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# Creating a Social Architecture: Architects Arakawa and Gins Encounter Social Psychology

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## Abstract

*The present exposition presents a conceptual analysis of how one might construct a social architecture. The focus is on creating a synthesis of constructs used by architects Arakawa and Gins (A/G) such as landing sites, tentativeness, and cleaving with social psychological constructs such as coordination, cooperation and trust. The purpose of this synthesis is to develop an organism that not only persons in A/G's terms but interpersons in my terms. I propose this extension as a possible way to help change people in a manner that will reduce, if not eliminate, destructive social conflicts such as those occurring in the Middle East between Palestinians and Israelis. Based on this analysis, new uses of A/G's architectural strategies are proposed.*

**Keywords:** Collaboration, Cooperation, Landing sites, Tentativeness, Trust

## 1. Introduction

In the present exposition I build upon and extend the analysis of Arakawa and Gins' constructs that I began in my *Interfaces* (Baron, 2003) article on the social ecology of landing sites and architectural bodies. In particular, I will develop the idea of a social architecture. I will not do this in the abstract. Rather, I will focus in particular on how social architecture can be linked to process constructs such as cleaving and tentativeness to clarify such basic social psychological dimensions as cooperation, coordination and trust. The goal of such an analysis is to give us an organism that not only persons but also interpersons by evolving a "mutually shared social field" (Asch, 1952) both individually and collectively. I will argue that only a humanity that interpersons is truly worthy of defeating death. In Arakawa and Gins' terms this is what the bioscleave wants above all.

What I will refer to as embodied cooperation is the engine of coordination of different peoples' landing sites. In particular, social landing sites are viewed as windows of environmental opportunity that specify points of entry into the social structure of class and power. A good example of how such landing sites function is captured in the following quote: "As an Arab-American, Shadid could visit places physically and psychologically where few other reporters were able to venture." (McIntyre, 2005). But this should not occur only at the individual level. Specifically, shared partitioning of the environment both facilitate cooperation and are the product of cooperation – people with similar landing sites are more likely to form coalitions; such collaborations are, in turn, likely to induce norms of cooperation. Building on such an analysis I propose that such essential properties of social interaction as trust, cooperation and conflict resolution between groups, share with landing sites and architectural bodies the problem of coordination. Further, both physical and social coordinative structures can be treated as being nested within the general functioning of the bioscleave, the meta-neighborhood in which we all live.

Such a multi-level way of conceptualizing these issues is clearly necessary given the impact that continuing states of international conflict are likely to have on such problems of the bioscleave as poverty, global warming, and in particular, on the pace of globalization. Indeed, I see the issue of conflict resolution as foundational; I cannot conceive of architecture against death working broadly in a world where problems of poverty, terrorism and unchecked globalism hold sway. I have never believed in isolationism in politics or theory. Thus, I believe that insights of Arakawa and Gins regarding the use of architecture to promote trans-human capabilities, including coordinating skills, need to be harnessed for seeking a reduction, if not an end to intractable conflicts. Such conflicts may, in turn, be viewed as a pathology of cleaving – divisions without integration.

What I mean by a pathology of cleaving can be partially explicated by Gilles Deleuze's (cited in Rajchman, 2000) attempt to reach people at a level before they have been contaminated by societal categories or divisions such as gender, country, race, religion and class. Such differentiations in Deleuze's terms can make us lose our individuality. From this perspective death is the final destroyer of singularity. I believe that architectures, both physical and social, viewed as organizations of coordinative structures, can help us achieve this basic want of

the bioscleave. This fits well with Deleuze's aspiration of "being at home not in a territory but in this Earth"(Rajchman, 2000).

Such a state would spare us the "indignity of speaking for others" (a phrase borrowed from Foucault (1974)), which I would claim, is an aspect of the problems of globalization. Specifically, we need to share frames of reference but such sharing should not involve imposing a frame of reference "top down"; mutuality needs to occur "bottom up". We need not love or even like the other, but we need to understand each other's concerns. I see this as a problem in learning how to share landing sites. That is, we need to build shared frames of reference that literally put us in the right position to see the other. For example, no level of reading about the American Indian's plight is equal to spending time on an Indian reservation. Similarly, reading the Koran as an outsider is different from reading the Koran in the mind set of Muslims who perceive themselves as victims. Looking at the landing sites of people who perceive themselves as victims may, in turn, help us to understand why people turn to terrorism. For example, consider this analysis of the motivation of suicide bombers by the maker of a film on suicide bombers, Abu Assad, "…the biggest motivation is impotence. You are captured in your own city; you can't do anything about it; you are nothing" (Riding 2005: E8). Such people have landing sites that go nowhere.

More generally what we can take from both Arakawa and Gins and Deleuze is the importance of developing procedures — both social and physical architectural arrangements — for encountering others under conditions that promote mutually shared social fields which I take to implicate shared landing sites. To the "hands on" experiences of the architectural body, we need to add a collective coordinations of bodies in search of jointly beneficial outcomes; or more broadly, we need to examine what basketball teams, wolf packs, and slime moulds have in common. To Arakawa and Gins' marmot we juxtapose a slime mould. At issue is cleaving to satisfy a collectively embodied agency.

## 2. Towards an Embodied Model of Cooperation

Individual amoebas aggregate into a multi-cellular organism called a slime mould. They do this when they experience the insufficiency of their local environment for finding food. Amoebas integrated into the slime mild are able to locomote to distant regions that have food. Wolves attack as a pack when they seek large prey that could overwhelm them individually. Players on a basketball team or soccer team begin to play as a team when in an environment where winning becomes more important to them than individual statistics.

In effect, cooperative action occurs when the environment or situation makes salient the insufficiency of individual competitive efforts, thereby breaking what is formally called a Nash Equilibrium (Nash, 1950) in which it is rational to be competitive in a mixed motive game. In the Gibsonian language of my *Interface*s paper, functioning as a part of a group enhances individual effectivities or response capabilities, thereby making available a greater range of environmental affordances. More broadly, group-ness opens a new range of possibilities for actions. In effect, what social architectural bodies do fits with the goals of A/G's physical architectural bodies; they make open what appears closed.

It is also important to note that viewed thusly, cooperation is a bottom-up process of self-organization which offers a fresh take on how to view cleaving. Specifically, local interactions give rise at a certain level of complexity, to a social body or group that has properties different from the local units whose interactions lead to its emergence. These properties flow from the downward feedback that the group exerts on its individual members. The individual coordinations that gave rise to a group, give way to role-based coordinations. I refer to such role-based coordinations as teamwork. Here, I have described how a social architectural body is self-organized, in effect, illustrating cleaving as a social process.

I would also claim that team-oriented activities have certain general properties given Arakawa and Gins' perspective: (1) roles take priority over individual histories in the selection of landing sites. For example, the point guard and the centre in basketball and the midfielder and the goalie in soccer have their landing sites constrained by their roles. Specifically, the point guard is positioned in the backcourt to see the whole court in order to maximize possibilities for passing; the centre plays close-in, with his/her back to the basket to be maximally available to receive a pass that will result in a score. Team play also illustrates another property of landing sites; they can be constructed perceptually or conceptually.

At a most basic level, basketball landing sites are organized perceptually as the players view the court. This is particularly true during a procedure called a fast break, where players are streaking toward the basket. In a half-court situation, a procedure called a set play is run. Here the landing sites are dictated by the coach's overall strategy. This is likely to involve conceptually dictated landing sites, which may also include imaginal considerations as the coach tries to anticipate what the other team will do.

In sum, I have treated cleaving as a self-organized, dynamical system that gives rise to role-constrained coordinations, mediated by the different landing sites available to different role-occupants. One can also differentiate levels of tentativeness in how cooperation plays out in this situation. Specifically, fast breaks utilizing coordinations are likely to be more tentative in both positive and negative ways than half-court play. That is, during a fast break more creativity is possible within roles. When a set play is run, coordinations within roles are more

constrained. In both cases we see the operation of agency embodied in collective action. In effect, a team exhibits the aggregation of landing sites that I would define as a social architectural body.

## 3. The Role of Trust

Another construct, trust, is importantly involved in the formation and persistence of a social architectural body. Specifically, trust constrains what is proper joint action. People move to certain positions in space because they trust other people to deliver the goods there. Trust viewed this way is embodied in joint anticipatory action. Trust is neither subjective nor objective. It is a bridge or connection that allows coordination to begin and to persist. Trust personifies tentativeness. Trust is never fixed once and for all. Trust must be continuously earned.

Within a complex dynamical-systems perspective, trust demonstrates hysteresis, a type of asymmetry in the conditions that create and maintain it, that I propose may give us deeper insight into the general idea of tentativeness. Specifically, it is easier to destroy trust than to build trust. It is also easier to build trust than to restore it once it is lost. We need to explore whether hysteresis is a general property of tentativeness. Trust also provides a good point of entry into the problem I raised in my introductory remarks, why it is necessary to move from an organism that persons to an organism that interpersons.

## 4. An Organism That Interpersons

Before offering a conceptual justification for this claim, I would like to offer a concrete example from sports that motivates this emphasis on interpersoning. What is needed is a situation where a coordination becomes a relationship, where cooperation becomes collaboration. Although I offer an example from baseball involving the coordination between a pitcher and a catcher, the same arguments would apply, for example, if we looked at the relationship between a choreographer and a set designer, or doubles partners in tennis. First, at issue is understanding collaboration as involving a deeper level interdependence, which is nested in, but goes beyond, the coordination of roles we illustrated with basketball. Like the basketball example, pitchers and catchers have different role-based landing sites; the pitcher is on the mound facing the hitter, whereas the catcher is behind the hitter surveying the whole field. These individual landing sites are likely less important than the *joint landing sites* that need to be negotiated before a pitch can be chosen. At issue are (a) a system of signs that are shared, and (b) an agreement between the pitcher and catcher that the sign communicated by the catcher is the appropriate one for the particular hitter. For this to occur, the pitcher and catcher must trust each other. If the pitcher deviates and throws an unexpected pitch (a fastball instead of a curve, outside instead of inside) the catcher may miss the ball and/or be injured. The catcher in particular is a kind of social architectural body for the pitcher, cradling him when the pitcher is having problems, and in general offering him social support.

Moreover, unlike other team level sports, pitchers develop favourite catchers and insist on using them even if that catcher is less skilled as a hitter. Specifically, their commitment to the relationship may be stronger than to the team. Their coordination is nested within a relationship that is all about trust. Unlike role-based coordination, only a specific other will do. There is in this relationship the shift *from two I's to a "fragile we"*(Vogel, 1994). The role of tentativeness is critical here and in any situation where a mutually shared social field is embedded not in a transitory coordination to achieve a momentary goal-cooperation, but rather in a persistent relationship. For example, when designer Michael Rakowitz was asked to come up with a physical design to prepare for a disaster, he deemphasized the importance of hardening sites but instead said, "But it's better to talk to your neighbours" (New York Times, no author cited, 2005: E10). That is, I take "neighbourliness" to be such a collaborative relationship at a collective level.

Interpersoning, however, be it at a dyadic level or within the context of becoming a good group member or good neighbour, raises a problem that threatens the necessary degrees of freedom that occur when tentativeness is operative. If the connections within the relationship are too strong, for example, if the social ties are too strong, broader social relations are threatened. Within the pitcher-catcher dyad, for example, loyalty to the dyad may undermine the success of the team. This problem of lost tentativeness becomes exacerbated at the level of the group. If the within-group ties are too strong it is difficult to build connections between groups. That is, a certain level of tentativeness, what Granovetter (1973) calls "the strength of weak ties," is necessary to build bridges between groups. At the intergroup level then, cooperation can more readily occur if there is a creative tension between the individual and the group. If such tentativeness does not exist, we get the pathology of groupthink (Janis, 1972). When groupthink holds sway there cannot be a mutually shared social field at the intergroup level, a situation necessary for conflict resolution to occur. Viewed thusly a "fragile we" may be more of an asset than a liability.

## 5. Kelman's Workshops as a Model

Indeed, the social psychologist Herbert C. Kelman (1997), in his conflict resolution workshops involving Palestinians and Israelis, adheres to a philosophy that, in effect, incorporates tentativeness as a procedure to produce conflict resolution. As I have pointed out elsewhere (Baron, 2004), Kelman's workshops create "uneasy coalitions" …in which new bonds are delicately balanced by old within-group bonds – for example, ties to doves across groups and hawks within groups must be balanced. This formulation allows us another possible meaning of tentativeness – it is not a sign of weakness but a sign of complexity in the dynamical systems sense that coordinations can occur across many levels of organization. For example, Kelman's workshops can be viewed "…as a microcosm of the larger system." (Kelman 1997: 216). He works simultaneously at micro and macro levels so that his workshop can be conceived as a laboratory for producing inputs into the larger system. Further, Kelman (2003) pointed out that the key issue for him was the re-entry problem in terms of how to get workshop participants with new insights back into their constituencies at appropriate points of entry. I propose that Kelman's "point of entry" problem could be reframed as a quest for landing sites within the socio-political system.

My analysis here has two broad implications. What I mean by an organism that interpersons must be understood as a multilevel claim involving coordination, trust and cooperation as building both relationships and skills. For example, building trust is a higher-order form of coordinating skills. Further, interpersoning viewed as the ability to achieve a "mutually shared social field," is both a necessity for communication and a strategy for conflict resolution. For example, a two-state solution in the Middle East requires the joint realization by Palestinians and Israelis that the current situation requires them to share the same small piece of land. "The result hopefully is a socially situated cognitive change based on a sense of shared space" (Baron, 2004, p. 8). Viewed thusly, it is not easy to become an organism that interpersons, but it is necessary. Kelman's view of his workshops as a vehicle or laboratory for creating both micro and macro change is a useful way to consider the architecting of Arakawa and Gins. Their work is both a laboratory to try to reeducate the senses of particular individuals and/or social units and a potential source of creating inputs that can change society's views of mortality at a collective level.

## 6. Lewin's Model of Change

Kurt Lewin has been recognized as the father of modern social psychology. It is useful to frame change in terms of Lewin's (1958) 3-step model: (1) Unfreezing a negative position, attitude or behaviour, for example, cigarette smoking or excessive drinking or in Arakawa and Gins' situation, people's restricted use of their sensory-tactile capabilities; (2) Producing an effective change procedure; for example, sensory education, stopping smoking or excessive drinking. Step one involves getting people's attention — e.g., helping them to realize the danger in what they are doing; Step two, involves a plan or a new set of coping strategies; for example, how to stop smoking, or architectural arrangements that change how people use and experience their bodies. (3) Refreezing the "healthy" change; making the new behaviour a way of life after the intervention ends. Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), with its perpetual support group, is prototypic here. At issue is finding social and/or architecture bodies that support the change.

It should be noted that Lewin's model can, in turn, be reframed in terms of AA types of change procedures. In the first step, old dysfunctional coordinations between the person and surround must change. New landing sites must be explored, old ones obliterated. For example, at a party the person should (a) see the dysfunctional behavior of drunks; (b) be educated to focus on new people rather than the location of the table where the drinks are, and more broadly be encouraged to seek new behavior settings; for example, to utilize book stores rather than bars for meeting people; (c) New, non-alcoholic friends are needed to replace drinking buddies so that the new landing sites can be assembled into a new style of living, where the new behaviors are supported physically and socially. In sum, change is motivated by the realization of the insufficiency or danger of the target behaviors. However, change to be effective often requires a collective-level support. Adapting Hillary Clinton's notion that it takes a village to raise a child, we may say it takes a village to stabilize a significant life change.

In this regard, one of Lewin's (1948) most important insights was that it is easier to change a person as part of a group than as an individual. Kelman's workshops incorporate this principle. If the goal of Arakawa and Gins is to use the most effective change procedures, this view of change needs to be considered. At a general level, Arakawa and Gins have understood that social and physical surrounds always interpenetrate one another; for example, groups don't live in a vacuum. Further, dyads and larger groups make different demands on their surrounds. And of course, the landing sites selected by people as part of a group will differ from those selected when people function as individual dwellers. This analysis, while consistent with A/G's general thinking, has not, however, been systematically incorporated into either their theorizing or their architecture.

Cleaving is an excellent way to think of the relation between the individual and the group. Indeed, the aphorism that the individual is in the group and the group is in the individual can be framed as an example of cleaving. That is, the individual both adheres to the group and is divided from it – she/he seeks both to fit in and to

be distinctive (Brewer, 1991). The challenge then for any program of change is to take into account Lewin's and Brewer's principles. Writ broadly, we also need to consider Kelman's work in this context. That is, Kelman wants the change he created in the workshops to generalize to the participant's connections to macro-level policy makers. In the long run, of course, this would also likely be Arakawa's and Gins' goal, assuming the success of their housing projects, viewed as workshops or laboratories for change.

## 7. Sociality As a Second Skin

In this final section of the paper, I will attempt to look at the implications of my case for creating an organism that interpersons for Arakawa and Gins' project, with the hope that by doing this it may be possible to add another dimension to attempts like Kelman's to reduce, if not eliminate, intractable conflict. This is essential given my belief that such conflict resolution is needed for society to be worthy of Arakawa and Gins' quest for immortality. As Shostak (2003) suggests in a quote from Rilke (1981) "The point of life is to fail at greater and greater things". In that spirit I will now grapple with how Arakawa and Gins' style of architecting can be refocused to function at a more collective level to produce organisms that interperson.

As a prelude to this section it is useful to think about the movie "March of the Penguins", a French documentary about the lives and loves of Emperor penguins. To survive winter storms, this species has literally developed a social architectural body, structurally and functionally. Specifically, the collective huddles together, providing the social counterpart of the snail's shell. Moreover, when a female penguin who has lost her child to the cold attempted to steal the child of another mother, a group of other mother penguins formed a protective shield around the threatened mother. The group once more became a second skin but this time to cope with a social as opposed to a natural threat such as a severe winter storm. I made a related point in my *Interfaces* paper when I pointed out that during the most recent regional blackout, people in New York City became very supportive of each other as opposed to the way they behaved in a previous blackout in the 1970's. And I speculated that this coming together may have been one of the few positive fallouts from 9/11 – greater within-group unity in the face of external threat.

## 8. Towards Architecting an Organism That Interpersons in the Service of Intergroup Relations

I begin with a pragmatic argument based on the group psychology I reviewed above. If Arakawa and Gins want to eventually produce societal level change, the group is a better level with which to begin than individuals, given that the group is both a more effective change agent than individuals and has links to other groups. Most directly, I am proposing that we use Arakawa and Gins' architecting to create organisms that interperson in the service of inter-grouping.

Returning to my earlier language, can Arakawa and Gins' use of architecting to re-condition how we know the world be extended to creating organisms that are open to mutually shared social fields at multiple levels? Can there be an architecture that triggers or shapes people to engage in cooperatively motivated joint activity? Indeed, Arakawa and Gins have already asked of the architectural surround that it "increase one's feeling of connection with and responsibility in the world" (Govan, 1997, p.12). To put the matter metaphorically, "if penguins are a lot like humans only braver, purer and endowed with more community spirit" (Holden, 2005: E 11) then A/G's architectural task is to bring out the penguin in us, given that penguins are organisms that interperson.

More specifically, I would like to build on my earlier observation that penguins aggregate their bodies to form a kind of second skin during a winter storm—a social architecture triggered by an environmental stressor. Given this analysis, I propose that A/G, by creating an imbalancing physical environment, one that disrupts people's daily routines and assumptions about dwelling places does more than reeducate one's senses. It also, as with the winter storm for penguins, triggers a need for a supportive social architecture. For example, people when faced with a disruptive architectural experience, are more likely to want to share this dwelling place with other people.

Indeed, there was a classic research program carried out by the social psychologist Stanley Schachter (1959) that demonstrated that under conditions of high fear or anxiety arousal people prefer to wait with other people as opposed to waiting alone. That is, a disturbing or threatening environmental experience increases affiliative desires for a range of reasons, the most important of which is increased interest in social comparison. More broadly, increasing the tentativeness of one's environmental experience creates conditions that generate a social architecture. Becoming imbalanced physically creates a need to rebalance our lives socially. In effect, just as A/G's architecture breaks down mind-body dualism, so it also breaks down the boundaries between physical and social architecture, between winter storms for penguins and disturbing architecture for organisms that person. Indeed, such circumstances increase the likelihood that organisms that person become organisms that interperson.

Basically, I am trying to build a bridge between my view of social architecture and A/G's view of procedural architecture. For example, can architecturally-induced disturbances in equilibrium or balance that lead to our knowing our own bodies in new ways change how we relate to other people? Can architecture be used to create dilemmas of movements that teach us to use our bodies jointly to navigate space, or more importantly, to

trust each other? What I am proposing is a way of inter-twining my perspectives as a social psychologist with A/G's procedural architecture. Their architecture not only opens up new affordances in the physical environment that can be used to slow down, if not reverse, the aging process, but also opens up new affordances in regard to relating to other people.

Operationally, let us consider Arakawa and Gins' "disperse-to-contrast procedures" as illustrated in Pardo (2003). In a house built around this procedure every room contains a "twin" of itself, alike in every respect to the other room except its floor, the length of which is tilted at the opposite angle to the other room. The person is then able to compare the sensations they experience in each room. Each room in effect has half the experience; you need to enter both to gain the whole sensory experience – tactile, visual, and kinesthetic. Moreover, one can learn from mishandling. For example, if one tries to transfer to the other room what she/he learned from a right slanted room to a left slanted room, she/he may lose her/his balance and fall.

What, however, if this were done in a collaborative way? Let us suppose that two people each enter an oppositely slanted room, but then before proceeding to enter the opposite twin they each accompany another person who has already done that room. By sharing experiences, a very basic kind of cooperation is at work. To deepen this experience, they each should have to walk in a pair of rooms by themselves. Then we would have both a physical and a socially mediated contrast experience, allowing for both direct and scaffolded sensory learning. In other situations, when moving between rooms, barriers could be placed that are wider or longer than people's arm spans. Here one needs to cooperate—to work with another person to remove the barrier. And in another situation one may have to get up a very steep step to reach the next level, thereby needing another to reach down and help as in rock climbing; the steeper the step, the more one needs to trust the other. Arakawa and Gins view their architectural procedures as challenging and retooling the physical-biosleave body. In my view, their architectural procedures have the added potential to enhance both social motivation-affiliative needs and stimulate the development of affiliative skills in the service of an embodied cooperation that can lead to new social landing sites and social architectural bodies. For example, imbalance can create collaborative activities that have the potential to change both physical and social positioning so as to promote a more reciprocal-egalitarian relationship.

I see these situations as sensory-motor analogues to Aronson et al.'s (1978) jigsaw procedure to promote cooperation. In that technique people representing different ethnic groups each have half the information necessary to solve a cognitive problem. This approach attenuates ordinary power differences as well as undercutting stereotypes regarding the ability of outgroups. Applying this line of reasoning to the several cooperation and trust building procedures I have described above, one could emulate Kelman's workshops by, for example, pairing Palestinians and Israelis in a twin rooms contrast situation, as well as the barrier and the climbing challenges. The advantage over the Kelman paradigm is that the dwellers would be sharing, on a daily basis, sensori-motor-tactile experiences as well as cognitive ones. In this context it should be noted that some of the most successful studies demonstrating that cooperation serves as an effective conflict resolution technique have come from "hands on" experiences. In one case Israeli and Palestinian farmers had to cooperate to solve a common agriculture problem. In a classic field experiment, the social psychologist, Muzafer Sherif (1966) sharply reduced hostility between groups at a boys' camp by confronting both groups with a breakdown of a bus that was carrying them. In this situation the boys had to cooperate with each other to push the bus.

## 9. Conclusion

It seems to me the demandingness of Arakawa and Gins' procedures provide a natural workshop for teaching people that outgroups or conflicting groups are also organisms that interperson. If we have such groups cooperate to deal with shared challenges, not on a one-shot basis but over time as they will in Arakawa and Gins' type of housing, a whole new dimension can be added to conflict resolution (Kelman's workshops lasted a few weeks but did not involve shared dwelling experiences). For example, we could create housing that could be shared for varying periods of time. Arakawa and Gins' communities could also have other structures that provide challenging sensory experiences, such as bumpy bridges or slanted streets.

Further, as in Sherif's (1966) research and Kelman's workshops, we can pair groups rather than just compose dyads. Indeed, it might be useful to repeat some of the classic contact research in desegregated housing by the social psychologist, Stuart Cook (1985) with the important addition of Arakawa and Gins' procedural architecture. Our ability to understand both "hands on", embodied cooperation as well as conflict resolution as lived experiences, are likely to be greatly enhanced. Living under conditions of equal status and at the same time having to deal daily with sensori-motor problems that require joint actions at a dyadic and/or group level over time are situations that will deepen our understanding of conflict resolution. And such experiences will help us further understand the impact of Arakawa and Gins' procedural architecture for communal living. Conceptually what is at issue is transforming mutually shared social fields into jointly perceived and constructed landing sites that both undermine stereotyping and build bridges across group boundaries. In such a context there is a confluence of Granovetter's (1973) strength of weak ties and the creation of a productive tentativeness of social living. Social living in this context is all about eschewing the pseudo-certainties of categorical thinking and groupthink.

Tentativeness in regard to how we treat others can be modelled by Heidegger's (1977) treatment of a great work of art as inexhaustible in the meanings it offers. So too, I would add, are people; they offer us a range of coordinations that is inexhaustible.

Such tentativeness does not indicate either indecisiveness or disorder; rather it provides the openness that is needed at all levels of social living, be it at the dyad, group or intergroup relations. The organism that interpersons will always be incomplete, always in transition toward a state of becoming. This state of becoming can never be realized because our attempt to understand ourselves and others is a process of wayfinding without end. Proper living is always "edgy". And if we fall off the edge so be it; it will be a magnificent failure.

## 10. Acknowledgements

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