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**MIGRATION, POWER AND THE LINE:
CEREMONIES OF COLLECTIVE
TRANSGRESSION IN THE SPATIAL
ARCHETYPES OF ELIAS CANETTI**

Michael Chapman and Michael Ostwald

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MIGRATION, POWER AND THE LINE: CEREMONIES OF COLLECTIVE TRANSGRESSION IN THE SPATIAL ARCHETYPES OF ELIAS CANETTI



This paper will explore the relationship between Canetti's idea of migration and its relationship to the modern spectacle. By defining the sensation of being in a crowd as a reversal of the fear of being touched, Canetti establishes a framework for rethinking conventional discourses on the relationship between power and space which focus almost exclusively on vision as the model through which individuals are controlled in space. Using Canetti's work on crowds as a framework, the paper will consider the role of "touching" and its relationship to architectural space, power and movement. By exploring the architectural dimensions of Canetti's theory of crowds, the paper will show how the spatial archetypes that Canetti uses to categorize crowd behavior delineate deep-seated power structures that have influenced urban planning throughout the modern era.

The publication, in 1961, of Elias Canetti's *Crowds and Power* was the culmination of over twenty years of research and personal enquiry and coincided, almost accidentally, with the emergence of critical theory as a multi-disciplinary discourse and the growth of anthropology (through structuralism) as a method of inquiry. Canetti, who drew deeply from anthropology for his research, was one of the first theorists of crowd "psychology" to begin to unravel the complex spatial implications that collective behavior might have. He also, more directly than previous authors, links the crowd with politics and authoritarian power, demonstrating a range of avenues through which this relationship is mediated. While investigations into the relationship between power and architectural theory are now numerous, focusing in particular on the genealogies of Michel Foucault, the writings of Canetti have yet to be studied in any detail. Canetti's writing on crowds, which is in its nature *spatial*, provides an interesting and original framework for investigating architectural space and the subtle nuances through which power infiltrates it.

While European thinkers such as Gabriel Tarde and Scipio Sighele had, in the 1870s, began to explore the complex social structure of the crowd, the accepted grandfather of "crowd psychology" was the conservative French psychologist Gustave Le Bon. Le Bon's groundbreaking work of 1895 *The Crowd: a Study of the Popular Mind*¹ was prescient in establishing a generalized psychological profile of the crowd and positioning crowd psychology as an academic discipline. Le Bon maintained that individuals in a crowd surrendered their own innate capacity to reason and act in a rational manner, instead adopting a new "group psychology" which was transmitted across the crowd. It was this thesis that Sigmund Freud also assimilated into his own "libidinal" theorizing in his 1921 work *Group Psychology and the analysis of the Ego*,² which began to introduce the broader themes of psychoanalysis to the problem of crowd behavior. Le Bon has an understanding of crowd behavior that is, in its nature, *anti-spatial*, in the sense that it is not the close proximity of individuals in space that enables a crowd psychology to emerge, but rather a more arbitrary social networking or a perceived emotional bond. This allows Le Bon to include, in his definition of crowds, groups such as the church, the army, juries, sects, classes and even races.³ Whilst such institutions represent complex social groupings, they are rarely

influenced by the dense concentration of individuals in space and as a result have little impact on the function of urban space or the city.⁴

The work of Canetti, which was the first major treatise on crowds since the 1930s, is the most notable and radical exception to this paradigm. From the outset Canetti defines the spatial experience of the crowd as a reversal of the “fear of being touched” where individuals, instead of maintaining a degree of spatial security around them, take solace and safety in the close proximity of other individuals.⁵ Canetti writes,

it is only in the crowd that [the individual] can become free of [their] fear of being touched. That is the only situation in which the fear changes into its opposite. The crowd [they] need is the dense crowd, in which body is pressed against body; a crowd, too whose psychical constitution is also dense, or compact so that [the individual] no longer notices who it is that presses against [them]. As soon as [an individual] has surrendered [themselves] to a crowd [they] cease to fear its touch.⁶

Through the sensation of touching, the crowd becomes so dense that individuals no longer even notice the bodies that are pressed against them and surrounding them. “Suddenly” writes Canetti, “it is as though everything were happening in one and the same body.”⁷ This has a profound effect on the way that space is inhabited and experienced by individuals within a crowd and conditions their relationship to urban environments.

Canetti’s understanding of power focuses on the role of touching as the primary mode through which power is distributed. The crowd uses touch to draw individuals into its web and it is the primary power that unites them as a collective body. In the section on “Seizing and Incorporating” Canetti draws an analogy between the formation of crowds and the act of hunting prey where touch defines the cathartic moment when the outcome of a transaction becomes inevitable. Describing the “first touching of the prey,” Canetti writes,

this is perhaps what is feared most. The fingers of the attacker feel what will soon belong to [their] whole body. Contact through the other senses, sight, hearing and smell, is not nearly so dangerous. With them there can be space between the attacker and the victim and, as long as this space exists, nothing is finally decided and there is still some chance of escape. The sensation of touch, on the other hand is the forerunner of tasting. The fairy-tale witch asks her victim to stretch out a finger so that she can feel whether he is fat enough to eat.⁸

The importance of “touching” within Canetti’s thesis is significant. Previous accounts of the relationship between space and power have focused almost exclusively upon vision as the primary mode through which the relationship between space, power and the individual is mediated. This was most famously celebrated in Foucault’s writing where he argued for an all-pervasive *surveillance* that, finding its archetype in Jeremy Bentham’s 1790 Panopticon prison, established an insidious field of control over the individual in space.⁹

Where Foucault stresses the role of vision in isolating individuals in institutional environments, Canetti provides a radical counterpoint: providing the framework for understanding the connection of individuals in space through *touch*. This allows for a non-visual analysis of power relationships to be undertaken. The crowd, rather than the individual, becomes the model for interpreting this haptic spatial connection.

Canetti's discussion of crowds, as a result, focuses to a large extent on the spatial relationships that predominate crowd phenomena. For Canetti the fourfold attributes that constitute a crowd are spatial. They constitute: a desire for continual growth; absolute equality within the crowd (the dissolution of perceived differences imposed by race, gender, religion, spatial division etc.); density (the close spatial proximity of human bodies); and direction (established either through leadership, space or a united purpose). Each of these attributes can be directly related to the availability and configuration of urban space.

For Canetti, spatial situations involving large populations dispersed in space without the characteristic of "touching" are manifestations of authoritarian power. These are characterized by order, symmetry and the "smoothness"¹⁰ of surfaces deployed. Modern architecture's concern with ensuring that, as Edgar Piel has observed in his analysis of Canetti's work, "the distances separating each [individual] from [their] neighbor are regulated and kept to"¹¹ is a manifestation of power and antithetical to the existence of the crowd. One such example, according to Canetti, is the military formation, where soldiers are organized in linear ranks that can be seen as spatially analogous to rows of teeth (for Canetti the ultimate and original manifestation of power).¹²

Canetti provides a detailed taxonomy of the varieties of crowds and their relationship to spatial principles. Canetti saw the ideal spatial environment of the crowd as the large public square of virtually unlimited dimension—"[o]n huge squares so big that they are hard to fill, the crowd has the possibility of growing, it remains open."¹³ Where crowds are confined or restricted their innate impulse to grow and absorb surrounding spatial structures has inevitably violent consequences. The spatial confinement of the crowd necessitates a violent reaction, manifest in an "attack on all boundaries."¹⁴ For Canetti it is a natural and psychologically necessary function of the crowd to attack architectural boundaries and remove them. He writes,

[w]indows and doors belong to houses; they are the most vulnerable part of their exterior and, once they are smashed, the house has lost its individuality; anyone may enter it and nothing and no-one is protected any more. In these houses live the supposed enemies of the crowd, those people who try to keep away from it. What separated them has now been destroyed and nothing stands between them and the crowd.¹⁵

While the structure of Foucault's thesis is division, the implications in Canetti's work are sexual, describing the "eruption" and the "expulsion" of the crowd as well as its "discharge" through a host of sexually originating metaphors. This sexual impulse is also transgressive in nature, where the individual feels that they are "transcending the limits of their own person."¹⁶ The individual in a crowd is opposed to all notions of division and, as Canetti writes:

they have a sense of relief, for the distances are removed which used to...shut them in. With the lifting of these burdens of distance [the individual] feels free; [their] freedom is the crossing of these boundaries. [They] want what is happening to others to happen to them too.¹⁷

This model of a united or sexualized extended body was incorporated into Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of the sexual nature of a Body Without Organs,¹⁸ and is an apparent theme in writing on crowds beginning as early as Sigmund Freud. Freud argued for a libidinal connection between members of a crowd, which unites them through communal desire.¹⁹ Many of Freud's ideas were incorporated into the research of the German psychologist Wilhelm Reich into sexuality and society, focusing primarily on his discovery of the *orgone* and its relationship to collective life.²⁰ Similarly divulging an economy of desire, the radical French critic Georges Bataille also saw strong connections between collectivity and sexuality, arguing for a sudden expulsion (or sacrifice) of collective energy as a means of discharging accumulated excess.²¹ The need for direct "touching" between individuals in a crowd is a theme that runs through all of these positions.

The sensual dimensions of "touch" and its relationship to architectural or urban experience has been a recent theme in some strands of architectural theorizing which have reacted against the ostensibly visual model of spatial analysis. Phenomenological discourse, embodied in the humanist writings of authors like Juhani Palasmaa,²² Christian Norberg-Schulz²³ and Steven Holl²⁴ have challenged the pre-eminence of visual models for describing architectural experience. Drawing from Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Martin Heidegger, this model of thinking and creating spatial environments argues for *touch* as an alternative datum for appreciating architectural and urban experience. However phenomenological discourse focuses, in a frigid way, on the relationship between an individual and an architectural surface. The potential for a collective experience, through the accumulated touching of bodies (rather than surfaces) in space, is not a dimension of "touch" that has been considered in this model of analysis. Canetti's work begins to formulate a model of spatial perception that not only draws from this collective bodily experience, but also begins to reveal the politics associated with touching and the requirement (or at least perceived requirement) to prevent it from occurring.

It is from this perspective of touching that Canetti begins to establish a taxonomy of the crowd and its relationship to spatial structures. Within this, two clear polarities emerge: the open, growing, undivided and

unlimited crowd and, its antithesis the artificially striated, hermetically sealed and *limited* spatial crowd. The two polarities are given the respective terms *open* and *closed* crowds and are prevalent throughout Canetti's work on crowds. If the open crowd is characterized by a reversal of the fear of being touched then the closed crowd is defined by the inability to touch other members of the crowd in a physical, psychological or emotional sense. While Canetti focuses most intently on the open crowd and its spatial dimensions in his work, it is the discursive model of the closed crowd and its peculiar spatial disposition that this paper sets to explore in greater detail. The closed crowd, as a means of preventing the open crowd from emerging has important correlations for understanding the relationship between crowds and architectural space and connects Canetti's work with other important thinkers in the field of architectural theory. Using the theme of migration, the paper will begin to unravel the curious ambiguities of the closed crowd and its peculiar political and spatial properties in the context of Canetti's work on power.

An important aspect of Canetti's understanding of the differentiation between the open and closed crowd is to do with the relationship between members who form the crowd and the perceived distances between them. One clear differentiation is the respect for boundaries that occurs in both a human and architectural sense in a closed crowd and disintegrates with the formation of an open crowd. Canetti describes the open crowd as "open everywhere and in any direction" existing only in a state of growth and accumulation and disintegrating the moment its growth stops.²⁵ The closed crowd on the other hand "renounces growth" and establishes itself by "accepting its limitation."²⁶ For Canetti the closed crowd is characterized by its boundary. He writes:

[the closed crowd] creates a space for itself which it will fill. This space can be compared to a vessel into which liquid is poured and whose capacity is known. The entrances to this space are limited in number and only these entrances can be used; the boundary is respected whether it consists of stone, of solid wall or of some special act of acceptance or entrance fee.²⁷

Implied in Canetti's thesis is that there is a correlation between the intense touching of human bodies and the destruction of architectural boundaries. For this reason the closed crowd, which prevents bodies from coming into direct contact and assuming the organic properties of a crowd, is accompanied by a respect for architectural boundaries that has obvious political advantages in the mediation of power in the built environment. Canetti argues that the religious rite and the festival are organized models of the closed crowd which, being constrained in both time and space, allow accumulated energy to be released without the violent repercussions of the open crowd. Touching, in the closed crowd is minimized and the bodies that constitute the crowd maintain a sense of their own individuality.

Canetti's analysis of "touching" and its spatial configuration is sprawling and draws on examples from a vast array of anthropological sources. One of the most intriguing accounts is his analysis of the ceremonial rites of the Aranda tribe in central Australia, which he uses to categories broader themes in his understanding of crowds. Where the relationship between an individual to space has been a theme in the various discourses on power in architecture to date, Canetti locates the thread of power in the relationship between individuals within a space and uses this to establish a broader understanding of modern power relations. Equally, what is implied in Canetti's discussion of the Aranda is that a connection exists between archaic stone-age rituals and modern human behavior.²⁸ Writing at the height of the intellectual fascination with structuralism in Europe, the kind of connections implied by Canetti were very much aligned with other developments in European cultural analysis.

Drawing from the then current anthropological research of Spencer and Gillen,²⁹ Canetti analyses the rituals of the Aranda not from the point of view of symbolism or accumulated cultural meaning, but the purely spatial organization of bodies in relationship to each other. Central to this is his notion of "touching" which connects bodies or, in its absence, divides them. While Canetti's use of the ceremonial rites of the Aranda is largely symbolic, it serves as a backdrop to his understanding of crowds and the relationship they have to architectural space. Canetti divides the rites into a list of categories consisting of the *heap on the ground*, the *running round and round*, the *dancing in a circle*, the *lying down in a row*, the *two rows*, the *dense square*, the *swaying cylinder* and the *single file*. Two clearly defined categories—the open and closed—emerge, characterized respectively by the perception of collective density and its absence: spatial division. For Canetti, dancing in a circle is an act of unity, turning the tribes back to outsiders and embracing the centre. This is also a characteristic of denser forms of organization such as the "swaying cylinder" of bodies or "square upon the ground" which use circularity and congestion to heighten unity and collective solidarity. These circular configurations, where touching is at its most intense, allow the spaces between bodies to evaporate and take on the collective, united body of the tribe. However the spatial structures that are linear are inevitably individual in nature, where individuals are organized in space in relationship to each other. The single file, which Canetti associates with *migration*, is a key example of this model of spatial organization. Canetti writes,

The single file expresses migration. Its importance in the traditions of the tribe is very great. It is often supposed that the ancestors wandered even beneath the earth. It is as though the young men, one after the other, had to tread in the footprints of their ancestors. Their silence and the way they move contain the respect owed to sacred journeyings and destinations.³⁰

Where the other formations represent the accumulation of a collective bond between bodies in space, the single file represents the discharge of collectivity or its release. Migration, while still transgressive in nature,

differs from the other models of crowd organization in that it is constrained in space and time, embodying the ceremonial expulsion of collective ritual, while at the same time suppressing the formation of denser forms of crowd organization which can be volatile. Other linear arrangements such as “the two rows set up against each other” are equally divisive representing, for Canetti “cleavage into two hostile packs, the other sex sometimes standing for the enemy.”³¹ The sexual as well as violent implications of this model of spatial organization are a key theme in the work of Canetti and its relationship to power.

Canetti associates this model of linear spatial organization with the geographic “crowd symbol”³² of the river which, as opposed to other crowds symbols Canetti describes³³ is in its nature linear and progressive, meandering through space rather than occupying it and overwhelming it. In the context of Canetti’s theory of crowds, the river is of a vastly different character to the insatiable and violent activities that are associated with, for example, fire, wind or even the sea.³⁴ Where much of Canetti’s concern in his writing on crowds is linked to the idea of connection, the river represents an aspect of division, dividing the banks of a space as well as the individuals that constitute it. It is also in a constant state of motion and progression and, unlike the other geographic symbols Canetti employs, is to do with the release rather than the accumulation of desire and emotion. Canetti concludes that “[the river] is the symbol of a movement which is still under control, before the eruption and the discharge; it contains the threat of these, rather than their actuality.”³⁵ The characteristic, which links it to the migratory rites of the Aranda, is its linear nature and its continual movement through space.

Given its unusual position in the context of not only Canetti’s thought, but the broader oeuvre of crowd psychology, the notion of the “linear” crowd is not only antithetical to widely held beliefs about the relationship between crowds and power, but also to discourse on power and its relationship to architectural space. Circularity, as a model of spatial organization, like vision, has been central to most analysis of the relationship between power and architecture. The circle has natural optic dimensions and is related to the eye as well as the lens. Foucault saw a relationship between the circularity of the Panopticon and a continuous ocular gaze which, like the eye, emits from a central point in an outward direction.³⁶ This is based on the widely accepted notion that power is concentrated at a single point where it accumulates and, equally, is dispersed.³⁷ The linear model of spatial organization that Canetti posits as an alternative has strong affiliations with the modern festival or parade and, as a ritual of collective migration, embodies an alternative model for understanding power and its dispersion through space. Where the open crowd can be characterized as a circular and horizontally radiating sea of bodies which is forever growing outwards until its disintegration, the closed crowd, embodied in this linear model of celebration organizes bodies in a progressive movement. Here power is mobilized by propelling bodies through space, minimizing the density of bodies at any point in time or space and, through a range of measures, preventing them from accumulating in the one spot for any length

of time. Like Canetti's analogy of the vessel waiting to be filled, the festival creates a temporary and delimited space in the city where the extended body of the crowd is temporarily amassed and then emptied out again back to their everyday lives.

The work of Canetti in identifying this politics of touching, also explains, to a greater degree, the importance of movement through what he terms *migration*. Movement is a key mechanism for preventing bodies from maintaining contact with each other and as a result stifling the psychological bonds that constitute a crowd. Where Foucault maintained that power was residual, lying dormant in structures waiting to be implemented, Canetti's model of a haptic condition of power is in a constant state of flux, growing continually outwards from a centre as various bodies come into contact with it. The migratory crowd that Canetti identifies with the "single file" organization of the Aranda, is in a state of continual movement and progression, preventing bodies from attaining the characteristic of density through their transition in space. This is not only the recreation of an ancient idea of migration, but the migration of power away from its source through an act of dispersion. More recent accounts have extended Canetti's understanding of this by arguing for the importance of speed and movement in understanding power relations and the crowd. In particular the French writer Paul Virilio whose influential work from 1986 *Speed and Politics* draws strong connections between movement (or migration) and politics. Virilio saw the crowd as a model of consumption which passed through space, without occupying it. He saw the places of transit and exchange as the centers of this cultural economy whereby architecture is affiliated with the forces of exchange. This non-centralized economy of power was in a constant state of dispersal, concentrating power at the points where speed was greatest. This is a model of power which is not, like Foucault's circular and visual but, in line with Canetti, haptic and linear.

Eric Hobsbawm has provided a preliminary account of the politics of this kind of organization in his 1968 essay "Cities and Insurrection" which argues that certain cities and urban forms have a predisposition towards insurrection while others, through a range of features both deliberate and accidental seem to mitigate against it. One of the characteristics that he sees as necessary for preventing insurrection is the provision of space for parades, festivals and other crowd oriented events. For Hobsbawm, the restructuring of Paris and Vienna in the middle of the nineteenth century—providing in each case, wide, expansive boulevards which were easily policed and availed themselves to popular celebration—was part of a broader urban strategy to control and manipulate the psychology of the crowd and provide for the crowd a legitimate yet transient space in the city. These spaces allowed for the carefully orchestrated transgression of social and urban norms in order that more violent and sinister crowd action (such as riots and insurrections) were avoided. In this sense, "migration" can be seen as a spatial and political technique with which the crowd safely discharges excess energy with minimized, or controlled, violence, hostility and destruction. Haussmann's incisions into the urban fabric of Paris opened "wide and straight boulevards along which artillery could fire, and troops

advance”³⁸ which in turn provided a highly determined urban canvas that could be easily policed, was neatly contained spatially and isolated the festival from the more politically sensitive parts of the city. For Hobsbawm,

the new and wide avenues provided an ideal location for what became an increasingly important aspect of popular movements, the mass demonstration, or rather procession. The more systematic these rings and cartwheels of boulevards, the more effectively isolated these were from the surrounding uninhabited area, the easier it became to turn such assemblies into ritual marches rather than preliminaries to riot.³⁹

Hobsbawm’s thesis can be reinterpreted in the context of Canetti’s work on power where this linear and directional model of urban space allows for the movement and coordination of the crowd without enabling its unlimited growth: a major concern with the large open-public squares that had formed the backdrop to the turbulence of the Revolution. What emerges in Hobsbawm’s thesis is an attitude to the crowd as a generator of urban form that both facilitates and controls collective celebration. Richard Sennett, in his work *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilisation*, also detects a broader political objective in the evolution of a public space for the crowd. Sennett writes, “Nineteenth century urban design enabled the movement of large numbers of individuals in the city and disabled the movement of groups, groups of the threatening sort which appeared in the revolution.”⁴⁰ Reflecting the broader themes that Canetti documents in his taxonomy of the crowd, Sennett’s work documents the emergence of the crowd as a collective “body” that, like the individual body, had a political and spatial presence through which urban space was experienced. The explosive and unpredictable behavior of this new collective body saw the emergence of new urban strategies which, as Sennett writes, sought to “train the crowd of bodies”⁴¹ in order to prevent the spontaneous and violent outbursts which had already sullied the relationship between crowd and city. The most important strategy in manipulating this new collective body was the principle of movement; animating the crowd in both space and time to prevent the gradual accumulation of its collective energy. First witnessed in his discussion of the Aranda, this model of linear, progressive crowd was something that Canetti’s work on power goes to great lengths to explain.

Canetti’s fascination with the spatial organization of bodies in the rituals of the Aranda belies a deeper interest in the notion of spectacle. The 1960s were replete with polemical accounts of the visualization of public life and its demise through the spectacle—the representation of reality rather than its actuality.⁴² Canetti’s focus on the rituals of the Aranda revisits a model of public celebration which is sensual and haptic, rather than visual. Still involving the notion of spectacle and representation, the various rites of the Aranda demonstrate an archaic desire to celebrate collectively through a communal experience of touching, directly involving the bodies of members of a tribe in the recreation of a specific historic event (such as a death or a mass

migration). Far from seeing this as an isolated or anthropological condition, Canetti argues that this need for collective solidarity is central to the modern human condition and explains the tendency of crowds to form.

Canetti's observance of the linear model of migratory power in the Aranda is part of a deeper sensitivity to the role of touching and the importance of bodies in relations of power. Foucault's analysis of power relations can be seen as a system of organizing space which acts to *prevent* touching through what he later described as dividing practices.⁴³ In *Discipline and Punish*,⁴⁴ Foucault begins by graphically retelling the violent dismembering of Damians the Regicide in the late 1700s, using the incident to demonstrate the end of the public spectacle of execution and its retreat into the modern institution. Here the tactics of power would no longer directly touch the bodies of wayward offenders in front of a public crowd but instead isolate them behind an austere and impenetrable wall, targeting the "soul" of the prisoner rather than "touching" their bodies in a violent and public way. This regime towards vision and against touching, is embodied in the all-seeing Panopticon, which organizes individuals within a space so that their only contact with the world and their superiors is visual. Miller, writing just before the publication of *Discipline and Punish* has argued that the function of the Panopticon was not, indeed punishment, but the classification, categorization and subsequent organization of collectives into individuals. Referring to Bentham's plan to use the Panopticon to draw labour from the poor and destitute, at the same time removing them as a collective from public view, Miller argues that "[t]he utilitarian is as repelled by crowds as he is by beggars."⁴⁵

However a vast array of evidence exists to suggest that the convenient "visualization" of architectural power that Foucault identifies through this process of institutional division, is only one dimension of an otherwise complex system of power relations that implode on the landscape of Europe in the aftermath of the Revolution. In the same year that Bentham was unveiling his proposals for the Panopticon, Robespierre was on the streets of Paris pronouncing:

For be assured of this citizens, whenever a line of demarcation is established, whenever a division is perceived then there is something that threatens the safety of the Fatherland. It is not natural that there be any separation amongst those equally devoted to the public good.⁴⁶

The politics of the immediate aftermath of the Revolution was less interested in the kind of visual power that Foucault celebrated but the haptic phenomenon of the crowd which, if controlled, provided untapped political legitimacy. The destruction of the Bastille and the other turbulent events of the period were characteristic of the impulse that Canetti sees for the crowd to grow into a larger body and absorb surrounding structures. The experience of the revolution was, in this sense, not visual at all, but a bodily experience where "touching" animated certain dormant impulses in its members with inevitably violent consequences. Canetti's model of power, disseminated amongst a collective through the experience of touch,

provides a more salient model for explaining the cannibalism of this model of crowd behavior and its eventual suffocation through the stratification of the Revolutionary festival which set aside set days and set spaces for this collective energy to be conveniently and safely discharged.

The work of Canetti in defining crowd phenomena through a politicized notion of touching provides a provocative framework from which to critique conventional theories of power and its relationship to space. The model of touching which connects bodies in the ancient rites of the Aranda is analogous with a modern technology of power that sees individualized bodies connected in violent and explosive forms. Equally, the tendency to mediate this model of touching through migratory practices of linear progression through space is also a political tactic which, like the rites of the Aranda, uses an understanding of touch as a political and volatile agent of architectural and spatial power. Where Foucault reduced the tactics of power to a visual mode of spatial infiltration, Canetti provides a model of understanding power through its infinite dispersal through human bodies.

If the emergence of the spectacle is not isolated to purely visual phenomena, but is also taken to include, like Canetti suggests, a broader human impulse to gather in close proximity of other humans then the spatial depiction of spectacle can be recast within a complex web of power relations. The evolution of the crowd as a haptic rather than visual phenomenon meant that its organization was equally haptic, contained, in the modern festival through the twin strategies of movement and linearity. This prevented the characteristics of the open crowd, most notably continual growth, from occurring and isolated it as a phenomenon in both space and time. Canetti's model of power can thus be used to identify this model of "haptic" power which operates, not at the expense of the visual regimes of Foucault, but in opposition to them.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

¹ Gustave Le Bon, *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind* (Mineola: Dover Publications, 2002). [Originally published in 1895; translated into English in 1896]

² Sigmund Freud, "Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego." James Strachey trans. In Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud Vol. XVIII* (London: Hogarth Press, 1955). [Originally published in 1921].

³ Le Bon divides these crowds into heterogenous and homogenous crowds in the section entitled "the Classification of Crowds." Of the crowds listed it is only the "anonymous crowd" or "street crowd" that corresponds to the definition that Canetti uses to define a crowd. The others are organisational rather than spatial phenomena. For the list and graphic depiction of Le Bon's classification of crowd types see: Le Bon, *The Crowd*, p. 100-101.

⁴ This is a theme that also characterises the work of historians of the crowd, such as the English scholar George Rudé. Rudé's work, while definitive, betrays the urban characteristics of crowds by focussing primarily on the violent behaviour of crowds in historical events such as riots. Despite rejecting Le Bon's

categorisations in favour of an analysis of “face to face” crowd, Rudé fails to address the urban nature of crowds, their relationships to the city and the intensely spatial phenomenon which accompanies the formation of a crowd. See George Rudé, *The Crowd in History: A Study of Popular Disturbances in France and England 1730-1848* (New York: Wiley, 1964).

⁵ Elias Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, Carol Stewart, trans. (London: Phoenix Press, 2000), p. 15. [The Fear of Being Touched].

⁶ Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, p. 15. [The Fear of Being Touched]. Gendered language in original.

⁷ Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, p. 16. [The Fear of Being Touched].

⁸ Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, p. 203-204. [Seizing and Incorporating].

⁹ See: Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Alan Sheridan, trans. (London: Penguin, 1991). [Originally published in 1975]

¹⁰ Canetti writes “smoothness and order, the manifest attributes of the teeth, have entered into the very nature of power. They are inseparable from it and, in every manifestation of power, they are the first things to be established.” See: Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, p. 208. [Seizing and Incorporating].

¹¹ Edgar Piel, “Putting an End to Power: Canetti’s Archetypal Images and New Myth” in *Essays in Honour of Elias Canetti*, Michael Hulse, trans. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1987): p. 151. Gendered language in original.

¹² Canetti writes: “The most striking natural instrument of power in [humans] and in many animals is the teeth. The way they are arranged in rows and their shining smoothness are quite different from anything else belonging to the body. One feels tempted to call them the very first manifestation of order and one so striking that it almost shouts for recognition.”

See: Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, p. 207. [Seizing and Incorporation].

¹³ Canetti, “The Conscience of Words,” quoted in Serge Moscovici, “Social Collectivities” in *Essays in Honour of Elias Canetti*, Michael Hulse, trans. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1987): p. 3

¹⁴ Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, p. 19-20. [Destructiveness].

¹⁵ Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, p. 19-20. [Destructiveness].

¹⁶ Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, p. 20. [Destructiveness].

¹⁷ Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, p. 20. [Destructiveness].

¹⁸ Deleuze and Guattari draw on Canetti’s model of the pack in their celebrated account of the Body Without Organs. Greg Lynn also introduces Canetti’s ideas into the framework of architectural theory in his analysis of Deleuze and Guattari’s work. See: Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Robert Hurley, trans. (London: The Athlone Press, 1987): 29-3; Greg Lynn, “Multiplicitous and Inorganic Bodies,” *Assemblage* 19 (December 1992): 38.

¹⁹ Freud argued that “if an individual gives up his distinctiveness in a group and lets its other members influence him by suggestion, it gives one the impression that he does it because he feels the need of being in harmony with them rather than in opposition to them.” Freud, “Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego,” 161.

²⁰ See for instance: Wilhelm Reich, *The Sexual Revolution: Toward a Self-Governing Character Structure*. Theodore P. Wolfe, trans. (London: Vision, 1969); Wilhelm Reich, *The Function of the Orgasm: Sex-Economic Problems of Biological Energy*. Vincent R. Carfagno, trans. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1973; Wilhelm Reich, *The Bioelectrical Investigation of Sexuality and Anxiety*. Marion Faber, trans. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1982).

²¹ Bataille’s specific interest in this regard is demonstrating an economy of gratification whereby death and sexuality become key existential moments for understanding human psychology. See: Georges Bataille, *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy (Volume 1)*. Robert Hurley, trans. (New York: Zone Books, 1991) [1967]; Georges Bataille, *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy (Volumes 2 and 3)*. Robert Hurley, trans. (New York: Zone Books, 1993) [1976].

²² See, for example: Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* (Chichester: Wiley Academy, 2005).

²³ Norberg Schulz argues for an attitude towards architectural experience which draws heavily from the ontology of Martin Heidegger. See: Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Architecture: Presence, Language, Place* (Milan: Skira, 2000); Christian Norberg-Schulz, *The Concept of Dwelling: On the Way to Figurative Architecture* (Milan:

Electa, 1985); Christian Norberg-Schulz, *The Concept of Dwelling: On the Way to Figurative Architecture* (Milan: Electa, 1985).

²⁴ Holl has explored the tactile dimensions of architectural space in both his writing and built work. It is documented in: Steven Holl, *Parallax* (Bäsel: Birkhäuser, 2000).

²⁵ See Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, p. 16-17. [The Open and the Closed Crowd].

²⁶ See Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, p. 16-17. [The Open and the Closed Crowd].

²⁷ See Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, p. 17. [The Open and the Closed Crowd].

²⁸ The idea of a connection between stone age ritual and collective behaviour is not unique to Canetti but exists in a number of other theorists of crowds, most notably Sigmund Freud, who saw the primal impulse to live in hordes as a key to understanding modern collective behaviour, and Emile Durkheim who understood "collective effervescence" as an almost irrational and archaic phenomenon that was inherited rather than uniquely modern. See: Sigmund Freud, "Totem and Taboo," trans. James Strachey. In Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud Vol. XIII* (London: Hogarth Press, 1955): p. 201; Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. Joseph Ward Swain, trans. (London: Allen and Unwin, 1971.)

²⁹ Baldwin Spencer, B., and F. J. Gillen, *The Arunta: A Study of Stone Age People* (London: Macmillan 1927);

Baldwin Spencer, B., and F. J. Gillen, *The Northern Tribes of Central Australia* (London: Macmillan 1904).

³⁰ Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, p. 123. [Temporary Formations among the Aranda].

³¹ Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, p. 123. [Temporary Formations among the Aranda].

³² Canetti defines "crowd symbols" as "collective units which do not consist of [individuals], but which are still felt to be crowds. [...] Every one of these phenomena comprehends some of the essential attributes of the crowd. Although they do not consist of [individuals], each of them recalls the crowd and stands as symbol for it in myth, dream, speech and song. Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, p. 75. [Crowd Symbols].

³³ The list, contained in the opening section of *Crowds and Power* consists of fire, the sea, rain, rivers, the forest, corn, wind, sand, the heap, stone heaps and treasure. These geographic phenomena are analogous with crowds and provide insights into understanding their psychological behaviour. See: Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, p. 75. [Crowd Symbols].

³⁴ On the river as a crowd symbol Canetti writes, "[The river] stands for processions; the people watching from the pavements are like trees on river banks, the solid bordering the following. Demonstrations in large cities have a similar river-like character: tributaries come from various districts to feed the main stream. Rivers are especially a symbol for the time when the crowd is forming, the time before it has attained what it will attain. Rivers lack the contagiousness of fire and the universality of the sea. But in place of these, they have an impetus which seems inexhaustible and which, because there is never a time when it is not being fed, is present from the beginning. Hence the fact that their origins are sometimes taken more seriously than their goal." Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, p. 83. [Crowd Symbols].

³⁵ Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, p. 84. [Crowd Symbols].

³⁶ Bentham himself in his own writings in the 1700s recommended the circle as the optimum form for exerting power over individuals. For Bentham it also had inherent operational advantages, minimising wastage and providing a general spatial efficiency. In his notes he wrote that "I cannot help looking upon every form as less and less eligible, in proportion as it deviates from the circle." Jeremy Bentham, *The Panopticon Writings* (London: Verso, 1995), p.44 [1790].

³⁷ Denis Hollier in his work *Against Architecture: The Writings of Georges Bataille* recognised a common "circular" ancestry in the work of Foucault and Bataille, contrasting the "ostentatious" extroverted architecture celebrated in the writings of Bataille on the Bastille with the "insinuating concavity" of Foucault's Panopticon "that surrounds, frames, contains, and confines for therapeutic or disciplinary ends." The dissemination of power from both the Bastille and Panopticon was, as Hollier noted, in its nature circular and centralised. Denis Hollier, *Against Architecture: The Writing of Georges Bataille*. Betsy Wing, trans. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1989), p.66.

³⁸ Eric Hobsbawm, "Cities and Insurrections" in Hobsbawm, *Revolutionaries* (London: Abacus, 1999), p. 269.

³⁹ Hobsbawm, "Cities and Insurrections" p. 269.

⁴⁰ Richard Sennett, *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilisation* (New York: W.W Norton and Co. 1994), p. 324.

⁴¹ Sennett, *Flesh and Stone*, p. 308.

⁴² The most famous and influential account of this genre is the situationist polemic from 1967 *The Society of the Spectacle* which, heavily implicated in the riots of the following year, documented the intellectual antagonism below the surface of French political life. Debord opened his account with the inflammatory pronouncement that "[t]he whole life of those societies in which modern conditions of production prevail presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles. All that once was directly lived has become mere representation." See Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*. Donald Nicholson-Smith, trans. (New York: Zone Books, 1995), p.14.

⁴³ In his essay "The Subject and Power" Foucault describes his work as the study of "dividing practices" whereby the "subject is either divided inside himself or divided from others" (p. 326) with the net result of objectivising the individual and preventing the formation of a collective. As an examination of the individuating dimensions of power, Foucault's archaeology of these "dividing practices" is profound, pursuing them meticulously in the asylum (*Madness and Civilisation*), the hospital (*The Birth of the Clinic*), methods of organising knowledge (*The Order of Things*, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*) and finally, individual sexuality (*The History of Sexuality Vol. 1-3*). In "The Subject and Power" articulates concisely this impulse of power to divide and individuate. He writes, "[t]his form of power that applies itself to immediate everyday life categorises the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him that he must recognise and others have recognise in him. It is a form of power that makes individuals subjects."

Foucault identifies, quite deliberately a starting point for these tactics of "division" as the last decades of the eighteenth century identifying the Panopticon as, predictably, the critical moment in this paradigmatic change. See Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power" In Foucault, *Power: The Essential Works 3*, James D. Faubion, ed., (London: Allen Lane, 2001), pp. 326-48.

⁴⁴ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 3-6.

⁴⁵ Jacques-Alain Miller, "Jeremy Bentham's Panoptic Device." Richard Miller, trans. *October* 41, Summer (1987): 17. Originally published as Jacques-Alain Miller, "Le Despotisme De L'utile: La Machine Panoptique De Jeremy Bentham." *Ornicar?* 3. May (1975): pp. 5-20

⁴⁶ Robespierre quoted in James A. Leith, "Contradictions in Revolutionary Ideology: Evidence in Rhetoric, Symbolism and Architecture," *Selected Papers: The Consortium on Revolutionary Europe: 1750-1850* (1994): 385.