PICTURING THE MODERN CITY AS A PANORAMA

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Abstract

While a panorama view of a city is a fairly commonplace and distinguishable image it remains without critical inquiry. The word panorama was coined in 1792 to market a large-scale circular painting that gained international popularity during the nineteenth century. The panorama image is investigated through large circular paintings, engravings and etchings, and panorama photographs that extend from the daguerreotype (1839) to the vintage silver print of the Cirkut camera (1904). The panorama is examined as a historical and discursive representation of modernity and modernization to consider its conditions of production and social relations as inseparable from technological change and economic growth and development. The panorama world-view implies prosperity and progress. The modernizing cities of London, Paris, San Francisco and Vancouver provide topographical views to examine the ambitiously complex composition and scale, and structure and space of the panorama. The panorama’s central permutations are recognized as a view from a high vantage point, a full force of pictorial record displaying objective fact, and an optical realm of illusionary structure. The spatial and social implications of the panorama are interpreted as successfully unifying discordant and disruptive experiences of modernity through spatially resolving the ambiguities and uncertainties of an increasingly global world of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Panorama vision and space are interpreted through theoretical influences of Roland Barthes, Jonathan Crary, Michel Foucault, Henri Lefebvre and Georg Simmel.

Key Words: panorama, photography, modernity, space
Dedication

For my daughter Cali who is starting her adult life, and for my dad who died just as I was completing the very last stages of this document.
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Introduction
The Panorama as Image and Representation of Space

For every image of the past that is not recognized by the present as one of its own concerns threatens to disappear irretrievably.¹

By beginning the introduction with this quote from Walter Benjamin, I want to draw attention to how pervasive and portentous panoramas were between the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century. I examine panoramas through a number of distinct but related media extending from etchings and engravings, large circular paintings, and photographs, first the daguerreotype panorama, which is followed by panoramas made from sequential printed photographs, and then panorama photographs taken with specifically designed cameras. By the end of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the traditional genre of landscape was increasingly being evaluated and revised as the physical world and the experience of everyday life was irreversibly altered through the spatial conditions of industrialization. These changes introduced new terms and conditions directed towards the exploitation of nature from the consistent advancing need for resources, not just as material extraction, but also the need for a manageable urban labour force which introduced distinct changes to the demographics of city space. The relations between the town and rural life were no longer stable or secure. This is the starting point to ascertain the genesis of the panorama as form and space, production, currency and reception.

During the first stages of my analysis I examine the modernizing cities of London and Paris pictured as large painted panoramas, and then look at images of the panorama photographs of the cities of San Francisco and Vancouver.

The optical realm of the panorama finds a strong lineage of visual recognition in the various historical applications of the high view. The high view is considered a central permutation through its determining vision of how the city is comprehended as knowledge and spatially negotiated, or navigated, as a type of pictorial map, to arrive at a visually formed legibility of city space. Roland Barthes’ writes of the view from the Eiffel Tower acknowledging relations between structure and understanding, illusion and intimacy, and uses topographical identification of the mapping process, as a form of record and knowledge. This he demonstrates when he writes “to decipher” the view of Paris is to acknowledge geographical, historical and social space as “an act of the mind” and also “an initiation.”2 I set out to ask does this connection serve as an effective modern link between economic, social, cognitive and ethical advancement of capital. Christopher Prendergast follows up this relationship between vision and space, and decipherment and understanding, to write of the high view by asking what does this view represent and how is it represented, to see it as form and identity: “in the double sense of giving identity to the city and finding identity, individual and collective, in the city.”3 The true, natural, real and proper order of city as a panorama image, these are nineteenth-century terms, was an ideal and virtual entity.

Its mode of legibility was epistemological, or a record of fact of a human negotiated city space, and because it was ideal it was also illusory, and both were combined together as knowledge. I propose, that the panorama as a form of knowledge and power held social and cultural significance extending from the local to international

stature. The panorama is also a form that would be marked with obsolescence, when the wide-view image no longer could engage the city as a spatial scan along the horizon for this popular representation no longer held the capacities to control the confusions of time and history, structure and space for which it was valued in the nineteenth century and for the early years of the twentieth century.

The word panorama entered popular culture in London in 1792 referring to a circular painting displayed in its brick purpose-built rotunda for maximum spatial visibility. This canvas tableau conceived by Robert Barker, a former portrait painter from Edinburgh, who when applying and receiving the patent in 1787 referred to the image as “La nature à coup d’œil.”⁴ This large cylindrical painting was illuminated by daylight from above, and the viewer entered into the viewing space by moving through a darkened passageway. The word panorama, first formulated as a marketing term, almost immediately acquired a far broader metaphorical meaning referencing a vista, or overview, usually from a high vantage point, and then more generally a synoptic gathering or classifying of almost anything. And over the nineteenth century the word panorama came to include other media from engravings to photographs, therefore to replace the earlier term prospect.

Within panorama structure and space the horizon is the central element guiding synoptic seeing. The pictorial image of panorama space is not one brought about through fractures or division; the horizon is a connective point corresponding spatially in physical terms and social space. The horizon, although a point of pictorial separation between the city environment and the sky above, contributes navigational attributes and therefore

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leads to mapped space. The horizon provides for the eye to move through designated space giving a very specific agency of embodied visibility, which lead to certain provisions for legibility. Form and purpose are to become one in this representation of space, which has a part to a whole relationship of signification extending to the view of the city as capital, and beyond to conditions of global exchange. Taken as a juxtaposition of connective links, the panorama view is synecdochal, to point to an index built up through scale from small to larger in an attempt to retain everything, and to do so in a specific classification and order. The panorama’s legibility is then essentially epistemological.

One way to view the panorama is a mode of organizing the city avoiding diversity to restrain differentiation and potential chaos, or a way of reckoning with the changing world, a spatial hegemony of vision. In connecting the historical terms of mapping city space with changing modes of landscape representation it is critically necessary to recognize the “aura of knowledge” possessed by maps regardless of the nature or degree of their accuracy.5 Read through terms of landscape, the space taking shapre between natural or urban during a specific historical time, the panorama image moves between panoptic vision and spectacular space.

I explore the panorama image as a spatial structure of topographical observation first as a large circular painting, engraved or etched prints, and then panorama photographs constructed using a number of sequential images, as early as the daguerreotype, as well as images taken with specifically designed panorama cameras. I interpret each of these mediums as a technical and cultural approach through which to

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view the modern city, and explore the economic and social significance of the panorama as a space of representation. Each medium is not to be separated from the other, but considered through integrative approaches that arrive at analogous cultural forms each with a range of structures and functions, supporters and detractors. Photography opened up new conditions of recording physical reality bringing an unprecedented verisimilitude to the image. The panorama photograph increasingly served as a booster image, taking up relations between seeing and legibility, identification and identity, and the panorama city is not just localized in terms of cartography and recording, but increasingly ascertains through the technologies of photographic reproduction a position of global influence.

Photography also furthered the original claims of the painted panorama to be a valid record, or truth to nature, yet each media relied on certain technological structures and spatial visibilities, physical and abstract modes of spatial perception, and implications of knowledge and power. While structure and space overlap within the wide view framing of the panorama, each is characterized by specific production and circulatory possibilities setting out modern conditions addressing how the city was to be made familiar “proceeding from history,” and consequently reattached to memory, which is interpreted through a sense of belonging through space, and connecting to place, that characterizes the panorama.6

The panorama view is a visual accounting of not just what is seen, but where the view is seen from, or observation point. This vantage point often forms the title of the image, and by doing so marks the viewer as Robert Barker puts it as “if really on the very spot.”7 The panorama provides both a far and a near view, one able to suppress the

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6 Roland Barthes, pp. 9-10.
7 “Specification of the patent granted to Mr. Robert Barker,” p. 165.
unknown elements and threatening conditions that came to characterize the industrial and urban city for the modernizing city was an increasingly crowded, unkempt and disorderly urban fabric of physical, economic and social change. In contrast, the panorama view enacts spatial certainty and evacuates “obstructive challenges to understanding,” and now the city is “perceived from a position of mastery.”\(^8\) This description of vision, control, legibility and identity forged new, more fluid, adaptable and shared ways of thinking about the city. But these dimensions of accounting for city space are constituted in the panorama through representation that takes from illusionary conditions as much as the evidence of the real.

In discussing the panorama view I go against the grain, or at least reformulate to some extent, the methodologies of modern estrangement. As we consider the integration of diffusive city space within the panorama, the city takes on a material analytical form, where vision turns to spatial seeing to enable legibility that is mapped, analyzable and knowable, quite distinct from the activity of the streets below. The German urban sociologist Georg Simmel describes: “The deepest problems of modern life derive from the claim of the individual to preserve the autonomy and individuality of his existence in the face of overwhelming social forces.”\(^9\) The next step is therefore to consider through physiological and sociological conditions, the spatial terms of this perceived transparency of city space, initiated through visual pleasure, and arriving at a sense of identification and belonging. The panorama view is a panoptic space, and following the initiatives of Foucault, I ask what kind of viewer is produced by the panorama as a technology of vision. In panoptic terms introduced by Foucault, the panorama is a structure where a

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\(^8\) Christopher Prendergast, p. 47.
cogent and congruent distribution of surfaces and gazes initiates modern economic and political worldviews.\textsuperscript{10}

I have referred to structures, relations and networks of vision in historical terms of space open to adaptation over time. Space, as produced in relation to the rise of commercial factions, is discussed in the writings of Henri Lefebvre. As space is produced through transformative historical terms of commercial capital, the graphic are developed through which the city became a subject in itself, and as cultural representation. Early mercantile activity is associated with the perspective town or city. "Representations of space" as formulated by Lefebvre contribute through practical and conceptual realms of activity. The modern demands and requirements, both physical and social, for ordering a visibility that could stabilize and objectify the contents of the city, making it over in terms of knowledge, was to be realized in the nineteenth century through the panorama. Lefebvre gives a place of importance to this transaction of seeing and knowing as "spatial practice," or the relation of society to space, and therefore modes of seeing to lived space. He also distinguishes "representational spaces," as spaces that are "directly lived."\textsuperscript{11} This approach to thinking through the nineteenth-century space of the city is also situated, if only in glimpses of panorama space, in the writings of Walter Benjamin.\textsuperscript{12} This image as spectacle holds a power of persuasion, most overtly didactic in battle scene panoramas. Benjamin finds that the illusion is complete in the many "oramas," that dominated the nineteenth century, and links the panorama up momentarily with the arcades, Baudelaire,


the wax museum, the fine art museum and space of museography, architecture, travel and tourism and history.

I have introduced the panorama through a broad analysis of both form and function, and space and structure, and what it might mean to acknowledge the city through these elements of making the city visible and legible, as a specific object and subjective response to the panorama as representation in economic, social and terms. I now want to say what I don’t include. Firstly, I don’t discuss the battle scene panoramas because I draw a pictorial distinction and an historical situation between panorama views of cities and painted panoramas of military reconstructions of events. Although these two “types” were produced during the same time period, and were equally popular as circular paintings, the battle panorama was connected, if often only indirectly, to canvassing popular support for past or future military interventions. With their idealistic aberrations the battles were bloodless, yet monumental in their scenery and action, bringing the image into the sphere of propaganda. Although publicly funded through investors entering the commercial mass market, the labour of art and craft necessary to produce these panoramas was wedded to a mode of military governance. These panorama paintings, it is important to note, were gaining wide public attendance just as history painting in the academic Salon was beginning to lose its long and illustrious standing. Addressing panorama photography, specifically in my discussion of panoramas taken with the Cirkut camera, I don’t discuss the images of large group portraits as popular images with this camera, from the ranks of the military extending to company employees or, comparatively, a “portrait” row of company trucks. I also don’t explore the panorama
as a gendered space linking this up with the city itself, and this is both a hegemonic and marginalized positions.

Since I was not benefited by a travel research budget I generally illustrate my discussion of panorama views with images sourced from books rather than direct visits to archives. The exception is the research I undertook on William John Moore’s photographs taken with a Cirkut camera. But research on these images is not to be considered a survey of the Moore collection in the City of Vancouver Archives. I was very circumscribed by access to reproduction of these images due to current, very limited availability. There is also the difficulty of photographing, and then reproducing in small scale, images of this size.

In Chapter 1 the structural and spatial elements of the high view are discussed as the central permutation of the panorama view. The high view is affiliated spatially with perception, and then interpreted through influencing the placement of the horizon, a significant compositional element in panorama space. The sense of cohesion and completeness brought about through the high view leads to perceived access to city space. I respond to the high vantage point in both material and symbolic terms by drawing from aesthetic and cartographic first-hand recollections of high views, and these also lead to geographical perception aligned with many attempts to map areas still open to discovery during the nineteenth century, such as the Alps.

In Chapter 2 fifteenth-century maps, sixteenth-century Renaissance paintings and seventeenth-century estate portraiture lead up to the eighteenth-century accountability of space recorded in printed prospects. The term “prospect” describes illustrative views of towns, usually etched or engraved. I consider these images as precursors to the painted
panorama image. Importantly for my analysis of modern city space, the term prospect also refers to a view into the future.¹³

In Chapter 3 the panorama image is distinguished through spatial and social relations of the illusionary real contemplated through spectacular form and panoptic control, an architectural structure and visual apparatus that draws similarities to the panorama, as well as linking up with the discursive field of positivism of the natural sciences during the nineteenth century. Power, in such a framework, is not a constraint, but is smoothly present in the fabric of city space caught up in the panorama as information and knowledge to be transmitted. And this defines the image of the panorama as representing the inroads of capital entering into all forms of experience connected to everyday life. How then does pleasure in seeing join with power in the image?

Foucault’s historical formulations of power explores hierarchies and apparatuses of order and control chiefly through a conceptual analysis of capillary power that is social and cultural rather that extraneous and forceful. Applicable to my analysis of the panorama is his instrumental empiricism of a plague-stricken town at the end of the seventeenth century: “The town immobilized by the functioning of an extensive power that bears in a distinct way over all individualized bodies—this is the utopia of the perfectly governed city.” He continues: “the plague as a form, at once real and imaginary, had its medical and political correlative discipline,” in a process of control enacted through the increasingly institutionalization of individuals.¹⁴ The plague-ridden town when interpreted as a metaphor for the panorama is a representation of space that is

¹⁴ Michel Foucault, p. 198.
“perfectly governed,” and in comparative terms the panorama is a space almost always absent of people, giving the image itself a kind of “bloodless” dehumanized landscape. But to say this without clarification is a failure to understand its real duration of temporal space of topographical empathy and totalizing aesthetics of visual pleasure giving to the viewer a reality that is stable and in a real-life sense a new epistemology sustained in the space of the image. This does not propose a similar response for each viewer, but a framework of desire.

Framing a description both real and imaginary, as Foucault does, compares the plague ridden town as a utopic element able to provide for a totalizing view that is organized and significant in its panoptic imagery, its power over place. Within this discursive space, the city is opened up as if a panorama: “an image we attempt to decipher,” Barthes terms for cartographic integration or reading the image as a whole: “We try to…identity landmarks.” And when the city is displayed as an object of representation, a totality which provides for pleasure in looking, an overseeing or all-seeing view, this action is a process that joins up with identity, of finding oneself in the city, and to return to Barthes this is “no difficult task, rather one of visual pleasure.”

Photography was my first entry into developing an interest in panoramas, when I first looked at the collection of panorama photographs taken by William John Moore. These photographs and the camera technology are examined in Chapter 5. My interest did not remain in the historical depth of the collection; rather I set out to investigate these topographical views within a historical-based visual culture of mapping, representation and picture making.

15 Roland Barthes, p. 10.
Panorama photography has never entered into the history of photography in any direct way, and this sparked my early interest. One might find an occasional image in a book about the cultural history of photography, but when this does occur it is usually without explanation. Today panorama photographs are largely forsaken in archives where they are considered purveyors of historical evidence, and remain without critical inquiry. The strategy that I engage for panorama photography is not one that directly sets out to chart its omission from the history of photography. Nevertheless, noticing the epistemological conditions whereby the panorama photograph remains separate from photographic history, and the criteria entering any aesthetic canon of exhibitions and collecting, is just a beginning, for the panorama as cultural representation of city space is also largely without any extensive history of merit.

The formative years of photography are outlined in Chapter 4 to broadly establish the relevance of views, and notations of recording an image through space and time by “drawing” with light. The photographic image when understood to have a transparent relation to the physical world, suited closely the panorama optics of an all-seeing space. Panorama photographs were taken soon after the daguerreotype was made available to the public in 1839. At first sequential panorama photographs were made, and as early as 1843 the first of many panorama cameras were invented.

I begin with looking at panorama photographs of Paris, and this is contextually important because in France, from the beginning of the introduction of the daguerreotype and paper prints, experimentation, innovation and commissions received government and institutional support giving credibility to the photograph as an important and objective truth. I then move to San Francisco to discuss Eadweard Muybridge’s panoramas of the
city, which I compare to elements found in his better-known motion studies. I trace the international utility of panorama photographs placing the image within expansionist economic development where it continues a confidence in its ability to display capital until the middle of the twentieth century. My treatment of panorama photographs extends to the early twentieth century. I locate at this time conditions, which mark the closure of panorama representation for they are no longer able to record the evolutionary nineteenth-century relationship of early capital exchange by placing horizons of meaning in relationship to levels of growth. This end point is regulated in the image when the city begins crowding upward.

Investigating photographs through the emergence of new economies and institutions and new practices of observation and techniques of representation is influenced by writings of Rosalind Krauss, Abigail Solomon-Godeau and John Tagg. Rosalind Krauss’ theoretical attempt to take Timothy O’Sullivan’s photographs out of the museum by exploring these images as utilitarian views that record geological data of empirical science is an example.16 While an inquiry into the discursive space of photography during the early years of the medium is the methodological approach that I follow, panorama photographs in contrast to O’Sullivan’s images, or other images given aesthetic values that disputes their scientific origins, has never been valued as an aesthetic typology, therefore exhibited in the space of the museum, as a genre or subject of analysis.

In Chapter 5 early sequential panorama photographs are introduced through “picturing” Vancouver as a frontier town between 1884 and 1910. I then discuss the

technology, imagery and application of the Cirkut camera and panorama photographs taken by Moore. Technically complex this camera scans the city recording the urban landscape as an expansive space, and in doing so the image leaves in its wake a technically inherent distortion of the view. The ramifications of the paradox between real and ideal that exists in these images continue many of the issues examined in past chapters. I have selected certain city views that designate industrial and urban growth, not as a broad mapping of a specific historical time and place, rather I record facets of control and power, and consequently I have chosen to investigate specific panoramas.

These large-scale photographs represent historically specific relations of space, and have now entered into an archival continuum. Moore's large panorama photographs sanction space through movement over time; this is a visualized mechanical means of encyclopedic and seemingly quite limitless topographical survey. This is accomplished through both the complex action of the camera technology and its scanning apparatus pertaining to vision and space.

The terms of inquiry address the complexities of the Cirkut camera image as a graphic medium by firstly noting how the city is made visible as a certain space, frame and strategy of what is make legible and how it is to be read, or observed. This representation of space relies on topographical conditions of mapping and recording, and both reveal how urban influences of power are revealed on this still frontier landscape. The kinds of inquiries and analysis opened up by these photographs are without precedence in photographic history.
But only in the nineteenth century did architects multiply panoramic prospects by erecting all manner of belvederes and terraces, bridges, viaducts, elevated trains, and, before long, towers on a scale quite other from those of the medieval period. Does the city remain “real” when considered from such distances, as a spectacle, a scene, and ultimately a stage set, a backdrop?17

The (Eiffel) Tower looks at Paris...the Tower overlooks not nature but the city; and yet, by its very position of a visited outlook, the Tower makes the city into a kind of nature...it adds to the frequently grim urban myth a romantic dimension, a harmony, a mitigation.18

The view from above and from the street: comprehending modernity

During the nineteenth century, city streets came to engender the culture of modernism with the old transforming into the new. The German urban sociologist Georg Simmel’s 1903 essay, “The Metropolis and Mental Life,” influentially characterized the street as the central environment and the paramount psychological feature of modernism: “With each crossing of the street, with the tempo and multiplicity of economic, occupational and social life, the city sets up a deep contrast with small town and rural life...Here the rhythm of life and sensory mental imagery flows more slowly, more habitually and evenly.”19 In these terms the street is perceived as a site of momentary perception and chance encounters that rarely provide for a view that can be thought of as landscape.

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While the Impressionists sometimes painted Hassumann’s long boulevards from a high view showing them as scenes of prodigious growth and the changes brought to public space, in contrast Edvard Munch painted his Neo-Impressionist-derived Rue Lafayette in 1891, and the following year Evening on Karl Johan Street. Both depicted the engineering of long wide boulevards with their infinite expanse moving into the distance of the pictorial field, and dominating these pictures are a spatial emptiness and an anxious crowd.20

Before the nineteenth century, economic and social relationships of the city took place in neighbourhoods, or quartiers, spaces marked out by irregular streets. Physical and personal conditions were regulated by community and place and remained close-knit and socially intimate. T.J. Clark compares traditional industry and capitalist exchange: “There were kinds of prestige and ingenuity of trade which came, and could only come, from belonging to a single family of streets...the world of traditional industry was changing...industry was increasingly a Parisian matter, done citywide; and that in turn meant it was visibly and insistently capitalist.” And he continues, commenting that when these matters were discussed in the 1860s, blame was defined by two situations:

Hassmannization and the grand magasins. In a sense they were right. The rebuilding of Paris had proved to be a great industry in itself; the city’s biggest and most profitable; it drained off labour from the quartier...Yet the industry of rebuilding was nothing on its own: it was meant to be the emblem and agent of a wider economic transformation...The straight lines to the railway station were meant to express the fact that Paris was henceforth part of a national and international economy...Haussmann homogenized the business of the city.21

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The streets of the old city represented a known economy of individual labour largely
guided by a guild system with its entrenched link to local markets. The wide, straight
boulevards cutting through the historical space of the medieval city, and the regulatory
grid systems introduced with the new frontier cities both represent the inroads of global
capital to all facets of daily life. To say that the city was increasingly homogenized
extends outward from the physical realm to conditions of the industrial labour market and
the embodied experience of an increasingly urban existence.

This rationalized and categorized space controlled by capital became inseparable
from subjective experience and social estrangement. In 1913, Walter Rathenau described
the city as the site of “soullessness,” and thus “terrifying”:

The wanderer who approaches the metropolis in the twilight from the depths of
the country experiences a descent into open tracks of misfortune... This is the
nighttime image of those cities that are praised and applauded as places of
happiness, of longing, of intoxication, of the intellect, that depopulate the
countryside, that kindle the desire of those excluded to the point of criminality.22

The new public spaces of modernity when mediated by the complex conditions of capital
came to be seen as constituting social disintegration, or alienation between individuals.
While Rathenau’s “open tracks of misfortune” are conditions of transformative
uneasiness and a fear of the unknown associated with shifting space of modernity, this
era of rapid change introduced new technologies and representations of space providing
for a new visibility that addressed how the city was to be seen in epistemological and
ontological terms.

22 Walter Rathenau cited in David Frisby “Social Theory, the Metropolis and Expressionism” in
Expressionist Utopias: Paradise, Metropolis, Architectural Fantasy, Timothy O. Benson, ed. (Los Angeles:
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1994), p. 95.
Roland Barthes looks over Paris from the high view of the Eiffel Tower to ask: “What, in fact, is a panorama? An image we attempt to decipher, in which we try to recognize known sites, to identify landmarks... You don’t see it, and this absence compels you to inspect the panorama once again, to look for this point which is missing in your structure, your knowledge...struggles with perception.” 23 The high view provides for a visual strategy of seeing a view expansively or synoptically, thereby deploying the foundational “structure” of the panorama; the city is perceived objectively, but it also becomes familiar, as Barthes remarks above, “your structure.” The high view is the determinate element that provides for distance, leading to the expansive visual presence of topographical and architectural detail that through spatial analysis is able to provide for a visually secure and identifiable sense of city space.

This elevated distance of synoptic pleasure provides initially for a striving to see, to overcome absence as Barthes outlines, which characterizes the need to seek out and “decipher” detail, a type of mapping of knowledge imminent to describing the panorama as a unified space. The ontological integration of the viewer into the panorama structure is achieved when absence turns to presence through a mapping process inseparable from a pleasure in viewing, and this connects visibility with representation, unfamiliarity with familiarity, discontinuity with continuity, and perception with legibility. Barthes describes this visibility when taking in the view from the Eiffel Tower: “it gives us the world to read and not only to perceive,” and this is why, he remarks, it corresponds to “a new sensibility of vision.” 24

24 Ibid.
To picture the city from a high view presents a visual apparatus, or space of two seemingly incongruent visibilities, a broad overview as well as a provision for significant and abundant detail. The role of the high view is, as Barthes writes, is a city (Paris) offered up "as an object virtually prepared," and this also suggests a controlling component of vision. But, as well, this decipherment of detail contributes to the "activity of the mind," or a type of satisfying "aggregation of place." Such perception is quite distinct, and visually removed from walking in the city. Michel de Certeau describes "walkers" as the "ordinary practitioners" of the city, who live "down below," where "below" refers to city streets. He then contrasts this to the threshold at which visibility begins, or the elevated vantage point, which characterizes the high view. "Walkers" on the streets of the city engage with an "urban text" of "moving, intersecting writings" that are shaped out of fragments of "trajectories and alterations of spaces: in relation to representations, it remains daily and indefinitely other." The representation of space of the high view, in these terms, is merely an imaginary totalization produced by the eye, a visibility that is unified and transparent through optical knowledge that has long had "the ambition of surmounting and articulating the contradictions arising from urban agglomeration." These concepts of above and below, distance and closeness, visible and invisible, overview and decipherment characterize the high view as the central permutation of the panorama. During the nineteenth century the panorama was heralded for its "reality" of making the city visible, yet the panorama was also an illusionary space.

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25 Ibid. My italics.
27 Ibid.
keeping within the "imaginary totalizations" produced by the eye of De Certeau's critical juncture between walking and the high view.

Oversized painted panoramas, with their origin in the late eighteenth century and their popular currency as entertainments to around 1900, have long been, either, painted over, damaged or destroyed, and panorama photographs, which flourished between ca. 1845 and 1945, a span of one hundred years, now gather dust in the collecting space of the archive. Today, the high view had lost much of its earlier phantasmagoric qualities with modern transportation and aerial photographs from a plane, and more recently, satellite images, yet high vantage points continue to be sought out and associated with visual pleasure, as well as a remarkable, if specific capacity to survey the topography and account for visual knowledge. But at the centre of my analysis is neither the new technologies, nor the often, corresponding sense of advances and obsolesce, although these contribute directly to the optics of visibility that structure the model of the panorama view. Rather I turn to examine how and why the high vantage point functioned to train the city’s gaze on itself, for "it seemed indispensable to preserve its visibility...its representability."\(^{28}\)

An image identified as a panorama, whether a painting or a photograph, or other media, or simply taking in a view from on high, such as from the Eiffel Tower, is not to be easily conflated as a single form of visibility or representation. But in order to examine the high view as structure and as perception, I do not discuss specifically, at this point, painting or photography, or other media used to represent panoramic space, and the importance of each as applied to their production, reception, marketing and currency. This analysis is covered more closely in the following chapters when engraved prospects,

\(^{28}\) Hubert Damisch, p. 12.
painted panoramas and panorama photographs are examined within new technologies, cultural histories and social influences.

When Robert Barker drew his first sketches for an oversized painting, and then took out a patent in 1787, or when Nadar in 1858, took his first aerial photographs over Paris, the high view was taken as an important point of observation and spatial seeing, but was certainly not an entirely new idea. This raises the question can the view from the Eiffel Tower, and therefore the panorama, be considered “a new sensibility of vision”?29

Rather greater significance applies to the newness of the space itself, the industrial and urban modern landscape, rather than the high view, as the city became increasingly transformed by the expansive development and growth of commercial capital. It was keeping in step with the spatial transformation of the city brought about by conditions of modernity and modernization, that during the late eighteenth- and nineteenth century, panoramas represented the first large cities of the European world, beginning with London, then Paris, and soon after cities throughout Europe, and not long after North America.

The earliest painted panoramas represented the same city in which the audiences that visited the panorama lived. These large oversized paintings made the city visible, giving it legibility in representation, beginning with Robert Barker’s panorama of Edinburgh (1788), followed with a view of London from Albion Mills (1792). To represent the city as a whole, and then present the image for viewing within that same city, continued in Prévost’s view of Paris, as seen from the roof of the Tuileries (1799), and this was ongoing with Girtin’s *Eidometropolis* (London) (1802), Tiekler’s Berlin (1801), Janscha and Post’s Vienna (1804), Taragnola’s Hamburg (1805), Morgenstern’s

29 Roland Barthes, p. 9.
Frankfurt (1817), Thomas Hornor’s Colosseum in London (1829), and Sattler’s Salzburg (1829), among others.\textsuperscript{30}

During the late eighteenth century, Europe was still overwhelmingly rural. In 1789, only two European cities could be called \textit{big}. The first to be industrialized were London and then Paris; London’s population was a million, and Paris about half a million.\textsuperscript{31} Industrial development was accompanied by a significant growth in urban demographics, thereby providing an audience for the panoramas. With entrance fees limiting access, panoramas were at first frequented only by the nobility and the new middle class, and then admission prices were still varied providing for a hierarchy of viewing situations, but even the lowest prices were more than a worker’s daily wage.\textsuperscript{32} During the second half of the nineteenth century, admission prices dropped sharply and the lower classes began to visit the panoramas. Other changes brought by new media occurred simultaneously; newspapers and other forms of popular entertainment supported a commercial “mass” sensibility, which began to address all social classes simultaneously to provide early homogenization to cultural forms aimed at a generalized audience, similar to those that visited the panoramas.

The panorama’s space of visibility relies on seemingly alternate optics of distance and closeness, the real and the imaginary. I approach this question as a discursive field that implies \textit{slippage} between conflicting conditions of visibility. On the one hand, the high view structures the city as a whole, then, on the other, it is able to encompass cartographic details, together leading to bringing epistemological recognition, or the sum

and its parts together comprehensively. This was often how a panorama was sketched, first a view encompassing synoptic space, and then a more careful consideration of the parts from below, including details of buildings, monuments, bridges and boats.

Bernard Comment addresses the "near-far paradigm" of the high view formulating an "exchange" between totality and detail. The high view as a distant image brings the urban landscape together as "embraced in its totality," and the close-up image "restricts itself to fragments but leaves nothing out." These visual perceptions of distance and closeness are not separate, but linked within the high view. As well, a kind of double appreciation can be said to take place. A high view from a mountain top grants pleasure, as well as stimulating a reversal of this pleasure once the viewer returns to the valley below, for then "pleasure returns," or is in "a way repeated" through the secondary experience of the topography of down below, which is now altered physically and psychologically, for the high view has imposed conditions suggestive of transparency located between representation of space and the experience of this space.33 To participate in this "journey" through the urban landscape is constituted as a space of visibility, which then reverberates within a "collective" identity through a common pursuit of pleasure and knowledge: "The intellectual focus is thus reductive: it frames the differentiated, heterogeneous social terrain as a unified picture, or—in yet another modulation of this key term—as spectacle," a discussion to which I will return.34

Divergent perceptions of city space

The concept of mapping space within the panorama confers a totalizing unity considered in relation to the fractured space of contingency, associated with the street and capitalist exchange itself, rendered through capitalist modernity. One way to approach this is aesthetic representation. Aesthetic realms of visual interpretation place the spatial configurations referenced in the terms *fragment* and *detail*, as quite distinctly separate from each other. Fragment with its etymology derived from the Latin *frangere*, meaning to break, stands in contrast to detail, for detail derives from *de-tail*, or to cut from.³⁵ In my inquiry into panorama space, the fragment represents a separate discursive field of interpretation, a space without a system for resolution, and a cultural form that I would locate closer to the modern form of montage which attempts to seek out and represent the conditions of a modern world considered fractured in its political, economic and social conditions, again returning to representation of the street. Contrastingly my reference to detail does not divide or separate as a modern human condition, but participates in a process of mapping parts in order to form a whole. Omar Calabrese writes:

> The fragment is presented to the viewer as it is, rather than as the product of an act performed by a subject....the fragment differs from a detail (in) that the edges of a fragment are not “de-fined” but “interrupted....In effect, however, the geometry of the fragment is that of a breakage...(which isolates) the fragment from the “whole” to which it belonged....The fragment, considered as part of a system, is then explained according to it. The detail, on the one hand, while being considered in the same way, explains the system in a new way.³⁶

³⁶ Ibid., p. 75.
In the panorama, detail contributes to the deciphering of a unified whole to complement the overview as it exacts a condition of presence as knowledge of city space.

The philosophical tradition of the *fragment* gains a presence only in the absence of fixed meaning. In the high view designation of panorama space, detail contributes to the illusionary totality of vision, rather than dissolution, and from the high view, a processing of mapping through detail is central to the “embrace” of the cityscape. Detail is the gratifying supplement and the element of decipherment that is central to the aestheticized pleasure of realizing a totality. Detail becomes central to the “act of the mind,” and when this is applied to the accumulative “euphoric vision” of the high view the perception of detail contributes to the “gliding” or scanning process whereby the eye finally encounters the “entire length of a continuous image” of Paris. In this “embrace” of totality the viewer feels that the world is organized around them, and: “we must find signs within it.”

Contrasting the street to the panorama, or the down below to the high view, does not entirely separate these modes of perception, or structures of seeing, rather an analogous relationship can be said to exist between these ways of seeing and their cultural meaning, for streets also contribute to the synoptic space of the panorama as a binding pictorial device.

Walter Benjamin’s integrates Simmel’s inquiry into modernism when he writes of the “protective eye,” or the eye within the disruptions of the modern street, which does not permit surrender to faraway things, a perception that can be found in the panorama view. When it does occur: “It may even cause one to feel something like pleasure in the degradation of such abandonment,” and this field of view enters the realm of panoramas.

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and dioramas. Benjamin talks of the “magic of distance,” and when it is pierced, and he cites from Baudelaire, “Nebulous Pleasure horizonward will flee/Just like a sylph behind the wings.” The “magic of distance” enables visibility, hence visual pleasure, while in contrast the street brings a strong reliance on closeness, or “the interpersonal relationships of people in big cities.” This locates the fractured condition closer to the visual experience of the montage. As space of the real and as a symbolic-interpretive space dependent on illusion, the panorama is quite in contrast to the spatial dislocation the uncertainty of meaning that is associated with montage. Montage represents space through random and disconnected forms of aesthetic application aligned with chance and coincidence. I mention montage and panoramas together, although they are quite distinct visual fields, and each held forth as a way of visualizing the city within a specific passage of historical time. Each in their awkward, and yet powerful space of representation is not to be read just as a convention of style. The panorama and montage as configurations of space are each supremely modern forms that are revisionist in their historical contexts, therefore each have been dully disputed and disregarded. The panorama as a cultural form is associated with the nineteenth century; montage, especially photomontage, is an early twentieth century form. Both are interconnected with conditions transformed through technology and the new mass media, and urban and political change.

When montage with its disparate imagery is considered in my analysis as a stand-in for the streets, as an aesthetic form to represent the city as a fractured physical and

39 Ibid., p. 192.
40 Ibid., p. 191. Geog Simmel provides Benjamin’s reference when he writes: “The interpersonal relationships of people in big cities are characterized by a markedly greater emphasis on the use of eye than on that of the ears. This can be attributed chiefly to the institution of public conveyances...Before people were never put in a position of having to stare at one another for minutes or even hours on end without exchanging a word.”
psychological space able to encounter the rapid economic, social and political shifts of modernity, then the panorama as a projected space of unity is the divergent historical predecessor. Each can be defined as providing a tenuous representation of the modern city, and each precludes any absolute meaning when setting out to represent the urban topography by bringing visibility to the city, by representing the city as space. Theodor Adorno comments on montage as a vulnerable form unable to retain a consistent message. “The principle of montage,” he wrote, “was supposed to shock people into realizing just how dubious any organic unity was.” But when the shock has lost its punch, the products of montage revert to being indifferent stuff or substance. 41 Within this linkage of relevance and indifference, both the panorama and montage, at their origins, provide for an epistemological discourse aligned with the uncertainties of modernity, thereby claiming each for their own purposes an interpretation of the whole and the fragment. Montage enters the picture during the twentieth century when panorama space can no longer grasp within its reach the city of modernity. For panorama space came with limitations. The demise of the panorama began to take place when the panorama no longer had the spatial apparatus or structure to visualize progress. For progress outgrew visual legibility when the city extended upward for spatial comprehension and capacity for spatial seeing, as a totality, was no longer able to achieve physical closure and symbolic recognition.

Conceptualizing the uncertainty of a city in pieces as in montage, rather than a unified whole, is also theorized through spatial activities of the flâneur, a literary and deeply metaphorical figure engaged in visual mobility extending through the newly

modernized streets of nineteenth-century Paris, and largely brought to contemporary critical standing through the writings of Walter Benjamin.\(^{42}\) The figure of the flâneur was embodied by Baudelaire, to walk the streets, to study the crowd, as the “economic base shifts drastically... (Baudelaire’s) awareness of his highly ambivalent situation—at once socially rebellious and producer of commodities for the literary market” was a condition central to modernism.\(^{43}\) For Baudelaire wandering the streets of Paris was an art form, realized through poetic imagination, but also “risk-filled,” as he writes in the poem, “The Sun”:

I walk alone, practicing my fantastic fencing
Sniffing at every risk-filled corner for a rhyme
Stumbling over words like cobblestones
Colliding at times with lines I dreamed of long ago.\(^{44}\)

The “I” of Baudelaire is assimilated through the metaphorical figure of the flâneur moving through the urban landscape in “unfeeling isolation.”\(^{45}\) Baudelaire’s activity of “sniffing at every risk-filled corner” leads to interpretation and production of images as “rhyme.” The figure of the flâneur, as carried forward through Baudelaire, to Benjamin, to the writings of Kracauer, hold “near-intangible meanings” which cast their “flow” over the flâneur or “even creates him.” Kracauer continues: “The flâneur is intoxicated with


\(^{44}\) Baudelaire cited in ibid., p. 185.

life in the street—life eternally dissolving the patterns which it is about to form." This is the modern street read as a montage, or image of visual uncertainty. In contrast is the panorama as representation able to provide for a collective identity, as a rebuttal to the "dissolving" patterns of the street and the experience of unfeeling isolation.

**Technological structures and a discursive vision**

Barker’s first panoramic overview of London in 1791 was a topographical view sketched by his son from the roof of the Albion Steam Flour Mills, a symbol of industrialization centrally located in London. The Albion Mills at this time was the highest building in London, and represented the latest industrial technology, and, as well, it overlooked St. Paul’s Cathedral and New Westminster Abbey. The vantage point was also historically timely as the building was completely destroyed by fire the following year. On the 10 January 1792, an advertisement in the *Times* of London used the word panorama for the first time:

> The public are most respectfully informed that the subject of the PANORAMA painted by R. Barker, Patentee of the invention, is a view-at-a-glance of CITIES of LONDON and WESTMINISTER comprehending the three bridges, represented in one Painting, containing 1479 square feet, which appears as large and in every respect the same as reality. The observers of the Picture being by painting only deceived as to suppose themselves on the Albion Mills from which the view was taken.  

The announcement concludes by listing hours of “inspection” and the cost of admittance, one shilling. Although the first panorama was only a half-circle, Barker, with a number of

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financial backers, constructed a permanent panorama rotunda in London, the following year to display a 360-degree view. The patent declared that the “invention” was intended as “a proper disposition of the whole, to perfect an entire view of any country or situation, as it appears to an observer turning quite around.” The patent continues stating that the image “delineates correctly and connectedly every object which presents itself to his view as he turns round, by a connection which where he began.” The image was marketed as representing the same as “in reality.” Most characteristically for the image that was to follow, the patent declared its intentions to realize an image that was a full-circle, so viewers could “imagine themselves, feel as if really on the very spot.”

The panorama view is the anecdote for rapid change providing an “aesthetic of integration” able to convey the complexities of the built environment of the modern city, and yet through a perception of temporal and spatial mobility embrace the city as a whole. The city of London was contained within a panorama of London, in 1793, produced by Barker and his sons, and the city of Paris contained within a panorama of Paris, the first opening in 1799, completed by four collaborating painters, Jean Mouchet, Denis Fontaine, Pierre Prévost and Constant Bourgeois. Both were exhibited in their own purpose-built rotundas. By considering the panorama as “a proper disposition of the whole,” and being as “if really on the very spot,” the panorama reached out to gain a comprehension of integration. The city viewed from afar and from on high stimulates the “urban imagination” which contributes through the metaphors of synecdoche as defined

48 Specification of the Patent granted to Mr. Robert Barker, of the City of Edinburgh, of the City of Edinburgh, Portrait Painter; for his Invention of an entire new Contrivance or Apparatus, called by him La Nature à d’oïl, for the Purpose of displaying Views of Nature at large, by Oil-Painting, Fresco, Water-colours, Crayons, or any other Mode of painting or drawing, June 19, 1787, pp. 165-166.
49 Ibid.,
by the ability simultaneously to conceive the part and the whole, or concurrently the part for the whole, and this becomes the aesthetic of integration for this personification of the city creates the unity that does not exist. It is the spatial ability of the panorama to combine parts, or topographical details into a whole that enables the viewer “to identify with the city, to know it, or to feel that we do.”

The aesthetic and utilitarian integration of space raises urban issues of rational and cohesive manipulation associated with the introduction during the nineteenth century of a planning sensibility and mastery of space promoting concepts of integration, harmony and coordination in the city’s form, utility and growth. These are the themes of Haussmann’s transformation of Paris, as well as the conceptual proposals of the theorists of the urban that were soon to follow at the start of the twentieth century from Scottish urbanist and biologist Patrick Geddes, to twentieth-century architect and planner Le Corbusier. Each sought a cartographic mapping of the modernizing city by seeking to prescribe the city’s purpose and form, and to understand and manipulate growth by transforming perception, thereby incorporating space into their methodologies by utilizing a high view.

Baron Haussmann did not invent “boulevard life—he generalized it, exaggerated it, made it monumental.” Haussmann’s changes, now well known, are still lamented by some, when compared to the remaining sections of the medieval city. The Goncourt brothers, the most dissident of nineteenth-century Parisian critics, loathed Haussmann’s streets, writing ironically in 1860: “without sinuosity, without the unexpected perspective, implacably straight, which no longer express the world of Balzac,” makes

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one think “of some American Babylon of the future.” More truthful, than the brothers perhaps realized in the changing world of the 1860s for no longer would traditional, irregular streets dominate the fabric of a city. The high view also entered into a more formalized methodology of urban planning. As early as 1862, César Daly writes: “Nothing is so beautiful...Great spectacles reinvigorate man’s forces...seduce his imagination...It is only from on high that one apprehends the masses of great monuments, reads their true dispositions and real character, and recognizes the general arrangement of their parts.”

In 1892 Geddes purchased a six-story building topped by a viewing platform. As the structure was located in Edinburgh, perhaps Geddes took his cue from Barker’s topographical view of the city of Edinburgh, which came to be called a panorama. Although the building originally was a seventeenth-century structure a public observatory with a dome-capped, camera obscura was constructed on the roof in the mid-1850s. Geddes added further renovations to the top floors of the building, and gave it the name Outlook Tower. It now became observation tower and civic museum. Later he would refer to the Edinburgh Outlook Tower as a prototype for similar structures in other cities, although none of these were ever constructed.

After first taking in the topographical view of the city from the enclosed camera obscura and the surrounding observation deck, the viewer descended through each consecutive floor. Geddes identified the view of the city as a place of geographical inquiry, and then connected this view to a philosophical and educational analysis of the

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53 Ibid.
physical world below: “Here around us...is an amphitheater of social evolution...we must study man’s struggle with life, at first in direct contact with nature, as hunter and fisher...woodman and miner; and then trace the complex development, yet enduring influence, of these elemental occupations into our modern industrial division of labour.”

The local reached out to encompass the universal, and both concepts of understanding were enabled from a high view. Geddes’ approach was to consider the past as bringing along ideas that would frame his own contemporary understanding between city space and its inhabitants. Three theoretical principles—the geographical, the historical and the spiritual—correspond to definitions of “place, work and folk,” categorizations he extracted from his early training as a biologist.

The Tower focused the visitors’ gaze on Edinburgh and its region to position the high view as an “organ of social transmission.” Geddes’ plan was as large in scale as was his concept of scientific inquiry, which led to a more universally prescribed approach to research and planning, one that would enable an “Index Museum to the World.”

Geddes was likely influenced by the nineteenth-century viewing and pedagogical space introduced by the panorama; during the late 1880s sketches, prints, oversized paintings, and photographs assumed a significant knowledge base of mapping and interpreting the urban city. Although it cannot be known how much Geddes was influenced by Barker’s patent, and the various popular panoramas constructed throughout Europe, comparisons exist in the elements of cartographic vision and space, knowledge and interpretive pedagogy. Geddes expanded further on Barker’s intentions by moving beyond the high

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56 Ibid., p. 80.
57 Ibid., p. 2.
58 Ibid., p. 92.
59 Ibid., p. 127.
view providing for an abundance of knowledge through which to interpret the city, and, in doing so, sought to consider how a city could be improved as a physical, social and cultural space, for in Geddes’ perception of change, the city was a “real and living unity.” The next step for Geddes’ was the concept of the high view as the central provision for the designation of “temples of knowledge,” which he then advanced and expanded to “temples of life.”

Other high view structures followed Geddes’ lofty and wide-ranging ideas. One of these was the design for the “Great Globe” by Elisée Reclus, 1897 – 1898, which while remaining unbuilt proposed a model of structure and interpretive focus that reflected Geddes’ pedagogy of interpreting cartographic space. Conceived as an egg-shaped construction accommodating a globe, documentation centre and library, knowledge was also to be transmitted by a changing collection of dioramas, not unlike the modern day natural history museum. A “celestial globe” was constructed, by Paul Louis Albert Galeron, a French architect, at the 1900 Universal Exposition held in Paris. Geddes then worked with Galeron to propose designs for a National Institute of Geography in Edinburgh. Although this structure was never built, Geddes continued to elaborate the concept of the high view in proposals that returned time and time again to the concept of the Outlook Tower as the model able to link science with metaphysical concepts, and thereby hope to identify and improve the position of the urban individual within the modern city.

The Eiffel Tower built for the World Exposition of 1889 achieved a far more monumental and far reaching cultural and social status. Barthes recognized “its universal

60 Ibid., p. 217.
61 Ibid., pp. 175-176.
language” describing: “Glance, object, symbol, such is the infinite circuit of functions which permits it always to be something other and something much more than the Eiffel Tower.” Although Gustave Eiffel’s proposed use for the Tower, were, as expected from an engineer, a number of scientific applications from telecommunications to meteorological observations, it is the “human meaning” which now defines the Tower, for the utilitarian sources are quite “ridiculous” in comparison to “the great imaginary function which enables men to be strictly human.” These are Barthes’ terms of identification of Paris from the Eiffel Tower, and they are an imaginary geography of place, but are not so distant from Geddes largely unrealized cultural, educational and metaphysical Outlook Tower, which although limited in influence, and occurring during the same years of the panorama, set out to propose a comparative symbolic journey as a confrontation of the real and the ideal, and these terms continued to shape the concepts and experiences of the high view.

Beginning in the 1920s, Le Corbusier, the Swiss-born French architect Charles-Edouard Jeanneret-Gris, believed that a comparative kind of human “dignity” could only exist through an understanding and interpretation of urban planning guided by aerial views, and, in fact, analogies can be drawn to the nineteenth-century implications of Geddes’ natural science. Le Corbusier linked up the functional and rational with the biological to arrive at “psycho-physiological” implications. This was influenced by an exploratory trip to New York as Le Corbusier sought commissions against the backdrop of America’s modern history of the skyscraper. What made the skyscraper possible were

62 Roland Barthes, pp. 4-5.
63 Ibid., 6.
the innovations and reliability of structural and mechanical systems, which Le Corbusier attempted to humanize as “rational, logically conceived, biologically normal.” Le Corbusier’s “impatience” with old Paris was extreme manipulation and destruction that harks back to Haussmann: “Imagine all of this junk, which till now had laid spread out over the soil like a dry crust, cleaned off and carted away.” The city according to Le Corbusier was to be rid of dirty, dangerous, and unhealthy spaces, and we can contrast this sharply to Baudelaire’s “sniffing” for inspiration in street corners.

The topographical view that Le Corbusier experienced in flights over South America introduced an illusionary spatial deployment comparative to the panorama image: “From far away I saw in my mind the vast and magnificent belt of buildings, crowned horizontally by a superhighway flying from mount to mount and reaching out from one bay to another.” In answering his critics, and there were many, he writes, that the view from on high is “masterful, dazzling, beautiful... You must believe that the experience of architecture from an airplane exists, it is to clarity itself.” Le Corbusier, as Haussmann before him, employed long-reaching perspective distance as a vehicle for urban planning, and a route to what the former called “infinite space,” or an ideal view systematized through long reaching boulevards that replaced the “disorder” of medieval crooked streets. For Le Corbusier space is the determinant, on the hand, the orientation of perception, and, on the other, a spatial directive that is never finalized at a fixed perspective point, but extends out into the distance.

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65 Ibid., p. 144.
66 Le Corbusier cited in ibid., p. 200.
67 Mardges Bacon, p. 71.
69 Anthony Vidler, Warped Space, p. 175.
Le Corbusier’s grand projects, just as Geddes before him, were equally grandiose in spectacle, and often remained unbuilt. Both relied on the high view, but this was quite distinct in intentions. Considered over historical space and time, the high view from the Eiffel Tower, Geddes’ Outlook Tower and Le Corbusier’s aerial scan from a plane, which when applied as an urban planning guide, recalls panorama space and its significance for the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century preeminent industrialized society. Each can be considered through early typologies of urban discourses claiming representation that transforms how the city was to be seen and interpreted, formulating structure and bestowing visual pleasure. Spatial changes were introduced when technology and the use of new materials introduced architecture modeled through engineering, rather than within earlier conventions of aesthetic. Early interpretations of the Eiffel Tower acknowledged its display of engineering technology. Comparatively, new technologies of engineering, and the use of modern materials certainly figured prominently in Le Corbusier’s grand schemes.

For Corbusier the high view set out to claim a distinctly differential formulation of space-time, than that proposed by Geddes’s historical model of space that took from the economy of the town. Le Corbusier’s grandiose and technocratic proposed developments were conceived through monumental terms, and pathological disruptions were associated with the street. He writes in 1929:

The street...rising straight up from it are walls of houses, which when seen against the sky-line present a grotesquely jagged silhouette of gables, attics, and zinc chimneys...The sky is a remote hope far, far above it. The street is no more than a trench, a deep cleft, a narrow passage. And although we have been accustomed to it for more than a thousand years, our hearts are always oppressed by the constriction of its enclosing walls.
The street is full of people: one must take care where one goes... The street wears us out. And when all is said and done we have to admit it disgusts us. Heaven preserve us from the Balzacian mentality of (those) who would be content to leave our streets as they are because these murky canyons offer them the fascinating spectacle of human physiognomy.  

Lefebvre writes of “scientists, planners, engineers, developers, architects, urbanists, geographers and those of a scientific bent,” when he refers to representations of space. Le Corbusier could have been in mind, specifically the general acceptance and praise for his architecture, rising against the grand monumental sensibilities of his accompanying urban planning schemes. Lefebvre gives recognition to space as extending beyond material space to spatial practice. Was he referring to panorama space when he writes of a space of representation “as innocent, as free of traps...The illusion of substantiality, naturalness and spatial opacity nurtures its own mythology.” In Lefebvre’s terms of space this reads as: “the illusion of transparency on the one hand and the illusion of opacity, or ‘realistic’ illusion, on the other.” Lefebvre addresses an inquiry into how societies generate complex symbolic spaces, such as the panorama or the view from the Eiffel Tower, conveying therefore spatial relations of production that do operate and take effect as realistic illusions.

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70 Le Coubusier cited in Anthony Vidler, Warped Space, pp. 61-62.
71 Henri Lefebvre, pp. 38-39
72 Ibid., pp. 28-30
73 Ibid., pp. 27-28.
It is now necessary to find a high vantage point to picture the city as a panorama. Roland Barthes positions himself on the balcony of the Eiffel Tower built in 1889, and by relying strongly on a structuralist reading, he asserts that panoramic vision gives “us the world to read and not only to perceive,” and this is how the panorama unites perception with vision “to transcend sensation and to see things in their structure.” The high view is formulated succinctly as providing for pleasure, a “bliss of sensation,” or as “nothing happier than a lofty outlook.” Barthes is one of the few writers that has critically investigated pleasure, and his contribution has advanced a new terminology, multifaceted, indeterminably complex and centrally exploratory:

Simply a day comes when we feel a certain need to loosen the theory a bit, to shift the discourse, the idiolect which repeats itself, becomes consistent, and to give it the shock of a question. Pleasure is this question. As a trivial, unworthy name (who today would call himself a hedonist with a straight face?), it can embarrass the text’s return to morality of truth: it is an oblique, a drag anchor, so to speak, without which the theory of the text would revert to a centered system, a philosophy of meaning.

Barthes sets out to avoid the orthodoxies of academic genres and conventions to consider pleasure as moving away from the categories of the erotic or fine art aesthetic, rather he exerts a “gradual torsion” to extract pleasure from its “regressive, idealist background

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75 Ibid., p. 11.
and bring it closer to the body.” In doing so, pleasure is positioned as less of a singular or autonomous, subjective vision, and brought closer to social and cultural codes, which is important for my analysis.

Positioning is everything. The high view provides spatial structure as visual dialectic that ranges between visual pleasure and interpretation. Barthes writes: “on the one hand, it is a euphoric vision, for it can glide slowly, lightly the entire length of a continuous image of Paris... but, on the other hand, it seeks to be deciphered, we must find signs within.” Distance, therefore, provides for an aesthetic unity as a base for knowledge, as Barthes writes, “to say that there is a beauty to Paris... is doubtless to acknowledge this euphoria of aerial vision... but it is also to mask the quite intellectual effort of the eye.” Perception taking on “decipherment” described as “quite intellectual effort” takes place through visual relations of near and far, and the viewer is “cut off from the world, and yet also the owner of the world.” How is this vision to be understood as perception moving between not only near and far, the totality and the detail, but real and ideal terms? On way to answer this is consider characteristics of the high view where the vantage point is both a form of separation and a structure of belonging, manufacturing “a new reality, condensing time, editing the visual field.”

“Visibility” from the Eiffel Tower described by Barthes, is a perception of city space quite distinct from de Certeau’s description from the now lost, but still highly symbolic “summit” of New York’s World Trade Center:

78 Roland Barthes, “The Eiffel Tower,” pp. 10-11,
79 Ibid., p. 17.
To be lifted to the summit of the World Trade Center is to be lifted out of the city’s grasp. One’s body is no longer clasped by the streets that turn and return it according to an anonymous law; nor is it possessed or played, by the rumble of so many differences and by the nervousness of New York traffic. When one goes up there he leaves behind the mass...An Icarus flying above these waters, he can ignore the devices of Daedalus in mobile and endless labyrinths far below.  

Space and spatial practices are expanded from on high, as de Certeau continues:

His elevation transfigures him into a voyeur. It puts him at a distance. It transforms the bewitching world by which one was “possessed” into a text that lies before one’s eyes. It allows one to read it, to be a solar Eye, looking down like a god. The exaltation of a scopic and gnostic drive: the fiction of knowledge is related to this lust to be a viewpoint and nothing more. Must one finally fall back into the dark street where crowds more back and forth...Escaping the imaginary totalizations produced by the eye, the everyday has a certain strangeness that does not surface. 

In contrast, to Barthes’ affirmative description of the visibility of the city of Paris, from the Eiffel Tower, de Certeau’s high view over New York was disputed as an “imaginary totalization,” nothing more than a “fiction,” easily abandoned for the “strangeness” and the “bewitching world” of the streets below. De Certeau positions the viewer from on high as a voyeur who “looks down like a God” on the ordinary “practitioners” of the city below. But unlike Barthes’ understanding of seeing things in their structure, therefore a comprehension of space, de Certeau articulates the high view as an “escape.” It remains fleeting and unsure, only momentarily providing a “corrective space” to the multiple confusions of the city below. The high view in this reading is largely oppressive, and

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81 Michel de Certeau, p. 92
82 Ibid. But acknowledging temporal space, with the destruction of the Towers, visual pleasure and decipherment has been replaced by politics, conspiracy theories and civic disputes.
83 Ibid, pp. 92-93
De Certeau’s spatial practices of the street embodies a close association with urban reality, the “dark spaces where crowds move back and forth,” crowds that are themselves unable “to see down below.”\(^{85}\) The streets of New York are a dark space of representation. Nevertheless dark space for Certeau takes a prior reading over the high view as panoptic structure. As walkers are unable to read the urban as “text,” this translates that the city cannot to be read as landscape interpreted as a unified picture or composite whole which forms the panorama. This is also Simmel’s view.

The city interpreted through its cacophonous streets is for Simmel relations between proximity and nearness within everyday experiences of the street:

Since contemporary urban culture, with its commercial, professional and social intercourse, forces us to be physically close to an enormous number of people, sensitive and modern people would sink completely into despair if the

\(^{84}\) Ibid., p. 108.

\(^{85}\) Ibid., p. 92.
objectification of social relationships did not bring with it an inner boundary and reserve. The pecuniary character of relationships, either openly or concealed in a thousand forms, places an invisible functional distance between people that is an inner protection and neutralization against the overcrowded proximity and friction of our cultural life. 86

Now metropolitan communication within the jostling crowds of the city is described as unbearable without "psychological distance." 87 Modern life is perceived as fluid and uncertain, terms expressed through the contingency of conditions of the street, which in relation to the high view is largely unfixed and inexpressible, an endless dynamic of spatial interactions unable to be grasped as a totality.

Writing the high-view in nineteenth-century literature

Nineteenth-century French literature took as one of its central motifs a view from on high, but as a literary interpretation guided by its own designations and expectations, this was a view with fluid stimulations quite distinct from the painted panorama popular during the same era. Literature incorporated into the high view is "an immediate consumption of a humanity," writes Barthes, and it is frequently "the function of great books to achieve in advance what technology will merely put into execution." 88 Barthes looks to the Eiffel Tower as materializing this imagination, but the high view in nineteenth-century literature did not sustain a level of optimism. In literature, the high view was perceived as an optical realm more menacing than the euphoric vision proposed by Barthes, for the high view was metaphorically, hence temporally separate from the

87 Ibid.
88 Roland Barthes, p. 8.
discordant sensations of modern life, but this “threat” of the down-below was not to be so readily discarded, as Léon Daudet wrote: “From above one looks down on this agglomeration of palaces, monuments, houses... What becomes most clearly recognizable from this height is a threat. The agglomerations of human beings are threatening.”

Daudet explains further by incorporating a series of high views that overlook the three cityscapes of Lyons, Marseilles and Paris. Each view has its own specific vantage point, and therefore topographical view. Yet this is not cohesive space, but “menace” connected to revolutionary zeal, hence political and social uncertainty:

From high up you can see this population of palaces, monuments, houses, and hovels, which seem to have gathered in expectation of some cataclysm, or of several cataclysms—meteorological, perhaps or social... As a lover of hilltop sanctuaries, which never fail to stimulate my mind and nerves with their bracing harsh wind, I have spent hours on Fourvières looking at Lyons, on Notre-Dame de la Garde looking at Marseilles, on Sacré Coeur looking at Paris... And, yes, at a certain moment I heard in myself something like a tocsin, a strange admonition, and I saw these three magnificent cities... threatened with collapse, with devastation by fire and flood, with carnage, with rapid erosion, like forests leveled en bloc. At other times, I saw them preyed upon by obscure, subterranean evil, which undermined the monuments and neighborhoods, causing entire sections to crumble... From the standpoint of these promontories, what appears most clearly is the menace. The agglomeration is menacing; the enormous labor is menacing. For man has need of labor, that is clear, but he has other needs as well... he needs to isolate himself and to form groups, to cry out and to revolt, to remain calm and to submit... Hence, as one looks out over Paris, Lyons, or Marseilles, from the heights of Sacré Coeur, the Fourvieres, or Notre-Dame de la Garde, what astounds one is that Paris, Lyons, and Marseilles have endured.

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Urban modernity is compared to nature, and nature to landscape, but nature is perceived as cataclysmic. The high vantage points or “sanctuaries” that stimulate the writer’s mind and nerves reveal only a sense of “menace,” and the viewer is unable to grasp a unified vision, rather revealing an unstable urban identity of “collapse” and “devastation.” Nature refers not to fortuitous elements of landscape; rather its cyclical decay marks out the foundation for urbanism now defined as a threat, or a failed response to political success and community accord.

Baudelaire combined visual pleasure from a high view with a much larger and all encompassing “monstrosity” of form: “With a contented heart, I climbed the hill from which one can survey the city in its breadth—hospitals and brothels, purgatory, inferno, prison-houses, where every monstrosity blossoms like a flower.” For Baudelaire the high view provides ambivalence in perception; although the high view provides for visual pleasure, it also encompasses despair, in this instance, the allegorical rendering of “every monstrosity blossoms like a flower.” Prendergast concludes with Baudelaire’s sustained allegorical approach to modern Paris: “From the high view one looks down as upon a fallen world, sometimes in amazement, even in the hope of redeeming it, but more often to despise it, posses it, manipulate it or escape from it.” Could Walter Benjamin have the high view panorama in mind when he refers to Baudelaire’s allegorical approach, and the poet’s necessity to “rip away the harmonious façade of the world that surrounded him”?

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92 Ibid., p. 52.
93 Walter Benjamin cited in Susan Buck-Morss, p. 182.
Comparatively, William Wordsworth wrote allegorically to sharply critique Barker’s early panorama of Edinburgh: “those mimic sides that ape the absolute presence of reality, expressing as a mirror, sea and land and what earth is, and what she has to shew.” Increasingly abstracted through distance, yet made familiar through detail, hence closeness, the high view within this dual response is able to transform the complex and jostling realities of the city: “the material (of the city) can be observed and ordered free of the threat of being submerged (‘drowned’) by its proliferating abundance.” To identify the city as a panorama in these terms of “proliferating abundance” is to say that the city defies description. The high view enables the viewer to understand the city, or at least a comprehension that this can take place: “whether of a panorama to be dominated or of a scene lost in the reflections of a viewer—these tropes all work through simplification. But they do work, and the consequence is that observers of the city hold onto them for explanations.” But contradiction arises, as, most notably, the panorama provides for “a completeness and truthfulness not always to be gained by a visit to the scene itself.”

A high view over looking the city of Paris is described by Victor Hugo as showing “the shivering of the sales of progress.” In 1855 Hugo wrote that progress was a “religion” in the nineteenth century (likely with some irony), for this was the year of the first Paris Exposition: “Progress is the footstep of God himself.” Paris as a city

95 Christopher Prendergast, p. 71.
98 Victor Hugo cited in Christopher Prendergast, p. 257.
rapidly expanding and transforming with the physical and social changes brought by
Haussmann’s rapid destruction and rebuilding of the city was described as a “marvelous
and terrible view of the flattened planes.”\textsuperscript{100} If the modernizing city as a panorama is
visualized and idealized as progress, the city below was a place of increasing
topographical uncertainty, as Haussmann began his plans to demolish parts of the old
medieval city to make way for the long straight boulevards that reshaped the older
medieval city in ways never before realized, but often repeated in a comparative urban
and mechanical proficiency. Haussmann referred to his staff as an “army,” whose task
what “to go forth to the conquest of Old Paris.” This army “would permit me to
undertake ripping the quartiers of the center of the city from a tangle of streets...gutting
the sordid, filthy, crowded houses” which as entry ways for disease were “subjects of
shame for a great country like France.”\textsuperscript{101}

In an often quoted text, Walter Benjamin has written about conditions of
“mechanical reproduction” as influencing representation that mediates cultural objects:
“Everyday the urge grows stronger to get hold of an object at a very close range by way
of its likeness, its reproduction.”\textsuperscript{102} The city as a panorama brings things together
spatially to “get hold” of the city as an object. In his patent, Barker specified a
corresponding objectification of a space of representation brought closer to the viewer:
“There must be an inclosure with the said circular buildings or framing, which shall
prevent an observer going too near the drawing, or painting, so as it may, from all parts it

\textsuperscript{100} Joris-Karl Huysmans cited in Christopher Prendergast, p. 259.
\textsuperscript{101} Haussmann cited in David P. Jordon, \textit{Transforming Paris}, p. 220.
can be viewed, have its proper effect." This "effect" of spatial "inclosure" implies an aesthetic, which brings the city itself into an ideal viewing space, psychologically neither too far nor too close, and in doing so panorama space provides for "coherent patterns":

"The panoramic view thus goes hand in hand with an aestheticizing perspective; both are intent on making wholes out of parts, stitching fragments, 'slices' and 'tableaux' into coherent patterns." This notion of an aesthetic totality is presented as working against urban fragmentation, in both a material and social sense, comparative to Barthes' notion of reading through "structure" from the high view of the Eiffel Tower.

Simon Schama's account of "our shaping perception that makes the difference between raw matter and landscape" positions landscape as structured by "myths," and forming a pervasive force through which historically culture has joined with nature, to manufacture the meaning of landscape, and consequently this perception manufactures the real. In Barthes' description of the view from the Eiffel Tower, and here he relies on the high view for its transformative properties of interpretation, the "frequently grim urban myth" of the city assumes "a romantic dimension," thereby a naming of landscape as a type of belonging, rather than the earlier "fallen world" of Baudelaire. Writing in the late eighteenth century, just three years after Barker exhibited his first painted panorama of London in Leicester Square, the poet Coleridge compared two landscapes in rural England. He contrasts a "humble" view from a cottage in the "dell" to the high view from a nearby hill. To view the landscape from a distance was a way to read "the whole

103 Robert Barker cited in Bernard Comment, p. 112.
104 Christopher Prendergast, p. 71.
World” as “seem’d imag’d” in the “vast circumference” of the horizon.”108 To realize the “world” as a panorama was to see the whole, which transposed the physical to the social, in Coleridge’s words a “burst of prospect” seen from the hill “seems like society.”109 The cottage in the “dell,” continues Coleridge, is a low viewpoint—a place of “naturalized intimacy” which is interiorized as a place of seclusion, a solely subjective form of existence.110

Selecting natural topography as the site to achieve a high-view, and to enable the observer to “see” a landscape spread out on all sides was increasingly transformed when the urban landscape itself provided for structures to accomplish this, as if to continue to preserve visibility of representation of space. But natural topography continued to play a role—at least, when it was advantageous to taking in the high view. From the unfinished Strasbourg cathedral, Goethe wrote, in the late eighteen century, that the high view is foremost “a most earnest desire” to enjoy “a fresh glance into a new land” that was like a paradise.”111 This sense of climbing to a high view to access a “new land” continued over to the burgeoning cities of North America. The German Prince Maximilian zu Weid wrote of climbing up to the roof of an insane asylum, when he arrived in New York in 1832, because of “the indescribably beautiful, broad, and interesting view from its high roof. How unfortunate, comments the Prince, that there is not an equivalent vantage point in Philadelphia; “the city would be more impressive” if one could find a “place from which to get a good view of it, but since the whole city lies...on level ground, there is no

109 Ibid., p. 85.
110 Ibid., p. 85.
111 Cited in Stephan Oettermann, p. 11.
such point at all.” When a city fails to make an impression because it lacks a high
vantage point, the observer fails to achieve visual pleasure in seeing, or the totalizing
“impressiveness” that comes with visual mastery.

Jonathan Crary’s analysis of visual modernity involves a reconsideration of what
“realism” meant in the nineteenth century, along with new ways of constructing the
observer, and although the panorama was not Crary’s focus, his references to “radical
abstraction” and “reconstruction of social experience”: “delineate an observing subject
who was both a product of and at the same time constitutive of modernity in the
nineteenth century.” Viewing the city as a panorama through these perceptual terms
positions the observer as inseparable from the process of modernization as it
encompasses not just economic foundations but, and this most accurately applies to the
panorama, an immense reorganization of knowledge, spaces, networks, communication
and subjectivity itself.

Charting further spaces of the high view

Significant areas of the known world were divided up by European powers into colonies
during the nineteenth century. Edward Lane, a European daguerreotypist traveled to
Cairo in the nineteenth century, as did many travelers/photographers, and he sought out a
high vantage point to view the city. From the top of a commanding hill, Lane describes “a
most magnificent view of the city and suburbs and the citadel.” He continues: “soon after

112 Ibid., p. 9.
113 Jonathan Crary, Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century
114 Ibid., 10.
my arrival I made a very elaborate drawing of the scene with the camera lucida. From no other spot can so good a view of the metropolis...be obtained." The city of Cairo with its physical and cultural unfamiliarity—of unmarked streets—could only become an experience of the real when viewed within the illusionary and abstract space that a high vantage point was able to provide: "The problem for the photographer or writer visiting the Middle East was not only to make an accurate picture of the East, but to set up the East as a picture. The problem...was to create a distance between oneself and the world...constitute it as something picture-like—as an object on exhibit." While the military observation tower provided a point of view for Lane to picture the city within the order and control initiated by the high view, the viewpoint was already a colonial structure positioned to achieve mastery, and to signify colonial power over this same space. But while Lane climbed a military structure, other European travelers in large numbers struggled to reach the top of the pyramids, and teams of Bedouin were organized to assist with the steep climb.

By now the large painted panorama was also a substitute for actually making a journey either to a distant city and country, or just to the regional countryside. In 1799 a panorama of the city of Paris drew attention to nature within the city: "the streets, the public squares decorated with lawns and plants to improve them," and also nature viewed as a small band of countryside surrounding the city. Nature was also being built into the city's actual fabric: "parks and squares...air and greenery which were sure to do some good. Yet no one pretended that this was a substitute for real fields and woods for the

116 Ibid., p. 229.
117 Bernard Comment, p. 137.
increased use of train travel enabled day visitors to get to the outskirts of the city, a space always contingent and mobile: “the genuine thing could be had any time for the price of a round-trip ticket. It was the age of the outing.”\textsuperscript{118} Train travel also contributed to the changing perception of modern space, and the consistently transforming material and social relations between the countryside and the city.

The railroad transformed landscape into a panoramic space of continuity and a cohesive tableau. Jules Clarétie, a Parisian journalist, characterized the view from the train window as an “evanescent landscape” within which rapid movement made it possible to grasp the whole: “In a few hours, it shows you all of France, and before your eyes it unrolls its infinite panorama, a vast succession of charming tableau...Don’t ask it for details, but for the living whole. Then, after having charmed you thus with its painterly skills, it suddenly stops and quite simply lets you get off where you wanted to go.”\textsuperscript{119} The train system altered space and time, distance and proximity: “In short, the views from European windows had lost their depth, becoming part and parcel of the same panorama world surrounding them and constituting a painted surface everywhere.”\textsuperscript{120} Concepts of space and time suggest that the social construction of these elements in representation is increasingly formed through economies technology and politics.

Politics were never far from any analysis of Paris in the nineteenth century, and this extends to the high view. The artist Gustave Courbet wanted to paint a view of Paris from the top floor of the Sainte Pélagie prison.\textsuperscript{121} Courbet was in prison for his alleged

\textsuperscript{118} T.J. Clark, p. 198.
leadership role in the dismantling of the Colonne Vendôme in 1871.\textsuperscript{122} At the top of this 150-foot column stood a statue of Napoleon Bonaparte dressed as a Roman emperor. Regardless of the alleged incident and the designation of blame for the pulling down of the column, Courbet would likely have been arrested as a participant in the Commune. Although at first he was only fined and imprisoned for six months, a new government then wanted to charge him with the complete cost of reconstruction. With the cost impossibly high, and after attempts to seize his paintings, he saved as much of his art as he could, and went into exile in Switzerland.

While in prison Courbet wrote, in a letter to a friend, that he wanted to paint this high view, the view from the prison, “the way I do my marines: with an immensely deep sky, and all its movement, all its houses and domes, imitating the tumultuous waves of the ocean.”\textsuperscript{123} Courbet was caught up with the energies and passions of the Revolution in Paris that brought real and symbolic changes to the urban landscape. But Courbet’s allocated view was not the popular painted panorama, but a revolutionary perspective in keeping with the tumultuous political and social conditions, and metaphorically the ocean is as transformative as the city space, and the ocean view with undulating tides suited this description well.

Courbet’s involvement with the Colonne Vendôme on 16 May 1871 is complex, with an ironic turn. In the previous Government of National Defense, Courbet’s chief role was the protection of the monuments and works of art of the city of Paris. Initially, this task focused on the preservation of the city from the threatening German army, but then the struggle became a civil war. And as Courbet was also president of the Société des


\textsuperscript{123} Gustave Courbet cited in Gaston Bachelard, p. 29.
Artistes, his influence was significant. But the seascapes, that he refers to, were serial works arising from summer spent in the towns of Trouville and Deauville, and are “arenas of personal freedom, remote from the conflicts and restraints of life in the Second Empire society.”  

General Valentine would not permit Courbet to paint this high view, saying: “He was not in prison for the purpose of amusing himself.” Understood as a metaphor for the city of Paris, Courbet’s concept of city-ocean was not just a striving for visual pleasure taken up through panoramic space, as a distant view enabling the city to be compared to the ocean, but rather far more significant for Courbet, the high view was able to characterize the profoundly urban character of Paris, the site of both the French Revolution and urban modernity. Courbet’s “houses and domes” are psychosomatic; they initiate visually and imitate psychologically the tumultuous waves of the ocean. Courbet’s metaphoric connection of the French Revolution to the ocean is able to expand on the uncertainties of history, and recognize conditional limitations on revolutionary ideals against the enormity of failure. Courbet’s city-ocean contains elements much larger than the individual, or a sense of limitless and contingency rooted in political ideals, yet buffeted by spatial and temporal uncertainty.

Two of Courbet’s well-known paintings can be considered spatially panoramic in terms of composition and their metaphors of abundance of subject matter. This is not to suggest that these easel paintings are panoramas, rather they are panoramic as they strive to represent a “realism” of economic and social change. They are larger than life narratives, providing for synoptic space, an overview in terms of the figures thereby.

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125 General Valentine cited in ibid., p. 29.
necessitating a longitudinal space, again reaching out to expressions of contingency and limitlessness.

In *Burial at Ornans* (1849) Courbet charts the townsfolk attending his grandfather’s funeral, a compositional framework that is disruptive of academic conventions with its compositional *disarray* of common people and priests. This oil painting is also an exceptionally large canvas 3.1 m x 6.6 m (10 ft. x 21 ft. 8 in.). The rise of such realism in painting was not separate from the influences of early photography. The painting was compared by a French critic to “a scene that could pass for the results of a badly made daguerreotype: brutal nature as one finds it every day, reproduced just as it is seen.”

*The Studio of the Painter: A Real Allegory of a Seven-Year Phase in My Life as an Artist* (1855) is even larger at 3.7 m x 5.9 cm (11 ft. 10 in. x 19 ft. x 7 in.). “Real allegory,” the term used by Courbet in the title, is a meaning couched in ambivalence, as allegories are unreal by definition, as they set out to take on deeper meaning than the overtly pictured representation, or allegory taken as saying one thing but meaning another. This painting reveals two aspects of Courbet’s life, on one side, a mixed group of political players, although shrouded in their appearance and any ready identification, and, on the other, the artist’s Parisian circle of clients, friends and intellectuals, including Baudelaire. In the only area illuminated in bright light the artist himself is shown painting a landscape. Standing by his side is a nude studio model, a somewhat ragged boy, and a white cat. To be real, yet be an allegory, is a complex conflation of time and space, which

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confronts not just his art, but Courbet’s own economic, social and political reading of modernity.

The aqueous imagery proposed by Courbet’s city/ocean was an allegory that he was not permitted to paint, but others pursued this thematic. Gustave Le Gray’s photographs of seascapes were taken between 1856 and 1859. By taking up new photographic technologies he produced images of sea and sky sometimes with a small boat dwarfed against the immensity that the ocean can symbolize. With the technology of the time, these images required two negatives, one for the sky and the other for the sea. The images of Le Gray have a panoramic composition that is comparative to Courbet’s proposed painting from the prison window (following his “marines”), and a view associated with looking out from the window of a train; each portray the startling new conditions of immensity and contingency of the nineteenth-century increasingly global world. Perhaps attempting to make sense of these seemingly limitless spaces was the panorama form that reached over temporal and spatial conventions and across media. But the topographical view of the oversized painted panorama, the view from a train widow, or those of Le Gray’s seascapes were caught up in an ever-widening gap between one’s lived and imagined perception of modernity.

Constantin Pecqueur wrote in 1839: “By a sort of miracle every man’s field would be found not only where it always was, but as large as it was. Every bit of terrain, each field would still remain intact; so would every house in a village, the village itself, or the town...on the map of the imagination all of these would finally be reproduced.”128

But in the age of two revolutions, industrial and political, new technologies and new

128 Cited in Shelley Rice, p. 192.
social relations, this was not to be so, and the panorama in its various spatial forms helped to hold things together as a map of the topographical real and the illusionary ideal.

Prendergast continues this relations between panorama stability and modernism as a discursive field of transformative uncertainty when he writes of the extraordinary cancellation of the panoramic view in Van Gogh’s *La Terrasse du Moulin le Blute-fin à Montmartre* (1886). The cultural life of the “panorama-image thus ends here in a visual space that is at once vast expanse and dead-end, its fictions of a common belonging within the ‘unified’ family of the nation in ruins. Whoever the city and its views belong to, it is clearly not to these people.”129 The painting shows five figures on, or at the base of a wooden red structure, a structure built for viewing. All the figures have their backs to the viewer and look out over an empty panorama view, but whether the view is an analogy to the sea, or presents a city shrouded in fog, or washed out by rain, is unclear. Prendergast’s use of the term “compelling” is not just an attempt to decipher the view, but to ask who are these people and what do they represent. They are certainly not a group out for a stroll or taking in a view associated with Haussmann’s transformation of the city of Paris occurring during this same time. Rather Van Gogh denies any panoramic relationship between viewer and place, instead he absolves conventions of seeing, while keeping the structure from which to see—the brilliance of the wooden red viewing platform—to arrive at a lamented proposition of space. Prendergast describes: “desolate smudges of people staring out into space emptied of meaning, memory, history, any sense of ‘belonging’; they have about them the air of homeless people.”130 While we don’t

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129 Christopher Prendergast, p. 73.
130 Ibid.
know their economic or social class the painting rejects all appeals to history and narrative, and in so doing this space resists representation.

Van Gogh’s view is an effort to void any optics of seeing or understanding of space, both through composition, which misaligns the certainty of the panorama view, the relations between people (viewers), as well as any pleasure to be gained from the view, which would conventionally be associated with the spectacular image of the city below. Interpretation is obtuse, and again emphasized by the cowered figures of the viewers. The fog characterizing this view is expressed in the analogous abstraction of meaning found in Caper David Friedrich’s painting *Traveler Looking Over A Sea of Fog* (1818). Compositionally both paintings negate any claims to coherence or legibility of the views.

In Friedrich’s painting nature shows itself in fragmented glimpses through the fog, which reveals a view at a distance. The rocky outcrops, shrubby trees, distant plateau and mountain compose an uncertain view out of time and undesignated space. Oettermann comments that “scholars have found evidence” that Friedrich visited panoramas, and possibly that he wanted to paint one himself.\(^{131}\) Perhaps he did, and this is it; a panorama representing a space of altered composition that is critical of the conventions of the standard view. Friedrich presents instead a modern critical aesthetic fostered through distance, but without the structure or details leading to mapped or knowable space the viewer perceives only uncertainty as relation between man and nature, the high vantage point and the space viewed. Contrastingly, this is not the view that Barthes recognizes from his vantage point of the Eiffel Tower, during the middle of

\(^{131}\) Stephen Oettermann, p. 47.
the twentieth century, rather the high view for Barthes: "will always be something, something of humanity itself."\textsuperscript{132}

Aby Warburg is acknowledged as contributing to the history of art a multivalent analysis where the images to be studied were not to be detached from culture and society. He proposes a method to set art history in "motion" without coming to rest on a single image, rather noting how one image corresponds to other images, both in the historical time and space of the period that identifies the image as its own, as well as later or earlier historical periods. Warburg would most famously connect the Renaissance with the culture of Native Americans, after his stay with the Pueblo Indians in New Mexico and Arizona, at the end of the nineteenth century, ca. 1896.\textsuperscript{133} Motion has a number of meanings for Warburg ranging from his analysis of comparative figures in 1893 to the generalized montage of bringing historically diverse images together in the 1920s. This type of movement was not just the preoccupation of Warburg for technology and mechanical reproduction, and how they affect reproduction, had already been taken up in various forms from the panoramas to photographic attempts to grasp movement undertaken by Eadweard Muybridge and Julies Etienne Marey, and then in the nascent techniques of cinema.

I refer to Warburg to give emphasis to the ongoing cultural grappling at this time between art and technology, distance and closeness and the ever eroding principles of seeing and understanding within the preservation of natural forces and the culture of modernity. The space of the panorama and its relations of pedagogy were combined as a

\textsuperscript{132} Roland Barthes, p. 5.
type of lore connecting vision and knowledge, and this was still to be retained at the
beginning of the twentieth century. Writing of a planned but unrealized trip to New York,
Warburg recalls his extensive library, and compares it to knowledge from a high view,
especially Geddes' model project when he refers metaphorically to an "observation
tower," when he writes: "our institute will have risen to meet the highest standards as an
observation tower, which, from its platform in Hamburg, looks out over all the migratory
routes of cultural exchange / of symbolic culture / between Asia and America."\(134\)

Chapter 2  
The Panorama: Seeing as Nature and Deciphering the World

It may perhaps be said... that our relationship to the external world, insofar as it exists for the eye, is based above all on our knowledge and idea of space and form. Orientation within the external world is absolutely impossible without them. We must therefore view the idea of space in general, and the idea of form or delimited space in particular, as the essential content or the essential reality of things.¹

The interest of the panorama is in seeing the true city—a city indoors. What stands within the windowless building is the true. One cannot see out these windows to anything outside. (What is true had no windows; nowhere does the true look out to the universe).²

Representations of space and the idea of visual reality

When Robert Barker arrived in London in 1787, with his recently patented oversized painting that depicted the city of Edinburgh, he claimed that his approach to image making was a view demonstrating qualities of art derived from a “fair sketch, displaying at once a circle of a very extraordinary extent...the same as if on the spot; forming perhaps, one of the most picturesque views in Europe.”³ Barkers’ view was a largely topographical-based image of the city of Edinburgh accomplished through a series of sketches, with this first attempt extending only to 180-degrees, a half-circle, rather than the full 360-degree painting that was to follow, and was specified as the final outcome in the patent. The patent refers to a “circular building or framing erected, on which this drawing or painting

may be performed.” Images of towns viewed from a distance were not new in the late eighteenth century, if fact, views, known as prospects, were the central focus of a European topographical print tradition extending back to the seventeenth century, if not earlier. Usually the etched or engraved prospects on paper concentrated on views over looking towns or estates of the landed gentry, country seats as they were known, to provide a unique record of how towns looked just prior to the industrial revolution, and the temporal space of picturing the modernizing city as a panorama, which was to follow.

Recognized as a minor genre, these prints remained largely separate from the traditions and conventions of the Academy of fine art in England, and in Europe. Prospects as cartographic overviews of towns were produced in large editions for sale, and were widely marketed. Barker taught scientific and artistic applications of perspective in Edinburgh, and was described in the patent for the panorama as a portrait painter. Therefore he would have been aware of the historically, uneasy relationship between art and cartographic pictorialism. David Cosgrove identifies the term prospect as “an extensive or commanding sight or view” that came into use just as the enclosure movement destroyed the remaining feudal ties, and commercial enterprise demanded new

6 Ralph Hyde, “Thomas Homer: Pictural Land Surveyor,” *Imago Mundi*, 29, 1977, p. 26. In 1813 Thomas Homer, a surveyor and landscape painter who described himself as a “Pictural Delineator of Estates” attempted to reconcile these separate interests: “The art of land surveying has remained stationary for a long period. The arts of surveying and landscape painting, which seem to have united in former days, are now distinct. That a plan may be drawn with the same precision and afterwards so finished as to form a faithful and interesting picture of the various features of the property, comprehending the prospects that it commands, as if it beheld in a camera obscura or from a lofty eminence, had been proved by the enlarged
applications for surveying and map-making that wrote "new perspectives over real landscapes." The early sixteenth century is a pivotal time in European history marking the end of the feudal order and the rise of a market-orientated economy dominated by merchant-capital controlling not only commerce and trade, but also manufacturing, conditions central to the global activities brought about through the rise of increasingly powerful merchant trading companies. Also connected to capitalist development were improvements in agricultural technology that brought changes in landownership and control.

The printed prospects were sketched as an instrumental record of daily life, although the image was generally idealized, and presented from a distant view. These wide-view prints included "staffage," a term referring to people and animals, which were usually placed in the foreground. Their positioning suggests a centrality to the overall topographical view, yet in the overall composition that shows the town spread out extensively across the horizon, they seem subsidiary or just attachments to a larger purpose. The town with its church steeples and other features of the build environment holds the eye through a synoptic glance, and the convergence of foreground and background realize the overall structure and space of the prospect. In other words linear perspective does not ensure compositional relationship between foreground and distant view. Rather the focus on the objective record of the townscape in the distance results through the division of the picture plane, the town and its fields below and a very broad

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expanse of the sky above. The figures remain awkwardly placed rather than integrated into the composition, and range from the fashionably dressed middle class, representing the new mercantile economy, and agricultural labourers or shepherds at work on the outskirts of town, representing the more rural economy.

Prospects were sketched by artists traveling from town to town, and then the final image was frequently engraved and published in either Germany or the Netherlands, often by master printers who had never visited England. As well, to satisfy the increasing demand for prospects of cities and towns, new but slightly altered images were copied from earlier prints or drawings. While these prints were marketed as cartographic images, the final print could be a quite separate image from the original sketch. The “mapping impulse” in Dutch art has been investigated by Svetlana Alpers, who explores, through paintings of Jan Vermeer and others, the resemblance and associations between pictures and maps.9 The Dutch excelled in mapmaking by the sixteenth century using printing techniques that included engraving, etching, woodcut and moveable type for the letters. The Dutch were the first to produce maps in various printed and painted mediums, including images serving as wall hangings.

European printmakers also came from Holland and Germany to reside and work in England either for many years, or just brief sojourns. A view of the town of Oxford, one of the earliest-known prospects, was printed in 1572. Sketched by Georg Hoefnagel in England, then engraved in Cologne, Germany the image was finally included in a six-volume atlas of geographical regions. Demonstrating the popularity and wide distribution of topographical views, the prospect was republished in a companion volume consisting of

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three hundred and fifty images of towns throughout Europe. Wenceslaus Hollar’s view of London of 1647 was sketched from the tower of the Southward Cathedral, then later engraved in Antwerp, in Holland. Although Hollar was born in Prague, then lived in Frankfurt, he resided in England between 1637 and 1644, and 1652 and 1677, where he worked sketching towns throughout the countryside. An engraved image, ca. 1713, “The Prospect of Cambridge from the West,” by Dutch artist, Johannes Kip, is a pictorial overview of the town, 45.1 x 117.8 cm (18¾ in. x 46 in.). The image is divided by the horizon, separating the large expanse of the sky above and the spatially significant foreground area humanized by staffage (fig. 1). The men cut and pile hay on the wagon; women rake and bind in bundles, and the children are minded nearby. The labouring activity of haying takes up a good half of the total image—most of the foreground, nevertheless, the eye is drawn to the town spread out along the horizon from one side of the frame to the other, and the key below identifies the central church, library and college buildings: St. Michael Church, St. Peter’s Church, Jesus College, Queen’s College, St. Johns’ Library, Trinity Library, and so one. Seeing is identified in the title as “from the West.”

A 1748 engraved view of London by an unknown artist, credited as “after Johannes Kip,” “La Ville de Londres/Prospectus Londinens,” or “The Prospect of the City of London,” depicts London as a crowded and congested city depicting new commercial prosperity through the mercantile fleet gathered in the foreground on the River Thames (fig. 2). The image size is 47.8 x 112 cm. (19 x 44 in.) including the key placed below the

10 Paul Hyde, Gilded Scenes and Shining Prospects, p. 38. In the second volume an invitation was extended to all those whose place had been overlooked, and to send “the portrait of it, and we will have it engraved.”
11 Ibid. pp. 23.
image, which guides the viewer to identify churches, buildings, marking out the site of The Tower and the Custom House, amongst others, and London Bridge.

By 1738 the English brothers Samuel and Nathaniel Buck entered into this flourishing market for cartographic pictorial views of British towns. They sketched and printed at least four hundred and twenty-three engraved prospects of British and Welsh towns, as well as single architectural images of monasteries and castles, and other historical buildings including ruins. In London around 1730, they established a commercial base to tour and document England. The Buck’s sketching tours, and therefore later markets, were prepared well in advance with potential subscribers informed by the local press of the towns the brothers planned to visit.\textsuperscript{12} The demand for prospects was large; the prolific practice of these brothers did not replace the foreign artist.

The Dutch artist, Johnnes Kip included many images of British country estates and town prospects in the large volume the \textit{Nouveau Théâtre de la Grande Bretagne}, sometimes entitled \textit{Britannia Illustrata}, and published in 1707. This publication included the prospect of London mentioned above. In the eighteenth century, the nobility in England still retained an important presence and power through the ownership of land, and this level of authority was demonstrated in many topographical views of prospects, including those of the city of London. These early prospects were distinctive in describing the traditional power eroding with the beginning of industrial change. An engraving of 1720, by Kip, was altered to acquire or satisfy patronage. Kip sketched \textit{A Prospect of the City of London Westminster and St. James Park}, and dedicated the prospect “To Her Royal Highness Wilhelmina Caroline, the most Illustrious Princess of Wales.” This print

consisted of twelve sheets making it the largest of any prospect yet produced. St. James’ Palace, where the couple resided, was situated prominently in the foreground, identifying the commission, but in order for the palace to spatially “fit” within the city of London and to represent the cityscape as a unified whole, or what would later be called a panorama view, the River Thames along with the surrounding architectural environment was sharply distorted. Cartographic representation was still assumed, certainly not annulled, but patronage brought topographical distortion that was too discernable to be dismissed.

Such cartographic change was easily aesthetically rationalized, but not politically justified, when the artist set out to market the prospect, therefore to sell and circulate the image further a field than the original commission. He noted in the London newspaper, the *Daily Courant*, 29 November 1715, that the image was drawn “in a perfect (tho’ uncommon) Manner.”\(^{13}\) Resolving significant optical conditions of distortion of the prospect, and its standing as a topographical record, necessitated such a clarification, for the discursive field in which the prospect print functioned was primarily as a mapping device that extended well beyond the aestheticized appreciation of any hierarchal sense of place. The assertion of traditions of power through place was established between the artist and “Her Royal Highness,” who placed the commission. The artist set out to look for singular redemption of this “error,” a position absolutely necessary as he was seeking a much larger market. He self-validated a solution by recognizing both aspects of aesthetic pleasure and a truth to reality by marketing the print as “uncommon,” but “perfect.”

In the overall visual schematic of these prints topographical reality was more important within the market place than any spatial-temporal organization of place that solely served to promote visual pleasure, or, in fact, patronage and power, so
consequently, the artist sketched another print as a follow-up to the first, and included what was overlooked and altered. By altering the topography of the city, then making changes that provide for a more accurate cartographic pictorial map, the image demonstrates the upcoming political and social divisions that marked the eighteenth century in not just England, but France, and throughout Europe. As social and economic transformation altered relations between the nobility and the bourgeois class, which increasingly provided the central source of income to printmakers, this was accompanied by the breaking down of boundaries and limitations between public and private space, synoptic record and individual pleasure. Comparatively, royal and noble patronage was replaced by the commercial interests of the middle class that was increasingly integrated throughout all sectors of the economy and everyday life. Now prospect prints were offered for sale in increasingly diverse locations, from map and print shops, to newspapers, to the artist himself listing his own means of contact.

How are these printed prospects of towns, with their activity of small-scale economies dependent on traditional technologies and pre-industrial organization, different from the panorama views that were to follow? Early prospects generally took as their point of view a position of stepping-back from the town, and although this was a view perceived from above ground, it is not a designated high vantage point, and is not identified in the title of the print, as was the topographical situation with the panorama. The sketch of the prospect located the viewer within the agricultural fields on the outskirts of the town. In the prospect prints the countryside still held a kind of equity, or justifiable presence, and thus, preserved a rural perspective between the town and the countryside, as not yet separated, by showing fields used for pasture and cultivation, and a few of its

13 Ralph Hyde, *Gilded Scenes and Shining Prospects*, p. 76.
inhabitants, usually both the merchant landowners and peasants. The panorama, contrastingly, as we shall see, began with a sketch from the observation point, the industrial and urban environment enabled this access—and thus the panorama view was firmly positioned within the center of the city. The panorama showed a synoptic overview of the city to include in this expansive space exact and numerous detail of this urban industrial environment. Then the view beyond was often not distinct or clarified. The panorama, contrastingly, as we shall see, began with a sketch from a high vantage point located at the center of the modern city, a point of view which culminated in mostly vague boundaries between where the city ended and countryside, or rural life began, a space increasingly mobile, as the city continued to rapidly develop and expand throughout the nineteenth century.

The oversized painting that came to be called a panorama was not as new as Barker would liked to have claimed. Many features of the panorama view do substantiate a continuation of the printed prospect, although the panorama brought significant change of scale and optical vision thereby making a greater claim to verisimilitude, as well as finding a larger, more varied and broader audience. Nevertheless the printed prospect was far from obsolete, and this tradition of printmaking did not end with the introduction of the panorama. Each took from the other, sometimes replicating not just the overview of the city, but repeating the same viewpoint. In 1822, the printmaker G. Tytler did not find it necessary to select a new vantage point, but made a coloured lithograph from the same site as Barker’s early panorama from Carlton Hill, and this was thirty-three years later.

Description of the Panoramic View of the City of Edinburgh and Surrounding Scenery as Seen from the Top of the Carlton Hill was printed and published using three conjoined
sheets. This coloured lithograph 289.56 x 213.36 cm (9½ x 84 in.), was accompanied with a key of fifty-three topographical references, making up a twenty-three-page booklet. The lithograph was so in demand because of Barker’s success with the painted panorama that it was reprinted the following year.

Next the printmaking tradition was brought increasingly closer to the emerging mass market of the nineteenth century with the inclusion of the panorama image as a marketing device. During the early 1840s printed panoramas became readily available as “give-aways” in weekly illustrated newspapers. The first to initiate this practice was the Illustrated London News. In 1842, the paper offered a free panorama of the city of London to new subscribers. Panorama images as inserted enclosures into newspapers were wood-engraved and usually, as in the panorama insert above, spanned two pages or 350.52 x 233.68 (11½ x 92 in.). The previous year Antoine Claudet, a French photographer living in England, took a sequence of daguerreotypes to form this panorama view of London. Using daguerreotype images as the sketch, the images were then redrawn on wood by Henry Anelay. The insert on newsprint was accompanied by not just a key, but also historical notes and words to the song “London the City of the World.” The engraving took as its high vantage point the column, still under construction, to celebrate Nelson’s recent victories. Other newspapers followed this marketing idea, and the idea of the give-aways...

14 Ibid., p. 186.
15 Ibid., p. 192.
16 Ibid., p. 92.
17 Janet E. Buerger, French Daguerreotypes (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 122-123. Claudet’s range of interests was broad, but he continued to value the daguerreotype image over the calotype process, long after many photographers had abandoned the singular image for the opportunity to make prints. His first major contribution to the field of photography was the use of chlorine as an accelerator in the sensitization of the daguerreotype plate. As early as 1842 he advocated the use of hand-coloured daguerreotype plates and the use of a painted backdrop for portraits, “to give depth and artistic effect,” in this way he positioned the subject within the landscape. He also wrote extensively on photography from a technical perspective.
away began to gain an after life in coloured reproductions made available for sale external to the newspaper’s insert. *The Grand Panorama of London from the Thames* was presented as an opportunity to subscribe to the *Pictorial Times* in 1848, and then this engraving was reissued for sale in wood-engraved, coloured copies. In 1889, the *Illustrated London News* included the wood engraving, *Bird’s Eye View of the Paris Exhibition Buildings and Grounds*, and this included the Eiffel Tower built the same year for the world exhibition. The panorama insertion was not just specific to only the large London newspapers, but quickly spread throughout Europe.

As long as the wood-engraving process was used for image reproduction in newspapers, and the subscription special of a give-away image, the printed prospect, or, as inserts now known, panoramas, continued. But while the wood engraving was able to reproduce images consistently of high quality, with the introduction of half tones in newspapers at the end of the nineteenth century, wood-engraved inserts came to an abrupt end. Changes in technology introduced photographic views as replacement images, and this brought other changes, most importantly, text and photographic images were printed together, and then integrated into the pages of the newspaper, not just as loose inserts, such as the inserted centerfold. Now technology transformed the earlier printing process, the production and distribution of newspapers was altered and a far broader readership evolved.
Topographical and aesthetic permutations: “as if really on the very spot”

In preparing a 360-degree painted panorama an artist usually worked on site, after selecting a high view, to produce sketches and relief plans that combined detailed distant and close-up views that were often accompanied by additional support material, generally architectural details and written notes. Sometimes sketches of panoramas were made from more than one vantage point, and incorporated planning and compositional requirements ranging from topographical and aesthetic points of view, from what to select at the first stage, to how things were to be visualized in the finished product. Significantly when formulating the “all-embracing view” that came to be called a panorama, sketching continued to be a sought after and still-necessary skill. The importance of the sketch continued although modern instruments and techniques of surveying advanced in precision and availability, as did optical instruments for drawing and painting.

The sketch played another role in the history of art which was quite separate from documentation, in fact, quite in contrast, and more aligned with expressing spontaneity and immediate effects of nature, rather than an approach to interpret the city through forms of surveying and mapping. The idea of the unfinished look of the sketch was sometimes admired and even preferred to the finished painting in eighteenth-century aesthetics, but it was the plein-air painters in nineteenth-century France that established the sketch as the sought after moment and finish. Pleinairisme was not merely a question of painting indoors or out, but rather what could be considered a work of art, for if a rough
and unfinished painting was characterized as sketchy, yet valued as art, then traditional values were challenged.

Important to the spatial organization of the panorama was the positioning of the artist making the sketch, and therefore the positioning of the viewer. The viewpoint, the place from which one looks, and the point of view, how things are seen, implies how the representation of space, which is the panorama, is embodied by the observer according to Barker's patent as being on the very spot. The importance of this viewing situation was essential to achieving verisimilitude, and ensuring this situation positioned the vantage point as under consideration, just as much as the point of view, thus the rooftops and chimneys were shown, as well as smoke, even if blocking the overall view.

Barker's reference to the circular view as a form of aesthetic pictorialism and cartographic accuracy was combined in his notation of the panorama as a "fair sketch, displaying a once a circle of a very extraordinary extent, the same as if on the spot...one of the most picturesque views in Europe." Barker sought to position the panorama within the academic tradition of landscape, and this was attempted by designating the view of the city of Edinburgh as a picturesque view. Defining an image as picturesque is accomplished through the original sketch as it brings with it aesthetic intent whereby a claim to nature is asserted and authenticated. If Barker's parallel aesthetic claim to illustrate the city as a view equitable to the picturesque was considered a valid appraisal, then the central principles of the picturesque are now applied for the first time to a cityscape, rather than the historical traditions of landscape. But how was this to be accomplished or, in fact, made credible as reality? Firstly, nature in the picturesque landscape was characterized as needing "correction" in composition, and, secondly,
subject matter and visual techniques were brought together to incorporate the viewer into the “corrected” aestheticized space. As nature was to be constituted through pictorial conventions before it could by formed into a picture, this was not open ended, rather guided and constrained by established stylistic principles, and a traditional use of structural terminology, such as perspective, foreground and background, and so on.

William Gilpin commented in a series of essays on the picturesque published in 1792 “nature rarely presents us with perfect compositions. Her ideas are too broad to be used by the picturesque eye, and need to be restrained by the laws of art.” For urban landscape to be acknowledged as an aesthetic field of appreciation many factors come into play when considering nature and its “capability of being formed into pictures.” Rosalind Krauss takes her pictorial reference from Jane Austens’ 1818 novel, *Northanger Abbey*. Catherine embarks on a walk with two friends who have the “eyes of the persons accustomed to drawing,” and after considering the view of the city of Barth decides to reject it as “unworthy to make a landscape.”

The sketch was the starting point, but equally relevant was the traditional understanding of pictorial framing devices. If a view was deemed “worthy” to be made into a landscape, this could only be accomplished through a reliance on the pictorial conventions of the physical frame, often strikingly elaborate, which by enclosing the scene acted as a “visual prompt,” that largely functioned as a means of separation rather than suggestive of a direct resemblance to the real world. Framing refers to a process of

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selection and composition, an enclosing mechanism that defines pictorial space, as an image reliant on a prescribed, or already recognizable enclosure, thus enabling the view to become a picture.

Barker’s visual project was spatially contradictory to the established academic terms of the picturesque, but he sought an acceptance or at least moderating approval, when he strived to present an all-embracing view of landscape characterized as without a frame and situating the viewer as being on the spot. Then, keeping in tandem with industrialization, he set out to represent the city, not the landscape of the countryside, hence contending that the city is a worthy subject of landscape. By moving away from using a traditional frame as an enclosing device, Barker also proposed a rethinking and reuse of foreground and background, one-point perspective and multiple-perspective, and turned around principles of traditional composition when constructing, during his first stage of experimentation, a hemispherical image of the city, which was to be later realized as a full circle.

The diminished importance of the frame was central to optical experimentation undertaken by others, certainly not just Barker, at this time. Discussing the French Salon of 1793, the philosopher, essayist and dramatist, Denis Diderot describes his perception of a 1763 landscape painting by Joseph Vernet, The Port of La Rochelle: “Look at the Port of La Rochelle through a glass that embraces the area of the picture and excludes the edges; and then, no longer mindful that you are examining a piece of painting, you will suddenly exclaim, though you were high up a mountain, a spectator of nature herself. Oh! what a wonderful view.” Diderot’s description sets out to exclude the image from the frame, and accomplishes this through an optical instrument, “a glass,” the Claude glass, that
permits him to question the accepted standards of the frame, leading into his suggestion
that the process of viewing, and the view itself, can be made more experiential and
spectacular, somewhat akin to the panorama, as he remarks on “the delightful hour we
have spent here.” Diderot’s remark came six years before the city of Paris gained its own
panorama, an image of the same city. Diderot’s reference to the view from “high up a
mountain,” and the viewer as a “spectator of nature,” and landscape as a pictorial
experience of immediate space—“spent here”—are qualities of structural form and
expression comparative to the terms of Barker’s patent, first titled “La nature à Coup
d’Oeil.”

At the end of eighteenth century, terms and conditions of academic or high culture
and the introduction of new forms of low culture brought an increasing divide between art
and entertainment. Referring to Diderot’s writings on vision, but not directly the above
quote, Jonathan Crary comments, that Diderot’s theoretical concerns were to move beyond
vision as a singular and primary aesthetic condition, hence an interest in ontological
experience that extended beyond the accepted geometry of space in single perspective
pictures. If Barker’s reference to the panorama as one of the most “picturesque views in
Europe” can be thought of as a considerable statement by an artist attempting to take up a
questioning of pictorial space and the compositional concepts of landscape, he is not only
redefining pictorial form, but he is attempting to consider the aesthetic dimensions that are
engaged when picturing the modern city as a type of landscape, in this case a panorama.

22 Denis Diderot cited in Bernard Comment, p. 78.
23 Ibid.
24 Jonathan Crary, Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century
Before continuing it must be clear that positioning Barker in relation to the "picturesque view" is not to heighten his status as the artist that he set out to be, or directly position the panorama as an artwork requiring standards of art historical canons of value, but rather to set out and examine Barker's historical dimension of landscape as a discursive field of representation. Barker was not a great artist, before or after he painted the panorama, and his oeuvre is lost to history, no one can comment on his brush strokes, as his panoramas (and indeed most others) did not survive due to size and circulation demands. It is also quite likely that Barker's early failure to be recognized as an artist encouraged his development of large-scale painting that he saw as breaking free from traditional artistic practice. While Barker's concept of the modernizing city of Edinburgh as a "picturesque" landscape is certainly strategic, the final result, his 360-degree panorama, is quite heavy-handed. But, if what he set out to accomplish was a pictorial composition that embraced landscape as a totality of industrial and urban space, and recognizing the city as his subject matter, rather than landscape as idealized nature, then this view with its entrenched verisimilitude and sense of place is quite readily at home in the aesthetic chronology of printed prospects.

Spaces of illusion and optics of influence

The German critic and artist Adolf Hildebrand was a popular chronicler of aesthetic innovation during the late nineteenth century addressing spatial values associated with a mobile and embodied eye, rather than the fixed and singular eye of the perspective view. In an 1893 essay "The Problem of Form in the Fine Arts" he critiques the ongoing
popularity of the panorama. By insisting on the placement of artistic perception as taking place through an embodied eye, spatial values are given priority as able to achieve a unified appearance. Setting up a parallel between nature and the work of art he comments that they both have the capacity for evoking an idea of space: “The appearance of nature is not intrinsically important as an expression of a spatial intention (if we think of the appearance of nature as something that gives form to space).” In carrying space over to a pictorial understanding of surface and depth, he continues: “Only at a distance from a perceived object do our eyes begin to see parallel, and take the object at a glance.”

Hildebrand’s focus was the classical art of the Renaissance, especially sculpture, but his approach, as we shall see, although he would very much prefer to avoid such a comparison, was not so distant from Barker’s strived for seeing as nature, and space “embraced” through an embodied eye engaged with multiple perspectives, or points of view is able to take in a whole. This is also comparative to Georg Simmel’s reflection on nature and landscape in his 1910 essay, “The Philosophy of Landscape”: “By nature we understand the infinite connection of things, the ceaseless birth and destruction of forms…that expresses itself in the continuity of temporal and spatial existence.” While he is discussing not optics, but how nature is conceptualized and therefore seen, “nature has no pieces, it is the unity of a totality,” Simmel as did Hildebrand before him, and likely provided the central and earlier influence in this area, when he recognizes the momentary “life of an object.” Simmel is giving recognition to modern experience along with

technological change, and by connecting seeing with the object in this way arrives at an aesthetic dimension where the embodied eye is able to achieve this totality.

Hildebrand was severely critical of the panorama outlining its central fault as an over-stimulated presentation of space, therefore its spectacular nature failed to lay any claim to art. In the essay cited above he gives the panorama short shrift, placing a well developed, but degrading commentary only in a footnote. Nevertheless his observations are informative as they open up the space of illusion to further inquiry, and this is recognized in the panorama as altering conditions of what is acceptable as art, and in contrast conditions of aesthetic degradation associated most directly with the rise of facets of mass culture. He accepts that techniques of illusion have always found a place in art, but in the panorama the “stimulus” is deceptive, a critique often argued at the time:

The panorama is built up through purely painterly—that is, surface—means and in part through a spatial perspective that is a multi-dimensional presentation, or more than one point of view. Spatially it seeks to transpose the observer into the reality by using the actual spatial depth occupied by the panorama to cause different eye accommodations, as in nature. In doing this, it seeks to deceive us with regard to the actual distances that make the different accommodations necessary. Through painterly means these distances are given a completely different spatial value that increases in the background of the image....According to the accommodation it is looking at something one meter away, while according to its visual impression it is a mile away....This contradiction produces an unpleasant feeling, a kind of dizziness, instead of the satisfaction of a clear spatial impression.27

The better the panorama then the greater the illusion continues Hildebrand: “The poorer the panorama, the better we feel, for the illusion ceases...The sense of reality that the panorama seeks to evolve presumes an insensitivity and coarseness of observation, a lack of refined functional feeling on the viewer.” Amid this insensitivity and coarseness the

27 Adolf Hildebrand, p. 242.
early panoramas were able to provide, according to Hildebrand, “innocent amusement,”
but, continuing with his disparaging tone, the illusion of the space of the panorama was
nothing more than a “falsified feeling of reality,” which he then compares to wax
figures. In other words he contrasts high art to low culture, with the latter remaining as a
degraded form. In large part, his criticism and condemnation of falsified reality is
influenced by the upswing in all forms of popular entertainment during the nineteenth
century. The display of wax figures of the nobility and torture chambers or dungeons, for
example, and by the 1880s there were at least a dozen wax museums in Paris.

Nevertheless, Hildebrand’s account of ways of seeing was clearly reformist. But
vision is investigated in ways not entirely separate from Barker’s formulation of the
composition of the panorama. In Hildebrand’s attempt to examine space through
configurations of movement he employs a comparative conceptualized portrayal of near
and far. The eye at rest he compares to a “distant view,” and the eye when engaged in a
“kinesthetic activity” connects to the “near view.” Hildebrand mentions the panorama, as
a footnote, in an essay on Renaissance sculpture, without focusing on close descriptions of
any particular art works. The important rests on his references to spatialized notations of
vision as “spatial continuum,” or “space as three-dimensional extension and as three-
dimensional mobility.” While these are uncertain theoretical terms of perception, they
are conditions of vision associated with movement or the mobile eye. Important is
Hildebrand’s discussion of vision, space and the observer, as these were also Barkers’
concepts of innovation, a number of years earlier, which he considered important and
relevant enough to take out a patent.

28 Ibid.
29 Ibid., p. 238.
Both Barker and Hildebrand connect vision and space together, and this is not tied to one single observation point, or the single and direct gaze of perspective, but rather utilizes visual and spatial foundations developing an aesthetic of perpetual change and motion. Nevertheless, this comparison must be considered only through conditions of caution, for Hildebrand disliked all aspects of the panorama. Because he kept within a generalized aesthetic inquiry, his theories of vision and movement were grounded in art without considering specific art objects. Hildebrand’s writings find purpose and criticism therefore in not just nineteenth-century aesthetics, but science, culture and optics. For example, he places the “isolated” perception of perspective as playing a limited role in scientific analysis, and he focuses his search on a more natural and complex, as well as cultural relations that form vision and aesthetic “empathy” that give emphasis to terms of embodied seeing. He writes of embodied vision as “able to relate everything to ourselves and to infuse it with our own bodily feeling.”

Expressed in another way, this is Barthes’ high view from the Eiffel Tower that makes the city into a kind of “nature.”

Keeping within this terminology of space and vision I return to Barker’s pictorial space of representing the urban landscape. Although his first innovative sketch was only a half circle, Barker, nevertheless, saw himself as primarily a liberator of conventions set out to relieve “sublime Art (landscape) from a Restraint it has ever laboured under.” Barker’s experimentation with vision and pictorial composition relied on his own innovations, chiefly an optical device with a revolving frame, that was used by Barker’s young son Henry to produce a second set of sketches, from the same vantage point, that

30 Ibid., p. 261.
32 Ralph Hyde, Panoramania, p. 21.
Barker's now patented image used as model and methodology. The sketches were reproduced in watercolor, and exhibited first in Edinburgh, then London. Seeking middle class patrons for his art, a newspaper advertisement described these watercolours as “a complete prospect of the whole horizon as appearing from the top of the observatory on Carlton Hill comprehending a circle of several hundred miles. The idea of this view is perfectly original and pleasing.”

Between 1790-91, Barker's son again made sketches for a panorama view, this time a view of London from the roof of the Albion Mills just before this large industrial mill burned to the ground. These sketches were used to produce his first larger scale panorama, which was exhibited in a “crude building” on Castle Street, behind Barker's London residence. The building was too small to display the total view, and another attempt to realize the full patent followed with a second version. A large 360-degree canvas painting was then exhibited in the purpose-built rotunda that was built in Leicester Square in 1794.

Frederick Birnie reproduced this view as a print, while the oversized painting was still on display in Castle Street. Illustrated here, “London from the Roof of the Albion Mills” is a 1792 series of prints using coloured aquatint with etching. The image size is 42.7 x 54.3 cm (17⅞ x 21¼ in.), and in all there are six sheets (fig. 3.1, 3.2, 3.3). The image draws attention to both the selection of the view, and how it was discursively constructed. Birnie, the printmaker, credits both Robert Barker and his son Henry, as sketching the view before him. Already at this very early stage of panorama production the question of authorship is raised, thereby what type of representation and rights are to be credited to the final image. By purchasing the aquatints one could visualize and acquire as representation the total view of not just the city beyond but also the vantage point, now

designated by the roof and chimneys of the mill. The interest in the spatial dimensions and symmetry of the urban space, the River Thames and its built environment, is a conception of cityscape that portrays in its strategy of being on the spot, or the chimneys even if they block the view, the iconography of a map, and therefore within this demarcation a claim to representing the "real."

According to Barker's claim to an "idea (that) is entirely new," the representation of landscape was freed, according to the terms of his patent, from the limitations of the frame of easel painting, and "the effect (was) produced by fair perspective, a proper point of view, and unlimiting the bounds of the Art of Painting." He continues describing these images of "fair perspective" as "being the result of minute investigation of the principles of art, it is intended chiefly for the criticism of artists, and admirers of painting." 34 Barker's spatial strategies of pictorial innovation were most often met with disapproval from English artists and critics, moving the panorama into the commercial foray of entertainment. The exception was France, where the panorama was briefly considered seriously within the fine arts.

In 1800 the Institute de France in Paris hired the architect and painter Antoine Dufourny to study "the origins, effects and development of the panorama." 35 The commission concluded favourably by supporting the panorama's "illusion totale" as an application of new techniques within the optics of science. In the commission's report the length of time spent in the panorama affected the viewer's perception of the illusion: "as soon as the eye is accustomed to the light inside (the panorama), (one) forgets the colors of nature, the painting produces imperceptibly its effect; the longer one contemplates it,

The illusionistic effect of a panorama is a process of forgetting and visualizing a new space. This “effect” the commission claimed could be employed in all forms of art, including—and this was only suggested in France—traditional easel paintings. The commission’s report granted significant credibility to the panorama by advancing its “exact and literal view”:

Were this ingenious application, of still more ingenious principles but a stimulus to curiosity; were it good for nothing other than to present the exact and literal view of cities and the most interesting sites of the globe, it would be still a contribution to the general interest and under these circumstances alone would merit the greatest encouragement as an object of both instruction and utility.37

In England, the overall reception of any fine art value can be characterized by the critic John Ruskin who dismissed any relationship to art, and supported the panorama for its usefulness as a tool for education, going so far as to suggest that the British government provide their support for panoramas as a pedagogical apparatus.

Although Barker took out a patent in 1787 the origins of the panorama, as also the origins of perspective, are uncertain, and just as early ideas about perspective, the panorama oscillates between concepts of invention and reinvention, birth and rebirth.38 Oettermann writes that the one-hundred-year history of the panorama coincides almost exactly with the nineteenth century. With little accountability to histories of pictorial cartography, town prospects or spaces of illusion Oettermann writes: “any new invention

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36 Oliver Grau, p. 64. Grau’s interest in the nineteenth-century panorama leads to an inquiry into applications of illusion and immersion in digital culture.
has precursors, forms of art bearing some apparent relation to the panorama existed
earlier, but in this case they played no direct role in the panorama’s development.”\textsuperscript{39}

While this dismissal of any direct influence is perplexing, his decision to account for the
painted panorama as a completely new image, and an image associated primarily with
forms of mass culture is emphatically to focus on the commercial entertainment market for
panoramas and the formation of a mass audience during the nineteenth century.

A largely middle-class audience visited the panorama, and Oettermann’s newness
taken as a dual cultural meaning describes the “pictorial expression” or “symbolic form”
of the panorama as specifically modern and “a bourgeois view of nature and the world.”
The pictorial panorama he continues is an apparatus for teaching and glorifying the
bourgeois view of the world…it served both as an instrument for liberating human vision
and for limiting and “imprisoning” it anew.”\textsuperscript{40} And summing up: “it represents the first
ture visual mass medium.” Oettermann’s dual meanings of \textit{mass} described as “limiting”
and “imprisoning” are comparable to Adorno’s influential critique of mass culture.\textsuperscript{41}

Oettermann, a German writer, would be familiar with Adorno’s critical inquiry. His
reference to the new middle class is appropriate for this was the audience who took visual
pleasure viewing a panorama of the same city in which they lived. To agree with

Oettermann’s equation of the “first mass medium” without aesthetic and cartographic

\textsuperscript{38} Samuel Y. Edgerton, Jr. \textit{The Renaissance Rediscovery of Linear Perspective} (New York: Basic Books,
\textsuperscript{39} Stephen Oettermann, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., p. 7.
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., p. 5. Oettermann cites T.W. Adorno when he writes that there are no direct precursors: “Nothing is
more detrimental to a theoretical understanding of modern art than attempts to reduce it to similarities with
what went before.” There is no discussion by Oettermann when he refers to Adorno’s aesthetic approach to
modern art. He does not say whether he considers the panorama as modern art, and, therefore, whether this
citation is relevant.
precursors is to refute the early history of representation of towns and cities that I presented in my earlier discussion of the printed prospect.

The panorama, like any medium, has its precursors, which are not so easily dismissed, and considering that Barker was a teacher of perspective techniques his experimentation with optics when applied to the panorama does not stray far from historical records of perspective inquiries related to new optical apparatuses, even if these approaches were questioned, rather than granted outright acceptance. The reaffirmation of perspective techniques in the eighteenth- and nineteenth century was just this approach, a way to retain the past in artistic practice, although such studies were largely considered part of the “grind” of student apprenticeship, and a “necessary tutelage—something that was expected as routine,” and something “to be got over.” Nevertheless perspective continued to have strong symbolic importance, and instructional books in perspective were produced in unprecedented numbers during the nineteenth century, including new editions of Alberti’s perspective treatise. Importantly for the centrally utilitarian and aesthetically valued sketch central to the first stage of production of the panorama, the early origins of perspective techniques extended to the “correct” rendering of buildings and topography (including streets and facades), a principle that Barker utilized as a foremost element to achieve the optical scheme of his synoptic cityscape.

When discussing forerunners and related genres of panoramas, Oettermann considers evaluation of perspective techniques as important, but not significantly decisive. He states that perspective was “abruptly relearned” within the panorama—“to begin again

at the beginning"—consequently this break." This statement contradicts Barker’s approach as a type of spatial seeing grounded in perspective techniques that have been adapted to a multiple perspective point of view in order to compose the panorama, which also can be perceived as scans occurring through shifting points of view. Perhaps, the most accurate way to describe the change that occurred in the space of the panorama is to move from a sole focus on the geometry of vision, as a single point, to examine a larger geometry of the space that ambiguously claimed both verisimilitude and illusion: “the truth value...is not dependent on resemblance, in any strict sense of the word,” and “perspective construction did not aim at illusion...it ordered itself around a notion of truth that might be called reality.” If truth to reality is central to interpreting the panorama this must be considered not as a given, but needs to be interpreted through complex historical terms and conditions.

Historically perspective was considered an important illustrative tool, but during the fifteenth and sixteenth century there was never one-way of achieving this. Perspective contributed to both truth and illusion, conditions largely undifferentiated, and significantly for early picture making of all sorts illusion was “amongst the most praiseworthy, as well as the most revolutionary of its attributes.” So consequently when, perspective was able to establish a “visual ordering (that) replaced the visual world,” then began the next step where perspective could be naturalized and equated with reality. It is the relationship between the real and the illusion, the cartographic aspect and visual pleasure of the panorama that gives impact and meaning. Historically the aesthetic condition of illusion

44 Ibid., p. 23.
45 Hubert Damisch, pp. 150-151.
46 John White, p. 189.
was not problematic, unlike the varieties of optical applications associated with entertainment viewed as a somewhat frivolous pastime in the nineteenth century. Optics of seeing and new technologies of vision—the panorama and the diorama are central examples—increased the divide between high art and mass culture. Under these influences, illusion became an “ugly word” in art usage, quite in contrast to its early beginnings of “most praiseworthy.” Too much illusion in the panorama, or as was also proposed, not enough, brought on the most severe criticism. But as the word “orama” came to define all kinds of popular pastimes, it also opened up further avenues to consider space and time through visual means inseparable from the modernizing world.

At its origins perspective was a new way of looking at the world with the built and topographical environment taking a prominent place, but not as the central subject of the image, rather part of a “scene,” a backdrop to tell a larger narrative. Because the Italian Renaissance system of perspective was based on a rigorous format of figure to ground, in its formative stage the integration of fixed human figures into monumental architectural settings dependent one point perspective was an aesthetic response, and a rethinking of approaches to image making that stretched back to the medieval era, with its setting out and glorifying of instructional, usually religious narratives. Hubert Damisch writes: “Paintings were ‘forcefully ennobled by architectural references…triumphal arches, temples…crystalline spaces set apart in the interior of the city, ideal for processions…ritual entries, of ceremonial decorations.’”48 Damisch’s reference to “thinking in painting” recognizes perspective as inseparable from architecture from its very origins: “inventories from the Renaissance to the classical period,” denote a “view of

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architecture.” Then Damisch takes these forms of representation a step further commenting that despite “evidence” formed through the projected space of perspective, a suspicion of deception also exists: “the term ‘perspective’ is often used to designate elements in which trompe l’oeil plays a part. 49

Barker’s commanding view of the city as a worthy subject of art for “displaying views of nature” identified and celebrated new relations of property, prosperity and progress within the now modern plenitude of city space. When Barker set out to picture the city as a panorama, he was participating in a breakdown of the distinction between the Renaissance limitations of landscape with architectural elements as background, and an image positioning the cityscape as central to the composition and subject of the picture. But by retaining and realigning basic elements of perspective, it can be said that Barker’s application was an image able to “dwell in propitious places by changing the given reality of nature.”50 And the panoramas that followed were a variant on this theme of changing the given reality.

By turning now to central paintings in the history of art, rather than the low and the broad market where I situated printed prospects, is not to say that panoramas can be said to be like this or that painting or print, but rather to provide insight into these given “realities” in representation, which then are interpreted as aligned with conditions of economic, political and social transformations. As earlier as the sixteenth century, when studies in optics began to alter the strict geometry of perspective, images began to extend into spaces of illusion. The anamorphic image familiar to painters during the fifteenth and

48 André Chastel cited in Hubert Damisch, p. 225.
49 Hubert Damisch, p. 271.
sixteenth century was a visual space seemingly very separate from perspective, yet closely intertwined in its recognition and application of how perspective as a technique acted to render concepts of presence and absence.

In Holbein's 1533 painting, *Ambassadors*, two French ambassadors stand in front of a large table filled with optical paraphernalia of sixteenth-century science. The overall pictorial space of the image is portrayed in perspective, except the anamorphic skull in the foreground is viewed from a position separate from single point of perspective. Jacques Lacan writes how the viewer is "called into the picture," rather than finding an external position and singular point of viewing the image: "The singular object floating in the foreground...is there to be looked at, in order to catch, I would almost say, to catch in its trap the observer...It is...some moment of reflection on the part of the painter, of showing us that, as subjects, we are literally called into the picture and represented there as caught."51 Anamorphosis as a "trap" or a visual game plan, a system that abstracts through optics of seeing any largely fixed relationship between an observer and a singular viewing position. Although its visual interpretation relies on stepping outside of perspective, it is "indivisible" from the terms of this model, for anamorphosis acquires meaning, in part, by critiquing perspective's "chief disadvantage"—the singular view of one point perspective.52 Therefore, rather than rely on perspective as forming a designated point of

view, as in the phrase “getting something into perspective,” anamorphosis leaves the viewer in anticipation of finding her own space, or solving a riddle.53

My inquiry into how the panorama is an illusory structure that depicts reality can learn from anamorphic vision taking and interpreting space as a conundrum of form that does not hold the certainty of reproducing or understanding the real through preconceived conventions of a known space, or traditional conventions of seeing. Although a transmuted spatial sense of confusion is found in the anamorphic visual puzzle, rather than the spatial embrace of the panorama, both are optical manipulations controversial in studio practices of painting from the fifteenth through to the nineteenth century. The use of mechanical devices never mixed well with art, rather was seen as largely incompatible to issues of formal and aesthetic composition. Therefore with the introduction of optical devices or perception that went against one point perspective, the viewer needed to redefine visual distance and proximity in order to read an image. This rethinking of near and far is central to the permutations that make up the panorama.

Panoramas were largely not taken seriously as an art form during the nineteenth century due to the failure to resolve such relations of vision and space, especially a lineage of illusionary abstraction. Barthes writes that the panorama can never be considered as a work of art: “its very continuity engages the mind in a certain struggle, it seeks to be deciphered, we must find signs within it...the aesthetic interest of a painting ceasing once we try to recognize in it particular points derived from our knowledge.”54 This same adjustment of struggle and decipherment recalls the anamorphic image and the spatial repositioning of the observer necessary to take in the image, and therefore to read it as a

whole. The next step moves from the perceptual ruptures and capabilities of illusion to the investigation of how picture making and cartography are conjoined within the construction of panoramic space.

**Reciprocal relations of art and cartography**

Early maps are a form of representation that fall somewhere between art and science, but while they may provide sources of geographical information, they usually and more reliably represent “prevailing notions of space and environment.” Early maps, as also medieval paintings, lacked visual coherence: “Relative sizes usually depend less on actual size than on emphasis...important figures and features, like important places on maps, were magnified. There was also a tendency to let objects ‘float’ to the surface and to show them from different viewpoints.” Without the use of perspective techniques pictures appear “naive,” the characteristic of much of medieval aesthetic representation. Without technical advances in topographical techniques of mapping, including aerial views from a plane, the still unknown regions of Europe in the eighteenth century could only be imagined through sketches, thereby techniques and applications of mapping sought validation chiefly through aesthetic affiliation. Referring to his own sketch of the Alps and noting the immensity of size, Karl Gotthard Grass writes in 1790, of his attempts to “construct and rearrange” the spatial elements of the mountain landscape:

54 Roland Barthes, p. 10.
55 Denis Cosgrove and Stephan Daniels, p. 65.
56 Ibid., p. 66.
I will often regret that I did not draw the whole pyramid formed by the mountain chain, even if it would have meant putting three sheets of paper together. Partly it seemed impossible to me to get it all down on paper, and I truly could not see enough that might interest me in the future, that I could pick out and use later. Nor could I see how I could construct and rearrange it...There is really something frightening in the inconceivable immensity of its size that holds one back.57

In noting the complex relations of space as “inconceivable immensity of size,” therefore, not to “hold one back,” Grass moves between the aesthetic conditions of the sketch and spatial concerns addressing the topography, and in doing so moves between the size of landscape in relation to the paper, “even if it meant—three sheets,” to approach a delicately balanced and symbiotic relationship between mapmaking and the difficulties of size, between representation and reality. Optical adjustments, the expanse of “immense” size and the problem of various viewpoints are the same issues pertinent to picturing the city as panoramic space.

Although well known for his essays on modernity that form an inquiry into specific spatial and temporal configurations of big cities, rather than views of the Alps, Simmel commented in his lecture of 1903, titled “Aesthetic Quantity,” that the complexities of an image of a mountain view, where the size of the original object is then compared to representation, needs to be considered when setting out to interpret the relations between aesthetics form and “quantifiable size.”58 Although at issue is the representation of big cities, the meaning and significance of an image when altered by scale, or in Simmel’s accountability between the original and representation, where interpretation resides is the “aesthetic thresholds of objects” in relationship to display and

exhibition. Comparatively, he considers changes in perception that take place when architecture is viewed as a model, and writes:

How is (it) that small models of built environments exercise almost no aesthetic effect, or at least one that does not correspond to the effect of the identically formed built structure itself? ... Our organs dealing with this are too crude in order to recognize psychologically the validity of the reduced relations...(of the) model... For ultimately empathetic feeling is feeling and must therefore, like other feelings, have a threshold in consciousness.59

And Simmel continues commenting on size and reception: “smaller or that much larger...we can, of course, still view and intellectually diagnose as having the same relationships of form,” but size he continues can change aesthetic effectiveness.60 Perhaps, Simmel had the panorama’s size and scale, in mind, when he commented that the “modern person” shows dissatisfaction with “small stimulation and joys of the day,” and, in contrast, the “need for great excitements...(which) ultimately brings about a situation in which nature only still gives us satisfaction on the North Sea and in the highest peaks of the Alps.”61 If consideration of size matters when considering both the object to be represented and the final representation, when size influences a spatial view that is compared to aesthetic appreciation, for example, how to represent the Alps, or, in fact, the modern city, then, these remarks are certainly relevant. But oddly, size was not specifically mentioned as the fundamental critique of the panorama in the nineteenth century.

In the early years of the panorama, artistic merit formed the central and broadest area of dispute. One eighteenth-century critic found that aesthetic conditions resided not

59 Ibid., 115. My italics.
60 Ibid.
61 Ibid., p. 112.
so much in whether the panorama exhibited elements of cartography or art, or questioned the accountability of the new medium itself, but in the talent of the artists:

Of course, in thus comparing Panoramas with other pictures, we are supposing the talent displayed by the artists in each case to be nearly on a par. We do not mean to say that the effect of a landscape Panorama by Mr. Barker is as good as that of Claude’s best pieces, or even of some of our own Turner’s; but we do say that it is infinitely better that that of any of the landscapes painted by artists possessing a similar degree of talent and acquirement.⁶²

The British painter John Constable agreed with this assessment, and concluded that although panorama paintings are “all the rage,” and while they are executed with “the greatest care and fidelity…great principles are neither expected nor looked for. The painter of panoramas views nature minutely and cunningly, but without greatness or breadth.”⁶³ Breadth refers not to cartographic scope, or not to “hold back” in acknowledging one’s ability to portray size in a sketch as in the Alps, but refers to the conventions of artistic practice from subject matter, to composition, to brush strokes, to framing and composing a landscape.

Nowhere were optical signs of “discontinuity and difference” in pictorial practice, between high art and the panorama, made more visible that in J.M.W. Turner’s work during the late 1830s and 1840s. Rather than take up issues of spatial organization and position these as relations of distant and closeness pertaining to industrialization and urbanization, as did Barker with his projection of multiple viewpoints that attempt to embrace the city as totalizing space, Turner’s painting had at its focus “a continuity of

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temporality. One of the ways he achieved this was a painterly collapse of spatial distance, and an undifferentiated use of light, and in doing so, Turner presented a "dream-world" of colour, as the Goncourt brothers wrote in 1867. For Turner to move from the conventions of painting that treated form as matter within a geometry of fixed space to portraying perception as spatial and temporal visual experience brought aesthetic inquiry closer to the material phenomena that was the smoky environment of industrial modernism, and especially relevant was how he moved between what could be considered individual and experiential space and the new rigours of public space. His starting point was an extensive knowledge of perspective, for only in this way could he begin to break the rules, to make optical "corrections." While Turner's paintings are very distinct in form and style from Barker's space of a panorama, the two painters confront comparative issues. Each examined and applied innovations to optical and spatial configurations when considering a view of the modern world, but Barker gave emphasis to size, consequently creating aesthetic separation from the conventions of easel painting, thereby losing, in Simmel's terms, the aesthetic effect.

Martin Kemp evaluates Turner's contributions to pictorial space by suggesting an "expansive fragment of infinitude." This goes beyond Barker's problematic dispute with equating representational size with the size of the object to be depicted, thereby as the argument went in the nineteenth century, loosing aesthetic effect. If these two examples suggest shared intentions or ambitions, the outcome brought very different results, and the

scope of each inquiry was carried over to other artists, for example, the "cacophonous" narratives of John Martin. During the nineteenth century Martin's paintings were considered a caricature of Turner's infinite expression of newness in time and space that set out to chart the changing industrialized world. But rather than develop a spatial inquiry into the phenomena of the industrialized world, as Turner did, Martin retreated backwards picking up narratives from mythic tales, thereby attempting to hang on to the conventions of academic history painting that had already lost its prominent role. The depictions of military conflicts celebrated in the painted panoramas, during this same time period, usually quite strident propaganda messages, can be also noted as attempts to readapt conventional approaches to academic history painting.

Contrasted to Barker's concept of enclosing the whole of the city, and defining place through a cartographic interpretive scheme, Martin's use of space was "anti-rational." In Martin's painting, Belchassar's Feast (1820), a long colonnade of architectural facades set the scene for the overbearing narrative of the painting. The artist breaks up perspective space structured through the firm rigour of a long façade stretching into the background of the painting. But overall the painting includes a dynamic dissolution of perceptual optics that applies to the spatial emphasis of the picture, and this achieved little more that special effects. And special effects describes this painting sufficiently well for it was soon after copied on both sides of a vertical canvas by Daguerre's former assistant, Hippolyte Sebron, and displayed as a diorama. Martin attempted unsuccessfully to close the exhibition, and the diorama expanded to four times its earlier size when it was shown in New York in 1833.

67 Ibid., p. 162.
To examine one of the earliest images of a town or cityscape is to return to the cusp of the fifteenth- and sixteenth century. Jacopo de Barbari’s wood block print “View of Venice” (ca. 1500) is acknowledged for its stylistic aerial view, its scale or large size, and use of synoptic space. The view demonstrates remarkable unity in pictorial space, yet no one in Jacopo’s time could have observed Venice from the high vantage point that designated the pictorial arrangement of the woodcut print. It is the high view, with its imaginary vantage point that contributes to the picture plane giving it legibility: “The distant mountains…(are read) both as a frame within the frame and as a distant landscape feature….Indeed, the composition is open at the sides and bottom, as if it were an excerpt of a still vaster prospect.” 69 Spatially, the city of Venice displays its success in commercial enterprise through the inclusion of ships in the harbour displaying the city’s successful prosperity through maritime trade. Ships in the harbour showing commerce and prosperity are a chief feature in not only this very early print, but the fifteenth-century Renaissance diptych, that I discuss next, as well as prospects, and panoramas extending from panorama paintings to photographs.

Henri Lefebvre describes the perspective space of the fifteenth century as the defining form and symbolic influence of the early formation of the city as a subject of pictorial representation. An increase in the number of towns during the sixteenth century occurred as ideologies and power were transferred from religious space to secular space, or the space of commerce and markets. And this was visually represented: “The town was

68 Martin Kemp, p. 162.
given written form—described geographically. Bird’s-eye views and plans proliferated.”

As early mercantile capitalism altered both space and time, it was within perspective, according to Lefebvre, that the town “recognized itself and found its image.” But perspective did not remain just the static geometry of form first naturalized in fifteenth-century painting.

In Piero della Francesca’s diptych of 1472-73, Battista Sforza and Federico da Montefeltro, the Duchess and Duke are shown in profile, and are as remote and lifeless as figureheads on coins. The topography of the distant view is quite in contrast. The high vantage point—the position of the duke and duchess—looks out on a distant atmospheric landscape with the pictorial horizon identified by receding hills. Behind Battista Sforza is a rugged landscape acting as a spatial rendering of the hills of Urbino; behind Duke Frederico lies a port town with navigable water with the requisite mercantile ships in the harbour. Duke Frederico aligned himself with the Church as the most powerful landowner in Italy in order to bring stability and prosperity to his land, thus obtaining control through commercial prosperity and avoiding many regional wars. As if he was, and, perhaps he is, commenting on this painting, Lefebvre proposes that as commerce transformed space: “ports and seaboard cities” gained importance: “This space...was by definition a space of exchange and communication, and...communication network (which) was simply the physical reflection—the natural mirror as it were—of the abstract and contractual network which bound together the ‘exchangers’ of products and money.” Inland water transportation linked local, regional and national markets. Italy, France, Flanders and Germany were trading partners still in the process of development.

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Lefebvre cautions defining space solely in terms of geography. In this painting the landscape stretching to the distance with its culminating harbour moves between an imaginary geography and the depiction and mapping of space leading to recognition of social space that is “multifaceted: abstract and practical, immediate and mediated.”72 Therefore space and place move beyond geography to geopolitics: “Under Frederico the dynasty would transfer its allegiance to the Church...to break with the...model of tyranny, to rally, motivated by power politics as much as by reason, behind the idea of a state authority...and above all on prudence.”73 Whereas the Church’s military powers were strong and entrenched, it is the Church’s cultural exploits (or exploitations), to cite Walter Benjamin as Damisch does, which serve as an indication of the extent to which culture can readily exist as “documents of barbarism.”74 The Duke’s ancestors had continually fought regional wars, hoping for immediate financial gain through violence, threat and plunder. But with stability achieved through alliance rather than violence the Duke assumed power and used culture as symbolic expression rather than relying on brute force. Such a cultural space of representation is demonstrated in the panorama view of the painting Citta ideale, also known as the Urbino panel.

Dated ca. 1490-1495 and attributed to Piero della Francesca, or his school, the painting draws attention back to the diptych of Battista Sforza and Federico da Montefeltro that was painted just a few years earlier, although each is a very different interpretation of the aesthetic and geopolitics of the dimensions of landscape. The painting Citta ideale is a view of architecture that does not abide with the single perspective of

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71 Ibid., p. 278.
72 Ibid., p. 266.
73 Hubert Damisch, p. 187.
74 Ibid.
Renaissance; the picture has panorama permutations. Conventional framing devices do not limit the representation of space of this ideal city. Damisch provides a very eloquent description:

A city, or rather a place, an urban site frozen in a perspective, deploying before the eye the symmetrical fan of its receding lines. The image of a deserted square, roughly rectangular...bordered along three of its sides by the fronts of palaces and middle-class houses, with a circular building, having two superimposed columnar orders and crowned by a conical roof, occupying its center. A view of architecture that connotes "renaissance"...The image of this ideal city offers nothing to view that can be narrated: which provides sufficient justification...to be qualified as abstract.75

Although this view of architecture connotes "renaissance," as Damisch points out, the receding lines do not demonstrate one-point principles of perspective. Also the architecture is central, rather than secondary to a larger narrative of human presence. In fact, there are no signs of habitation/occupation; rather the only living things are two stationary pigeons and a trace of plant life on the second storey window ledge of the right façade. Lefebvre could have been identifying this image when he wrote: "Façade and perspective went hand in hand. Perspective established the line of façades to create its horizons and vanishing point....It is curious in view of its artificial and studied character, that the façade is arguably the basis for the 'organic' analogy."76 This analogy between perspective and façade is constructed on the historical formation of the application of perspective to the depiction of architecture, and now when the "object" refers to representation, the "subject" refers to the city, which "emerges as a unified entity."77 This same usage of façade and perspective space continues in photography.

75 Ibid., p. 169-171.
76 Ibid., p. 273.
77 Ibid., p. 271.
This image of an ideal city does not conform to the conventional fixed viewpoint of perspective, but is another way of seeing incorporating facets of movement—the scan of the eye from side-to-side in order to take in the whole. Factored into this reading are spatial permutations, which cause the eye to move or scan across the wide view to therefore characterize the view as panoramic. And as if to overrule any integration of perspective supremacy the central axis of the painting, the eye does not manage to anchor itself anywhere, but rather proceeds “without one’s being able to figure out why at first, by successive slippages and—as one would say of an equestrian mount—by ambling about.”

The image suggests a curvilinear form, as does a panorama. Damisch writes of “being continually sent back from the center to the periphery, its allure limited by the extremely wide angle of vision, which...as well as the structure of what is presented as a scenic configuration in which the façade parallel to the picture plane, challenge the importance of the central cylindrical volume, somewhat recessed and on a curved surface over which the eye tends to skid.”78

With its architecture of grandeur and stability, the image suggests a dazzling and celebratory city that recognizes the Count’s wealth and power; however the architecture was never realized. This painting of an “ideal city” illustrates de Certeau’s commentary on Renaissance painters who “represented the city as seen in a perspective that no eye had yet enjoyed,” and he continues commenting on how such a totalizing eye with its “scopic drive,” at one time associated with painters, but now part of the monumentality of architectural: “by materializing today the utopia that yesterday was only painted.”79 Without further legibility, this representation of space is certainly not a mapping device whereby the viewer can interpret this imaginary city, or in fact observe

78 Ibid., p. 170.
79 Michel de Certeau, p. 92.
beyond the initial slippages of the picture plane. The utopic quality of the image remains only as a metaphor of a representational space and its limitations.

The image creates ambivalence between a visual pleasure in looking, a “fascination,” and an approach to invisibility, “a kind of blindness” and “difficulty of appraisal.” The importance of vision and invisibility in this image explore the differences of how the image might be perceived, and this carries over to the provenance of this painting that is also fraught with difficulty, as is its accountability within the history of art. What is known is that the city of this panel was only realized by the Count’s architects as a conceptual plan or idea: “showing how the construction of this palace (like that of Versailles much later) was both the instrument and the symbol of that of the state, in accordance with Count Federico’s cherished pretensions of seeing the court of Urbino prevail over all others...reflected in the arrangement of its spaces.” The picture is an immersive space of illusion comparative to the panorama of the nineteenth century, and although the Urbino city was never built, this utopic image holds a cultural contingency of meaning comparative to the panorama four centuries later. How does the city itself become the sole subject of the image? How to depict the city spatially? How to make the city visible and become legible through terms that negotiate political, economic and social forces? Another way of saying this is that the representation of space diverges: “yet the unity of the whole was not shattered.” This comparison is not to say that one era acts to mirror another, but rather in crossing “histories,” or raising questions of precedence and influence, as I have done, leads to consider further conditions identified with spatial apparatus and representations of space.

80 Hurbert Damisch, p. 170.
81 Ibid., p. 188.
Malleable spaces and negotiating form

The fifteenth and sixteenth century introduced optical experimentation that explored unanticipated or multiple viewing positions. Best known is Leonardo da Vinci’s exploration of the mathematical principles of perspective in his well know work the *Last Supper*, ca. 1497. But when spaces of illusion begin to extend even further single-point perspective and related pictorial composition the image enters into a murky area of art historical currency. Almost a curvilinear form, but still holding back, is the image space of Carel Fabritus’s 1652 painting *View in Delft*. In this small painting, 15.4 x 31.6 cm (6 x 12 in.) the sweeping curvature of the street along with its seventeenth century architecture is comparable to a photographic panorama that operates within principles of curvilinear form later utilized by panorama cameras, the subject of chapter 4.

This painting of Delft is not a transformative image in genre terms, but an image displaying visual experimentation and optical ambivalence. There is not enough known of its history to consider its social manifestation, or its presence in the visual culture of Dutch realism, rather it is best understood as an image generating knowledge about seeing and space, optics and representation. Its knowledge base is not to describe the world, but to show a pictorial world able to arrive at both rational and irrational space, reality and illusion. On the one hand, the curvature of the overall spatial distortion of the street dominates the pictorial composition. Then the impression of distortion is somewhat mitigated by including on the left side of the picture a standardized architectural feature, a

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82 Henri Lefebvre, p. 266.
83 Martin Kemp, p. 208.
vendor’s stall, that falls back to rely on principles of perspective. The artist also includes a perspective drawing of a lute, an acknowledged still life subject during the seventeenth-century. Very little is known about this image or the artist’s oeuvre, but by remaining longer with this image of the street, spatial variables suggest comparison to the small-scale panorama viewing boxes of the nineteenth century. But whether this image was part of this lineage, and was to be exhibited as a curved surface in a round perspective box, popular at the time, cannot be established, and these are also a likely precursor to the panorama viewing boxes, but this cannot be ascertained.

The implications of the seventeenth-century baroque painted ceiling is a spatial interplay of illusion and embodied vision, equally a spectacular image, but not distinctly a parallel to the panorama. Oettermann describes the panorama as not continuing the Baroque conditions of spatial illusion, but here again he strives to bypass historical precursors by describing skills “forgotten,” and panorama painters starting anew: “the tradition does not continue.”84 Bernard Comment recognizes the baroque ceiling and the panorama as possibly sharing spatial dimensions, but writes that “obvious comparisons” should be dismissed. The baroque ceiling and the panorama housed in its purpose built rotunda are symbiotic in their embodied spatial formation of linking spectator and picture surface. Comment would prefer to disregard any spatial configurations that might contribute to comparison and influence because he prefers to expand on the significant differences of symbolic meanings: “the Baroque, with its sotto in su perspective, was above all signaling its obedience to divine power, while circular perspective was more concerned with human domination of nature.”85 Although spaces of display are not

84 Stephen Oettermann, p. 23.
85 Bernard Comment, p. 77.
immediately comparative, other factors are equally shared. In both, the representation of space leads to an imaginary world brought to materiality through expansive spaces of illusion.

Both are immersive and spectacular, for each is a highly fabricated and illusionary space. Gilles Deleuze writes that it is “precisely the contrast between the exacerbated language of the façade and the serene peace of the inside that constitutes one of the most powerful effects that Baroque art exerts upon us.”86 Such spatial terms also address the enclosed space of the panorama. Writing on the painted panorama in 1805, the critic, Johann August Eberhard, described the deceptive character of the medium, as a “copy to true nature cannot be any greater” because the illusion of the confined space results in a spatial-psychological field where the viewer can only “sway between reality and unreality, between nature and non-nature, between truth and appearance.” He concludes by complaining of the impossibility of escaping from the illusion: “I feel myself trapped in the net of a contradictory world...not even comparison with the bodies that surround me can awake me from this terrifying nightmare, which I must go on dreaming against my will.”87 Comment seeks difference rather than any hybrid nature of influence.

The baroque as a space of illusion was a pertinent response by the Catholic Church to challenges that were both spiritual and secular. The introduction in Europe of revisionist religions brought forward with the Reformation coincided with the more secular and worldly developments taking place globally. The investments and political implications of the church were not separate from the expanding activities of the European merchant class. Both competed internationally for the control of resources and markets,

which led to European powers establishing permanent colonies. Between the years 1685 and 1694, Andrea Posso painted the baroque dome of S. Ignazio in a church in Rome, belonging to the Jesuit Order, or the Society of Jesus founded by Ignatius Loyola. Amid controversy, Posso used a complex scheme that utilized architectural perspective yet moved beyond static and single viewpoints to embody an extravagant pictorial technique that spatially engaged the whole of the nave ceiling. 

Foucault without directly mentioning the spectacular baroque displays of the seventeenth century writes: “thought ceases to move in the element of resemblance...leaving nothing behind it but games, whose powers of enchantment grow out of a new kinship between resemblance and illusion...it is the privileged age of trompe l’oeil painting...of dreams and visions; it is the age of deceiving the senses.”

This illusionary image sustains power relations acting as a vehicle of knowledge: “to send forth a ray of light into the heart of Ignatius, which is then transmitted by him to the most distant regions of the four parts of the world.”

Disciplinary mechanisms also surface when Foucault examines the model colleges of the Jesuits that lead to entrenching power and knowledge through individual, social and political terms. Conditions of early modernity are engaged spatially in the visual apparatus of the college and the church ceiling. Recognizing knowledge and power transmitted through religious ceremony and morality, as well as secular and global terms of economic and political power are no longer differentiated.

87 Johnn August Eberhard cited in Oiver Grau, pp. 63-64.
88 Martin Kemp, p. 139.
90 Martin Kemp, p. 139.
Visual pleasure gained from the celestially painted ceilings transferred the mind of
the viewer from material to spiritual purposes. If this is the case, then the painted or
photographic panoramas, while entirely secular, transferred perception and cognition from
physical space to illusionary space by fulfilling a utopic dream of identity, which took
place through identification of city space within a world increasingly transformed both
locally and globally. In the Baroque ceiling architecture can be said to "fold" into
painting, and how this occurs in through a connection between architectural space and
pictorial space. Gilles Deleuze writes: "the severing of the façade from the inside...and
the autonomy of the interior from the independence of the exterior...each of the two terms
thrust the other forward."92 The illusion of the "fold" is accomplished through immersion,
or the notion of "thrust," and this is a spatial reading, as each painted surface relies closely
on architectural structure and enclosure. Crary defines perception through its original
Latin meaning of "catching" or "taking captive," and these are terms relevant to the space
of the Baroque ceiling and the panorama enclosed in its rotunda.93 The feeling of
"trapped" and "dreaming against my will," citing Eberhard earlier, is part of the
transformation of perception central to the modern world of spectacle examined more
closely in chapter 3. Whether the baroque ceiling or the panorama are in some way
comparative, and then the former is identified as a precursor, is one of the questions to be
raised, but does not end there. More central is the question of how and what kind of spatial
practice these conditions of illusion immerse the viewer, and provide for vision and
perception that engages the "realities" of modern life providing a more astute reading of

92 Gilles Deleuze, p. 28.
93 Jonathan Crary, Suspensions of Perception, p. 3.
the resemblance of two spectacular forms. The answer can only remain a spatial response connecting aspects of visual culture to social and political integration.

The use of the suffix "orama" encapsulates these terms of illusion during the nineteenth century extending to the panorama's main rival in terms of popularity the diorama, launched by Louis-Jacques Mande Daquerre, himself a painter, but receiving credit for the invention of the daguerreotype. The illusionary space of the diorama depends on changes in lighting, so that the landscape was seen between contrasts of day and night, or a temporal space able to generate, if in limited representation a sense of movement. Considered an illusionary diversion, a form of nineteenth-century entertainment, then the often misty and sublime images of the diorama can be considered as inverting the mediatory message of the baroque image by bringing it to earth. And again spatial shifts are relevant, for if the baroque praised heavenly thoughts, while securing allegiance on earth, the diorama attempted to introduce within modernity the increasingly vanquished images of cyclical time-based nature, the elements of rural experience now irreversibility altered by the encroaching conditions of industrialization.

Charles Baudelaire that he: "would rather return to the diorama, whose brutal and enormous magic has the power to impose a genuine illusion upon me." He continues: "I would rather go to the theatre and feast my eyes on the scenery, in which I find my dearest dreams artistically expressed, and tragically concentrated! These things, because they are false, are infinitely closer to the truth; whereas the majority of our landscape-painters are liars, precisely because they have neglected to lie." 94 Who were these landscape painters, and why are they "liars." Why are their paintings false? Daubigny's Landscape by the

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River Oise; Paul Flandrin’s Landscape; Millet’s The Cowgirl; Rousseau’s The Gorges di’Apremont, Fatainebleau; Tryon’s The Return to the Farm are representative of the academic paintings at the Salon that year. These are picturesque and rustic regional genres displaying rural virtue, frankness and simplicity, in short, a scene of peasant humility and contentment, and therefore the paintings are “false,” because they fail to recognize the impact of the industrial revolution on the countryside.

In the same essay, Baudelaire wrote that there is “a lack not only of seascapes—such a poetic genre, moreover; though I do not count as seascapes those military dramas which are played at sea—but also of a genre which I can only call the landscape of great cities.”

The genre that Baudelaire refers to as a “landscape of great cities” is likely referring to the earlier work of Turner and Whistler. However a landscape of the modern city of Paris could find no stable link to the past for as these sentiments on “views” were expressed, Hausmann was setting out to alter the original core of old Paris, and Paris was becoming transformed through the new boulevards that gave the city over to levels of abstraction guided by long straight lines that can also be attributed to the planar leveling of the high view.

95 Ibid., p. 200.
Chapter 3
Configurations of Modernity: Panoptic Space and Spectacular Reality

A whole history remains to be written of spaces—which would at the same time be the history of powers (both these terms in the plural)—from the great strategies of geopolitics to the little tactics of the habitat.¹

The spectacle which inverts the real is in fact produced. Lived reality is materially invaded by the contemplation of the spectacle while simultaneously absorbing the spectacular order, giving it positive cohesiveness. Objective reality is present on both sides. Every notion fixed this way has no other basis than its passage into the opposite: reality gives up within the spectacle, and the spectacle is real.²

Balloon views, perceptual un/certainties and symbolic meaning

Viewing a panorama, entering into the crowd watching an early balloon ascent, or visiting the nineteenth-century world expositions can all be described as an engagement with nineteenth-century “spaces of constructed visibility.”³ On 19 September 1783 a large balloon ascended for eight minutes over the palace of Versailles. In the basket below the spectacular sixty-foot, azure-blue balloon, decorated with golden fleurs-de-lis, were barnyard animals, a sheep named Montauciel (Climb-to-the-sky), a duck and a rooster. The balloon flight was momentous as public spectacle. On the ground the balloon remained under the authority of palace affairs, but in the air it was viewed as “democratic,” or symbolically accessible to all.” The balloon launch overreached established protocol and contributed to a reordering of relations between the nobility and the bourgeoisie, the public sphere of the spectacle and audience, for the palace at

² Guy Debord, Spectacle of Society (Detroit: Black and Red, 1863), section 7.
Versailles had long been characterized by sumptuous entertainment and opulent pleasures available to the nobility alone.

The launching of the balloon aloft was identified with progress and individual enterprise. As a middle class innovation utilizing and representing the technologies of modernity, the balloon flight suspended, in fact, superseded the status of the monarchy. Instead of enforcing the monarchic hierarchy of privileged vision both in terms of seeing and being seen—"as the cynosure of all eyes"—the balloon aloft was "the visual property of everyone in the crowd." By breaching traditional protocol, the balloon ascent at Versailles participated in configuring a new audience—a crowd increasingly in step with the revolutionary and democratically inspired notion of "the construction of a citizen." The balloon reordered traditional hierarchies of public spectacle; the crowd sensed that they were witnessing "a liberating event—an augury of a free-floating future—which gave them a kind of temporary fellowship," for it was the balloon as a symbol of innovation, liberation and freedom that integrated the audience into a new "social formation," where the "experience" not the audience was "noble." The rise of technological apparatus, such as the balloon and the panorama during the nineteenth century, increasingly mediated modern perception during the nineteenth century, altering the construction of the subject through new modalities of vision, representation and space.

The crowd was equally capricious as a largely new and unknown social component. The crowd was: "incoherent, spontaneous and viscerally roused. Yet they

5 Ibid., pp. 123-124. An estimated 100,000 people traveled from Paris to attend the balloon launch at Versailles.
were neither a mob...nor a random aggregate.”7 To describe the experience as “noble,” as Schama does, provides for a semantic turn; the balloon high above is far beyond the control of the monarchy, for now the modalities of seeing, not the traditional authority or purveyor of the gaze, are recognized as “noble.” The bourgeoisie celebrated and idealized the balloon as a symbol of transformation that looked to the future, placing the flight in tandem with the conditions of the far broader political and socially punitive actions of the French Revolution that brought the capital back to Paris from Versailles in 1789, five years after the balloon flight recorded here. The use of the term crowd in contrast to “mob” implies historical conditions and transformation. Mob suggests a negative group identity associated with political and violent actions, while the crowd is largely a social formation that increasingly made its way into modern experience by characterizing the activities taking place on the new boulevards of Paris, as well as the viewers engaged in the new public arena of modernity that included visitors to world expositions, panoramas and dioramas.

Balons were a French invention of the Montgolfier’s brothers and increasingly gained a place in the popular imagination as a symbolic image of modernity inseparable from an urban culture constituted by new nineteenth-century economies and entertainments from world expositions to the Salon, from glass covered arcades to department stores, from large, painted panoramas to back-lit dioramas. The first officially confirmed flight of an unmanned hot-air balloon took place in France on June 1783. In August, Etienne Montgolfier became a celebrity sending aloft a small balloon, powered by inflammable gas, rather than the hot-air balloon he used for his early experiments. In

6 Ibid., p. 125.
7 Ibid., p. 131.
September this group of barnyard animals were sent up, and by November, of the same year, the first person went up in a balloon.

The first arcade was in Paris and facilitated pedestrian traffic not only between streets, but the arcade itself served as a street, introducing window-shopping. As well, one of the earliest arcades connected two panorama rotundas. The arcade was significant in terms of display as it attracted a new public, one that can be compared to the crowd gathered to watch the balloon ascent, or visit a panorama. At their conception the arcades represented the site of new forms of consumption; products of luxury and fashion were there to be displayed, marketed and sold to the bourgeoisie, the same social group making up the crowd that watched the ascent of the balloon. Walter Benjamin described the arcades as “the original temple of commodity capitalism.” 8 The balloon’s consistent spatial presence in nineteenth-century paintings, prints and cartoons registered the increased cultural integration of technology into all forms of modern life.

Schama’s eulogizing appraisal of the balloon’s ascent relies on visual distance, in terms of closeness and separation, near and far, just as these same optics of vision apply to the panorama; both represent a separation from the strife of the modernizing world below. The balloon aloft exemplifies a shift where vision now becomes subjected to engagement and interaction with forces and relations of modernity. The spectacle of the balloon aloft watched by the introduction of a historically socially disparate crowd is a broad displacement of social and political conditions, and perception assumes a role between physiological and psychological terms introduced with the new conditions of mass culture. As a modern allegory of seeing, the balloon aloft dislodges relations of power and control.

that are located in place and class. This point of view participates in terms of both seeing and being seen to grant the viewer social identification, and an imaginary role in achieving elements of knowledge and power.

The balloon aloft is associated with expectations brought about through forms of perception that take place through proximity and distance, technology and culture, and the ensuing disruption of boundaries between private and public spheres. Perceptual distance and social distance are now altered by historical conditions of modernization and modernity. The new spatial dimensions of visual culture—the balloon aloft as also the panorama—constructs the subject as much as the object of perception, for seeing is now structured through a spectacle of visual illusion, which is not separate from representation of the real, or lived reality. Responsive to these conditions was Jacques-Alexandre-César Charles’ balloon flight, and his announcement that he could now stop down in the garden of the Tuileries to drop in unannounced on the king. The balloon expresses a subjective modification of vision and imaginary power when Charles comments that the sun shines for those above, not for those below: “the sun had already set for the inhabitants of the valleys; soon after it rose again for me alone...I was the only illuminated body on the horizon; all the rest of nature lay sunk in shadow.” In 1833, an early panorama of the city of Paris indicates a comparative displacement of power and class by depicting a view seen from the roof of the Pavillon de Flore at the Tuileries, a view previously available only to the monarchy and court.

Perception is increasingly integrated through phantasmagoric cultural conditions: “life is made infinitely easy for the personality in that stimulations, interests, uses of time

and consciousness are offered to it from all sides." Simmel characterizes modernity by interpreting modern experience not just as external life, but how this has altered the inner self, and he locates the integration of internal and external life as taking place in proportion to the size of the city including its increasing demographics. The term phantasmagoria arose in England in 1802, as the name for often, innovative exhibition of optics, and the first were images of magic lanterns. Sight was privileged; perception was associated with visual pleasure that was inseparable from the new public spaces of entertainment of modernity. If the arcades created a phantasmagoria of commodities as an environment of consumption, the panoramas engaged the perception of the viewer in a stimulated total environment. This was expanded when the panorama was located within the grounds of the international exposition, an area often the size of a small town.

The historical position of technology-stimulated aesthetics is a social phenomenon comparable to the crowd that traveled from Paris to watch the balloon ascent. Vision is characterized by not just visual technology but a cultural and social environment inseparable from the formations of entertainment as a middle-class public sphere. Interpreted through Simmel’s diagnostic sensibility of modern experience and mental life, the spectacle of the balloon aloft stimulated modern conditions able to characterize new social freedoms through a technologically defined apparatus of visual experience. At the same time, the visual representation of spectacle integrated the gathered crowd to introduce the beginnings of a shared or popular culture of modernity through which

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individuals from all social spheres imagined themselves as participating in and contributing to "mass" society.

A stimulated view, a graphic illustration, of the popular painted panorama of London of 1929, as seen from the painters' platform that was part of the scaffolding for reconstructing St. Paul’s Cathedral exemplifies the panorama image as a spectacular ordering of space (fig. 4). Artist unknown, published by R. Ackerman and Co., the same year, the image, a hand coloured aquatint, 42.2 x 32.9 cm (16 ½ x 13 in.), titled *Bird's Eye View from the Staircase of the Upper Part of the Pavilion in the Colosseum, Regent's Park*, shows both the view and the viewing platform. In the central column of the circular rotunda of the Colosseum are the stairs, lift and viewing galleries. The dome and cross of St. Paul’s Cathedral were undergoing renovation between 1823 and 1824, and the scaffolding erected for this purpose gave Thomas Horner the idea of using this high view perch to sketch a panorama of London. He began very early in the morning before the factories began to spew smoke and the city became covered in smog. A correspondent for the Berliner Kunstblatt writes:

The artist...wanted to show everything with the utmost precision...He even kept a telescope at hand. He strove to catch the sunniest and brightest moments which, as you know, are few and far between in London. For the impartial observer this circumstance actually decreases the resemblance of the picture to the original effect. On the contrary, the artist has understood so well how to create harmony and effects of light in the work as a whole that the telescopic accuracy raises the illusion to the level of sheer magic.¹²

Honor reworked the sketches into one large drawing, and then the division of labour that characterizes a panorama took place; an artist named Babor prepared the canvas, and then Edmund Thomas Paris, the producer of the panorama, took charge of the actual painting
working mainly with George Chambers known largely for his paintings of ships and marine scenes.

Considering the panorama as a phantasmagoric experience reconstructs the city through a “technological reconstruction of experience” that comes to reside in the body: “The relocation of perception into the thickness of the body was a precondition for the instrumentalizing of human vision.” The disintegration of what was indisputable distinctions between “interior and exterior identifies the condition for the emergence of spectacular modernizing culture.” The public visiting the panorama consumes images of an illusory “reality,” and this is comparative to an apparatus where the subject is simultaneously the object of knowledge and normalization. The “disintegration” between interior and exterior, subject and object is visualized through the breaking down of early relations of seeing lodged in the camera obscura, and the introduction of schematic relations of new forms of perception to connect structure and vision, and illusion and reality, as found in the balloon aloft and the panorama.

Although Crary’s scale and optics of focus is the stereoscope—a paradigm of nineteenth-century illusionary reality—he arrives at a visual analysis closely associated with the illusory conditions of the panorama, although each exists as a distinct illusionary reality. These increasingly abstract condition of optical experience and illusionary perception through which the observer becomes productive in the discourse of seeing accounts for Debord’s image of “the spectacle as capital accumulated until it becomes an

12 Stephan Oettermann, pp. 133-134.
image.\textsuperscript{14} Crary’s inquiry into the stereoscope brings insight into the historical circumstances of the panorama, for each claimed access to “natural vision.” Crary notes the “reality effect” was highly variable, but was acquired as an accumulative visual condition:

Pronounced stereoscopic effects depend on the presence of objects or obtrusive forms in the near or middle ground, that is, there must be enough points in the image that require significant changes in the angle of convergence of the optical axis. Thus the most intense experience of the stereoscopic image coincides with an object-filled space, with a material plentitude that bespeaks a nineteenth-century bourgeois horror of the void; and there are endless quantities of stereo cards showing interiors crammed with bric-a-brac, densely filled museum sculpture galleries, and congested city views...the stereoscope relief or depth has no unifying logic or order.\textsuperscript{15}

Viewing the stereoscopic space Crary writes: “Our eyes never traverse the image in a full apprehension of the three-dimensionality of the entire field, but in terms of a localized experience of separate areas.”\textsuperscript{16} Comparatively, the panorama with its pictorial structure is readily traversed or scanned. Nevertheless, when brought together as two apparatus of vision, both display the visual spaces of classification and accumulation of things which can be considered as part of a technological modern development of seeing dependent on various visual apparatus—whether the stereoscope or the panorama, and also the diorama. Entering into the picture of nineteenth-century entertainments, the diorama operates as a mobile unit of immediate temporal experience; the viewer is either seated on a moving platform, or the image moves in front of the observer. Vision is increasingly mediated by the technological world of modernity, and positions the viewer as an embodied subject.

\textsuperscript{14} Guy Debord, section 34.
\textsuperscript{15} Jonathan Crary, p. 126.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.
Before interpreting these relations of vision, space and the embodied viewer further and applying them to the panorama, I return to examine more closely the terms of vision and visuality linked to the spectacular ascent of the balloon, and its integration with new social formations.

Symbolic meaning is formed through the integration and the diminishing of conditions that separate subject from object: “The symbol fused together motion and stillness, turbulent content and organic form, mind and world...the symbol brought such truths to bear on the mind in a way which brooked no questions.”17 Hugo embarks on such a material and metaphorical perception in his 1859 book Legend of the Centuries. The physical distance of the balloon aloft represents the symbolic—imaginary grasp of the future, if only in Hugo’s somewhat romanticized political sense. In a poem he refers to the balloon as “a globe like the world.” The balloon exists as a symbol of hope, as a prophecy of the future: “This world is dead...Look up above.”18

Physical distance marks Hugo’s own seclusion in exile, in Guernsey, during the years of the Second Empire, the regime of Napoleon III, which extended from 1852 to 1870. In an open letter published in Paris during his exile he refers to a walk he took with the scientist François Arago, the liberal politician and scientist who urged successfully that the French state make the daguerreotype process available to all:

It was summer. A balloon, which had ascended from the Champ de Mars, passed over our heads in the clouds. Its rotundity, gilded by the setting sun, was majestic,” and as Hugo continues with increased fervor: “There floats the egg waiting for the bird; but the bird is within it and it will emerge. Arago took both my hands in his, and fixing me with his luminous eyes exclaimed: ‘And on that day Geo will be

called Demos!’ A profound remark. Geo will be called Demos. The whole world will be a democracy.

As a republican in exile, Hugo’s narrative of watching the balloon aloft illuminates political ideals and revolutionary shifts of power. The “majestic” balloon serves as an equalizer whereby “the whole world will be a democracy,” and for Hugo this demonstrates support for the revolutionary activities taking place in France. His perception relies on a spatially formed affiliation prompted through distance, which symbolically integrates his own politically motivated exile through the perception of the balloon aloft. Hugo uses the balloon to simultaneously represent democracy and the revolutionary ideals rupturing the forces of sovereign power, for Geo represents the King, who historically was believed to be appointed/anointed by God, and is now displaced by revolutionary activities. In Hugo’s perception the spatial ascent of the balloon heralds the conditions of democracy, or Demos, for the balloon aloft with its “liberation” of vision gives symbolic meaning to the displacement of entrenched hierarchies, and recognizing social, political and cultural change through a freeing up of vision.

The narrative of shifting spaces of representation, between above and below, distance and proximity, noble privilege and democratic ideals reveals Hugo’s prophetic position between stasis and mobility to define the topography of the world in secular, technological and revolutionary, if also romanticized terms. Modernity read through “luminous eyes” captures the historical specificity of modernizing France for Hugo presents Arago’s dual position of scientist and politician, each profession characterizing and working towards universal and moral values. As one of the journalists of the time comments: “this scientist whom all of Europe admires is at the same time one of the most

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vigorous defenders of public freedom and the interests of the people."\textsuperscript{20} Hugo’s spatial perception of the balloon as symbolically giving birth to democracy compares with Arago’s more immediate and “profound” observation of “Demos” descending and embracing the whole world. Democracy for Arago is panoramic in its conceptualizing of space, in fact, democracy in these terms metaphorically produces space. This takes effect when Arago, as Hugo’s friend and political confidant, uses the balloon to symbolize the republican program of modern reform leading to the introduction of a democratic society, and in Arago’s instrumental language “Demos” is a social institution on the ground, while Hugo’s “Demos” remains in flight, such as in the sun was setting, and “there floats the egg waiting for the bird.”\textsuperscript{21}

The first ascent of a hydrogen balloon was made over the Champ de Mars in 1798, and Hugo likely responds to this event in his open letter of 1864, the excerpt previously cited. Earlier the Champ de Mars was a central battlefield for revolutionary strife. Champ de Mars claims mythic origins; Mars was the Roman god of war. Most critically was the historical event on 14 July 1790 when a huge feast was held on the Champ de Mars to celebrate the short-lived constitutional monarchy in France, where the people’s “liberty” was believed to have been achieved in the newly formed National Assembly, to which King Louis XVI had sworn his allegiance. This was an event celebrated throughout the European world, and, as well, the “new world” represented by the presence of a visiting delegation from the United States. Constitutional reform began in England when democratic change took place without violent revolutionary means. But the Camp de Mars was not to be the site of immediate democratic ideals for on 17 July 1791 shifting political

\textsuperscript{20} Cited in Gisele Freund,\textit{Photography and Society} (Boston: David R. Godine, Publisher, 1980), p. 23.
\textsuperscript{21} Victor Hugo cited in Stephan Oettermann, p. 15.
realities made Camp de Mars the site of a massacre of “citizens.” The balloon aloft with its manifestation of technical innovation giving rise to new forms of perception, both topographical and class-based encompasses comparative motives and false starts. Describing this spatially, Hugo writes: “the dawn is breaking over these vast graveyards of history.” Each was marked by a comparison to the early failures of the balloon’s ability to “fly,” to the consistent failure to fulfill revolutionary ideals. Aligning the balloon with political ideologies is to symbolically connect progressive aspects of modernization, technological and political, as well as social with the “construction of the citizen.” But the immediacy of down-below brought Hugo to focus, in 1862, on the largely unknown and ignoble underground of Paris in Les Misérables, when he describes Jean Valjean’s mistreatment and dramatic escape through the sewers.

If the balloon takes on great symbolic identity in validating a temporal view by keeping in step with revolutionary and technological change in late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century France, the struggle that was taking place within the city for political and social validation was also secured by looking back in historical time. A popular nineteenth-century analogy compared revolutionary Paris to “a new Athens,” thereby, recovering for the present, the universal and timeless political values associated with antiquity, and also, in fact, the polis taken as an allegorical space to suggest community values through characterizing the political and social formations that Simmel locates in small towns. However, the modern city of Paris remained largely uncertain and obscure when compared to the Acropolis with its Greek polis, for it could find neither firm resolution in Athens’ coherent, material space or, in fact, affiliation with the harmonious

22 Patricia Mainardi, p. 149.
political and social community represented by the polis.\textsuperscript{24} The classical architecture of ancient Greece and its historically defined political arena sought a further analogy in the Bastille: “Athens built the Parthenon, but Paris tore down the Bastille,” wrote Hugo.\textsuperscript{25} The Bastille prison was destroyed to mark the beginning of the republic, but this analogy relies on absence, or tearing down, rather than presence. Economically, politically and socially the destruction and divisions brought by revolutionary activities left an absence not easily replaced nor resolved, and this is a comparative condition to Hugo’s writings during his extended exile.

When the first painted panorama opened in Paris in 1799, and the selected high vantage point was the Tuileries palace, this was a well-chosen, post-revolutionary viewpoint that overlooked the palace gardens, but also embraced the growth of the city beyond, including the Seine with its new bridges and quays demonstrating mercantile activity. The panorama provided an idealized view of the city, a view also exemplified historically by the Acropolis: “at once down and up—down to the agora, the place of transaction and exchange, the conflict and negotiation of secular interests,” then up to the sky and “man’s relation to the gods.” Although similar to Hugo’s revolutionary idealism expressed in the ascent of the balloon, the view of the panorama could encompass much more, for the panorama embraced the city providing the viewer with a sweeping gaze able to take in “the city in a single view” that would confirm, make visible, not just an idealized reciprocity between the old and the new, but the depiction of a topographical urban space that brought with it a sense of “belonging” to the urban city. Although


panorama space is realized through an understanding of identity as “felt wholeness,” space as an association with the historical site of the Acropolis, also extends this “wholeness,” or unity, beyond the modernizing view of Paris, “to bring together the human and the divine.” 26 A view from on high, whether from an all-embracing panorama, the largely allegorical summit of the Acropolis, or the “democratic” spectacular ascent of the balloon aloft, could portray, in various ways, metaphors of space marked out by identity and a felt wholeness, and most desirably, in sharply polemical terms, a recovery of place at once easily accessible to all, but these spatial conditions were in sharp contrast to the streets below marked by revolutionary change, political strife and consistent urban growth.

Hugo’s republican colleague Nadar took this visionary model of a high view one step further, when he took aerial photographs from a balloon over Paris in 1858, but his perception of Paris was an increasingly solitary and melancholic view, as he looked down from on high to consider his own everyday world, the lived experience of the modernizing city. Gaspard-Félix Tournachon was born in Paris in 1820, and acquired the name Nadar from his close circle of friends: fellow artists, actors and literati. Nadar’s view from the balloon in 1858 was a city transformed; this was Haussmann’s Paris. When Nada’s balloon took him aloft from the Champ de Mars, he looked out on the northwest of Paris, the area that had been most rapidly transformed by Haussmann to accommodate the residential areas occupied by the newly wealthy bourgeoisie. The image shows Haussmann’s new boulevards, as well as buildings and landmarks like the Parc Monceau, the Russian Church, Montmartre in the distance and the Arc de Triomphe, at the lower

26 Christopher Prendergast, p. 48.
right cropped by the frame of the photograph. The Arc de Triomphe situated within the broad geometric sweep of four newly constructed boulevards became the centerpiece of another aerial photograph.

Nadar’s large-format camera framed views showing Haussmann’s new boulevards—as long straight lines cutting through, yet, connecting the cityscape. Nadar’s interest in using a camera to take aerial views began from an interest in topographical mapping, as a provision to find alternatives to the time-consuming process and limitations of surveying and sketching. More recently Beaumont Newhall describes aerial photography also drawing comparisons to nature, with the high view enabling a vision encompassing a magnitude of scale along with a multitude of details:

The eye for the first time beholds a picture of nature on the vastest scale, both as to size and magnificence, in the construction of which none of the complicated laws of linear perspective are at all involved...the most rigorous observance of proportion between the size and the motion of the various bodies is combined with the most perfect delineation of their minutest forms throughout every scale of decreasing magnitude. 28

Temporal characteristics tracing “nature on the vastest scale” and the most “perfect delineation of their minutest forms” are also the elements of panorama photography that received greatest praise in the nineteenth century. These aerial views of Paris—few of which remain, and it is not known how many were taken under such complex technical

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difficulties—pertaining to both the balloon and camera technology. These unsurpassed aerial views are suspended between dream and function, and utopia and instrumentality.29

Space, size and symbolic significance all contribute to Nadar’s aerial view, the scope of the imagination, “being unbounded,” and the demands of reason, or “sensible barriers,” are brought together through a confrontational space, and the imagination looses its earlier association with the beautiful. Nadar makes this connection when he writes: “of hospitable and benevolent spaces where no human forces, no power of evil can reach.”

The experience of the sublime is above all transcendent, a literal rising above and a metaphorical separation from the modern world, which is the city of Paris, as capital of the nineteenth century, which for Nadar was a temporal space altered forever by Haussmann. The down below of the city under transformation, the tumultuous space of Haussmann’s boulevards, is held in contrast to the view from Nadar’s balloon, where the “detached soul” was able to perceive “an infinite voluptuousness of silence,” “a sense of complete detachment” and “real solitude.”30 Nadar’s solitude and detachment is achieved through separation that applies to the uneasiness and disquietude of Haussmann’s Paris: “the traveler who arrived yesterday in a strange city.”31

The past when compared to the present reveal an absence of spatial recognition, for although Nadar writes propitiously of the city and modern life, he strives without success for panoramic resolution. This he is unable to grasp. Nadar writes “we will finish by finding the heart of this place,” yet he is not able to realize a mastery over the cityscape: “It is no longer Paris, my Paris that I know, where I was born,” and as he

31 Ibid., p. 177.
continues I no “longer know how to find myself in that which surrounds me.”³² For Haussmann’s Paris was, according to Nadar (and others of his intellectual circle), a “transformed, confused Paris...(where) all is changed, upset, ideas, things, even names.”³³ Nadar is unable to successfully chart the modern space of the city, or successfully remember the old.

The sublime is an aesthetic of the unknown, a space governed by undesignated size and power, and its threat is psychosomatic, or both a physical and metaphysical condition. Nadar’s description of Paris is in opposition to the space of the panorama. What remains is an unresolved absence, or a discordant lack of reality. The role that memory plays in Nadar’s bird’s-eye view from his balloon—loss remains an “unrealized presence”—is in contrast to Barthes’ description of the high view from the Eiffel Tower. Barthes’ pleasure of looking is able to recognize the city of Paris as buffeted by the “mystery of time.”³⁴

Barthes becomes an advocate of the high view by not necessarily seeing a new landscape, but a new perception of space where decipherment “engages the mind in a certain struggle...we must find signs within it.”³⁵ For Barthes the high view of the Eiffel Tower joins space and place to memory through visual “decipherment,” and this is Barthes’ term of mapping space. Perception taken as a “modest glance” in Barthes’ words locates signs of identification and identity. But if this is a mastery of space, the space recognized is an ongoing “mutation of the landscape,” not an abhorrence of space (closer to Nadar), but more so an abstraction that bypasses imminent power, and returns again to the sensibility of Barthes’ concept of pleasure and memory, thereby joining the present

³² Ibid.
³³ Ibid., p. 178.
³⁵ Ibid., p. 10.
with the past. For the high view provides an “astonishment of space” which “plunges into the mystery of time,” for it is “duration itself which becomes panoramic.” 36 Barthes positions the Eiffel Tower as structure, sign and symbol, and these are experienced through the viewers’ own history, and for Barthes this encompasses French writers and his own memories of space and place. But the view from the Eiffel Tower taken as a historical reading over time, as Barthes does, is not consistent with just recognition of physical space, rather ways in which perception and visuality are historically governed and framed.

Panoramas, universal expositions, Manet’s allegory of the view

Panoramas and universal expositions had their origins in Britain; then each moved to Paris, gaining increasingly in size and popularity. Soon panoramas and world expositions took place in Europe and North America. Britain initiated the first international exhibition in London by opening in 1851, the Great Exhibition of Works of Industry of All Nations. The exposition was held in Hyde Park in the specially constructed Crystal Palace, a large iron structure covered with a transparent skin of glass. Britain was the most advanced industrial nation in the mid-nineteenth century, and this first world exhibition demonstrated its increasing economic prosperity that was dependent on overseas resources and trade, for “Greater Britain” was to include imperial gains within home rule: “Empire was to be “naturalized” for the British public...Popular pride in empire must be viewed as an emotion...artificially generated to facilitate governmental policy abroad...Empire was

a commodity." The first half of the nineteenth century has become increasingly characterized by international economic expansion, and keeping in step with this growth of capital the international exhibition set out to display "the industry of all nations," a process concurrent with the escalating drive and success by a few countries to control all the world markets. This overall placement of British colonies in the "Empire" was displayed to simultaneously "glorify and domesticate empire."38

A nineteenth-century document recognizes the universal exposition by connecting the exhibitionary "process of inspection" as advancing capitalism "to bring the leading men in manufactures, commerce and science into close and intimate communication with each other." This would establish: "intelligent supervision...and let the whole world be invited to assist in carrying forward the vast scheme of human labour which has hitherto been prosecuted at random and without any knowledge or appreciation of the system which pervaded it."39 Conditions of industrial capital were never far from the universal expositions, and this included not just the conditions of empire, but securing the stability of labour conditions at home. Walter Benjamin comments on the pedagogy of these displays: "Proletarians were encouraged by the authorities to make the 'pilgrimage' to these shrines of industry, to view on display the wonders that their own class had produced but could not afford to own, or to marvel at machines that would displace them."40 The exhibitions understood their central audience to be the growing middle and

38 Ibid., p. 54.
lower classes; the masses proper were deemed to be the preferred beneficiaries of learning. This was also the audience for the panorama.

The first French Universal Exposition was held in Paris, in 1855, and was a cultural, economic and political response to the Great Exhibition of Works of Industry of All Nations held four years earlier in London. Then the second French Exposition in 1867, also held in Paris, followed the 1862 British International Exhibition. Other international exhibitions had been held in the intervening twelve years, Brussels in 1857, Algeria in 1862, Dublin in 1865. However, France considered England its chief industrial rival, and its chief competitor in resources and trade; each sought to establish and retain conditions of imperial capitalism abroad. This booster culture of progress joined the synoptic high view of the panorama to culminate most famously and enduringly with the Eiffel Tower designed and constructed for the 1889 World Exposition in Paris. At its construction the Eiffel Tower was the largest building in the world. The city “presented itself as the imperial capital of the world, and the exhibition at its centre laid out the exhibits of the world’s empires and nations accordingly.”41 And a panorama of the city of Paris stood at the centre of the exhibition grounds, which had been built in the centre of Paris.

The panorama as a visual apparatus, along with the other exhibitions of display, from universal expositions to the new public museums, are to be understood in relation to new capital, new class systems and institutions where power resides in representation through a combination of detachment yet close attentiveness, the conditions that support “objective” perception. Simmel describes a comparative situation:

41 Timothy Mitchell, p. 8.
The development of modern culture is characterized by the preponderance of what one may call the ‘objective spirit’ over the ‘subjective spirit’.... he can cope less and less with the outgrowth of objective culture...The individual is reduced to a negligible quantity, perhaps less in his consciousness than in his practice and in the totality of his obscure emotional states that are derived from this practice. The individual has become a mere cog in an enormous organization of things and powers which tear from his hands all progress, spirituality, and value in order to transform them from their subjective form into the form of a purely objective life.42

These disparities correspond to the published reports describing the world expositions by Egyptian visitors during the nineteenth century:

These accounts devote hundreds of pages to describing the peculiar order and technique of such spectacles—the curious crowd of spectators, the device of the exhibit and the model, the organization of panoramas and perspectives...the systems of classification, the calculation of statistics, the lectures, the plans and guide books—in short the entire machinery of what I am going to refer to as ‘representation’: everything collected and rearranged to stand for something, to represent progress and history, human industry and empire; something set up, and the whole set-up always evoking somehow some larger truth.43

Mitchell’s analysis of the subjective and the objective is directed to discovery the terms of “some larger truth”: the apparent realism of the exhibits, their organization around a central point, and the position of the observer at a common centre, often a designated point of view, which was often a high vantage point. Mitchell continues: “France, for example, would occupy the central place on the Champ de Mars surrounded by the exhibits of the other industrial states, with their colonies and other nations surrounding them in the proper order.” In the exposition guide for L’Egypte, la Tunisie, le Maroc et l’exposition de 1878 it is made clear that: “It is not on the Champ de Mars that one should look for the Egyptian exhibit...This is easily explained, for the country has no industry at all, properly

speaking.”44 Only the European order is reflected in the displays, and a guidebook describes exactly how the exposition is to be viewed.

A systematic rendering of objective visibility was carried over into the Paris Exposition of 1900, and organized spatially in terms of the recognition of France as a world power dominating over its major colonies of Algeria and Tunisia. The structures built to house the products associated with these colonies were situated between the Trocadero Palace on the Siene’s right bank and the Eiffel Tower on the left bank. The elevated view from the Eiffel Tower, from the north, revealed the colonial buildings embraced by the “two arms of the Trocadero’s ‘Neo-Islamic’ style façade”:

France’s North African colonies—indeed all of them—would appear to occupy a place within the nurturing and protective arms of the French nation, whose own identity would appear to be figured as assimilative, and thus supportive of the peoples and products that were contained and exhibited... Taking up the view from the opposite direction, looking south from the Trocadero towards the Exposition ground across the river, there is a markedly different morphology. The entire fairground is dominated by the Eiffel Tower, that gigantic technological feat of modern French engineering. Dwarfing all the colonial edifices like a colossus...its four great piers are grounded amongst the massed buildings of the colonial possessions. Appearing to have been built up on top of these buildings, the Tower, one might say, puts things (back) in a proper perspective.45

The World Expositions, the panoramas and the high view of the Eiffel Tower constitute a panoptic apparatus in terms of architectural and spatial configurations that designate power established by reordering representations of space. Foucault outlines architecture as becoming increasingly involved in problems of population, health and the urban question, at the end of the eighteenth century: “using the disposition of space for economico-

43 Timothy Mitchell, p. 6.
44 Ibid., pp. 8-9.
political ends.”  

At the same time this power was “meta-physical” as it operated through spectacular display. Walter Benjamin compares visiting world expositions to a “pilgrimage” and the experience takes on the metaphysics of a shrine: “It worked by creating an appearance of order... Power now sought to work not only upon the exterior of the body but also ‘from the inside out’—by shaping the individual mind.”  

Mitchell’s focus on orientalism as transcribed by world expositions operates as a discursive field where the optics of order were never far from political power, an approach which draws strong affinities from Foucault’s earlier spatial comprehension of power: “Tactics and strategies deployed through... demarcations, control of territories and organization of domains which could well make up a sort of geopolitics.”  

The world expositions significantly contributed to the revival of panoramas that by the mid-nineteenth century had begun to loose their early popularity. The Universal Exposition of 1878, held in Paris, incorporated a large painted panorama of the city, and this trend continued up until the Universal Exposition of 1900. The Universal Exposition of 1889, which included the newly constructed Eiffel Tower, featured at least seven different panoramas, one of which was a view of Paris. The world expositions as spaces of production of capitalism and its technologies, products and colonial networks contributed the same pedagogy of progress as did the representation of space of the panorama; each served to interpret and promote the latest in economic developments, for knowledge constituted power.

47 Timothy Mitchell, p. 94.
Panoramas were typically located at the centre of the world expositions, and were a new apparatus for remaking the public sphere and incorporating individuals within the new phenomenon of spectacular imagery representing the real. This imagery was soon brought closer to the development and promotion of capital growth. The passenger line Compagnie Transatlantique featured a panorama with an observation platform designed to look like the bridge of a ship, and the visitor imagined setting sail from Le Havre on a trade route crossing the Atlantic. An international petroleum company used the panorama structure to display maps of their major oil fields from around the world to show: “a series of interesting views...scenes from the United States and Caucasus...a wonderfully advanced state of development in our day.”

Soon after the daguerreotype process was announced in Paris in 1839, photography became an integral part of world expositions. Photography’s ability to combine the past and the present was assimilated into the exposition, and these were the same terms of modernity read through conditions of progress that were essential to the exposition model of display. For example, the exhibition displays focused on the utility of new innovative machines, the anthropology of the colonies of European powers, and the accumulation of commodities. As photography advanced into the expanding sphere of observation and classification, including new forms of record-keeping directly coupled to social control, photography as also the displays of the universal exposition both assumed a validating role as transparent means of representation. The daguerreotype introduced an unprecedented ability to reproduce detail and replicate not only how things looked to the human eye, but even more so to consider the camera as an apparatus operating in the realm of science,

49 Stephen Oettermann, pp. 171-173.
which was readily compared to the telescope and microscope, technologies also on display at the expositions.

In 1951 the San Francisco paper, the *Alta Californian*, praised a now-lost daguerreotype panorama by S.C. McIntyre, and announced that this photograph was “intended for the World’s Industrial Convention in London.”\(^5^0\) With similar plans to attain international importance through a sequence of daguerreotype images of the new city of Cincinnati, Ohio, a busy center of river-borne shipping—then the most western area of the United States—in 1848, the daguerreotype firms of Charles Fontayne and William Southgate Porter took a panorama of the city’s bourgeoning waterfront (fig. 5.1, 5.2, 5.3). In this “Daguerreotype of Cincinnati Taken From Newport, Ky.,” each sequential image measures 15.24 x 21.59 cm (6½ x 8½ in.). The daguerreotype records two miles of river frontage to identify this view as the gauge of its modernity. There are more than sixty steamboats; the daguerreotype provides sufficient detail for them to be identified by name. The panorama also shows the newly constructed station of the railway line, an important development of the same year. In 1851, this daguerreotype panorama was exhibited at the World Exhibition in London, and provided a “sort of proxy for its city’s claim to global importance.”\(^5^1\) These eight daguerreotypes sum up and carry forward the socioeconomic conditions traced earlier through early relations of cartography and art, prospects, and then the painted panoramas; within each are town- or cityscapes, mercantile activities represented through ships and schooners, and then the addition of the railway.

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Panorama photographs were central to promoting early globalization and creating a national and international profile, for similar to the displays at world expositions, panoramas of cityscapes put modernization and capitalist development on display, both home and abroad, depicting growth, but eliciting visual pleasure in localized terms of progress, and therefore demonstrating a desire for global expression in the name of capital and investment. If the buildings in which they were exhibited at the expositions were temporary, the photographs took on a more permanent ambassadorial role, open to continued distribution and broader circulation in order to stimulate investment in trade and industry, and in some cases tourism. The nineteenth-century middle class positioned the expansion of commerce as indicating advances in civilization, thus the imperatives of capitalist modernization could be joined in the display of international expositions as well as the representation of the city space of panoramas.

World expositions grew in size through ways that seemed inevitable in relation to world trade, and the implications of empire directed towards nationalism and technologies, resources and manufacturing. World expositions—measured through strategies, performance and fulfillment of technological innovation and capital accumulation—consistently strived to surpass the previous one in size and structure. The exhibition grounds extended over more acreage, buildings were larger and grander, and there were increasingly more machines and commodities to view. Panoramas followed suit. New technologies and industrial machines gave the Western world greater material gains, and these were articulated through social and moral channels ostensibly bought together as a measure of progress, often to be conceptualized quantitatively. Related to size is scale, and scale is not to be unquestionably associated with largeness. Scale is much more closely
associated with space and its epistemologies, such as the viewer’s experience and understanding of overview and detail, distance and proximity, which takes place when a city is pictured as a panorama.

Associated with this view is a sense of scale in determining representation, and concurrently how this space relates objectively to the outside world. Scale, in these terms, is clarified as specifically related to, but also relatively separate, from big. In these terms scale is the integral factor, whereby the realism of the model is able to stand in for reality. Scale itself can be considered a central feature of spectacular visibility, for as viewers marveled at the increasingly extravagant display or illusion, each panorama or world exposition was proclaimed the best. Therefore, it was often ascertained, that because it was bigger it was also better, and, therefore, in spectacular terms, visual pleasure became quantifiable because it was equated in similar terms of better because it was bigger. And as its final achievement came to be described through terms of scale, the conditions of size—the bigger the better—were also considered in increasingly finite terms; because this one is so big, can it be bigger, and therefore will this be the last! The Louisiana Purchase Exposition, “The Greatest Exposition the World has Ever Seen,” was held in 1904, and was by far the largest ever held, the most expensive and at 1240 acres the exposition almost doubled the previous one. Over 200 acres was given to exhibition space; a prominent section of the display area, and the most controversial, was the “Philippines Reservation,” a 47-acre display featuring nearly 1200 Filipinos.

Just as in the extraordinary large globe built for the 1889 World Exposition in Paris, panorama photographs also grew in size employing the same impulse to construct a mimetic “reality” of representation that accumulatively resulted in astonishing scale. As
the final panorama print was largely dependent on the technology of new cameras, this was a chief factor in the continued commercial success of the technological advances of panorama cameras, such as the Cirkut camera that I discuss in chapter 5. The panorama as a spatial overview operated under the taskmaster of spatially always wanting more; this is not to deny that cities were also becoming larger through industrialization and urbanization. Nevertheless, most “big” images were only a one-time experiment. In 1867, Charles Bayliss and Bernard Otto Halterman made a 914.4 cm (30 ft.) long panorama of Sydney using the wet-plate collodian process, and each glass plate was 104.14 cm x 152.4 cm (3½ x 5 ft.). But big beget bigger, and in 1904 a panorama of the Bay of Naples measured in all 152.4 x 1188.72 cm (5 x 39 ft.). The image was taken and printed by Neue Photogarphische Gessellschaft a photographic company in Berlin. The panorama was acclaimed by viewers at the St. Louis World’s Fair in Missouri, of the same year. Six negatives were made, each about 256.54 x 317.5 cm (8½ x 10½ in.), and then with an enlarging apparatus, using a single bromide photographic paper sheet, each exposure measured 152.5 x 203.2 cm (60 by 80 in.). To develop the multi-segment photograph the exposed paper was wound around a wooden wheel 182.88 cm (6 ft.) wide, with a diameter of 396.24 cm (13 ft.), and 426.72 cm (41 ft.) circumference. Specially constructed tanks, three in all, holding the processing solutions, moved on railway tracks, and were pushed beneath the drum, which was then lowered and turned. After the developing process was completed the final wash took place in a huge trough containing 3,000 gallons. All this took place outside at night.

Jorge Luis Borges' prose poem, "On Exactitude in Science," brings sardonic humour to cartographic ambition that seeks resolution in size, space and representation:

In that Empire, the Art of Cartography reached such Perfection that the map of one Province alone took up the whole of a City, and the map of the empire, the whole of a Province. In time, those Unconscionable Maps did not satisfy, and the Colleges of Cartographers set up a Map of the Empire which had the size of the Empire itself and coincided with its point by point. Less Addicted to the Study of Cartography, Succeeding Generations understood that this Widespread Map was Useless and not without Impiety they abandoned it to the In clemencies of the Sun and the Winters. In the desserts of the West some mangled Ruins of the Map lasted on, inhabited by animals and Beggars; in the whole Country there are no other relics of the Disciplines of Geography.53

This prose poem taken as a metaphor for the panorama's propensity for increasing in size refers to an increased potential for ordering and classification. But expansion is reversed and the notion of totality becomes a remnant, or ruin. The idea of spatial accretion matches up with capital accumulation in the panorama of the modern city. The pictorial emphasis on the art of cartography in Borges' fantastic naturalism of nature arrives not at scientific justification applied to the discipline of geography, rather "some mangled Ruins of the Map." To arrive at this discontinuity between space and place is a crisis in representation where both presence and absence remain contingencies within the new optical realms, technologies and capital exchange of modernity.

Borges imaginary geography deploys a space of illusion that is unable to grasp any immediate knowledge. Borges' ironic commentary on the science of mapmaking and its accountability of the real holds a material analogy to the painted panorama of the modern city, for panoramas represented not only the illusory real but circulated during the

nineteenth century to such an extent that they became frayed and worn out, and then discarded as a "relic" of an imaginary geography of city space.

Panoramas were produced and in significant numbers, and they followed the pictorial tradition of illustrating the view, already made familiar through prospect images of cities and towns. Although dependent on a sketch made in the exterior world what did change was the studio condition as the panorama reached for grander and readily grasped effects, many of them spatial. This cannot be considered within the terms of the traditional studio, rather the working space was closer to the introduction of the division of labour taking place in all aspects of the economy. Producing a panorama from start to finish was not a practice of optical scale associated with the historical studio setting. From the sketch to the finished painting, artists were hired according to different skills or areas of specialization, and took part in a production system that was closer to the model of the factory than to the conditions of the solitary artist in the studio. With painted panoramas the concept of the image began with a sketch, and latter the technical capacity of photography replaced the hand-drawn image. Each was largely a singular task, but the next stage, the production process essential to completing such an oversized painting, was managed with a team of assistants that resembled a systematized production line with each person in the assembly crew taking on a specific task, or specialization—the architecture, sky or marine component, for example, or just a designated area of a divided canvas.

In the earliest reception of the oversized painted panorama, the criticism of the image and its failure to be considered art was in part reliant on these studio factors, and the skills of the artists, not the size of the finished image. Simmel would have applied similar criticism to the panorama painter when he describes the increasing division of
labour as “retrogression in the culture of the individual with reference to spirituality, delicacy, and idealism.” When the public flocked to the panorama, in Simmel’s terms they themselves were lacking in “delicacy.”54 This was the common complaint that addressed the panorama in the nineteenth century by critics and artists. In 1806, the Dictionnaire des beaux-arts outlined: “The opinions of several harsh critics and connoisseurs were at first not very much in favour of this optical show. All the artists could see was an expensive scrawl amusing” to those of all ages, and that “perspective was well observed and that the objects represented were imitated faithfully.”55 The entry continues that despite the severity of these judgments, Barker’s exhibitions drew huge crowds when they were exhibited at home in London and abroad. The panorama was quite distinct from the fine art tradition.

Within the fine arts during the nineteenth century it was emphasized that industrial expositions followed in the tradition of the yearly Salon; any relationship of the world expositions to fairs or markets, or other commercial designations, was sharply avoided.56 The idea of furthering the concept of modernity, as a framework of giving value to progress, distinguished the smaller, early expositions of industry and trade, not yet “world” in character, by giving out medals and other honours by committee selection, in the tradition of the Salon’s appraisal of the “best” paintings and sculptures. The classical décor that was fabricated for the very earliest industrial displays was to situate technology, manufacturing and resources in a fine art tradition. In 1819 industrialists talked their way into holding the exposition, not international at this time, in the Louvre where relations between art and industry, or at least their representative displays, could be nurtured as

institutional closeness. This relationship between industry and art was viewed as replacing the former guild system that systematically had controlled the rights and monopolies to the handcrafting and marketing of art and craft, as well as early industry.

The early nineteenth century was also a pivotal time for the fine arts as the entrenched levels of authority, which had earlier justified and ranked the arts, history painting was primarily praised for its narrative capacity, was increasingly replaced by a capitalist driven market system with private dealers and commercial galleries largely frequented by the rising bourgeoisie, composed of the newly prosperous manufacturing and commercial class. Few artists were able to cling to government recognition or patronage in terms of commissions or sales. The coveted place for artists to show their work was in the Salon, and although the Salon preceded the expositions, and also took place during the years when there was no exposition in Paris, the Salon was reinvented in a newer and grander form with wider affiliations, in part because of consistent associations with the expositions. Political concerns rather than aesthetic associations were strongest in deciding the overall plan of the Salon. Conservative committees consistently attempted to place a limit on the acceptance of contemporary work, or art by living artists.

The moral and social implications of what was contemporary were suggested by the critic Jules Antoine Castagnary, who writing on the Salon of 1863, held in Paris, was able to both praise the “naturalists” for “putting the artist back into the midst of his era, with the mission of reflecting it,” and French society for producing “painting that describes its own appearances and customs and no longer those of vanished civilizations.”57 By referring to “vanished civilization” he is critiquing the academic

56 Patricia Mainardi, p. 16.
conventions of history painting that failed to move beyond the painterly conventions of preserving a seemingly unaltered past, but artists who engaged with contemporary subjects failed to find academic acceptance, and often a commercial market. Artists who took the depiction of the contemporary world usually failed to find a place in the Salon. The Salon of 1867 demonstrates conditions of academic acceptance and rejection of the pictorial practices of the contemporaries. Castagnary describes the rejection of over 2,000 artists from the 3,000 that had sent work. Emile Zola wrote to a friend: "the Jury...had thrown out all those who are taking the new road."58 Artists such as Cézanne, Bazille, Pisarro, Manet and Monet were refused, although Degas, Fantin-Latour and Berthe Morisot were accepted. Courbet wrote, “To exhibit is to find friends and allies for the struggle,” when he set up his own exhibition in a pavilion, as he had done previously in 1851.”59

T.J. Clark describes Impressionist painting as a craft tradition under “pressure,” and the “gravity” of breaking the rules. He moves beyond the new subject matter of painting as any objective recounting of new entertainments, or train stations. Rather he asks how this painting restructured its own procedures: “visualizing, resemblance, address to the viewer, scale, touch, good drawing and modeling, articulate composition,” and in doing so strives to decipher not just “social detail but social structure”: “Then, for a moment it may lay hold of the grammar of appearance in the culture at large, and the means of production and identity and difference—of self and other...freedom and self-awareness. Not just ‘spectacle’ and ‘class,’ in other words, but spectacle and class as specific forms of visualization.” He continues by providing a way to approach

58 Patricia Mainardi, p. 135.
59 Ibid., p. 141.
representation that goes beyond his “defense of specific aesthetic practice…that set of representations called “modernity” on painters who chose to take them up.”60 The newness of modernity, and how these conditions altered the experiences of everyday life, was also a condition of landscape and the modern city. The painting of “modern life” is then increasingly a situation of paradox: “obviously these painters had a fondness for their own time, yet there is also a sense of “detachment from the material with which they worked,” and this was the bourgeois world, that largely controlled to some extent the aesthetic and economic conditions of marketing their paintings.61 Each artist expressed their individual terms of communication and lived experience with this world, but overall the paintings are a symptomatic attempt to disrupt the conservative culture of the fine arts still firmly entrenched in the French academy, which held on the seemingly unaltered conditions of the past, and strived to continue to entrench these images in the Salon.

However, Impressionism also took up another way to view or comprehend modernity. Subject matter was pictured in aesthetic terms characterized by symptoms and experiences of detachment, or a distancing from modern life. Baudelaire, a friend to many of these painters, especially Manet, best exemplifies this critique of modernity with his antibourgeois sentiments that never stray far from the streets of Paris. In Baudelaire’s essay “The Painter of Modern Life,” written in 1863, modernity’s most striking aspect is a condition of immediacy, a spatial presence that can only be grasped temporally.62 Baudelaire writes: “Modernity is the transitory, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art,

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61 Ibid., p. xxx.
of which the other half is the eternal and the immutable.” The conservative selection of pictures for the Salon, of which I have spoken, are not justified in Baudelaire’s terms of “eternal and immutable”; looking to historical paintings “may be useful to learn how to paint,” but not to understand the “special nature of present-day beauty” which takes from the “transitory” and “fugitive” in the contemporary world. Modernity is located in the “contemporary” as the “new,” and cannot be compared to anything in the past. 63 Writing on “the heroism of modern life” in his essay on “The Salon of 1846” Baudelaire brings to further consideration “the eternal” and “the transitory” by defining them as “the absolute” and “the particular.” Eternal beauty is defined as abstraction for it is skimmed from the “surface” of no particular time and place, whereas the “particular” refers to a specific beauty, intrinsic to the temporal emotions considered as inseparable from transitory elements that marked the streetscape of modern life. 64

Manet, most astutely of all the nineteenth-century French artists, negotiated his paintings of contemporary life through an ambivalence of style and form, and expectation and meaning, comparatively drawing on conditions of the “transitory, the fugitive, the contingent,” the elements of modern life expressed by Baudelaire. Manet’s paintings were criticized in the nineteenth century as unfinished, chiefly because they went against academic brushwork, but Manet’s painterly techniques for expressing transitory elements provide also put forward an uncertainty in image-making that rubbed up against social mores, both accepted genres of how and what artists painted. Within the brushwork and subject matter of Manet’s pictorial composition spatial definition is evaded as his

paintings stand apart to exemplify evocative pictorial and social transformation rather than a capacity for resemblance.

Manet painted the *Universal Exposition of Paris, 1867*, an easel painting, and a painting that in its wide-view can be termed panoramic, 108 x 196.5 cm (42½ x 77½ in.), shortly before or after the universal exposition opened the same year. Manet selects for this painting the *official* viewpoint overlooking the exposition grounds, although he takes a slightly lower position on the Trocadéro hillside, which is situated on the opposite bank of the Seine River from the World Exposition. This high view was designated in official guidebooks and exposition prints, both would have been available for purchase at the exposition, and this was also the same high vantage point of the guidebooks accompanying key.65 Stylistically subversive in its spatial strategies, the painting dislocates the anticipated permutations of an expected panorama view, firstly the breaking up of both spatial distance and detail. How Manet approached this picturing of the exposition, and made clear that this was the subject matter by the title of the work, was above all physiological when he bypassed to some extent the shape and structure of the cityscape. What might at first appear as an arbitrary handling of paint is a format and application much more contingent on the temporal space of modernity as unsettled and unsettling.

Flatness as a feature of the picture plane, and as a substantial aesthetic form and quality of this painting becomes ever more poignant in its application for surface image and meaning when placed against the structure usually associated with a panorama. First introduced in the nineteenth century, and grasped as style, flatness increasingly became

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substance, or subject matter. Flatness is integral to Manet’s painterly strategy in the
Universal Exposition of Paris for it not only examines and subverts aesthetic
representation of oil painting and the cultural conventions of image making inclusive of
the popular panorama, but he extends this to the world expositions, which hold similarities
to the conditions put forward by the Salon, those same terms of middle class
conventionality that reject his paintings. Manet’s paintings also utilize the surface of the
canvas an approach to printmaking where the surface of the image is thrust forward as
etched plate or woodblock print; each are worked all over. Unlike the panorama this is
not following a tradition path, but a sustained critique.

Christopher Prendergast describes Manet’s painting Universal Exposition of Paris,
1867 as a “comedy, pantomime, a parodic echo of the ‘totalizing’ endeavour” leading to a
disconnectedness between viewers and city. The “totalizing endeavour” refers, of course,
to the large painted panorama, but this pictorial map has become through Manet’s
“unbinding” view a pictorial space that is an ironic manipulation that releases any stable
positioning, or expectations for a conventional format. The result is cognitive confusion
for this panorama view does not supply a visual record or decipherment, in Barthes’ terms:
“we must finds signs within...the quite intellectual effort of the eye before an object
which requires to be divided up, identified, reattached to memory.” How does this play
out in the perception of a “disconnected” vision that does not sustain panoramic structure?
Firstly, in Manet’s painting the pictorial composition is still: “seen panoramically,” but
then following this initial looking the condition of panoramic seeing lacks commitment to

66 Svetlana Alpers, The Vexations of Art: Velazquez and Others (New Haven and London: Yale University
67 Christopher Prendergast, p. 72.
68 Roland Barthes, p. 10.
the “presuppositions” and “aspirations” of the panoramic view... as a place which doesn’t add up, which doesn’t mean much any more.”69 By saying that the picture, or in fact the view, doesn’t “mean much any more” is to declare the image a blague that resembles, but does not answer to the deciphering demands of pictorial space that Barthes defines as the “intellectual character of the panorama.”70

The astutely critical Parisian Goncourt brothers sanctioned blague as a modern ironic form. Comparing blague to “the Parisian revolt of disillusionment, the light and boyish formula of blasphemy...impious and charivaresque, of universal doubt and national pyrrhonism; the blague of the nineteenth century, that great destroyer, that great revolutionary, that poisoner of faith, killer of respect.”71 Manet was greatly at ease with “popular” turns of phrase and he employs the term blague in his brief writing on his art. Irony is a rhetorical figure that is both mocking and serious. According to the nineteenth-century theorist of rhetoric, Pierre Fontanier, irony is a trope that “seems to belong most particularly to gaiety; but anger and contempt also use it sometimes, even to advantage; consequently it can enter into the noblest style and the gravest of subjects.”72 Manet writes in the first person: “Manet has never wished to protest, It is rather against him who did not expect it that people have protested.” These words ring hollow, suggests Linda Nochlin, noting the strident affronts to public sensibility in paintings such as Déjeuner sur l’herbe or Olympia. Nochlin suggests not enough attention has been given to Manet’s ironic put-

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69 Christopher Prendergast, p. 72.
70 Roland Barthes, p. 11.
ons, or *blagues*: “a favorite form of destructive wit...pictorial versions...to destroy all serious values, to profane and vulgarize the most sacred verities of the times.”  

T.J. Clark writes of this painting as: “a separate something to be looked at—an image, a pantomime, a panorama.” The pictorial elements of this painting are described as “approximate,” but “not vague” to give credit to the view as demonstrating some aspects of meaning elicited as a panorama view: “the strollers on the hill would not settle for vagueness; their minimum requirement is that Paris had landmarks, which is not just the city below, but the society, the Parisian types in the foreground, even when recognized as a tableau not quite formed.” But there is more to this description than a parody of the popular panorama painting, or all the other trappings of panorama space that the image references, the designated viewpoint, the guidebook, and the exposition itself with its own panoramas, and here I would include a commentary on the staffage which identifies the eighteenth century prospect. Clark continues: “This is all Haussmann’s doing...it is how the imperial city was supposed to present itself...Three months before, the exhibition organizers had decided that the Butte de Chaillot was ‘irregular’ and wild... the view lacked harmony. The exhibition officials ordered the baron to lower the hill by twenty feet or so and make its profile less untidy.” These principles of harmony realized through spatial connectedness and points of view were integral to Haussmann’s urban planning, not just the totalized whole of the painted panorama. It was also the rationalized harmonious perspective that the Goncourt brothers had lamented a few years earlier in 1860: “These new boulevards without sinuousness, without the unexpected perspective,

74 T.J. Clark p. 62.
75 T.J. Clark, p. 60.
implacably straight." The city conceived as spectacle is also where the desired visibility is secured by the last minute "improvements" of lowering a hill, and where "that twenty feet makes all the difference." Manet's answer is to render the panorama as equally form and dissolution, style and displacement.

The city as spectacle is a temporal space seemingly available to all, and where transparency and accessibility evolves into sightseeing that take place "down below," and partake in opening up areas of the city to categorization and inspection. The cultural manifestations of the spectacle also contribute to open up the city spatially through other "entertainments," such as tours through the sewers and the morgue: "It (the morgue) is nothing but a spectacle a sensation, permanent and free, where the playbill changes everyday."77

The image of the panorama identifies the cityscape spatially and temporally as a form of capital accumulation, both materially and symbolically it visualizes prosperity and progress. Therefore how the city is to be perceived; how it is to be consumed. The image of the city as a panorama enters into representation within which the observer is brought into a space generating self-regulatory activities, or through conditions of knowledge a power relationship is enacted and sustained. Crary has taken this subjection and applied it specifically to vision and the spectacle when he writes: "the spectacles of time and space, our physiological apparatus is again and again shown to be...prey to illusion, and, in a crucial manner, susceptible to external procedures of manipulation and stimulation that have the essential capacity to produce experience for the subject."78

77 Vanessa R. Schwartz, p. 59.
order generated by the panorama is an apparent record of accurate representation of the city, which spatially is embraced as an all-seeing mode, the high view, and also the detail of description that leads to the observers’ task of cartographic decipherment of forming an identity with the city. The spectacle interpreted in these terms is the introduction of a new optical realm in visual culture that cannot be separated from the forces of modernity, the spectacular condition that I have locate in the balloon aloft, panoramas and world expositions.

**Knowledge, power and constructed spaces of visibility**

In a footnote to the translation of Foucault’s book *Discipline and Punish*, Alan Sheridan raises the historical comparison between the panopticon and the panorama to question “was Benthan aware of the Panoramas that Barker was constructing at exactly the same period...and in which the visitors, occupying the central place, saw unfolding around them a landscape, a city...The visitors occupied exactly the place of the sovereign gaze.”79 When picturing the modern city as a panorama the view is mediated through panoptic principles that spatially enclose the city to enact conditions of knowledge through maintaining s view of representational order and spatial cohesion. When speaking of optical principles as a technique of making visible, Foucault writes of operating through a “surface of images...an accumulation and a centralization of knowledge; the play of signs defines the anchorage of power,” but this is not that “the beautiful totality of the individual is amputated, repressed, altered by our social order, it

79 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 317.
is rather that the individual is carefully fabricated in it.”\textsuperscript{80} This notation of “surface of images” is the very essence of the observers’ viewing relationship to the panorama of the modern city, and the relationship of the city as such an image itself then also ranges from “beautiful totality” to the “carefully fabricated.” Barthes reminds us that every society develops techniques of control through social and cultural knowledge in order to fix fluctuating signifiers and combat the uncertainty of modern representation.\textsuperscript{81}

Foucault’s application of discursive formations located in panoptic space—the power relations that he then designates as disciplinary mechanisms extending out to all areas of society—are extracted from the Panopticon, or Inspection House, specific architecture devised by Jeremy Bentham in 1787. At their origins panoptic principles of visibility arise from a definitive architecture and operative system dependent on a unique type of structure and specific spatial properties: “At the centre of this is a tower, pierced by large windows opening on to the inner face...The outer building is divided into cells each of which traverses the whole thickness of the building.”\textsuperscript{82} This structural concept of circular architecture with its multiple cells is contrasted by Foucault to an earlier public display of the body of the condemned, where the message of power is written differently: “The scaffold, where the body of the tortured criminal had been exposed to the ritually manifest force of the sovereign, the punitive theatre in which the representation of punishment was permanently available to the social body.”\textsuperscript{83}

In moving beyond this display of immanent physical force, Foucault states that he does not intend his treatment of the panopticon to be understood as less of an effect of

\textsuperscript{80} Ibid., p. 217.
\textsuperscript{82} Michel Foucault, “The Eye of Power,” p. 147.
power—a “dream building”—rather a technology of power now applied and diffused spatially through mobilization of “finer channels” of productive knowledge that takes effect through everyday agency and activity: “to ensure the circulation of effects of power through progressively finer channels, gaining access to individuals themselves, to their bodies, their gestures and all their daily actions.” Foucault continues: “power, even when faced with ruling a multiplicity of men, could be as efficacious as if it were being exercised over a single one.” Observation was then able to extend beyond the architectural model by encompassing the subjectivity of the individual and the “surfaces” of the social. 84 So also the panorama can be interpreted as an image of power, which is able: “to alter behavior, to train or correct individuals.” 85 Bentham’s project held utilitarian interest chiefly because of its provision, or its promise of being able to control the disorders of modern life, especially pertaining to the demographics resulting from the industrial revolution.

Foucault argues that the nineteenth century brought an increase in disciplinary approaches, which were increasingly to be considered institution. In other words the means for recording and controlling, and these were often linked to a technology of visibility. The panorama is one such application, when it is considered a space of exhibition that in providing for transparency, and legibility of how city space should be read, this brings with it degrees of normalization pertaining to capital development and growth. To advance this panoptic space as a “model” it is necessary to comprehend that power is not in the hands of one person, rather it is mechanism in which everyone is...
caught and nineteenth-century societies exemplify this by drawing up similarities and minimizing differences, and here the new mass cultural forms play a role.

Now in these terms, the panorama is an all seeing panoptic principle of transparency which constitutes a view of moral appraisal, and knowledge as a type of certainty about the city, and then when combined with visual pleasure this leads to accountability through ideal formulation. Then the city’s accumulation of capital, its growth and urban expansion becomes not only a disciplinary mechanism but a spectacular trope, or as more generally known, a booster image. This “initiation” of space manifests a “kind of superlative capital,” and the city is materialized through a “movement of accession to a superior order of pleasures.”86 How things are made visible connects spatially to how an individual is caught up in a power situation “of which they are themselves the bearers.”87 Connecting power to social and cultural forms lays the groundwork to connect the panorama with not only world expositions, but also new forms of display associated with the introduction of public galleries and museums.

Timothy Mitchell coined the term “exhibitionary order” to examine global conditions of imperial power enacted through world expositions.88 The “global hegemony of the West, economically and politically” is constituted through: “new machinery (for images of illusory reality) for rendering up and laying out the meaning of the world...the new apparatus of representation, particularly the world exhibitions, gave central place to the representation of the non-Western world,” and in doing so, the major colonial powers in Europe, were granted a means of manufacturing “national identity” leading to

86 Roland Barthes, p. 3.
87 Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish, p. 201.

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“imperial purpose.” 89 Mitchell’s analysis embraces space and vision, perception and representation as drawing from “imaginings” that range from how things are displayed, and consequently how things are seen: “Like the careful layout of an exhibition, this structure appeared as a framework within which activities could be organized, controlled, and observed…the same technologies of order created both a disciplinary power and a seemingly separate realm of meaning or truth.” 90 Foucault joins space with homogenous effects of power when he writes: “real subjection is born mechanically from a fictitious relation.” 91 Exhibitionary order describes provisionary spaces of regulatory constraint, conditions are not dependent on disciplinary modalities replacing all others, rather colonial power “required the country to be readable, like a book, in our sense of such a term,” and the same can be said about the frame or plan of an exhibition, “as something object-like…In other words it was to be made picture-like and legible.” 92 The colonizing nature of power was firmly located in world expositions, and the large oversized panoramas, as well as panorama photographs, was integrated within them. Contextually, principles of disciplinary institutions and forms, the panopticon as the model institution, generating a geometric order and generalized surveillance, was first devised for and built in colonial countries. 93

Cities themselves and images of cities do, in fact, sustain power relations as well as naturalizing them. In 1750, only two cities in Britain had populations over 50,000, by 1850, there were twenty-nine, and of the British population overall, nearly one person in three lived in a city with over 50,000 inhabitants, and these were not the ordered or

89 Ibid., pp. 451-452.
90 Timothy Mitchell, Colonising Egypt, p. xv.
92 Timothy Mitchell, Colonising Egypt, p. 33.
transparent (clean) cities of the panorama image, but cities overcrowded, dirty, lacking public services, and ravaged by epidemics and disease. Bentham’s panoptic formulaic nature was first directed at the uncertainty of these new populations and social practices: “Morals reformed—health preserved—industry invigorated—instruction diffused—public burden lightened…all by a simple idea in Architecture!”

Friedrich Engels undertook research to record and interpret the condition of the proletariat after the rapid introduction of industrial labour in England, which together brought an increasing division of labour introducing new socioeconomic divisions marked by absolute poverty to extreme wealth. Engels’ mapping of views was a sociological study where advances in capital growth separated aspects of the historical past from the industrial present, and this is personified through the ships—the schooners and the steamers; symbolic objects at home in the realm of panorama space. Engels describes an overview of London by considering the city as a space of accumulative commercial capital that is exemplified by the “giant docks” and “countless ships”:

I know of nothing more imposing than the view which the Thames offers during the ascent from the sea to London Bridge. The masses of buildings, the wharves on both sides, especially from Woolwich upwards, the countless ships along both shores, crowding ever closer and closer together, until, at last, only a narrow passage remains in the middle of the river, a passage through which hundreds of steamers shoot by one another; all this is so vast, so impressive.

93 Ibid., p. 35.
94 Ibid., p. 47
He continues commenting that the viewer traveling up the River Thames is lost in the marvel of England’s greatness before he sets foot upon English soil. This is a metaphoric approach to a panoramic view.

Then after further industrialization, Engles describes the same view as “now a dreary collection of ugly steamers.” The view from a distance gave an entirely different picture; the maritime view was expansive and optimistic, but once walking through the streets of the capital “human turmoil” overtakes the viewer: “these Londoners have been forced to sacrifice the best qualities of their human nature…and still they crowd by one another as though they had nothing in common…The brutal indifference, the unfeeling isolation of each in his private interest…the more these individuals are crowded together, within a limited space.”

Between the picturesque conditions of the sailing schooners, and the smoke and grime of the sooty steamers were consecutive waves of industrialization that swept through England during the nineteenth century. Engles’ view is an historical dimension, or situation, which is comparatively panoramic in illuminating topographical distance, and then comparing this distance to a close up encounter of crowds on London’s streets.

**Connecting vision to space**

In the eighteenth and nineteenth century a great variety of optical instruments and diverse large structures, or types of visual apparatus were part of a larger revaluation of vision that was taking place just as industrial modernization was altering all aspects of everyday life. Science and art held overlapping interests that set out to interpret the mechanics and
aesthetics of Nature, and painters made use of the camera obscura, just as naturalists and astronomers made use of the microscope and telescope. The lesser-known Claude mirror was a convex tinted mirror with a reflected surface that moved beyond the camera obscura by articulating vision as increasingly fluid and abstract. Barthes writes of the high view from the Eiffel Tower as: “made natural by that glance which transforms it into space.”98 One way to assume a visual mobility was to yield to the line of the horizon. In panorama paintings, and very salient in the composition of panorama photographs, the horizon forms a distinct separation, which is generally a division by half, separating the built environment and the sky. Carousels, a new form of entertainment, also characterized this turning eye. The circular track of carousels can be seen as a symbol of a journey around a horizon, or the circular arc transcribed in the turning eye. This circular arc of the horizon line scanned multiple points of view, and in so doing so panorama image became a durational or traversed space.

The glance when associated with the horizon, and within this same optical realm, the mobile eye, is a spatial reckoning of what the eye can take in at a time whether through visually scanning the horizon, which is also references an embodied engagement with temporal space. This was the spatial vision that Robert Barker sought in his patent for the panorama when he referred to an enclosed circular space—employing a high view—but importantly defining a way of turning right around, or “Views of Nature at large.” This traversing view was increasingly abstracted through vision and space introduced by modern technologies of seeing, including modes of travel such as the railroad. In 1861, Benjamin Gastineau wrote of the “synthetic philosophy of the glance” to describe the

97 Ibid., pp. 36-37.
perception of the landscape from a train window or the illusions of the diorama: “the point of view every moment...all visions that disappear as soon as they are seen.”

Maxime Du Camp describes modern life as advancing ahead almost unmercifully swift, while the eyes are closed not to see, but rather the viewer is holding on to the past to retain an experience of authenticity, of validation. In other words, he asks in a tone of irony, what does the culture of progress enabled by electricity have to do with the mythic experience of Bacchus, the god of wine?

Everything advances, expands and increases around us....Science produces marvels, industry accomplishes miracles, and we remain impassive, insensitive, disdainful, scratching the false cords of our lyres, closing our eyes in order not to see, or persisting in looking towards a past that nothing ought to make us regret. Steam is discovered, and we sing to Venus, daughter of the briny main; electricity is discovered and we sing to Bacchus, friend of the rosy grape. It’s absurd.

In casting historical validation aside as “absurd” in an era of continual transformation, the proponents of new ways of seeing are advocating a similar task. Crary discusses how the singular cone of vision that directs the gaze of perspective is refigured and reconstituted by an increasingly dynamic and mobile modern world. He writes of vision perceived as a condition of “liberation”; now vision is located not as looking out, as a fixed geometric space, but space abstracted through the empirical immediacy of the observer’s body: “it belonged to time, to flux, to death. The guarantees of authority, identity, and universality...are of another epoch.”

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In a book written in 1743, describing principles of painting, Roger de Piles writes that “it is not proper to leave the eye at liberty to gaze at random; because if it should happen to be detained on any one side of the picture, this will frustrate the painter’s intention…Whence it follows that the eye must be fixed.”\textsuperscript{102} But he also writes that the convex mirror “improves upon nature as to the unity of the object in vision…the objects that are seen there with one glance of the eye, make together one whole.”\textsuperscript{103} The visual convexity of the Claude mirror incorporates a physiology of the human body; the embodied eye almost unconsciously tries out different vantage points. This is comparative to the abstraction of space and the structure of vision that takes place in the panorama, and other expanding technologies of vision during the nineteenth century. The Claude mirror was critically compared during both the eighteenth century and nineteenth century to the established geometric space of perspective, with the latter generally privileged: “They not understand how to make objects recede and turn into the distance by using an arrangement of parallel planes.” And this was the view that was soon to dominate architectural photographs. Unlike the sharp planes of perspective, the Claude glass made the entire painting have “the same spherical, mirroring effect, which amounts to representing objects the way the eye sees, which is absolutely false and ridiculous thing to propose.”\textsuperscript{104} Thus the academy clung to aesthetic and perceptual conventions of the fixed eye rendered through the geometry of perspective, and in so doing stepped backward from the technological conditions of mobility characterized by modernity and modernization.

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid., p. 88.
\textsuperscript{104} Abraham Bosse cited in ibid., p. 183.
These contingent principles of modernizing perception begin to directly influence the position of the observer in the nineteenth century: “what happens to the observer…is a process of modernization; he or she is made adequate to a constellation of new events, forces, and institutions that together are loosely and perhaps tautologically definable as “modernity.”105 The viewer in this exchange, between seeing, and what is seen, is both a product of modernity and an essential element of the space of modernity understood through perception that is a technological apparatus. Both the gaze and the glance are terms of vision, as well as visual analysis, and each represents an approach to achieve a point of view, which is a variable spatial system directly connected with vision. Martin Jay maximizes the diversity rather than separation between the gaze and the glance:

“Glancing is not somehow innately superior to gazing; vision hostage to desire is not necessarily always better than casting a cold eye; a sight from the situated context of a body in the world may not always see things that are visible to ‘high-altitude’ or ‘God’s-eye-view’.”106

Taken then not as separate but consistently interrelated aspects of vision and space, the gaze and the glance contribute as multiple and diverse points of view that constitute a means of achieving visual passage through the city. Vision is applied to temporal space within the ambience or atmosphere of the modern metropolis. Gustave Fraipont wrote in the nineteenth century: “It’s the freedom of gazes that rules in Paris and rules here alone…that turns the big city into a spectacle that is always lively, animated and

105 Jonathan Crary, p. 9.
joyous.”107 This “freedom” is the plurality of means and the newness of public spaces, and what this brings with it are the changes that take place when the observer is repositioned outside of the interior/exterior relations of the camera obscura. The freeing up of vision is this falling away of this traditional pictorial space: “falling away of the rigid structures that has shaped and constituted its objects.”108 This “freedom of gazes” takes place in the modern city through spectacle. This reshaping of vision and space applies to the ascent of the balloon, but also other forms of “liberation” to enter other realities within the various spaces of spectacle that arise in the nineteenth century.

Guy Debord’s formulation of spectacle is an instrument of unification, on the one hand, but also a visual space marked out by social separation and alienation. Debord describes the realm of spectacle as “the common ground of the deceived gaze and of false consciousness.”109 The panorama taken as a spectacle in Debord’s terms demonstrates a false relationship between individuals and the city, and individuals and each other, and this takes place within forms of illusory reality. The image as spectacle in these terms is a language of separation; he perceived totality is realized through the image space. Social indifference and exclusion are portrayed visually and spatially representing a discursive field where capital development has opened up spaces of class difference to shape public space as increasingly formed through economic inequalities and social exclusion. This is Haussmann’s Paris, and the space of the new boulevards. The streets represent estrangement; the space of the city cannot be known, but is contingent on the economic and social interventions of the public sphere.

107 Gustave Fraipont cited in Vanessa R. Schwartz, p. 13. The title of Fraipont’s book, from which the quote is taken, Paris, à vol d’oiseau, suggests that the city should be viewed from above.
109 Guy Debord, section 3.
As the public sphere itself is a productive space, the visual culture of early modernism is inseparable from the introduction of the new culture of consumption, which would link the situation in the café with the arcades or the world exposition, hence a very specific condition of viewing, and one that is class designated and class controlled. Pleasure in this context of a productive force is a circulatory condition, and one where power is equally productive, rather than a negative force:

If power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it?... (power) doesn’t only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it produces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body.110

Linda Nochlin describes Seurat’s 1884-86 painting *La Grande Jatte* as: “the most advanced stages of alienation associated with capitalism’s radical revision of urban spatial divisions and social hierarchies.” She continues: “the experience of living in the society of the spectacle... is the very fabric and structure of the picture.”111 The space of Seurat’s painting is a wide view, but not panoramic when understood as a fully realized topography of place, where vision would be dispersed through out. In the painting there is almost no interaction between the figures; this is also accomplished through the regularized dots—the pointillé: “The Western tradition of representation is here undermined... in these machine turned profiles, these regularized dots we may discover coded references to modern science and to modern industry with its mass production; to the department store with its cheap and multiple copies; to the mass press with its endless pictorial...

reproductions." In the painting each individual is regulated by a solitary inward gaze cut off from social relations with others, and vision remains segregated rather than spatalized throughout the pictorial plane.

This oil painting can be read as an allegory for panorama representation, although rather than picturing the city, or the park within the city, by taking a more subversive position the artist puts the focus on the new activity of leisure, itself a new form of spectacular vision. As an image of order and control, not preeminently of the environment, but rather the inhabitants, Seurat dehumanizes the space of the city proposing an inanimate, immobile and petrified place devoid of social interaction, where life is disembodied. Within this complex image the modalities between subject and object does not achieve the fullness of space that forms the panorama, rather it marks out a disjointed and uncomfortable relationship between industrial and urban space and the ever encroaching institutional control presiding over the individual.

This situatedness of the subject implies the nineteenth-century institutional formations of normalizing social power, and there were many. One of these I will introduce just briefly here for just as the viewer of the large painted panorama was engaging in a mobile and embodied vision, evoked through the glance, modern medicine was increasingly implicating and monitoring its subjects through scientific terminologies of the gaze. In *The Birth of the Clinic* Foucault refers to "the eye that knows and decides, the eye that governs" describing "the first attempt to order science on the exercise and decisions of the gaze." Comparing the science of the clinic to consistent entrenchment of natural history by depending on "visible characteristics," Foucault comments on "spatial arrangements, the number and size of elements: natural history took upon the task of

112 Ibid., p. 173.
mapping them.” He then continues by positioning the expanding institutional space of the clinic in relation to how things are made visible: “The clinic demands as much of the gaze as natural history...to a certain extent, the same thing: to see, to isolate features, to recognize those that are identical and those that are different, to regroup them.”

Another approach to thinking vision, visibility and legibility through in more detail is the entry of the archive into all forms of space and society, implying extensive systems of knowledge, and functioning as an increasingly potent form of power that involves spatial arrangements as much as tabulations of order, and therefore control over individuals through a visual means of recording. Next the photographic image enters into institutional forms and structures, and the body is sanctioned though knowledge inseparable through power relations, which contribute to a visibility of certainty, a positivism through a drive to conceive an apparent accuracy of representation, and therefore act as provision of evidence. This is exemplified, most graphically, in almost encyclopedic you-are-there detail at the “image factory” of the gaze overseeing and diagnostic control over the women housed in Salpetrière, France, with its indexical series of photographically illustrated publications the *Iconographie Photographique de la Salpetrière.*

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The realists among the modern photographers have done much to synchronize our vision with total experiences in other dimensions. That is, they have made us perceive the world we actually live in—no mean achievement considering the power of resistance inherent in acts of seeing. In fact, some such habits stubbornly survive. For instance, the predilection which many people show today for wide vistas and panoramic views may well go back to an era less dynamic than ours.¹

Anybody will be able to observe how much more easily a painting, and above all sculpture or architecture can be grasped in photographs than in reality.²

The invention of photography, views and the “skin” of the city

Panorama photographs appeared shortly after the daguerreotype process was announced to the public in August 1839. The pictorial genres of prospects and panoramas, images of broad sweeping views of towns and cities, which at the same time provided a precise representation of detail, were images well suited for adaptation to this new medium. Positioned within the history of early photography, panorama photography became quickly integrated into early innovative applications that defined the nineteenth-century contexts and discussions of the photographic medium in general, including photography’s early predilection for views, to which panoramas contributed.

The long exposure times of the early chemical processes required a subject that did not move. Architecture was the ideal object on which to focus the camera lens. But the point of view that turned to architecture was also something more than a fitting

subject for the camera as a mechanical means of production that used new and hesitant technologies, when it came to capturing movement. Photographs from their origins were also not viewed individually, but considered through collective frameworks of observation and knowledge as applied to time and space, and this suited the introduction of the panorama photography. The verisimilitude of the photographic practice, its trace of the real, elicits certain conditions of viewing, perceiving and mapping city space, on the one hand. Then, on the other, these provisions for recording are a means to identify with the city, eliciting a type of belonging and taking visual pleasure in this identification. In doing so, the panorama photograph articulates an image reliant on ideal and real terms, for while the photograph in conventional use refers to a record of fact, or verisimilitude, this truth to reality is also bracketed by other conditions of perception and understanding.

Earlier chapters have considered the panorama view as a convincing and authoritative pictorial form produced through printmaking and painting. These views, with their cultural history of topographical surveying have been discussed as extending as far back as the fifteenth century. A close association with printmaking marked the early years of photography—the daguerreotype began to replace a hand-drawn sketch, and this was the only way a copy could be made of a daguerreotype—over all, in terms of presenting “reality,” a view photographed is quite different from a view etched or engraved. Roland Barthes writes, taking his starting point from the nineteenth century: “A specific photograph, in effect, is never distinguished from its referent (from what it represents)...It is as if the Photograph always carries its referent with itself, both affected by the same amorous or funereal immobility, at the very heart of the moving world: they
are glued together.” But this perceived identification with the real, this transparency of representation, “the instrumental mode,” also belongs to a “discursive space in which a particular photography could be made to operate.” This is John Tagg’s characterization of the entry of photography into institutionalized applications, with the result of positioning photography as transmitting an authoritative instrumentalism: “impartial, objective, clean, compelling and modern.” Comparatively, the city immobilized in a panorama was perceived as providing for these same characteristics.

The French physicist Gay-Lussac outlined unstinting praise for photography in a speech six weeks after the daguerreotype gained support from the French Chamber in Paris: “Everything that leads to the progress of civilization, to the physical and moral well-being of man, ought to be the continuing goal of enlightened government…. (that) must rise to meet the fates of the citizens that are entrusted to it.” Photography was quickly aligned with the rise of the bourgeoisie and its institutions, which also attracted many of the artistic elite, defining the role of photography as a significant purveyor of the idea and the ideal of capital progress. This was the production of pace already occupied by the panorama, and the panorama photograph proceeded therefore to contribute an even more significant role of making capital discernible in terms of being seen, recognized and understood, and therefore accepted within certain criteria of modern life. Because this took place in the panorama form through conditions supporting a commonality of

recognition—an all-embracing and all seeing space, the presence of capital was confirmed and made acceptable within the modern city.

A panorama photograph is a space of representation with three-dimensional objects now interpreted as two-dimensions, and has aptly been called—through drawing from its recognized synoptic field—“skinning the city.”6 The “skin” of the city aims to articulate a trace repository of information or physical record, or even photography as a deposition of “matter itself.”7 But when Oliver Wendell Holmes, in his essay “The Stereoscope and the Stereograph,” written in 1859, speaks of “form” as “henceforth divorced from matter,” he strives to interpret how the trace or material conception of the photographic image, or the material space and surface of architectural structures, are now rendered in new epistemological terms: “Every conceivable object of Nature and Art will soon scale off its surface for us. Men will hunt all curious, beautiful, grand objects...for their skins.” For Holmes the skin is a form and space of representation unforeseen in any previous medium. The consequence of this new means of mechanical reproduction is the resulting “enormous collection of forms” that will now be classified and arranged in archives; the “man who wishes any object...will call for its skin or form” as he would a book in a library.8 Shedding skin in the analogy to the animal world is a transformative process that takes place over time; in photography the stopping of time enables spatial coordinates and material conditions of one moment to be viewed as a whole, as well as detail. This is the skinning of the city in a panorama photograph.

Early photographs and the predilection for views

Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre describes the daguerreotype just after it was released to the public: "any idea of drawing, without any knowledge of chemistry and physics...to take in a few minutes the most detailed views...is not merely an instrument which serves to draw Nature; on the contrary it is a chemical and physical process which gives her the power to reproduce herself." The daguerreotype was a positive image on a small metal plate, 8.5 x 11.7 cm (3 x 4 1/2 in.) with a mirror-like silvered surface providing an "unimaginable precision" of detail: "accuracy of the lines...the nicety of the form...a broad and vigorous modeling as rich in tone as it is in effect." Although Daguerre named the daguerreotype after himself, he had earlier collaborated with Joseph Nicéphore Niépce, who died before the announcement was made. As early as 1826, Niépce used modified lithographic techniques to fix an image from the camera obscura, although the image remained faint, as the etched metal place was shiny and the picture very much underexposed.

When working on his first experimental images, Niépce used the term "points de vue," which was also the term found in letters to his son Isidore, his brother Claude, the engraver Lemaitre, and his partner Daguerre: "His correspondents used the term when replying...Everywhere the difference between ‘points of vue’ and ‘copies de gravures’ is

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11 Gisèle Freund, Photography and Society (Boston: David R. Godine, 1980), p. 22. "Lithography, invented in 1798 by Alois Senefelder and introduced to France a few years later by Philippe de Lasteyrie (who set up a studio in Paris), represented an important step in the democratization of art." p. 4.
emphasized. When speaking of his brother’s attempts to fix images, Niépce wrote in 1824 that “you are determined, my dear friend, to occupy yourself principally with views of landscape in preference to copying paintings,” and in the same year his brother wrote back: “I have succeeded in getting a picture from nature (point de vue) as good as I could desire.” When describing, in a letter to Daguerre, on 4 June 1827, his inadequate results with the views taken looking out from his studio window at a courtyard scene, Niépce writes: “I shall take them up again today because the countryside is in the full splendor of its attire and I shall devote myself exclusively to the copying of views.” But “copying,” it is worth noting, is the process designated to the action of the camera taking an image, or realizing a view, and view was used rather than landscape. These terms of realizing and describing an image contributes on a specific epistemological level to early photography by bringing the mechanical process to the forefront, and largely detaching and denying the notion of authorship or artist. Rosalind Krauss recognizes early photography’s notation of the delineation of views as pictures of nature, when she writes that this gave emphasis to: “the natural phenomenon, the point of interest, rises up to confront the viewer.”

It was the genesis of photography as a mechanical system of recording and representation that ensured this designation of view, but while view encompassed a naturalism that was also equated with science, the photographic image as a form of picture making, was not entirely remote from the more traditional principles of the picturesque image, or the topographical qualities of the printed prospect, as well as the

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12 Georges Potonniée tracing the use of these terms is cited in Geoffrey Batchen, p. 70.
popular and wide-spread cultural currency of visual pleasure invested in the spatial illusions of the panorama and diorama. Photography, in general, and panorama photography specifically, was involved, one could almost say indulged, in pictorial traditions of forms and styles able to align this new mechanical means of image making with representation that would legitimize its entry into picture-making. Lady Elizabeth Eastlake, a writer and translator, and wife of Sir Charles Eastlake, first president of the London Photographic Society, described in 1857 the “business” of photography “to give evidence of facts.” In praising photography as an unprecedented recording device, its visual imagery was associated with the emerging mass culture of the nineteenth century, separating art as appraised and appreciated by only a few:

The debt to Science for additional clearness, precision, and size may be gratefully acknowledged...She is made for the present age, in which the desire for art, resides in a small minority, but the craving, or rather the necessity, for cheap, prompt, and correct facts in the public at large. Photography is the purveyor of such knowledge of the world. She is the sworn witness of everything presented to her view...facts which are neither the province of art nor of description, but of that new form of communication between man and man. 15

This “new form of communication” was unselective in its composition leaving that for the domain of art, as explained by Eastlake, but she recognizes photography’s currency, cultural value and the importance of the medium for transmitting knowledge. The photograph soon began to be characterized by its own terms of visibility, its own spatial uniqueness and representation of detail within temporal space: “the facts of the age and the hour are there, for we count the lines in that keen perspective of telegraphic wire, and read the characters on that playbill or manifesto, destined to be torn down on the

morrow,” and, in fact, the “view of the city” that she ascribes to photography is “deficient in those niceties of reflected lights and harmonious gradations” that art takes into account.\textsuperscript{16}

Baudelaire, as a prominent critic, writing the same year, would also gloss over the eager reception of photography, largely the photographic portrait, by the masses, putting such eagerness down to their “stupidity,” and then praising most highly photography’s “absolute material accuracy” as a science of record keeping, copying and interpretative pedagogy:

Let photography quickly enrich the traveler’s album, and restore to his eyes the precision his memory may lack; let it adorn the library of the naturalist, magnify microscopic insects, even strengthen, with a few facts, the hypotheses of the astronomer...be the secretary and record-keeper of whomever needs absolute material accuracy for professional records...Let it save crumbling ruins from oblivion, books, engravings, and manuscripts, the prey of time, all those precious things, vowed to dissolution...in all these things, photography will deserve our thanks and applause.\textsuperscript{17}

He continues stating that photography must not “be allowed to impinge on the sphere of the intangible and the imaginary,” on anything that is valued as art.\textsuperscript{18} These were ways of articulating photography as a recording apparatus with applications entirely suited to be utilized in the panorama format.

Just a few weeks after the announcement that Daguerre’s process was made available for public use in France, William Henry Fox Talbot published an account, in England, of his invention of “Photogenic Drawing.” His first images made four years earlier, and known as the calotype process, were faint although decipherable as images

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., p. 65.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.
from a camera obscura. Talbot is usually given credit for photography as we have come
to know it, as a negative-positive process that used a paper negative able to be printed out
using various techniques and papers. Talbot published, between 1844 and 1846, the first
book illustrated with photographs, *The Pencil of Nature*. Talbot without the artistic
training of many early photographers, became interested in fixing the image of the
camera obscura while lamenting his lack of “previous knowledge of drawing” when
vacationing on the “lovely shores of the Lake of Como in Italy,” and “taking sketches
with Wollaston’s Camera Lucida.”19 When publishing *The Pencil of Nature* he clearly
sets out to separate his new photogenic drawings from earlier engraved images, writing
that photography is directly “impressed by Nature’s hand,” therefore setting out an
aesthetic direction of the book, and it is worth noting that Talbot was above all a scientist
by education.20

Talbot writes a descriptive commentary on each of the views or still-live images.
In Plate II “View of the Boulevards at Paris” he describes where the viewer is situated,
making it clear to define the sensibility of being on the spot, or marking out the
observation point which is a primary characteristic of the panorama. He then advances
further into art and science as he sets out the timeframe as to when the photograph was
taken, notes the weather and maps out aspects of what the viewer is to see:

This view is taken from the upper windows of the Hotel de Douvres, situated at
the corner of the Rue de la Paix. The spectator is looking to the North-east. The
time is the afternoon. The sun is just quitting the range of buildings...The weather
is hot and dusty...A whole forest of chimneys borders the horizon: for the
instrument chronicles what it sees, and certainly would delineate a chimney-pot or

20 Ibid., unpaginated, “Introductory Remarks.”
a chimney-sweeper with the same impartiality as it would the Apollo of Belvedere. The view is taken from a considerable height, as appears easily by observing the house on the right hand; the eye being necessarily on a level with that part of the building on which the horizontal lines or courses of stone appear parallel to the margin of the picture.  

Talbot comments on the photograph as equalitarian, or democratic in its inclusiveness by recognizing the contingency of the image. Familiar detail is recognized through photography's debt to science, and the high vantage point reaffirms the panorama view of "a whole forest of chimneys (that) border the horizon." In other views he continues to offer a comparative mapping of temporal space. The mapping or spatialized charting of these conditions links up with art of the past to gain aesthetic verification and a buffer of respectability. The photograph, *The Open Door*, shows a broom placed by the partially open stable door on Talbot's estate, and the image is aligned in the accompanying text to Dutch painting, a genre collected in England during this time:

> We have sufficient authority in the Dutch school of art, for taking as subjects of representation scenes of daily and familiar occurrence. A painter's eye will often be arrested where ordinary people see nothing remarkable. A casual gleam of sunshine, or a shadow thrown across his path, a time-withered oak, or a moss-covered stone may awaken a train of thoughts and feelings, and picturesque imaginings.  

Talbot seeks to examine and equate the photographic image with not just its recording ability, but reference to the history of art. In the analogy to Dutch painting both science, including mapping principles of geography, and art claim a sensibility of detail. In

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21 Ibid., unpaginated, "Plate I, View of the Boulevards at Paris."
22 Ibid., unpaginated, "Plate IV. The Open Door."
linking the science of photography with aesthetic criteria of picture making he also transfers the authority and legitimacy of Dutch painting, and its then popular status in England, to the vernacular image located in his own pictorial work. He does imply that the photograph is not separate from other forms of representation, in this instance, the pictorial history of art. He describes in the text, as this is a move away from the historical, the necessity to “awaken” aesthetic sympathies, “thoughts and feelings” arriving at “picturesque imaginings.” Talbot’s texts are importantly very much circumscribed as time-based in their concern with topographical description, for example, he mentions a “shadow,” and other elements of temporal seeing, but he primarily seeks affirmation of the photographic image through pictorial precedents from the past.

In a disputed, but much traveled exhibition of paintings and photographs, Peter Galassi proposed the pictorial aesthetic realm as significantly influential in the development of photography, and in doing so he supercedes the more established allegiances to science, the camera obscura and nineteenth-century ongoing experimentation in chemical applications:

In a sense the (nineteenth-century) critics were right on both counts. Photography recorded not the physical reality before the lens but its visible aspect, determined by a specific point and scope of view, at a particular moment, in a particular light. The description was seamless, but only in two dimensions. The photographer ignored this fact at his peril, risking obstructions and discontinuities, fortuitous juxtapositions, and unexpected densities and gaps in spatial logic...Like the landscape sketches but on a much broader scale, the photographers had a mandate to seek the specific and provisional in place of the general and didactic.24

reinforced by the new experimental science and technology, confirmed pictures as the way to new and certain knowledge of the world...visual experience was a central mode of self-consciousness.” p. xxv.

According to Galassi the photographic image is not the physical reality placed before the lens, but its “visible aspect,” determined by a “specific point and scope of view,” and this takes place at a “particular moment, in a particular light.” Placing the panorama image within this accountability of balancing reality off “visible aspects,” which are the conventions of the Western pictorial tradition, has engaged my inquiry throughout, and the panorama photograph is not to be set apart from the prospect, the oversized panorama painting, or other influential, but less overt influences. This is not to conflate the printed image and the photograph for each exist with their own representative qualities and visibilities during the nineteenth century, which set them apart through their noticeable differences. But in comparative goals and pictorial means, each of these forms provides information about a town or city, and the respective stages of capital and urban growth.

The scope of the view: form, composition and pictorial empathy

The copying of Nature in the first hand accounts of the daguerreotype aligns with nineteenth century naturalism where the optics of science connect to new means of legibility not available by the hand of the artist. In 1839 Samuel Morse, an artist and professor of arts and design at the University of the City of New York, viewed a number of Daguerre’s earliest daguerreotypes in Paris, and set out the terms of viewing by acknowledging that the photograph claimed exacting recording qualities which he linked to science, as well as its own inherently strong aesthetic qualities, naming the absorbing ability of the daguerreotype to document detail, and raising, as did Talbot a few year later, a reference to Dutch art:
In a view up the street a distant sign would be perceived, and the eye could just discern that there were lines of letters upon it, but so minute as not to be read with the naked eye... The effects of the lens upon the picture was in a great degree like that of the telescope in nature... The impressions of interior views are Rembrandt perfected... You perceived how this discovery is, therefore, about to open a new field of research in the depths of microscopic Nature... The naturalist is to have a new kingdom to explore, as much beyond the microscope as the microscope is beyond the human eye.25

Seeing “beyond the human eye” is to characterize photography as an advanced technology during the nineteenth century providing for “a new kingdom to explore.” The news of how the daguerreotype image could equal art—“Rembrandt perfected” rivaled the traditions of art by opening up conditions for both scientific and aesthetic responses to the meaning of this new imagery, and this provided the impetus for the news of the daguerreotype process to quickly spread through gatherings, newspapers, publications, and scholarly and popular lectures.

Morse was one of the many scientists and artists who attended the first presentation of the daguerreotype process, and later visited Daguerre in his workshop at the diorama. A high view image of a Parisian street was shown to Morse, and in a letter he describes the daguerreotype as a new image similar to engravings, except printmaking could not come near to showing the accurate detail: “exquisite minuteness of the delineation cannot be conceived. No painting or engraving ever approached it.”26 Morse was one of the first to make daguerreotype views of New York. When he returned from Paris to his New York studio he took a number of high views from his window and rooftop that were then described by a visitor: “Very clear, distinct views of Brooklyn in

the distance and the roofs of the foreground, taken from the top of the building in Nassau-
Street, were upon his table." 27 Feeling as if on the spot—as in Barker’s panorama
patent—is integrated into the photographic image not just through optics and composition
alone, but also within an established field of image making and the easily recognizable
and conventional elements of the recurring roofs and chimneys of the painted panorama.

To a significant degree, if the chemistry was new, the use of optics was not, for
since the fifteenth century there were innumerable other contrivances, both “mechanical
and lenticular,” that brought new terms of visibility to nature. 28 In Art and Photography,
Aaron Scharf explores how earlier writings on science and art foresaw and advocated the
camera. He cites the eighteenth-century writer and art patron, the Venetian, Count
Francesco Algarotti, whose influential book on painting was translated into English in
1764, almost prophesized the invention of photography: “we may well imagine, that,
could a young painter but view a picture by the hand of Nature herself, and study it at his
leisure, he would profit more by it than by the excellent performance by the hand of
man.” Although not yet invented, his description could fit the daguerreotype “as a picture
of inexpressive force and brightness; and, as nothing is more delightful to behold, so
nothing can be more useful to study, than such a picture.” He remarks on the “hand of
Nature” by noting “the justness of the contours, the exactness of perspective and of the
chiaroscuro, which exceeds conception.” Connecting art to science he continues:
“Painters should make the same use of the Camera Obscura, which Naturalists and
Astronomers make of the microscope and telescope; for all these instruments equally

contribute to make known, and represent Nature.” Scharf recognizes not just the better
known camera obscura in prescribing ways to represent Nature, but: “ambiguous
mechanisms described by Alberti...those fascinating framed grids and eye-pieces
illustrated by Durer, and ends with the incredible plethora of contraptions which poured
from the industrial cornucopia of the nineteenth century.”29 He sets out a long list, just to
name a few: the camera lucida, the graphic telescope, the periscopic camera, the solar
megascope, the physionotrace, and pantographic instruments. And, I will add, the
panorama if considered as an apparatus that utilized, over a period of years, a number of
gadgets and techniques to picture the modern city as both spectacular and panoptic space,
and as the site/sight of significant detail.

The reference to apparatus, also moves beyond its visual mechanics to Foucault’s
usage: “I understand by the term ‘apparatus’ a sort of—shall we say—formation which
has as its major function at a given historical moment that of responding to an urgent
need. The apparatus thus has a dominant strategic function.”30 Many of these devices
were also closely integrated into the relationship between art and cartography, a subject
that I explored in chapter 2, noting how early cartography held strong ties to both art and
science. The mapping of towns as prospects were as much a record of a survey as it was
an evolving pictorial style, hence my prior use of the term picture-map to encompass both
the fifteenth century woodblock print, the engraved prospect and the painted panorama,
also appearing as a print on paper. But photography with its significant attention to detail
eclipsed all early styles, devices and applied instruments.

29 Ibid.
30 Michel Foucault, “The Confessions of the Flesh,” in Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other
Support for the recording ability of the camera was also situated in the broader and dynamic impact of the scientific context of the writings of August Comte. His methodological organization of facts derived from observation established the certainty of physical evidence through a scientific naturalism: “Our real business is to analyze accurately the circumstances of phenomena, and to connect them by the natural relations of succession of resemblance.”31 By declaring observation as taking place within “natural relations,” comparatively the photographic image gains substance in its recording ability as an arrangement of facts within a coherence of form. Positivism’s accountability was to science, along with visual tools such as the microscope and telescope, and a scientific naturalism was easily assimilated by the chemically and optically produced medium of photography, especially its claim to “draw” nature: “Observation acquires a new extension...We can employ an artificial apparatus to perfect the natural sensations, and especially in the case of sight...such an apparatus helps us to a much better estimate of a structure whose least perceptible details may acquire a primary importance.”32 This passage has implications for panorama photography. The emphasis on the visual joins perception to structure and analysis, as well as certifying authenticity of the image.

To position photography as a recognizable image-space took place unconsciously through a cultural familiarity with the camera obscura and other apparatuses of seeing developed in the eighteenth century and earlier, and I would also add the historical lineage of the high vantage point that remained popular when photographing architectural views from windows and rooftops. Hubert Damisch examines the rapid acceptance of the photographic image by considering how elements of one medium move to another: “The

32 August Comte cited ibid., p. 58.
image that the first photographs were hoping to seize, and the very latent image which they were able to reveal and develop, were in no sense naturally given," but as he continues: "the camera was tied to a notion of space and of objectivity whose development preceded the invention of photography, and to which the great majority of photographers only conformed." But this does not mean that photography was not an astoundingly innovative approach to picture making: "something strange and new."

Walter Benjamin applies this approach to early photography by describing a "magical value that a painted picture can never again possess." He continues by granting the photographic image a new visibility: "It is a different nature which speaks to the camera than speaks to the eye: so different that in place of a space consciously woven together by a man on the spot there enters a space held together unconsciously."

Exploring further this condition of "optical unconscious," Benjamin continues: "photography opens up...physiognomic aspects of the world of images, which reside in the smallest detail, clear and yet hidden enough to have found shelter in daydreams."

Benjamin reference to "on the spot" and the separation of photography from a picture made by the hand of an artist does leave space to match up the fanciful or imaginary, even if materially grounded, or idealized, while also finding terms validating verisimilitude. Both the implicit confidence in the image itself and also its imaginary transference of this perceived visibility is demonstrated in the 1839 description of the daguerreotype, earlier cited, and the daguerreotype view that follows as the imaginary optical transference of a rooftop image from Paris to New York.

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33 Hubert Damisch, “Five Notes for a Phenomenology Of the Photographic Image,” in *Classical Essays in Photography*, p. 289.
Lewis Gaylord Clark, a New York editor and writer, interprets a daguerreotype of a high view overlooking the city of Paris, and then transposes this image to an imaginary view of the city of New York, a view not yet taken as a photograph, but idealized as a reflective imaginary space of pictorial form and verisimilitude:

We have seen the views taken in Paris by the 'Daguerreotype,' and have no hesitation in avowing that they are the most remarkable objects of curiosity and admiration, in the arts, that we ever beheld. The exquisite perfection almost transcends the bounds of sober belief...Let him (the reader) suppose himself standing in the middle of Broadway, with a looking glass held perpendicularly in his hand, in which is reflected the street, with all that therein is, for two or three miles, taking in the haziest distance. Then let him take the glass into the house, and find the impression of the entire view, in the softest light and shade, vividly retained upon its surface...There is not an object even the most minute, embraced in that wide scope, which was not in the original; and it is impossible that one should have been omitted. 35

This daguerreotype image constitutes an imaginary high view of New York, with a span of "two or three miles." This is an optical response to the high view ranging from "embraced in that wide-scope" and "impossible" that minute detail "should be omitted."

In grasping the photograph as an indexical trace, while noting further the photographic capacity for serial form, each view is distinct, but this citation suggests how a panorama image of a city can seem connected to another, no matter how separate. How does this transference so readily take place? Spatial qualities are similar and temporal conditions are guided by an accountability of the city as signifying progress, and this marks the necessary condition of realization, no matter how imaginary, between one image and the next.

Daguerre most likely took the image of the city of Paris referred to above, for his
dual chemical and optical process had just been publicly presented by Dominique
Francois Arago to an open session of the Academy of Sciences and the Academy of Fine
Arts on August 1839. In this first presentation, he advocates the recording impact by
remarking on photography as a time saver with economic advantages, mentioning how
these seldom go “hand in hand in the arts with the perfecting of production. He continues:

To copy the millions of hieroglyphics which cover even the exterior of the great
monuments...would require decades of time and legions of draughtsman. By
daguerreotype one person would suffice to accomplish this immense work
successfully...These designs will excel the works of the most accomplished
painters, in fidelity of detail and true reproduction of the local atmosphere. Since
the invention follows the laws of geometry, it will be possible to reestablish with
the aid of a small number of given factors the exact size of the highest points of
the most inaccessible structures.

The machine takes precedence and is given greater value over the hand-produced product
of human labour. Photography is not just a recording device, but immediately after its
introduction, photography began to influence how to picture the city, to set out a view
and to delineate through the camera’s recording abilities a confidence in the
verisimilitude of the camera. When science combined with art, or when verisimilitude
meets up with aesthetic and spatial illusion imbedded in compositional space, the viewer
is directed to, not only what to see, but how to see it. These factors influenced the
conditions of the introduction of panorama photographs.

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36 Praising this discovery as an “original invention” that will render “valuable service to archaeology and the fine arts,” the astronomer and scientist Dominique Francois Arago became Daguerre’s first and most active supporter. Daguerre and the son of M. Niepce received an annual pension from the State for “their process for the fixation of images obtained in the camera obscura.” Dominique Francois Arago, “Report” in Classic Essay on Photography, p. 15.
37 Ibid., pp. 17-18.
To illustrate by view

In 1851 the *San Francisco Daily Herald* solicited its readers to collect “the different engravings and daguerreotypes of the city taken at various stages of progress.” The article continues:

With the extensive immigration and increase of the inhabitants of this place, the outline of the city in every few months must necessarily vary considerably, but with the fires to destroy the parts built and still further alter the appearance, it is almost impossible for a resident to recollect some of the quarters, representations of which have been lately exhibited in the windows of daguerreotypists.  

The above encouragement to “collect” engravings and daguerreotype views of the city undergoing change due to “progress” and the consistent fires—which ravaged many cites during the nineteenth century, substantiates and authenticates capital and urban growth, giving their middle class readers not just “recollection,” but affirmation and substantiation as a kind of evidence or knowledge. The daguerreotype through "the stop-time of a photograph...gave people something, at least, to hold on to.” This is echoed in my earlier discussion of sketching a panorama of the Alps. The newspaper description positions city space as a site of collective memory evoking some of the now transformed quarters, recalling those that had lived there before and how the neighbourhood itself had changed. Roland Barthes also connects memory with historical time when he describes the view from the Eiffel Tower: “the knowledge you may have of Parisian topography...the elements are in front of you, real, ancestral, but nonetheless

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disorientated by the total space in which they are given to you, for this space was unknown to you.” 40 And the past never remains just that in a panorama view, rather it is always a view from the present.

In the mid-nineteenth century, the column was written in 1851, the city of San Francisco was transformed from a vast “urban warehouse” on the west coast to a more localized business-orientated and residential urban city. The earliest and most dramatic changes occurred on the waterfront, always the central focus of early commerce and settlement:

What were once long wharves became city streets, and the earlier primacy of maritime activity gradually lessened in the face of the growing complexity and efficiency of the operations taking place on dry land.... The development of a more permanent architectural landscape further inland, however, was continually stymied by the scourge of fire. On five separate occasions between 1849 and 1851 whole sections of the town were leveled by flames, and each time, owners sifted through the ashes and built anew.... The development boom of the early 1850s resulted in the construction of a great many small residential and commercial structures, as well as a handful of more expensive, large buildings whose scale and cost suggested a growing commitment to San Francisco’s permanence. The solidity of a few massive structures, both public (like the Custom’s House...), and private (for example the Montgomery Block...), stood in marked contrast to the thousands of small commercial and residential structures erected cheaply... It was perhaps this contrast of scale and this seemingly random disparity in architectural development which made San Franciscans of the mid to late 1850s acutely critical of the gap between ideal and reality in their city...(from) the aspect and character of a desert.... nothing but long rows of buildings, clouds of dust, busy, crowded streets, and sand hills.41

Within relative facets of development, devastation and redevelopment the generality of collecting images from engravings to daguerreotypes continually shape and

represent the city as a view. The reference in the newspaper to the city and its serial views, images over time prompting memory and mapping terms of understanding city space, record not just physical conditions, but combine to ask what does the city represent. Was the new coastal city to exist merely as a “warehouse,” or was it to evolve more spectacularly as a modernizing city of civic prosperity, progress and pride? These were the shifts in meaning that “collecting” could stimulate and contribute as knowledge about the city, and therefore facets of power could be displayed, but also aestheticized. Local commentators like H.G. Langley, who normally painted only the most glowing of pictures for his annual city directory, evaluated the city as having “the aspect and character of a desert,” or similarly as read through the disparaging eye of another observer the prospect of the city from the bay presented, as cited earlier, as nothing more than “long rows of buildings, clouds of dust, busy, crowded streets, and sand hills.”

The city becomes an image through this description of straddling visual and material conditions, and the transition from the old to the new moved from long wharves to city streets, from cheap and short-lived structures to grand and permanent brick buildings. In these terms collecting applies to the city as history, which is inseparable from the city considered contemporaneously as a view, whether in real or idealized terms. But change was also examined in critical terms, not unlike the response to modernization and urbanization that was underway during the same time period in Paris. The reference to views, when understood through these political, economic and social terms, ultimately came to reside in physical and conceptual classifications, and a cataloguing of capital development through industrial and urban transformation. To depict the city at various stages of progress using the engraving and the daguerreotype, and soon after the
collotype did not simply record the topographical and built environment, rather these images mediated, shaped and largely celebrated change. Unlike the city of Paris, the very recent past of San Francisco was not memorialized as what used to be, or as a rupture in human consciousness of city space, as expressed by Nadar, and others. Rather, the early photographs of San Francisco provide an image of what the city was to become, through spatial continuity and temporal succession, and these were also the traits of the indexical quality of the photographic medium.

In “collecting,” the object is generally detached from all its original functions, to enter into another relationship, which brings “things together of the same kind,” and makes them into a “historical system” to arrive at “an encyclopedia of all knowledge of the epoch, the landscape, the industry, and the owner from which it comes.” Kracauer draws a correspondence between “history and the photographic medium, historical reality and camera-reality.” Each emerged in the nineteenth century bringing forward a “system” of ordering facts and interpretation of these facts, but although neither history nor photography can be extracted from each of their discursive fields; as analogous “systems” each strives to provide for the perception and record of a specific time and place. This recording and decipherment is central to panorama photography, as a verisimilitude that is both inclusive, or totalizing, and unarguably factual, or authentic: “The very things which an artist would leave out, or render imperfectly, the photograph takes infinite care with, and so makes its illusions perfect.”

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The newspaper column advocated collecting various images of the city in 1851, and this was the same year of the earliest surviving daguerreotype panorama of San Francisco, taken by an unknown photographer. Five sequential daguerreotype images, each with a plate size of 10.7 x 13.9 cm (4 x 5 in.), and individually framed, span the city taking in a view of approximately 120 degrees. The space of the image encompasses the city from this high vantage point and extends to the waterfront district on the bay, showing its clusters of mercantile ships. Two beached storage ships, the Niantic and the Apollo, most accurately date the panorama between 19 January and 3 May 1851, the time they were destroyed by fire. Another panorama of San Francisco, of 1853, made of six daguerreotypes, each 14.3 x 20.6 cm (5 x 8 in.), also by an unknown photographer, depict the city as likely taken from the same location, but now deciphers a different topography of city space. Between the two panorama sequences of daguerreotypes were two major fires that leveled large portions of the city leaving few recognizable buildings common to both panoramas. In the second panorama “brick had largely replaced wood and canvas as the principal building material used in the city centre. Residential development had moved further west and north...Powell Street...was already identifiable as the site of a number of the city’s churches.”

In France, soon after the announcement of Daguerre’s process, daguerreotype views were taken and commissioned for publication in books and reproduced as engravings or lithographs. In 1841 and 1843, Hector Horeau’s Panorama d’Égypte et de Nubie profiled engravings based on daguerreotypes made by the Swiss-born Canadian photographer, Joly de Lotbiniers. Between 1840 and 1844, Noel-Marie Paymal

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45 Ibid.
Lerebour's *Exursions daguerriennes: vues et monuments les plus remarquables du globe* was published to include approximately four hundred images from a reported 1,200 daguerreotypes plates taken internationally; the publication also comprised a number of early urban views of Paris.\(^47\) The daguerreotypes were reproduced as engravings; the images suggest aquatint with some etching, rendering prints more tonal than linear: "At the same time the cool middle grey value and crisp detail overall identify their origin in the early optics of the camera lens and the metal daguerreotype plate."\(^48\) By looking back to an earlier medium, the daguerreotype not only became reproducible, but now the daguerreotype image was reversed. The market for the *Excursions daguerriennes* was extensive with a second edition in c. 1864. Lerebour took some of the photographs himself, but generally published the daguerreotypes of others anonymously, thereby claiming "authorship" for the publisher, not the photographer, or "operator" in nineteenth-century terminology. In c. 1845, the *Album du daguerreotype reproduit orné de vues de Paris, en épreuves de luxe avec texte*, included four lithographs on silvered paper to simulate the daguerreotype image.\(^49\)

In 1866 the sixth annual edition of the Royal Album Court Directory and General Guide included panorama images, a view from across the river of Windsor Castle, and the Houses of Parliament, London Bridge, Trafalgar Square. The photographs were made with a Johnson and Harrison Pantascopic camera capable of a single wide-view panoramic picture.\(^50\)

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\(^{47}\) Janet E. Beurger, p. 28.
\(^{49}\) Ibid.
The Mission Héliographique was a state sponsored project of 1851 that commissioned five photographers to survey and record five different regions in France, taking photographs of historical sites and monuments put forward by regional archeological and restoration societies. Édouard Baldus, Hippolyte Bayard, Henri Le Secq, Gustave Le Gray and O. Mestral each traveled to a different area of France. By September 1852, some 300 calotype negatives had been deposited in the archive of the Commission des Monuments Historiques. As these images were not given a systematic printing or exhibition they are closer to a historical resource, an archive, and one of the earliest to link photography and historical record. By 1855 these photographers, who with others, went on to record high views and broadly sweeping panorama vistas of Paris, perhaps building on this earlier “valuable field experience.” Baldus, Bayard, Le Secq, and Le Gray are all known to have taken panorama views.

Also significant to the flourishing of city views was the introduction of new printing processes. Between 1847 and 1851 Louis-Désire Blanquart-Evard’s improved on Talbot’s calotype making it possible for multiple permanent prints that were not subject to fading to be made from a single paper negative. The calotype with its innovations over the next decade produced remarkable aesthetic images printed out as either salted or albumen prints. Gustave Le Grey contributed a waxing process to provide greater sharpness and adaptability for using this technique, and now the negative could be sensitized up to two weeks before exposure. Frederick Scott Archer, an English photographer, introduced the wet collodion process in 1851. While bringing shortened

52 Shelly Rice, p. 52.
exposure times, this technical process increased bulk and fragility to the already very cumbersome camera and developing equipment. These developments established the groundwork for the image system that circulated photographic prints to the public just as Haussmann’s plan of Paris circulated traffic.53 The new permanence of the image and the availability of a negative to make multiple copies significantly connected photography to commercial and public utility. Blanquart-Evrard significantly contributed to the further industrialization of views with advances in reproduction facilities. During the five-year duration of his photographic workshop at Lille, he printed 100,000 negatives for commercial purposes. He also undertook printing the plates for many early books that included photographic images.

Photographic views and the urban fabric of the modern city

Many photographers during the early nineteenth century had previously trained as artists, as well as engravers or draughtsman, before taking up photography, and they applied comparative learning and pictorial approaches when they photographed the city, but could now lay claim to greater verisimilitude in their images:

By 1839, when photographers first began to turn their lenses on architectural subjects, the manual tradition of architectural rendering was at one of its most dynamic moments... The area in which the photographers could outdo the graphic artists was in the accuracy of proportions and the precise delineation of details, or what the age referred to as “truth.”54

53 Shelley Rice, p. 46.
While Daguerre first applied the daguerreotype technique to the streets and facades of Paris, these images did not set out to decipher the city as space or place, rather the city was the view from the window and the most accessible subject matter to focus the camera obscura during this still highly experimental stage of image making. By 1851, Charles Marville, an early French photographer, began to focus on the urban fabric as a site of both preservation and transformation. The streets of Paris and their architectural facades were his central interest. A series of views from the street onto the courtyards of the École des Beaux-Arts were some of his first images, dated 1851, and published by Blanquart-Evrard between 1851 and 1853. As early as 1851, the first of these albumen silver prints were deposited in the Bibliothèque National. For the first time the camera takes in a view analogous to the pedestrian walking along the street, at eye-level: “facades of the buildings at the same time are of interest in themselves and serve to define the space of the street as an architectural entity.” Blanquart-Evrard, in 1851, wrote on photographing architecture, something omitted by “how-to” books:

If a detailed drawing of a plane of elevation is desired, choose the moment when the building is not illuminated by the sun... use a preparation that works slowly during the exposure... When a picturesque ensemble is desired, the sun is a powerful aid in bringing out piquant effects, especially if the monument consists of stones blackened by time. But the most favourable for this kind of reproduction is that where the monument is successively illuminated by full light and obscured by the passage of a cloud.

He continues writing of the effects of light as a temporal space of weather change and how the old interacts with the new technology of photography, concluding with an

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55 Ibid., p. 24.
56 Ibid.
57 Andre Jammes and Eugenia Parry Janis, pp. 56-57.
acknowledgement of temporal space: “one can achieve extremely varied effects in reproducing the same monument.”

Marville was soon to be called the “photographe de la ville de Paris,” for during the 1860s he began working under the employ of Haussmann, who in addition to commissioning from Marville the documentation of the changes he was bringing to the streets of Paris also hired several archivists to set up the newly formed City Council Permanent Subcommittee on Historic Works. To meet Haussmann’s requirements, Marville took before, during and after shots of the destruction and rebuilding of the streets of old Paris. While his central focus was the medieval streets that were to disappear, he also photographed the prosperous new quartiers. Each photograph was given the title of the name of the street, and this designated the image as a specific classification, or representation of space; his applied to both the streets that were to be demolished and those that were to be rebuilt. Physical space became photographic space. Marville’s images are to be understood through temporal aspects of the photographic medium; his photographs of a specific street were often more than one image, rather views taken from different vantage points mapped the space of the city as past or future space. In London, photographers such as A. and J. Bool and Henry Dixon were engaged in a similar endeavor. In 1867 the Society for Photographing the Relics of Old London commissioned Book and Dixon to undertake a survey of London’s historical buildings that were threatened by demolition or neglect.

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58 Ibid., p. 57.
59 Shelley Rice, p. 86.
60 Cervin Robinson and Joe Herschman, p. 26.
61 Ibid.
When views are considered as temporal representations of space linked to industrial and technological change, and capital and urban expansion, these were also the conditions and terms that marked the proliferation of "architectural photography" and "industrial photography," as categories of commissioned work usually contracted by government ministries, or directly by the engineer.\(^6^2\) As early as 1847 the renowned nineteenth-century engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel was receiving weekly daguerreotypes of the construction of the Italian and Austrian Railway between Florence and Pistoia.\(^6^3\) In 1855, Edouard Baldus worked for Baron James de Rothschild, the major stockholder in the Compagnie du Chemin de fer du Nord, to record the new stations and railroads recently purchased by the company. His images varied from panoramas pierced by barely visible train tracks to photographs of newly built bridges and stations.\(^6^4\) In a journal article of 1858, "On the Application of Photography to Art and Art Purposes, but more Particularly to Architecture," J.T. Brown writes: "As to the use of Photography to the engineer, I need only instance the case of the Suspense Bridge, over the Dnieper at Kioff, constructed...for the Emperor of Russia, photographic views of which were taken weekly during the whole period of its construction."\(^6^5\) Such images when classified in terms of observation function as a level of surveillance with the inclusion of workers, as modern gradations of "staffage" arranged standing in groups near the unfinished structure. Once finished their presence was no longer part of the record, or the image entering the archive.

\(^6^3\) Ibid., p. 197
\(^6^4\) Ibid., pp. 108-212.
As demonstrated in these topographical views, as well as the photographic panorama views that I will now be discussing, these photographs are records closely connected to "collecting" as an archival sensibility. Photographs recorded modernity through establishing a spatial sense of accountability through which photographs documented change, while visualizing and celebrating capital expansion and prosperity. But often these photographs are not singular in their composition or meaning but refer to other media. When compared with the engineer’s drawings on the site the stylistic model is closely similar to the technical drawing taught at the Ecole des Ponts et Chaussées. These images are also comparable to the wood engravings that appeared as illustrations in the new forms of mass media from daily or weekly newspapers to journals.

The increasing global space of capitalism becomes the stage, or space of display, for these photographic images, laying the groundwork for such spaces of production to take place on a continually expanding scale. The space relations identified in this way are permeated by the flows of capital development meeting up with not only the modern application of photography to document and archive knowledge, but celebratory aspects that also visualize power and control place, a practical technique or activity similar to the technical drawing which preceded the structure, but overall the systematic articulation of entrenching new space-place relations of modernity.

Working under government and private commission in France, Collard was commissioned to photograph many new bridges. One of these, the Pont St. Michael was the bridge built to complete Haussman’s straight cut from the Gare de l’Est, past the new Palais de Justice, to the Left Bank. As well as these newly constructed bridges, he also

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66 Anne McCauley, p. 212.
67 Ibid., pp. 203-204.
photographed railroads, aqueducts, roundhouses and stations. Serial images of construction are generally staged through these views, although there is a panorama of four-prints taken to document the Pont-Viaduc, a five arch, masonry two-storey structure carrying a road way for carriages and another for train tracks. The panorama shows the unfinished bridge, so that starting from the left, the eye can scan the space taking in a view that starts with a lowly suburban café, then scans the new quay, and ends with ramshackle buildings, a hut suitable construction supplies, on the far right of the image.68

**Early panorama views: the city as object, representation as space**

Joachim Bonnemaison, a private collector, in France, specializing in panorama photographs, a collection singular in its mandate, sets out four different categories to distinguish “types” of panorama images.69 Panoramas as single images, views from joined, sequential photographs and images taken with a moving lens camera: “Panorama-views” are singular elongated views, and the image becomes a “panorama” when a sequence of images takes place. “Panoramics” describe spatial dimensions obtained through a moving lens camera that aligns a horizontal span of 140-degrees to 150-degrees. Then with technological advancement images are able to span a complete 360-degrees, and are described by Bonnemaison as “panoptic advancement.” These terms are specific neologisms, and while descriptive of technology are unique to the collectors’ categorizing of acquisitions, and are focused on clarifying difference between images that exist in large part through specific technological advancements in panorama cameras that

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68 Ibid., p. 212.
commenced with the daguerreotype camera. Another reason why I don’t use these terms directly is that during the years that panoramas flourished, experiments in technology were the photographic norm. And as there are many different kinds of panorama formats, there are also cameras. The main categories are: stationary panorama cameras (sometimes with curvilinear plates), rotating cameras, swing-lens cameras, and wide-angle cameras. Sometimes these categories are combined. My central approach to technology is to expand on these features only when they are applicable to explain the structural relations between view, space and representation of topographical views of the modern city.

For my focus, the generality of linking the term panorama with the image base or medium of photographs—to form panorama photographs—engages sufficiently the complexity of applications and technologies available to examine the visual culture of the panorama image, and the forms and composition of this space of representation. But whether using various technologies, or applying different compositions, taking early sequential panorama photographs, a view “advanced” through new camera technologies, was always a complex task for the photographer both needed to gauge the overall scanning requirements, and then calculate the connection of each sequential image, or the distance to move the camera the estimated span before exposing the next plate. These images were displayed with edges joined, as stereoscope viewing, and with album presentation with a single image on each page. Images in albums were popular means of display, and panorama images become easier to handle. Stereoscopic images also prevailed in this popular apparatus of seeing. The synoptic view needed to maintain a

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continuous and connected horizon line dependent on conjoined images was often not achieved as perceptible in the Cincinnati daguerreotype, which I am told can now be obtained in such a Photoshop version. But while the earlier printed prospects could rely on an illusory vantage point, a photographer needed to find a point of observation from a high view enabled either by natural topography or a built structure.

In 1843, Frédéric von Martens, a photographer of German descent living in Paris, developed a panorama daguerreotype camera, the Megaskope, with rotating lens on cylindrically curved metal plates. The first views were of the city of Paris (fig. 6). The Megaskope set the technical requirements for panorama cameras that were to follow. But the daguerreotype had the disadvantage of rendering images in reverse. Nevertheless, Marten’s camera was described as representing an important advance in the science of photography: “it enables one to produce prints of considerable length and exquisite clarity. Thus with a lens of ordinary quality, one can obtain views 12 x 38 cm (4 x 1 ft. 3 in.), perfectly sharp over the whole surface, and embracing a visual field of over 150 degrees.” The horizontal movement of the lens was structured through a narrow vertical slit that followed the lens in its movement to scan all points on the horizon, as a cylindrical curved copper plate brought into focus all objects of unequal distance:

This slit, which plays the part of a diaphragm...only allows central rays of light to act on the sensitive surface...It is essential that the position of the lens’ axis of rotation be determined with perfect exactness. Otherwise, the images of the objects towards which the camera moves, before vanishing to give place to those that follow, move about on the unpolished glass, and in consequence also on the plate. All sharpness is then impossible.

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71 The Cincinnati Library now makes available for reproduction both versions. I refer to this daguerreotype in chapter 3.
72 Cited in Joachim Bonnemaison, p. 19.
73 Ibid., p. 20.
The Megascope's system of moving the camera lens horizontally across a curved film plane was the technology adapted for use in most panorama cameras that followed, including the integration of technology to use new rolled film. Much more widely sold were two later panorama cameras: the Al-Vista of 1898 and the Kodak Panoram of 1899; both cameras used comparative moving lens technology. The former used 4-inch film with a 160-degree field of view, with a negative measuring 20.32 x 66.04 cm (8 x 26 in.). The latter, used 3½-inch film with a 142-degree view, to produce a 30.48 cm (12 in.) negative in length. The Kodak Panoram was also reissued as a larger model in 1900. Both cameras were manufactured in the United States, as was the commercially popular Cirkut camera, introduced in 1904, and followed by many subsequent models. Many wide-angle, panorama cameras have been made over the years, for example, the Kodak Banquet Camera. In this camera the film is held flat and the wide-angle lens adequate to cover a long and narrow panorama format. Importantly, a panorama photograph taken with any camera is usually a contact print.

The Cirkut Camera was initially made by the Rochester Panoramic Company, and was patented in 1904, then other Cirkut models were also introduced by other American companies up until the early 1940s. This camera, bulky and technically complex, was usually marketed to and used only by commercial photographers to take city views, generally from high vantage points. This camera was also used to take large group portraits. Half the complete span, or less, that was technically possible with the camera—a full 360-degrees—was usually the selected point of view. William John Moore, a

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74 Panorama cameras available today include the Japanese Widelux and the German Noblex, each in various models.
photographer who documented Vancouver from 1913 to 1945, and is the subject of the following chapter, used the #8 Cirkut Outfit model. The Cirkut Outfit was able to perform as a panorama camera and as a standard large-format camera. I discuss the technological apparatus of the Cirkut camera in my inquiry into Moore’s photographs of Vancouver.

To describe panorama photographs as one of the most “successful mechanism” that photographers used to “civilize the city,” and to make it “comprehensible” by enclosing the city and giving it “holistic identity,” as an all-encompassing space, renders the city itself as a spatialized object to be consumed in real and imaginary terms.\(^75\) The city as a panorama photograph is aligned with conditions of modern capital providing for a cohesive physical space and symbolic representation. In contrast to the allegorical recognition during the nineteenth century of the historical ruin, with its nostalgic terms of loss and decay, the panorama charts a space for industrial capital through spectacular means. Progress and the future are put on display.

Nineteenth-century culture readily associates this view with the assumed democracy of the photographic image. On the one hand, is the contingency of the image, demonstrated earlier in Talbot’s views; it records everything in view by opening up the distinctions of utility and belonging. Already by the 19\(^{th}\) century the many social uses of photography increasingly confirmed its democratic status: “photography has become a household word and a household want.”\(^76\) As the panorama format brings forward the cultural definition of an image historically legible to all, the next step is to consider the

\(^75\) Peter Hales, p. 73.
panorama image as a “precious commodity” leading to “closure and identity.” To use the term “precious commodity,” in this way, as Peter Hales does, is to draw an analogy between the city and the photograph. Each becomes a visual experience and an object to be consumed.

Designating the city as an object to be consumed, and the panorama as a commodity, is to combine reality with value as “mutually independent categories through which our conceptions become images of the world.” A commodity has value as it enters into the market place, which Simmel clarifies not as physical space, but “metaphysical” for it establishes a relationship between, in this case, the viewer and the object, which is the city. The visual acceptance of unlimited growth is the evaluation, or the value-form, through which the panorama photograph is considered “precious.” The term “precious” is value-based in its intention of understanding and knowing the city through its changing topographical views. Photography as representation through mechanical reproduction serves this definition well as a way of seeing, but as a temporal space open to serial form that includes photographing the same view over time, and reproducing the image in a number of copies, precious does not refer to singular, but a value form of observation. The term precious then includes elements of contradiction, because the panorama as pictorial form is rarely a singular image starting with its long tradition of acceptance before photography. Commodity certainly applies because when panorama photographs quickly entered into and participated in the market place, they

77 Peter Hales, p. 73. The full citation reads “And to an urban culture characterized by vague, constantly shifting boundaries and tenuous unity threatening always to break down into its cultural, economic, or geographic subcategories, closure and identity were previous commodities.”

were given credibility and granted value within the new economic, social and cultural conditions of the modern city.

The panorama viewpoint is everything, not only what is seen, but how it is seen, and from where. Shelley Rice includes a number of panorama photographs in her book *Parisian Views*. Two of these are the *Panorama of Paris taken from the Towers of Notre Dame Cathedral*, ca. early 1850s, by the Bisson brothers, and undated image, before 1867, by C. Soulier, *Panorama of Paris from the Colonnade of the Louvre*. The titles of the panorama establish two vantage points of importance, Notre Dame and the Louvre. Rice directly links these views with the modernizing changes that Haussmann was bringing to Paris: “The city became a perspective, a contingent view strictly dependent on the time and space of the beholder, a ‘slice of life’ that implied something much larger.”

Larger is not scale, as in the tendency of the panorama image itself, but rather denotes a sense of relationships, or network, extending between the parts of the city, or an overall legibility of structure, between the new and the old, the urban fabric and monuments, the river and streets.

In three panorama photographs taken by Edouard Denis Baldus, two taken in 1855, the last undated, the high vantage point is defined as the Louvre, and each describes what is to be seen in the panorama view: *Vue du Louvre vers La Seine, Vue de la Cour du Louvre vers les Tuilleries* and *Vue du Louvre vers les Tuileries*. Two images are distinctly contrasting views of the Tuileries. In *Vue du Louvre vers La Seine* the river with its bridges runs through the panorama with a slim façade of architecture aligned along the street parallel to the river, and on the other side the city mass extends towards

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79 Shelley Rice, p. 136.
80 These views are in the Bonnemaison Collection. The first panorama is 140 x 305 mm, the second is 122 x 300 mm, and the third 140 x 305 mm.
the horizon. The Bisson brothers’ photographs of the same year, *Vue du Pont neuf et le Vert galant*, is a two-part sequential panorama monopolized by a view of the Seine and its rows of bathhouses.

In 1864 Baldus’ took another high view photograph of Paris, *Panorama de la Cité*, of 1864, but this time picturing the Seine in a view giving emphasis to foreground detail, rather than a panorama sweep of space leading of into the distance. In this view the focus of the panorama is the Ile de la Cité in general and Notre-Dame, specifically. The architecture of the city is contrasted to the river flowing to the left of the island in a diagonal line, from the bottom right to the middle left ground of the photograph. Baldus had played down the physical form of Notre-Dame placing it within the space of the topography of the city as a whole, but he has, in the process, as Rice describes, emphasized the church’s role as the pivotal stable point of “something much larger than itself—the city’s life.” In this panorama, Rice continues, Notre-Dame has “stepped down” from the heavens and will now take its chances in the temporal space of the photograph, the world where cities themselves are demolished and rebuilt, but now the church participates in the urban life around it in a way that had never been possible before. While the church is represented in the photograph as a monument, therefore secular, it is also a spiritual institution immersed closely within the urban fabric, not just topographically but culturally and socially. But when old and venerated monuments were historically so inseparable from the dense and overpopulated fabric of the city they were almost invisible. The panorama portrays this integration so well, but this was not to continue. One of Haussmann’s first priorities was the disengagement of these monuments

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81 Shelley Rice, p. 135.
82 Ibid., p. 136.
83 Ibid., pp. 137-138.
from the larger urban fabric of the city, their historical network of belonging. Haussmann was to demolish the buildings that surrounded Notre-Dame and enforce a singular and solitary monument status to the church. The panorama considered in terms of identification of place, of bringing all the parts of the city together, or “something to hold on to” in the subjective sense of closeness and identity of “something much larger,” or in the objective sense of viewing the city as a whole or a totalizing space, rather than the sum of its parts, are brought together in the panorama photograph as the decipherment of not only space but place.

San Francisco: the city as panorama, the city of panoramas

San Francisco can be termed the city of panoramas primarily because its natural topography provided for enviable high views. Secondly, because the city was the subject of many panoramas since the 1850s, beginning with the daguerreotype. Thirdly, the city was the focus of Eadweard Muybridge’s three panoramas, the last and most technically astute taken in 1878. In 1851 a daguerreotype panorama by S.C. McIntyre was described, and appraised in the San Francisco newspaper *Alta California* as: “decidedly the finest thing in the fine arts produced in this city.” This series of daguerreotype images maps the temporal space of the city giving it legible form:

A consecutive series of Daguerrean plates, five in number, arranged side by side so as to give a view of our entire city and harbour, the shipping, bay, coast and mountains opposite, islands, dwellings and hills—all embraced between Rincon Point on the right, to the mouth of our beautiful bay on the left, included between lines proceeding from the hills to the west of the city as the point of vision.84

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84 David Harris, *Eadweard Muybridge and the Photographic Panorama of San Francisco*, p. 38.
Following the mapping process of this description, taking in the city from all the points of vision described, in part, above, from right to left, the photographic record joins up with an aestheticized composition: “The picture, for such it may be termed, although the first attempt is nearly perfect. It is admirable in execution as well as design.”85 Photography exceeded all earlier forms of representation in certifying verisimilitude and composition, or “admirable in execution” and “nearly perfect.” In this description an objective calculation meets up with a subjective appraisal giving credibility to the daguerreotype as an accurate record and an aestheticized image. By granting the panorama photograph not only the excellence of its ability to record, therefore to display topography in terms of capital and prosperity, but also aesthetically valuing the image as a pictorial space marked by “admirable” composition, then the newspaper article concludes that the panorama is certainly suitable for exhibition, and is “intended for the World’s Industrial Convention.”

The newspaper was referring to The Great Exhibition of Works of Industry of All Nations in 1851, held in London, the exhibition for which the Crystal Palace was built. The paper continues in its praise: “We venture the assertion that nothing there will create greater interest than this specimen of Art among us, exhibiting a perfect idea of the city which of all the world carries with its name abroad more of a romance and wonder than any other.” And then moving from “Art” to photography as evidence, or “truth,” obtained because the image is brought about through a technical apparatus and chemical emulsion, the writer continues: “It is a picture, too, which cannot be disputed—it carries with it evidence which God himself gives through the unerring light of the world’s great

85 Ibid.
luminary. The people of Europe have never yet seen a picture of this, to them, most
wonderful city. This will tell its own story, and with the sun to testify to its truth."

The following day, the same newspaper continues: “A large number of gentlemen
called...to examine Mr. McIntyre’s admirable Daguerreotype panorama...They all
expressed themselves highly pleased with it. It is certainly the only picture of any
description ever produced giving anything like a correct idea of the extent of our city.”
Indicating the panorama overview as “a correct idea” appraises the panorama as a booster
image, which is characterized by showing the “extent of the city,” its level of growth and
types of capital development. The “correct idea” also refers to a pleasure in looking, an
expressive aesthetic mode showing acceptance of the camera’s version of reality not just
as form and composition, but meaning.

The natural topography of the city of San Francisco provided the necessary
structure to embrace the city as a single view. In a letter dated 1869, the topography is
described as “the most hilly town in the world,” and the letter continues: “Laid out in
squares...almost every vista presents a slope...in whichever direction you walk you soon
have a bird’s eye view of the place.”87 Nob Hill, earlier called California Street Hill, was
the preferred viewpoint, and while much depended on topography, the site itself came to
characterize prodigious capital and immense display of wealth, giving the high point this
vernacular name. The hill’s new residents were the railroad industrialists and investors
who built grand mansions on the city’s highest point, after the offices of the Central
Pacific Railway were moved to from Sacramento to San Francisco in 1873. I emphasize
the acquisition of land overlooking the city, for although these grand houses were

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86 Ibid.
87 Cited in ibid.
noticeable for their size and extravagance—they were situated and designed to be looked at—they importantly provided a high view from a specific vantage point to look from, and what they saw was the city below, which they had significantly helped to shape.

The most notable photographer taking the earliest panoramas of San Francisco was Carleton Eugene Watkins, who moved to California in 1851 from New York State. Although he first worked in the city as a portrait photographer he was active taking views commercially by the late 1850s, and likely photographed the city from a high view more often than any other photographer. Views of the city were often made available as stereocards, to take advantage of this popular market. In a Watkins’ panorama of 1873, titled from the vantage point of California and Powell Street, the view is composed of ten overlapping stereocards, each composed of two albumen silver prints from wet-collodion, glass-plate negatives. Watkins’ panorama showed the city block that Leland Stanford acquired in May 1873, where he would subsequently build his mansion on the eastern half of the block, and sell the western half to his business partner Mark Hopkins, whose upper balcony was used by Muybridge to take a series of panoramas in 1877 and 1878.88 Charles Crocker began acquiring land on the other side of the block in 1873, and along with Stanford purchased the entire block with the exception of a single house. Nicholas Yung, a funeral director, refused to sell his small portion, and Crocker built a “spite fence” around the house. This forty-foot-tall wall surrounding a much smaller house deprived Yung of not only his view, but also light and air. Not easily intimidated by the power of the railroad barons who owned most of the block, he eventually moved without

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88 Leland Stanford was governor of California from 1862 to 1863, as well as president of the Central Pacific Railroad.
selling. In 1873 Watkins took another set of panorama stereocards from the residence of Charles Crocker.

A panorama viewed as a stereoscope no long retains seeing as a activity of the scan, or vision mediated by the spatial overview of seeing at a glance that characterizes the panorama, and the forced nearness of the image changes the viewer’s visual space. Now the sense of distance is reformatted without spatial adaptation that is found in the viewing situation of the panorama. The viewing space is now disembodied—becoming a limited and enclosed space—where only the eye can shift. Oliver Wendell Holmes’s describes this shutting out of exterior space and the concentration of looking as “disembodied visual seeing”: “in which we seem to leave the body behind us and sail away into one strange scene after another, like disembodied spirits.” Nevertheless, Holmes, who coined the name stereograph, was convinced of the importance of this medium as a visual record able to provide for form “which makes itself seen through the world as intelligence.” He then compares the stereograph to language and books. From this comparison he argues for the use of stereographic collections just as there are various areas in libraries for designated collecting, and he expends this argument by declaring the necessity of securing a universal currency of this “great Bank of Nature.” Holmes wants to move the stereograph beyond the “pretty toy,” or the use of the device as a form of entertainment in every parlour, which provided a ready commercial market for these images throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century.

While panoramas were representing the modernizing city as a view from Nob Hill, the streets below became the sites for social and political discontent. 1877 brought

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the Great Strike, which was national in its scope, begun after the railroads severely slashed already low wages, and the recent completion of the major sections of the national railroads had already put many skilled and unskilled labourers out of work.91 During this same summer, the Nez Percé in northern Oregon were in conflict with the government, as European settlement was rapidly advancing with the railway lines to threaten their hereditary lands. Ethnic strife and harassment also characterized the Grand Strike in San Francisco with the Chinese serving as the scapegoats between the increasing number of the unemployed and the few who had greatly prospered from developing the railroad. The Chinese immigrants, largely brought over to work on the railroads, were equally exploited with even lower wages, and consequently accused of taking jobs away from white labourers. Just after Muybridge’s panorama of 1877 was taken, and announced for sale to the public, conflict and arson erupted in the city bringing constant clashes between police, white workers and the Chinese.

The San Francisco Examiner, on 24 July 1877, critically understood the basis of the strike and the complexity and disillusionment of many of the supporting ideologies: “the hired advocates of Stanford and Co. would have us believe, a contest against Railroads, for no one is so foolish to depreciate their value; but it is a contest against the audacious usurpations, the monstrous tyranny, the unparalleled robbery, of the Railway Companies.” But the owners of the railway systems across America were gaining even greater wealth with their expansionary projects, and were not listening. The Southern Pacific Railroad was described in the same newspaper feature as “the most obvious instance of what was grossly wrong with California: a very few of the supper-rich

virtually owned the state—its land, its economy, its government—and were running it as a private preserve."

Muybridge was positioned between the two when he seeks patronage from the railroad barons, but does not share anti-Chinese sentiments. Although he was a skilled professional dependent on patronage opportunities, direct commissions and market sales, that incurred close ties with the most prosperous, he would also have recognized the difficulties of integration and employment circumstances of the Chinese as similar to his own early struggles as an immigrant. His dealers Bradly and Rulofson, before he moved to the Morse Gallery, employed Chinese workers, and an account of his time in jail during his murder charge tells of his politicized defense of fellow Chinese inmates.

Muybridge was commissioned to photograph Stanford's new residence, which he accomplished during 1877-1878, with the resulting album composed of sixty-two albumin prints mounted on paper, each 25.4 x 33.4 cm (10 x 13 in.). The album luxuriously bound in black morocco leather was further decorated with "red sprinkled edges" and "green marbled endpapers" to display the sumptuous images of the interior of the house, as well as a series of panorama images taken from the windows that would have provided a panorama view. The interior photographs are equally panoramic in scope, scanning the space of each room leaving nothing out from the extravagance of the furniture to not only the quality, but also the quantity of the works of art. Each photograph is titled, not so much from the point of view as is the custom of a panorama, but rather giving justification to what is to be seen: *View of the Drawing or Pompeian Room, View of the Art Gallery*, but then looking outward *View from the Sanford*

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92 Cited in ibid.
93 Ibid.
94 David Harris, pp. 103-104.
Residence, looking towards Telegraph Hill. The gallery with its abundance of artwork is hung salon style to accommodate the quantity of images. One of Stanford’s guests describes the extravagance of the interior space, by contrasting the accumulation of objects to the strife taking place on the streets below the house. He is urged to read the provenance inscribed on a small label on the base of a vase. “De Marie Antionette au dernier Marquis de Villette” reads the guest just as a uproar took place on the streets below the house.” Stanford’s remarks address the presence on the street below of Dennis Kearney, the leader of the protesters and head of the Workingmen’s Party, but he treated the situation as a “joke.”

If the Stanford’s mansion was a work of art in an Italian Renaissance reflection of style, the residence of Mark Hopkins, Muybridge’s high vantage point, was an extravagant palatial display of wealth of the nouveau riche, for Hopkins, a former hardware store owner, had invested in the fledgling Central Pacific Railroad in early 1870s, and had made millions. In a photograph taken by Watkins in c. 1878, his house is by far the tallest and largest residential footprint on the block, with or without the tower on which Muybridge was to position his camera. The mansion is emblazoned with decorative recklessness, more deco than classical, with its prodigious detail exceeding immediate function, but recalling a physical space of accumulation, therefore consumption. Now the excess of design serves as an allegory of opulence that is not separate from the charting of the city’s growth to depict prosperity and progress through the eliciting of visual pleasure represented in the spatial composition of the panorama.

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95 Ibid., p. 171.
Eadweard Muybridge's photographic views

Eadweard Muybridge, born Edward Muggeridge in 1830 in Kingston-upon-Thames near London, was a man of exceptional photographic ability and knowledge. His prodigious technical skills were applied commercially through an unswerving capacity to challenge and compete in innovative photography. His astute business and marketing sense provided him with ample opportunities to put these skills into practice. Muybridge immigrated to New York in 1851, from England, and four years later moved to San Francisco where he was hired to open a bookstore for the London Printing and Publishing Company. In 1860, while traveling across the country on a visit to England, he suffered a severe head injury in a stagecoach accident. Little is known about his seven years in England, in part, he must have been recovering from the accident, but after returning to San Francisco in 1867, he changed his name to Muybridge, after first briefly using the commercial pseudonym “Helios,” and opened what was to become a highly successful photographic business.

From the late 1860s to 1873, Muybridge was to undertake self-directed projects and government commissions to photograph parts of the western United States. He documented the “Modoc War,” California’s most severe Native confrontation, and the official government expedition to Alaska when it was first acquired from Russia in 1868. Muybridge’s first international recognition came with his large-plate landscape photographs of the Yosemite Valley. Then in 1870 or 1871, Muybridge married Flora Shallcross Stone, a woman much younger than himself. When he returned home from a
photographic commission, he believed his now pregnant wife to have a lover, Major Harry Larkyns. After traveling to where he was living, Muybridge killed him with a single pistol shot when Larkyns opened the door of his house. On 5 February 1875, after four months of imprisonment pending trial, the jury acquitted Muybridge on grounds of “justifiable homicide.” To avoid further controversy, Muybridge left for a yearlong photographic expedition to Central America.

For his sojourn in Guatemala his “sponsor,” the term used by Muybridge, was the Pacific Mail Steamship Company. On his return he advertised for sale stereographic cards and portfolios of prints including images from Panama, Guatemala and Mexico. He prepared five albums of large photographs, titled “The Pacific Coast of Central America and Mexico; The Isthmus of Panama; Guatemala; and the Cultivation and Shipment of Coffee. Illustrated by Muybridge.” Four copies were given to those that had helped with the trial, chiefly Stanford and his lawyer, with a copy also going to the president of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company. Muybridge’s visit occurred during a period of significant economic, social and cultural transformation with coffee as the central commodity of change. Many of the images of Guatemala are panoramic in their point of view as they are usually taken showing an overview from a high vantage point as well as depicting in detail the indigenous labour force at work. Secondly, the images are panoramic in their ability to visualize capital “progress.” These views showed the coffee finca as a prosperous and industrious site, the wealth, of course, accruing to the American company. Together the views, resolutely serial images in encompassing and tracing of the

96 The baby, a boy, was, later in life, considered to resemble Muybridge.
production of space, constitute through panorama legibility a “disciplinary mechanism” of power taking effect both locally and internationally.

The conditions of mid- to late nineteenth-century capitalism introduced to Guatemala through the economic and political forces of early globalization was accomplished through the internal production and export of a coffee crop reliant on the exploitation of a nearly impoverished, aboriginal work force. Such a focus on one export crop brought a sharp depletion of the basic food crops that had earlier sustained the general population. The increasingly expanding coffee fincas contributed immense profits to a few owners, ladinos of Spanish-Indian descent, or foreigners from Germany and America, such as Muybridge’s “sponsor” the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, which owned the coffee plantation “Las Nubees,” where these photographs were taken. Muybridge might not have considered his panorama photographs of coffee production—the clearing, planting, cultivation, harvesting, picking and shipping—to be exemplary of the entry of capital into Guatemala, but the commission was to generate this representation of space, and in doing so these images would serve to contribute to the export of goods, the increasing production of coffee leaving the country, and the diminishing of resources accessible to the aboriginal population.98

Muybridge was forty-two in 1873 when he first began working with Stanford on his motion studies, a celebrated inquiry into how a horse actually moved. Although this photographic work was interrupted with his trial, and his subsequent decision to leave the city for Central America, he returned to this photographic focus in 1878, after completing the panorama photographs, which I will discuss as intertwined with the images of a

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98 David Harris mentions an eleven-panel panorama of Guatemala City taken by Muybridge, but this is not illustrated. David Harris, p. 47. Burns does not refer to this panorama.
sequential arrangement of the analysis of movement. His first series of motion studies begins with one of Stanford’s horses and a series of twelve cameras positioned alongside a track, each fitted with a shutter and a special exposing apparatus. After a number of unsuccessful attempts, the horse ran through the strings attached to the shutters to produce a series of negatives, clearly showing that the feet of the horse were off the ground at the same time during the gallop, only when the feet were brought together under the belly. The results of the motion studies, were in contrast to the hobbyhorse pose then prevalent in nineteenth-century painting. The animal locomotive studies branched out to sequential photographs of other animals, and male and female models; the results were published widely in photography and popular magazines, and also scientific journals, such as La Nature.

The sentience of Eadweard Muybridge’s panoramas

Jonathan Crary compares Muybridge’s motion studies to one of his high view photographs of coffee pickers in Guatemala. Crary writes of static “trajectories whose abstraction and velocity are outside the human capacity to perceive them” except through forms of image making.99 He wasn’t, but he could have been writing comparatively about Muybridge’s 1878 panoramas of San Francisco, a city made visible through a sequence of images depicting and deciphering perceptual temporalities. Muybridge’s panorama photograph of 1878, that I will be discussing next in conjunction with the motion studies, that both preceded and followed the panorama images, take the object out

of what Crary advocates as “normal” perception. In so doing, the panorama photograph represents the city as a scopic realm of topographical space both imaginary and real. So on the one hand, the sequences of images are considered indexical through the mechanical apparatus of the camera, and, on the other, the images are aligned with a satisfying and sustained aesthetic form, that although brought about through technical innovation, also enable the idea of visual pleasure that can be considered as breaking the mold of expectation in panorama space.

How this was achieved was a technical, innovative and imaginative apparatus of visualizing a panorama. Paul Valéry writing on Muybridge’s depiction of various postures of the horse” sets up a link between “documentary comparison” and a kind of “creative seeing” that is also pertinent to Muybridge’s panorama: “Only probable positions could be assigned to movement so rapid, and it might be worthwhile to try to define, by means of documentary comparison, this kind of creative seeing by which the understanding filled the gaps in sense perception.”\textsuperscript{100} If “movement so rapid” was replaced by temporal space we are faced with a comparative “creative seeing.” But the indexical quality of a “documentary comparison” is not to be understood as the real, although both terminologies contribute to the nineteenth century reception of photographic verisimilitude. The sense of the real associated with the panorama view is a cultural value of acceptant that is reliant on conditional terms that extend between a representation of space and the temporal space of the city. Influential factors can contribute to the notion of achieving reality, and one of these is the size of the panorama resulting in a scale which puts forward other variables, therefore the image is too big to

hold in the hand, enclose in a frame, and so on. And when considering these permutations of size, it becomes clear that conditions or components of the real are also historical, as Linda Nochlin has shown, perception is culturally conditioned, just as realism is comparatively connected to style and form in picture making.  

Marta Braun expands the analysis in a comparison between Muybridge’s motion studies and the motion research photographs taken by Etienne-Jules Marey. The names of Marey and Muybridge are both linked to photographic studies of movement, although each is quite different. The importance of the variation of method, apparatus and use between the two lends itself to issues of the appearance of visible reality, accuracy of representation and pictorial space. Each approached temporal space, but did so in entirely different ways. While Marey relied on the accuracy of photographic space he did so by designing a specific camera that allowed for more than one picture on a single plate:

“Then, as a man clothed all in white and lit by the sun passed between the camera and the black surface, the slotted-disk shutter alternately exposed and masked the plate. As the slot—or window, as Marey called it—passed the lens, a phase of the movement was registered on the plate; as the subject moved to a new position...and so on.”

I mention this description both as contrast to Muybridge, and itself a graphic notation of time moving through space, for now seeing at a glance is taken up as a mapping of lines and points to give information specifically about successive activity of the body.

In comparison, Muybridge’s serial images capture space and time by recording movement in different phases or temporal spaces, in this way, time is elapsed from one image to the next, and space is moved through just as topographical space is engaged in

the comparative analytical and calculated space of the sequential panorama. Muybridge’s choices in composing images have a pictorial lineage in the history of art, for example men undertake sports, and women dress and undress. Each of these approaches is a strategy of making movement visible as specific form. Muybridge’s tableau are instructive images of contextual information that are in themselves fragments, but together or sequentially make up a narrative whole. A panorama is also a strategy of movement that pictorially gathers up space over time. Muybridge’s sequential panoramas, extraordinary technical feats in their contribution to the genre, correspond to the strategy of different tableau linked up through an aesthetic field of recording recognition. The importance of this is how science relates to art during the nineteenth century through photographic applications. I won’t at this point compare the moving lens and moving film panorama cameras, or the combination of the two, to Marey’s innovative cameras with their aims of science in any direct way, but comparatively the panorama image taken with these cameras is another application of space over time, as something resolutely moving through an instantaneous continuity of space.

Considering that Watkins had been so active taking panoramas from California Street Hill—a few of these I had mentioned earlier—it is surprising that Muybridge made only one image from this vantage point prior to 1877, a single stereocard *San Francisco, from top of California Street.* Many, but not all of the earliest panoramas, especially those from the daguerreotype era, had taken Rincon Hill as their vantage point, for the move to California Street Hill was not without commercial and urban influence, Now the city’s rapid growth had extended outward to establish this high vantage point as centrally

103 David Harris, p. 47. Muybridge had also made a seven-part stereographic panorama from Rincon Point. Watkins stereoscope panoramas are illustrated in Harris’ study of Muybridge.
located within the city’s current range of urban development. Muybridge photographed the city as a panorama twice in 1877, and in 1878 it is believed that he took two additional panoramas. Although an early panorama of 1878, is considered lost in a fire, the second panorama and his most well known, likely needs to be rated highly, if panoramas can triumph—with the assistance of Muybridge the technician, Muybridge the artist and Muybridge the commercial photographer, not necessarily in this order—over their largely direful reputation.

In early January of 1877, Muybridge set up a camera with 8 x 10 in. plates, and sequentially photographed the city as a panorama of eleven plates, which combined together extended to 7½ ft. in length. As I have mentioned earlier, the subject matter was not new, and the visual perception and innovative technological applications can be said to spin off Muybridge’s earlier motion studies and views. In describing his second panorama of 1877 to prospective buyers, Muybridge undertook a process of scanning the space of the city, describing it geographically, and then gathering this description into a marketing scheme that ends with the price of purchase:

I have the pleasure of informing you that I have just published a photographic PANORAMA OF SAN FRANCISCO, the points of view being from the tower of the new residence of Mark Hopkins, Esq. about 400 feet above the waters of the Bay. The day selected for its execution was remarkable for the clearness of the atmosphere; all the buildings, hotels and banks, all the wharves, with the very few exceptions, and nearly all the stores and private residences within a radius of six miles being clearly distinguishable, the whole forming a complete Panorama of the entire city, its picturesque suburbs and surrounding ranges of hills. It is nearly eight feet long, mounted on cloth, folded into eleven sections and bound in a cloth cover nine inches wide by twelve inches high, accomplished with a key and index of 220 references. Forwarded by mail to any part of the United States, free of postage, upon receipt of PRICE, TEN DOLLARS, or unmounted, properly

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104 This does not mean that Nob Hill was not used earlier as a vantage point. The first recorded date and image is 1851 for five daguerreotype images.
secured upon a roller, to any part of the world, free of postage, upon receipt of Eight dollars, which may be sent to me direct; or preferably to some bank or mercantile house in this city with proper instructions.  

Muybridge’s 1877 panorama was a strategy with twofold meanings, first it visualized the city of San Francisco at a specific time and place, and, secondly, the vantage point was from the newly built Mark Hopkins residence, which provided a topographical description that introduced its marketing agenda. Now priced as a commodity, the view of the city from the rooftop of the house of one of the wealthiest men in the city now becomes available to “everyman,” or the man on the street far below. This is a complex socio-spatial reality.

By the time that Muybridge took his panorama photographs, California Street Hill was where the very wealthy had built or were just finishing building their mansions, and from this vantage point the topography was considered in terms of capital, or a display of prosperity and progress that has historically been symbolized through the high view. Earlier Stanford has described his own imaginary geography as a panorama of prosperity, from a balcony not yet built:

I shall see cars from the city of Mexico, and trains laden with gold and silver bullion and grain that comes from Sonora and Chihuahua on the south and from Washington Territory and Oregon on the north...I shall look through the Golden Gate and I shall see fleets of ocean steamers bearing the trade of India, the commerce of Asia, the traffic of the islands of the ocean...  

The mansions of Stanford and Hopkins, as well as Charles Croker, occupied a central space and place in the San Francisco hilly skyline. On the one hand, this high vantage

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105 David Harris, p. 37.
106 Ibid., p. 47.
point was logistically placed, the highest and most central point of the cityscape, but as well symbolically designated. These large mansions made a visual impression on the urban landscape by their sheer size and positioning, a scale of grandeur inseparable from the power and wealth that resided with each of these families. As these panoramas were the first photographic project that Muybridge undertook upon his return from Central America, their conceptual scope and technical application, could have been a strategy to advertise his availability for commissions, including but not limited to San Francisco’s wealthiest families. 107

In a marketing prospectus that Muybridge published in September of 1877 that accompanied the panorama of that year, he included an excerpt from the *Alta California* of 22 July. I quote the excerpt, in part, beginning with topographical placement of the view and vantage point, and concluding with the aesthetic recognition of Muybridge’s accomplishment:

The Photograph of San Francisco, recently made by putting together a succession of views which, taken from a commanding central point, make a complete circuit of the horizon suggests to us that among the many wonderful features of our city, the panoramic character of its topography is not the least deserving of attention, though it has been overlooked, at least by people generally, until Muybridge discovered and utilized its artistic value.

Then the writer moves from “artistic value” to explain the “character of the topography” with a strangely compelling and oddly scaled metaphor of the viewer as an ant employing a thimble as the vantage point, and a dinner plate to represent the whole city, or the point of view: “Let us image a small ant wishing to get a comprehensive view of a painted

107 Ibid., p. 48.
Japanese dinner-plate. He would succeed if he could get a thimble upright in the middle of the plate, then climb to the top of the thimble and look by turns in every direction.\(^{108}\)

The newspaper uses the thimble and the Japanese dinner-plate metaphor to demonstrate how the scan of a 360-degree panorama works, but, perhaps, comparing the landscape design on the dinner-plate to Muybridge’s panoramic space of representation holds more meaning than just a fanciful turn of phrase, or a journalistic catchall. If the Japanese dinner-plate in its picturesque, but unfamiliar design, its foreignness, needs to be deciphered, then compare these same characteristics to the city itself, for between 1850 to 1880, San Francisco had grown from early settlement focused on increasing commercial trade to a prosperous urban metropolis. Although the scopic realm of seeing a panorama view is quite incongruent with the reductive scale of the thimble and dinner plate, what this metaphor does is bring the epistemological seeing and knowing of the panorama structure down to human scale; in straightforward terms the Japanese dinner-plate is foreign, that is carries an element of the unknown, but picturesque, but also at home domestically, as is the utilitarian thimble. But bypassing the actual vantage point, which is the palatial dwelling of Hopkins, on California Street Hill, the newspaper ignores the permutations of the panorama as a dual site of power and surveillance over the increasingly expansive functioning of capital with San Francisco the centre of business and commerce on the west coast during the late nineteenth century. As a tautology of space and place, the geography of the panorama is abstract, but embodied in a topographical, architectural, urban and commercial basis of realization:

\(^{108}\) Ibid., p. 49.
Starting near the west we see Point Bonita the northern pillar of the Golden Gate, whence there is a gradual rise to the summit of Tamalpais, 15 miles off and 2603 feet above the see; and beyond that, 40 miles away, we see the ridges between Petaluma and Sonoma...Besides the prominent features visible on the line of the apparent horizon, are a multitude of others less notable below the horizon, including a large part of San Francisco Bay and its entrance, Angle, Alcatraz, Goat and Mission Islands, the Alameda Plain, with its towns, inlets and wharves, the coves, Long Bridges, wharves, and shipping of the harbor; Telegraph Hill, 300 feet high, a mile distant to the northeast...all rise up in amphitheatric fashion, so as to permit their houses to see, and be seen. While the farther sides of these hills and ridges are not without their occupants, it may safely be said that the homes of more than a quarter of a million of people...are distinctly visible from the corner of California and Mason Streets, 381 feet above ordinary high tide. 109

The view is described spatially as above and below the horizon. The mountains above and at a distance, and the islands below waiting ready to be named, then the topography links up with business and residential interests bringing a rigorous mapping system to the panorama as a totality of spatial seeing.

In 1877 using a one-page key Muybridge presented a photographic panorama of that year laid out in three rows. Written in Muybridge’s neatly graphic hand the key lists 221 sites deciphered from this high view. 110 The key was a portable record of the panorama photographs mounted on card 20.4 x 30 cm (8 x 11 in.) that could stand-alone or accompany the larger scale panorama sequence of images. Noting the major topographical and engineering features, from the Golden Gate Bridge to Angle Island, the key also listed the new City Hall, and other new civic buildings, commercial businesses, and extended the listing of private residences beyond the few strongholds of immense wealth at the top of the hill. With such a long list, the key mapped a greater range of deciphering space and place, and therefore included a broad middle-class demographic, which then expanded his list of potential buyers. If social situations were expendable for

109 Ibid., p. 49.
110 Ibid., pp. 31-32.
profit, the panorama photograph matched this through its strong sense of contingency of space, if anything and everything, well more so.

Making the key into a marketing device is extended further when Muybridge also summarizes front and centre on the card his other accomplishments: “Reproductions of Paintings, Drawings and Art Manufactures; Photographic Illustrations of Alaska, California, Mexico, Central America and the Isthmus of Panama” and “Horses photographed while running or trotting at full speed.”\textsuperscript{111} Keys in general are guidebooks to spaces of representation and provide a means to “systematize as well as to glorify.”\textsuperscript{112} The concept of a guide is also a type of survival kit to comprehend, to find one’s existence, or to identify with rapid topographical and social change. The guide then is a map to find one’s bearings as a route though the panorama, both the synoptic space of seeing, and then most importantly taking this space to a complex interpretation of detail. But in examining the panorama of 1877, with or without the guidance of the key, it is quite clear from the details of the rooftop that this image of the panorama ends where it began, with the noticeable in the image very prominent spire of the Hopkins house. This important spatial detail resides at both ends of the sequential images serving as an actual depository of space, and a symbolic reference to capital as a circulatory process.

Muybridge’s most accomplished 360-degree panorama, Panorama of San Francisco from California Street of 1878, is itself a form of cartographic guidance through the authority of the real and the aesthetics of abstraction: “an entire rotation of the seeing eye around the horizon (an action that takes place in time)” was a spatial simultaneity that is “at once completely plausible and perfectly impossible; it is, as if, the

\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., pp. 118-119.
work of sculpture (the city) were to be turned inside out, by some prodigy of
topology.\textsuperscript{113} Again his vantage point was the tower on the Hopkins residence, which
remained the highest point overlooking the city. Muybridge photographed the city of San
Francisco with a larger format camera, than the previous year, he took thirteen silver-
prints using wet-collodion, glass-plate negatives (fig. 7). Each print is 57.3 x 39.9 cm (22
x 15\textfrac{1}{2} in.). If mounted in a sequential format, the panorama would reach approximately 5
m (17 ft.) in length.

Muybridge turned his large-plate camera on its side in a decision that went against
the established ways of seeing horizontally, or how to scan through the pictorial space of
the panorama in order to traverse along the horizon, a movement considered well-
matched to natural seeing. 180 degrees is perceived to be the normal range of vision, and
this was by definition usually the strived for view. Muybridge, in contrast, does not seek
a route that charts resolutely around the horizon, but rather plots its passage in ways more
characteristic of a skillful map, and in this strategic and intelligent application of form,
Muybridge’s panorama differs from all others that had preceded it.

Together the panorama’s thirteen parts perfectly span the 360-degree
circumference without the overlap in the 1877 panorama. It is thought that Muybridge
began working, with at least one assistant, in mid-morning, taking the first view from the
south-west with between 15 to 25 minutes for each successive view, and moving in a
clockwise direction, working the camera away from the sun, so the last view was taken
around 3 or 4 pm.\textsuperscript{114} When complete one image stands out from the others. After the

\textsuperscript{113} Hollis Frampton, \textit{Circles of Confusion: Film, Photography, Video Texts 1968 – 1980} (Rochester, New
\textsuperscript{114} Ibid.
panorama was complete in its 360-degree scan of the city from this high vantage point, the seventh image had to be remade, and this reveals the sun’s change of direction.\textsuperscript{115}

The panorama view was not to be presented as a single view, but in “elephant folios. The panorama entered into another phase of distribution; it was not to be purchased by the larger demographics of the middle-class able that was able to purchase a copy of the earlier panorama. There are nine accounted for folio versions of this panorama, and that is largely understood to be about the total printed. The folios given to Mrs. Mark Hopkins and Mrs. Leland Stanford are inscribed “compliments of / The Artist.” The “elephant folio,” as it was known, is composed of 13 albumen silver prints mounted on paper, backed by a single sheet of linen, and accordion-folded between covers, and bound in black leather, a luxurious presentation and a gift. By the time these were received their husbands had died; John Hopkins never lived long enough to occupy his mansion on the hill.

The two earlier panoramas and the first stages of the motion photographs can be taken as “studies” for this version. His last panorama exceeded his earlier ones of the year before, certainly not only in size, rather primarily in the conception of achieving the whole that was accomplished when he turned the camera on its side. How the 1878 panorama learned from the motion studies can be considered more closely through the concept of the grid that was utilized in the motion studies, and increasingly served as a modern aesthetic. The grid in a spatial sense is “geometricized, ordered...In the flatness that results from its coordinates, the grid is the means of crowding out the dimensions of the real and replacing them with the lateral spread of a single surface....In the temporal

\textsuperscript{115} Ibid.
dimension, the grid is an emblem of modernity by being just that.”116 The grid arising out
of modern art and modernism is the surface of Mondrian’s paintings, and his views of the
city of New York are compositions released from chaotic internal sensibilities, for now
the space of the city is contained through an ordering mechanisms of sequence and form,
not unlike panorama space.

To comprehend Muybridge’s understanding of sequential form and application of
structure is to consider the streets connective form as they move through individual
images.117 The dominant lines of four streets surround the site on which the Hopkins
house was built: Mason Street to the west, California Street to the north, Powell to the
east, and Pine to the south. Because the streets act to connect sequential images together
the viewer visualizes and interprets the form and direction of each street twice. The
western half of Pine Street joins with the eastern portion. The panorama view engages the
streets as abstract markers of temporal space. But the panorama in its detail of discovery
has topographic circumstances that reach beyond the illusionary reality of the whole.
Between each of the streets and below each of the grand houses are the disruptions of
modern life from the disorder of lots laid bare by the extraction of gravel (likely for these
same houses), the irregular dwelling with its temporary stairway, piles of scrap lumber
and eroded hillsides.

While not the first to tackle a 360-degree panorama using photographic images,
Muybridge’s strategy bypasses the techniques of many panorama views. Muybridge’s
technical and aesthetic use of structure to compose the panorama alters perception, as did
his motion studies. But this is not to rest squarely on photography as a technical process,

117 David Harris, p. 50.
but more so to bring together simultaneously the conjunction of pictorial abstraction and
the authenticity to the real, and in doing so give credibility to the symbolic. Muybridge,
as other conveyors of panoramic space, was concerned with the role that his panorama
would come to play in physical and social terms, as designated by his selection of a high
vantage point, which was surely not just topographical in his thinking, but political, social
and cultural, as were his Guatemalan sequential pictures, but now with the passing of
temporal space, the viewpoint is no longer Hopkin’s power of place, but belongs to
Muybridge.
Chapter 5
Panorama Photographs of the Modernizing City of Vancouver 1884 – 1939

The horizon of the city expands in a manner comparable to the way in which wealth develops; a certain amount of property increases in a quasi-automatical way in ever more rapid progression.¹

The camera on the waterfront

The panorama photographs examined in the previous chapters largely selected the city of Paris as their point of view—these were the earliest panorama photographs, beginning with the daguerreotype, and were followed soon after by views of San Francisco and other frontier cities of the “new world.” As Vancouver is such a new city, photography has always had a presence on the urban landscape. The legibility that characterizes panorama photographs and their space of representation coincided with Vancouver’s early years of rapid expansion from the 1880s to the end of the 1930s. Vancouver was charted as a city on 16 April 1886; the town site of Granville, its predecessor, was formed in the early 1880s.

One of the earliest photographs of the lower mainland shows a number of sailing ships waiting to load lumber at Moodyville, on the northeast side of Burrard Inlet in 1869. The photograph was copied as an engraving, and published in the Canadian Illustrated News on 1 June 1872.² The large log boom spatially dominating the photograph constitutes the image as a figurative application of synecdoche, in which a part sets out to constitute a larger whole, in this relationship the logs refer to the mill

itself absent from the picture. But spatially the log boom assumes a presence and
authority from its symmetry of form dependent on the diagonal direction of the logs that
encompass the space of the frame reaching from one side to the other. Juxtaposed to the
sharp diagonal forms are horizontal logs that close off the end of the boom by running
parallel to the horizon where ships with their distinguishing tall masts, perhaps taken
from these same shores, are anchored. A large wooden sailing ship located broadside
connects shore to horizon, and additional ships project their wooden hulls and square
rigging to confront the viewer straight on. While not a panorama photograph, the image is
a comprehensive bringing together of space, and also a view that can be associated with
the Dutch pictorial tradition of illustrating the activities and prosperity of seafront
harbours. The photograph transcribed into the engraved graphic image, which was then
published nationally, is a topographical view not yet showing the civic pride of the later
panoramas, but in its own spatial terms demonstrates and promotes a prosperity that
invites development, investment and trading partners through the striking presentation of
marine activity.

I have investigated how the panorama as compositional form mediates the
representation of topographical space by influencing not only what is seen, but also how
things are to be seen. Coupled with this way of seeing is how photography validates our
experience of being there, and in terms of temporal space the photograph enables the
nineteenth century visual sensibility of “being on the spot.” As well, in a panorama,
nothing is to be left out in terms of recording and bringing to visibility.

Photography as representation is understood and circulated through terms of
original and copies, both in reference to the trace of the real now materialized in the
photograph, as well as the circulatory potential of the image with the introduction of paper prints. Oliver Wendell Holmes in 1859 wrote: “There is only one Coliseum or Pantheon; but how many millions of potential negatives have they shed.” The standard format of photography with its essential optics and mechanics derived from the focal point of the camera obscura is a vernacular way of seeing, an image read physically and metaphorically as “putting things into perspective.” Perspective with its long and influential history, before photography and through photography, contributed to its acceptance as a natural realm of vision. In addition, naturalism was fostered through the fragmented cuts and arbitrary framing associated with standard camera technology.

Panorama photographs are usually direct copy prints made directly from the negative, and this determines their size, rather than the standard format of enlarging a negative to achieve the required size. The size of the panorama photograph determines an image not easily reproduced, or transportable, and as well their composition is intricate and their subject matter is limited. A panorama photograph cannot be transposed to the standard photograph in terms of original and copy. Because of the complexities and difficulties of the production of panorama photographs, and secondly their cost, abundant copies did not exist in a corresponding manner to the standard photograph. By recognizing the panorama photograph as quite separate from a standard photograph can it be said correspondingly in any vernacular mediation: “putting things into a panorama.” I think not. On the contrary, this visual space is not yet historicized.

Although I start by examining a number of sequential views, it is the panorama photographs taken with the Cirkut camera that are the central focus of this chapter. These

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photographs are in an archival collection and, as such, are “liberated from use and yet at a more general level and empiricist model of truth prevails. Pictures are atomized, isolated in one way and homogenized in another.”

As a largely unnoticed, or disregarded visual currency of cultural representation, the panorama photographs can be described as temporal space where “The past leaves its traces; time has its own script.” Panorama photographs, as complex traces of place and as a temporal spatial script, in terms of a synoptic sensibility of vision, portray the modern city through the assuredness of photographic truth, which together are able to spatially materialize and control the irrepressible movement of the rapidly modernizing urban landscape.

Panorama photographs have depicted Canadian cities, and these photographs are now in archives across the country, where, for the most part, they are considered as straightforward historical documents that show the expansion of the city over time, and are therefore used and valued for their synoptic views, as well as descriptive details of the camera eye. They function as picture maps of a specific historical time and place. My overall approach is not to trace a history by means of individual photographers, although this does come through to a limited extent in William John Moore’s Cirkut camera photographs. Although he was not the only photographer that used this panorama camera in Vancouver during the early twentieth century, these images form the scope of this chapter. A significant factor in interpreting Moore’s panorama photographs is it can only be surmised who would have commissioned or purchased these photographs, or how these photographs were utilized, or, in fact, viewed and valued. Unlike the panoramas of

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San Francisco there are no written accolades. Some images are directive as to the nature of the commission; the panorama views of the rail yards and roundhouse, the port and wharf facilities, and real estate concessions record the property of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR). Although this cannot be ascertained, or rather because there is not record of these image in the CPR archive in Montreal perhaps discounted as the circumstance of their production of panorama space.

In Vancouver as in other cities, photographers climbed to high points, usually the roofs of newly constructed buildings, and although height was an important factor when selecting the view, the vantage point itself is inseparable from the ownership and authority invested in property. It was these vantage points that enabled the photographer to spatially enclose areas of the city as it grew from forest to wood frame buildings, and after the fire solid brick buildings.

**Sequential panorama photographs of the frontier city of Vancouver**

Captain George Vancouver entered into the waters of Burrard Inlet in 1792. Having sailed from England to meet the Spanish commissioner Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra, to discuss, if not settle, a dispute between claims of occupation and threats of war. Captain Vancouver anchored in the area around Birch Bay, in Washington State, and in two smaller boats continued on to explore the inner waters of Burrard Inlet. On 13 June 1792 these small boat passed through the First Narrows, and Captain Vancouver and his crew camped for one night on the shore near the entrance to Indian Arm. Vancouver
left the next day continuing on with the large boats to survey the coast north as far as Jervis Inlet and Texada Island.

This coastline remained isolated from European settlement until the 1880s. Salish Natives had harvested fish and game in and around Burrard Inlet for thousands of years. Extensive middens at Whoi-Whoi, just inside the First Narrows entrance to Burrard Inlet, near the present site of Lumbermen’s Arch in Stanley Park, indicate that a significant number of Native people used this site for at least five hundred years. An even larger midden on the south slope of Point Grey indicates the presence of Musquem activity extending back at least two thousand years. Snauq, a Squamish Indian village, was established sometime in the early nineteenth century near Kitsilano Point; today this is the area at the south end of Burrard Bridge. The Natives set up fish traps on the sand bars that were later to become Granville Island. In 1869 a small reservation area was established at this site to include the village. It remained so until 1901 when the Provincial Government moved the Native community using a barge and dispersed them to either the Squamish or Capilano reserves. Also displaced was the white settler, Sam Greer, who lived on Kitsilano Beach from 1882 until 1890, when the CPR gained title over the land. Greer went to jail for shooting the sheriff who had come to force him to leave. The area was to be named Kitsilano after Chief Khahtsahanough, whose grandson August Jack was a resident of the village.

European settlement began on the northwest coast in 1859 when Victoria was established as a fort for commercial endeavors on the northwest coast. New Westminster, up the Fraser River, was the first incorporated city, in 1860, in western Canada, and was first proposed as the new capital of the colony of British Columbia,
before finally established in Victoria in 1868. The site that was to become the city of Vancouver remained virtually unaltered first-growth forest, until the 1860s when early settlement in the area began with the cutting of lumber on the northern shore of Burrard Inlet. The city of Vancouver, first known as Granville, arose from the small settlements that were grouped around two sawmills during a twenty-year period from the mid-60s to mid-1880s. On the north side of Burrard Inlet, an American Sewell (Sue) Moody established the first sawmill, which influenced the growth of the small settlement of Moodyville, about half a mile east of Lonsdale Avenue. After Moody’s death it acquired a number of short-term owners and managers, but most, unlike Moody, were unsuccessful in their business ventures and ability to find foreign investors.

A settlement then grew on the south side, after the establishment of the nearby Hastings Mill, and this was to become the town of Granville, to be renamed the city of Vancouver. The city began with a number of saloons and supply stores; by 1875, four of the ten buildings were saloons. Hastings Mill as the central town site served the increasing numbers of loggers and sawmill workers on both sides of the inlet. The destination for most of the lumber from these two mills was San Francisco, the west coast regional centre for commerce and investment.  

It was during the early 1880s, that the first economic development on the frontier edge of what was still a dense forest became the subject of the first panorama photograph of Vancouver, still known as Granville. The first known panorama photograph, composed of two sequential images was taken in 1884, or before August 1885, and the photographer is unknown. The panorama shows a row of one or two story, small wood-framed

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6 Ibid., pp. 7-8. Moody was traveling to San Francisco to market Burrard Inlet lumber and meet with investors when during the night the boat in which he was traveling collided with another.
structures; smoke comes from the chimneys of most of the buildings. A key compiled later by Major. J.S. Matthews in 1939 describes the pioneer settlement as “crowded between forest and shore,” and he charts the location of three hotels, two saloons, a dry goods business, a restaurant, a general store, a Chinese laundry, a Chinese wash house, a general merchandise store and a butcher shop. This was not a residential settlement, for the manager of the sawmill, and other administrators, including the schoolteacher lived in houses above the mills, while the bulk of the population, skilled and unskilled labours were housed in bunkhouses or cabins situated near the mills, now on both sides of the inlet.

The photographer likely set up his camera on one of the long wooden floats extending outward into Burrard Inlet. The sequential two-part panorama foregrounds the long ramps of these docks leading to the row of buildings squatting at the edge of the sea on piles, with the forest crowding snug behind. Panoramas were rarely so easily composed without a high vantage point. Or perhaps, this image of a town site is not a panorama in genre terms of composition and subject matter, but remains a town prospect. Although in the medium of photography, the panorama classification is appropriate. This small frontier settlement could be easily grasped in two collodion-plate negatives. Nevertheless, the settlement in the-mid 1880s was considered important enough to be recorded in a panorama.

The sequential panoramas of Vancouver are most often identifiable through two points of view. They either look north over Burrard Inlet taking a high vantage point positioned within the center of the city, or a view to the south towards the area.

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7 Dist.N19 P30, City of Vancouver Archives. The original photograph is in the Provincial Archives in Victoria. Matthews, the founder and archivist of the City of Vancouver Archives, and seven other individuals provided the key.
circumventing around False Creek. The exception to this are views taken on the south shores of False Creek, at an elevation above the water, in the vicinity where Broadway Street is today, and these views look north over the City to the mountains. The former view was central to picturing the first business and residential section of the city, and the latter was critical to the industrialized economy that was soon to be centralized around False Creek.

Lumber was the mainstay of the economy, and remained the central export commodity from Vancouver, as a port city, throughout the nineteenth century. But the story of early capital development, industrialization and urban growth is the historical situation of how the CPR made Vancouver its transcontinental terminus, and significantly developed the city into an important port, railway terminus, and commercial and investment centre. The CPR negotiated a land transaction of fundamental importance for the whole of Vancouver and the areas circumventing False Creek, in particular. Under the management of William Van Horne, the CPR wanted the profits from land development to benefit the railroad, not private investors. On 13 February 1886 Van Horne quietly signed a deal with the provincial government, and the company was granted about 6,000 acres in exchange for extending the line to Coal Harbour. The first train arrived in the city on 23 May 1887. It was argued at the time, by some, that the CPR didn’t need such generous concessions, as the railway would continue the line anyway to gain the best position to establish a port ideally situated for global trade. But this was only the first concession of many.

The panorama photographs, both sequential and Cirkut, that record CPR development and control over large portions of the city, are records of possession,
authority and control. The rapid transformation of the area began immediately after the completion of the CPR line. In 1855 surveys of the proposed town site established the urban grid of the downtown peninsula focusing the city centre around Granville Street. By the following year real estate speculation rapidly followed, with the CPR leading the way surveying and selling lots, and establishing forms of governance by starting to clear land and construct streets, at first relying on the plentiful supply of wood planks.

Panorama photographs composed from sequential images began to visualize the city as a place to settle, work and invest in commercial endeavors. In 1886, a few weeks before the fire that swept through the city on 13 June 1886, a panorama photograph of three parts records the now established Hastings Mill with the H.B.C. steamer, the Beaver, tied up at the dock in front. In the central image of the sequence, a very narrow row of businesses and houses are located on the waterfront with the forest close behind. The central town site area, including two new hotels, demonstrates the growing density and commercial importance of the city. This panorama repeats the town site area that was shown in the 1884 or 1885 panorama, although now the business section has expanded along the waterfront. The vantage point is unclear; perhaps this panorama view was taken from a large trading ship anchored at a short distance from the land, as the point of view towards the shore is slightly above the rowboat and the canoe situated on the water. The 1886 fire destroyed most of the buildings depicted in this panorama, including the section of the forest circumventing the waterfront.

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8 The railway persuaded the Bank of Montreal to build on Granville Street, the central thoroughfare of the companies’ properties. The CPR built a hotel and an opera house on Granville Street. By 1889, CPR officials and their friends invested in building two large privately owned office buildings on Granville Street.
9 David Mattison, p. 34.
The fire that destroyed most of the city was thought to have started from bush-clearing fires near where Burrard Street is today. The fire rapidly spread east leaving the West End still heavily timbered and swampy. Only a few months later the city began to be rebuilt, and this time largely in brick construction. Almost contradictory considering the crises at hand, but remarkably advanced in planning, one of the first actions of the city council, Vancouver was now incorporated, was the city to request from the Dominion government that the land put aside a few years earlier as a reserved area now become a park. In June 1887 they agreed, and Stanley Park was officially opened to the public a year later. In the same year the first passenger train from Montreal arrived in Vancouver.

Around April of 1887, H.T. Devine, a commercial photographer in Vancouver working with Brock and Company, produced a two-part panorama, the first known high view, probably taken from the roof of the Leland House, a hotel located on the south side of Hastings Street just west of Seymour.\footnote{David Mattison, p. 38. I use Mattison’s identification of the buildings in these early sequential panoramas.} A northeast view of the waterfront fills the left side of the panorama, and depicts remarkable growth of the central business section over one year, since the last panorama. Seymour Street extends north to Burrard Inlet, and Hastings Street extends eastward. Where these streets intersect on the southeast side is the Bank of British Columbia, a large brick building under construction, but already looming much larger than the other buildings to function as a frontier symbol of civilization, is the central feature of the right section of the panorama.\footnote{Not related to the present Bank of British Columbia.} Water is at a distance in this panorama; the sighting of the tip of False Creek, which at that time...
extended further east, binds, although does not connect, to the water frontage of Burrard Inlet in the left section.

In 1889, a two-part panorama photograph, taken by the Bailey Brothers, records the city from the roof of the second Hotel Vancouver building. The left photograph shows Howe Street extending down to a bluff above the ocean. The families that had gained significant wealth from the railway and real estate had built grand houses on these waterfront properties. Nearby is the residence of the Japanese and American consulate, identified through flags. Moving west to Granville Street, the image shows the Van Horne Block, a four-storey building associated with the CPR, which was constructed in the summer of 1888. Granville Street extending through to Georgia then down to the waterfront is explicit in the left image sequence. On the east side of Granville are a number of three- and four-storey brick buildings also constructed in 1888: the New York Block, the Simpson Block and the Crew Block. The much smaller wood-frame building on the south side of these three buildings is a saloon. The large empty lot at the northeast corner of Granville and Georgia is the future home of the Hudson’s Bay Company. Then moving east Seymour Street extends down from Georgia Street to the port, and beyond is a mixed business and residential area. Prominent with its tall spire, an element that has characterized prospect and panorama views since their origins, is the Holy Rosary Church on Homer Street.

In 1890 a two-part panorama similar to the previous view is likely also taken from the Vancouver Hotel. Howe Street dominates the view on the right, but unlike the 1889 image shows far denser residential growth reaching westward with Coal Harbour and

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12 The panorama is in the Vancouver Public Library historical photographic collection. The original photographs are backed with linen and displayed in an album.
Stanley Park behind. As in the previous panorama, the largest and grandest houses are grouped in a small area near the waterfront at the foot of Howe Street. Granville Street extends north to the water with the Manor House Hotel, the dominant building, on Howe and Dunsmuir Streets in the right image.

In 1892 a four-part panorama, also taken by the Bailey Brothers, illustrates a view looking east from the roof of the four-storey Lefevre Block at the corner of Hastings and Seymour. The extensive sweep of the Burrard Inlet waterfront, now the business district, with a number of ships docked at the wharves spread along the shore, dominates the left image. In the foreground of this sequential view is the Wulffsohn Block built in 1887 for the private banking firm of Wulffsohn & Bewicke. The United States Consulate Office identified by its flag occupies part of this building. In the forefront of the next sequential image, moving to the right, the very broad unadorned, brick rear wall of the Thompson-Ogle Block, built in 1889, dominates with most of the view by filling the image completely and extending slightly higher than the vantage point. The signage identifies it as the Vancouver Loan, Trust, Savings & Guarantee Company, a partnership between J.W. Horne, R.G. Tatlow and H.T. Ceperley, three of the most influential and wealthy real estate agents, with strong connections to the CPR. Behind this brick structure the city reaches out to the horizon. In the next sequential image, brick buildings line Hastings Street running east, with the Bank of British Columbia visible at Hastings and Richards Street. In the last of the four panorama images, the building in the foreground is the Bank of Montreal building constructed in 1887. This was the only brick building depicted in Devine’s earlier 1887 panorama of the same area. A number of churches with their tall
spires dot the extensive spread of residential houses that now reach through the distant southeast view.

In 1893 the distant view characterizes a four-part panorama of the city taken from the rise of Fairview slopes across the waters of False Creek, by the Richard Henry Trueman & Norman Caple photographic partnership. The controversial CPR Kitsilano Trestle built in 1886 to carry the CPR trains across the narrows at the west point of False Creek in the panorama image. The company’s unrealized plan was to build ocean docks on the point in the area of Kitsilano. The CPR trestle bridge clashed with the vision of transportation and industry that the City Council had for the north shore of False Creek. The bridge blocked the entrance into False Creek for larger sailing ships and coastal steamers, although small tugs and schooners could still enter when the swing span was floated aside. Vancouver’s City Council offered the CPR a thirty-year tax-exempt status on the seventy-five acres of the company’s land on the north side of False Creek to take the bridge down. The conflict was not settled until October of 1898, and only with additional concessions did the CPR finally remove the bridge.

An area set back from the False Creek water frontage in the western section of the panorama is an area controlled by the CPR that is still without settlement. When it was granted to the Company in 1885, a small group of settlers had begun to make improvements on the land, but under the concessions acceded with this transfer of land the government paid most settlers to abandon their claim. The eastern area of the panorama contains the False Creek water frontage with the CPR’s roundhouse and workshops on the north shore of False Creek. On the far right, at the very eastern end of False Creek, is an area of dense industrial growth. Here the Westminster Avenue Trestle,
a low timber trestle and a large bridge for the time, built in 1876, crosses False Creek. The bridge, in the area of where Main Street is today, was built to carry the road through from to New Westminster. The bridge was finally removed in 1909 when the east end of False Creek began to be filled in, as recorded by Moore in a series of Cirkut panoramas.

With urban expansion increasingly taking place on the south shore of False Creek two additional sequential panoramas were taken in 1898 and 1910. The images of the 1898 panorama were taken from the fire hall in Mount Pleasant, and the 1910 panorama from Cambie Street and 12th Avenue area, that was to become Fairview slopes.

In all of the sequential panorama taken between 1884 to 1910, discussed here, a twelve-year span of time, the images record rapid growth, first on the shores of Burrard Inlet, then reaching southward to False Creek, and finally the Fairview and Mount Pleasant southern slopes beyond. These sequential panoramas show the city’s permanence and progress. Although there is no certainty in who commissioned or had access to these photographs, the topographical city views of these panorama photographs share utility, intent and visual scope with the promotional bird’s-eye maps of Vancouver made during the same time period. In an 1890 bird’s-eye map the grid system of streets is surrounded by water to the north and south. Framing the rectangular grid of the map are the businesses that had subscribed to this promotional device, a key at the lower edge of the map identifies each. Not to be outdone the newspaper, in 1898, Vancouver World, published a bird’s-eye view of Vancouver, but largely omitted the significant presence of the railway, rather giving emphasis to the harbour and its marine traffic.\(^{13}\) The first of these illustrated maps, shows the built environment of Granville and Hastings Street, using architecture as a symbolic record of city growth, while the second includes a grid

\(^{13}\) These maps are included in Derek Hayes, pp. 56-57.
system of the city, but gives visual emphasis to commercial trade and transportation with
graphic sailing ships and steamers docked at or approaching the port facilities. A
recession occurred between the times the two maps were published so changes in the city
grid are minimum.

William John Moore’s Cirkut photographs of Vancouver

William John Moore worked as a commercial photographer with a specialization in
panoramas taken with a Cirkut camera between 1913 and 1953. Born in 1887, in Bryson,
Quebec, Moore moved with his parents and siblings to DeWinton, Alberta ca. 1901.
Bryon Harmon, a well-known commercial photographer, married Moore’s older sister
Maude in 1907, and Moore began working with him at his Banff studio in 1911. In 1912
Moore, along with his parents and several brothers and sisters moved west, following an
older brother already living in Vancouver. Moore soon established a commercial
photography studio out of his home at East 21 Avenue. In 1913 he purchased a Kodak No
8 Cirkut camera, and panorama views became a specialized area of his photographic
work for at least fifteen years. Moore worked on his own until mid-1915, then formed a
partnership with Wilfred F. McConnell; together they purchased the Canadian Photo
Company, then owned by O.J. Rognon and Fred P. Stevens. Their partnership was
dissolved in 1921, with McConnell continuing to operate under the Canadian Photo
Company until 1933. Percy Bentley, with the Dominion Photo Company, also specialized
in panoramas using the Cirkut camera, although the subject matter was usually group
portraits, or “portraits” of trucks lined up in long row.
Moore went on to establish a commercial studio in the Winch Building at 420 West Hastings Street. He produced Photostat reproductions as part of the business, providing "legal, accurate, economical" copies of charts, drawings, maps, usually pertaining to shipping information. William Read became his assistant eventually purchasing the business when Moore retired in 1953. Matthews in a commemorative text on the occasion of the death of Moore's wife, Josephine Bishop, in 1945, comments on the assistance that Moore provided to the archives during the 1930s and 40s:

Mr. Moore had done all the photography required by the City Archives, and had done it not only very well, but very splendidly. All the hundreds of negatives of re-photographed old photographs of early Vancouver have been done by him…I remember, in 1933, I told him I wanted some photography done, but was without money to pay for it. (It was the time when the City Council granted me $25 a month for salary, expenses and all else). They were the hard years for the City Archives, when many scoffed, and others were amused. Mr Moore told me to bring to him what I wanted done. I ran up a bill of nearly $200 and it went unpaid for eighteen months. Then, one day I paid it all….It was such men and such acts which permitted the City Archives to retain the spark of life during those hard, lean unappreciated years. 14

Although Moore first began taking panorama photographs with a Cirkut camera in 1913, usually views from high vantage points, he was not the first. H.O. Dodge, from Sydney, Nova Scotia, visited Vancouver briefly and took panorama images of the downtown area with a Cirkut camera in 1912. 15 Before discussing Moore's panorama photographs, the Cirkut camera requires description and explanation in general terms of technology, usage and capabilities.

14 City of Vancouver Archives, Major Matthews collection, Add. MSS. 54, Topical files, 504-G-4 file 243, Moore, William J., photographer, citation from Major Mathews, the founder and first archivist.
15 Two Cirkut panoramas by Dodge are in the City of Vancouver Archives. They are both topographical city views.
Patented in 1904 the Cirkut camera was initially manufactured by the Rochester Panoramic Camera, New York, which later merged with the Century Camera Company.\footnote{Bill McBride, “Panorama Cameras 1843 – 1994, http://www.panoramicphoto.com.timeline.htm; Bill McBride, “Panorama Cameras, http://www.cirkutpanorama.com/cameras.htm/} Two years later, Century became part of the Eastman Kodak Company, which manufactured the camera until 1941. Six models were manufactured; four were exclusively for panoramas. Two models were called Cirkut Outfit, and had a Graphic Double Plate Holder for 6 by $8\frac{1}{2}$ inch glass plate negatives, as well as a panorama attachment that used roll film to produce nitrate negatives. The film was usually 20.32 cm (8in.) high, and could extend up to 243.84 cm (8 ft.) long. The Cirkut Outfit was manufactured between 1907 and 1927, and was originally priced at 175.00 American dollars.

Moore used a Cirkut No 8 Outfit. Since Von Martens panorama camera of 1844, a number of cameras with revolving lens technologies were developed and significantly advanced, but the Cirkut camera was the most well known and most widely used commercially. Cirkut cameras were constructed from mahogany wood; the exterior was protected with high quality leather, and the interior finely manufactured and varnished to emphasize the wood’s natural grain. The camera was mounted on a circular track on a tripod. The attachment for making Cirkut negatives consisted of a box, which contained the motor for revolving the camera on the tripod, while at the same time winding the film from the spool to the receiving drum. A small “governor” located in the film box controlled the speed of the motor. Exposures of $1/2$, $1/4$, $1/6$, $1/8$, $1/9$ and $1/12$ of a second could be made.
To start the motor, a key placed in the back panel of the film box regulated the vertical exposure slot. As the internal clockwork motor pulled the roll film past the exposure slot counter-clockwise at a pre-selected speed, the camera was set to rotate in the opposite direction clockwise on the geared tripod at the same relative speed that the roll film moves past the exposure slot. In this way, the portion of the film that is being exposed is stationary. While the camera could take up to 360-degree angles of view, this was rarely done, although Moore took a number of these views. The sliding scale of measurement that encircled the tripod top enabled the photographer to determine in advance the amount of film required for negatives of different lengths with lens of various foci. The No. 8 could make negatives up to 243.84 cm (8 ft.) long and use 20.32 cm (8 in.) film. The prints were contact, or the height and width of the negative was the same as the finished print. More than one exposure, side by side, could also be made on the same roll of film, which would later be cut.

The Cirkut camera received its name from the word circuit, already patented and applied to the concept of route or path around something, such as the military practice of documenting by photographs, or other means, troop maneuvers and tents. Cirkut was then an adaptation from the unavailable word circuit. Such views demanded a specialized approach, or in other words these activities could best be grasped as a panorama. Albumen prints, of military maneuvers, from collodion plate negatives, were taken by the nineteenth-century photographer Gustave Le Gray, who was commissioned, in 1857, by Napoleon III to photograph troops at the Camp de Chalons, just east of Paris. As many early photographers, Le Gray’s training as a painter influenced how he approached photography from composition to tonality print. His highly acclaimed nineteenth-century
photographs of seascapes and forests are largely ephemeral records of textures, light and shadow. The photographic views showing Napoleon’s troops on their vast military training grounds are equally ephemeral with this subject matter moving between material record and aesthetic form. Central to all these photographs is the reliance of a horizon line distinctly dividing the frame.

Le Gray’s nineteenth-century photographs were compiled as an album of wide-angle views, along with an eight-sequence panorama. The immensity of the wide, flat planes are laid out for observation. The men on horseback and the tents of the cavalry hold uncertain reading of detail, and are also set back at a distance. The photographs are without clear comprehension or the topographical monumentality of space that usually characterizes the panorama. Eugenia Parry Janis describes these photographs as: “keeping a distance and allowing his acute sense of alignment, as it unified the columns of the cavalry, to weigh each row of riders against the horizon line…Many of Le Gray’s compositions of maneuvers seem like simplified codifications of the battle commands and engagements…rather than representations of actual events.” In 1858 Adrian Pascal comments in a similar agency of activity rather than static image: “The terrain of a camp should be a theatre of practical study, independent of the aids provided by topographical maps; the glance alone should decide everything.” Space is not directed at a formalized interpretation, but is represented by Le Grey as an intuitive response, applied to the viewer, and when transposed to the soldier, or his commander, this becomes the ability to grasp or approach landscape quickly and efficiently, or the panorama as a “practical

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study.” Facilitated by this ambiguous space of representation is the glance, as if the battle was taking place and decisions needed to be vital and quick.

**Tracing the tracks of the Canadian Pacific Railway**

During the 1940s and 50s Moore donated 370 Cirkut negatives and 397 panorama photographs to the City of Vancouver Archives. A small number of these remarkable photographs are considered here. Unfortunately most often these images are only illustrated by a “portion” of the image; portion is the archive’s designation for part of the panorama. The portion was made for reproduction purposes requested for previous research that focused on only a part when setting out to illustrate specific buildings, or a topographical area within the panorama view. The portion omits large sections of the whole, which due to the unfamiliarity or perhaps a failure to grant the panorama a specific presence as image, as composition, takes out sections of the image. Not in touch with cultural history of the panorama, the first section to go is the roof from which the photograph was taken (the designation of “on the spot”), and then the broader topography of the urban surrounding the buildings under analysis, which alter the totality of the city view. The panorama is about the interrelationship between all the parts of the city, not just the detail under the historical microscope.

Moore was a commercial photographer engaged largely in taking panoramas of Vancouver and the lower mainland using the Cirkut camera, but he also processed other photographic applications meeting requests upon demand. Moore’s panoramas are

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19 The archive’s statistical analysis of subject matter in Moore’s collection lists 202 photographs of Vancouver, and 73 of this total are views of the city itself. The lower mainland provided subject matter for 125 of the photographs, 1 photograph was taken in Alberta, and 3 remain unknown locations.
topographic and architectural views, and they explore site location, growth and future
development, and the content was knowledge leading to a record of place. Aligned with
the recording aspect of the photograph as fact, these panoramas function as maps,
although we cannot be sure who the audiences were for these vast photographs.

The pictorial distinction and historical situation of these panorama photographs is
the modern city, and the stimulus to viewing the original photographs initiates embodied
experience. While the panorama photograph has an economic, social and cultural basis of
representation, the mode of perception that I engage when picturing the modern city is
inseparable from experimentation with time and space. Leading up to these scans of the
cityscape and also giving them contemporary context through movement and embodied
vision are other pictorial practices of photography during the nineteenth century.

Early influences are the work of Etienne-Jules Marey’s scientific investigations
attempting to translate movement into scientific data, as well as Eadweard Muybridge’s
pictorial motion studies, now more closely aligned with aesthetics of visual art. Both
became sources of interest in early modernist art by shifting space and realizing the
contingency of time. Marcel Duchamp’s *Nude Descending a Staircase* and Giacomo
Balla’s *Dynamism of a Dog on a Leash*, both painted in 1912, are two examples; many
others could be added both before and after this date.

There is no way of being certain of Moore’s working process or opportunities for
commission, or knowing what he might have taken on speculation. But these panorama
images are all topographical space documenting property, prosperity and power. Moore
himself expressed recognition of these sentiments when advertising his photographic
business. Progress and prosperity arise from the “hard work of its citizens,” he writes, but
overall, as these panoramas demonstrate, the jobs are almost entirely dependent on the vast influx of capital under the control of the CPR:

Plain Truth... Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow! These words hold deep meaning for Canadians today, when so many people are listening to ideas and “isms” that would undermine the pillars of industry and enterprise. Canada’s progress and prosperity is due to the industry, enterprise and hard work of its citizens. This is what has created thousands of well-paid jobs which never could have existed without the hope of reward encouraging men on to greater efforts. Courage, thrift and individual enterprise have raised our standards of living to what they are today.20

In many ways Moore’s promotional strategy was in line with economic growth dependent upon technical advancements brought by the railway and the port, all largely controlled by the CPR, by the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. The many jobs connected with the CPR are not separate from Moore’s “pillars of industry and enterprise,” but neither are small businesses such as his own. The “isms” that Moore mentions are the threat of labour unrest. Robert McDonald in Making Vancouver, 1863 – 1913 describes the city as retaining elements to its “‘frontier’ past longer than most cities in spite of its increasing separation into groups ranked by wealth, education and influence that was accelerated by the coming of the railway. He describes the Dominion Day parades of the late nineteenth century as crossing class lines, and each group taking pride in some aspect of boosterism from entrepreneurs to “ordinary citizens” celebrating their “achievement as city builders.”21 He continues this argument noting that up until 1913, Vancouver remained “a new society where expectations of material

betterment lessened awareness of class differences.” Yet to emphasize business opportunities and power alone he writes is not to “ignore social relations,” and especially the “ideological and structural conditions” that characterized prewar Vancouver. This was the historical situation when Moore moved to Vancouver, and started his commercial photography practice.

In order to investigate the relations of capital expressed in these panorama photographs, and responded to by the audiences or viewers of panoramas, I want to return briefly to review my earlier discussion of painted panoramas during the nineteenth century, and their role in picturing city space amid the increasingly global inroads of capital, which was the temporal space in which panoramas of urban views replaced prospects of towns. In his 1825 prospectus for the panorama of London, from St. Paul’s Cathedral, Thomas Horner claimed: “to unfold the vast resources of empire, in the countless traces of its commerce, its manufactures, and trade; to exhibit the productiveness of its public revenues, through the grand national spirit of industry and enterprise.” Horner is marking out a “space of production” for his panorama by not describing a cartographic or descriptive “reality,” but rather global economic and political conditions, of which he positions the city of London, and describes the means through which this panorama view contributes to early globalization, and this is 1825. The other side to this boosterism is explained by Peter Hales when he writes of the “grand urban style” photographs of Charles Dudley Arnold in Chicago, 1892: “The urban grand style began as a visual expression of hope for the city. Yet it reached its purest distillation as a

22 Ibid., p. 234.
justification for ignoring the secret horrors, which lay beneath its glittering surface or just outside the frame."²⁴ The frame includes everything in panorama space because it is inclusive and filled with expectations; in the panorama nothing is to be omitted, in other words, the image has a full presence leaving no room for doubt or "horrors." How does the viewer become integrated, through these terms, into the city when viewed as a panorama with its deeply illusory yet objective decipherment of space? How does the viewer of this space unite capital and labour through this pleasure in seeing, and how does the panorama also act to control space making separations between capital and labour no longer so sharply distinct, yet retaining in its conjunction of illusion and reality, the power of cohesion and control leading to possession and authority?

Moore began to take panorama photographs of the city of Vancouver in 1913. Often Moore placed his camera on a tall building with the point of view facing either north or south, comparative to views taken by the earlier nineteenth-century sequential panorama photographs. These topographical views were inseparable from the pervasive or, more emphatically, the powerful economic influences of the CPR. The view to the south brings panoramic legibility to the rail yards and the industry of False Creek. The view to the north depicts the increasing density of the business district and port, the CPR docks. Although documentation cannot establish these views as commissions, early Vancouver was a CPR town built, owned and operated. Documentation of CPR structures must have surely been the source of commissions. The Cirkut views of the city connect space to place through the passage of capital upon the topography of the city, from the lumber mills that largely shaped the first phase of industry, then transportation centered on the railway and its yards, with the docks extending trade globally, and finally the

²⁴ Peter B. Hales, p. 150.
accumulation, development and sale of real estate, both industrial, commercial and residential.

In 1913, and then again an undated image ca. 1914, Moore photographed the city as a panorama from the top of the Dominion Trust Building at Homer and Pender to depict a view of the city looking north over the harbour (fig. 8). Moore when taking this panorama on 30 July 1932 positioned his camera on the roof of the Dominion Trust Building, at Homer and Pender Street. Two earlier panorama views from the same vantage point were taken in 1913 and 1914. The view shows significant growth from that time, although the panorama was taken during the Great Depression of the 1930s, which was associated with global fears of revolutions, Communism and labour unrest, internationally and in Vancouver. A key was compiled by the City of Vancouver Archives in 1995 (I list only part of the buildings included in the key): the Holy Rosary Cathedral, Dunsmuir Hotel, Vancouver Block, Hudson’s Bay Company, Vancouver Hotel (2nd), Georgia Hotel, Hotel Vancouver (3rd), Devonshire Hotel, Marine Building, Standard Building, Kelly Douglas and Company Ltd., Bank of Montreal, Dominion Bank Building, Woodward’s Building, Province Building, World Building. Between the years 1913 to 1916 Moore photographed construction projects of the CPR. The Vancouver’s waterfront now depicts the CPR Station and Pier D under construction at the foot of Granville and Cordova Street.

Moore photographed the development of Shaughnessy Heights in 1911, and again in 1919, showing the CPR’s urban development of this area with its upper class provisions that set firm stipulations on who can purchase these lots and what can be

constructed. The large lots and curvilinear street system that took the natural contours of the land for its directive was a successful bid by the CPR to lure the wealthy from the West End, an area already acquiring a few apartment blocks. First offered for sale in 1909, between 1911 and 1914 many prominent business and professional families built new homes in Shaughnessy, grandly articulating different styles of English architecture. In Moore’s panorama taken in 1911 a number of houses are under construction, and the photograph depicts Hycroft Manor one of the earliest to be built, and completed by 1912. This was the home of lumber baron, A.D. McRae, and cost $250,000, and expressed in exuberant fashion the prewar business community’s “boundless optimism” for the city and its future.²⁶

Moore’s early panorama photographs of downtown and the False Creek area depict Vancouver’s prewar industrial prosperity in the 1913 panorama of the Vancouver waterfront with the CPR station and Pier D under construction. When taking a 360-degree panorama photograph the following year Moore was standing on the roof of the second Hotel Vancouver building (begun in 1912; opened for business in 1916). The hotel was not yet complete, when Moore made a 360-degree view of the city from the roof top garden (fig. 9). The wood frame latticework of the garden roof is visible at both ends of the scan.²⁷ The Cirkut camera has an innate tendency to bend space, and the image looking north depicts Howe Street, Seymour Street and Hornby Street as skewed through the curvilinear scope of the image, for when making the scan fully around the horizon line the streets no longer run strictly parallel. Misleading, yes, but the streets facing north to south, finally terminate at Burrard Inlet. The image derives much of its

²⁶ Robert A.J. McDonald, p. 156. It is now the home of the University Women’s Club of Vancouver.
²⁷ The Hotel Vancouver (2nd) was soon to be turned into a government administration building during WWII, and torn down in 1949.
effect from scale, if distortion fails to uphold the full impact of the real, such monumental accommodations of space had other virtues. The city was enclosed from the high view giving the image a spatial relationship to realize all its parts, as a symbol of spatial density preserved as a totalizing aesthetic.

The first phase of the CPR Drake Street Round House was built in 1888 with the completion of the railway. A panorama view of False Creek, looking south, with the rail yards, terminal workshops and roundhouse in the foreground was taken on 19 April 1916 (fig. 10). The image is 20.32 cm (8 in.) high and a 86.36 cm (34 in.) portion of the total scan, with 25.4 cm (10 in.) cropped on the right and 30.48 cm (12 in.) on the left side, making the total panorama 144.78 cm (57 in.) wide. Today the roundhouse is the community center for Concord Pacific development on the north side of False Creek, another type of real estate monopoly, although much smaller than the CPR’s historic control of land in Vancouver, reaching between Burrard Inlet and the north and south slopes of False Creek.

After 1915 the CPR was no longer the sole transcontinental railway serving Vancouver, but competitors were hindered from entering the downtown core due to the CPR control over land within the central area of the city. False Creek, which was then much larger than it is today, was proposed as the solution to provide additional land and therefore access to the city by other railways than the CPR. Although, one of the first civic plans for False Creek was to deepen the basin and establish a series of docks on the shore, this plan was quickly shunted aside when the city received a proposal from the Great Northern Railway requesting a semicircular piece of land at the eastern basin of False Creek, in all 61 acres. An agreement was reached in February 1913. The railway
was to reclaim the tidal land through fill, return 35 acres to the city, and purchase the remaining area for one dollar. In exchange it agreed to build a large terminal station, establish a trans-Pacific steamship service within eight years, and construct a double-track, electrified rail line from the Fraser River to False Creek. The track took two years to complete due to the poor financial situation of the company.  

Moore took two panoramas of the partial reclamation at the eastern end of False Creek on August 1916 and March 1917. In the second panorama the Great Northern Railway station is almost completed (fig. 11). The Canadian Northern Pacific Railway station foundation remains to be built at the site of crane. This is just a section of this high view panorama; the image portion 20.32 cm (8 in.) high, and 55.8 cm (22 in.), making the overall image 137.16 cm (54 in.). Cropped right is 48.26 cm (19 in.) is and 33.02 cm (13 in.) left. As in most cities of this era the railway station was a monumental form referencing classical architecture in order to provide a symbolic gateway demonstrating the city’s industrial and commercial prosperity. An area around the station would then be suitably transformed as an offsetting vista incorporating a small park.

In 1859 George Richards had surveyed False Creek and described the sandbars as forming an island at low tide during at least half of the day. The Granville Street Bridge was completed in January 1889, and crossed False Creek over the sandbars. Changes began to take place immediately after the bridge was open when a number of businessmen began to drive piles for an island with plans to use the reclaimed land as a shingle and sawmill, and booming grounds. Without permission the men acted quickly, thinking once the work was done it would be too late to go back. The CPR intervened

28 Derek Hayes, pp. 101-102.
29 Derek Hayes, p. 104.
rapidly using federal connections to bring infill activity to a halt. This action was unexpected, as the CPR’s William Cornelius Van Horne had earlier described all of False Creek as “useless,” and recommended that it should be completely filled in. But with this prompting of unauthorized use, and competitive views, Ottawa realized the potential of the site, and proposed public use, but public was not the present market and tourist destination, but industrial land not presently controlled by the CPR. In 1915 a bulkhead wall was built around the sandbars and dredges dragged up fill from False Creek. Although Ottawa stopped the work at one point because of increasing war costs (WW1 was from 1914 to 1918) in 1916 the island was completed, and quickly became just as industrial as the shores of False Creek.30

Moore’s panorama of the construction of Granville Island is an exceptional display of composition and form. The high vantage point is the second Granville Bridge built in 1909. The steel trusses of the overhead supports fill the centre and overhead foreground of the photograph. Below is the fill not yet completed within the frame of the bulkhead wall that stretches left and right, and seems to link up with the overhead bridge network. On the right, in the distance, are Kitsilano and the Native reservation. As Parisians mourned the loss of old Paris, False Creek would be its compatriot site for Vancouver citizens. Although the two are broadly dissimilar, the first a medieval architecture, and the second, a broad waterway, nevertheless, it is one area of Vancouver that might most easily kindle a sense of loss—how did it look—for an entirely different waterway encompassed the False Creek area. Vancouver was more of an island surrounded to the east by mud flats where a canoe could be paddled across at high tide. Of course, with the last twenty years additional changes has altered the area moving False

30 Granville Island, as the place we know today, opened in July 1979.
Creek from tidal waterway and mud flat, to industrial wasteland, to defining Vancouver as the city of glass.

Before the building became the Sylvia Hotel in 1936, the Sylvia Court Apartments was one of the first high-rise apartment buildings in the West End. When Moore took a panorama of the building in 19 July 1919 it was decorated for the Great Peace Celebrations held in Stanley Park the same month. Although the armistice on 11 November 1919 ended WW I, the influenza epidemic brought a year’s postponement of peace celebration to take place the following summer. The panorama view was likely taken from the English Bay pier erected in 1909 and demolished in 1939 (fig. 12). The apartment building in Moore’s panorama stands alone and unattended without its current high-rise companions. English Bay is a sweeping expanse of water with small boats, a wharf and swimmers, just as it would be found in the summer months today.

In June 1921 Moore photographed Vancouver from the World Building, later the Sun Tower, at 100 West Pender Street (fig. 13). Built in 1911 – 1912, the structure laid claim to be the tallest building in the world, and this was most likely the reason Moore selected this viewpoint. Or was this panorama taken on as a commission from the newspaper that occupied the building? The World Building was built for the newspaper *Vancouver World*, becoming the Sun Tower when the *Vancouver Sun* made it their headquarters. Moore took two views, one looking south, the other north. In the view looking south, the panorama photograph illustrated here, he depicts the Georgia Viaduct, already a curvilinear form, but which now demonstrates even more clearly the convergence of space that takes place in the scanning movement of the panorama scope.
produced with this camera. The illustration shows a panorama photograph of 15.24 cm (6 in.) high and 99.06 cm (39 in.) long.

The viaduct was constructed by the city in 1915 in order to extend Georgia Street over the CPR’s rail yards, but never of sound construction it soon deteriorated so much it was supported by timbers to try and limit further decay and halt falling concrete. The panorama depicts the industrial land of False Creek. The sign Wood Vallance-Leggat Contractors and Logging Supplies identifies the rectangular building in the foreground, and across the water to the right is the Coughlan Shipyards. In 1918 Moore took four panoramas of the shipyard located at the foot of Columbia Street on the south side of False Creek. Steel framed buildings were their first commodity, but after the outbreak of WWI they converted to steel framed ships building twenty-one between 1917 and 1921. The company was credited after the war for delivering to the British Government the greatest tonnage of freight vessels by any firm in the Dominion. In the same year and likely from the same vantage point, Moore took a view over the city looking north depicting the Vancouver School of Art, Victory Square, the Dominion Bank Building and Woodward’s department store.

On 29 July 1939 Moore took a panorama photograph of the Fairview and Mount Pleasant areas from the roof of City Hall, at 12th Avenue and Cambie Street, which was constructed three years earlier (Fig. 14). The image shown is a portion of the larger panorama with 11.43 cm (4½ in.) cropped off the right side and 25.4 cm (10 in.) on the right, the roof deck where the camera was set up. The art deco building was constructed

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31 Chuck Davis, p. 314. The Georgia Viaduct was replaced with the present structure in 1972.
32 The Western Canada Shipyards were also the subject of a three panoramas by Moore taken between 1917 and 1918. Building wooden, not steel hulled boats, the yard constructed six steamers for the Imperial Munitions Board.
in 1935-36, and, in part, it celebrated a larger amalgamated city with the joining of the municipalities of South Vancouver and Point Grey.

The CPR docks began to constructed on Burrard Inlet when the rail line was completed. Moore took a series of panorama photographs of the CPR Pier D under construction in 1913 and 1914. Beginning in 1925 and extending to 1931, Moore photographed at least 22 panorama photographs of the Terminal Dock, at the foot of Nanaimo Street. Ships transported mail, lumber and general cargo, both local commodities, and wheat and manufactured goods sent to Vancouver by rail for shipment to Pacific Rim countries. The Canadian Pacific Steamship Company was formed on the coast with a fleet of ex-Cunard liners; these were steamships bringing, tea, silk and other commodities, from the Orient, and machinery from England. In 1891 the CPR established its famous Empress Line with the ships Empress of India, Empress of China and the Empress of Japan. The loading of cargo was dependent on longshoreman carting 250-pound sacks by hand, for Vancouver’s harbour was not the container pier it is today. The container, initially introduced in the United States, was established as a world standard for cargo by the end of the 1950s. The use of shipping containers brought regularization to the harbour and served to make not just the cargo but ports less visible.33

Panoramas as photographic archive

Panorama photographs are buried in archives throughout the western world, and little is known about them. To understand how the city is rendered transparent through these

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33 Alan Sekula, *Fish Story* (Hamburg: Richter Verlag, 1996). Sekula describes in text and photographs, the role of cargo containers as a central element in transforming maritime space and global networks of trade.
spectacular images the panorama demands consideration as urban paradigm and mechanism of space that is purged of all modern conditions of unpredictability, instability and uncertainty. The historical archival context by definition recognizes panoramas as topographical views of cities, rather than a pictorial form characterized by a slippage between a recording panoptic space of discipline and power and an aesthetic totalization leading to visual pleasure, or correspondingly a documentary historical record as well as an aesthetic space of illusion. Thus an archival depository of historical fact permits or, in fact, advocates researchers of local history to take the “portion” of the whole to suit their documentary needs. This is the diminishing of the photographic medium to a topographic task. In a recent publication *Historical Atlas of Vancouver and the Lower Fraser Valley*, Derek Hayes, educated as a geographer and a former urban planner with the City of Vancouver, includes a number of Moore’s photographs without cropping, although in using these photographs Moore is usually not identified as the photographer of these wide view images that cross over two large pages. What interests me is the closer understanding of these photographs by a geographer who recognizes them as a type of map, and consequently an acceptance of the whole rather than portion, for a map exists through its coordinates which perceive the surveying process as a whole. The relationship between the pictorial composition of the panorama, and the very localized historical record or situation, which I examined in this chapter, is itself a mapping process of space over time. These panorama photographs taken during the twentieth century belonged to a visual culture mediating and facilitating a panoptic mapping of urban space, and then transforming this space into symbolic representation that provide in its abstract form the notion of prosperity for all, and a benign portrayal of
progress. This was the achievement of the panorama, its legibility, or if you prefer its utopic illusion, and together these mediated a mechanism of normalization.
Conclusion
Space, Structure and Seeing, the Panorama and Digital Space

Exploring the panorama’s role as a significant and influential genre of representing the modernizing city of the nineteenth- and early twentieth century identifies a specific historical representation of city space located between ca. 1789 and 1939. I trace the panorama through nineteenth-century sources to reference optics and vision, space and views. I extend the panorama image to examine precursors and influences selecting those with a history of topographical representation that mapped economic, social and cultural change made evident through early pictorial maps, specific Renaissance paintings and the introduction of town prospects as engravings and etchings. The development of any genre, and this is then interpreted as a discursive field, is not a steady trail forward, meaning it is not linear, but inter-connective through associations and affiliations that overlap, but always include historical disruptions and dissonance. I now add to these earlier terms by moving beyond this inquiry to explore the scan, or screen, of the panorama through elements of association with digital image space.

The analytic approach to the panorama as a mapping and interpretive mode through the visual pleasure of a high vantage point is central to the panorama view, and leads into a recognition of capital development, and prosperity and progress for all, not just for the privileged few situated with closer ties to power, but an image which is a screen for a larger horizon of knowledge. The panorama provides a message that is social, cultural, historical, rational, and so on, whose finality is not the pictorial horizon, but a projected ideal totality, or fullness, in the sense of dimensions of knowledge that reach out to the new public spheres that mark out modernity both in physical and mental
terms. The past plays a role in this viewing process; how the city has changed over time. Synoptically within mass cultural meaning, the panorama reading of city space is a collectivity. Social values and affiliations link up through the image of the panorama to a symbolism of space that is central to the nineteenth-century formations of new public spheres that provide an affinity between the object and the subject, the individual and society. The range in my analysis extends from the crowd watching the balloon ascent, the first international exhibitions, new forms of mass entertainment, and the opening up of formerly royal or private collections in public museums. I examine panorama photographs of San Francisco and Vancouver formulating a direct link with the modernity of European presence within frontier city space. The cityscape is increasingly made legible through conduits of power, noting a point or site toward which all others may be imagined or aspiring, for this is the cultural and social mediation of the panorama.

The full circle of the panorama or a half circle, and of course, degrees in between, all suggest technology, as an apparatus of seeing, that in reconstructing the material nature of the city, its topographical form through a modern transparency, is bracketed by conditions, which are reconstructing society in relation to its association with the transformative space of capital. This is spatial identification, or how to read the city, and also gives a specific identity to the city, therefore levels of association between social transformation taking place through economic change and an aid to reconstructing society through these panoramic terms of identity and identification.

Technology as a visual apparatus, which is the panorama, is part of the body politic in this analysis, not only was society to be enlightened, but the view of city space
itself moved from dark to light as comprehension joins with rationalization, or a totality of seeing drawn from a collectivity of identification. While this can vary from the railway baron who is observing a panorama from his own high view balcony, to the city gentlemen of no monetary status who visit the newspaper office to see a panorama, each finds identity and gratification the urban shift marking historical change in representation of space. The panorama makes this change accessible and knowable. Each has associations of desire. If there is a shared modality this is the agency of viewing an urban landscape, unknown and unknowable in its transformative phases of modernization and modernity, the uncertain conditions leading in Simmel’s terms addressing the formative conditions of mental life.

The panorama orients the audience through hegemony of meanings addressing the city recognized and explored through historically co-constructed economic practices and values enabling an epistemology of modern progress through the newly formed bourgeois aspects of modernity. The bourgeois flocked to view the painted panorama or purchase panorama photographs, and they represented the centralizing experience of this engagement with the modern cityscape, for this was how they recognized themselves and the city as a place of capital, to develop and invest, and also inhabit. But the mediated status of the panorama as a middle class experience of public significance is not inseparable from the larger surround of modernism, which waged in its complexities the extended historical junctures of war, capitalism, class differences, revolution, labour strife and the social powers of the middle class. For many in the middle-class the panorama became a value form of cultural representation, enabled by its popularity, it was able to mediate their agency. Within this spatial horizon the panorama presents the
city as an object with material properties of architecture, monuments, rivers and streets, a
comprensive rationalization drawn through a presence of ordered and controlled
visibility, and if an illusory fiction this was to be made over into an imaginary, but
nevertheless very real place.

Institutions, space and vision all addressing place unfold in the nineteenth
century. During the same time that Bentham was designing his model of panoptic space,
and Barker was acquiring a patent and constructing the first full circle panorama, there
were other affinities between form, space and utility taking place in relation to the
evolving middle-class terms of power. Chief among these are the proposed and built
assembly chambers of the new French parliament, and like the panorama this modeling of
structures, vision and language of legibility of the new ruling middle class, are expressed
in architectural and technological forms, providing for an imposition of space and
signification. In an essay titled “The Circle of Discussion and the Semicircle of
Criticism” Jean-Philippe Heurtin writes of space, politics and its discontents addressing
the French Revolution and the history of French Parliamentary assemblies: “Between the
first meeting of the States General on May 5, 1789, and the installation of the Council of
Five Hundred...(1789), the revolutionary political assemblies sat in five different places
and went through six different configurations before they finally settled on a place (the
Palais-Bourbon, which became the Palais National and where to this day the National
Assembly sits) and a form (the semicircle).” Comparing the assembly to the panorama
space the notion of the citizen sought practical and euphoric means during the nineteenth
century.

34 Jean-Philippe Heurtin, “The Circle of Discussion and the Semicircle of Criticism,” in Making Things
Public: Atmospheres of Democracy, Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel, eds. (MIT Press: Cambridge,
It becomes apparent that the panorama serves as a specific archive or visual culture, which itself is just a fragment of the real, a representation. Now my analysis forms a connective link with the panorama and film, largely one based on movement and the eye at a glance. In digital culture of representation, abstraction and immateriality are each firmly coupled with the real, yet formed through computer-generated imaging modalities. Like the role of the panorama within the high arts contemporaneous to the nineteenth century, the media arts find it hard to shed their origins of utility and mechanics.

The panorama has a temporal spatial presence that is marked out as on the “spot,” giving emphasize to the importance of situating the subject within the image, and consequently how it is to be viewed. This approach is inseparable from earlier media. I outlined a linear fabric of images showing the town becoming the metropolis, from the Renaissance humanistic subject of perspective space, the landowner located in the space where the country intersects with the town, the early modern subject of the cityscape in panorama space, and the modern subject in montage space. Each takes on a position of viewing, and as I have discussed this is enclosed within the title, where it sets out the observation point of the high view. This representation of space of the panorama was the spatiotemporal economy of modernity and its unending signs of progress. This inquiry points to the subject placed within the screen of the digital image.

Anthony Vidler explores the critical difference between the subject of digital culture and the modern subject by placing the former “in a matrix or a space of no time and no place” and where this leads is “a blockage of modernist progress.” He remarks

on a space—screened, scanned—with no history properly speaking, and then moving
away from the panorama sense of screen, or scan, to now enter a world so flattened out
simultaneously that the world appears dehistoricized. To take the idea of the technology
of the image further within this comparison arrives at the rationalization of production
and the development of a profound “immobility” and isolation in the technological world.

Another reading of the digital aesthetic takes us closer to the panorama as a
potential for knowledge. Rather than viewing digital information as a threat that denies
levels of human perception, how does digital information pinpoint and expand the scope
of the human grasp. This moves beyond earlier forms including the cinematic image
when dealing with resemblance, duration and information. Google Earth, as digital
mapping form, is a later example of the encyclopedic apparatus of the panorama, and
demonstrates how digital information becomes imagery, geography and a subjective
realization of topography taking the world and making it local/individual. The web
instructions state “dive right in—Google Earth combines satellite imagery, maps and the
power of Google Search to put the world’s geographic information at your fingertips.”

When you identify the destination and the search begins, the view can also be tilted and
rotated to picture 3D terrain and buildings. This imaging and mapping project does have
a prehistory as both mark out places inseparable from elements that link place with
power, the sites of the central and larger cities of the world, a strong focus on the cities in
the U.S., where the technology originated. The key is yours for the making with hotels,
schools, restaurants, parks and possibly even your own dwelling situated within this
abundance of information. Digital assembly is a counterpart of selection and the
stimulation like the panorama is a visual technology able to navigate space. Navigable
space, which is also the space that marks the panorama with its key or guide, is central to digital culture and the interface of the new genres that increasingly define this culture. The world of cyberspace has an increasingly consistent drive to embody cultural values and distinctions of place, thus displaying the panorama's early modern attempt to find transparency in a changing world, and in doing so shapes the very meaning of the transition, just as the panorama did for the nineteenth century.
3.1. Frederick Birnie (after Robert Barker), *Panorama of London from the Albion Mills*, 1792-93, colour aquatint with etching, original in colour (sheet 3 of 6). Courtesy Yale Center of British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.
3.2. Frederick Birnie (after Robert Barker), *Panorama of London from the Albion Mills*, 1792-93, aquatint with etching, original in colour (sheet 4 of 6). Courtesy Yale Center of British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.
3.3. Frederick Birnie (after Robert Barker), *Panorama of London from the Albion Mills*, 1792-93, colour aquatint with etching, original in colour (sheet 3 and 4). Courtesy Yale Center of British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.
4. R. Ackerman, *Bird's Eye View from the Staircase of the upper part of the Pavilion in the Colosseum, Regent's Park*, 1829, aquatint and engraving, original in colour. Courtesy Yale Center of British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.
5.1. Charles Fontayne and William Southgate Porter, *Daguerreotype View of Cincinnati. Taken from Newport Ky., 1848*. Courtesy Rare Books and Special Collections, Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County.
5.2. Charles Fontayne and William Southgate Porter, *Daguerreotype View of Cincinnati. Taken from Newport, Ky., 1848*, daguerreotype (plate 4 of 8). Courtesy Rare Books and Special Collections, Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County.
5.3. Charles Fontayne and William Southgate Porter, *Daguerreotype View of Cincinnati. Taken from Newport, Ky.*, 1848, daguerreotype (plates 3 and 4). Courtesy Rare Books and Special Collections, Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County.
10. W.J. Moore, *View of False Creek, looking south, with the CPR Drake Street roundhouse, yards and workshops*, 1916, vintage silver print, Cirkut camera photograph, detail. Courtesy City of Vancouver Archives.
11. W.J. Moore, Great Northern Railway Station nearing completion and Canadian Northern Pacific Railway Station (later Canadian National Railway) foundation after the reclamation of 160 acres of False Creek tidal flats, 1917, vintage silver print, Cirkut camera photograph, detail. Courtesy City of Vancouver Archives.
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