"SHIVA, LURIA, KAHN,"

by

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This essay appears in *The Religious Imagination in Modern and Contemporary Architecture: A Reader,* Renata Hejduk and Jim Williamson, Eds. (Routledge, 2011)

When it comes to architects' religious feelings, the doors of scholarship are open.

Of what significance is it that Mies van der Rohe was raised devoutly German-Catholic, and yet close to Protestant Holland?[ii] Carlo Scarpa's architecture seems charged with religious feeling. Where does it come from? (His Brion-Vega cemetery practically invents new liturgy.) Luis Barragan, for all his love of abstraction, was still deeply interested in baptismal transformation, and magical realism in general.[iii] Tadao Ando infuses Christianity with Zen Buddhism, of which he claims he is an adept. Le Corbusier imagined he was descended from 12th-century Cathars, the "pure ones," a group cruelly persecuted by the Church of Rome for its Gnostic leanings. Corb's admiration for the monastic life touched everything he did. *Purism* is what he named the style of his youthful work; total dedication to Architecture is what he advised students; and self-pity dogged him all his days.[iv] Nor was he immune from the influence of Freemasonry.[v] Influenced by Louis Sullivan (in turn influenced by Ralph Waldo Emerson), Frank Lloyd Wright identified Nature with divinity—a freedom permitted by his Unitarianism—adding a possibly Gurdjieff-inspired dose of mysticism.[vi]

And so on.

With the exception of Antonio Gaudi, whose Catholicism was so central to his professional identity that he was called a saint by Barcelonans (and "God's architect" by many),[vii] we seem to know rather little of our canonical architects' theological leanings, religious roots, or levels of observance. This is due to the general bias of historians toward secular interpretations of Modernism, as well as to the legacy of formalist art history, which discounts biography as a source of relevant knowledge for interpretation.[viii]

And it's a pity, because Modernism itself was, arguably, a religious movement from the start—a Protestant, counter Counter-Reformation, this time not so much against the Church and its attachment to pomp, hierarchy, convention, iconography, and embellishment—but against the class-anxious

bourgeoisie's attachment to the same.[ix] For early Protestants, access to the divine would be unmediated by priest or icon. Nor could God's grace be *earned*; we can only look for signs that we already have it, that we are "elected," as Calvin and the Puritans believed. One is not surprised, then, to be able to pick out a thread of the Puritan/Protestant Ethic (as Max Weber called it) running through quotidian American architecture, and, with that, the near-divinization of buildings that are plain, practical, and profitable. One wonders how Catholic-raised architects elevated simplicity and *sachlichkeit* (practicality, objectivity) to the heights that many did without conversion of some sort.

As though to avoid just these difficulties, many spiritually-minded artists and architects today take the "road to divinity" that passes through Nature, just as science-minded thinkers of the 18th and 19th centuries did. For some, Nature *is* God and God Nature, as Spinoza had laid out. For others, a variety of *deism* seems right: God (or some undefined Force) has set the universe into motion with perfect laws..and *voila*. Nature's obvious beauty is evidence enough of divinity: the whirling galaxies above, luminous jellyfish below, crystal sands, nodding ferns, ants, macaws, the human body…all seem made with an eye for form and with a degree of ingenuity far beyond human understanding, much less capability. And everywhere we probe, mathematics seems to be at work: logic, complexity, speed…all revealing to the religious mind a thrumming universe that in some sense *knows* what it's doing at the deepest levels. To such a stupendous Work or "process," artists and scientists (not to mention lowly engineers) can only pay respect. As Michelangelo put it: "Art is but a shadow of divine perfection." And again: "My soul can find no staircase to Heaven unless it be through Earth's loveliness."

The sentiment rings true today, even as our eyes have been opened wider by science. But note that in all this, whether it be to God-the-Creator or to the Grandeur of Evolution that we pay respect, it is the *aesthetic impulse* that lifts our eyes. The mark of divinity is beauty. And if beauty is also "in the eye of the beholder," then so much the better: more than being only witness to the divine, the beholder partakes of it.

Equally mysterious, however, and large, is the *ethical impulse*. Indeed, for certain religious imaginations, the *ethical* impulse—not the aesthetic—connects us most surely to divinity.[x] For such people, appeals to nature are largely ineffective, images of lions lying down with lambs notwithstanding. Nature is a-moral, or pre-moral. Evolutionary science may help us explain how our moral sense developed "out of nature," but that makes things worse in a way, or at least brings matters to a head. For, as Steven Pinker, Robert Wright, Daniel Dennett, and many other evolutionists have pointed out (since, and including, Darwin), one has to wonder why it is that what is

good and right in our eyes often runs *counter* to what we know is true of nature, counter to what evolutionary dynamics (not to say instinct) would advise us to do in order to survive and reproduce. Care for the ill, the aged, or the handicapped? Please! Love your enemies? Pshhh. Refrain from killing? Get real. These things will only slow you and/or your tribe down in the struggle to out-survive and out-reproduce your neighbors. One looks in vain across the plains of biology for anything other than the cruelest manifestations of "justice."

The idea, anyway, that both the explanation of the ethical impulse and the purpose of it lies in divinity—the idea that the goodness of God and the Godliness of good-doing point to the same reality—is an old one, relatively speaking. It lies at the heart of midrashic Judaism[xi] and of early Christianity (especially through the Epistle of James). It is central to Confucianism's celebration of the Way of Heaven in human affairs, just as it is to Buddhism's Eightfold Way entreating us to "right speech," "right living," and compassion for all living things under the sign of Brahman.

Set aside whether the ethical impulse itself evolved or was breathed into us by God. (These might be two ways of saying the same thing.) The question for architecture is this: can the *ethical* impulse be expressed in, or be carried out by, a building? The answer, of course, has to be yes. But there are problems. Here is a building that was an ethical commission by an ethical client, carried out by an ethical architect and builder.[xii] The building may well be ugly. Here is another building, serving selfish or amoral purposes, shadily financed, designed by an arrogant architect, and assembled by an obstreperous builder. It may well be beautiful.

It's an old dilemma. It would seem that neither the aesthetic impulse nor the ethical impulse is sufficient for Architecture to fulfill what anyone would call its divine purpose. Both are needed.

A further mistake would be to pair aesthetics exclusively with a high regard for nature, and ethics exclusively with high regard for humanity. As gorgeous as are tropical fish, starry nights, and the folds of a lily, Nature is not the only model of, source of, or inspiration for, human artistry.[xiii] We also have available what one might call *ecstatic humanism*, one of the hallmarks of which is a relative disinterest in the forms and processes of nature (except to intervene, practically, on nature's behalf) and a relatively greater interest in the forms and processes of human action, emotion, cognition, and sociality.[xiv] Indeed, given the generally dim view of humanity that accompanies the sustainability movement today, it is easy to forget how strong the ecstatic (or spiritual) dimension of the humanist-ethical impulse can be in architecture, and how it can be entrained to produce beauty in our day. Several canonical modern architects come to mind as having taken this route: Le Corbusier, Alvar Aalto, and of course, Louis Kahn, to whom we now turn.[xv]

Early in a longer version of this essay I remark that Louis Kahn was an architect "happy to stand at the gates of Mystery." He made no secret of his Jewishness, though he was far from observant. He was not particularly ethical when it came to his own family life (at least by conventional standards), but in his approach to architecture, he certainly was.

What light did Kahn shed on human creativity's relation to the divine, and then to the theory of evolution (which he surely understood quite well)?

Kahn's respect for human community and regard of *human* institutions as achievements somehow greater than the people that constituted them, marked him as no nature worshipper.[xvi] It was in the ethical dimension—human desire, will, existence, and community upon this earth—that Kahn rooted his sense of the divine. It has been said that the Greeks worshipped the goodness of beauty, while the Hebrews worshipped the beauty of goodness. Maybe there's some truth in it. Certainly, Kahn's humanism was religious, not secular, ecstatic, not tragic, and from it he would draw an aesthetic entire.

Not for Kahn, then, Vitruvian Man and Renaissance humanism (despite his love of squares and circles), but an image that Kahn must have known if not studied in his preparations for his project in Dacca: the Hindu god Shiva. Here is a description of the representation of Shiva (Figure 1). It rewards careful reading.

> In the night of Brahma, nature is inert and cannot dance until Shiva wills it. He arises from his rapture and dancing, sends through inert matter pulsing waves of awakening sound, and lo, matter also dances, appearing as a glory around him. Dancing, he sustains the manifold phenomena. In the fullness of time still dancing, he destroys all forms and names by fire and gives new rest.[xvii]

The meaning of Shiva's dance is given by his posture and some of his attributes. If you look under his right foot, you see the demon of ignorance and illusion. This demon is always ugly and always being trampled.

> Human beings can only reach true wisdom by conquering ignorance and illusion, which takes the phenomenal world as real instead of seeing it as a reflection or manifestation of ultimate reality, underlying everything. Shiva dances within a flamed arch. The arch represents nature, the processes of the universe, and the transcendental light sustaining it. Shiva dances within and touches the arch with his head, hands, and feet because he is the omnipresent spirit. In one ear he wears a female earring, in the other ear a male one, signifying that he

> represents both masculine and feminine. He has four arms. The upper right arm carries a drum signifying creation, the creative energy of sound and evolution. And in the palm of his upper left arm, he bears the tongue of flame, which symbolizes destruction and purification. The balance of the hands gives equal weight to both creation and destruction as necessary for purification, evolution, and transformation. The lower right arm is the Abhaya Mudra, the *"fear not"* gesture, and the lower left arm is pointing to his lifted foot indicating release from ignorance.[xviii]

The Universe is inert until Shiva dances. Might Bergson have read this? Or Nietzsche? Emerson? Whitman? The Kabbalists? Shiva is surely cousin to Dionysus, God of Creative Ecstasy. If vitalism needed a God-figure, it would be Shiva.[xix] Perhaps he is also a precursor of the Holy Spirit in Christianity, or of *nefesh*, *ruach* and *neshama* in Judaism.[xx]

Now here is a triplet of pictures of Louis Kahn at the chalkboard, giving a lecture. I don't think we have to know exactly what he is saying: his gesture says it all.

Kahn was showing off how well he draws with both hands, yes. But he was also expressing something about the dance of Shiva—about life's desire to become good and real, like this drawing, *through him*. You can also see in this thought the inspiration for some of Kahn's great circular inner sanctums, as in the vaulted meeting chamber in Bangladesh, and the central hall of the Exeter Library where the circles are flat, of course, but the diagonal beams above recall or recreate some of the energy we see in Shiva's dancing arms and legs.

Certainly, Kahn, like Wright, put tremendous value on being connected to the creative spirit he thought animated the universe. In exercising that spirit, or better, in channeling it on earth, Kahn "feared not," just as Shiva instructs. And among Kahn's drawings we find two small metaphysical diagrams, easily overlooked, that say as much:

The texts go round and round, without real beginning or end, and this is deliberate, Shiva-like. *"Eternity is of two brothers. The one desires to be, to express; the one to be, to make; the one light non-luminous, the one light luminous."*[xxi] The one "brother" wants to exist in order to express himself, or to express the nature of existence. The other "brother" wants to exist in order to *make* things: events, forms, buildings. The light emanated by the first is non-luminous. It comes out of the ground of Being in non-visible, non-earthly frequencies.

The light of human making is luminous, resultant, explicit. It casts shadows and has color. We can see it. It sets off sparks. Kahn echoes *Genesis* 1:1: When the world was an ooze without shape or direction, there must have been this force of joy, a force that prevailed everywhere and that

was reaching out to express. It was the essence of creativity, the force of it. You cannot make a building unless you are joyously engaged… Shades of Le Corbusier, who similarly saw human creativity as an expression of divine joy? Or of Henri Bergson's *élan vital* ("vital impetus"), which Bergson introduced in his immensely popular 1907 book, *Creative Evolution?* Kahn had surely read it. Or is this Kahn's very own "ecstatic humanism?"

I think so. In the second metaphysical diagram (Figure 4), Kahn lets it rip: *"Spending to the emergence of material, the prevailing luminous groups to ignite a world dance of a flaming prevalence Spending to the emergence of material..."* And so it goes, around the square and around again, start where you will. (Yes, emergence is misspelled)

"Not very Jewish," some might say, "Where is 'the Lord our God, King of the Universe'?" And not very Darwinian, either. Where is evolution's famed blindness, where the mistakes, the cruelty, the chanciness of it all? And what of the implication of Bergsonian vitalism?

Setting aside Judaism's privileging of community over theology in general,[xxii] Kahn's version of vitalism can be found in the Kabbalistic strain of Judaism, where it is very much connected to the Hebrew Biblical God.[xxiii] (It is also found in the German Romantic tradition, rooted in Hegel's idea of the Absolute Spirit, which rises up *with* mankind's moral development, a tradition with which Kahn was familiar through his parents, and which influenced Bergson mightily. I will come back to the evolutionary component in a moment.)

Take, for example, the striking creation myth penned by Rabbi Isaac Luria in the 16th century and known as *tzim-tzum* ("self-withdrawal" or "self-contraction"). It was Kabbalistic doctrines like this that supported the ecstatic mystical movement in Judaism known as Hasidism, with its joyful modes of prayer, its love of creativity, and its belief that intuition must accompany both Toraic and worldly learning.

In Luria's creation myth, God is imagined as holy light, a light without shadow, that once filled the universe so fully that God and universe were co-terminous: they were One.

Then, in the act of divine will *that appears to us as Creation*, or the Big Bang, God withdrew or contracted himself from all to part, leaving reality as we see it: differentiated, in constant movement, with shade and shadow, both a remainder and a reminder of original perfection. Why did God do this? In an act of canonical, self-sacrificial love, it was in order to leave room for the stars, for the earth, and for us, so that we might *exist, at all*; and at the same time to give us a purpose. And what is that purpose? It is to repair, heal, restore, lift up, and return whatever is broken and whoever is fallen to a position of blissful unity with God: like sparks back to the mother fire, like shards back to the unbroken window.

A magnificent vision, this, both aesthetically and ethically (and not incidentally, homologous to the history of Jewish exile and diaspora). Creation is seen as a withdrawal of God from the universe, a Fall that precedes the Fall described in Genesis where disobedience to God results in God's bequeathing to humanity a life of labor in a world without steady divine protection. And yet this first withdrawal—*tzim-tzum*—was not a punishment but a gift...the gift of everything you see around you, the pebbles, the stars, life itself.[xxiv]

The Creation sequence imagined by Rabbi Luria stands at the logical extreme of the idea of an original paradise. The story of *tzim-tzum* tells us that before there was "reality" at all, before there was "heaven and earth," before there were "waters" to hover over or voids to form, there was only God, God in full, perfect, and *without end* (in Hebrew *ein sof*, Kahn's term for which was "the Unmeasurable"). Material and energic reality, heaven-and-earth, the cosmos...is already a fallen state, a partially abandoned one. Depressing? Not at all. For Luria's vision is also a future-looking one inasmuch as it delineates an obligation to bring about a future unity and perfection not in theory but in *reality*, a restoration of God on the one hand, yes, but on the other, a new configuration of the facts of existence, since Creation cannot be undone or reversed.

This obligation, this call to action, is what gives Luria's vision an ethical force that transcends NeoPlatonic and deistic aestheticism. God's willful contraction of himself in order to leave room for the world as we know it is to be matched by *our* willful dedication of ourselves *in return*—in return, that is, for our very existence—to carrying out innumerable gift-like acts of ethical care and creativity: "*tikkun olam*," the "making-good of the world." Our charge is to "lift the sparks" of a scattered fire until the world is made whole and holy again, illumined in every quarter by God's light—until, indeed, it consists of God's light again.[xxv]

Whether or not we accept this charge, of course, is up to us. We are free. The reward to future generations might be the nonpareil experience of ecstatic self-dissolution into unity with God, but as much to be desired, if not more, is the reward of living a meaningful life until then. Could one ask for more? To Isaac Luria and to the many sincere readers of the Kabbalah since, the answer is: No, one cannot ask for more. And I don't think Louis Kahn wanted more either. "Beauty cannot be built into architecture by design," he said. "Beauty evolves from acceptance and love."[xxvi]

In a photograph of Kahn taken around 1972 and the completion of the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth, we see him standing in the tallest space in the building (which is the auditorium), with a one-minute ray of sunshine streaking in from above. He was not past understanding conventional religious imagery, nor placing himself in its flow. There's a similar, earlier

picture of him at his first Yale Art Gallery, surrounded by darkness, face upturned to the light issuing from...who knows where?

Presumptuous? Perhaps.

Like all modern thinkers, Kahn had to reconcile the new evolutionary view of creation/creativity with theistic and deistic views of the same. On the one hand, evolution has no purpose. There are no "corrections" in it because there are no "mistakes" in it. Only humans imagine that evolution is headed somewhere. Moreover, only humans are convinced that it is headed somewhere *good*, as though under benevolent central control, even as science tells that, in fact, it is under no such control. So life, Kahn figured, is best thought of as a self-organizing thing, one that produces joy in comprehending its own existence ("the prevailing luminous *groups* to ignite a world dance of flaming prevalence..."); life is a self-pruning, agglomerating tree that gives rise to new entities that themselves branch and evolve in new, self-knowing, and multi-purposeful ways. Creative people in all fields take part in this larger evolutionary process. They take part not only *in* it, however; they also *take charge* of it in part *and re-name that part design*.[xxvii]

Indeed, paradoxically, it is only from the highly evolved state of being-a-modern-human that a one can reject the idea of evolution, as today's creationists do. Why would one want to do that (aside from sheer ignorance of science)? Perhaps because rejecting the theory of evolution (in favor of positing God as the creator, albeit to the scorn of atheists) has, itself, some evolutionary benefit. The idea, on the one hand, that a future awaits us which is settled and good, and the idea, on the other, that there are unseen energies and forces—gods like Shiva and Yahweh—who know what they're doing (to put it mildly) and who urge nature and human beings towards perfection, though mistaken, are important and effective ideas nonetheless, and no less real for having, themselves, evolved to promote evolution.[xxviii]

But lest you accept *this* idea too readily, know that it permits rather too much. It is the evolution-theoretical equivalent of the faith-based notion that everything that happens happens because it is God's will[xxix]...which, alas, cannot be the case if God is all-good as well as all-powerful and all-knowing. For there are forks in the evolutionary path. Think of it as a symbol: Shiva's upper left hand (he has four, remember) denotes destruction and purification by fire: Shiva dances also at the pyre. The innocent suffer. And indeed, evolution has gone forward in the long run by countless short-run episodes of death, destruction, barrenness, and extinction—tragedies each one, though we might neutralize them in hindsight with the metaphor of "selection."

We need to know that God has taken a different path, however, and has asked us to do the same.

Can we evolve *without* causing pain, *without* causing death, *without*

causing destruction or extinction? The answer is yes, in both evolutionary theory (differential reproduction is painless; design is in our hands), and in "theo-ry:" we shall not kill; God is love. This love can be symbolized in various ways. One of them is light—not harsh but caressing, not artificial but natural; clean light and human light, maternal light, as from a pearlescent vault over us and nearby...

This, then, is the argument from design*ers*. Or should be. Evolution giveth and evolution taketh away, but evolution henceforth, inasmuch as it can be in our hands, will not "take away." It will not take away because in our trained minds and willing hands it is conscious and conscienced activity called *design*. In this new activity on the face of the earth, God is goodness only, and only goodness God.

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NOTES

[i] This is an augmented excerpt of the essay *God, Creativity, and Evolution: The Argument From Design(ers)* (Austin: Center for American Architecture and Design, 2008), and "The Argument from Design(ers)," in Michael Benedikt, ed., *CENTER 15: Divinity, Creativity, Complexity* (Austin: Center for American Architecture and Design, 2010). Many of the theological arguments glossed in this article are treated more deeply in *God Is the Good We Do: Theology of Theopraxy* (New York: Bottino Books, 2007).

[ii] His biographer, Franz Schulze, has little to tell us, except that every Sunday young Mies was transfixed by the stonework of the chapel at Aachen Cathedral. Mies was no reader of books, though he seems to have had glancing familiarity with the thoughts of Augustine and Aquinas. See Franz Schulze, *Mies van der Rohe: A Critical Biography* (University of Chicago Press, 1985). We can say this: Mies's only theological pronouncement—"God is in the details"—actually came from Gustave Flaubert, who got it from Thomas Aquinas. Michelangelo is quoted as saying something very similar: "Trifles make perfection, but there is nothing trivial about perfection." "Whoever is striving for perfection is striving for something divine." And "Beauty is the purgation of superfluity." From a Protestant modern point of view, it's hard to see Baroque Michelangelo as a minimalist.

In earlier versions of this essay (see Note 1 above) I mistakenly identified Mies as Huguenot Protestant.

[iii] See Sheryl Tucker de Vasquez, "Light is Like Water: Barragan and the Question of Magic," in Benedikt, ed., (2009) op. cit.

[iv] Charles Jencks, *Le Corbusier and the Tragic View of Architecture* (Harvard University Press, 1973).

[v] See J.K. Birksted, *Le Corbusier and the Occult* (MIT Press, 2009).

[vi] Olgivanna, Wright's third wife, was an acolyte of the Greek mystic G.I Gurdjieff, whom Wright met. An article by Wright on Gurdjieff see http://www.gurdjieff.org/G.8-1.htm. Wright and Mies

admired each other, but one would hard pressed to find the God of organic nature in, say, the Farnsworth House.

[vii] Michael S. Rose, "Gaudi's Glory Day," *Catholic World News*, April 2003, http://www.catholicculture.org/news/features/index.cfm?recnum=21633 One could add Rudolph Steiner's Theosophy and Anthroposophy, but Steiner was not primarily an architect. While his ideas were infuential, his Goetheanums were to have little influence.

[viii] There is one more reason. The longer I explore this are the more I begin to suspect that architects—or "great" architects anyway—have a proclivity for inventing their own religions.

[ix] The religious component of Modernism—as it emerged in Vienna, at least—is a story nicely told by Robert Whalen in *Sacred Spring: God and the Birth of Modernism in Fin De Siecle Vienna* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2007). It is not the story of Protestant simplicity introduced and accepted, but rather of the transfiguration, first, of the religio-ethical impulse into pure aesthetics, laced by neo-pagan emotion and fantasy, across all the arts. We should not understimate, then, the importance of Loos's three-year sojourn to America, 1894 to 1897, and Wright's visit to Europe (especially to Vienna, in 1910) and later European enthusiasm for his writings and drawings. The young Mies was mightily impressed by a show of Wright's work in Berlin as early as 1911 (Schulze, op. cit., p. 68). The case could be made that Modern architecture might have been born in Europe but was conceived in America, or perhaps on trips back and forth...

[x] I make no assertions here as to what that "connection" consists in. The strongest plea for the superiority of the ethical impulse over the aesthetic impulse (and then of the religious life over both) from a Christian perspective, is perhaps Soren Kierkegaard's 1843 *Either/Or*. From a Jewish perspective, anything by Martin Buber would serve, but especially *I and Thou* (1923).

[xi] Midrash = to examine, to investigate—verse by verse interpretation of Hebrew Scriptures, consisting of homily and exegesis by Jewish teachers since about 400 B.C.E., and which began to be written down circa 200 C.E.

[xii] Replace "ethical" by "altruistic" to make the case stronger, if you want. It won't help.

[xiii] Just as, symmetrically, morality (altruism, care, justice) *can* be found in nature. Where? Chiefly among dogs, dolphins, elephants and primates, but also, in rudimentary form, among most mammals. Proponents of the ethical view need not deny this, just point out that these animals are seldom held up for the marvel of their anatomies or "construction." For that, non-humanist designers look to crystals, insects, cells, fish, flowers, stars, things with flagellae…i.e. to the pre-conscious and pre-conscienced world.

[xiv] This is not the place to summarize the humanistic thread in architecture so well outlined by Geoffrey Scott in his classic *The Architecture of Humanism* (1924).

[xv] Although he designed many churches, Aalto was himself not a religious man. Although he loved natural materials and nature's meanders and adaptability, he did not divinize nature as Wright did, or use "organic" as a seal of approval. (He thought Wright's houses were marvelous, like flowers…but glass ones, artificial. He preferred real flowers set in plainer architecture. See Goran Schildt, *Alvar Aalto in His Own Words* [Rizzoli, 1998] p. 247,8.) For Aalto, the dignity, health, and comfort of ordinary people in resistance to technocracy came first. This was Aalto's non-heroic brand of humanism. As for Le Corbusier's ecstatic humanism, one need look no further than his "Open Hand" rhetoric. See Benedikt (2008), the long version of this essay.

[xvi] See Willam Richards, "From Modern to modern: Kahn's Shift at Mid-Century" in Benedikt, ed., (2009) op. cit. In this essay, Richards illustrates the thesis of his mentor, Sarah Williams Goldhagen, in her book *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism* (Yale University Press, 2001): that Kahn was not only the rumpled mystic he is often taken to be, but also an outgoing, socially engaged, and ethically motivated architect. In this article I attempt to show how these "two sides" of Kahn are united at a theological level.

[xvii] Kim Nataraja,"The Dancing Shiva," at *http://www.bedegriffiths.com/sangha/san_2.htm*

[xviii] Ibid.

[xix] And if economist Friedrich von Hayek's followers needed a mascot, it would be this statuette. (Von Hayek famously coined the term "creative destruction" to describe the healthy dynamic of capitalism.)

[xx] "The soul consists of three parts which are called by the Hebrew names, *nefesh, ruach* and *neshama*. The word *neshama* is a cognate of *nesheema*, which means literally 'breath.' *Ruach* means 'wind.' *Nefesh* comes from the root *nafash*, meaning 'rest,' as in the verse, 'on the seventh day, [God] ceased work and rested (*nafash*).' (Exodus 31:17). God's exhaling a soul can be compared to a glassblower forming a vessel. The breath (*neshama*) first leaves His lips, travels as a wind (*ruach*) and finally comes to rest (*nefesh*) in the vessel. Of these three levels of the soul, *neshama* is therefore the highest and closes to God, while *nefesh* is that aspect of the soul residing in the body. *Ruach* stands between the two, binding men and women to their spiritual Source. It is for this reason that Divine Inspiration is called *Ruach HaKodesh* in Hebrew. The *neshama* is affected only by thought, the *ruach* by speech, and the *nefesh* by action." From Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, *Handbook of Jewish Thought, Vol. 2* at *http://www.aish.com/jl/kc/48942091.html*

[xxi] In his notes, Kahn said he didn't want to use the word the *other*, as in "the one brother this and the *other* that." He liked the see-saw repetition, "the one this, the one that, the one this, the one that..."

[xxii] "Synagogues" ("'together-ings' of people") are meeting places, which became necessary after the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans in 70 C.E. and the scattering of the Jews all over the Middle East and Europe. They are not temples, markers of great events, destinations of pilgrimage, or places that are intrinsically holy.

[xxiii] Let it be noted for future scholarship (1) that the canonical Kabbalistic representation of the Ten Sefirot (the ten "emanations" or aspects of divinity) looks for all the world like a Kahn-designed campus or building plan, and (2), that the language with which the sefirot are discussed clearly informs Kahn's renowned metaphysical vocabulary. Jewish Kabbalists like Abraham Abulafia (1240–1291) also produced diagrams quite a lot like Figures 3 and 4 (see *http://www.ubu.com/ethno/visuals/jewish04.html*) and so Kahn's inspiration may not have been (only) Shiva. Goldhagen (2001) argues that Kahn was not much of a reader, that most of the philosophy books in his house were Esther Kahn's, and so forth. I cannot help but think that Goldhagen, in her desire to show Kahn's humanist side, has either underestimated Kahn's contact with Jewish/theological/philosophical literature as a younger man, or underestimated what impact even brief, less-than-scholarly contact with such literature can have on a creative soul.

[xxiv] One might remark upon the similarity, image wise, between *tzim-tzum* as a cosmogony and the

period of inflation that followed immediately upon the Big Bang, first proposed by Alan Guth in 1980 and which still holds sway. (See his *The Inflationary Universe* [New York: Perseus Publishing, 1997]). Then again there are several doctrines and images in Hindu, Buddhist, and Taoist cosmology that bear striking resemblance to modern physics versions of the same.

[xxv] One can see an affinity here with the Christian doctrine of *kenosis* (Gk., "self-emptying") to describe why God would willingly become incarnate in (or as) Jesus, giving up His divine powers to become, so to speak, servant to Himself.

[xxvi] Quote from Goldhagen (2001) op. cit. p. 59. Charles Moore, Kahn's student, was often heard to say "you cannot lunge for beauty."

[xxvii] These statements about evolution, and the ones that will shortly follow, benefit from being read in the context of the longer essay from which this is drawn (see Note 1).

[xxviii] Many of the articles in *CENTER 15* (2009, op. cit.) explore this position.

[xxix] To wit: "Everything you see evolved to be what it is."