus elude concern for formal order to focus only on the "systems that condition the distribution and density of urban form." [28] And in the end, such a project is only possible within the frame provided by over a century and a half of city-making. As an

urban pleasure park, built literally within the frame of historic artifact on which it is built, the High Line is, quintessentially, a civic space that sits comfortably within the transect of urbanism that New Urbanism uses as its yardstick. In other words, it does not supplant the basic urban typologies of parks and streets. Rather it fills in the details.

The City Rebuts the Metropolis: Slow Beats Fast

The New Urbanists believe that the urban form still possesses the capacity to provide the framework within which communities can evolve. Therefore, they seem less interested in the metropolitan-scale systems that prioritize *automobility*, focusing instead on the tactics of city-making, including an understanding and deployment of desired typologies that prioritize *walkability.* Their goal is to reconstitute a formal order because, they believe, formal orders are not arbitrary, nor are they the exclusive domain of a bourgeois social order, as the Landscape Urbanists have alleged, but are recurrent across cultures, continents and economic milieus. The New Urbanist argument in support of civic space — including the need for a hierarchy of articulated street spaces — stems from this recognition. These formal, culturally relevant orders are derived from fundamental principles about human scale and time-honored requirements for building civic capacity, defined by sociologist Robert Bellah as the willingness and ability of a populace to utilize the shared resource of cooperation to affect the common good. Civic capacity, he argues, blends civic habits and networks of trust, a recipe in which public space is an essential ingredient.[29]

Thus New Urbanists view metropolises like Houston as aberrations, the result of controls — via financing and deed restrictions (in the case of Houston) or zoning and subdivision ordinances (in other cities) — which actually abdicate control of the city's physical form. New Urbanism aims to upend the existing regulatory structures that have codified suburban sprawl and established the primacy of the automobile. They aim to transform the suburban environment through a context-sensitive urbanism of streets, squares and public transportation, and to repair the urban landscape by filling in under-utilized and abandoned sites, inverting suburban-style back-front relationships while reprogramming streets and neighborhoods from mono-cultural to diverse environments. To accomplish these tasks, New Urbanists concede the need to form working

relationships with those in power, i.e., the development community, regulators, and capital markets. This renders New Urbanism not only compositional, but technical and political.

Their concern for walkability and urban scale notwithstanding, the New Urbanists have not ignored the larger regional planning issues that contemporary settlement patterns require. Calthorpe and Fulton's *The Regional City* elegantly connects the dots between the "emerging region, the maturing suburb, and the renewed city" as interrelated phenomenon.[30] "Designing the region IS designing the neighborhood" [emphasis mine].[31]

Irreconcilable Differences

The emerging differences between Landscape Urbanism and New Urbanism goes beyond matters of aesthetics, theoretical propositions, or proclamations about lineage. These differences point to a struggle to define an urban ethos for the twenty-first century. Landscape Urbanists see the "site," which may be at the scale of the city or the region, as having inherent characteristics, where the role of the urbanist is to make visible those characteristics. But their implementation of this ideal is inexplicit. They offer only limited ideas for fixing the vast array of urban and ecological problems brought on by postwar physical planning, preferring to use drossscape as a palimpsest upon which poetry may be composed. It is telling that Landscape Urbanists eschew direct empirical observation of, for example, the day-to-day interactions of people, which they dismiss as "leading to a false understanding of the whole." Ignoring empirically based social effects, they respond to the ecological ramifications of sprawl by relying on technological solutions. As Waldheim suggests, hopefully, "There may be a form of *automobility* that is carbon-neutral or in which the consequential effects of *automobility* are mitigated." [32]

Most of us can acknowledge, at least, that Landscape Urbanism has brought to the forefront a discussion of the leftover landscapes — the "dross" — that don't easily fit within the New Urbanist frame. New Urbanists sometimes relegate these spaces to "special districts," which can include anything from a designated area for big box retailers to monofunctional industrial areas or airports and highway rights-of-way (the "dross," on steroids). This is particularly fertile ground for the Landscape Urbanism.

At the same time, the Landscape Urbanists' research may have brought them to acknowledge many of the conditions that the New Urbanists have been at the forefront of resolving. For example, Waldheim asserts that "we might imagine suburban communities in the US being retrofitted, reorganized, to accommodate pedestrian activities, bikes, smart cars and car-shares and then converting the suburban lawns into productive landscapes. Taken as a whole it's a fairly radical vision, but stated in more incremental terms." When viewed within a context of New Urbanist agendas, as advanced by Dunham-Jones and Williamson in *Retrofitting Suburbia*, Tachieva in the *Sprawl Repair Manual*, and DPZ and Low in the *Light Imprint Handbook*, this hardly seems like a breakthrough idea.[33]

The differences between New Urbanism and Landscape Urbanism cannot be characterized by the firmness of the terrain (hardscape versus softscape) — by urbanism versus naturalism — since both lament the absence of "urban form and process from any ecological analysis."[34] Instead, the difference lies in the pitting of the Metropolis against the City, of metropolitan scale formulations versus human-scale priorities. Landscape Urbanism celebrates design for the vision it brings and the set of experiences it can conjure up within the imagination of a mobile culture, but it rejects the reality of city-making. Where this reality is engaged, it is viewed as a condition beyond the designer's control, not something that can be creatively acted upon.

Landscape Urbanism arose out of dissatisfaction over the marginalization of landscape architecture, bound as it was to the leftover spaces that remained after the planners, architects and transportation engineers had finished. It evolved out of an astute reading of utopian proposals for decentralized urbanism as well as a reframing of decentralized settlements embodied in places like Houston. The sprawling metropolis came to be viewed as a place to analyze, reframe and even celebrate for its inherent modernity, automobility and metropolitan scale.

New Urbanism originated not from any particular utopian fascination or celebration of the flotsam and jetsam of contemporary urbanism. Rather, it grew from a critical appraisal of Main and Elm Streets, not for nostalgic purpose, but for the contemporary lessons of human settlement they embody. It continues to evolve as an interdisciplinary movement destined to catalogue, through experience and pedestrian-level analysis, what works and what doesn't — at every scale and every context of

human settlement, placing that acquired catalogue of experience at the service of city-making.

Landscape Urbanism argues that the Metropolis is our destiny, because we are driven to it by the inevitable advance of human culture. The only ethical imperative here is how artful we are with the landscape we are given. By contrast, New Urbanism argues that the City, and more importantly the public spaces contained within it, are important to our society because these places of urbanity are necessary in building civic capacity. In other words, an urbanism of streets, spaces and buildings continues to be relevant.

Endnotes

1 Waldheim, Charles. 2006. *Landscape as Urbanism*. In Waldheim, Charles, Ed., The Landscape Urbanism Reader. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, p. 37.

2 Duany, Andrés, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck. 2000. *Suburban Nation*. New York: North Point Press, p. xiii.

3 Pollak, Linda. 2006. Constructed Ground: Questions of Scale, In Waldheim, Charles, Ed., *The Landscape Urbanism Reader*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 127.

4 Corner, James. 1999. *Recovering Landscape*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, p. 12.

5 Waldheim, Charles. 2008. Urban Design after Oil: Charles Waldheim on Automobility, youtube.com/watch?v=6Jaq9FFDOXw

6 Of course New Urbanism counts landscape architects as significant theoretical and professional contributors in its ranks, so the profession was already a player.

7 Among them, Julia Czerniak acknowledges the landscape designers' conventional analysis of site ecology and terrain, but laments the small number who would "draw from a site's specific organizational systems, performative agendas, formal languages, material palettes and signifying content for use when generating landscape design work," in Looking Back at Landscape Urbanism: Speculations on Site, p. 107. And Linda Pollak writes about the possibility of widening landscape architecture's purview to focus on cultural and historical processes as well as its more traditional considerations of nature and ecology in Constructed Ground: Questions of Scale, p. 127.

8 Berger, Allan. 2006. Drosscape. In Waldheim, Charles, Ed., *The Landscape Urbanism Reader.* New York: Princeton Architectural Press, p. 199.

9 Berger's term "drosscape" comes from a reading of Lars Lerup's article Stim and Dross. 1994. *Assemblage 25*. Cambridge, MA: MIT.

10 Charles Waldheim, Precedents for a North America Landscape Urbanism. 2008. *Center 14: On Landscape Urbanism.* Austin, TX: Center for American Architecture and Design, p. 293.

11 See Stein, Clarence. 1957. *Towards New Towns for America*. New York: Reinhold. Greenbelt, MD, was to be "of a size that makes possible a full measure of social life, but no larger." Stein quotes from the "accepted definition of the Garden City" and from the Report of the Senate Subcommittee, written by Senator Paul H. Douglas: "The particular portion of the amendment relating to adequate open land is intended to preserve as far as practicable the original design of having each of these projects protected by green belt of park and forest land surrounding such a community" (p. 136).

12 Rowe, Colin and John Hejduk. 1957. Lockhart, Texas: *Architectural Record,* March, p. 202.

13 Hall, Peter. 1990. *Cities of Tomorrow: An Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design in the Twentieth Century.* Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, p. 140.

14 Corner, James. 2006. Terra Fluxus. In Waldheim, Charles, Ed., *The Landscape Urbanism Reader.* New York: Princeton Architectural Press, p. 30.

15 Waldheim, op cit., p 39.

16 For a description of the synoptic survey, see Codes Project website, codesproject.asu.edu/php/your_life.php

17 For a discussion of the role of aerial photography in Landscape Urbanism, see Waldheim, Charles. 1999. Aerial Representation and the Recovery of Landscape. In Corner, James. 1999. *Recovering Landscape.* New York: Princeton Architectural Press, pp. 120–39. Among other things, Waldheim highlights the use of aerial "surveillance" as a tool for identifying new sites for work, such as transportation corridors, infrastructure easements, and flight patterns of urban airports, among others.

18 Berger, op cit., p. 201.

19 Lerup, Lar. Stim and Dross. 1994. *Assemblage* 25. Cambridge, MA: MIT, pp. 94–107.

20 Lerup, footnote 5, p. 106.

21 Robertson, Jaquelin T. 1983. In Search of an American Urban Order, Part I: The Nagasaki Syndrome. *Modulus 16.* Charlottesville, VA: The University of Virginia Architectural Review, p. 6.

22 Tatom argues that "Allan Jacobs's documentation, Great Streets, fuels the prevailing narrative of lost urbanity that permeates the public discourse by proposing these historic urban forms as models to solve contemporary needs for circulation and public space." She never actually gets around to explaining why these historic forms are not appropriate. She assumes that the reader just understands this as a given. Tatom, Jacqueline. Urban Highways and the Reluctant Public Realm. In Waldheim, Charles, Ed., *The Landscape Urbanism Reader.* New York: Princeton Architectural Press, p. 183.

23 Harvey, David. 1996. *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference.* Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, p. 420.

24 Tatom's assertion that the New Urbanists demonize the automobile is unsupportable. It would be more appropriate to state the New Urbanists reject the hegemony of the automobile and its associated infrastructure over other forms and speeds of movement and their related infrastructural requirements, instead favoring an equivalence of circulation technologies and means. Tatom, p. 183.

25 My characterization derives from Waldheim's assertion: "In place of traditional dense urban form, most North Americans spend their time in built environments characterized by decreased density, easy accommodation of the automobile, and public realms characterized by extensive vegetation. In this horizontal field of urbanization, landscape has a newfound relevance, offering a multivalent and manifold medium for the making of urban form, and in particular, in the context of complex natural environments, post-industrial sites, and public infrastructure." Waldheim, Charles. 2006. Introduction. In Waldheim, Charles, Ed., *The Landscape Urbanism Reader.* New York: Princeton Architectural Press, p. 15.

26 Waldheim, Charles. 2008. Precedents for a North America Landscape Urbanism. *Center 14: On Landscape Urbanism*. Austin, TX: Center for American Architecture and Design, p. 292.

27 According to Hawthorne, Christopher. 2011. Critic's Notebook: Shifting Horizons in Santa Monica Parks Design. *Los Angles* Times, July 30. The High Line was designed by James Corner Field Operations with architects Diller, Scofido + Renfro and garden designer Piet Oudolf.

28 Corner, Terra, op cit., p. 28.

29 Bellah, Robert Nelly. 1985. *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

30 Calthorpe, Peter and William Fulton. 2001. *The Regional City.* Washington, DC: Island Press.

31 Ibid. p. 49.

32 Waldheim, op cit., 2008.

33 See Dunham-Jones, Ellen and June Williamson. 2009. *Retrofitting Suburbia.* Hoboken, NJ: Wiley; and Low, Thomas E. and DPZ. 2008. *Light Imprint Handbook,* version 1.3. Charlotte, SC: DPZ Charlotte.

34 Corner. 2006, p. 27, and Low and DPZ.