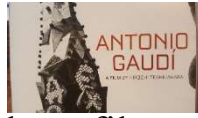


## Lecture 4 – Warped Edibles



[ Hiroshi Teshigahara film: ch.7 – Casa Batlló ]

Last week, we looked at Gaudí's **equilibrated structures** that he developed from a **decade long study beginning in 1898**, of his **tensile stereo-static model**. Next week, we will see his **decade long search for natural form** in his work on the Nativity Façade of Sagrada Familia, which led to the **development of warped surfaces** (Rovira Rabassa class in warped surfaces/perspectival study) in his work **after 1898**. For me personally, the breadth of his **originality and creativity was best expressed in this period**, when he **returned to the traditional Catalan brickwork techniques**, to **develop new combinations and complexities of form**, which we will look at today.



In **1892, José María Bocabella**, the founder of **Sagrada Familia**, died. A large anonymous donation was made to the church, of which Gaudí was encouraged to spend it as quickly as he could on the construction. And so **began, nearly a decade long study** and execution of the sculpted **natural forms** comprising the **Nativity Façade**, as if **icing on the cake**. Gaudí, named the architect of the church in 1883, had finally reached the point, where he was **given creative freedom** and he took full advantage to express his vision for **The Cathedral of the Poor** (Joaquim Mir, 1898).



In the fields next to the church, **sculptors carved away at white stones laid out like hallucinatory sugar cubes**, while hungry families begged for food in its shadow. A year later, as if to be **punished by God for his gluttonous reverie**, his good friend and religious mentor, **Bishop Grau dies**. And then, as if **to repent for his sins**, **Gaudí withdraws into a Lent fast**, sustained for so long, he nearly dies himself. No longer the dandy, dining at the finest cafés, as if **penance**, **Gaudí's diet turned to meager rations**: meals no more than a piece of (daily) bread or a few figs.

As a result of the **Spanish American War in 1898** (April 21 – August 13, 1898), **Catalan industrialists lost many of their colonies** (Puerto Rico, Guam, Philippines, and Cuba) to America, and therefore **sought new forms of investment**, a new form of manufacturing. Turning to real **estate development**, **architecture became a commodity**, the architect's artwork became **merchandise to be consumed**, **edible**. A new breed of intermediaries (galleries, dealers, magazines) touted the **Modernistas**, the **taste makers**, with a bohemian theory of **l'art pour l'art**, scandal, and a sneering contempt for the bourgeoisie.



A **rivalry** grew among the most sought-after architects, vying not to be outdone by the next. **Barcelona City Council** established an annual prize, to **award the most original building of the year**, **celebrating the individuality of the architect**, and by extension the building owner for commissioning the work. In the **first year, 1900**, **the prize was given to Gaudí for Casa Calvet (1898-1900)**, praised as “tasteful discretion in all”.

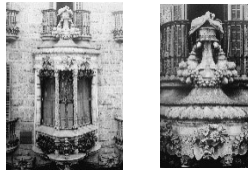
On the exterior, the first signs of what is to come, in the **parapet** **baroque curve** and **balconies, repeating in succession**, as waves in the sea.



These decadent **mansions were pervaded by the nervous life of their inhabitants**, everything selected from the world of the richest and most sophisticated objects, and the tension of the whole universe conflated with the mood of the owner, all **condensed in a single detail**: in the case of Casa Calvet, **the mushroom**.



Calvet was an amateur mycologist, in the projecting gallery window, the **corbelled supports for the projecting window and wrought iron work are elements taken from the structure of the murgulas mushroom**, devil's egg. The twisted and beaten balcony railings immortalized the Catalan love of mushrooms, a catalog of edible fungi: *Craterellus cornucopioides* the **funereal inky-black horn of plenty**, *Clathrus cancellatus* the tasty coxcomb and *Morchella esculenta* the morel.



In stonework, following his work on the Nativity Façade, the natural carvings.



In this frenzy, the Modernista had moved beyond the traditional roles of an architect, the planning and construction of the building, into elements considered minor or secondary, traditionally left to the craftsman, but now suddenly placed in the foreground and hailed as essential: railings, grilles, lamps, doorknobs. The delirium invaded every facet of life, taking charge of furniture, tapestries, crockery, cutlery, even the wardrobe for the lady of the house.



The iron door knocker in the form of a cross that beat against a wrought-iron beetle, a reference to Catholic Catalonia and parasitic Castile, a favorite topic of the Renaixença.



The Bourgeois houses sought comfort, viewed by the aristocrats in their palaces as the expression of bourgeois mediocrity. Casa Calvet anatomic chair, the legs and arms resemble the bones of the human body, the ends a clenched like fists.

Sagrada Familia money runs out (1900) > wild mushroom



“The Catalonia rovellón mushroom, gastronomically the most positive soft-factor of Catalan mysticism.”



Dali continued, “Beauty will be edible, or it will no longer be.”



“Those who have **not tasted his superbly creative bad taste are traitors**, because they intentionally ignored the dominate role that it plays in Gaudí’s art. It is a common error to think of bad taste as sterile, rather it is good taste, and good taste alone, that possesses the power to sterilize and is always the first handicap to any creative functioning.” (Dali, 1968)

A **shapeliness of form**, Gaudí preferred **a relaxed appearance as if the material had been formed by the elements, rather than man**. In the **Miralles Gate (1901)**, Gaudí moved away from the drawing board, returning to his talent in making, working **with his hands on three-dimensional surfaces in space**. Models were much easier for the workers to visualize, than two-dimensional drawings. No longer measured by the straight edge, **lines became freehand**, sketches. By making the transition, Gaudí’s designs became much **more fluid, sculptural, plastic**.



Speaking with Le Corbusier in 1929, Dali said, “**Architecture will be soft and hairy**, and I categorically affirm that **the last great architectural genius was called Gaudí**, whose **name in Catalan means ‘enjoy’**, just as **Dali means ‘desire’**. Enjoyment and desire are attributes of Mediterranean Catholicism and Gothic Art, which were reinvented and brought to a state of paroxysm by Gaudí.”



1:20

Güell diversified into real estate development with **Park Güell (1900-1914)**, built in Gaudí’s singular Catalan style, **motifs of Catalan history and myths**, the blood striped shield, fiery dragons and their lairs, **mixed with indigenous plantings** and splintered **rock sourced on site**.



Abundance of **undulating pathways**, bore witness to Gaudí’s hatred for the sterile **straight line**.

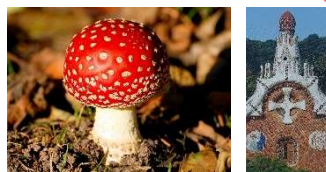




A miraculous gingerbread house in the middle of the forest, ornamented with cakes and tarts and windows formed of barley sugar. Two young children, **Hansel and Gretel**, abandoned by their parents, lost in the woods, ravaged by hunger, come upon this hallucinatory spectacle and partake of its delights. This wish fulfillment, this extreme oral gratification, temporarily assuaging the terror of being abandoned, in fact veils an ever-greater and more primal fear: that of being devoured. For the charming gingerbread house is but a lure, a trap, inhabited by a wicked old woman who captures the children and intends to eat them.



The pleasure of eating dissimulates its opposite, the threat of being devoured, for the confectionary house hides its origin, the very oven that is to be the site of the children's destiny. A single location, where the edible dissimulates the cannibal, is simultaneously utopic and dystopic, revealing the antithetical sense of primal gustatory emotions. The architectural homely conceals its uncanny mystery, where the ultimate secret of life is revealed: death. Edible architecture, cannibal architecture, the origins and genesis of such monstrosities are a function of psychological projection, where unconscious impulses organize the perceptual gestalt.



The gatehouses are distorted in scale, to have an hallucinatory wonderland feel. The magic mushroom crowning the roof echoes Maragall's translation of Humperdinck's **Hansel and Gretel opera**, in the coded narrative of fairytale salvation. *Amanita muscaria* red capped with white spots mushroom atop the gardener's gatehouse, a hallucinogen used in ancestral religious and secular ceremonies, including trace, euphoric and soporific states, popularized in 19th century by many artists and intellectuals, such as **Baudelaire, Hugo, Balzac, Nietzsche, Yeats, Picasso and Dali**. Located as a chimney cap, above the oven in which the witch was trapped, in her gingerbread cottage, the exiting smoke as the release of aromatic incense pollenating the park grounds.

The main entrance of Park Güell is flanked by two small buildings, one housing the **gatekeeper/gardener** and the other providing a **waiting room with lavatory and telephone services**. Both have elaborate ceramic-coated roofs, with the one on the left with a spire and four-armed cross suspended atop twisting metal frame, one of the **first examples of reinforced concrete construction in Spain**.



In these gatehouses, **structure, subject, decoration and function are fused together**, Gaudí had become one of the 20th century's great sculptors. By **returning to the Catalan craft tradition, he could open up a whole new language of forms**. The tiled fish-scale skins created by Catalan bricklayers, by laminating layers of thin tile bricks (**tabicadas**), formed the curves of the arches and vaults which were both sturdy and decorative. Both efficient and cheap, allowed the ready construction of parabolic arches. Covering the roof structure was a vividly colored skin of mosaic, fashioned from tiny shards of tile (**trencadís**). Gaudí ordered his workmen to scavenge broken tiles from nearby building sites on their walk to work. There were also reports of the workmen taking delivery of carefully transported Valencian tiles and then smashing them in front of the horrified delivery man.

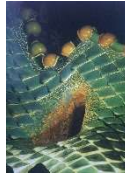


Along Barcelona's most elegant boulevard, the odd-numbered side of **Passeig de Gràcia**, arose **the Block of Discord** (**Manzana de la Discordia**: **Casa Lleò Morera** by **Domènech y Montaner** in 1905, **Casa Amatller** by **Puig y Cadafalch** in 1900), **architecture of manic forms, anthropomorphic compositions, façades deformed by a mood, by laughter or weeping**, side by side maximizing eclectic effect. The street façades of their creations viewed **as paintings in a salon exhibition**.



**Dali** writes of Gaudí's entry onto the Block of Discord, **Casa Batlló (1904-1906)**, in his essay, **Of the Terrifying and Edible Beauty of Art Nouveau Architecture** (**Minotaure**, 1933), Gaudí's terrifying and sublime ornamental nature, the

essentially inexplicable morphology of its appearance, not simply replacing the ‘right angle’ and ‘golden section’ with the convulsive-undulating form. The delirious concrete of Art Nouveau is an irrational upsurge from the past, not a project for the future.



Art Nouveau (Modern Style) Architecture is the first to be based on the oneiric manifestations of desire. The invention of an ‘hysterical sculpture’ derived from a fascination with organic, rather than mechanical, forms. The fluid “sculpting of reflections of crepuscular clouds in water”, manifesting the “hard undulations of sculpted water” with a photographic concern for instantaneity”.



The Baroque façade is the aquatic reflection of a Renaissance façade. “An immense and insane multicolored and gleaming mosaic of pointillist iridescences from which emerge the forms of pouring water, the forms of stagnant water, the forms of glistening water, the forms of water grazed by the wind, the sea forms on a stormy day.”



Batló is an edible architecture, that which in Dali’s imagination approaches the perverse manifestations of the sublime. The possibility of eating the objects of our architectural desire.



This return to a more primal (edible) beauty, evinces Dali’s realization that “erotic desire is the ruin of intellectualist aesthetics”, such that architecture is oneiric and symbolic before it is pragmatic, following the Surrealist ontology and epistemology of transforming the forms of the world according to the lineaments of our desires, these gustatory passions.



Jellyfish, corals, underground streams, antediluvian fossils: a neurotic re-encounter,



culminating in the small, soft, warm corner, cave inside the cave, of the fireplace.



In the dining room, the ceiling condenses in the form of great drops, while the soft, almost liquid moldings of the twin columns, refer to the extremely slow process of erosion.



In the main lounge, the ceiling has become a vortex, the core of a whirlwind.



The light penetrates into the rooms through greenish and bluish toned stained glass, bathing aquatic surfaces with aquarium light.

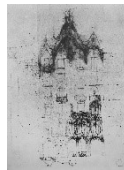
**[ 10 MINUTE BREAK ]**







**Casa Batlló (1904-1906)** was the renovation of a house designed by one of Gaudí's former teachers (**Emili Salas Cortés** in 1877). Acquired by textile industrialist **Josep Batlló y Casanovas** in 1903 (for today's equivalent of \$3.5K), who felt the building had no charm and asked Gaudí to **let his imagination fly, to make a fairytale house**. Batlló had many children, each with their own wish for the house. One said, "**a house like the sea, like a forest**." One of the girls said, "No, a house **like a carnival**." The youngest one said, "I want a house **like a hero legend**." Batlló thought they should choose just one, that Gaudí could not accommodate all of their wishes. Yet, it is in the **layering of metaphors and myths** that Gaudí's creativity flourishes, the architecture possessing **a multitude of readings simultaneously**.



The original house measured 21 meters in height, Gaudí added another 11 meters for an attic floor to provide laundry service to the apartments. As visible in an early drawing, this new roof **started out symmetrically, more traditional in form** as with **Casa Calvet**. However, in the process of design, it **morphed into a more organic** shape, **inspired by the freehand** as in the **Miralles gate**.



A metaphor of **Montserrat**, topped with Gaudí's signature four-armed cross,



the columns on the street as waves of the Mediterranean Sea receding to reveal a beach of mosaic shells glistening in the Catalan sunlight.



Or, could the roof be the back of **the mythic dragon**, the tower is **King Jaime I's lance** that slayed the beast. "**The house of bones**" as Casa Batlló was referred, is



filled with the bones and helmets of the knights the dragon ate, resting atop after a giant feast.



Or maybe, the balconies are not helmets, but **carnival masks**, the wall covered in **multi-colored Venetian glass confetti**. Combined, all of these metaphors tell of a greater tale, a theme in all of Gaudí's work: **restoration**.



Here in the restoration of a house, is the story to **restore the Catalan culture** under the thumb of Castilian rule, as depicted by the legend of Jaume I, the greatest Catalan king; the mythology of Montserrat to **restore the Catholic Church** dissolving by the rise of science and atheism; and a celebration of the **handmade crafts, restoring tradition** into a new industrial age of machines.



Looking closely at the bones, in their joints springs flora, **death restoring life**, the **ability of matter to regenerate**, germination, eternal metamorphosis. Time devours matter and matter reverts to chaos, continuously seeking new form.



However with Casa Batlló, Gaudí is telling this story in a new way, a departure from his past work, **a new type of form – a soft architecture**. On the street façade, he understood the relationship of neighboring **Casa Amatller (am-aht-yer) (1900)**, by **Puig y Cadafalch**. He **lowered the top corner, creating a balcony**, to soften the transition between the two buildings. Further, Gaudí **carries the molding down the left side**, to meet the molding on the Amatller house. The vertical tower rises from the balcony, **anchoring the left side of the elevation, balancing the roof asymmetry** (receiving City Council award in 1906).

The stepped triangular façade of Casa Amatller, very rare in Barcelona with strong horizontal cornice lines, is **repeated in Batlló as a mansard roof**, with the double line steps becoming free undulating lines dotted with a string of articulations. In fact, the gesture of the roof dissolves toward the Amatller house, its bravado in the opposite direction, as if turning its back, a **clean, yet respectful break**. The last to arrive on a block with a previous precedent. And yet, he **devours and digests** it, the existing building to be renovated, as with the buildings found on the block, **disappear within the soft forms** of this new shimmering façade. The Block of Discord is where the Modernista rivalry began, on public display, but not because Puig and Domènech constructed houses 5 years and 50 meters apart, rather it was because Gaudí came along and built the Batlló house in such discord with everything else.

In 1900, **Adolf Loos** published a story about a ‘**poor little rich man**’, in which this bourgeois gentleman had a house built and decorated, down to the smallest details. From that moment on, **his house is complete, full and harmonious**. And, so is his life: he can no longer receive a gift or buy anything new, there will be nothing he can fall in love with. **He is finished, no longer desire anything more**. Wandering like a ghost past the windows of the city’s shops with their displays of goods that will never be for him.

A similar story is told of one of Gaudí’s clients, who received an unexpected gift of **a grand piano**, for which she can find no place in the living room he designed. The size of the piano neither fits in the room, nor harmonizing with the décor, the house closed to objects from the outside, finished, already harmonized and full. Gaudí’s response, after measuring the room, looking under the carpets and moving chairs around, “Take up the violin.” **Faced with the genius of the Modernista, the client must change her tastes**. Rumored to be Güell’s daughter Isabel, on the occasion of her marriage to the Marquis of Castellós or possibly describing an apartment in Casa Batlló, which was under construction around the time the story originated.



**Gluttonous overconsumption**, the bourgeois house petrifies the market, turns it to stone, rooms with stagnant atmosphere. **The cave, the aquarium**, set apart from the anonymous flows of the city, exaggerates the virtues of its uniqueness. Such a house is in conflict with the everyday, with life, can never have inhabitants. But it is precisely this conflict, that gives the Modernista his eccentric prestige and popularity.



This conflict is best exemplified in the wood that makes up the Casa Batlló dining room chair. It has **lost all of the intrinsic properties of wood**: the seat surface is deformed, as if by the pressure of a seated person's weight. The legs bend and twist, as if they buckled under that weight. And, the backrest has flanges with circular recesses, as if someone has lifted the chair by its back, gripping with their thumbs has left an impression. The stiffness of the wood has given way to a softness, as if molded clay. The chair's **form has been imposed on the material, without regard to its qualities**, the oak chair has lost its materiality and only speaks of its form. A **form that is expressing** the weight of a body sitting on it, the pressure of thumbs pinching it. But more significantly, the chair is not marked by just any body or hand, but the hand of its creator, Gaudí. By impressing on the seat, pressing his thumbs into its backrest, **Gaudí has given form to the clay, breathed life into it, acting as God the Creator himself**. The form of the chair is a handprint, the gesture of the process of its creation. And in this, the **interior furnishings of Casa Batlló impose a discord more disturbing than the front elevation of the building on the Block of Discord**: the Batllós will have to sit in Gaudí's chair, **their bodies conforming to a seat formed by someone else's body**. In Casa Batlló, architectural form has become indifferent to the materials in which it is made, as much as it is indifferent to the inhabitants who use it, speaks more of the Modernista who created it – Gaudí. Form that goes **beyond the representation of the world, to convey the originality and creative genius of its creator**. The softness of the Casa Batlló chairs, the melting of the walls and ceilings, the motion of the exterior façade and columns, is all presented as **raw material into which Gaudí has breathed form, a warped form that speaks to a desire, an original hunger of creation**, (warped edibles). The **myth of the origin**, the grotto cave as the maternal womb of the earth, the sea as the medium in which life emerges, the Batlló house a cosmos.



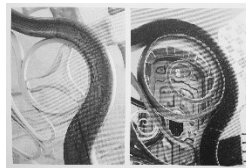
The doors to the apartments, also made of oak, are softened. Emerging from their mass are stars, the origin of cosmic creation. Also appearing within the door, tibia bones, half submerged as if the site of an archeological discovery, a hint of the skeletons to be found inside.



The central living room, the generating maternal womb, where the whirlwind of creation is found on the ceiling



and reflected in the hexagonal floor tiles, swirling amongst sea urchins and starfish. The spiral an ancient symbol for the growth of the universe, the cosmos of motion.



There is also a curious whirlwind, found in a particular place. The apartments are identified not with numbers, but letters, ascending from A (Antoni) on the first floor, to I on the top. On each landing, the railing terminates in the same circle containing a trefoil design. However, there is one exception, one of the railings contains a whirlwind spiral, on the landing of the door labeled G. The initial letter of 'genesis', 'germination', and of course 'Gaudí'.



Liquefaction has removed the tectonic qualities of the stone: waves, wrinkles, creases, drips hanging in suspension. Just as the stone's purpose, supporting the weight of the building, has been suspended, forgotten, the fluidity of its form distracts our attention. Rather than let a material's natural limitations dictate his use of it, he manipulated and forced it with his implacable will to dominate. He refused every physical and technical constraint, no financial or commercial imperatives could be imposed. His was an unerring vision, and to those who were less convinced, his reply was unqualified, "He who doubts is ignorant".



In Casa Batlló is found the greatest of delicacies, an edible architecture, candy for all the senses. But, pleasure is also found in Gaudí, who at this moment has reached his **greatest popularity and fame**, based on the public opinion reflected in the **illustrated press: satirical cartoons and travel postcards** (hundreds appearing in his lifetime). It was at this time while working on Casa Batlló, that the **King of Spain, Alfonso XIII** came to visit his work on the Nativity façade of the Sagrada Família. And, Gaudí at the peak of his glory, had the **pride and confidence to only speak Catalan to the Castilian monarch**, which was not just a sign of disrespect, but was also a punishable offense.



It is in **Casa Milà (1906-1910)** that **overconsumption of Gaudí's work gained the greatest satirical press, the Barcelona pastry** (la pâtisserie Barcelone). A **temptation first for the eyes and then for all the senses**, as well as being in their gluttonous impermanence, the ultimate culmination of the idea of consumption in its most radical and truly cannibal form.



No wonder, that delirious desire should determine that what the hungry children in the forest find will be no juicy sausage, nor abundance of fruit, but a whole cottage of gingerbread and candy. Nor in the equally delirious showcases of 1900s bourgeois desire, on the Passeig de Gràcia, **seeing the way the Gaudí deformed materials, stripping them of all their tectonic qualities, his contemporaries should have used in referring to those buildings of pastry, the metaphor of the cake shop**, as in the child of a 1910 cartoon pointing and exclaiming, “Daddy, Daddy, I want an Easter cake as big as this one.”



The image is not at all soft and sweet, as nice as a cake. On the contrary, it is scornful and cruel, and comes from an anonymous and desiring public's intuition that **architecture has become just another product among the products on display in the market**. This elevation of architecture to the level of the pâtissier's shop contains **an obscenity: architecture's need to make a show before the eyes of all in order to occupy its privileged place in bourgeois society**, where **firmitas (firmness)** and **utilitas (utility)** are no longer necessary qualities and **venustas (beauty)** has been **reduced to the subjectivity of an intrinsically eccentric taste**.



The swollen body of the Casa Milà, loomed threateningly over the street, a **mountain appearing on the Barcelona skyline**, a hulk **marooned from another era**. Not Catalan, not Iberian or Mudejar, it was **a building without precedent**.



**Pere Milà y Camps** suggested Gaudí as architect for Casa Batlló, but now that the right site had appeared, he commissioned Gaudí for his own apartment building. Using the **structural arrangement of a grid of columns supporting the floor slabs**, as was common in factories to provide an open plan, the **interior and exterior walls were thereby non-loadbearing and could take on any shape or configuration**. Gaudí said this provided the flexibility **to easily adapt the arrangement of future apartments and changes in use**. Subsequently, the building **went up without any plans** and when he was asked by another architect how could build without drawings, Gaudí reached into his pocket and crumpled up a piece of paper, then patiently he opened the creased ball and flattened it out carefully, stating proudly, “This is my plan for the Casa Milà, Senyor. Bon dia i Adéu! (Good day & Goodbye)



Gaudí corrected the stone mason carving the central rose for the central façade, finally taking the chisel in his own hands, blunting back the mason had carved, until it became **the ideal, non-specific rose, frozen at the very moment of becoming**. Gaudí told the mason, he **didn't want a specific rose from nature, rather he wanted the essence of rose**. This was a **departure from the literal casting of human figures, flora and fauna** he had done a decade earlier in the Nativity Façade of the Sagrada Familia we will look at next week. This **abstraction of form**, may be due to his collaborations with **Josep Jujol**, an apprentice that entered Gaudí's studio in 1906.



Casa Milà carved in stone, **a metaphoric mountain, Montserrat, to be crowned on top with a statue of the Virgin Mary**. The **150 openings in the exterior façade, representing the rosary beads**. However, Pere Milà was concerned City Hall would oppose the ensemble, as well as fears of the building being targeted by rebellious anarchists against the Catholic Church. Despite Gaudí's claims that the statue was also a homage to his wife, Rosario, playing to her vanity, neither were persuaded and Gaudí resigned from the project.

## (1906, Oct.) Gaudí's Father and Martorell died / Year of holocaust

By now, revered but also known as abrupt and slowly losing interest in his personal appearance. He was **gradually drawing away into himself and his work**, taking up residence with his father and niece in Park Güell. Only **daily confessional at St. Felip Neri** and Sunday mass in the Cathedral, that kept him in touch with life in the Gothic quarter. On his walks with his neighbor's son, Alfonso, he would often announce, **"We Catalans have a sweet tooth"** and enter El Caballo Blanco to buy a **treat and catch up on local gossip**.



## Colonia Güell crypt vaults (1908-1914)

An entirely **new vocabulary develops, resulting in warped surfaces**, **hyperbolic paraboloids, hyperboloids**, requiring only **straight lines to generate double curvatures**. Much easier to realize in model form than traditional orthogonal projection on paper. Like the model, inverted to study the loading utilizing gravity to lead the way in developing the design. Here **in construction, he inverts the vaults, becoming convex, sagging between the supporting elements**, much like the giant sea shell holding the holy water. By doing so, the **vaulting would undulate like water, swelling up and down**, taking on **a new plasticity, the building coming to life**.



Always innovating and improving construction methods, Gaudí remarked, "If I had not been an architect, I would most like to have taken up shipbuilding." In the **convex vaults of the crypt, the ship's hull floats on the water**. Marking the center of the vaults, **the most vulnerable place structurally, is St. Andrew's cross**, the patron saint offering extra reassurance.



"When masons build a wall, they place two plumb uprights and string a line between them horizontally. **If one of the uprights goes out of plumb**, which happens much more often than you may think, the masons, **believing that they are building a flat wall, are in fact making a paraboloid**. We have **gone directly and deliberately to this form and seeing its beauty and the possibilities that it offers**, we

have also used it for the vaults.” “Polyhedral forms and those erroneously called ‘geometric’ are not commonly found in the natural world. Even the pieces that man makes flat, doors, tables, and boards, will all warp over time.” “With the well-reasoned use of bulging surfaces, no moldings are needed, they are adaptable to all kinds of locations and volumes, by avoiding all laws concerning passive or inert masses, and producing therefore, more light, where the light combines admirably with sound.” Gaudí continued, “If I had not been able to test the large scale use of curved forms in the Colonia Güell, with helicoidal shapes in the columns and paraboloids in the walls and vaults, I would not have dared to use them for the Sagrada Familia.”



2:35

### Sagrada Familia Schools (1909)

A roof that undulated like a wave, providing perfect drainage.



In the walls and roof, is realized for the first time, Gaudí’s continuous undulating warped parabolic form, by the simplest of means, straight rafters supported by a central beam, varying in height at their ends, with concave and convex Catalan brickwork bóvedas tabicadas spanning between. A school made for children, Gaudí created his most evolved structure and form, while retaining his playful childhood curious perspective.



The schools catered to the local working class children, the free system of education was designed to bring the children closer to God – Bocabella (Sagrada Familia founder) and Gaudí believing to reform society, it is necessary to reform the individual, so each child was given their own potted plant to be placed in the playground located on the church site. Most mornings, before work began, workers would climb the church scaffolding, to rescue the children’s kites tangled up in the Nativity Façade. One of the workers used a spare corner of the site to grow produce for his family. When Gaudí discovered this, he extended permission to all the other workers to follow his example, saying siesta time was far better used in gardening with your family, than giving in to the temptation of the local bars. Gaudí was rewarded with baskets of produce, which he gave to the church to feed the beggars.





## Setmana Tragica

On Tuesday, July 27, 1909, ‘Tragic Night’, Gaudí climbed up onto the roof of his house in Park Güell, pacing around the parapet. People all over Barcelona gathered on roof terraces to gaze on the spectacle, a city transformed into a great hypostyle hall whose smoke columns, rising from the subsoil as factory chimneys, giving an idea of the gigantic buildings that will be constructed there, the urbanism of the contemporary Barcelona. All that is needed is for the soul that sustains us, the smoke to be perpetuated in bricks and stone, and that was the task of the most eccentric architects, with Gaudí first among them.

“When Catalonia, the very land assigned to destroy the Catholic religion, dedicates not only cathedrals but the most fundamentally artistic cathedral in the world to Catholicism, we have the case of those who, in calling the pigs to slaughter, give them everything possible to fatten them up and get them to weigh what they should at the moment of death, when they are prepared to be eaten by man, following the laws of antagonistic symbiosis, which dictate that we organic beings must live off one another; and we all know that every last bit of the pig is edible: as the Catalan refrain referring to the laws of nutrition and regeneration – whose truth we can observe in the bodies of all living beings – tells us, ‘in the pigs as in the woman, every part is delicious’.” (Gaudí’s Artistic and Religious Vision, Francesc Pujols, 1927)

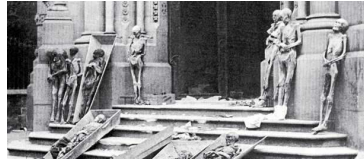
Pâtisserie architecture that fed an aesthetic appetite, had turned into the cannibalistic tastes of politics. Gaudí’s religious architecture becomes an object not of devotion, but devouring, feeding the immense eternal body, a dying Catholicism. It is an edible architecture, edible in its entirety, because like the pig, no part of it goes to waste.



Temple as ruin, ruin as mountain, mountain as temple. Destruction as construction. The unavoidable rituals of the church burners and murders and devourers of priests and nuns, the Barcelona revolutionaries of 1909 burned schools, nursing homes, convents, churches, paintings, sculptures, and all kinds of furniture, furnishings, and religious objects.



Those buildings and those images were not the expression of power, but were possessed of it. On Tragic Night, 23 churches and convents had been burned, 2 priests murdered. By the end of the week, 12 churches and 40 religious establishments had been destroyed.



2:45

The bodies of priests and nuns had been disinterred from their burial in the churches and convents. The most notable event by a group of women taking corpse after corpse of the Hieronymite nuns, carrying them on their shoulders, they paraded them through the streets to the houses of the Marquès de Comillas and his brother-in-law's house, Eusebi Güell. The rotting corpses were laid out for all to see, under the arches of the Palau Moja and against the wrought-iron gates of the Palau Güell. The working class viewed the Catholic Church as being corrupted by the wealthy Industrialists, with the Marquès and Güell being the wealthiest. The churches and convents that provided meals and refuge for the poor, were seen to be conspiring with the factories that imposed moral reforms, keeping the working people under their thumb.

The Catalan working class was drafted as soldiers for the war in Morocco, to defend the King's colonies of Catholic missionaries and Bourgeois industries. Do not attempt to tell me it was the unrest of foreigners, outsiders, a kind of ubiquitous mercenary mob, the burning of churches and religious buildings as a confrontation between Satan against God, Hatred against Love. It is us, the excellence of the Barcelonese consisted in the bomb and blasphemy. Their way of cleansing, of clearing, of making room. Barcelona, you have to suffer if you want to save yourself, you have to accept the bombs. Tell me if you do not see in this as a ray of light, ...dark light.

In place of the tremendous repression and the executions that followed the revolt, Maragall proposed reconciliation. The dynamism of a society that will necessarily have to modernize and proposes it through the destruction and demolition, the bombs and blazing torches of the revolutionaries would have in some way been the instrument, as unexpected as it was unconscious, with which society had provided itself for this renewal.



Maragall writes of the impression made on him, by the first **Mass in one of the burned churches**, “I have never attended a Mass like that. The **vault of the church fallen in, the walls blackened and flaking, the altars destroyed**, missing, especially the great black void at the end, where the main altar had been. A torrent of **sunlight streamed through the crack in the vault with swarms of flies hovering in the glare**. **Destroying the church, you have restored the Church** the fire has built, the **blasphemy has cleansed**. A Church **closer to its origins, purged of pomp** and ceremony. The **invention of Catalan Gothic, bare and austere, horizontal and democratic**.



During the Tragic Week, citizens were ordered to stay off the streets, that had been barricaded with debris to slow the movements of troops and revolutionaries. Despite pleas from his builder **Josep Bayó** not to, Gaudí left the safety of Park Güell, to check on the condition of Casa Milà located in the heart of the gunfire and rebellion. After finding it undamaged, he proceeded to Sagrada Família, which was also left untouched. Why the arsonists have not vented their rage on the Sagrada Família? Because it was not finished yet. Churches burn and images are reduced to ashes. Those images grow and pile up on the giant bonfire of **the Sagrada Família, a petrified bonfire, on which burned all of the waste of architectural constructions of history**, like all collective dreams. Its towers, four tongues of fire more condensed than ice, giant scarecrows looming like a nightmare, are the chimneys for this furnace inferno, volcanoes of rage. **Unfinished, as if a perpetual state of ruins, construction from destruction, restoration by consumption, a warped and edible architecture**.

## FIN

Transition from constructed/assembled brick, to sculpted/carved stone.

As with Islamic art, expressive, fluid, yet suppression of the figurative. Calligraphy.

an erotic virgin that could promote any sort of fantasy / edible architecture (Dali)