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## "(E)merging Discourses: Architecture and Cultural Studies"

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# (E) MERGING DISCOURSES ARCHITECTURE AND CULTURAL STUDIES

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## Abstract

Three recent works, Rosalind Galt's *Pretty*, Anne Cheng's *Second Skin*, and Daniel Purdy's *On the Ruins of Babel* incorporate architectural history and architectural discourse into their analyses in ways that are new to their respective fields ranging from studies of film, gender, and race to intellectual history. Placing these three works in one essay allows for a detailed review of the ways in which each author employs architecture, at the same time as it reveals the benefits and challenges of incorporating architecture into cultural studies. The essay discusses the contributions of each work to their fields and also takes advantage of the different approaches to culture and architecture to explore the ways in which this relationship might continue to inform and generate productive studies.

## Résumé

Trois œuvres récentes : « *Petty* » par Rosalind Galt, « *Second Skin* » par Anne Cheng, et « *On the Ruins of Babel* » par Daniel Purdy intègrent l'histoire architecturale et le discours architectural d'une façon innovatrice à des domaines qui vont des études filmiques aux études sur les genres, aux études raciales et à l'histoire des idées. Regrouper les trois œuvres dans un article permet d'examiner la manière selon laquelle chaque auteur emploie l'architecture, ainsi que de faire ressortir les avantages et les défis d'incorporer l'architecture dans le domaine des études culturelles. Cet article évalue les contributions de chaque œuvre à son domaine respectif, mais il profite aussi de la variété d'approches de la culture et de l'architecture pour explorer la possibilité que ces rapports interdisciplinaires puissent continuer à ouvrir la voie à des formes de recherches novatrices.

Architecture is a medium that appears in our daily lives. We experience a building as a façade, a visual field that is as part of daily life as the flickering images of the television or the advertisements on buses or in windows. We also experience its spaces, both those of the interior and those which frame the exterior world.<sup>1</sup> Both an optic and haptic experience, architecture is most often experienced in distraction, as Walter Benjamin once aptly noted.<sup>2</sup> In scholarship, as in daily life, architecture appears most often, and most visibly, as architectural practice, i.e. completed construction. In recent years, cultural studies have recognized the significance of the built landscape and produced works that focus on specific architects and architectural movements or speak to urban building programs and their social, political, economic, or cultural effects.<sup>3</sup> These studies rely, for the most part, on architectural practice as a physical representation or embodiment of policies and cultural themes. Architecture, however, is more than construction or a resulting building; it is a discourse that (in its place between science and art and in its reference to history and culture) contributes to numerous other discourses. Despite this, cultural studies do not often look to architectural thought and debate to understand its contribution to our understanding of culture or other media forms.<sup>4</sup> Such an understanding of architecture as discourse is at the center of the three works to be reviewed here. As a group, Rosalind Galt's *Pretty*, Anne Cheng's *Second Skin*, and Daniel Purdy's *On the Ruins of Babel* reveal architectural practice and discourse as productive fields for cultural studies.

In all three works, European architectural discourse is woven into cultural and historical analysis. In this, however, each scholar employs aspects of architectural discourse to very different cultural contexts. Two of the titles, namely Galt's *Pretty* and Cheng's *Second Skin*, contribute to Film Studies, and as they do so, they rely upon early film and film criticism's development at the time of the emergence of Modernism in architecture. While Galt investigates ornament and its use as a descriptor of marginalized films in the history of film criticism from then to now, Cheng uses architects' fascination with Josephine Baker as a way of reconceptualizing

race within European Modernism. Both studies employ themes of architectural discourse in their projects to redefine critical discourses on film, bodies, gender, sex, nationality, and race. Purdy's *On the Ruins of Babel*, in contrast, has neither a focus on film, nor does it elaborate on critical discourses of sex, race, or gender. His work takes a broader historical perspective than Galt's or Cheng's and traces architecture as a metaphor in modern German intellectual history. Like Galt and Cheng, Purdy sees architecture as more than a history of buildings and asks how architectural discourses and structures change over time. This historical perspective provides the reader with a deeper understanding of how German culture conceptualizes issues of aesthetics, epistemology, the individual, and history in architectural terms.

All three works expose different conceptions of what constitutes architectural discourse and how it can be mobilized to better understand other fields. As already mentioned, architecture engages both visual and spatial themes. In European architectural Modernism, however, architectural change is often measured visually and through changes in the surface of architecture. Indeed, radical shifts in the understanding and creation of architecture as a visual field take place during the early twentieth century in Europe. This is the period in which the Viennese architect Adolf Loos denounces ornament as a crime and architects in the US and Europe use glass and steel architecture beyond its already common industrial forms. Amongst this debate and development of a new visual landscape of architecture, Josephine Baker is at the height of her career and film emerges as a field of criticism. For Galt, architectural discourse and its anti-ornamentalism allows her to understand the origins of the aesthetic assumptions of film criticism. For Cheng, the same discourse on ornament is more than a debate over the visual and is tied inextricably to an understanding of its relationship to the interior. This relationship, Cheng notes, is undergoing transformation, and Modernism's differentiation between the surface of a building and its interior thus allows her to reconceptualize the relationship between skin and flesh. Purdy also recognizes that discourse on

the surface and façade of architecture is connected to its spatial constructions. His work looks at this aspect of architectural discourse, in order to better understand how intellectuals deploy architectural metaphors in their thought.

The works of Purdy, Galt, and Cheng show how moments of transformation in architectural discourse reflect in and upon other fields. In what follows, I will trace and evaluate the ways in which these three scholars employ architecture in their works. I will discuss each work separately, for not only does each interact with architectural discourse to different effect, but each work also has consequences for their fields of study beyond their use of architectural discourse. In conclusion, however, I will return to the question of how all three works base key arguments upon understandings of architectural history, architectural discourse, and architecture's cultural impact.

In *Pretty*, Galt mobilizes architectural discourse in order to understand an emerging visual culture at the outset of the twentieth century. Her work focuses on marginalized cinematic forms and themes, which she collects under the term "pretty." The "pretty," as she defines it, is a minor taste concept, and to that end, she appropriately invokes Ngai's work on "cute."<sup>5</sup> Although a seemingly innocent, even neutral, term in the spoken vernacular, Galt argues that film criticism associates the term "pretty" with the feminine, decorative, and everyday, and in the association with these concepts, has negative connotations. Early film criticism valued masculine, realist forms of film and these characteristics defined a theory of art and avant-garde films that continue to determine which films are culturally significant. As Galt points out, this view of film did not consider the ways in which it silently excluded non-Western film and aesthetics. Further, it continues to do so. Her book's goal is to recover "pretty," in order to generate a new film criticism, one that is global in its form, content, and reception and thus more reflective of the geopolitics of film today.

To establish a history of the source of anti-ornament in film, Galt turns to Loos and Modern architecture. Loos is the central figure of, and his writings and buildings are the evidence for, the Western rejection of ornament in Modernism. Loos's emphatic rejection of ornament in his lecture turned influential essay "Ornament and Crime" is also a rejection of non-Western aesthetics; he locates the ornamental in the tattoos of the Papuans in order to denounce it as inferior and antiquated.<sup>6</sup> Galt relies on this anti-ornamental reading to construct her history of aesthetics since Modernism and in so doing neither considers alternative perspectives in architectural discourse nor takes into account that Loos's essay is not isolated in its rejection of non-Western aesthetics and that he might be exaggerating in order to emphasize a point. Stated more explicitly, Galt reads Loos's anti-ornamentalism as evidence for European Modernism's collective rejection of non-Western aesthetics and for its definition of ornament as exotic and foreign.<sup>7</sup> She supports this through a traditional reading of architecture that begins with Loos, is supported by Le Corbusier, and is made permanent in the work of architectural historian Nikolas Pevsner.<sup>8</sup> She then pairs this view of European Modernism with the history of iconoclasm in art history, philosophy, and film and with a history of Classicist and Neoclassicist aesthetics and their rejection of decoration, particularly the arabesque, in favor of the (masculine) line. These various strands of aesthetic history, she argues, collude with an emerging European film criticism at the start of the twentieth century and find an echo in film criticism's categorical rejection of decoration and ornament in film, a rejection based in the sexed, raced, and gendered language of critics and constructed in order to establish cultural validity for the emerging medium in Europe and the US. This early film criticism, as Galt goes on to describe, relies upon a discourse of feminization and exoticism to establish the avant-garde, artistic, and political character of "real" or "culturally valuable" film against a commercialized and (feminized) popular film industry.

Galt boldly asserts a political view of film that insists upon looking at the filmic "pretty" in new ways, and she does so with ample evidence from film criticism and

with acute analyses of a diverse array of marginalized films, such as Baz Luhrmann's *Moulin Rouge!*, the work of Derek Jarman and Ulrike Ottinger, and Mikhail Kalatozov's *Soy Cuba*. This is certainly the strength of her study: her innovative discussion of post-war film theory and film. In this part of her analysis, she considers alternatives to the common binaries of surface/depth, white/black, subject/object, "pretty"/real and lays out a complex network of the ways in which the discourse of film criticism constructs decorative, ornamental, pleasurable surface, and image-oriented film as politically, aesthetically, and culturally impotent. She continues and notes that this discourse disregards subversive possibilities and closes its eyes to a theory of film that breaks free of its Western binds to starkness and distance as the sole forms of political viability in film.

Due to the significant work Galt performs in her analysis of film and film criticism since the late 1940s, it is unexpected that her work positions itself much less critically vis-à-vis historical discourse and contexts. While she presents and criticizes the history of film criticism, she does not include more than brief references to pre-WWII films. In addition, her work assumes, for the most part, that Western aesthetics has a history of binary categorization that rejects one value (non-Western, feminine, ornamental, exotic) for another (white, masculine, Western). This history is presented as continuous and linear, with some slight shifts in the view of its content but no fundamental debate over its basic form.<sup>9</sup> Put more simply, Galt's study implies that the binary and hierarchical views of the past (those of early Modernism and post-WWII film criticism) must be overcome in the present, suggesting that the entire history of Western aesthetics constitutes a raced, gendered, and sexed discourse that positions the white European male as the source of power and domination.

An example from early film criticism that characterizes Galt's tendency in her work to assert, and not question, such hierarchies (particularly before WWII) is her discussion of the film critic Emile Vuillermoz and his reference to "craft." (Galt 107) Galt cites a 1918 review

by Vuillermoz in which he refers to the filmmaker Abel Gance as a "good craftsman." Pointing to Loos's denigration of craft to establish the concept's historical context, Galt claims that Vuillermoz's use of the word "craftsman" to describe a filmmaker implies said filmmaker is not an "artist," for it is the artist who has a higher cultural value. Certainly, this is a possible reading of Vuillermoz's use of the term; however, it is not the only implication of the use of "craftsman" in the context of the early twentieth century. Galt neglects to note that architects, philosophers, and designers of the early twentieth century are in the midst of a debate on the relationship between craft and art, set into motion by a rise in technology and new means of mass production. This debate generates a much more subtle relationship between craft and art than the simple hierarchy she invokes here. Loos himself wrote of the respect that needs to be given to a master craftsman when it comes to the design of objects.<sup>10</sup> Indeed, the necessity of promoting craftsmanship in design and design education is also a central goal of the Bauhaus, a school whose social and aesthetic import in Modernism is widely acknowledged and to which Galt does not refer in her overview of architectural history. As in her presentation of Loos's comments on ornament, Galt puts aside the historical context of debate and with it any renegotiation of Western aesthetics, in order to present a stark picture of the period as anti-ornament and anti-decorative.

I do not wish to imply that Galt presents false information in her discussion of the Western history of aesthetics, as she has certainly done much historical work to present her narrative of Classicism, Neoclassicism, and Modernism. Instead, I suggest that these remain historical excursions, simplified and isolated as presentations of Western aesthetics, and thus they detract from the complexity of the main focus of her work, which is the politics in and of film criticism and film since 1960. It is in her investigation of the "pretty" and her call for a look at ornament, style, surface detail, arabesque camera movement, and color as a marginalized political force in film after 1960 that *Pretty* constitutes a substantive contribution to Film Studies. In this endeavor, Galt offers ample evidence from the history of film criticism

and repositions a wide array of films within that history. The breadth of films she analyzes—from avant-garde and queer film to commercialized popular film and art cinema—and her careful articulation of the decorative images and objects in the films and in their contexts is impressive. Here in her work, discourses of gender, race, sex, and the exotic become visible and are unpacked by exploring alternative ways of generating political meaning. For instance, *Soy Cuba*, a film commonly praised as significant for film history yet denounced as politically and socially impotent, gains new depth and texture with Galt's exposition of key scenes, in particular the funeral procession. And, as Galt compellingly argues, positioning film's surface, image, and decoration at the center of film criticism has revolutionary potential for film theory in global cinema today. Thus, her work on post-1960 film is an essential contribution to renewing the field of film criticism.

In her presentation of ornament and surface, Cheng's *Second Skin* offers an alternative to Galt's *Pretty* when examining the discourses of race, gender, and sex in Western Modernism. Cheng does not contradict the assertion that Western Modernism is a discourse dominated by white Western males. She, like Galt, stresses how the privileged position of the masculine, white, straight model generated a hierarchy to the detriment of the objectified Other. And yet, she asks new questions of this hierarchy: in what ways does this relationship change the object *and* subject? How can we consider agency on both sides of the subject-object relationship? And how does this provide new insight into the construction of race?

To answer these questions, Cheng invokes Modern architectural discourse surrounding ornament and surface, in order to approach the construction of race from a radically new direction. Architecture allows her to review the relationship between skin and flesh, as well as object and subject, for in Modernism, the surface gains a material significance independent of its structural dimensions at the same time as the spaces of architecture are radically redefined. Like Galt, two central figures of architectural Modernism form Cheng's

discussion here: Adolf Loos, who designed a never-to-be-built house for Baker, and Le Corbusier, with whom Baker had an affair. Admitting that Loos's polemic essay "Ornament and Crime" invokes racial and gendered speech in order to establish the need to advance a new aesthetic program, Cheng does not assume that Loos takes this stance throughout his work. As a result, she approaches Loos's design of the Josephine Baker house in a way as yet unexplored in scholarship. She sees the objectification of Baker in its construction but refuses to eliminate Baker's agency or reduce Loos's role in the project to one of master over performer. This discussion and others rely upon unique connections amongst cultural products of the time. She notes, for example, the role of plastic, prison stripes in fashion, gold, and dirt, at the time of Josephine Baker's performances and these provide her with new interpretations of common Modernist readings of skin, surface, and race.

Through examples from film, literature, architecture, and art, Cheng delves into the complexities of a critical discourse on Modernism which emphasizes the agency of European white males and thereby assumes the passivity of non-European subjects. Here, Picasso's famous visit to the Trocadéro, Le Corbusier's affair with Josephine Baker, and Portia's choice of a leaden coffin become the textual evidence of the contamination of both object and subject in the (visual) construction of race and gender. These, she argues, revise our view of race and Primitivism as simple issues of "Otherness" in Modernism. As her work redefines our understanding of Primitivism and Orientalism, race and subjecthood, Cheng does not stray far from the figure of Baker, the core of her study. She incorporates analyses of all aspects of Baker's performance from her films to her photographs and her biography. Thus, her work is both an innovative study of Josephine Baker as well as an important contribution to Cultural, Film, and Visual Studies of Western Modernism.

Ultimately, however, Cheng's interest does not lie in all of these important revisions to our understanding of Western Modernism. Instead, she aims to present a more nuanced view of the history of race in order to approach

contemporary racial politics. Refusing to look at skin as an embodiment of subjectivity, Cheng challenges contemporary constructions of race, particularly those that stress the agency of the performance or the mastery of the subject that colonializes or dominates the “Other”. Her historical work on race demands a new racial politics that accepts authenticity as contradictory and recognizes “the predicament of embodiment” (Cheng 170-171). Like Galt, Cheng calls for contemporary political change, and architectural discourse provides her with an essential referent in the construction of race.

Cheng’s work starts with the visual in her study of Baker in architecture, film, theater, and photography and out of these discourses emerges her new view of the modern subject. It is this modern subject and the specifically architectural connections which intellectuals invoke in its creation that are the subject of Purdy’s *On the Ruins of Babel*. From the outset, Purdy establishes that architecture lies at the center of philosophy, poetry, and critical theory in Europe even as it emerges as a discipline. Indeed, architectural terminology and debates structure both European society and thought. His exhaustive study begins in the seventeenth century with the European rejection of the classical order of columns and continues into discourses on building and memorialization in contemporary Europe and the US.

Important to the development of architecture in Europe is the major shift in architectural thought from a regulated aesthetics to one that is open to change in style and in period in the sixteenth century. Prudy takes this shift as a starting point to discuss the role of architecture in German intellectual thought, most notably in the work of Kant, Goethe, and Benjamin. In case studies on each of these writers, Purdy illuminates the way in which they refer and rely upon architectural metaphors. To do so, he delves into the discourse of architecture and architectural theory of their time. All of the significant names of European architectural history and theory are referenced—from Palladio to Laugier and Gideon—but also some of the more specific disciplinary names (see his extensive bibliography of primary and secondary sources). Furthermore, he firmly locates these thinkers

within their historical and cultural contexts and examines the influence of architectural discourse in the work of other philosophers, perhaps most significantly Hegel, but also Descartes and others. The result is both an overview of the history of European architectural theory from a German perspective, at the same time as it is a history of intellectuals’ response to and use of architectural theory in their work.

To this breadth of context, Purdy does not neglect detail, and it is in his ability to read carefully that his work gains in depth. For his study of each author’s work, he follows choices in terminology, traces patterns and developments of themes, and elaborates on etymological and historical contexts. He reveals readings that are substantive and insightful. For instance, Goethe’s architectural references, Purdy shows, are informed by his experiences with architecture as a child, at the same time as they form his concept of poetry and poetic genius. Exploring such paths in the works of the authors and intellectuals he mentions leads Purdy to include not just the usual writings addressed in scholarship or those most often referenced for their views on architecture. In his study of Benjamin, for example, Purdy draws upon works as diverse as Benjamin’s early *Denkbilder* and his study of Goethe’s *Wahlverwandschaften* (*Elective Affinities*). Purdy’s combination of understanding words and themes in the authors’ oeuvres, as well as in their cultural and historical context, allows him to identify otherwise unnoticed references to architectural discourse; it also highlights the value of reading carefully across disciplines.

Purdy’s work is accessible to a general scholarly audience and does not assume the reader has a vast knowledge of architectural history or even of the work of Kant, Goethe, and Benjamin, although those who do are presented with a nuanced and new view of both. He highlights these particular intellectuals because of their fundamental roles in German intellectual thought, as well as due to their influences and connections to one another. Kant’s work informs much of modern philosophy, including Hegel, while Goethe’s architectural concepts and writings reappear in Benjamin’s work. Purdy thus

draws upon the history he traces at each new stage of his study's presentation of its development.

This dense chronological approach changes somewhat in his final chapters, as Purdy extends his discussion of architecture into the late twentieth and early twenty-first century. As he notes in his introduction and shows in his discussion of architectural metaphor into the early twentieth century, there is a long history of architecture in German thought that continues to inform an understanding of the architectural and intellectual landscape today. This aspect of his argument substantiates his temporal jump to the contentious debates on building in the unified Berlin of the late twentieth century, particularly those on ruin, monument, and museum in the new capital. Purdy's insightful comparison of Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum to the work of Hegel shows how significant this connection is. His analysis of the museum shows the ways in which an awareness of historical understanding of architecture continues to underscore the power of contemporary building.

The works of Purdy, Cheng, and Galt are built upon different perspectives on the history of architectural discourse, but each also point towards further potential for studies in pursuing intersections with architectural discourses. For both Galt and Cheng, the early twentieth-century architectural debates on ornament and façade are productive contexts in order to establish and question normative assertions of race and film. Galt's work uses architectural discourse to explore early cinema and its critics as they establish the field. It allows her to view the emergent field in a broader context and include art historical and architectural debates over ornament, decoration, craft, and technology. While her current study refrains from incorporating architectural discourse in anything more than an allusive role, it does suggest that a study of early film criticism would benefit from further exploration of its connections to Modern architectural discourse in its many and complex dimensions. Cheng's work constitutes a shift in our understanding of the legacies of Modernism and highlights the ways in which architecture contributes

to this shift. As she notes in her conclusion, this has ramifications for contemporary racial politics, but it also, I would argue, calls for a look at the history of architecture's relationship to surface beyond the one that coalesces around the figure of Josephine Baker. Purdy's range—both diachronic and synchronic—on topics of architecture, writing, and thought is immense. Indeed, it left me hoping that Purdy consider writing an additional book devoted to contemporary or post-WWII architectural thought in German culture. As it stands, the analysis of Libeskind's museum would be better served as a separate article. For while removing this discussion of post-unified Germany from the book would limit the historical import of his analysis of pre-WWII architectural metaphor and intellectual thought, it would also allow for more thematic and temporal coherence. The references to the World Trade Center, the Jewish Museum, and the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe thrust the reader into different historical contexts and discourses than the remainder of the book.

What becomes clear in the work of these scholars is the importance of understanding the complexity of architecture as a discipline and a practice. While Galt focuses primarily on architecture as a visual medium, Cheng adds the haptic and structural dimensions of the field to her cultural analysis. Building further upon the concept of architecture and its discourse allows Purdy to recognize architecture's role in the public sphere, as well as the implications of its use in creating a private space for the individual. All three works show how architecture contributes to the complexities of cultural discourses and all also recognize the ways in which architecture structures and informs debates on surface, identity, popular culture, ideas, and worldviews. Debates over architecture's meaning and its role in society allow it to become a key metaphor for epistemology and cultural criticism. Architecture provides a visual and spatial element around which discourses on the body, the self, aesthetics, and history emerge and coalesce. In their different uses of architecture and the major themes of its discourse, these works show the benefits and potential of breaking architecture out of the boundaries of its field to become a resource for understanding the

cultural conditions upon and with which twentieth and twenty-first century thought, popular culture, and visual media have developed. Indeed, these three scholars emphasize the need to move architecture's reach into a transdisciplinary space.

#### Notes

1. For a recent discussion of architecture as visual and spatial, see the appropriately titled conference volume: Antony Vidler, *Architecture between Spectacle and Use* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).
2. Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in: Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, trans. by Harry Zohn (New York, NY: Schocken Books, 1968) 239.
3. There are too many works on architects and architectural movements to list here. A selection of recent significant books that discuss Central European architecture and architects are: Deborah Ascher Barnstone, *The Transparent State: Architecture and Politics in Postwar Germany* (London and New York, NY: Routledge, 2005); Sabine Hake, *Topographies of Class: Modern Architecture and Mass Society in Weimar Berlin* (University of Michigan Press, 2008); Jennifer Jenkins, *Provincial Modernity: Local Culture & Liberal Politics in Fin-de-Siècle Hamburg* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003); John V. Maciuika, *Before the Bauhaus: Architecture, Politics, and the German State, 1890-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Despina Stratigakos, *A Women's Berlin: Building the Modern City* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2008); and Janet Ward, *Weimar Surfaces: Urban Visual Culture in 1920s Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).
4. A notable exception in intellectual history is Mitchell Schwarzer, *German Architectural Theory and the Search for Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995). Janet Ward's book (see footnote 3) also looks at architecture in the context of the media landscape of the Weimar Republic.
5. Sianne Ngai, "The Cuteness of the Avant-Garde," *Critical Inquiry* 31.4 (2005): 811-47.
6. Adolf Loos, "Ornament und verbrechen," in: *Ornament und verbrechen. Ausgewählte Schriften*, ed. Adolf Opel, Wien: Prachner, 2000.
7. In his study of Gottfried Semper and the nineteenth-century debates on ornament, Harry Mallgrave notes, for example, that Loos is a "sentimental ornamentalist." See: Harry Francis Mallgrave, *Gottfried Semper: Architect of the Nineteenth Century. A Personal and Intellectual Biography*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996. 370.
8. See Galt 114 and the corresponding footnote (Galt 320).
9. An example: "Realism is attributed to Western aesthetic values, whereas symmetry, stylization, and the decorative are linked to the Orient. Thus in thinking ornament, we find a colonial and Orientalizing logic at work from the beginning." (Galt 105)
10. For example, see: Adolf Loos, *Trotzdem. Gesammelte Schriften. 1900-1930*. Vienna: Prachner 1982, in particular the essay "Der Sattellemeister."

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## Bio

Sarah McGaughey is assistant professor of German at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. She is completing a manuscript tentatively titled *Ornament as Crisis: Architecture, Design, and Modernity in Hermann Broch's Die Schlafwandler*. Her research focus is on spatial theory and architectural theory as it intersects with literature. She has published articles on topics ranging from fashion and furniture to the concept of style and architecture in Broch's early works. Her next project is on architectural interiors of Modernism. Sarah McGaughey is a member of the board of directors of the international association of scholars working on Hermann Broch (IAB) and of the editorial advisory board of *Imaginations: Journal of Cross-Cultural Image Studies*.

## Bio

Sarah McGaughey est professeure adjointe en allemand au Dickinson College à Carlisle, en Pennsylvanie. Elle est en train de terminer un manuscrit ayant le titre provisoire de « *Ornament as Crisis: Architecture, Design, and Modernity in Hermann Broch's Die Schlafwandler* ». Ses recherches se concentrent sur l'intersection entre la littérature, la théorie spatiale, et la théorie architecturale. Ses publications vont de la mode et de l'ameublement au concept du style et à l'architecture dans les premières œuvres de Broch. Son prochain projet traite des intérieurs architecturaux dans le cadre du modernisme. Sarah McGaughey est membre du conseil d'administration de l'association internationale des spécialistes de Hermann Broch, ainsi que du comité scientifique d'*Imaginations : revue d'études interculturelles de l'image*.