





PREFACE

What you are holding in your hands is a manual dedicated to cyclopean masonry. That is all. We can't have you getting lost in temporal translation—you play a central role in disseminating this ancient knowledge. So before we begin, we want to clarify a few things, and share some prerequisite thoughts. First, some notes on cannibalism. Then, our thoughts on manuals and dissemination of knowledge. We conclude with an introduction to the structure of this book. Take your time, don't rush. There's a lot to digest.

ON CANNIBALISM

We've chosen the polemical term "cannibalism" to frame our project as both verb and noun. By cannibalism, we do not refer to the common use of cannibal as human consuming human. Instead, we refer to inanimate matter consuming itself, or its own likeness. We refer to an aggressive, in situ

upcycling. Not a blasé recycling, nor simply a material adaptation. Our intent is not to romanticize barbarity, but distill its materiality. What does cannibalism mean as an act of architecture? Is it an architectural predator versus prey binary? Is it intrinsically violent, destructive? Can it be a sustainable, careful reconfiguration of the hostile?

We propose to cannibalize rubble to produce a future architecture. This manual does not reference the practice of human cannibalism, but rather, appropriates the term cannibalism as a proposed, architectural mindset. The content of this manual modifies the semantics of cannibalism. It overlays the term cannibalism to refer to a more cognizant,



Cyclopean: *adj.* "(1) often capitalized: of, relating to, or characteristic of a Cyclops; (2) huge, massive; (3) of or relating to a style of stone construction marked typically by the use of large irregular blocks without mortar"

Cannibalism: *n.* "(1) the usually ritualistic eating of human flesh by a human being; (2) the eating of the other flesh of an animal by another animal of the same kind; (3) an act of cannibalizing something"

Cyclopean Cannibalism: construction technique consisting of the re-appropriation of pre-existing building stock for the assembly of "new" buildings // harnesses robotics to site, scan, and minimally carve stock to reconstruct architecture at a full scale



FIG 1.1 Concrete Rubble (Peter Kaminski)

in-situ mode of recycling. This manual deploys architectural cannibalism as a reconfigured materiality.

Our initial work on the subject began with a peripheral interest in Oswald de Andrade's *Manifesto Antropófago*¹ (Cannibalist Manifesto) of 1928. Andrade's seminal text argued for a cultural liberation of Brazilian artistic production, premised on its long history of "cannibalizing" European works. It was a visceral,



FIG 1.2 Figure from *Manifesto Antropófago*

post-colonial counter to European cultural dominance. Purported tribal "rites" are a combative tool against cultural destruction.

In this sense, we deploy de Andrade's antropofagia, or cultural cannibalization, as a method for architectural thinking and making. Our cannibalism combats exploitative and wasteful architecture. It challenges the current construction framework in the North American, urban context. It eats old architecture, unwanted and unusable building waste. From material likeness consuming likeness, we hope to devour the paradigm of wasteful dominance.

ON COOKBOOKS

With the topic of construction waste established, we needed a final deliverable. A means of disseminating our accumulated knowledge. Certain cookbook-manuals came to mind. In 1971, William Powell published the *Anarchist Cookbook*². That same year, Ant Farm released their *Inflatocookbook*³. Both texts offered empowerment through accumulated, documented, and shared knowledge. They insisted on freedom through instruction. Of course, the texts deviate in message. But their intent is clear. The contents of both texts—their

1. Oswald de Andrade, *Manifesto Antropófago* (Cannibalist Manifesto), 1928.
2. William Powell, *The Anarchist Cookbook*. New York: Stuart, 1971.
3. Ant Farm, *Inflatocookbook*. Cambridge, MA: Ant Corps, 1971.

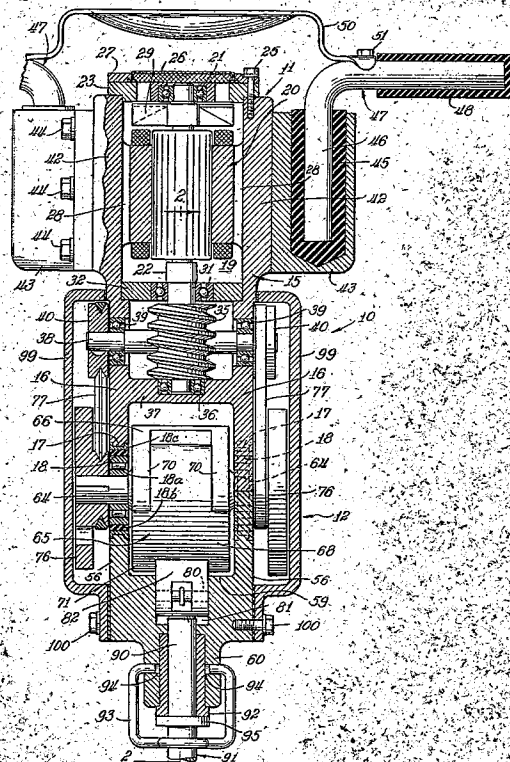


FIG 1.3 Demolition Hammer, US Patent:
2,778,335, Russel G. Bourbon, (1957)

accumulated, curated sets of knowledge—exist for the reader, to be deployed by the reader.

We choose to follow in these footsteps. This is our manual, for you and to be deployed by you. It is a revival of megalithic stone works, to confront our construction waste. The manual is also our manifesto. The way in which we construct buildings today is more anachronistic than the ancient techniques we propose. Materials are sourced from all over the globe and shipped to construction sites. Even recycled materials are shipped away to be processed. Almost nothing is sourced in situ, from previous buildings. So this manual is not just documentation and how-to, but also a means of convincing you, reader, to re-assess how we conceive of design and how we build.

The current mode of designing and subsequent construction is not working. So we turn back the clock, for a multi-temporal revival. We unearth the original mascot of grand stone cannibalism—Cyclops. We invite the Cyclops family members to help us share this knowledge. We blend fiction with fact, merging myths of the past with techniques of the future. We merge our own fictions with oral histories. In this way, we re-convey information that the careful archeologists have discovered, but intuit our own (coupled with computational tools, in some cases). This is a handbook based on a lost poem that no one remembers the precise stanzas to. We

THE CANNIBAL'S COOKBOOK

large-scale masonry construction. Our focus centers on the Inka. We then catalog debris materials, offer constructional frameworks for varied contexts, and include the tools—both digitized and analog—utilized to achieve these structures. The rest of the translation work we leave for you and your new body of knowledge.



PREFACE

WARNING!

THE TEXT YOU ARE ABOUT TO READ
MAY OR MAY NOT BE TRUE.

This manual is, in some parts, entirely a work of fiction. While it draws from established techniques and myth, it intentionally blends the two. We do not distinguish between these two divergent elements. Some of the material in this book is true, and corroborated with citations, etc. Some is rooted in oral history and our own musings of the past. Do not take us at our word. This manual is meant for your own deciphering. We intend for this academically "disrespectful" merging of fact and fiction to cultivate a new architectural approach to recycled materials and design.

The Cannibalist Manifesto



A concrete chokehold grips fighter around our necks. Another concrete giant rises from the ground, just as another is sentenced to death. The city grows upwards with intrepid velocity. It stops at nothing to grow more, make new, eradicate old. We're wheezing to catch our breaths, just to catch up with this growth.

The masonry techniques of our ancestors have been lobotomized from our constructional memory; we are fighting to remember this craft. But as each new building emerges, our

memories of the past slowly dissolve. Our concrete, glass, and steel super structures supplant bespoke stonework. And as our cities grow, our constructional heritage is further distanced from our consciousness.

But where do these super structures go, as they are torn down, rebuilt, torn down, again and again? After their executions, what do we do with their remains? We've studied what remains of our stonework heritage, but the architectural assassins combat our investigations. They keep us on a strict agenda of newness and immediacy. They tell us that there is no time for deliberate craftsmanship, no room for ancient agency in these juvenile cities. So we continue rebuilding,

tearing down, rebuilding. Again and again. We are disturbed by this expediency. We are appalled by the lack of questioning. This is a declaration of methodology and intent.

This is a call to arms for a cyclopean revival; a plea for innovative urbanisms with old materials. A revulsion of what has transpired in the recent history of our cities. A cry for fresh buildings from antiquated structures. We must witness architecture rise from its own ashes. We demand immediate reincarnation! We demand a front row seat to watch the city burn.

We are for a situational architecture. One that is utterly non-deterministic, malleable. An

architecture that is confronted with possibility, and the immediacy of formal response. We need architecture that flexes and slackens, that responds to what is right in front of it.

We demand slow food, an architecture that materializes out of localized sluggishness. Architectural novocain. A building system of situational immediacy, interested only in surgically reformulating the present. A localized allegiance to the reuse of the decrepit. An architecture of here-ness.

This system that we thirst for is a living organism. It is breathing, just like the very cities we inhabit. But it obliterates the current practice we adhere

to, the one that ignores the cyclicity of living in exchange for ceaseless newness.

But we don't want new, now. We want a system that acknowledges the realities of now.

Our current urbanism screams

NEW NEW NEW.

We scream back

NOW NOW NOW.

Our cities live in a permanent concrete hangover. They binge. They inhale behemoth quantities of concrete and steel. They purge. They eliminate any structures that stand in their way. The regurgitated structures,

remnants of the hangover, make their way to rural landfills. Vast tracts of peripheral, rural lands are engorged with concrete city vomit.

Something more nefarious is driving this slow-paced self-destruction, but we haven't paused to ask what and why. We're too busy trying to get another drink at the crowded bar.

The drinking stops now. We can't sustain this lifestyle. We're driving at top speed to the end of a cliff. But we can't just slam on the brakes.

We propose slowness. Awareness. Intent. Deliberate here-ness, now.

This is a return to craft and method. To heaviness. To non-standardization. Fuck the masses, fuck expediency. This is about methodically dealing with the architectural disaster we've concocted for ourselves.

We start by looking around and ingesting what already surrounds us. We stop stuffing ourselves with the new, and start cannibalizing the old. Our system begins by consuming unwanted building garbage. We will dumpster dive to make a future, superior architecture. Because in the future, one building's trash is another building's architecture. We're trying to reverse the damage we've done. We intend to build with rubble. This pursuit for cannibalized

material applications begins in the trash heaps of our ancestors. We look to Greek, Rapanui, Roman, Egyptian, Inkan, and other cyclopean masonry cultures.

Where did we get so lost in translation along the way? Why has it taken us so long to remember this lineage?

The dogmas of constructional past—truth in structure and materiality—were wiped clean from our architectural lineage. The mechanization of the Industrial Revolution should have advanced these techniques. Instead, they were left in history's own landfill of forgotten knowledge. Today our buildings are a farce, a visual sham.

The poché wall is hollow. The thick column is a steel beam encased in a plastic shell. The system repeats itself as such—an utter deception that grows and grows. We have no patience for these architectural Ponzi schemes—just look what they've done to our crisis.

These pillars of constructional faith are the Brutus to our Caesarian cities. They've duped us, left us to bleed out until we have nothing left to build with. But we've found a suture to remedy this architectural knife wound. Let's face the facts—truth through industrialism was a disaster. So we're turning our backs on this reality. It hasn't offered us much recently. We're dusting off the ideologies, the radical

mythologies of our ancestors. Just like their construction techniques. Our remedy is mythological masonry—cyclopean masonry.

We offer freedom through unearthed knowledge of the past. Freedom through an unexpected, but powerful, pairing—Cyclopean Cannibalism. Bespoke masonry derived from the remains of other structures. We're interested in autonomy from monetary and material restrictions. This is liberation through flexibility, freedom through information.

This is an ode to the burning city, a toast to the decrepit architectures loathed by the masses. We await their leveling. We offer them

cannibalistic rebirth, a rubble renaissance. Your legacy persists, dear Cyclops.

