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# Émile Zola's Volatile Utopia

The essay explores the role played by anarchist thinking on Zola's utopian city in *Travail* (1901). While Zola did not consider anarchism to be a viable political ideology for the ideal city portrayed in the novel, he found it to be a revelatory model for its artistic culture. Drawing from anarchist agitator Peter Kropotkin, Zola conceived of the residential area as the antithesis of the city center. This essay will examine the contradictory facets in this piece of early twentieth-century utopian fiction, and, through this lens, will consider the more salient tensions in modernist utopias as a whole.

I know of no better bomb than a book.  
—Stéphane Mallarmé<sup>1</sup>

On the quiet evening of December 9th, 1894, an anarchist sympathizer by the name of Auguste Vaillant set off a bomb at the Chambre des Députés in central Paris. The eleventh banquet of the literary journal *La Plume*, presided over by the sculptor Auguste Rodin, was in mid-session when journalist Paul Brulat entered the room. Brulat announced the fateful news of the nearby attacks and surveyed the opinions of

those gathered. The symbolist poet Stéphane Mallarmé responded with the phrase cited above.

Symbolists had long evaded social and political reality in favor of a kind of reverie that only poetry or fiction could provide. However, that stance was quickly changing during the turbulent years of the *fin-de-siècle*. Also present among the writers and artists meeting that night was Émile Zola, who scribbled: "During troubled times, folly abounds, and the guillotine is much less able to effect change than is a new ideal."<sup>2</sup> A few years later Zola would publish *Travail* (1901), a utopian novel aimed at addressing the conflicts of the period and propagating a visionary society of the future (Figure 1).<sup>3</sup>

*Travail* has appealed to groups that have sought to transform the very real shape of the city. According to one commentator, socialists, anarchists, and the working classes quickly embraced the novel and devoted countless night courses to its study.<sup>4</sup> A prime inspiration for Tony Garnier and Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, the vision of an ideal city described in Zola's narrative extended well into the architectural and social imaginary of the twentieth century.<sup>5</sup> And while its farsighted portrayal of political and technological structures had a formative impact on progressive factions during the twentieth century, the aesthetic views advanced in Zola's novel, based

as they are in late nineteenth-century anarchist thought, had only a short-lived effect and have been given little or no attention since.<sup>6</sup> This oversight is particularly relevant today given the continued tendency to purge the modern utopian imagination of its internal tensions and complexities.

*Travail* first appeared in December 1900 as daily excerpts in *L'Aurore*, a progressive newspaper with socialist and anarchist leanings. Two years earlier it had published "J'Accuse...!", Zola's defiant rebuke of the Third Republic's handling of the Dreyfus affair. The serialized delivery of the novel was appropriate given that Zola devised it as a fictionalized instruction manual, bringing the reader through the arduous stages of transforming a small town rife with misery and class antagonism into an exemplar of peace and prosperity. In this sense, Zola's method departed from the utopian genre as practiced by late nineteenth-century reformers such as Edward Bellamy and William Morris, who presented glimpses of an ideal order as though connected to the real world only through dream.<sup>7</sup>

*Travail* tells the story of Luc Froment, a young engineer whose observations of the social inequity that beleaguer the fictional industrial town of Beauclair compel him to found a new society based on the theories of early nineteenth-century social reformer Charles Fourier.<sup>8</sup> Fourier's system, grounded in the belief that one could discover a social correlate to Newton's law of universal gravitation, purported to reveal the perfect combination of personality types needed to lead society towards a more perfect future. As Zola remarked in the working notes for the novel, "No revolution, evolution through Fourier."<sup>9</sup> Zola based his vision of an ideal city on the newly liberated passions of its populace, imagining such a system as entailing the destruction of social hierarchies and a redistribution of labor according to the specific personality traits of the individual. Despite a precarious beginning, Froment's ideal city, aided by hard work and the mechanization and electrification of industrial processes, grew rapidly as workers realized the advantages of a system based on an equitable

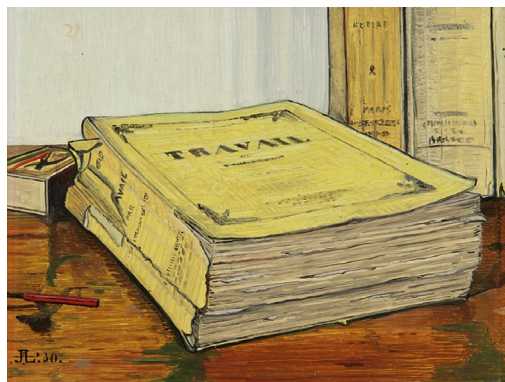


Figure 1. Johannes Lodeizen, The Book 'Travail' by Émile Zola, 1930. Oil on canvas.

social order. By establishing a small enclave where the passions of free association and just labor were the norm, one could set an example, Zola believed, that would become contagious throughout the surrounding areas. This is exactly what happens in *Travail*. By the novel's end, the entire city of Beauclair has been engulfed by the ideal city, which expands ceaselessly towards the horizon.

Zola's descriptions of this new, prosperous, and highly mechanized city were prescient, albeit largely optimistic. For example, electricity replaced coal in the ovens that transformed the iron mined near Beauclair into commodities such as rails used to expand train routes (rather than the weaponry the town had originally produced); this promoted peace

and social harmony.<sup>10</sup> Further, electric cars buzzed around the city streets, their energy tapped from the sun's rays. Following Fourier's ideas, glass-covered arcades protected residents from seasonal temperature changes. Plans were even afoot to build an artificial light source high up in the sky to keep the city evenly lit at all hours of the night (an idea proposed for the Parisian Universal Exposition of 1889) and of controlling the movement of the clouds so as to have unvarying rain watering the crops. Additionally, manual labor was rendered obsolete in Zola's ideal city, backbreaking work having been passed on to humanoid machines "having arms and legs like the slaves of old."<sup>11</sup> In short, all of the earth's forces had been harnessed and, as Zola explained, man had

made of nature "his servant and paradise."<sup>12</sup> But in a sense this is only half the story of Zola's ideal city. As with all of Zola's novels, the unstable and obstinate underbelly of society surfaces in *Travail*. While many progressive readers appreciated the highly mechanized and ordered character of the ideal city, the artistic culture of the ideal city was of an entirely different kind.

Zola recorded his impressions upon visiting Jean-Baptiste André Godin's Familistère de Guise, an experimental industrial and residential community located in the north of France and inspired by Fourier's Phalanstery (Figure 2). "House of glass, mistrust of one's neighbors," he observed in the *carnet d'enquêtes* he customarily kept for his literary research. The brick complex, with its introverted layout centered around interior glass-covered courtyards, left "no solitude, no freedom," and none of the valued "risks of a free and adventurous life." Zola concluded: "Do not pour all of the lives into the same mold."<sup>13</sup> Zola was well aware of the dangers of communal housing projects. Human individuality and independence, traits so dear to the culture of the *fin-de-siècle* European metropolis, were put at risk by such restrictive systems. As a counterpoint to the collectivist work ethic of the ideal city, Zola paid special attention to the capacity for art and architecture to stimulate variety in the city.

Beyond the influences noted above, the blueprint for Zola's vision of a thriving artistic culture came in large part from the ideas of anarchist writer and agitator Peter Kropotkin. Zola gave his anarchist philosophy voice through the character of Lange, a ceramist of exceptional talent and conviction. But Lange went well beyond the anarchism proposed by Kropotkin; he embraced the more radical wing of anarchic thinking that believed in what was called "propaganda by deed," or the use of violent means to propel society into massive revolt. In the first half of *Travail* and before the town's transformation, Lange returned again and again to his cherished dream of setting the town ablaze by fashioning a series of colorful ceramic pots with powerful explosives con-



Figure 2. A watercolor of Fourier's Phalanstery as imagined by an unknown painter in the nineteenth century. (Musée du Temps, Besançon, inv. 978.8.1)

cealed within and depositing them at the doorsteps of the institutions of power and authority.<sup>14</sup>

Lange's daydream evoked similar exploits by anarchist groups during the turbulent 1890s. One of the most famous anarchic events, the bombing of the Café Terminal adjacent the Gare Saint-Lazare, was perpetrated by Émile Henry, an aspiring decorative artist.<sup>15</sup> In Henry's subsequent letter of defense he quoted the character Souvarine, an anarchist saboteur from Zola's novel *Germinal*: "All discussions about the future are criminal since they hinder pure and simple destruction and slow down the march of the revolution." This quote also encapsulated Lange's outlook when he argued, "No compromise, it was all rotten, there was no choice but to bomb the old society, and raze it to the ground."<sup>16</sup>

A contemporary French poet, Laurent Tailhade, saw these acts as sublime: "Who cares about the victims if the act is artistic? Who cares about the disappearance of vague humanity, if, by that disappearance, an individual affirms his identity?"<sup>17</sup> Tailhade thought his words wise until he himself was injured in the anarchist bombing of the Café Foyot in 1894. But Tailhade's comments were perhaps not so strange for a culture that regarded individualism as the apogee of historical evolution.<sup>18</sup> Although Zola did not consider anarchism a viable political ideology for his ideal city, he did see it as the only appropriate philosophy for its artistic culture.

For Kropotkin, anarchism was the sole political solution to safeguard the individuality and artistic independence of the populace. In *The Conquest of Bread* (1892) he reproached the "ideal communist societies" for dwelling on "material wants" and for neglecting to satisfy "higher delights" and artistic desires. "In your communal stores you may perhaps have bread for all," Kropotkin explained, "but you will not have beautiful pictures, optical instruments, luxurious furniture, artistic jewelry." He continued: "and in this way you suppress the possibility of obtaining anything besides the bread and meat which the commune can offer to all, and the grey linen in which all your lady citizens will be dressed."<sup>19</sup>

Zola's character Lange reiterated Kropotkin's commitment to the intrinsic necessity of art; art was "as necessary to human existence as the daily bread."<sup>20</sup> Like Kropotkin, Lange believed that artistic expression should pervade all walks of life, embedded in the very surfaces of objects of everyday use. At the core of the anarchist aesthetic philosophy was a tension between the desire for art to be ubiquitous and inimitable, an opposition that would eventually manifest itself in the *Deutscher Werkbund* debates between Henry Van der Velde and Hermann Muthesius on the question of aesthetic standards. For Zola, that tension was reconciled by sublimating nature into the very process of production. As Zola explained, Lange's creative control over the pots, plates, statuettes, vases, and ornamental fantasies he produced was mitigated by "the haphazard effect of the firing" (*les hasards du feu*) which seared the effects of uncontrollable natural forces onto the exterior finish of his pieces.

Lange envisioned his works enlarged to the scale of the city. The final shape of the residential area of the ideal city manifested Lange's main principles for the anarchic city. Unlike other parts of the city, which followed an orthogonal grid, the residential area obeyed no system or overarching logic and its exuberant artistic culture devoted to handiwork stood in stark contrast to the technological prowess of the industrial quarter of the city. "The city resembled an immense garden, where the houses were scattered in a natural way, amidst the greenery," Zola explained. The lack of planning was as much a virtue as it was a challenge to the "epoch of tyranny and terror" that had produced buildings "one against another." Each resident having chosen a plot of land on this vast and lightly wooded terrain, built up that plot "according to his own fantasy." The residential area departed from accepted planning practices.<sup>21</sup> Each house in Zola's ideal city stood as a kind of personal statement of that resident's artistic vision, the white façades used as a canvas of sorts on which were gathered "brightly colored faïences and earthenwares: glazed tiles, gables, moldings, friezes, cornices," of which

"the lilac blues, dandelion yellows and poppy reds made them appear as large flourishing bouquets between the massive greens of the surrounding trees."<sup>22</sup> "On sunny days," Zola concluded, "the white façades of the houses seemed to giggle amidst of the greenery, with no smoke to tarnish the purity of the air."<sup>23</sup>

Lange's theory of the arts was no mere utopian dream wish. Zola's descriptions of the artistic culture of the ideal city mirrored the real-life agitations of a number of artists, literary figures and architects. Most influential in Zola's own circle of friends was the architect Frantz Jourdain, who would design Zola's tomb in Montmartre.<sup>24</sup> Jourdain scrutinized the hierarchy between art forms with the same sense of purpose. In 1894, he asserted that the aristocratic traditions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had unjustly relegated utilitarian art forms to the bottom rungs of artistic merit. Understandably, the *École des Beaux-Arts* was detested by Jourdain; he claimed that it had done more damage to art than "an epidemic of cholera or an invasion of cossacks."<sup>25</sup> One must, according to him, "blow up, and promptly, this wall impeding the forward movement and steady march of ideas."<sup>26</sup> Traditions or institutions that imposed calcified solutions to contemporary artistic practice would have to be done away with. "In its innermost essence, art is horrified by obstacles, barriers, regulations, dogmas, classifications, codes and tyrannies," Jourdain explained, "That which restricts it, suffocates it, that which weighs it down, squashes it, that which makes it subservient, assassinates it."<sup>27</sup> The mid-nineteenth-century battle cry for "la liberté dans l'art" had reached a fever pitch.<sup>28</sup> Many of those calling for artistic freedom, a call that for decades had run parallel to the aims and ambitions of Republicanism, had become radicalized and disenchanting with the bourgeois aspirations of the government of the Third Republic. Jourdain's call for artistic freedom made no compromises; "in art," he exclaimed, "there is but a single type of governance both logical and honest, and that is anarchy."<sup>29</sup>

The core idea that Jourdain and Zola held in common was that decoration was the chief means by

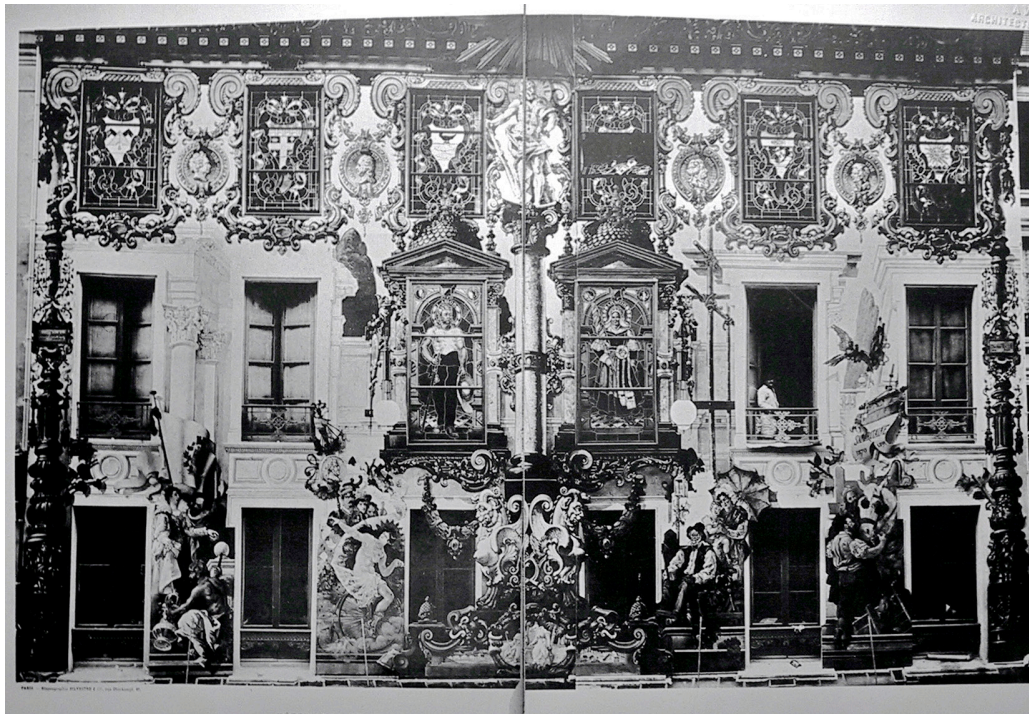


Figure 3. A mural painting by Charles Toch featured in Frantz Jourdain, "L'Art dans la rue," *Revue des Arts Décoratifs*, 12e année, (1891-1892).

which man-made constructions expressed a cultural moment. Borrowing key concepts from the mid-nineteenth-century decorative reform movements, Jourdain explained that "an insatiable thirst devoured" man and impelled him to "ameliorate, embellish and ornament the house in which his life will run its course."<sup>30</sup> The illuminator, claimed Jourdain, was inseparable from the constructor. The color and detail of decorative motifs was critical to the legibility of architecture and "completed, detailed, explicated and characterized" its meaning and significance for all to see.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, for Jourdain as for Zola, the call for anarchy in the arts implied that all traditional hierarchies be reevaluated and that art be made accessible to all. However divergent, the personal artistic vision of each individual should also circulate freely in the public sphere. "The ideal," Jourdain proclaimed, "would be to see each and every artist, full of proud contempt for the past, bring forth a unique and singular formula that would perish with him."<sup>32</sup>

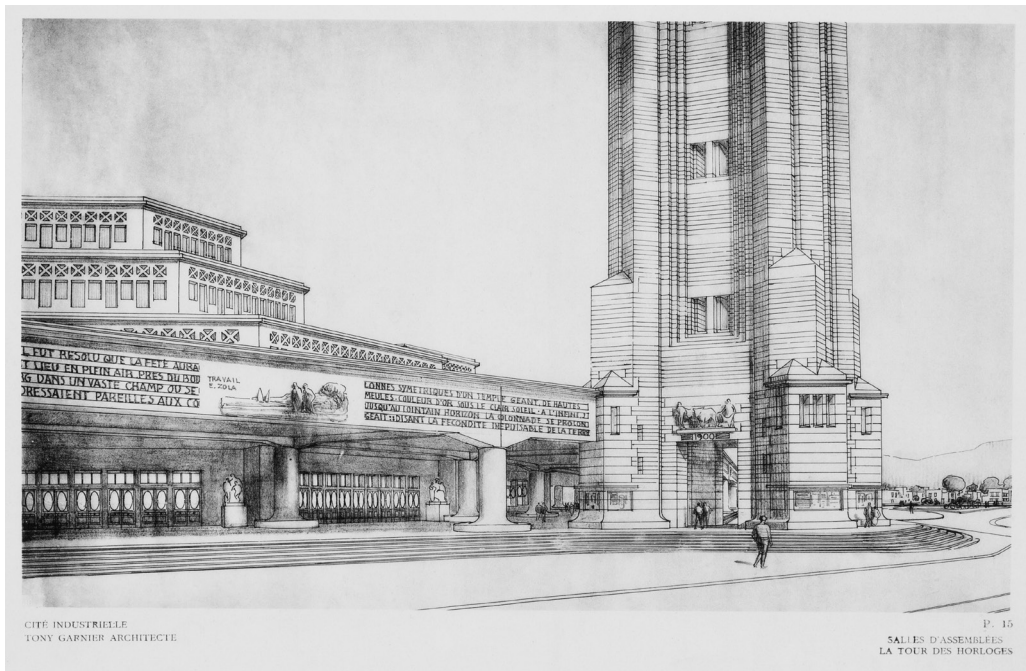
Jourdain envisioned the main venue for displays of individual artistic approaches to be the street. Like the street life of Zola's ideal city, with its white houses colorfully decorated according to the individual tastes and fantasies of their inhabitants, Jourdain's ideal prized originality above all

else, and emphasized it as an essential aspect of the communal nature of society. Commercial and capitalist ambitions, though they could be swayed for the benefit of the public, were often obstacles to the real expression of individual creativity.<sup>33</sup> As Jourdain explained in "L'Art dans la rue" (published in 1891 in *La revue des arts décoratifs*), the presence of public art and architecture on the street also served an educational and social purpose (Figure 3). While the aristocracy and bourgeois audience could follow the artist into the salons, exhibition halls, and private galleries, the proletarian masses had no access to such exclusive realms. Art would have to come to them. More so than the classroom, the street, claimed Jourdain, was the place for educating the masses, or developing their tastes and interests. Like Zola's character Lange, Jourdain believed that the beautification of the street was of moral consequence and contributed to forging a public that was honest, compassionate, and just.

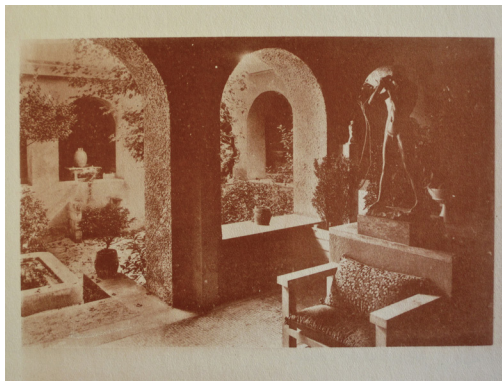
As Meredith Clausen has observed, Jourdain's fascination for civic art drew from the more comprehensive attention to street aesthetics in Belgium.<sup>34</sup> In France, Jourdain and his cohorts Roger Marx and the symbolist poet and polymath Henri Cazalis emphasized the properties of ceramics and lacquered metals,

which they saw as particularly well suited to the vagaries of street life. These materials fulfilled a number of criteria dear to the proponents of social art: they were hygienic; they represented the triumph of the handicrafts over academic art; and they were immediately accessible to all since their bright colors and reflective surfaces appealed primarily to the senses. However, Marx was most quixotic in his descriptions of this media. Reporting on the work of the fin-de-siècle decorative artist Émile Gallé in his article "La décoration architecturale et les industries d'art à l'Exposition Universelle de 1889," Marx explained that the eye was fascinated by the "metamorphoses of the porcelain into precious matter . . . caused by the combinations of firing."<sup>35</sup> These "accidents of nature" were the result of what Marx described as "an alchemy of lapidary dissemblance" that "imprisoned fleeting and evanescent reflections, vapors of clouds, streaming haze, echoes deafened by reflections, rippling fumes, and lunar clarity."<sup>36</sup> The critic turned into a crystal ball gazer of sorts when confronted with the brilliant play of surface and depth in ceramic glazes. The main point of interest in this medium was its ability to capture the fleeting, the spontaneous, and the accidental, and to remain consistently distinctive. Each ceramic piece, although a fabricated object, had a kind of volatility and vitality to it as though fashioned by the processes of nature itself. However, the pieces produced by Zola's anarchist potter were somewhat more modest, and it is significant to note that, at the moment when symbolist poets and artists were awakening to the social and political realities that characterized the turbulent years of the *fin-de-siècle*, Zola's naturalism (the theoretical armature underpinning the twenty novels that made up the Rougon-Macquart series), was transforming itself to include idealist reverie and dream.

As far as we know, no plan was made of Zola's ideal city, although some years earlier Jourdain had developed a series of architectural drawings for the fictive department store that would be the setting for Zola's novel *Aux bonheur des dames*.<sup>37</sup> If we were to draw a city plan based on Zola's descrip-



**Figure 4.** Acknowledging his debt to Zola, Garnier incorporated a long band of quotations from *Travail* on the walls of the central assembly building of the Cité Industrielle. Tony Garnier *Une cité industrielle: étude pour la construction des villes* (Paris: A. Vincent, c. 1917), plate 15. (Collection Centre Canadien d'Architecture/ Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal).



**Figure 5.** Tony Garnier added a number of photographs of his built projects into *Une cité industrielle*. The photographs and many of the drawings incorporate ceramic pots and statuette, vestiges perhaps of Zola's anarchic artistic vision. Tony Garnier, *Une cité industrielle: étude pour la construction des villes* (Paris: A. Vincent, 1917?), plate 121. (Collection Centre Canadien d'Architecture/ Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal).

tions in *Travail*, what would be immediately striking would be the disjunction between the highly planned orthogonality of the mechanized city center and the dispersed scatter of the residential zones, which from above might resemble the informality of a shantytown. As Zola explained, architects were employed in his novel to design buildings in established zones in such a way as to employ diverse aesthetic approaches in order to create monumental and lasting works, while those in the residential district were left to each resident's personal expression.<sup>38</sup> These differences included the choice of the materials used for building each sector. While the city center and industrial sectors were notable for their use of steel elements, precisely shaped in electric furnaces, the polychrome faïence that decorated the modest buildings of the residential quarter were made by hand and were intentionally crude and unique (makeshift wood burning kilns were used for the task). However, besides ensuring individuality in the residential area, it also could be seen as a way of standing outside of industrial capital and commodification, exemplify-

ing the anarchist rejection of a reified and wholly ordered social domain.

Within a couple of years of *Travail's* publication, an acute sense of realism had set in among the proponents of "l'art dans la rue." The title of Henri Cazalis' publication in 1902, *L'Art pour le peuple à défaut de l'art par le peuple* [*Art for the People, in Lieu of Art by the People*] signaled the nature of the change. The lack of interest on the part of citizens in creating a popular art form necessitated that the reform of the arts come from above. This shifted the emphasis to proponents of change opening design shops, publishing illustrated journals, and promoting the use of decorative wallpaper for worker housing. The anarchic elements of Zola's ideal city were largely dropped when it was translated by Tony Garnier into his utopian Cité Industrielle, the drawings for which were first exhibited in 1901. Garnier's plans adjusted the residential quarters to the prevailing grid of the rest of the city and, while he inscribed passages from Zola's *Travail* on the great assembly hall at the center of the city, these celebrated the industrial prowess and productive promise of the new social order without acknowledging the anarchic elements (Figure 4). All that remained, as vestiges of Zola's anarchic vision, were the ceramic wares that dot the perspectives of the Cité Industrielle's *quartier d'habitation* (Figure 5). Le Corbusier, who was significantly moved by Garnier's revisionist urbanism, vehemently rejected the aesthetic promoted by Zola. Writing in *L'Art décoratif d'aujourd'hui*, Le Corbusier lambasted the *fin-de-siècle* decorative arts movement for its "nauseating" handiwork and its mystification of imprecision and error. For Le Corbusier, the absence of precision in the "dripping glazes" and "the haphazard effects of kiln," was evidence of what he proclaimed to be an artisanal "cult of failure" ("*un culte des ratées*")<sup>39</sup> (Figure 6).

Ultimately, Zola's literary vision of Beauclair dramatized the disjunction between order and disorder, precision and accident, blueprint and chance. In so doing, Zola's experimental city exposed tensions at the very heart of the early modern utopian project,

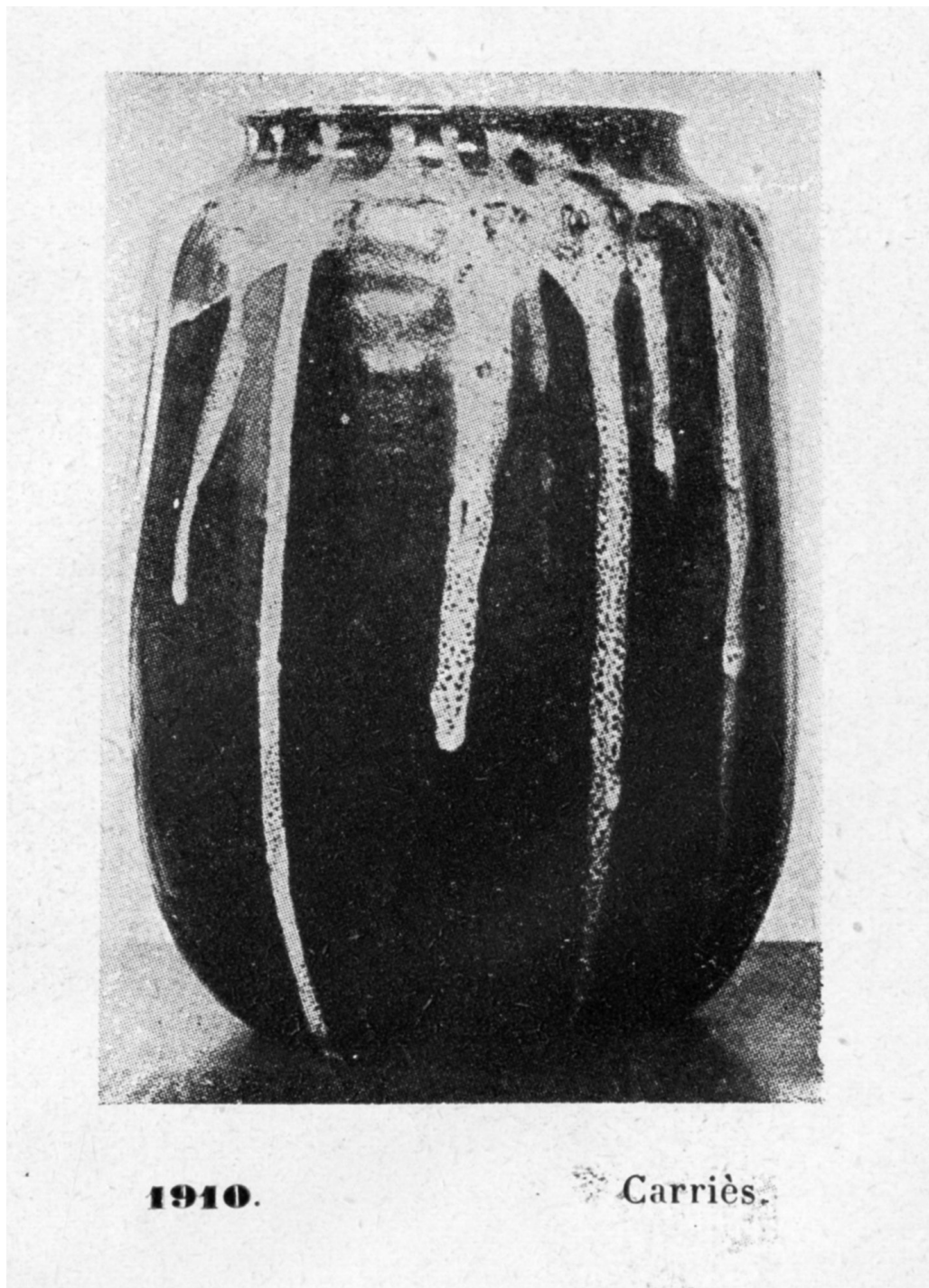


Figure 6. Le Corbusier, *L'Art decorative d'aujourd'hui* (Paris : G. Crès, 1926), 153. © 2013 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris/F.L.C.

tensions that would re-emerge in the late 1950s and 1960s in various utopian movements.<sup>40</sup> In Zola's utopian city one can see the tension as being ultimately internalized into the very heartbeat of the populace as it moves daily from the informal and haphazard to regularized patterns and systematized practices.<sup>41</sup> And while Zola's ideal city was among the first of a long line of modern schemes to separate urban functions, none of the modernist utopias, whether projected or actualized, incorporated within their intended fabric both plan and non-plan elements.<sup>42</sup> Zola's utopia thus departs from the geometrical unity that has characterized ideal city plans from Claude-Nicolas Ledoux's Royal Saltworks at Arc-et-Senans to Le Corbusier's Ville Radieuse. As such, it remains a provocative urban model for us to consider.

#### Notes

1. "Je ne sais pas d'autre bombe qu'un livre." The translation, which deviates slightly from the original, is my own. See: Pamela A. Genova, *Symbolist Journals* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002), 51.
2. "Aux époque troublées, la folie souffle, et la guillotine pourra encore moins qu'un idéal nouveau." The translation has been borrowed from Genova, *Symbolist Journals* (see note 1), 51. All further translations in this essay are my own unless indicated otherwise.
3. I would like to thank Mary McLeod and Cesare Birignani for their valuable comments on this piece. I would also like to thank Marc Pitre at the Canadian Centre for Architecture for his advice on image permissions and for his help with photographic reproductions.
4. Armand Lanoux, *Bonjour Monsieur Zola* (Paris: Amiot-Dumont, 1954), 379.
5. Shirley W. Vinhall remarks that Marinetti's passion for machines can be partially attributed to two of Zola's novels, *La Bête Humaine* and *Travail*. See Shirley W. Vinhall, "Marinetti, Soffici, and French Literature," in *International Futurism in Arts and Literature*, ed. Günter Berghaus (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000), 25.
6. Of the many scholarly works that refer to the architectural legacy of Zola's ideal city in *Travail* the only detailed discussion of the novel is found in Anthony Vidler's essay "The New World: The Reconstruction of Urban Utopia in Late 19th Century France," *Perspecta* 13–14 (1971): 243–56, reprinted in *The Scenes of the Street and Other Essays* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 2011), 244–57.
7. By the mid-nineteenth century the word utopian became an accusation of flightiness or of lack of realism, a damning charge for a period permeated with materialist and positivist values. In *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels disparagingly referred to the social thinkers of the early part of that century (men such as Charles Fourier, Saint-Simon, and Robert Owen) as "social utopians" and derided their "castles in the air" which they felt were lacking a larger historical analysis. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (New Haven: Yale

University Press, 2012). See also Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward, 2000–1887* (Boston: Ticknor and Co., 1888) and William Morris, *News from Nowhere: Or, an Epoch of Rest, Being Some Chapters from a Utopian Romance* (London: Reeves & Turner, 1891).

8. As Frederick Ivor Case has noted, Zola did not read Fourier directly but acquired his knowledge of Fourier's views from a short pamphlet, *Solidarité: Vue Synthétique sur la Doctrine de Charles Fourier*, written by Hippolyte Renaud. This was given to him by Monsieur J. Noirot, who was a friend and collaborator with Jean Baptiste André Godin, founder of the Familistère, an experimental phalanstery in Belgium. See Frederick Ivor Case, *La Cité Idéal Dans Travail d'Émile Zola* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 18.

9. Case, *La Cité* (see note 8), 28.

10. The expansion of train routes was an idea championed by the Saint-Simonians who believed in facilitating global communication in order to bring about an "organic" epoch of world peace.

11. The complete passage reads: "What great work, easy and delicious! Barely a few hours per day of surveillance were needed since these powerful and ingenious machines had ended up having arms and legs like the slaves of old. They lifted mountains and manipulated the most delicate of objects, shaping them with infinite care. They walked and obeyed like beings ignorant of their own suffering, wearing themselves out without tiring. Thanks to the machine, man had accomplished the conquering of nature, and had made it its servant and its paradise." Émile Zola, *Travail* (Paris: Harmattan, 1993), 643.

12. Zola, *Travail* (see note 11), 643.

13. *Ibid.*, ii.

14. Only from a clean slate can the anarchist imagine rebuilding. Lange explained: "there are too many poor inhabitants suffering and one of these mornings we will have to blow up Beauclair in order to properly rebuild . . . one fine day . . . we are strolling down all the streets and there is a bomb hidden in each cooking pot, we drop one off at the governmental offices, another at the town hall, one at the courthouse, one more at the prison, and one at the church, one at each place where there is an institution of authority needing to be destroyed. The slow burning wicks give us the needed time. And then, all of a sudden, Beauclair bursts, a terrifying volcanic eruption burns it down and eradicates it." Zola, *Travail* (see note 11), 191.

15. Ernest Alfred Vizetelly, *The Anarchists: Their Faith and Their Record* (Edinburgh: Turnbull and Spears Printers, 1911), ch. 8. Vizetelly was also responsible for translating *Travail* into English in 1901. Interestingly, Vizetelly explains that at age sixteen Émile Henry received a grant for admission to the École Polytechnique, an opportunity he turned down due to his opposition to militarism. He later entered into an apprenticeship with a clockmaker and finally entered employment as a sculptor of ornamental work. Apparently it was during this period of his career that Henry turned to a virulent strain of anarchism.

16. *Ibid.*, 283.

17. Cited and translated by Genova, *Symbolist Journals* (see note 1), 50.

18. The fierce sense of individuality in *fin-de-siècle* Parisian culture is the subject of Debora Silverman's brilliant essay "The 1889 Exhibition: The Crisis of Bourgeois Individualism," *Oppositions* 8 (Spring 1977): 71–91.

19. Peter Kropotkin, *The Conquest of Bread* (New York: New York University Press, 1972), 125.

20. *Ibid.*, 604.

21. Zola's *Travail*, it should be noted, appeared two years before the French translations of Ebenezer Howard's *Garden Cities of To-morrow* and Camillo Sitte's *Der Städtebau Nach Seinen Künstlerischen Grundsätzen*, both translated into French in 1902.

22. Zola, *Travail* (see note 11), 591.

23. *Ibid.*, 590.

24. Frantz Jourdain (1847–1935) was at the center of the Parisian architectural world for well over three decades. His sharp criticisms of the École des Beaux-Arts (which he had attended in the 1860s) drew wide attention and launched him as an architectural critic of note during the *fin-de-siècle* period. Jourdain's theories on decoration and structure, which he believed were consistent with those of Henri Labrousse and Viollet-le-Duc, were displayed in his most ambitious built project, a large art nouveau department store facing the Seine (La Samaritaine). See Meredith Clausen, *Frantz Jourdain and the Samaritaine: Art Nouveau Theory and Criticism* (Leiden: Brill, 1987) and Arlette Barré-Despond, *Jourdain: Frantz 1847-1935, Francis 1876-1958, Frantz-Philippe 1906-1990* (New York: Rizzoli, 1991).

25. Frantz Jourdain, "L'École des Beaux-Arts," *Revue de l'Époque* 1 (October–November 1894): n.p.

26. Frantz Jourdain, "L'Indépendance en Art," *Le Livre Vert* 3 (December 1896), reprinted in Frantz Jourdain, *De Choses et d'Autres* (1902), 155–158.

27. *Ibid.*

28. See César Daly, "De la Liberté dans l'Art," *Revue de l'Architecture et des Travaux Publics* 7 (1847): 392–408.

29. Jourdain, "L'École des Beaux-Arts" (see note 24), 366.

30. Jourdain explained this idea in the preface to the publication of Charles Garnier's exhibition *L'Histoire de l'Habitation Humaine* held at the Paris universal exposition in 1889. See Charles Garnier, *L'Histoire de l'Habitation Humaine* (Paris: Librairie Centrale des Beaux-Arts, 1889).

31. According to Jourdain, decoration acted as a kind of social leveler and gave as much voice to the lowly proletariat as the idle rich. Jourdain explained: "For a long time we have attributed to decoration the significance of luxury, wealth, majesty that it does not possess. In reality, decoration remains at the disposal of all, the insignificant and the great, the humble and the powerful, the workers and the princes, the bourgeois and the artists, the savages and the civilized. We would not be able to define where exactly it begins and where it ends, and we would not dare restrict it to any given role or function. Its domain extends so far that it seems impossible to assign limits to it." Frantz Jourdain, "La Décoration et la Campagne," in *Des Choses et d'Autres* (note 25), 197–198.

32. Jourdain, "L'Indépendance en Art" (note 25), 155–56.

33. One such instance in which commercial and artistic aims coincided was the erection of a mural painting by M. Toché on one of the façades of the old building housing the store La Samaritaine. Frantz Jourdain, "L'Art dans la Rue," *La Revue des Arts Décoratifs* (1891–92): 211–214.

34. Meredith Clausen, *Frantz Jourdain and the Samaritaine of 1905*, Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley (1972), 125.

35. Roger Marx, "La Décoration Architecturale et les Industries d'Art à l'Exposition Universelle de 1889," *Revue des Arts Décoratifs* (note 32), 36.

36. *Ibid.*, 39.

37. See Atsuko Nakai, "Architecture et Littérature: L'Influence Réciproque entre Émile Zola et Frantz Jourdain," *Doshisha Studies in Language and Culture* 2, no. 4 (2000): 547–83.

38. The architects, Zola explained, "built immense and superb palaces for the people, made in the image of the people of a scale and a majesty that was as varied as the multitudes, with the adorable fantasies of the thousands of voices that they summarized." Zola, *Travail* (note 11), 644.

39. The complete citation reads: "Écoeurant. Écoeuré, LE BON AMATEUR D'ART DIT: Il faut retourner à la nature. La nature est belle parce qu'elle est sensible. Et par un syllogisme impeccable, on conclut: 'la nature' c'est le travail à la main, parce que la main est sensible et du reste la main est naturelle. Travail tout à la main: face aux produits innombrables de l'industrie, produits de la machine, voici la parade: travail à la main. Mystique. Évocation de Bernard Palissy. Invention des coulées en émaux. Le hasard du four, c'est la nature; la coulée d'émail qui rate, c'est la nature: culte des 'ratées.'" Le Corbusier, *L'Art Décoratif d'Aujourd'hui* (Paris: Flammarion, 1996), 61.

40. One thinks of Constant Nieuwenhuys's New Babylon, which challenged the productive efficiency of the city at large, and, with the radical impermanence of its internal spatial configuration, divorced habitation from its dependence on habit.

41. Or, to use a contemporary designation for such wholly distinct experiences, one can see the discrepancy as one between smooth and striated space. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, "1440: The Smooth and the Striated," in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 474–500.

42. It is interesting to note that while mid-century modernist city plans such as Le Corbusier's plan for Chandigarh and Lúcio Costa's plan for Brasília projected a unified geometrical order, they did not properly account for subsequent growth, and, in the case of Brasília, for the proper housing of workers that built the city. Today, both cities have had the geometrical idealism of their plans significantly challenged by the vast sectors (in the case of Chandigarh) and outer rings (in the case of Brasília) of unplanned and informal housing. This was also the case in Paris where Haussmann's dramatic modernization produced large "zones" of squatter settlements beyond the 1844 fortifications of the city. One wonders if Zola, an attentive critic of Second Empire Parisian culture, might have considered the stark contrast produced by Haussmann's Paris when he conceived of Beauclair's disjunctive plan.