We shall search out a real architect... even if he be a
figure of speech.

—Louis Sullivan, Kindergarten Chats

THE BEGINNINGS OF ARCHITECTURAL THEORY IN DRAMA AND PHILOSOPHY

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[TEXT] *In the Beginning...*
Architecture has been around for as long as humans have
collectively settled and creatively wondered about their finite
place in a vast and perplexing cosmos. For we recognize
architecture not only in the physical remains of the earliest
cities (like Çatalhöyük and Jericho), but also in the symbolic
reach of more metaphysically orienting constructs (like the
pyramids of Giza, the ziggurats of Ur, the stone circles of Great
Britain, and the megaliths of Göbekli Tepe). Architects—in
various mortal and divine guises—have surely been around for
an equally long time. For we discern sophisticated architectural
intentions and activities in the ordered configurations of built
works, such as those just mentioned, as well as in the diverse
verbal and figurative arts that have for so long accompanied
the art of building: including early inscriptions, sculptural
reliefs, fragmentary drawings, epic poems and creation stories.

However, in spite of the long-standing existence of architecture
and architects (there is evidence spanning at least 12,000
years), "architecture" and "architects"—as specific names for a
discipline and its primary agents—did not emerge until much
later (just 2,500-2,000 years ago). These Greek and Latin
terms, which we still use today, arose in particular cultural
contexts. And some of those contexts are surprising! Why?
Because they are not primarily architectural, at least not in
the sense that architecture has come to be understood as
pertaining solely to the design of distinct buildings. Moreover,
the usage of these early "architect" terms is surprising
because they are often used figuratively and poetically to
qualify intentions and actions that, while not directly concerned

with buildings, do have transformative implications for citizens
and their shared settings.

Over the past few years, I have been gathering these surprising
and seemingly eccentric references to "architects" and
"architecture" from some of the earliest surviving Greek and
Latin texts, and interpreting their relevance to the beginnings
of architectural discourse. What follows is a partial survey of
my findings (mainly from dramatic and philosophical sources),
together with a few observations on how these findings
illuminate not only the origins of architectural theory but also
some of the most essential architectural questions that remain
urgent for us today: such as, What do architects primarily do?
What does architecture fundamentally entail? And, how can
architecture remain coherent and relevant as a discipline while
remaining enmeshed in diverse concerns and circumstances
that seem to extend so far beyond it?

The First ἀρχιτέκτων in Inscriptions and Historical Prose
The Greek word for "architect" appears as early as 447 BCE
on inscriptions concerning new and ongoing building projects
in and around Athens. In these early inscriptions, which are
more contractual than commemorative, an "architect" (usually
called out also by name) is charged with various practical
responsibilities: preparing specifications, drawings and models
(and presenting these to Council); directing all aspects of
construction (within set times and budgets); and contributing to
the general management of important sites (along with other
officials). In addition to these inscriptions, "architects" also
appear in similarly straightforward ways in Herodotus' *Histories*,
which circulated around 425 BCE. Here, in the course of
describing the feats of foreign Kings and the wonders of distant
lands, Herodotus names the "architect" of a few remarkable
works, including a temple, bridge, tunnel, and harbor wall.

This much evidence, from Greek inscriptions and historical prose,
is frequently cited as attesting to the emergence of "architects"
as officially recognized public figures. But these sources indicate
only part of an architect's role, while revealing very little about
the motives and meanings of that role, and virtually nothing about
how the role was performed and perceived.

Architects and Architecting in the scripts of Dramatists
Euripides + Aristophanes:

> *Be silent now—for you know my scheme completely—*
> *And when I command be persuaded to follow the architects.*
> —Odysseus to a chorus of satyrs, from Euripides'
> *Cyclops* (lines 476-78)

> *So, if it is necessary for us to do anything*
> *(in view of Peace) direct us and architect.*
> —the chorus leader to Trygaeus, from Aristophanes'
> *Peace* (line 305)

Around the same time Herodotus was mentioning "architects" in his *Histories*, and officials were inscribing their contractual obligations in stone, "architects"—as lively agents of transformation—were figuring into Greek culture in a more dramatic and speculative way. I say dramatic and speculative because it is precisely in ancient Greek drama—and before thousands of contemplative spectators in the Theatre of Dionysus—that these "architects" were performing.

Euripides, in his satyr play *Cyclops* (circa 424 BCE), and Aristophanes, in his comedy *Peace* (421 BCE), each brought "architect" terms into their scripts to qualify their leading protagonist at a critical moment in the plot. For Euripides, "architects" (in the plural) named the multifaceted Odysseus, just as he reveals his daring scheme to punish and flee the Cyclops and thus restore justice and social order on behalf of those oppressed by the lawless beast. For Aristophanes, "architecting" qualified the action of a comic hero named Trygaeus, just as he begins to lead the chorus members in a comparably daring scheme to restore a just and comprehensive peace on behalf of those beleaguered by a long and ruthless war. Although remarkable for being among the earliest extant "architects" to appear in Greek literature, these architect-protagonists are also surprising (as noted above) because architecture, as it tends to be objectified, is not their target of attention. Rather, transformative and restorative schemes are their foremost concern. These protagonists are associated with "architects" and "architecting" not primarily for the physical things they make but rather for the actions they perform; or, to be more precise, for the transformative and restorative plans of action they devise, initiate and lead. True, their plans involve influential props, which they make or knowingly manipulate: including a fiery stake to blind the Cyclops; and a voluptuous statue of Peace, which Trygaeus retrieves from a pit and installs in the orchestra to arouse the people's desire for her and her benefits. But the invention and revelation of these cunning devices are only part of their overall plans, the success of which depend as much on their decisive actions, ethical judgments, persuasive leadership, and practical forethought in the midst of highly problematic situations. These dramatic protagonists are also seen as "architects" and as having "architected" because of the palpable changes they ultimately initiate. By the end of each play, the protagonist (with the help of the chorus) has begun to recover and make available to everyone (including the spectators) those endangered and seemingly lost conditions conducive to the common and greatest good: the extraordinary yet basic conditions of social order, justice and peace.

What I have just drawn out here are the most important dimensions of the overall plots of *Cyclops* and *Peace*, together with the primarily ethical role that the architect-protagonist plays in each of them. But, I must admit, these plays are also full of extremely strange and humorous details. On the one-hand, one finds a giant cannibal and licentious satyrs (mythic horse-like men with oversized ears, hoofs, and phalluses), as well as Odysseus' flask of potent wine, with its intoxicating, maddening, and erotic (but ultimately philial) effects. And,

on the other hand, one finds the silly antics of Old Comedy (including outrageous sex scenes and poop jokes), as well as a comically monstrous personification of War (who threatens to devour Greece like a hungry cannibal), and a huge dung-eating beetle, which the comic hero flies to the heavens so as to demand from Zeus directly an end to the war on earth. That this comic hero discovers Zeus has abandoned the heavens (leaving War in his place) only adds to the humor—and to the implications of the chorus' subsequent demand that Trygaeus himself get busy and start "architecting".

Given the utter strangeness of these two plays it would be easier to dismiss them as irrelevant to the serious work of "architects" rather than to interpret their unusual details. (Believe me, during the early phases of my research, I struggled with the question of relevance and it sometimes took me months to finally "get" the meaningful implications of Aristophanes' most obscure jokes). However, anyone who has studied the politically and metaphysically allusive plots of Athenian drama and discovered the civic and ritual functions of the Great Dionysia festival knows well that these plays and their performative context provide critical insight into the collective desires and dilemmas of Athens—a city that, during the years these plays were performed, was struggling to sustain the practices and institutions that were fundamental to democracy.

Indeed, one may interpret the Cyclops' way of life (as presented by Euripides) as a parody of the decline of social responsibility in Greece in the last quarter of the fifth century BCE. The giant's total rejection of societal obligations in favor of a lawless self-centered life (dedicated to the pursuit of unlimited personal gratification), and his deliberate perversion of long-standing social customs (specifically the obligation to graciously host, not murderously roast, strangers), have direct correlations to historical circumstances in Euripides' day, when the customs of participatory democracy and basic hospitality were threatened by comparably tyrannical and solipsistic agencies. (Athenian democracy in fact collapsed in 411 BCE). In this context, the plural "architects" Odysseus invokes may be harnessing a multiplicity of social and mythic agencies to help ward-off Cyclopean threats. Not least among these agencies is the wine he offers. By its loosening, transformative and binding power, this Dionysian agency cultivates (among other things) friendship, revelry and the potentiality for genuine social cohesion.

Similarly, in the case of Aristophanes' comedy, the peace-seeking "architecting" performed by Trygaeus may be seen to hyperbolically reflect the contemporaneous politicking of the Athenian general Nicias, whose own attempts to win a lasting peace were only fleetingly successful. (The truce he won in the same year *Peace* was staged ultimately failed, and the Peloponnesian War continued until 404 BCE). Trygaeus' "architecting" may also be understood as acting alongside and against the actual architectural ambitions of Pericles and Pheidias. This famous statesman and architect-sculptor, who together had monumentalized Athenian glory through major building projects on and around the Acropolis, are accused in

the play of doing nothing other than magnifying distrust and discontent among people of the region. Trygaeus' architecting in the Theatre of Dionysus—at the foot of the Acropolis—may thus be taken to critically and creatively complement (and to some extent correct) the architectural activity still underway atop the Acropolis. For Trygaeus procures dramatically what monumental architecture alone had not: social and participatory benefits, including peaceable agreement and good humor among the people gathered from across the divided region.

Unlike the historical anecdotes and inscriptions (referred to above), these plays of Aristophanes and Euripides project an image of "architects" not as they were, but as they might or ought to be. By dramatizing "architects" and "architecting" in such exaggeratedly vivid and critically ambitious ways these dramatic poets brought speculative attention to the ethical and representative obligations implicit in their role.

Plautus:
In the years around 200 BCE the Roman playwright Plautus featured architects (the first "architects" in Latin literature) in at least five of his popular comedies. These plays were performed not in a permanent theatrical setting (as Euripides' and Aristophanes' had been in Athens) but in the busy streets and plazas of Rome. In one instance, "architects" figure into a prologue delivered directly to the assembled audience just as the play begins:

> It's Plautus' plea that you provide a plot,
> within your pretty city please, a spot,
> where he can rear his Athens proud and high
> - all by himself, no architects need apply
> —Plautus, *Truculentus*, 1-4 (James Tatum, Trans.)

Although "architects" are involved here only to be dismissed, the manner of their dismissal suggests that dramatic poets and architects share (in some contentious sense) in the activity of imaginative place-making and plot-making. Being staged in Rome but set in Greece, this inaugural speech of the play transforms the city—or rather the spectator's perception of it—through the dramatist's architect-like powers of persuasive conjuration.

In another comedy by Plautus, the messenger god Mercury delivers an introductory speech in which he qualifies Jupiter as the "architect of all"—especially of all the "good deeds" he's performed for the people (*Amphitryon*, 45). This seemingly straightforward qualification of Jupiter's benevolent omnipotence takes on subtler layers of meaning, however, when considered in dramatic context. For Jupiter performs in this comedy as a deceptive schemer in pursuit of mortal love—and Plautus himself may well have played the role. This "architect of all", then, alludes less to the god and more to the dramatist, who offers his "good deeds" to the people of Rome.

In three other comedies, Plautus uses *architectus*, in a similarly euphemistic way, to qualify leading protagonists of another sort:

cunning slaves. These trickster characters, who perform from a marginalized and officially subordinate position, comically succeed in outwitting more powerful adversaries (such as a braggart soldier) by devising and directing elaborate ruses for the benefit of others who have become caught up in some unfortunate (and usually ridiculous) predicament (*Miles Gloriosus* 903-21; *Mostellaria* 760; *Poenulus* 1110). Of the many points of relevance these plays offer, I'll emphasize just two: first, the affinities between architects and dramatists (initiated by Aristophanes and Euripides) become all the more pronounced in Plautus; and these affinities, while remaining based on the enactment of transformative and restorative schemes, also focus on the special skill of the architectus in acts of deception.

Architecture, Architecting and Architectonics in the words of Philosophers
Euripides and Aristophanes (as well as Plautus) had no word for "architecture" as a discipline; this word arises four centuries after the Greek plays (and two centuries after Plautus) in the writings of a Latin philosopher. Such a delay should not come as a surprise. The history of ideas shows how the identification of human agents (like architects or judges) and their activities (like architecting or judging) precede the linguistic invention of more abstract categories that we take for granted today (like architecture or justice). For instance, as Eric Havelock has shown, long before the philosopher Plato conceptualized "justice" in his *Republic* by asking what *is* justice (in itself), the Greeks had understood this through a variety of exemplary agents and agencies: as the personified daughter of Zeus (who administers her father's decisive punishments); as diverse metaphors (like "balanced", "straight" or "well-adjusted" decisions—measured as if with a merchant's "scale", a carpenter's "level", or a mason's "flexible rule"); and as a set of memorable narratives describing paradigmatic transgressions, consequences and pay-backs (such as the Homeric story of Odysseus blinding the Cyclops). The development of the general concept of architecture may be considered similarly, whereby the exemplary deeds of mythic and poetic figures (including Odysseus and Trygaeus) may be seen to prefigure—and persist within—later understandings of an architect's role and discipline. I will return to Plato (and Aristotle), at the close of this essay. But, since Greek philosophers did not speak of "architecture" by that name, I must turn now to the Latin author who did.

Cicero:
"Architectura" was first penned not, as one might think, by the Roman architect Vitruvius in his seminal treatise *On Architecture* (composed around 25 BCE) but rather by the Roman statesman Cicero, just two decades earlier, in a discussion of moral obligations entitled *On Duties* (*de Officiis*, written in 44 BCE). Specifically, in the course of considering which occupations contribute most (and least) to social harmony and personal virtue, Cicero introduces "architecture" as a relatively honorable pursuit comparable to medicine and teaching, since each of these arts is broadly beneficial

to society and requires great prudence of its practitioners (*de Officiis*, 1.151). I say relatively honorable because Cicero reserves first honors for the philosophical and political pursuits of wisdom, justice and human fellowship. Elsewhere, in his two primary studies on the art of public speaking, Cicero favorably compares an eloquent "architect" to a persuasive orator (*de Oratore*, 1.62); while, more ambiguously, he casts the Stoics as dialectically-savvy "architects of words" (*Brutus*, 118). In another work, Cicero crafts a lengthy dialogue in which architects, architecting and architecture play key roles in helping the speakers discover and debate "moral ends"; that is, the ultimate aims toward which individuals ought to strive. This dialogue warrants further elaboration.

Early in Cicero's dialogue *On Moral Ends* (*de Finibus*), one of the speakers promotes the teachings of the pleasure-seeking philosopher Epicurus, calling him a "great explorer of truth and architect of the happy life" (1.32). A little while later, however, another speaker (representing Cicero himself) refutes Epicurus' pleasure-seeking ways by arguing that his kind of pleasure satisfies only one's bodily senses whereas Wisdom appeals also to higher pleasures sought by thinking minds. To demonstrate this argument more vividly, Cicero presents—in the form of a question—an image of personified Wisdom actively "architecting pleasures":

> The sense of sight, says Plato, is the keenest sense we possess, yet our eyes cannot behold Wisdom; could we see her, what passionate love would she awaken! And why is this so? Is it because of her supreme ability and cunning in architecting pleasures?
> —Cicero, *de Finibus,* 2.52

The discursive context of this image, however, implies that Cicero introduces it as an ironic figure of thought, one that invites interpretation of its contrary implications. In other words, Wisdom's primary goal should be understood not as architecting sensual pleasures that merely aim to arouse and satisfy the eye, but rather as architecting more subtly discernible and comprehensive benefits that contribute more enduringly to the common good: benefits such as justice and friendship. Such noble benefits are not primarily visual, but they are understandable. Just as an honest friend is trustworthy even in the dark (as the old saying goes), works of Wisdom, Cicero suggests, may be discernible even to the blind. Cicero goes on to argue that those pursuing only sensual and personal pleasures (like the Epicureans) are building their lives on "watery foundations" (2.72); and such fallible foundations, he later suggests, are poor conditions for "constructing the highest good", since they give Wisdom "no ground to stand on" (4.68-9). Here "architecting" is associated metaphorically with establishing both the foundations and the pinnacle of the good.

Finally, toward the end of this dialogue, architecture figures more tangibly into the discourse as a series of references to actual settings, including a senate house in Rome, a city gate of Athens, the nearby tomb of Pericles, the School of Ptolemy,

and Plato's Academy and gardens—where the culmination of this dialogue on moral ends takes place. As one speaker observes, such settings not only meaningfully situate present exchanges but also strongly recall past activities through their power of suggestion: "Such is the evocative power that locations possess. No wonder the training of memory is based on them" (5.2). This last remark alludes to the crucial role settings play in the art of memory, or mnemonics. This art, which orators like Cicero practiced, was a way to devise, adapt, rehearse and recall long speeches by hypothetically placing each image, idea and argument of their speech in a topically appropriate place (a particular doorway, porch or niche, for instance). They would then retrieve, one by one, each part of their speech as they imaginatively walked through the setting. Such settings could be drawn from those a speaker was familiar with (such as the gardens of Plato's Academy). Or, if an appropriate setting could not be found in memory or experience, he could succeed by "architecting as many as he wishes (in his imagination)"—as a later Roman thinker encouraged his students to do (*Rhetoric to Herennius*, 3.19.32). With such mnemonic arts being demonstrated throughout this culminating dialogue, we may be right to regard the identified settings (senate house, city gate, tomb, schools and gardens) as providing the firm and persuasive grounds for recollecting, exchanging and "architecting" the less tangible but highest benefits of justice, wisdom and friendship.

Thus, in these few passages drawn (mainly) from Cicero's works *On Duties*, *On Oratory* and *On Moral Ends*, we find not only the earliest coinage of the Latin noun *architectura*, but also a series of particular links between architectural activity, the activity of Wisdom, the art of memory and the pursuit of the highest good. We also find specific architectural features and settings actively contributing to the meaningful development of philosophical and moral imagination.

Cicero may have been the first to name the discipline of "architecture" in a written work, but he was not the first philosopher to make epistemological and ethical use of architectural terms, for three centuries earlier Plato and Aristotle (writing in Greek) had involved "architects" and "architectonics" in their own philosophical pursuits. Let us turn, then, to Plato (who was but a child when Aristophanes' *Peace* was performed).

Plato:
For anyone familiar with the works of Plato, *Timaeus* may immediately come to mind as having the most relevance for architects. Yet, the divine maker of the cosmos featured in this famous dialogue is not called an architect, but rather a "demiurge"; literally, one who performs "work" (*ergos*) for the "people" (*dêmos*). Although distinctions between an *architektôn* and *dêmiurgos* should not be overdrawn (since a *dêmiurgos* was a more general designation inclusive of architects), it is a curious fact that, however influential the *Timaeus* would become for architectural theory, it does not literally have an "architect" in it. In what contexts, then, do "architects" figure into the work of Plato?

Like Cicero does after him, Plato involves "architects" in works concerning the moral pursuits of rhetoric and politics. Near the beginning of his dialogue called *Gorgias*, Socrates introduces "architects" (as well as physicians and generals) as influential agents comparable, in some ways, to orators (455b). The basis of comparison would seem to lay not only on their shared skill at persuasive speech, but also (as the full dialogue discloses) on their ultimate obligation: to persuade the public to pursue what is best for their city—an obligation usually neglected in favor of pursuing personal success, as Socrates exposes. In another dialogue, Plato, like Cicero, establishes links between "architects" and "wisdom". Here, near the beginning of his inquiry on the *Statesman*, the interlocutors quickly agree that unlike craftsmen (who provide physical labor and expertise focused on particular techniques) an "architect" provides comprehensive knowledge and thoughtful direction, guiding and modulating such technical work toward a desired end (259e-260a).

Thus, in each of these two works of Plato, "architects" are introduced preliminarily as examples that, by their ethical motives and modes of leadership, help lay the groundwork for defining the comparable acts of orators and statesmen.

Aristotle:

> in all the arts, the ends of the architectonic ones are more desirable than all those that fall under them, for these latter are pursued for the sake of the former... If there is some end of our actions that we wish for... clearly this would be the good, that is, the best... Is not the knowledge of this good of great weight, and [if we discern it] would we not, like archers in possession of a target, better hit on what is needed? If this is so, then one must try to grasp, in outline at least, whatever it is and to which of the arts it belongs. But it might be held to belong to the most architectonic art, and such appears to be the political.
> —Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, 1094a15-28 (R. Bartlett and S. Collins, Trans.)

In several of his works, Aristotle reiterates Plato's distinction between the handy skills of craftsmen and the intelligent leadership of "architects". He does so most explicitly at the beginning of his *Metaphysics* in the course of establishing the general difference between technical and theoretical kinds of knowledge: the former leading to well-made artifacts, and the latter leading to an understanding of motivating causes and purposeful ends (981a30). Aristotle makes this distinction again near the beginning and end of his *Politics*—a study of the city and its legal constitution. Here, Aristotle introduces "architects" in order to help define the directive agency of household and civic authorities who, like architects, act not by performing physical labor but by exercising their thinking minds (1325b20; 1253b35). In two related passages Aristotle qualifies (and in a sense personifies) "reason" and "prudence" (*logos* and *phronêsis*) as "architects" capable of leading socially constructive

endeavors through their capacity to fully deliberate on ultimate goals and make sound judgments about how best to pursue them (*Politics* 1260a18-19; *Magna Moralia* 1198b6).

Aristotle also involves architectural terminology in his *Nicomachean Ethics* (which provides a kind of prologue to his subsequent study of the city, the *Politics*). In this influential study of ethics, Aristotle repeatedly uses "architectonic" as an adjective to qualify the art of politics. Why is the art of politics "architectonic"? According to Aristotle, politics is "architectonic" because it sets the most comprehensive goals to which so many other arts contribute; because it requires the widest knowledge of "the good"; because it affects so many citizens and whole cities; and because it demands the greatest prudence of its practitioners (1094a15-28; 1141b25-26). Toward the close of this discourse, Aristotle takes this "architectonic" idea a step further by calling a political philosopher (such as himself) an "architect of the end" (1152b2): that is, one most capable of judging each and every thing as being bad or good "in itself", and thus (with full awareness) best suited to advise others aiming for the good in particular situations.

This is not the place to elaborate on how Aristotle's architectonic qualifications fit into his overall philosophy of ethics. Rather it is enough here to emphasize that unlike modern and post-modern philosophers (from Kant to Derrida), who tend to reduce "architectonics" to autonomous systems and to abstract ontological structures (with little to no relation to either lived experience or practical aims), Aristotle's "architectonic" art remains ethically grounded in human affairs and in considering what is "good" for particular situations. Although Aristotle may be reaching for an absolute good when he claims that an "architect of the end" seeks an understanding of the good "in itself", the practical thinker (and perhaps the practical architect) in him knows that there are a great variety of "goods" appropriate to different situations and cities. Indeed, this acknowledgement of variability in civic situations leads Aristotle to admit—at the conclusion of his ethical study—that he has not yet reached his "end" (1179a34), since he must now regard various cities, and their respective goods, with a view to considering what is best. The closing line of the *Nichomachean Ethics* looks forward to this subsequent task—a task that, at the close of this essay, we may each take up also as our own: "With this as our beginning, then, let us speak" (1181b24).

Conclusion: Dramatic and Metaphoric Understandings

> The difference between trivial metaphor and poetic metaphor is not that one can be paraphrased and the other not, but that the paraphrase of the latter is without end. It is endless precisely because it can always spring back to life. If a metaphor engenders thought throughout a long discourse, is this not because it is itself a brief discourse?
> —Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor* (1977), p. 188.

I do not know what meaning classical studies could have for our time if they were not untimely — that is to say, acting counter to our time and thereby acting on our time and, let us hope, for the benefit of a time to come.
—Friedrich Nietzsche, "On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life"

Look up the etymology of "architect" in any dictionary and you will find an entry denoting it as a compound word joining "archê" (chief or master) with "tektôn" (carpenter or builder). While there is truth to this standard account, this abbreviated etymology fails to capture the full meanings of both "archê" and "tektôn". For, in the earliest Greek sources, *tektôn*—in both noun and verb forms—implies a variety of makers (including thought-builders, song-makers, and artisans of what is just), and generative modes of making, such as fabricating arguments (that seek agreement), schemes (to ward-off misfortune), and stories (that bring about a renewed sense of order). Similarly, *archê*—in its earliest noun and verb forms—implies not only a hierarchical sense of authority, authorship and leadership but also a poetic and dramatic sense of "beginning", "initiating" and "inaugurating"—usually with a view to what is ultimately good. Thus, an archi-tekton might be better understood as a "maker" of auspicious yet open-ended "beginnings".

Furthermore, the standard account of this word's roots (as "master-builder") fails to consider the profoundly ethical and intellectual meanings borne by architectural terms as they were actually used by influential poets and philosophers from the fifth to first centuries BCE—that is during the long period that "architects" (and their discipline) were emerging as figures of public significance. As my review of primary sources has shown, the dramatists (Euripides, Aristophanes and Plautus) and the philosophers (Plato, Aristotle and Cicero), each involved architectural terms to help them dramatize, characterize, debate and define problems and opportunities associated with civic leadership. And these "architectonic" problems and opportunities (like reaching for social harmony, peace and justice) are as relevant to our time as they were to theirs. Thus, it is my wager that these dramatic and philosophical treatments of "architects" and "architecting" still vividly present to us some of the most essential aspects of what architects and architecture might yet strive to do.

I am quite aware that turning to the classics as a way to invigorate present-day thought is unfashionable, or as Nietzsche said, "untimely". But given the ongoing necessity and desire for ethical responsibility in the face of monstrous obstacles to viable peace and justice, I am convinced that it remains good for us to do so.

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