

transtension

a theory/methodology/polemic of (a/A)rchitecture
predicated on sincerity, Love, and (inter; trans; sub).subjectivity

transtension

a theory of (a/A)rchitecture predicated on
sincerity, Love, and (inter; trans; sub).subjectivity

“let us feebly poke sticks at rocks”

t. logan king, Twitter (pre-X) (03:01 29.9.20)

intro

Whether or not we are aware of it (we are), this existence is *tensive*; that is, full of relations among opposites, predicated (up)on physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual *strain*. In the context of (a/A)rchitecture, this translates to a need for shelter from, yet a simultaneous/concurrent desire for (connection with), nature. Subsequently, a sincere (a/A)rchitecture maintains/synthesizes a balance between these oppositions (among others).

In contemporary society, (a/A)rchitecture has been eviscerated of all sincerity. While the causes are many and the symptoms severe, solutions seem altogether out of reach//at odds with ‘the bottom line’. ‘the bottom line’ refers to that which has eviscerated architecture, and quite frankly society at large, of all soul and sincerity; namely: objectivity, capital, and efficiency.

transtension is offered as a theory of (a/A)rchitecture predicated on sincerity, Love and (inter; trans; sub).subjectivity, capable of restoring/reinstantiating/reminding us of *the third thing*, i.e. our relation((s)ships).

In this **hypo.thesis**, I will argue that the evisceration of soul and sincerity *qua* (a/A)rchitecture can be traced back to the Vitruvian tenets of “*firmitas, utilitas, venustas*”, but specifically *venustas*, later amended to *amoenitas*, which should have initially and always been *caritas*, if we are to afford ourselves such contrivances and codifications as tenets of (a/A)rchitecture, which we will, since we are human and we are inclined to do so, whether or not we want to or even understand why we want to.

Additionally, I will touch briefly upon two other fabled axioms/aphorisms/adages of architectural theory, Sullivan’s “form follows function” and Mies’ “less is more”. Both will be amended so as to provide us with three separate but equal notions or axioms or tenets of architecture that, collectively, underpin transtension.

In order to get there, we will first start with an explication of the conflation/distinction/constant co.incidence of architecture and Architecture as exercised throughout this paper and this thesis and the discipline at large, specifically with regard to (wrt) ‘the bottom

line'. In that same vein, (inter; trans; sub).subjectivity will be explicated, specifically in relation to subjectivity, Love, and sincerity [read : **transtension**]. This explication will be mirrored by an account of objectivity in relation to efficiency and Capital [read : 'the bottom line'].

on (a/A)rchitecture

The distinction between architecture and Architecture is entirely contrived, and thus can be traced back to several different 'sources'. For the purposes of this explanation, architecture is traced back to the conceptual 'primitive hut' of Laugier and Semper's *The Four Elements of Architecture*. Architecture, on the other hand, will be traced back to Vitruvius' *De architectura*¹. Finally, capital 'A' architecture will be traced back to the 'birth of capital' sometime in the middle-to-late period of the last millennium.

We will misappropriate Laugier's 'primitive hut' so as to understand that architecture's primary 'use' for woman is to remind him of that which he has forgotten, which is to say simply to make her question. Laugier was contemplating the universals of architecture wrt nature, and thus it follows that the primitive hut allows woman to contemplate the universals of his existence. Furthermore, the primitive hut and its universality is derived from nature, pointing to the fact that that which we are always looking for, always lacking, is always right there next to us, always right there within us. The truth is, Laugier's primitive hut, as a notion and a concept, helped concretize and codify architecture within the [western] collective (un)conscious, and consequently continues to serve as a reminder of the necessary superfluity of the existence of our species.

In a similar vein, though perhaps on the other side of the coin, Semper's four elements of architecture details the hearth, the roof, the enclosure, and the mound. The hearth is originary qua architecture in the sense that by gathering around fire, society was born as man started to relate to the world through her relations with one , 'the other', and each.other. This thought can be traced through thinkers like Hegel and architects like Corb, who thought architecture was that which housed the void and sheltered the spirit of the times,

¹ There's a certain irony in the diminution of 'architectura' in *De architectura*, especially considering the argument that this treatise can more or less act as the birth of Architecture. I am aware this is a very euro-/western-centric take, but the aim is to ameliorate the tension between architecture, Architecture, and capital 'A' architecture via an appeal to eastern ideals.

respectively and irrespectively. Subsequently, the roof, the enclosure, and the mound center and circle around the hearth, as further evolutions of this inter.relating.

architecture, that is to say the art or science of building (shelter), is necessary. architecture, in many ways, simply refers to woman's need for shelter from nature and subsequent superfluity wrt that shelter. (Ironically, this shelter from nature is comprised of and predicated on nature.) As such, architecture is meant to denote the necessary shelters which woman constructs for himself. However, being purely utilitarian and intrinsically universal, architecture is not exclusive to humans. Most species require some semblance of shelter - bird nests, rabbit burrows, bee hives, ant hills, etc... At a base level, architecture, the art/science of building ((habitable) shelters), is universal to all living beings, carried out in a universal way such that architecture can be thought of as a ubiquitous expression of the universe itself.

Taking this further, literally to a meta level, it can be said that architecture is not even exclusive to living beings, but instead is just the universe expressing itself in such infinitely platitudinous ways that its ubiquity has been taken for granted. Conceptually speaking, planets, suns, solar systems, galaxies, and even the universe itself are all architectural. The universe constructed itself in an instant (allegedly, but I still appeal to contingency arguments. Academia does not though, so we will leave it be), and has been on a teleological path of building, constructing, and expanding towards heat death ever since. The big bang, the birth of the universe, can be thought of as the first act of architecture. Separation of a single point of infinite light (unity) into infinities of infinitesimals and further infinities (duality (or polarity)). Creation from destruction [and back again and again and again in an endless, cyclical, reciprocal, recursive cycle].

Ok, so let us take two steps back in order to take one step forward. architecture, the art/science of building, is predicated on relation, for building inherently relates - that is the point: architecture simultaneously synthesizes and discretizes, separates and connects, concurrently disparatizing and desegregating. However, separation and connection are more often than not entirely misconstrued, and these misconstrued misconceptions can be tied directly to our subjectivities. You see, separation doesn't really rely on 'the one' or 'the other'. Separation relies on the

relation(ship) between the two, and it is in this way that separation and connection can simply be thought of as two sides of the same coin.² Thus, the issue arises that, given our (inescapable) subjective experiences of the world, we are always relegated to being 'the one' or 'the other', rather than the relation(ship) between the two. In fact, the relation(ship) between the two is the 'real other', the forgotten one.³ The relation(ship) between the two, from this point on, will be referred to as 'the third thing'.

A third thing, 'the third thing', can also be extrapolated to a universal scale. Take the singularity which is the origin of the universe. A single thing. Now separate the single thing, and you are left with two things. Not only that, but you are left with two equally unequal things. However, a separated single thing inherently/inevitably/intrinsically involves three parts: the two separate things, and the relation between the two things, aka 'the third thing'.

[Perhaps some sacred geo diagrams of vesica piscis]

While all this may seem elementary, its ubiquity has more or less relegated itself to a sub- or unconscious level, such that it is taken for granted. In the same (exact) vein, the ubiquity of architecture has relegated itself to a sub- or unconscious level, such that not only is it taken for granted, but it more or less goes by unnoticed, fading into the background. We know this to be true thanks to the existence of Architecture, which initially sought to remind us of these universal notions via hyper.codification and hegemony.

on venustas, amoenitas, caritas

Architecture, as contrived by Vitruvius, is predicated on three things (there's always a third thing): *firmitas, utilitas, venustas*.

² As all actual antonyms are

³ Every single (human) being goes through life as 'the one', with 'the other' simply being every other thing/being. as such, 'the other' can never actually be 'the one' and thus every single (human) being is actually just 'the one'. as such, 'the other' is actually just the relation(ship) between any number of 'the ones'.

Important to note is that this theory is aiming at a 'subject oriented ontology' as opposed to any other type of ontology.

Also, see neo in *the matrix* for a better understanding of both 'the one' and the power of Love.

All these must be built with due reference to durability (firmitas/firmness), convenience (utilitas/commodity), and beauty (venustas/delight). Durability will be assured when foundations are carried down to the solid ground and materials wisely and liberally selected; convenience, when the arrangement of the apartments is faultless and presents no hindrance to use, and when each class of building is assigned to its suitable and appropriate exposure; and beauty, when the appearance of the work is pleasing and in good taste, and when its members are in due proportion according to correct principles of symmetry.

Under Vitruvius' conception, "all these" refers to the three classes of public buildings: defensive, utilitarian, and religious, with public buildings being conceived in relation to private ones. Going up one level higher, "the art of building" is one of three "departments of architecture", the other two being "the making of timepieces" and "the construction of machinery".⁴ But for the purposes of this **hypo.thesis**, we will focus on "the art of building", and specifically the canonical tenets of *firmitas*, *utilitas*, *venustas*.

Straight from Wikipedia, we learn that

venustas (lit. "of goddess Venus") carries strong association with the erotic love, so Alberti changed it to Latin: *amoenitas* ("pleasure") in the 15th century. He also split the beauty into essential Latin: *pulchritudo*, the beauty of proportions, and superficial Latin: *ornamentum* that only goes skin-deep ("auxiliary brightness").

While admirable distinctions for first and second passes, *venustas*, *amoenitas*, and *pulchritudo*//*ornamentum* are all inadequate, if not entirely misguided, in terms of serving as one of the three central tenets of Architecture. In order to understand why, we must first understand the nature of Architecture.

Architecture, as distinct from architecture, as distinct from capital 'A' architecture, stems from the human need to codify thought so as to rationalize action. This is because Architecture is superfluous. While fitting for the time it was conceived (*venustas*, that is), today Architecture must free itself from the hyper-codification and hegemony of contemporary society in order to transcend its superfluity into the realm of necessity. As such, **transtension** offers a substitution of *caritas* in place of *amoenitas* in place of *venustas*. While Alberti understood the essential and

⁴ It used to all be so simple. Somewhat ironically, it still is. Today, even with all the hyper-codification and hegemony which runs rampant throughout our world (self-inflicted, of course), the only layer of Vitruvius' theoretical construction which has been lost is the uppermost one, as "the making of timepieces" and "the construction of machinery" have branched and developed into their own mature fields.

superficial distinctions inherent to *amoenitas*, what was lost in his conception was the necessity.

The necessities of *firmitas* and *utilitas* appear self-evident – in brief, buildings must be constructed so as to not fall down while simultaneously serving some (programmatic) purpose. The necessity of *venustas/amoenitas*, on the other hand, feels much less apparent. Neither beauty nor pleasure are necessary, *especially wrt* Architecture. Furthermore, both are so subjective it seems as though any statement indicating what is beautiful or pleasurable is actually a projection/imposition on the part of the author.⁵

on “form follows function”

Louis Sullivan’s maxim “form *ever* follows function” is one such projection/imposition. What we must remember is that the maxim was symptomatic of the times, and is now still debated and brought up in ‘the discourse’ due to its seductive simplicity. In some ways, we are all striving for objectivity, for a truth outside of ourselves which we can appeal to as a higher or greater authority. “Form follows function” achieves this by presenting it.self as self-evident. In essence, buildings and objects should be designed with their primary functions, i.e. the functions of their inhabitants (whether ‘subjects’ or ‘objects’) in mind. This creates the constraints, limits, and restrictions within which architects thrive.⁶ Moreover, the maxim appears rational, especially in relation to the limited timescales humans tend to think, i.e. their own lifetimes and what actions and events will have an immediate and tangible effect upon their lived experience. Of course, the converse of “form follows function”, “function follows form”, has also been argued, and can be viewed as equally valid. There’s no reason to believe that the design of a building imposes a certain way of functioning, a certain way of living, a certain way of being, upon its inhabitants. This feels more apparent in industrial design discussions, wherein the shape and form of a tool inform not only how it is used, but in a more anthropological sense how we evolved. This leads us to **transtension**’s revision of both “form follows function” and “function follows form”,

⁵ As if projection isn’t an unavoidable aspect of subjectivity/expression in the first place (laughing emoji)

⁶ Arguably the biggest difference between artists and architects is that of function and constraint – by operating within constraints and designing with purpose and intent, i.e. that of the necessity of shelter, architecture is freed of the total liberation that is expression, that which art thrives upon

that of “forms function and functions form”. In this way, neither form nor function is placed above the other. Rather, each coexist in a reciprocal, recursive, reiterative fashion. Think Hegelian dialectics, but instead of slaves and masters, which is inherently hierarchical, the relation is constantly in flux, with masters becoming slaves and slaves becoming masters as situations call for either.or. Mies deals with a similar notion which we should want more, which we will now move on to.

on “less is more”

“Less is more” is another maxim, arguably the most relevant to contemporary society given concerns surrounding sustainability and our species’ role in the extraction, subjugation, and exploitation of the planet. However, when Mies was working, it was really in dialogue, or at least relation to, Loos’ ‘ornament is crime’, which, while we will now not get into, is clearly too hierarchical under the view of **transtension**⁷. Less is more has to do with allowing the rational nature of a building to express itself as that which it truly is (see : the Seagram Building and say : something about the fetishization of rationality and structure as a pure or un.adulterated expression of that fetishization of rationality). Thus, it is not to say that ornament is crime, but rather that there is a superfluity to ornament that can be reduced to the essentials, those being what allows the building to actually stand up, function, and provide shelter, both from the elements and to the programs which it houses. As such, the maxim dovetails nicely with “form follows function”, then goes one step further to say that ‘form expresses function’.

Of course, the converse has been brought up over the course of architectural discourse, with popular examples being “less is a bore” and “less is enough”, with the former seeming to be as extreme on the opposite side of the coin, and the latter, seemingly closer to something less hierarchical and more ‘flat’. However, these strict and dogmatic hierarchies, even the asceticism of Aureli, are exactly what **transtension** aims to assuage, ameliorate, and amend. As such, the revised version reads as follows: ‘neither less nor more, simply enough’. In this way, **transtension** does not place any one above the other, and moreover does not place aesthetics, either beautiful, pleasurable or erotic, on a pedestal, as something to strive for.

⁷ Perhaps something somewhat facetious such as ‘ornaments adorn , crimes scorn [both the criminal and the victim]’

However, there is an alternative to beauty, to pleasure, to erotic love; to utility versus expression; to minimalism and maximalism. Somewhat ironically, this alternative is the basis of beauty, pleasure, and erotic love, among all of the other Goods. This alternative is Love, in latin *caritas*, in greek *agape*.

*Agape; caritas; Love.*⁸

on Love .

Love.

Love is .

Love is -.

Love is .

Love.

Any attempt to define Love will inevitably fall short and feel inadequate. ‘Humans do not understand these things. We feel them’

(Un)fortunately, this is an ‘academic’ **hypo.thesis**, and the only way out is through, so we will use some words in order to attempt to define some of the feelings surrounding Love.⁹ But let us be perfectly clear that Love is unthinkable, unknowable, indescribable (if that rings any bells for you).

So, Love is, not necessarily, necessary. Moreso, Love is ubiquitous, often latent, but regardless eternally ever- and omni-present. Love is. As such, *caritas*, a translation of a translation of Love, can and will be contrived as necessary, as a necessity. Since this is an entirely arbitrary contrivance wrt necessity, we will pick and choose definitions so as to suit our fancy.

caritas . yes, charity, but also “affections people ought to feel for one another”

agape . “selfless, unselfish, unconditional love”, not just of ‘the other’, but also of self and the universe and God, both holistically and all the way down.¹⁰

⁸ The capitalization of Love is self-evident. If it sticks with you, ask your.self why

⁹ Important to note is that feelings are not being conflated with emotions here

¹⁰ as above, so below . as within, so without . turtles all the way down, in, out, up, and around

Love . -

Essentially, the golden rule; treat others as you want to be treated. Nothing new, but now necessary, as one of the three basic tenets of architecture.

Now seems like a good time to touch briefly on sincerity and subjectivity, and where **transtension** aims to situate itself wrt ‘’.

on sincerity

Sincerity is tricky because it is, by definition, to act without pretense. This is why children are thought of as incredibly sincere , if not downright blunt, given their literal innocence and naivete. What is ironic here is that, at a certain age, you start getting told to ‘stop being so naive’, as if it were sinful to act without pretense. That is because this world, or at least this constructed society which comprises ‘the world’ for your average passerby, is incredibly insincere, entirely predicated on operating under pretenses so as to simply pass through with controlled and predictable outcomes; in other words, safety.

However, pretenses are important; but just as an ego, they make for great servants but terrible masters. Take, for example, a stranger knocking on your door late at night. First, there’s the question of whether or not you should even open your door for a stranger. There are those stories, you know... But let’s say you do open the door, and the stranger is asking for a place to stay. Given what could be considered ‘common sense’, really another couple of words for agreed upon pretenses, most would decline, citing, if not outright then in the back of their mind, that the other is a stranger who can not be trusted, for who knows how they would treat a place that is not their own, and who knows what would happen once one fell asleep. What would the stranger do? We tend to operate more so under the question of ‘what could the stranger do?’, and this is the beginning of the slippery slope where most tend to end up at the bottom, aka the worst possible outcome, and then make decisions and act accordingly from there.

Let us consider the other side of this coin, the perspective of the one who knocks. They have just been kicked out of their home by their partner (reasoning irrelevant), and they went out wandering until they came upon this house with the lights on. The house looks nice enough, friendly enough, and they feel compelled to knock, to ask

for some help, a momentary reprieve, a night of reprieve. You may be wondering, why wouldn't the one who knocks go and ask one of their friends, or a relative? But what you may not know is that the one who knocks just moved to this place because of their partner, they know no one in the area, and they are all alone.

In this instance, there really is no right answer. Letting a stranger into one's home is, by all accounts, a risky thing to do. There is simply the question of what one would do, how one would act, if they were to do so under no pretenses. More likely than not, or perhaps just hopefully, one would treat the other as though they were themselves.

on subjectivity

Treat others the way you want to be treated. The golden rule. This golden rule is inherently paradoxical, intrinsically implausible, innately impossible, and as such is arguably the only aim we should strive for in this life (especially given the level of difficulty and the subsequent effects). Given that we all exist as the centers of our own universes (so-to-speak), we all want to be treated a certain way, and moreover to treat others a certain way. There was a time when there were external objectivities we could appeal to, namely God, in earlier times gods (plural). However, given the plurality of the globalized world and academia's disdain for any such appeal, we are going to have to jump through some hoops in order to get anywhere even remotely close to some similar sort of objectivity, and furthermore we're going to need it to be internally generated yet externally motivated and resolved.

So, returning to the golden rule, 'treat others the way you want to be treated.' But I want to be treated like this, and You want to be treated like that. What's a woman to do? What's a man to say?

We are to try our best.

And if You are not actually a person? If You are an object? Inanimate? If we speak different languages? If You can't hear me? If I can't see You? How best would *You* like to be treated?

These are unanswerable questions. Unknowable, and based on how I'm currently feeling, unthinkable. However, there is this one little loop hole which we may be able to squeeze ourselves through, in order to reach 'the other' side, and maybe, hopefully, gain some

perspective. It goes back to our discussion of singularities, oppositions, and ‘the third thing’.

You see, there is no You. There is no Me. As such, I, You, Me, and subsequently, We, are incredibly malleable. While these ideas of ‘the one’ and ‘the other’ are (nearly) inescapable, they are still useful (conceptions and codifications), ideas we can sink into until we slip through.

Thus, in order to understand the golden rule, in order to ‘treat others the way you want to be treated’, in order to Love, We must place our centers outside ourselves. In so doing, we are able to coincide our centers with our relations, thus eliminating ourselves. Once the illusion has been eliminated and separation has been resolved, we are able to remember. We are all One.

At this point we should be diving into Eastern philosophies like the Tao, Yoga (the actual branch of Hinduism, not the western version akin to ‘socialized stretching’), Buddhism and Nondualism, but the western (academic) bureaucracy would eviscerate, obliterate and disregard such thoughts (or simply disregard them), so instead we will turn in on ourselves and more specifically, on the theory of **transtension** and the notion of ‘the bottom line’, since the west loves to back itself into corners with its droves and droves of codes and codes so as to appear superior (when in fact it is simply superfluous).

on transtension

transtension can be understood quite literally as ‘across, through, and/or beyond’ [trans] ‘the relation((s)ship) between opposites, i.e. mental and/or emotional and/or physical and/or spiritual strain’ [tension]. Thus, it can be argued that (a/A)rchitecture is at its core inherently and intrinsically transtensive, given that it simultaneously discretizes and synthesizes disparities, the most obvious example being shelter from and connection with *nature*, as well as shelter from and construction of *nature*.

However, contemporary society has bastardized this relation, relegating nature to an object, placing it in subservient opposition and calamitous subjugation to culture. In some ways, **transtension** simply seeks to ameliorate this hierarchical situation so as to

situate nature and culture in a nonhierarchical, dialectical, reciprocal relation.

Pushing further, contemporary society and the powers at be have also led to an atomized and individuated society wherein we're all supposed to look out for 'number 1', aka the self. And even when one is able to fulfill their basic needs of food and shelter, when one has satisfied the self, we're still pushed to want more, to desire whatever it is that we lack, to fill the void we can't quite place and don't fully understand. For Lacan, this is the *objet a*, for Derrida the *trace*, for Buddhists and Hinduists *Śūnyatā*, for Taoists the *Void*, for Christians the *thirst*, and the list goes on. It is that nagging feeling that something is missing regardless of how much we have, which capitalism is able to capitalize off of by continually reforming and reshaping it (the void) into something ephemerally desirable yet barely placeable via means of manipulation and marketing. It is what led to Vitruvius ascribing *Venustas* as one of the three main tenets of architecture and why someone like Mies was constantly striving for less and less, trying to whittle away the excess and get down to the essence of why we need, or think we need, designed shelter.

transtension works across, through and beyond this void, this nothingness, this lack so as to allow for // shelter inter-, trans-, and sub- subjective relations which allow us to reach and re-reach and research and re-teach mutual understandings of our common lack. For Ettinger, this lack can be traced back to the original separation, the original other, the mOther, back to the time when we were in the womb, through development when we finally started to recognize ourselves as individual and autonomous beings and thus, when we finally started to recognize our *lack*. Accordingly, for Lacan this point of no return is referred to as 'the mirror stage', given that once we are able to recognize ourselves in the mirror is when the *objet a* truly starts to blossom and take root in the form of *lack* (gross reduction, I know, but this is an architectural thesis, not a psychoanalytical one).

In the context of (a/A)rchitecture as a discipline and profession, **transtension** understands this void/lack not as the need for shelter, but as the need for *superfluous* shelter, i.e. shelter which goes above and beyond the call of duty, be it via programming for more than the basic needs, ornamentation which expresses the ethos of the time (or perhaps just one's own 'individuality'), or even details which express the ego of the 'creator'. Given that all these superfluities stem from the same desire, to fill the void, and given

the slippery slope this has led us down qua neoliberal capitalism, **transtension** steps in so as to redirect this desire in a contradictory, paradoxical, ‘both, and’ type of way. Satisfy the void of the self by satisfying the void of the other¹¹; recognize the self not as an atomized autonomous individual but rather as a link in a chain, as cells interlinked in one great big cosmic mess which would be neither the same nor different without one’s presence. Think of indra’s net, of each being being a jewel in a matrix reflecting the infinity of the cosmos. Think grains of sand on the beach, being washed over and over and over again by the same wave, again and again and again, some being pulled into the sea and sinking a certain distance, others being washed away ‘til they forget their distance, or perhaps even the existence of the ocean itself. However, such a way of being would not be supported by ‘the bottom line’.

on ‘the bottom line’

‘the bottom line’ refers to that which has eviscerated not only Architecture, but nearly every aspect of human existence, of all sincerity. This can be traced back to capital’s ability to ‘deterritorialize’ us such that we are at its mercy. ‘the bottom line’ simply exists as a tongue-in-cheek way of verbally (both metaphorically and literally) capturing the nature of capital, since in Architecture the bottom line is always what value is measured up against. As long as things are done quickly, cheaply, and ‘safely’, as designated and described by our codes and regulations, the work is seen as valuable, worthwhile, and ‘practical’. In reality, ‘the bottom line’ presupposes a sort of irresponsible inefficiency which more or less imposes a (con/re)striction on the ability to practice **transtensive** architecture, i.e. architecture that is sincere, Loving, and (inter; trans; sub).subjective. We can not practice sincerely since we must practice efficiently. As such, there is always the pretense of faster being better, and if you are able to work quickly and produce *deliverables* which are superficially (read : surfacially) attractive and acceptable, you are deemed good at what you do. Similarly, we can not practice Lovingly since we must practice

¹¹ Often people do this by having children, with many describing it as ‘the best thing to ever happen to them’. Several bastardized versions of this exist, including broken couples having children to save the relationship, individuals having offspring so as to live vicariously through them, or even people having kids so as to achieve a pseudo-immortality by passing on their genes. Anti-natalism is a slippery slope here, but ultimately a trap.

capitalistically. Capital is situated in opposition to Love given its presupposition of value. Love has no value and can not be valued.

Again,

Love is .

And furthermore, we can not practice in an (inter; trans; sub).subjective way since 'the bottom line' requires objectivity, and not only base-level objectivity but objective as superseding subjectivity, since objectivity can be proven whereas subjectivity can only be felt. Thus, 'the bottom line' must be escaped, jumped off of, cut in two, erased, so that we may find ourselves. **transtension** is a way out. But the only way out is through.

on Capital

In the context of **transtension**, Capital is used as a stand-in for several aspects of the 'the bottom line', including but not limited to money [and subsequently time], goods and services exchanged for money, as well as the lack that is traded around as if it held intrinsic value. As such, it is important to understand that Capital is the closest our species has come to understanding nothing, even if that understanding is entirely shaped and construed through the opposite of nothing, that being something.

Capital is incredibly fluid. It can take whatever shape one desires. But at its center is simply a void, an ephemeral and ever-shifting void which allows it to take on value, given that value in contemporary society is more or less meaningless, given that that which we value has no real meaning, only that that which we value is *worth* something. If you look up the definitions of value and worth, you will see that they are self-referential. (Essentially a closed loop.) Thus, similar to something like ethics or aesthetics, but really objective notions in general, value and worth are entirely subjective notions whose meanings are determined by those who can afford to do so. At this point, it should be clear why Capital is positioned as a counterpart to Love: two sides of the same coin. Both Love and Capital are more or less undefineable, or at the very least so pluralistically defineable that their meanings are meaningless. So, why not use them interchangeably? Well, you could. But it would be similar to using *caritas* and *venustas* interchangeably, such that you might think you're saying the same thing, but in reality the core or root of each could not be more different.

Capital and Love can both be traced back to that central lack which we all have and experience and become aware of at that critical inflection point, and then continue to face and grapple with and succumb to and transcend throughout this life. However, whereas Capital would grow in that place stemming from the self as center, Love would grow in that place stemming from the other as center. And yet, for some reason, this world runs on Capital, rather than Love. This could now turn into a discussion of 'the state of nature' and 'nature v. nurture' arguments regarding whether, at her core, man is inherently good or evil. It will not. Perhaps it is not 'either/or', but simply 'both, and'.

on efficiency

In order to operate as quickly as possible, with as little risk as possible, society aims to be efficient. This is because we must keep moving on, keep pushing forward, to that point from which we can't return, which we can't actually see but somehow know is there. In order to operate efficiently, one must operate under and in a state of pure pretense, hence why efficiency is positioned in opposition to sincerity. Similar to the old rectangle/square axiom, while it is possible to be sincerely efficient, one can hardly be efficiently sincere.

But who cares about sincerity when we're moving at such a pace it feels as though the train is on its own time, moving at a clip along a track with no operator, accelerating to a point where slowing down, let alone stopping, is high impossible, and jumping off seems to implicate certain death. What ever are we to do as the passengers aboard?

on objectivity

Arguably the biggest misconception to plague the human species, objectivity is what ties us all together. The question then arises of whether it ties us together so as to constrict movement and further segregate us, or ties us together so as to liberate us from our own isolation, uniting us under agreed upon notions of what is right or wrong, good or bad, ugly or beautiful, nice or not. If we think back to Plato, we find an objectivity linked to the world of forms, a realm external to ours whereof we only glimpse shadows. Shadows of that which is true, thus that which is good and that which is beautiful and that which is right. The truth, assuming there is one, is that on this

planet, in this society within this reality, there is no truth, no objectivity, no one thing which every other living breathing being would agree upon.

Of course, the truth, knowing that there is one, is Love.

The issue is, in order for something like 'truth' or 'objectivity' to exist, in a subjective sense, it must be agreed upon. This is why the closest we come, or perhaps why that which we default to, can be reduced down to what scientists refer to as empirical evidence and mathematical fact. However, most scientists worth their weight will tell you themselves that there are certain things beyond our comprehension, and even if mathematical facts do exist and empirical evidence can be relied upon as 'objective', they in no way encapsulate the entirety nor the complexity nor the ephemerality of this existence.

Take the age-old case of murder being objectively wrong, or suicide being a sin, or something as rote and elementary as the notion that all men are created equal. Now go to an arabic country and ask them about honor killings, go to Japan and ask about Seppuku, or look down at that little phone in your pocket and ask the people born into slavery how they feel about waking up everyday and mining for your cobalt just so you can stay 'up to date' and 'connected' with the world, so you can be *efficient*.

The point here being, objectivity sounds nice in theory, but in practice, as a reflection of the actions of ourselves and others and the values exemplified embodied and personified by our culture and its values, objectivity falls short. If we were to describe objectivity accurately, we would need to appeal to notions of intersubjectivity, and namely that fact that objectivity is shaped by relations and specifically agreements among subjects which exist within the same 'world' (Husserlian). As such, why not just appeal to subjectivity in the first place and drop the pretenses regarding notions of the greater good and what the right thing to do is. If people truly believed there was a right thing to do, and here we mean right in the Platonic sense, as in an objective thing which exists outside of this world which we should constantly and relentlessly pursue, and they acted in alignment with their beliefs, this world would be an incredibly different place, and who knows if for the better.

outro

If there is only one take away from this thesis, from enacting this process of **transtension**, it is thus: the only way out is through. Do not conflate this with something like accelerationism.

The only way out is through is meant as both a literal and metaphorical maxim, an axiom to live by and a notion to remind ourselves of when the going gets tough. There are no people in a dark room plotting the downfall, demise, or enslavement of the species (I hope). We are simply living through an incredible time with several paths laid out before us. As we all know, choice can be paralyzing. At its core (assuming it has one), **transtension** is simultaneously a resignation and call to action, a simple reminder that talk is cheap, actions speak louder than words, and Love always prevails. In times of crisis, it is easy to forget such things, especially when we have access to all the information in the world and it feels like the walls are falling down around us. Instead of succumbing to the pressure, of backing ourselves into a corner so as to fit the nice little codified, atomized, homogenized boxes set up for us by the powers at be, **transtension** simply asks for three things : sincerity, Love, and (inter; trans; sub).subjectivity. Said another way, practice the golden rule, treat others the way you want to be treated, do unto others as you would have others do unto you, and Love thy neighbor as thyself, that neighbor being a person, place, thing, idea, man, woman, non-binary, cat, dog, wolf, mouse, tree, bird, plane, brick, arch, wall, book, friend, lover, fighter, adversary, enemy, abuser, addict, fascist, orange peel, blade of grass, grain of sand, follicle of hair, piece of paper, page of book, particle of dust, atom of matter, etc.

We are all one, the self and the other, only (in/sub).stantiated by our relations among each other.