Scruton on Architecture

Gordon Graham
Princeton Theological Seminary

In *The Ethical Function of Architecture* Karsten Harries distinguishes between two approaches to architecture – the ethical and the aesthetic. On the aesthetic approach, he says,

> the point of architecture, as opposed to mere building, is to have aesthetic appeal, however that is to be understood. Thus the work of architecture is essentially a functional building with an added aesthetic component. An obvious way of creating such a work would be to decorate some utilitarian structure: *work of architecture = building + decoration*. Not that we have to think of the addition of the aesthetic component as a matter of adding decoration as this is usually understood. Imagine someone who in building his bicycle shed is concerned to observe the golden section in every possible way: he too would be adding an aesthetic component to a functional shed; so would someone concerned to give her bicycle shed the look of a ruin; . . . Stretching the term a bit, I want to call such building, too, decorated sheds – a term that of course belongs to the authors of *Learning from Las Vegas* (Harries 1997: 6)

Harries thinks that the rise of the aesthetic approach can be dated to the eighteenth century and owes much to Kant (whose influence on aesthetics in general has been immense of course). It is an understanding of architecture that he wants to reject because it reflects a way of thinking that has ‘divorced pragmatic and aesthetic considerations and placed the architect uneasily between the two.’

> On the one hand the uses of architecture are emphasized; on the other architecture is supposed to be artistic. . . . In the aesthetic approach the beauty of a building has to appear as something added on to what [functional] necessity dictates, as decoration in a broad sense. The tensions that result from this mingling of pragmatic and aesthetic concerns all but rule out aesthetic completeness. (ibid: 25-6)

Robert Venturi’s convenient term ‘decorated shed’ captures what is plausibly the central problem of the aesthetics of architecture – how to avoid a bifurcation of art and engineering in explaining the significance and value of architecture. From the point of view of the construction of useful buildings it seems that a shed is just as valuable with or without decoration. Conversely, it seems possible for a badly constructed shed to have a beautiful appearance. *Both possibilities illustrate the way in which the conception of architecture as ‘building+decoration’ radically separates art and engineering.* [maybe another sentence to spell out this problem?] So how
can we conceive of architecture as *the art of building* in a way that secures its ‘aesthetic completeness’?

In *The Aesthetics of Architecture*, Roger Scruton raises the same issue, and gives us a different version of the decorated shed – what might be called ‘the walk-in-through sculpture’.

The value of building simply cannot be understood independently of its utility. It is of course possible to take a merely ‘sculptural’ view of architecture; but that is to treat buildings as forms whose aesthetic nature is conjoined only accidentally to a certain function. Texture, surface, form, representation and expression now begin to take precedence over those aesthetic aims which we would normally consider to be specifically architectural . . . Consider, for example, the Chapel of the Colonia Güell, Santa Coloma de Cervello by Gaudí. Such a building tries to represent itself as something other than architecture, as a form of tree-like growth rather than balanced engineering. The strangeness comes from the attempt to translate a decorative tradition into a sculptural principle . . . the accidental has become the essential, and what purports to be architecture can no longer be understood as such, but only as a piece of elaborate expressionist sculpture seen from within. (pp. 7-8)

Like Harries, Scruton thinks that Kant gave aesthetics its modern form, but, while acknowledging Kant’s influence on his own work, he aims ‘to demonstrate that the [Kantian] division between practical reason and aesthetic understanding is in fact untenable’. (p. 1). The aim of this essay is to determine whether, given its broadly Kantian character, Scruton’s aesthetics of architecture succeeds in overcoming the problem of the ‘decorated shed’ and the ‘walk-through sculpture’.

An important part of the error conception of architecture [is it simply an "error"?](p.10)

that gives rise to the ‘walk-through sculpture’ lies in the familiar idea that ‘the aesthetic’ is a distinctive kind of sensual experience we find pleasing, and that it is the purpose of art to produce objects that prompt and sustain this experience. Now against this idea, Scruton plausibly asserts that quite generally,

our sense of the beauty of an object is always dependent on a conception of that object, just as our sense of the beauty of a human figure is dependent on a conception of that figure. Features that we could consider beautiful in a horse – developed haunches, a curved back and so on -- we would consider ugly in a man, and this aesthetic judgment would be determined by our conception of what [they?] men are, how they move and what they achieve through their movements. In a similar way, our sense of the beauty in architectural forms cannot be divorced from our conception of buildings and the function that they fulfil. (p.10)
What has come to be known as functionalism ‘can be seen as part of an attempt to reassert architectural against sculptural values’ (ibid). In the hands of most of its exponents, however, it has erred in the opposite direction and effectively collapsed the distinction between art and design, Scruton argues. So following Scruton’s line of argument we might say that the central task of a philosophy of architecture is to steer a satisfactory course between a number of ideas that are often held to be in competition – the aesthetic versus the practical, the functional versus the expressive, the beautiful versus the utilitarian, Scruton concludes.

To steer such a course satisfactorily, we have to start by identifying the distinguishing features of architecture – what makes it what it is. In addition to functionality, Scruton cites locality, technology and public space as crucial to understanding architecture. Within some very general limits, literary texts, musical works, paintings and sculptures can all move around without any significant aesthetic consequences. In sharp contrast, buildings have to be somewhere in particular, and in the vast majority of cases are expressly built for the geographical space that they occupy. Secondly, the possibilities for their construction are in part determined by technological innovation. The invention of reinforced concrete (Scruton’s example) has had architectural, and hence artistic, consequences. Thirdly, whereas other arts can be reserved for private consumption, architecture is inescapably public. This means that it cannot either inculcate or be reserved for ‘audiences attuned to novelty’ in the way that ‘modern’ poetry, music and painting can. This fact about architecture’s public character gives rise to what Scruton regards as ‘the feature which serves most of all to give it a peculiar status and significance in our lives’ namely ‘its continuity with the decorative arts’.

Architecture is primarily a vernacular art: it exists first and foremost as a process of arrangement in which every normal man may participate, and indeed does participate, to the extent that he builds, decorates and arranges his rooms. It does not normally aim at those ‘meanings’ ascribed to it by the practitioners of Kunstgeschichte, nor does it present itself self-consciously as art. It is a natural extension of common human activities, obeying no forced constraints, and no burden of an ‘artistic conception’.

In elaborating this conception of the aesthetics of architecture three concepts emerge as having special significance – imagination, taste and style. Scruton notes that the general role that Kant gives imagination in perception needs to be distinguished from the special role that imagination plays in aesthetic judgement. It is imagination in this second context that matters, because it allows rational
freedom of a kind that perception in itself does not enjoy. Consider, for example, Gothic cathedrals. Lying behind their architectural style, it has been suggested, is a vision of the Heavenly City of the Book of Revelation. But when, for example, we look at the West Front of Amiens Cathedral, whereas

[w]e are compelled to believe that what we see is a mass of masonry, and therefore to see that it is so. . . . we are not compelled to attend to the building in such a way that the thought of the celestial city seems an apt or appropriate expression of our experience. It is an activity of ours to attend to the cathedral in that way, and it is an activity that we might choose not to engage in. (p. 85)

[Not sure what the paragraph layout is here – if this is all one long para, can it be broken up? Connectedly, you seem to be moving from expositing Scruton's view, to presenting your own (Scrutonian) position. Maybe that needs to be demarcated a bit more, to make clear whether it's yours or Scruton's view] Free imagination of this kind, however, is not simply a matter of switching between aspects, as in Wittgenstein’s famous duck-rabbit example. We can give reasons to favour one way of exercising this imaginative power over another. Such reasons are never conclusive, but estimating their cogency is nonetheless a matter of judgement and exercising such judgment lies at the heart of acquiring and educating taste. It is ‘taste’ in this sense that enables us to choose, to appreciate and to exhibit ‘style’, which is to say, achieve a kind of coherence in matters of dress, décor, cookery, tableware. These

In my view, Scruton is right to emphasize that these are not trivial additions to ordinary life. They are important dimensions to food, sexual relations, home making, family relationships, occupations, celebrations, and so on, in short all those aspects of our existence that require ‘fittedness’ in the selection of color, shape, materials, arrangement, gesture, tone etc. To understand this is to see that imagination, taste and style are not in any sense optional extras in our lives, as the products of high art may be, but are amongst the things that mark them off as properly human. Making architecture continuous with the decorative arts, therefore, dissolves the false dichotomy suggested by the decorated shed and the walk through statue. It constitutes a rejection of the mistaken starting point from which these dichotomies arise. What could be more inherently ‘practical’ than eating? Nothing, yet the action of ingesting nutritious organic substances cannot be separated from the style in which those materials are prepared, served and eaten. This fact introduces an element of rational choice in human conduct quite unavailable to other beings – dogs, cows, tigers, mice -- for whom the ingestion of organic substances is no less essential to the preservation of life.
The concept of style, then, may rightly be said to show – as Scruton alleges -- that Kant’s division between aesthetic judgment and practical reason is untenable. Still, even if we accept that architecture – unlike the music of the concert hall or the contents of the modern art museum perhaps – is continuous with the aesthetics of everyday life, we still need some way of indicating its distinguishing feature. After all, a gardener might exercise tasteful judgment in the erection of a garden shed, taking into account location, materials, public perception and the like – or show a decided lapse of taste in this regard. But even the most tasteful garden shed hardly counts as architecture. So what sets apart those exercises of taste in the aesthetics of everyday life that warrant the rather grander accolade of ‘architecture’?

There is some plausibility to the suggestion that we should reject this question. Why should we make any such distinction? Isn’t it the case that architectural merit can intelligibly be attributed to quite humble buildings? Architectural guidebooks often include stable blocks, gate lodges, guard houses, wayside inns, or village churches, for example. No one thinks that their inclusion is absurd. But if such buildings are appropriate objects of architectural interest, then the connection between architecture and grandeur is fortuitous -- and for the most part a prejudice, it might be added. Still, while it is undoubtedly true that modest buildings can have architectural merit, the question – when does stylish everyday building become architecture? – does not seem to be so easily circumvented. Let us agree that Corbusier’s well known contrast between ‘architecture’ and ‘mere building’ reflects an unwarranted contempt for everyday buildings and a high minded blindness to the architectural qualities that they can have. Nevertheless, there is an intuitive and accepted difference of some sort that is commonly applied. If we ask people to name ‘great’ buildings in the same spirit that we might ask them to name ‘great’ paintings or musical compositions, we can be reasonably confident of finding a large measure of general agreement. St Peter’s or the Parthenon are far more likely to spring to mind than the buildings of colonial Williamsburg or the village churches of the Cotswolds, even given their indisputable charm and attractiveness. In a similar fashion, we can ask people to name ‘great’ architects, and again expect to be given standard answers. This is because the pantheon of great ‘artists’ includes many figures who are well known (sometimes best known) for the magnificent buildings they created. Often, too, it was in light of this general acknowledgement that they were commissioned to build more, thereby having their ‘artistic’ status confirmed. Frank Lloyd Wright is as much a ‘name’ in the art world of 20th century America as Samuel Barber, Edward Hopper or Ernest Hemingway.

The contention that there has to be more to architecture than stylish and tasteful building receives some confirmation from The Aesthetics of Architecture. Most of the examples Scruton uses to illustrate points he wants to make about architecture are buildings that would commonly be identified in this way – the cathedrals of Europe, the Renaissance buildings of Venice and Rome, for example -- and many of them come from identifiable hands – Michelangelo, Palladio, Borromini, Wren, Pugin, Mies van der Rohe among others. This fact sits in some tension with the general contention that architecture is a vernacular art, because with outstanding examples and famous names in mind, it is much less obvious that does it not, at least
sometimes, ‘present itself self-consciously as art’. Any tension is resolved, however, once we see that even if architecture is rightly considered ‘a natural extension of common human activities’, this is quite compatible with the further suggestion that its trajectory leads beyond the everyday to buildings that do arise from the ‘burden’ of an ‘artistic conception’ in the minds of its masters.

Neither the existence of ‘humble’ buildings of architectural merit, nor the continuity between the aesthetics of architecture and the aesthetics of everyday life give us reason to reject every distinction of the kind that Corbusier attempted to draw. Accordingly, it seems correct to say that even if all building is an exercise (good or bad) in the aesthetics of everyday life, not all building is architecture. So where then does the difference lie? An argument can be made that in his implicit answer to this question, Scruton lapses back into the Kantian divide that his appeal to the aesthetics of everyday life was intended to overcome. The explanation for this ‘lapse’ lies with the notion of ‘experience’ that plays a central role in his account of the aesthetic appreciation or understanding of architecture. In several places *The Aesthetics of Architecture* refers to our ‘experience’ of a building. Even if this is not an entirely natural way of speaking about our engagement with buildings, Scruton makes a good case for the idea of experiencing architecture. In the context of aesthetics, however, the term ‘experience’ is likely to be taken to mean sensual experience, and with this interpretation in mind, there is clearly a danger of the decorated shed and the walk-through sculpture making a reappearance. For if our aesthetic ‘experience’ of a building lies in our apprehension and appreciation of its appearance, then function is once more relegated to the ‘hidden’ structure upon which this appearance is imposed. Indeed, at one point in the text, and contrary to the argument that has preceded it, Scruton seems to endorse precisely such a view.

The examples of the [chapter entitled ‘Experiencing Architecture’] seemed to suggest that criticism involves a search for the ‘correct’ or ‘balanced’ perception, the perception in which ambiguities are resolved and harmonies established, allowing the kind of pervasive visual satisfaction which I hinted at.

Immediately, however, he adds this proviso.

But that cannot be all. The conceptions which influence our experience of architecture are as far-reaching as the conceptions which govern our lives. How else is it possible for an architect like Pugin to think that it was incumbent upon him as a Christian to explore the intricacies of finials, pinnacles and tracery? (pp. 119-20)

In illustration of his general point Scruton offers us the specific example of Borromini’s *Oratorio di san Filippo Neri* in Rome. The people who do not like it probably do not understand it, he says, and this is because they have not seen how its architectural contrasts -- between bold facade and modest brick -- reflect a ‘balance of competing claims’ between ‘worldly competence and spiritual
These features by fail to identify encapsulate a spirit that is appropriate in a building dedicated to the order of St Philip Neri (the sixteenth century ‘Apostle of Rome’ famous for his organization of missions to the poor). Still, in the end, it seems, bearing such considerations in mind does not in fact move us beyond aesthetic experience in the more restricted Kantian sense.

In relating our visual experience in this way to an abstract idea, we are not necessarily describing the architect’s intentions, nor are we proposing a definitive interpretation, valid irrefutably for all succeeding times. Rather, we are attempting to show that the spectator’s knowledge of, and sympathy with, a particular state of mind, may modify and enrich his perception of a building. The validity of such an attempt must rest not in the architect’s intention but in the transformation of the spectator’s experience. For an idea to be a successful instrument of criticism it must find a detailed, and not merely a schematic, correspondence in our perceptions. (pp. 122-3, my emphasis)

The words that I have emphasized in this quotation strongly suggest that our appreciation of the Oratorio as a work of art is essentially a matter of perception. Since a proper understanding of the building requires us to have the relevant knowledge, this must be historically informed perception, and in this way it goes beyond the immediately sensuous. Nevertheless, we still stand in relation to the building as spectators, not as users.

A careful reading of the Aesthetics of Architecture might incline someone to resist, or at least modify this interpretation. A little earlier in the book Scruton remarks that ‘it is doubtful that a purely visual experience could reveal to us the full power of St Peter’s in Rome’ (p. 96) and again that ‘we must allow precedence to the visual aspect in architecture’ but only because ‘it is this which forms the basis and the necessary precondition of all the other parts’ (102). Both these quotations suggest that visual experience is at most the starting point of a fuller and more rounded ‘experience’ of architecture. And to some degree this is confirmed by his remarks on Hans Poelzig’s background townscape to Paul Wegener’s expressionist film Der Golem. ‘Here’ Scruton says, ‘the audience is necessarily a theatre audience, prepared to treat the background as part of an unreal world in which they do not live and of which they can only be spectators’ (p.191).

This reference to ‘spectators’ clearly suggests that if we are to experience architecture properly, visual apprehension is not enough. That assertion in itself moves us beyond the defective conception of the decorated shed, and accords with Scruton’s contention that appreciating the full power of St Peter’s requires more than visual experience. If what he has in mind is that we must also move around it, savour its spaces, be able to touch its materials, scent its atmosphere, glance along its internal vistas, and hear its distinctive sounds, then he is undoubtedly underlining a very important difference between our experience of real buildings and our experience of architectural backdrops as in Poelzig’s set for Wegener’s movie. Nevertheless, this fuller and far more rounded experience has not yet moved
beyond the sort of experience we might expect to get from a walk-through sculpture.

Nothing very much turns on the words we use here. Let us agree that the person who ‘experiences’ a building to the full has to be more than a mere ‘spectator’ in just this sense. Photographs of a building, however comprehensive, cannot adequately substitute for viewing that building in person, as (arguably) they might substitute for personal experience of a painting. Even so, it is still the case that the underlying disposition is one of ‘contemplation’. The important point is this. Insofar as his account of the aesthetics of architecture is in the end contemplative, Scruton remains within the ambit of Kant and thus fails in his attempt to bridge the aesthetic and the practical.

That this is indeed so is suggested by some fleeting remarks he makes about the Platonic alternative to Kant. Famously, Plato grounds our appreciation of beauty in ‘eros’, and thus makes it a manifestation of desire rather than an act of perception. Scruton records his view that on this point R G Collingwood ‘argued persuasively’ against Plato, whose mistake was ‘to situate the aesthetic response in the realm of desire, rather than contemplation’ (p. 157). Yet, any ‘attempt to reassert architectural against sculptural values’, of the sort that Scruton earlier approved, must side with Plato in this regard. To see a building as having architectural value is to want to use it, and not merely contemplate it. This is what makes the 18th centuries folies mere ornaments. People had (and have) plenty of reason to admire these miniature Greek temples (and the like). No one had, has, or has ever had, any reason to worship in them.

III

What would take us beyond the folie and the walk-through sculpture? The first beginnings of an answer, I shall suggest, lies in shifting attention from aesthetic ‘appreciation’ to aesthetic ‘appropriation’. That is to say, the key to understanding architecture requires us stop thinking in terms of admiring the architectural merits of a building, and think instead about using it because of those merits. A simple way to explain what I have in mind by ‘appropriation’ here is to contrast a house and a home. A house is a building intended for human habitation, but it becomes a home only when it is appropriated by someone as a place in which to live. Obviously, since people can live in caves and other natural shelters, not all homes are houses. Conversely houses may fail to be homes because whatever attractive features they may have, they are found to be ‘inappropriate’ as homes by those who might live there.

We make houses into homes. This is a double sided affair. The house must have properties that enable us to do this, but those properties take on the character of a home in virtue of our ‘styling’ them as such. When it comes to homes, standards and
expectations change. At any particular time there are houses in existence that cannot serve as homes. Sometimes this will be because they are no longer wind and water tight, lack electricity, or do not have adequate plumbing. This is not the interesting case, however, because the houses of the teeming Brazilian favelas and similar shanty towns are like this (though many in the favelas now have electricity). The houses I have in mind can no longer be appropriated as homes, not because they are too poor, but because they are too grand. It is still worth visiting such houses, of course. We can readily enjoy seeing and exploring them, and find much that is of interest in them. We can admire their sweeping staircases, spacious rooms, ornamental ceilings, and long passages. In neither case, though, would we think of living in them. The style of life that they facilitate, and require, is not ours.

The house too grand to be a home alerts us to a third defective conception of architecture. Alongside the more familiar concepts of decorated shed and walk-through sculpture, we must place the ‘tourist attraction’. Scruton’s example of St Peter’s Basilica in Rome could fall within this category. I imagine that a very large proportion of the people who visit it would unhesitatingly agree that ‘experiencing’ its power is much more than merely seeing it. They would acknowledge the need to feel its awesome spaces and stupendous ornamentation. And yet for all that, they do not find it (and in many cases could not find it) as a place superbly suited to Christian prayer and worship. In The Story of Architecture, Patrick Nuttgens reflects on Bernini’s colonnades around the piazza outside St Peter’s. They are, he suggests, an architectural realization of ‘the protective arms of Mother Church, wrapped around the faithful’ as they stand looking up to the windows of the Vatican for a papal blessing (Nuttgens 1983: 200). To appreciate the colonnades it is enough to imagine that someone could so view them; to appropriate them is to seek their embrace.

Some of the greatest works of architecture can cease to have a function and become simply spectacles. To describe them, when this happens, as ‘tourist attractions’ suggests a measure of degeneration, a falling away from the ideal. I think this is correct, so long as we understand it properly. For us the Palace at Versailles cannot be more than a tourist attraction, but it is still in a quite different category to the Temple of Artemis (one of the Seven Wonders of the World). Where the Temple has vanished almost without trace, Versailles is in such a wonderful state of preservation that we can still revel in its Hall of Mirrors and watch its Fountains play. Nevertheless, the magnification of a ‘Sun King’ is no more a purpose we might intelligibly seek to accomplish than is the worship of Diana, and this means that Versailles, for all that it is a building, is also simply an art object for aesthetic contemplation. Its connection with practical life is irreparably severed.

More needs to be said, however. As the example of house and home suggests, the contrast between ‘appreciation’ and ‘appropriation’ has application across the whole spectrum of the aesthetics of everyday life. Consider the case of clothing. In my view Scruton is quite right to emphasize just how central imagination, taste, and judgment are in the ways we dress, and thus how intimately the aesthetic is bound up with the practical in everyday life. Here too appreciation and appropriation are importantly different. I can take great pleasure in encountering and examining the
style of dress that people wore in ages past or wear in distant places. I can admire the elegant coherence of its colour, fabric and line, and yet never entertain the thought that I might dress that way. The only use such dress could have would be in a costume drama. Being able to appreciate but unable to appropriate, is not the same as saying ‘How could anyone wear that?’ however. In response to that question, I can be given helpful historical or cultural information that brings me to ‘see’ it differently, and correctly. This is a valuable accomplishment. Yet I am no nearer regarding the costume as a style that I might make my own.

What this example shows is that ‘appropriation’ is key to forging a connection between the aesthetic and the practical right across the spectrum of everyday aesthetics. Accordingly, it tells us nothing about architecture in particular. Yet the everyday example of dress can serve to point us in the right direction on this matter. How we dress is an important component of the aesthetics of everyday, but not all dress is everyday dress. We also dress for special occasions when, as we say, we want to ‘look our best’. Weddings are an obvious example. A wedding dress is so far from ‘everyday’, it may be worn just once. It is making dresses for very special occasions that elevates the ‘dressmaker’ into the ‘couturier’. At both levels there is a fusion of the practical and the aesthetic; the difference lies in the relative significance of these occupations in the broader context of human life.

So too with architecture, I am inclined to say. Both ‘building’ and ‘architecture’ require a fusion of the practical and the aesthetic, which is why modest buildings such a gatehouses, and even a railway wall (one of Scruton’s examples) can have aesthetic merits. What marks off architecture is not this, but the fact that it is ‘special’ building in the way that *haute couture* is special dressmaking. [Not with modernism – factories...?]

The ‘specialness’ of architecture is partly a matter of the importance that people lend to the project which the architect is called to undertake. The re-building of St Paul’s Cathedral after the Great Fire of London was a matter of great moment. That is why Wren was appointed by a Royal Commission, large sums of money were made available for it, immense amounts of time and attention paid to it, and why the undertaking of so great a project called for ‘architecture’ rather than ‘mere building’. As the 30 year long story of its construction shows, at every moment the practical and aesthetic debates and decisions were intertwined.

What lends a building project the kind of specialness that elevates it to architecture? A commission from a fabulously wealthy individual is not enough, I am inclined to say, since this may simply make the architect a servant of personal aggrandizement. The project needs a deeper cultural connection. It is notable that no fewer than 55 of the 90 plates that are included in *The Aesthetics of Architecture* are of religious (almost exclusively Christian) buildings. This is striking but not surprising, given the history of European architecture. But there is another reason underlying this history. Even relatively modest religious buildings can be said to be ‘special’ in just this sense; they constitute a ‘sacred space’ where everyday life is transformed into something more than ordinary, where in some measure (to use an expression of
Kierkegaard’s) the eternal comes into being in time. They do so, however, only in so
far as they are appropriated as such. For the vast hords of people who pass
through them, the Christian buildings of Europe are not like this. They are tourist
attractions, places that once had a use, but have a use no more (unless it be for an
alternative use -- concerts and the like) and tourism is an ordinary part of everyday
life. [So the use for concerts and for tourism is different – the former not part of
everyday life?] Many of these churches are still in use as places of worship, of
course, but only for a social minority, generally too small and culturally insignificant
to command financial resources and public support on anything like the scale that
made the buildings they still use possible in the first place.

This raises an interesting issue, one with which Karsten Harries concludes The Ethical
Function of Architecture. ‘[If] temple and church provide paradigms that have lost
their authority, [h]ow are we to reoccupy the place once held by sacred
architecture?’ (Harries 1998: 365). His tentative suggestions are monument, theatre,
landscape park, and most interestingly, the shopping mall. Whereas Ludwig
Feuerbach famously advanced the slogan ‘Man is what he eats’, Harries gives voice
to the thought that ‘We are what we build’ – architecturally. If true, what would this
say about a culture that called for architecture, rather than mere building, in its
shopping malls?

Bibliography
Press

Scruton, Roger, 1979, The Aesthetics of Architecture, Princeton, Princeton University
Press