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State-Making and the Origins of Global Order in the Long Nineteenth Century and Beyond

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POLITICAL SCIENCE AS ARCHITECTURE

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I Introduction

Most political science departments have sections on their websites where they explain to prospective students, and to others, what political science is all about. They typically begin by listing some of the things political scientists study (ideologies, parties, institutions, and wars are often mentioned). Many also list the subdisciplines of political science, and explain the differences among them. Few departments move beyond the subject matter and organization of the discipline and answer a deeper question bright students might be asking themselves, or at least should be: What is political science *for*? What is its purpose?

If political scientists had an answer to that question, even a tentative one, we would be better able to explain what role political science can and should play in a changing, modern society. A clearer idea of what political science is for might also help to integrate the many subfields of our increasingly fragmented discipline. In this paper, I offer my own answer. My method is analogical reasoning: I compare political science to another discipline, with which it has much in common. That discipline is architecture. I argue that the political-science-as-architecture analogy has important implications for the ends, means, and uses of political science.

Among the many articles and books that have touched on the question what political science is for, I would especially like to mention one: Jane Mansbridge's Presidential Address to the American Political Science Association, which is called just that, "What Is Political Science For?" (2014). In Mansbridge's view, political science "has a mandate to help us human beings govern ourselves" (8). She goes on to argue that the "fundamental job" of political science is to "help societies create and properly use legitimate coercion" (9). I have a lot of sympathy for Mansbridge's idea, but I would like to suggest a more general answer. Just as the purpose of architecture is to conceive of physical structures in which humans can live together, the purpose of political science is to conceive of institutional structures that enable humans to live together in societies. Legitimate coercion is a necessary condition of living together in complex societies, but not a sufficient condition.

One of the main points of the political-science-as-architecture analogy is that it offers some much-needed perspective on recurring debates about which sorts of questions political scientists should answer and which types of methods we should use. Architects have known for thousands of years that designing a building or a city is a multidimensional problem. According to the Roman architect Vitruvius, for instance, a good building is characterized by

firmitas (strength), *utilitas* (usefulness), and *venustas* (beauty) (Vitruvius 1999 [c15 BC], Book 1, Section 1). So, one thinks, are good political institutions. The political-science-as-architecture analogy suggests, therefore, that political science must necessarily be a multidimensional discipline: it is necessarily concerned with both normative and empirical questions, and it requires a combination of different research methods. But the analogy also suggests that there is something that brings political scientists together—or at least should bring us together. As political scientists, we ask different sorts of questions and use different types of methods *because* we have a common purpose: to understand the political systems humans create and how they shape the lives they live.

In other words, the political-science-as-architecture analogy suggests that political scientists should welcome conceptual, theoretical, and methodological diversity within our discipline, but it also suggests that political science mustn't become a free-for-all. Architects have always put the built environment in context—by, for example, studying its psychological effects, analyzing its role in social life, and studying the history of architecture and architectural styles—but they always come back to the central problem of designing buildings and cities. Similarly, although political scientists have every reason to put political institutions and systems in their socialpsychological, sociological, and historical context, the ultimate purpose of our discipline is and remains to understand political systems and conceive of institutional structures that enable humans to live together in societies.

The next section explains the thinking behind political-science-as architecture analogy. The three sections that follow discuss the implications of this analogy for the ends, means, and uses of political science—that is, for the sorts of questions political scientists ask, the types of methods we use when answering those questions, and how political-science knowledge can be put to use—and, indeed, misuse—in society. The final section concludes by discussing the relationship between political science and neighboring disciplines.

II Political-Science-as-Architecture Analogy

Architecture is the art and science of building houses and other physical structures that are meant to be used by humans. Academic and professional architects disagree among themselves on the precise meaning of the term architecture and often add a great deal of nuance to this simple, everyday

definition. But a simple definition will do for now.[1] The inclusion of physical structures in general, and not only individual buildings, is important for the purposes of this paper, since I will sometimes refer to metaphors of the state or political system as a building and at other times to metaphors of the state or political system as a city. This is standard usage: ever since ancient times, architects have been involved in designing both buildings and cities. Indeed, textbooks on architecture often note that it's a mistake to distinguish between building houses and planning cities, for buildings are what they are because of their place in the city, and cities are made up of buildings.

There are many ways for politics and architecture to meet. Perhaps most obviously, political decisions are made, and power resides, in designated buildings such as parliaments, government ministries, and high courts. That's why many of the words we use to analyze politics have spatial, architectural origins, including the terms "left" and "right," which go back to the seating arrangements in the French National Assembly in the early days of the Great Revolution.[2] Another way for political science and architecture to meet is the study of urban politics. A large proportion of the world's population live in cities, which are all shaped by political decisions about construction, infrastructure, and zoning. The political lives of cities are consequently an important concern for political scientists and architects alike.[3] The relationship between cities and their surroundings are equally politically important. Recent work in political geography has demonstrated the powerful political effects, especially in the United States, of the flow of middle-class and upper-middle-class voters from cities to single-family homes in the suburbs in the second half of the twentieth century.[4]

But this is not a paper about how politics and architecture meet in practice; it's a paper about political science as an intellectual endeavor. My argument is that the political-science-as-architecture analogy can help political scientists think more clearly about the ends, means, and uses of our own discipline. The main idea behind the analogy is that both political science and architecture are concerned with the organization of social space: how structures shape the way humans live together.[5] There are of course lots of differences between the two disciplines: my argument is one of analogy, not of identity. Unlike architects, political scientists study institutional structures, not tangible physical ones, and we typically address the problem of how humans might live together at a larger scale than architects do: that of entire countries, or even the world as a whole. But the similarities are striking enough to justify the comparison I propose in this paper.

The similarities between political science and architecture become especially apparent when one takes into account modern theories of

architecture that are explicitly concerned with the effects of buildings and cities on social space, such as the influential theory developed by Hillier and Hanson in their book *The Social Logic of Space* (1984) and by Hillier in his *Space is the Machine* (1996). Hillier (1996) argues directly against the view that architecture is "building plus art" and instead defends the view that architecture investigates the social effects of buildings, since buildings "constitute the social organisation of everyday life as the spatial configurations of space in which we live and move," and "represent social organisation as physical configurations of forms and elements that we see." It is no coincidence that Hillier and Hanson's *The Social Logic of Space* ends with an overtly political analysis of the social consequences of modern building and city planning (1984, 256–261).

There is a curious historical fact that supports the idea of a politicalscience-as-architecture analogy. In Book 1, Part VIII of *Politics*, Aristotle (1885 [*c*350 BC]) identifies a man called Hippodamus of Miletus as "the first person not a statesman who made inquiries about the best form of government." Aristotle wasn't particularly impressed with Hippodamus's theory of government, and does not seem to have thought very highly of him as a person (he notes that many people found him "affected" since he would "wear flowing hair and expensive ornaments"). But he does give him credit for being first. Today, however, Hippodamus is best remembered for his day job. He was an architect, who became especially famous for the new town plan of Piraeus, the port of Athens, which was rebuilt in the fifth century BC.[6] It can plausibly be argued, then, that the first political scientist, *avant la lettre*, was also an architect.

But there are other, perhaps more convincing, reasons to find the politicalscience-as-architecture analogy apt—in addition to the basic idea that both political science and architecture are concerned with the organization of social space. The purpose of a building is to be useful to those who live, work, and convene within it—people who may well have different goals and ideals life. Similarly, the purpose of a well-ordered political system is to make life easier and better for those who live in it, even if they are different from each other, and even if they have different goals and ideals.

Buildings—or combinations of buildings and other structures, such as cities—have long been used as metaphors for the state, or, more generally, for a society's political system. It is certainly not the only such metaphor; indeed there are numerous others, such as the Leviathan, with the state as a synthetic person—an "Artificiall Man" or a "Mortall God" (Hobbes 2009 [1651], Introduction and Chapter XVII)—and, perhaps most prominently, the ship of state, with the ruler as a captain who steers a vessel through treacherous waters (Plato 2000 [*c*380 BC], Book VI). But the metaphor of the political

system as a building or a city seems more appropriate for a modern, pluralistic, changing society. The normative problem with the ship-of-state metaphor, in my view, is the notion that the state is going somewhere, as if on a pilgrimage or voyage of discovery. The normative problem with the state-as-person metaphor is that political society isn't a single, corporate organism; it is made up of numerous and diverse people, or peoples.

The origins of the very word "politics" are architectural, for the Greek politika derives from the word for city, *polis*, a root that is shared by words such as "policy," "polity," and "police." As noted by Deutsch (1970), the word "government," by contrast, derives from the Greek *kubernan*, which means "to steer or pilot a ship." In other words, whereas the word "politics" is associated with the concept of a city (and, grammatically, with a noun), the word "government" is associated with the ship-of-state metaphor and its very different historical and normative connotations (and, grammatically, with a verb).

Architectural metaphors for states and political systems seem to have been especially common in the eighteenth century. The reason, most likely, is that there's a natural affinity between architectural metaphors and the constitutionalist idea that political society should be governed by rules and laws that are constructed deliberately.[7] Here, for example, is James Madison, arguing in Federalist 38 that it would be unreasonable for Americans to hold on to the older Articles of Confederation just because the new United States Constitution had some faults of its own:

> No man would refuse to quit a shattered and tottering habitation for a firm and commodious building, because the latter had not a porch to it, or because some of the rooms might be a little larger or smaller, or the ceilings a little higher or lower than his fancy would have planned them. (Hamilton, Madison, and Jay 2003 [1787–1788], 38)

A few years earlier, Kant had used another building metaphor in his essay "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose" (1991 [1784]). According to Kant, the problem of how to design a "lawful civic constitution" is "the most difficult and the last to be solved by mankind," and he explained why in this famous passage:

> This task is therefore the hardest of all; indeed, its complete solution is impossible, for from such crooked wood as man is made of, nothing perfectly straight can be built.

I will come back to Kant's essay in the next section. But first, let's consider a few other examples of building metaphors in political thought. Two decades before Kant, Rousseau used one such metaphor in *The Social Contract* (1762, Book II, Chapter 8), when describing the ideal legislator:

> Before putting up a large building, the architect surveys and tests the ground to see if it can support the weight; and in the same way the wise legislator doesn't start by laying down his good laws but by investigating whether the populace they are intended for is in a condition to receive them.[8]

And toward the end of the eighteenth century, Burke used several building metaphors in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), notably in his defense of the English constitution (355):

> I wish my countrymen rather to recommend to our neighbors the example of the British constitution than to take models from them for the improvement of our own. ...I would not exclude alteration neither, but even when I changed, it should be to preserve. ...In what I did, I should follow the example of our ancestors. I would make the reparation as nearly as possible in the style of the building.[9]

There are nineteeenth-century examples too. As is well-known, Karl Marx used a building metaphor to describe the political system, although he something a little different in mind:

> The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. (Marx 1977[1859])

And then there's this famous quote, from a speech Abraham Lincoln gave in Illinois in 1858:

> A house divided against itself, cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other. (Lincoln and Douglas 1860, 1)

III Architecture and the Ends of Political Science

One of the main implications of the political-science-as-architecture analogy is that political science is—and must be—both normative and empirical. Political scientists study institutional structures, architects study physical structures, but both political scientists and architects wish to understand how to build a world in which humans can live together. Solving that problem requires both normative ideas and empirical knowledge. As a discipline, therefore, political science cannot be value-free, even if individual research programs within the discipline can be. As Gerring and Yesnowitz (2006) put it, "If political science is to matter to policymakers or citizens, as most political scientists believe it should, authors must be clear about how their subject ties into some broader telos that others might share."

But the political-science-as-architecture analogy also suggests that political science cannot be idealistic, for the construction of institutions and political systems is a practical matter, just as the construction of building and cities. Normative thinking within political science needs to be tempered by the realism that comes with empirical knowledge of real-world political systems.

Let us return to one of the classics of political thought that I discussed in the previous section: Kant's "Idea for a Universal History." In that essay, Kant wrote that the greatest problem mankind has ever faced and will ever face is "the achievement of a universal civic society which administers law among men." According to Kant, the basic force in human history is mankind's "unsocial sociability": our "propensity to enter into society, bound together with a mutual opposition which constantly threatens to break up the society" (Kant 1991 [1784], fourth thesis). The solution to this problem, Kant wrote, is a "lawful civic constitution," and the problem of how to design such a constitution is "the most difficult and the last to be solved by mankind." In Kant's view, then, the main purpose of political institutions is to help humans live together, even if they have competitive instincts that drive them apart.

It is no coincidence, I think, that Kant used the building metaphor of "crooked wood" in his discussion of this problem in "Idea for a Universal History." But what's perhaps even more interesting is Kant's next observation, which is that solving the problem of how to design a lawful constitution requires several different types of knowledge.

> That it is the last problem to be solved follows also from this: it requires that there be a correct conception of a possible constitution, great experience

> gained in many paths of life, and—far beyond these—a good will ready to accept such a constitution.

In contemporary terms, solving the problem of how to design a lawful constitution requires an understanding of both normative ideas ("a correct conception" and "good will") and of empirical facts ("great experience gained in many paths of life").

Architects have long known that the design and construction of a building or a city involves many different types of considerations. Most famously, as I discussed in the introduction, the Roman architect Vitruvius argued two thousand years ago that a good building is characterized by three values: *firmitas* (strength), *utilitas* (utility), and *venustas* (beauty). As I noted, that is also a pretty good summary of what we want from a constitution: we want it to be robust; we want it to be useful to those who live under it; but we also want it to reflect our values and our best aspirations—to be, in that sense, "beautiful." If we accept Vitruvius's view, and if we assume that the purpose of political science is to say when political systems are fit for human habitation, it follows that political scientists need to answer several different types of questions to do their job well. The question of what makes a constitution "robust" can and should be studied with empirical methods—just as it is possible to study empirically what makes beams and walls and other building elements robust. The question of what makes a constitution "useful" to those who live under it can perhaps also be answered empirically, but it is likely to also require an investigation into normative problems (useful for what and for whom?). But the question of what makes a constitution "beautiful" is quite clearly a normative one.

The political-science-as-architecture analogy doesn't only suggest that both facts and values matter, however; it also suggests that as a discipline, political science cannot responsibly separate one from the other. Vitruvius's point in *On Architecture* was not merely that strength, utility, and beauty matter, but that they're mutually dependent: for example, a building's strength matters little if it isn't useful and beautiful, but a building's beauty matters little if it isn't robust and useful. Similarly, we want more from a political system than mere resilience—realism without ideals leads to cynicism—but a constitution that reflects high ideals but cannot be sustained and doesn't work in practice isn't just useless, but also dangerous. As Mark Lilla (2001) argues in *The Reckless Mind*, there is something deeply irresponsible about forms of political thought that don't take into account the realities of politics.

Political science is an alliance of those who study politics as it is, those who study politics as it should be, and those who do both. That alliance is

sometimes seen as an uneasy one, but the political-science-as-architecture analogy suggests that it's a defining quality of the discipline.

IV Architecture and the Means of Political Science

The political-science-as-architecture analogy does not only tell us something about the subject matter of political science and the sorts of questions political scientists should ask. It also suggests how we might think about the nature of political inquiry and the methods that political scientists use, and should use. In other words, the political-science-as-architecture analogy can help to clarify our thinking about the relationships among different methodological approaches within the discipline. One of the defining characteristics of architecture is that it combines art and science (with the term "art" being used in the sense of "skills acquired through experience," not only in the sense of producing aesthetic objects). That goes for political science too. Some of the questions political scientists ask are possible to answer using methods that allow for reasonably precise measurement and reasonably precise statistical estimates, using what are commonly known as quantitative methods. But other equally important questions are not possible to answer in this way, which means that they require the use of methods that are commonly known as qualitative.[10]

To see how the analogy works, consider the different types of questions architects need to answer when they design buildings. Some of the questions they confront require quantitative methods that involve precise measurements and some combination of experiments and statistical analyses of observational data. Think, for instance, of questions about the strength of a building's construction materials, the flow of air through its ventilation systems, or the energy needed to power its heating apparatus. Knowledge of these applied-science problems is essential for any architect. Similarly, many of the questions that political scientists must answer are best answered using hard-science approaches. Returning, once more, to the essay by Kant that I discussed in the previous sections, when Kant wrote of the "great experience gained in many paths of life" that is required to build a political society from the crooked wood of humanity, scholars of politics had only begun to use statistics and statistical methods (indeed the term statistics originated in eighteenth-century statecraft). Today, it is clear that experiments and statistical analyses of observational data have become essential tools in the social sciences. Think of the effects of the electoral system, one of the main

building elements in any democratic constitution. It is difficult to see how one could begin to understand those effects if one ignores the findings from statistical analyses of the rich data that are available on party-system change and individual-level electoral behavior under different electoral systems.

But just as architects need other, less technical forms of knowledge to do their work well—designing a building is not *only* an engineering problem—so do political scientists. Put differently, the questions that hard-science methods can answer are but elements in a larger set of questions that scholars of politics must answer. This comparison, incidentally, is why the term "constitutional engineering" seems ill-chosen to me (Sartori 1997), for designing a constitution can never be treated as an optimization problem (see especially Elster 1987). "Constitutional architecture" is a better term. Only a foolish architect would ignore the knowledge offered by engineers who can calculate precisely the strength of frames and beams, just as it would be foolish for a political scientist to ignore the "great experience" that has been gained through systematic empirical research on politics (or, indeed, the "conceptions" of "possible constitutions" that one can derive from formal models of institutions). But an architect who *only* paid attention to engineering problems—and not to the needs and desires of those who would actually use the building, or to the building's appearance and style—would be equally foolish.

From this vantage point, many disciplinary debates in political science, such as the ongoing debates concerning quantitative and qualitative approaches to the study of politics, seem irrelevant or at least overblown. If political science is anything like architecture, as I think it is, political scientists need many different forms of knowledge to do their job well. The critical question, in my view, isn't whether both quantitative and qualitative methods belong in political science—they clearly do—but how those methods should be *combined*, for the recognition that many different types of methods are needed doesn't mean that anything goes.

The political-science-as-architecture analogy is helpful in at least two ways when thinking through this important question. First, the analogy emphasizes that fitting methods to research questions is a concrete, practical problem, and not an abstract, theoretical one: ultimately, it is a question of how political science best realizes the promise of guiding the design and construction of political institutions and systems. Second, the analogy emphasizes the risks of excessive methodological specialization. Since the problems political scientists ultimately want to understand cannot be solved using one type of method only, it is essential that we are able to understand and engage with scholarly work that relies on many different types of methods.

V Architecture and the Uses of Political Science

Throughout history, knowledge of architecture has been used for both good and evil. So has knowledge of political systems and institutions. In addition to helping us to think through the ends and means of political science, the political-science-as-architecture analogy can help us think more precisely about the uses and misuses of political-science knowledge. To be more specific, the analogy can help us identify the temptations that political scientists may face when it comes to applying their knowledge to real-world political problems, for it suggests that political scientists are most likely to do evil when they are tempted to help the powerful stay in power—or control other people's lives—rather than helping everyone live well together. Political scientists should not whisper in the prince's ear how he might govern: we should address all our fellow citizens, not only men and women in power.

One does not need to turn to extreme authoritarian examples such as Adolf Hitler's architect Albert Speer to see how architects and urban planners have put their skills to use for sinister political ends. Consider, for instance, the role the Prefect of the Department of Seine, Georges-Eugène Haussmann, played in Second-Empire France in the 1850s and 1860s. Haussmann was commissioned by the French Emperor Napoleon III to put in place a program for urban renewal in Paris, a program that changed the entire layout of the French capital. Among other things, the restructuring of Paris made room for the great boulevards that define and dominate the modern city. One of the main objectives of Haussmann's program was to facilitate political repression. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the narrow streets and alleys of old Paris had been used effectively by revolutionaries and rebels in several uprisings. Haussmann's new, wide boulevards allowed the military to deploy large numbers of troups throughout Paris and to use its manpower and technology to defeat rebellions and urban unrest—which is what in fact happened when the Paris Commune was defeated in the spring of 1871 and ended in enourmous bloodshed (Merriman 2014). Haussmann's project had other objectives as well, including improved public health and more efficient transport—but that only makes the example more interesting, for in political reform, as in urban renewal, noble motives are often mixed with sinister ones.

Another, more recent example is the remaking of modern New York in the middle of the twentieth century. In his biography of the great city planner Robert Moses—who incidentally had a doctorate in political science from Columbia (Moses 1914)—Robert Caro (1974) documents the numerous ways in which urban design and architecture served the interests of New York's

powerful and were used to silence, remove, or keep out the powerless when New York's and New York State's transport infrastructures, housing projects, and recreational areas were constructed between the 1920s and the 1960s. One striking example is the construction of access roads and other facilities for the Long Island beaches, which discouraged the use of the beaches by poorer New York City residents.

It isn't hard to come up with examples of how political scientists may be tempted to use their knowledge to serve the powerful, as Haussmann and Moses did. The knowledge of how to draw electoral boundaries to increase the likelihood that the incumbent party wins elections in a country with first-past-the-post single-member districts comes to mind. So does the knowledge of how to regulate political communication to help a governing political party hold on to power. Using our knowledge to benefit the powerful often comes with financial benefits and personal prestige. That temptation is more easily resisted, and our integrity more easily preserved, if we think of political science as having a purpose that goes beyond general curiosity and skill. The political-science-as-architecture analogy suggests what that purpose might be: it is to help people live together in societies, and not to help princes rule the state.

VI Conclusions

When I was young, I didn't worry much about the purpose of political science; it just seemed like a scholarly field among others where one could do interesting work on important topics. As I grow older, I find myself thinking more about what political science is, what it's for, and why it's worthwhile. In this paper, I have tried to answer those questions through analogical reasoning: by comparing political science to the discipline of architecture. I have argued that the political-science-as-architecture analogy has important implications for the ends, means, and uses of political science.

This paper's discussion of the political-science-as-architecture analogy is related to an ongoing discussion about the ends, means, and uses of economics, which is the scholarly discipline that is most closely related to ours. Interestingly, there are several examples from the last couple of decades of leading economists who have compared their own discipline with disciplines—or rather activities—that are themselves closely related with architecture. I am thinking in particular of Esther Duflo's recent argument that economists are best thought of as plumbers, which is itself a response to Alvin

Roth's argument that the role of economists is comparable with that of an engineer (2002; see also Mankiw 2006 on "the macroeconomist as scientist and engineer"). For Roth, the key point of the economics-as-engineering analogy is that the task of designing markets comes with a "responsibility for detail" (1342), which means that economists need to go beyond microeconomic theory and add computational and experimental methods to their toolboxes. In Duflo's view, modern economics is an even more hands-on, practical discipline:

> The economist-plumber stands on the shoulder of scientists and engineers, but does not have the safety net of a bounded set of assumptions. She is more concerned about 'how' to do things than about 'what' to do. In the pursuit of good implementation of public policy, she is willing to tinker. Field experimentation is her tool of choice. (Duflo 2017, 3)

Like the discussion of the political-science-as-architecture analogy in this paper, both the economist-as-engineer analogy and the economist-as-plumber analogy start with the subject matter and purpose of economics as a discipline and then draw lessons concerning how research questions should be asked, how methods should be asked, and how economic knowledge should be put to use.

It is striking that Roth and Duflo compare economics to two intellectual and practical endeavors that are themselves closely related to architecture, the intellectual and practical pursuit to which political science is compared in this essay. If these analogies are apt—as I think they are—they suggest a division of labor between political science and its sister discipline economics that fits well with Fritz Scharpf's discussion of the relationship between political science and economics in his book *Games Real Actors Play* (1997). For Scharpf, the distinction between political science and economics is that economics studies the effects of policies (how policies result in intended and non-intended outcomes), whereas political science studies the context in which policies come about in the first place (how policies are made).

The idea that political science can be seen as a form of societal architecture is ambitious in one way and unambitious in another. It is ambitious since it asks of political scientists that we integrate art and science and combine insights and ideas from different intellectual traditions into a vision of how political systems and institutions can and ought to be organized. But it is at the samt time an unambitious idea, for good architects prioritize those who would dwell, work, or convene in the buildings and cities they design over their own ideals and goals. The job of an architect is not to realize some grand plan for how other people should live their lives; it is to help people ensure that the

structures in which they live their lives are robust, useful, and beautiful. In a democratic, pluralistic society, the construction of the institutional structures in which we all live together must be a joint endeavor; it is not something that can be left to experts or elites.[11]

Is contemporary political science approaching the ideal that the politicalscience-as-architecture analogy represents? I worry that the answer is no. The main reason for my pessimism is the increasing fragmentation of the discipline (the American Political Science Association currently has forty-seven sections). It follows from the arguments in this essay that for political science to live up to its promise, what's required is an integration of different forms of knowledge, not fragmentation. The political-science-as-architecture analogy suggests that conceptual and methodological pluralism are virtues, not vices—so diversity of research questions and methods are good things—but it also suggests that political science would be a more successful academic discipline if we agreed, at least tentatively, on what political science is for and how different types of research might contribute to that end: conceiving of institutional structures that allow humans to live together in societies.

Notes

[1]The term architecture is also often used in a figurative or transferred sense, to describe things that are not buildings or other man-made physical structures such as cities; for example, the term is often applied to both the hardware and the software of computers and systems of computers.

[2]The word "forum" is another example: political scientists often use that word in an abstract sense, but for the Romans, a forum was a combined marketplace and town square. There are important literatures on parliaments and other places of power in both architecture and political science. See, for example, Dovey's well-known studies of the "mediation of power in built form" (Dovey 1999) and the discussion of parliament buildings in Manow (2010).

[3]Two influential political-science books that come to mind are Katznelson (1981) on the United States and Le Gal`es (2002) on Europe.

[4]See, for example, Nall (2018), which argues that the American political landscape was reshaped by the movement of the white middle- and uppermiddle classes to the suburbs, and Baum-Snow (2007), which, like Nall (2018), emphasizes the relationship between the Interstate Highway System and the growth of suburbs in the United States.

[5]Habermas (1987 [1985], Chapter 12) notes that human practice extends in social space and historical time.

[6]On Hippodamus's political thought, see Hogan (1959).

[7]Classical philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle were more interested in actual architecture and actual city planning, as opposed to treating buildings and cities as metaphors See, for example, the discussion of city planning in Book V of Plato's Laws (2016 [c360 BC]) and Book 7, Part IX of Aristotle's Politics (1885 [c350 BC]). For an early Renaissance example of how a city was used as a methaphor for the political system, consider Ambrogio Lorenzetti's fourteenth-century frescoes "Good and Bad Government" in Siena's Palazzo Pubblico, where the Good City becomes an allegory of good government and the Bad City becomes an allegory of bad government (Skinner 2002, Chapter 3). When studying Lorenzetti's frescoes with these allegories in mind, one notices the ongoing construction work in the Good City, where buildings and structures and repaired and extended, and the decay and rot that corrupt the Bad City.

[8]"Comme avant d'´elever un grand ´edifice l'architecte observe & sonde le sol, pour voir s'il en peut soutenir le poids, le sage instituteur ne commence pas par r´ediger de bonnes loix elles-mˆemes, mais il examine auparavant si le peuple auquel il les destine est propre `a les supporter."

[9]One doesn't have to be a conservative to appreciate the idea that a political reformer must always pay attention to the history of the structure he or she is trying to reform. Wittgenstein's famous architectural metaphor of how language has emerged applies equally well to the problem of how constitutions, governments, and political systems have emerged:

> Our language can be seen as an ancient city: a maze of little streets and squares, of old and new houses, and of houses with additions from various periods; and this surrounded by a multitude of new boroughs with straight regular streets and uniform houses.

The political-science-as-architecture analogy suggests that political science, and political thought in general, requires an understanding of the historical processes through which contemporary political systems emerged.

[10]In fact, since political science is both art and science, it would perhaps be best to call it something else. My own preference would be "Politics." Note that the term "Architecture" refers both to an academic discipline and to that which it studies—as in the sentence "this building is a good example of Baroque architecture"—just as "Politics" does for political science.

[11]As the Swedish poet-bureaucrat Ragnar Thoursie put it in his poem *Sundbybergsprologen* some seventy years ago (Thoursie 1952, 81–84),

En öppen stad, ej en befästad, bygger vi gemensamt.
Dess ljus slår upp mot rymdens
ensamhet.

Loosely translated into English, this reads,

An open city, not a fortified one, we'll build together.
Its light flares up toward
towards the loneliness of space.

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