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Introduction: Shifting Paradigms and Concerns

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Architecture houses and holds human beings in an intimate way, enframing them in a manner not unlike clothing (although admittedly less intimately). It thereby mediates between people and their wider environment, providing a membrane that protects bodies from intruders and climatic incursions such as rain or cold. It also gives them a symbolic presence, at once internal and in terms of the outside world, in which variations can have radically divergent effects on individual psyches. No single person controls this complex mediation; it involves ongoing negotiations about social, cultural, economic and political matters. This is how architecture is intertwined with articulations of power and difference. Power is relevant when discussing the privileged role of the architect, but also when analysing presumptions about the individual and the public, including the client, or when investigating the social and environmental impact of buildings. Architectural and urban spaces can sustain, question or modify political and social structures of power. Spatial patterns interact with existing cultural constructions of gender, class, race, geography and status, usually upholding established hierarchies with exciting new imagery, sometimes defying those norms. This introductory chapter explores how such issues have given rise to consecutive and overlapping strands of theoretical explorations. By doing so it frames and positions the next three chapters, which analyse some of these issues in greater depth.

Theories about architecture entail self-conscious analyses about underlying systems, influences, intentions, conditions and changes over time. If Western theories have evolved and altered considerably since antiquity, the pace and passions of change during the second half of the twentieth century seem unprecedented. Moreover, whereas the centre of gravity in earlier periods was clearly Europe, American voices have become more prominent (Mallgrave 2005; Mallgrave and Contandrioupolos 2008). The intellectual horizons of architectural theory have also shifted. If in the decades before 1970 practising architects, focusing on aesthetics, set the tone (Ockman 1993), since then the advent of post-structuralist literary theory and the emancipatory goals of political/social radicalism brought in other voices with concerns that were quite distinct from design processes as such. These new influences altered many fundamental conceptions about architecture and its effects. Some people have criticized this intellectual stance as too distant and abstract, too far removed from the actual practices of designing and

using buildings. Nonetheless, this more intellectualized mode has reset the tone of architectural debate that emanates from publications, conferences and courses (Nesbitt 1996; Hays 1998). The intensity and the very nature of the issues have opened new directions in the last decades of the twentieth century, resulting in a fluid and diverse field of multiple, sometimes incommensurable theories.

The new theorists looked beyond the themes of individual originality, harmonious composition and phenomenological resonance which had up until the 1960s defined architectural discourse. Concurrently, the figure of the theorist became increasingly detached from the practising architect, and architectural theory evolved into a full-fledged, full-time academic discipline. The shift began in the 1970s when neo-marxism provided a widespread critical perspective. Authors such as Alexander Tzonis (1972) and Manfredo Tafuri (1976) introduced a theoretical framework that confronted the link between architectural developments and their socio-political context. They questioned whether an architect's good intentions indeed translated into socio-political benefits, given that the demands of capitalism played a significant role in architecture's history – and its present (see also Aureli 2008).

Michel Foucault, especially in his writings on the hospital (1973) and the prison (1977), provided the next major influence, taken up by Tafuri in his later years and taken to heart by a whole series of architectural scholars in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Foucault explained how expert knowledge affects the social workings of power, and thus how certain architectural configurations (such as the famous panopticon) can play a role in disciplining people's minds and bodies. He opened the way for a series of studies that investigated how diverse buildings and social patterns interact. Most architectural theorists believed that spatial configurations could embody and reinforce human attitudes and interactions, albeit with diverse interpretations of the specific role. Whereas Foucault himself insisted that no architectural form could be inherently oppressive or liberating, since human actions were the critical factor (Wright 2005), not all his followers have taken this point to heart.

Post-structuralism, which challenged prevailing concepts of inherent qualities or simple binary relationships, flourished in Paris from the late 1960s onwards, with, next to Foucault, writers such as Julia Kristeva, Jean-François Lyotard, Roland Barthes and Jean Baudrillard. Deconstructive philosophy, based on the writings of Jacques Derrida, soon formed one particular strand that emphasized the instability and defensive self-regard in all forms of language. Architectural theory absorbed these influences and applied them to visual languages. This absorption occurred with a bit of a time delay, since literary theory and criticism mediated the impact of continental French theory, especially on the American intellectual scene (see Bloom 1979). At first it seemed as if semiotics, the study of languages as systems of signs, would reinvigorate architectural theory at the wane of modernism. Charles Jencks and George Baird (1969) explored the concept of meaning in architecture, followed by other authors who tried to develop more systematic reflections on how architecture worked as a medium of communication (Eco 1972, Norberg-Schulz 1975).

Miscommunication was a major theme in the critiques of technocracy and top-down planning during these same years. The semiotic focus soon tied in with a criticism of the theoretical foundations of architectural modernism, leading Jencks to announce the 'Death of Modernism' – and hence the arrival of postmodernism (Jencks 1977). Architectural postmodernism was not fully in line with postmodern philosophy as described by Lyotard, since it relied upon a teleological understanding of architecture's course, putting postmodernism chronologically 'after' modernism which was at odds with how Lyotard saw the relationship between both paradigms (Lyotard 1992).

It shared nevertheless with philosophical postmodernism a suspicion of presumptions about rationality and transparency. It became increasingly difficult to simply presume these were stable guiding principles in architecture (as they had seemed to be within the Modern Movement). Architects now had to confront the power relations inherent in all such language systems.

Post-structuralism, postmodernism and deconstruction thus taught architectural theorists to question the logocentrism that is entrenched in Western thinking. The Purism, essentialism and universalism that had dominated modernist architectural discourse for the better part of the twentieth century gave way to hybridity, constructionism and relativism. Feminist and postcolonial theories appropriated these concepts and gave them a more direct and activist meaning, emphasizing how difference is embodied and thereby used to separate people according to gender, class and ethnicity. A growing literature on architecture and gender raised fundamental questions about the literal and symbolic embodiment of architectural values and biases. Postcolonial critiques highlighted themes of difference in architecture's geographical and cultural hierarchies – both cultural differences to respect and inequalities to expose.

These volatile forces have constituted the most visible currents in architectural theory in the past few decades. Although they are by no means the only viable way to 'do' architectural theory – as will become clear in the other sections of this volume – they constitute pertinent challenges for architecture and architects. Hence we begin this volume with an extensive discussion of recent paradigms and concerns related to issues of power, difference and embodiment.

ARCHITECTURE AND POWER

Contemporary architectural theories often emphasize how buildings and physical settings reveal, accentuate or challenge various structures of power that are otherwise difficult to discern. This extends from a global realm of economies, ecologies and cultural dominance to the particularities of specific groups and even those of individual subjectivities. If the theoretical frameworks of neo-Marxism and post-structuralism first addressed the macro-scale of how societal relationships intersect with architectural movements and discourses, later approaches narrowed the scope to scrutinize specific building types or spatial configurations in circumscribed times and settings.

An early example of this highly focused work can be found in Reinhard Bentmann and Michael Müller's study of the villa, published in German in 1970 and translated only in 1992 as *The Villa as Hegemonic Architecture* (conspicuously without the chapter on the Israeli-kibbutz ideology). This Marxist study embedded the analysis of architectural sources (drawings, manuals, buildings) within a broader context that drew upon political, social and economic history, effectively showing how this building type has embodied particular power relationships that endure and others that change over time.

Thomas A. Markus undertook a similar enterprise two decades later in his *Buildings and Power* (1993), which focused on new building types developed between roughly 1750 and 1850, notably schools, prisons, public libraries, museums and factories. Rather than appropriating an overtly Marxist or Foucauldian theoretical framework, Markus used Bill Hillier and Julienne Hanson's space syntax (1984) as an overarching analytical instrument. Space syntax claims to be a specifically *architectural* theory, based on spatial/architectural parameters rather than importing philosophical or social theories from other disciplines. Its basic idea is that spatial configurations have an ordering impact on how social relationships unfold and that it is possible to unravel this connection by studying underlying spatial patterns, such as 'depth' (the number of

thresholds to cross before reaching the innermost space in a building) or 'axiality' (the presence of a long visual axis). The core users of space syntax – Hillier, Hanson and their students – have elaborated this model into computational software that is being applied in a variety of historical and geographical cases, albeit with mixed results. Space syntax tends to be used in an abstract, universalist way that does not take account of cultural or social differences among people. Authors such as Markus or Kim Dovey (1999) couple a basic version of the space syntax toolkit with other interpretational frameworks – social history, art history, social theory, hermeneutics – which allows them to deploy it without overly reductive effects.

These various studies have expanded the purview of architectural history and theory away from a few iconic monumental buildings towards a wide range of modest, indeed ordinary and commonly used structures. Few contemporary architectural scholars would agree with Nikolaus Pevsner's infamous dictum that 'a bicycle shed is a building, but Lincoln cathedral is a piece of architecture' (1957, 23). In traditional scholarship, as Markus correctly observed (1993, 26), researchers treated buildings as art, as material objects or as investments, but rarely as social objects. These earlier architectural historians tended to adopt methods and techniques from art history, relegating the study of technical or financial aspects to engineering and real estate. The emphasis on buildings as socially relevant objects, however, requires an interdisciplinary perspective, one that intertwines architectural analysis with methodologies developed in fields like anthropology, sociology, psychology or geography (Lawrence and Low 1990, 2003). Architectural theorists and historians have gradually integrated such parallels, becoming far more precise and refined in the process.

Social and cultural geographies have had a major impact, often emphasizing the effects of imperialism and colonialism on urban space. Brenda Yeoh's book on colonial Singapore (2000) has been influential in showing how British and Asian conceptions of the city contributed to and clashed with one another, a tension that has affected Singapore's present shape. Jane M. Jacobs' study on postcolonialism and the city revealed how different spatial interpretations lead to volatile social geometries of power, signification and contestation in every part of the world (1996).

Blank: Architecture, Apartheid and After (Judin and Vladislavic 1999) was one of the first books on architecture to fully integrate a broad-based social perspective into discussions about contemporary architecture without neglecting historical legacies. The very layout of the book juxtaposes diverse perspectives among South African architect-activists and theorists, some of whom lambast the spatial legacies of racism in cities and townships, while others explore alternative possibilities for reconciliation. In a similar manner, Eyal Weizman's *Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation* (2007) deftly interweaves military and political history, astute three-dimensional mapping, a deconstruction of archeological discourse and a wry disquisition on the Israeli military's appropriation of Situationist theories. Weizman uses the word 'architecture' in a double sense, indicating both the built structures that sustain the occupation (walls, bridges, tunnels, settlements, checkpoints and watchtowers) and a metaphor for the constructed nature of political issues.

To some extent the widened scope of what constitutes 'architecture' connects to a desire to side with or at least stand up for the powerless that first emerged in the 1970s. Initially united under the rubric of advocacy, some radical architects and planners had worked closely with impoverished and disempowered groups in American cities, rural areas and other sites throughout the world, such as 'informal' urban settlements (barrios, bidonvilles, favelas, etc.) in the fast-growing Third World cities. The ongoing interest in David Harvey, Manuel Castells and the legacy of John F.C. Turner reaffirms a vision of radical global changes through specific local interventions. Whereas these issues have had little play among the most visible theorists (e.g. in the so-called 'post-criticality' debate), they are nevertheless taken up by several more politically oriented authors.

Issues of citizens' rights have recently come to the fore, especially in terms of rights for the poor, the powerless and other marginalized groups in specific settings, both urban and rural. [See discussions in this section (Chapter 3) but also in Sections 5 (Chapter 24) and 8 (Chapter 38), as well as in Chapter 40 on housing.] Provocative recent debates have emphasized a spatial dimension to citizenship. In principle, a nation-state defines citizens as those people who are born in and or live within its borders – thus privileging a space-bounded view on citizenship. Yet the fluidity of globalization encompasses transnational movements of people and internal socio-economic disparities, both of which accentuate divergences from 'formal' and 'substantive' citizenship for those who seem to be 'outsiders'. Even long-time residents may not be able to claim the privileges that supposedly go along with that status (housing, social security, etc.). Demands for these rights in cities and rural areas have given rise to what Holston (1999) calls 'insurgent citizenship'. The inverse is also true in that wealthy foreign investors, producers and tourists often exercise considerable influence over the use, access and appearance of specific urban spaces, even when they are neither citizens nor residents.

All these explorations have brought *representation* to the fore. Key questions extend from visual modalities to the subjectivity of user responses and on to political metaphors. Section 5 will discuss the effects of computer drawings and models of future buildings. Here we are principally interested in representation as it relates to subjectivity and to political issues. Recent cognitive and psychological theorists, notably Jacques Lacan, relate representational images to conceptions of subjectivity. Reflecting on such propositions might lead us to emphasize the role of representational spaces in subject formation – arguing for example that girly bedrooms help construct female subjectivities or that master bedrooms support heterosexuality as the norm. Given these interrelations, how might we best think about the subject that creates and the subjects that inhabit a space? Do certain representational techniques tend to reinforce norms, generate alternatives and/or sustain other critiques?

The early dominance of psychoanalytic theory has now extended from inquiries about the architect's individual creativity and a supposedly collective response of the public – both of which have multiple and competing dimensions. Some theorists have questioned the interactions between architectural innovations and various understandings of domesticity (Heynen and Baydar 2005) or the impact of urban renewal on people's sense of home (Porteous and Smith 2001). Others have focused on incentives for daring innovation or the individual's role in the rapid succession of transformations in generic types like housing or infrastructure (Bell 2004; Varnelis 2008). Still others have asked how physical spaces affect concepts of gender and sexuality; race and ethnicity; or class and status (Rendell et al. 1999; Wilkins 2007; Zukin 2009). This leads in turn to questions about the avant-garde concept of *estrangement*, historically considered liberatory, and the parallel disdain for familiarity, which seemed an inevitable constraint. Some theorists are now pointing out that certain forms of familiarity might be a necessary base for innovations and comparisons, as is the case with laboratory experiments (Picon and Ponte 2003). Established patterns may reinforce 'traditional' expectations but they also allow a platform for exploring alternatives, even transgressions of established norms, as in the sciences or indeed in legislation. Recent interest in the work of Pierre Bourdieu has brought new subtleties to the debate about cultural capital and discrimination that is fundamental to architectural judgement. Bourdieu's notion of the *habitus* also aligns the structure of architectural settings with

that of more practical activities that effect the power of invention (Pinto 2002; Lipstadt 2003).

Many recent theorists continue to explore the political implications of representation in the sense of representative democracies, community participation and the hierarchy of architecture firms. The 1960s to 1970s encompassed active political involvement along with critiques of good intentions by Manfredo Tafuri and Michel Foucault. New strategies for 'participation' and public debate about architectural design – especially the need for choices – emerged in the 1980s. The 1990s then imported ideas about hybridity from Néstor García Canclini and Homi Bhabha, criticizing purity as exclusionary. Several key questions have emerged. Does the public have a right to good architecture in addition to the architect's right to explore new ideas? To what extent and by what criteria do non-architects – clients, users and various members of the public, often competing with one another – judge architecture? How can we distinguish between differences based on culture or group preferences and others that constitute inequalities? If we acknowledge that architects can produce settings geared to rigid discipline and oppression, which may not be immediately visible, how might we conceive of an architecture of resistance (see also Chapter 5)?

All these questions draw upon post-structuralist theory in that they refuse to acknowledge a privileged position for Western man as the subject of a teleological history, as centre and reference point for notions of progress and development. And yet, if the earlier concept of 'modern man' no longer holds, no adequate substitute has emerged. The individual 'self' can be variously understood as a heroic author/architect, a narcissist or as a person who may want to resist or at least question what is imposed, however inarticulate or frustrated those reservations might be. Post-structuralist theory considers all these selves as 'agents' rather than 'subjects' since they are clearly conditioned by and responding to societal and spatial conditions which they can negotiate but cannot overcome. In a similar way, architects (and theorists) are agents whose ideas about creativity, reception and effects are likewise conditioned by their time and circumstances, although they too can choose to emphasize or ignore a particular topic or audience.

Ole Fischer's chapter on criticality (Chapter 2) deals with many of these issues, focusing on a most interesting debate that unfolded during the years since 2000. In the wake of Tafuri's and Foucault's analyses of architecture's interconnection with power, a dominant tendency within architecture and within architectural theory has espoused criticality: the desire to relate *critically* to hegemonic societal powers, either by exposing manipulative societal conditions through formal language – sometimes denouncing the very powers that brought a building into being – or by positioning planning and design interventions in such a way that they benefit or at least take the side of disadvantaged social groups. Both kinds of critical architecture have recently been taken to task for being too convoluted, too intellectualized, too difficult and distanced or simply too boring. In unraveling the intricacies of these debates, Fischer points towards hidden geographies (notably Europe versus North America). Like other cohorts, he draws on Bruno Latour, especially his emphasis on 'connections' rather than static space and mutable 'aggregates' with open borders and relatively fixed agents such as 'the architect' or 'architecture'. Fischer thus pleads for a more honest self-reflection in which architecture is not just a matter of interest, but also a matter of concern (Latour and Wiebel 2005; Latour 2007; Graham and Marvin 2001).

POWER AND DIFFERENCE

Given that power has become a major issue in architectural theory over the last several decades, it stands to reason that *difference* and *embodiment* have come to the fore. These are the warp and woof of power relations; one might even state that some differences are 'produced' by uneven power relations. Patriarchy, imperialism, colonialism and economic dominance emphasize particular characteristics to bolster inequalities between, respectively, men and women, West and East, colonizer and colonized, city and country. These differences do not exist in an abstract way: they are embodied in real persons who can be subjected to real discrimination.

Whereas the heroic generations of modernists believed they could wipe away all differences based upon class, ethnicity or gender – uniting all humanity under the banner of a shared belief in progress and emancipation – it has become clear that differences among people and places are profound and persistent. Likewise, assertions of a necessary break with local and regional geographies no longer hold up. Many contemporary theorists stress the importance of climate and landscape as well as history and culture in people's relations with the built environment (see also Sections 4 and 7). A few postmodernists who criticized the modernist tabula rasa have recently moved towards 'ecological' notions of interconnection, a paradigm that extends from environmental pragmatists to some of the pleas for a 'new urbanism'. Landscapes are no longer presumed to be bucolic; they can be dangerous, vulnerable, urban and even conceptual. Human interventions can take many forms. Debates about 'critical regionalism' that began with Tzonis and Lefaivre's analyses of post-WWII Greek modernism in the 1970s then expanded with Kenneth Frampton's call for abstract expressions of local tectonic and climactic conditions. In contrast, explorations of the distinctive modernist idioms of Latin America, Southeast Asia, the Middle East and other regions now emphasize the incorporation of 'traditional' climactic adaptations together with modern technological innovations (see also Chapter 34). Here, too, those who argue for the essence or genius loci of a place now encounter criticisms that they unintentionally encourage unequal hierarchies, eco-consumerism and tourism. In sum, it is no longer possible to claim that architectural practice or theory can bracket out the complex distinctions and interconnections, both global and local, at the core of environmental issues.

Even without resorting to post-structuralist theories, therefore, the notion of difference has taken on a primary role in many architectural discourses. Engagement with the work of authors such as Derrida, Lyotard or Foucault has given philosophical depth to these issues. For Derrida, *differance* – a play upon the French words for 'differing' and 'defering' – is an inescapable feature of language: language is built upon differences between words, the meanings of which can never be fixed but are always subject to further clarification. There is no ultimate guarantee that words mean what we want them to mean, since this chain of signification can never be anchored in a transcendent entity (such as 'God') accepted by all users of the language. Lyotard takes this idea one step further by exploring its social consequences. His book *Differend* (1989) investigates situations in which a conflict arises that cannot be resolved because there are no rules of judgement that both parties accept as applicable to the case. If parties do not agree about the rules of the game, the game cannot be played in a fair way. Lyotard argues convincingly that this situation often occurs because language produces different genres of discourses which are not always compatible with one another. Rather than ignore this differend – whether by subsuming everything under the same denominator of money (capitalism) or by playing one's own game as if it is the master game ruling all others (academia) – he insists that philosophy must bear witness to the differend. Lyotard's 'language games' resemble Foucault's 'discursive formations,' indicating a loose constellation of interconnected theories about what can be spoken and comprehended in a given historical context. Foucault suggested that such

discursive formations may determine what kind of ideas can gain foothold, and hence which ones are closely related to regimes of power. Not incidentally, he insisted that power did not radiate out from one person or one centre (a king or a government); it is an ongoing process in which finely dispersed structural forces regulate everyone's behaviour, including those who exercise considerable power over others, in a continuous concatenation of actions and reactions.

Postcolonial theories have used these ideas in order to unravel how colonialism used specialized or expert knowledge production and how colonized people negotiated, contested and twisted colonial spaces. Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) has been a major reference. Said argued that imperial practices were closely intertwined with modes of knowledge production that looked back to the Enlightenment project of modernity. Indeed, colonial discourse was intrinsic to European self-understanding since knowledge about foreign peoples and territories (two closely linked topics) allowed Europeans to position themselves as modern, civilized, superior, developed and progressive while local colonized populations supposedly possessed none of these qualities (Venn 2000). Said's *Orientalism* refered specifically to a body of scholarly knowledge and practices that characterized the Orient as the 'other' or antithesis of the Occident, roughly equating it with the mysterious, the exotic, the excessive, the irrational, the alien. This 'other' was seen as the negation of everything that Europe imagined or desired itself to be. Since Europe's 'modern' virtues would continue to progress, the differences would always remain intact. Historians such as Gwendolyn Wright (1991) or Zeynep Çelik (1997b) have brought these topics to the fore in architectural history and theory. Yet even today few accounts of modernity and modernism acknowledge this crucial role of colonialism in the self-understanding of Western culture. Although some 'alternative modernities' have been introduced in recent years, the pivotal role of colonialism has been conveniently ignored in the conventional historiography of the Modern Movement.

Jyoti Hosagrahar discusses these themes in Chapter 3. She acknowledges that postcolonial perspectives in architecture and urbanism do not comprise a well-defined body of knowledge, although they do share an intellectual starting point in what she calls 'intellectual decolonization': the active rejection of spaces and discourses based in hegemonic dualities (modern versus traditional, centre versus periphery, universal versus local, Western versus non-Western). Postcolonial thinking explores multiplicities and hybrids, studying precisely those spaces and practices that cannot be qualified as either 'modern' or 'traditional' since they occupy a position in between. Such an approach raises questions about the conventional categories and narratives in all aspects of architectural history. (Why is Europe almost always the focus of general histories of architecture? Why do we presume that innovations always radiate outward from a vital centre to peripheral hinterlands that can only copy and, often as not, 'misinterpret' that modernity?)

Postcolonialism thus provides insights into the multiple ways that archiecture is implicated in the socio-political processes of nation-building and the economic geopolitics of globalization, in the present as in the past. How do we judge improvements that may benefit local populations, even as they endanger environments and entrench dominant powers? This dilemma, so conspicuous in colonial and neo-colonial settings, underlies every architectural intervention. We see that the history of architecture is also inscribed in the trajectories of 'minor' architects who negotiate between the requirements of powerful political authorities on the one hand and the specific local realities of materials, skills and cultural traditions on the other. This in turn calls attention to the challenges and accomplishments of contemporary architects and urbanists who 'design from the margins', those who practise on the edges of the places where avant-garde architectural culture is produced and promoted, especially those who work in and for places where the goals of social responsibility, sustainability and multiplicity require new kinds of reflection and new forms of architectural creativity.

Difference is also a crucial term for feminist theories, as Jane Rendell explains in Chapter 4. Feminist architects began to develop gendered critiques of architecture in the 1970s. This was at first inspired by an activist, political mood that aimed to break down the barriers for women in the architectural profession and, simultaneously, to expose and alleviate gender discrimination in the 'man-made' built environment. Feminist concerns gradually shifted towards a critique of conventional understandings of architecture based on monumental buildings and the master works of canonized male architects. Architectural historians began to study women architects and the role of female patrons in the production of architecture. Feminist architects developed new forms of interdisciplinary praxis that questioned the boundaries of architecture as a discipline. Difference and location became central concerns as these theorists insisted that knowledge is always situated, and so one must always consider the standpoint from which insights are being developed. Knowledge is not free-floating; it is embodied in persons, who are differently situated in terms of class, race, culture and gender. These circumstances are not incidental; they directly affect the kinds of knowledge that are produced and disseminated. Converging with postcolonial perspectives and other analyses of power, feminism and gender studies have radically altered the parameters of architectural theory.

These intellectual explorations have thus brought the stability of 'architecture' as a concept into question. Architecture is shown to be a contested territory, no longer the undisputed legacy of 'the canon' – whether this is the chronicle of 'masterworks' running from the Egyptian pyramids to the Seattle Public Library or the privileged terrain of white males who have defined avant-garde culture. Diverse groups are asserting their right to make architecture productive and meaningful on their own terms. These terrains include feminist collectives working to protect women against male violence, subaltern practices seeking to redefine what constitutes heritage, 'minor' designers exploring the aesthetic terrains of specific regions, and writers mapping the intersections of autobiography, critical writing and poetic spatial practices. These diverse voices have not achieved a profound change in conventional practices and disciplinary boundaries, but they have had a significant impact on architectural theory, in that they show how conventional understandings of architecture are – wittingly or unwittingly – bound up with patriarchy and cultural hegemony.

The language of these critical voices has become more precise and pointed since the 1960s as analysts have drawn upon broader intellectual tendencies. Recent theories have incorporated a revived environmentalist movement and new conceptions about cities as dynamic, heterogeneous ecologies (see also Sections 7 and 8) in questioning established canons, hagiographies and teleologies that had long been taken for granted. Architects' intentions are suddenly less important than other influences, both new and established, conscious and unintended. Even specific words have changed. Whereas early verbs asked how architecture and urban spaces reflect, support or modify political and social structures of difference, other more nuanced terms now ask how they *intimidate*, *divide*, *buttress*, *enhance*, *challenge* and *destabilize* – all of which can be positive or negative in different circumstances.

The appropriation of languages outside of architecture has thus shifted considerably in the past 40 years. To some extent the discussion has touted the significance of architecture and spatial configurations, both urban and natural, not just within the discipline but in the world at large – including other academic disciplines from the sciences to the humanities. Architectural analogies of the 1960s continued to draw from the biological

and social sciences. Christopher Alexander initiated the use of computers to apply mathematical set theories, hoping to extrapolate a new language that could assure a building's 'fit' in modern societies. The rise of the New Left then unleashed vehement critiques of the design professions, refuting promises of amelioration as empty metaphors. Architects and theorists alike evoked the *people*, the *public*, the *social* and the *community* in beginning to acknowledge diverse, even competing needs or desires. While an activist trajectory continued, taking new paths, architectural theory in the 1970s often converted politics into more abstract intellectual concerns, as explored by Ole Fischer in Chapter 2. The idea of an oppositional strategy of negation emphasized words like *difference*, *rupture*, *fragmentation* and radical *heterogeneity* as ways to sustain alternative utopian possibilities. Familiar architectural analogies were scrutinized, especially terms like *structure* or *stability*, although clever language games sometimes became facile. Recent interests have shifted to theories about translation/bilingualism and vernacular or local languages for everyday life. Through these debates the term *discourse* often replaced that of language, again encompassing various meanings from a distinctive internal 'jargon' (as Adorno used the term) to Foucault's ideas about culture/power, Lyotard's fascination with discursive genres and Habermas's theories about conversation.

Gradually the modernist idea of utopia as a brave new world underwent significant changes. Whereas architects such as Le Corbusier or Frank Lloyd Wright had no qualms in depicting idealized versions of the future (Fishman 1977), the utopian impulse bore itself out in the 1960s, giving way to dystopian scenarios that saw the future in terms of loss and catastrophe – or at least as a much more ambivalent place to be than the Radiant or Broadacre City. Superstudio, Archizoom or OMA used architectural tools (drawings, models, mappings) to investigate the liberatory but also oppressive forces of spatial configurations (Van Schaik and Macel 2005). A fascination with technology gave rise to multiple experiments that investigated the possibilities of megastructures, inflatables, domes, spaceships, underwater worlds and desert cities. If these experiments barely touched upon mainstream architectural culture and remained politically ineffective (Scott 2007), they help explain the simultaneous neo-colonial export of high-tech infrastructure and manufactured-housing systems that would supposedly transform and 'solve' the problems of the Third World.

By the 1980s and 1990s, the very idea of utopia seemed compromised beyond redemption. Postmodernism presented itself as a down-to-earth architectural strategy that was more interested in salvaging elements of the past than in discovering possibilities for the future (Jencks 1977; Klotz 1984; Jameson 1989; Ghirardo 1996). 'Post-humanist' theorists repositioned the architectural avant-garde, deriding efforts to improve conditions as naive and futile. Yet here and there, utopia re-emerged, often bound up with the notion of *difference* itself: something different had to be possible, something more than just a repetition of what already existed, something that harboured a promise that could not yet be articulated. One group of authors came up with the term *Embodied Utopias* as a way to think the future – or re-configure the past – not in an abstract, spiritual way, but rather as social and corporeal practices, recognizing the importance of bodies that are ethnically, sexually, culturally and socially inscribed (Bingaman et al. 2002).

EMBODIED DIFFERENCES

Architecture's engagement with the body can be traced back to antiquity. Western classicism envisaged the orders as emulating the human body. Recent architectural theories have reconfigured the body as a model for rhythm and proportions, as a reference point for discussions of scale, as a vulnerable body in need of physical and symbolic shelter, as a sensuous body that perceives buildings in visual but also in haptic ways, as a working body that requires functionally apt spaces, as a comfort-seeking body that desires tempered environmental conditions or as a body with special needs that necessitate prosthetic help from technology and from architecture (Rykwert 1972; de Sola-Morales 1997; Hauptmann 2006). All these aspects of the body have given rise to an extensive literature that will be further explored in Sections 2 and 6 of this Handbook. However, this literature often posits an unmarked, quasi-idealized body as the subject of architecture, a body without a sex, a gender, a skin colour, an age, a language, a culture, a physical defect or even a class. Even today, the bodies in architectural theory are all too often – unconsciously and therefore unmarked – presumed to be male, middle-aged, middle-class, white bodies that struggle with anxieties about cars and computers, but know next to nothing about child bearing, racial profiling, social exclusion or cultural subordination.

The contributions in this section insist that we recognize how physical spaces inscribe power constellations and differentiations onto human bodies with consequences that directly affect everyday practices and experiences. The institutional realities of architectural education, the structuring of the profession and the organization of architectural media all share in the disparities and discriminations described in these pages: they privilege middle-class, Anglo-Saxon, able-bodied, white males while making it harder for all those lacking one or more of these features to be successful in their chosen field (assuming for a moment that 'choosing a field' would be a concept applicable beyond the confines of global middle-class economy). If (post)critical positions (Fisher), postcolonial perspectives (Hosagrahar) and feminist critiques (Rendell) have something in common, it might be this insistence that differences matter in everyday situations and that architecture, one way or another, is involved in this mattering.

Architecture is not the only discipline to explore this fascinating if tangled phenomenon. Cultural geographers also argue that 'bodies and places are woven together through intricate webs of social and spatial relations that are made by, and make, embodied subjects' (Nast and Pile 1998, 4). What architectural theory can add to these understandings is a more specific analysis of how spatial articulations contribute to this making of subjects. Going further, it asks how architectural discourse is implicated in the production of differentiated spaces that shape differentiated subjectivities. Examples include Beatriz Colomina's analysis of the gendered architectural spaces of Loos and Le Corbusier (1994), Leslie Kanes Weisman's explanation of 'discrimination by design' (1992) and Zeynep Çelik's writings about colonialism's fundamental role in modernism (1997a; 1997b). This type of scrutiny also interrogates the implicit relations between 'architecture' and 'race'. For example, Darell Fields (2000) mines the aesthetic discourse of G.W.F. Hegel to understand how 'blackness' and 'architecture' are intertwined. (Fields contends that Hegel put architecture beneath other forms of the fine arts because of its association [through 'Egypt'] with 'blackness'.) Lesley Lokko (2000) examines the metaphor of 'light' in Western discourse: light as the source of vision and understanding, as the medium through which architecture is imagined and experienced, which makes it the opposite of 'dark', 'black' and 'night'. The fundamental role of both metaphors in language and experience (ranging from tropes of rationality and Enlightenment to practices of slavery), makes it difficult to construct alternate architectures that might overcome these inherited associations. This is nonetheless the challenge facing architects and theorists who seek to articulate an architecture that is meaningful from the point of view of *other* traditions and *other* collective memories. For Lokko, the question is 'how to draw on

these traditions [e.g. those associated with the body and with orality], interpreting them in ways that not only satisfy the "past/present/future" dichotomy "solved" by the tradition of orality, but offers something new, something to enable to process of "becoming"' (Lokko 2000, 33).

Some authors have adopted the term 'heterotopia' to describe such alternate modes of architectural thinking and practice. They take the word from Foucault who described heterotopias, somewhat enigmatically, as 'real places, effective places, places that are written into the institution of society itself, and that are a sort of counter-emplacements, a sort of effectively realized utopias in which the real emplacements, all the other real emplacements that can be found within a culture, are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted' (Foucault 2008, 17). He suggested that such sites can accommodate, albeit briefly, practices that one way or another fall outside the dominant culture. This notion has been taken up in very different ways in a fast-growing literature on heterotopia (see for example Dehaene and De Cauter 2008) that usually emphasizes a subversive and emancipatory potential but sometimes warns of a disciplinary – even oppressive – condition. Craig Wilkins (2007), who writes on space, architecture, race and music, wants to go beyond the latter aspect, which he feels Foucault overemphasized. He proposes instead to think in terms of 'celebratory heterotopias' where people act collectively to resist cultural alienation and, in the process, produce euphoric spaces and empowered subjects who actively and continually renegotiate differences among themselves (Wilkins 2007, 108ff, 111). This, for him, is the architectural/urban equivalent of bell hooks' 'choosing the space of the margin' (hooks 1989b). Both authors call for rethinking the experience of space in ways that are closer to African-American bodies.

The workings of the body are evoked not just by Wilkins, but also by many others discussing how spaces can accommodate practices related to power and difference. Important in this respect is our choice of the term 'embodiment' over 'body' in the title of this section. This choice is theoretically charged, because it implies that we understand bodies not as given objects but as entities inscribed by structural differentiations, by social and cultural imprints such as gender, race, class, etc. Indeed, no one's body is ever 'just' a body, completely determined by historical and cultural circumstances. The fact that bodies act out or 'perform' the differentiations of gender, ethnicity, class, etc., means they can also subvert these labels and explore alternatives (Thrift and Dewsbury 2000). For example, women are never 'just' women since they can choose and 'perform' versions of femininity in which shifts, ironical gestures or parody allow them to undermine the very norms of femininity they are embodying (Irigaray 1985b; Butler 1993). In a similar way, colonized people and racial minorities have some leeway in how they act out the roles society has assigned to them, such that mimicry and exaggeration can parody and, to a certain extent, resist derogatory labels (Taussig 1992).

As Jane Rendell argues in Chapter 4, the 'performative turn' in architecture and architectural theory has lagged behind other disciplines (she names art and literature.) A similar statement can be made about the impact of queer theory – a collective tag used for studies based on lesbian and gay sexualities. Queer theorists, according to Kathy Rudy (2000), share some assertions that open up exciting ways to rethink social reality. They emphasize the role of interpretation in understanding all aspects of human life – hence questioning and challenging what is usually taken to be 'normal'. Sexual identities and gender are understood as historically contingent, socially constructed categories that rely in part on performance, which leads to a political activism that is often aggressive and confrontational. Lastly, queer theorists refuse to discuss sexual behavior from an ethical point of view: for them, all consensual sex is good and every attempt to restrict it should be seen as partial to a hegemonic force that keeps the idea of 'normal' intact. As a mode of thought, queer theory therefore encompasses a wide range of critical practices and priorities which mobilize 'queer' as a verb to unsettle assumptions about sexed/sexual being and doing (Spargo 1999, 40). Given these assertions, queer theory might well challenge architectural theory to confront the spatial paradigms that seem to reinforce the robustness of 'normality,' since architecture solidifies social norms and institutional regulations into stone. Architectural theory has not directly engaged this challenge. Although we have two books (Betsky 1997; Bonnevier 2007) and a couple of illuminating articles (Urbach 1999; Reed 1996) that explicitly deal with architecture from a queer point of view (or with queer theory from an architectural point of view), this literature does not match the extensive geographical analyses of queer space (Brent Ingram et al. 1997; Duncan 1996; Browne et al. 2007; Hemmings 2002; etc.).

Admittedly, one must first ask whether or how a certain 'space' is 'queer'. Architectural theory examines the articulation of physical spaces into rooms, buildings, streets and cityscapes, demonstrating how these seemingly stable spatial entities shore up 'normality'. Hence it is difficult to recognize 'queerness' as a possible attribute of any of these spaces, because 'queering' means subverting normality (see Chauncey in Sanders 1996). Aaron Betsky (1997) provides a case in point. Although Betsky starts out by affirming that queer space is 'a misuse or deformation of a place, an appropriation of the buildings and codes of the city for perverse purposes' (5), half the book is devoted to descriptions of historical building types – from Roman baths to Bavarian fairy tale castles – that he feels exemplify queerness. His interpretation thus oscillates back and forth between characterizing specific *spaces* as queer and recognizing that only certain *uses* make a space queer, usually just for the time of those uses. Christopher Reed tackles the problem head-on by stating that 'queer space may be a contradiction in terms'. He opts out of this contradiction by adding the qualification 'imminent':

> No space is totally queer or completely unqueerable, but some spaces are queerer than others. The term I propose for queer space is *imminent*: rooted in the Latin *imminere*, to loom over or threaten, it means ready to take place. For both advocates and opponents, the notion of queerness is threatening indeed. More fundamentally, queer space is space in the process of, literally, *taking place*, of claiming territory. (Reed 1996, 64)

This imminence brings us back to the topic of performativity. The geographers Thrift and Dewsbury (2000) discern four current manifestations of performance: the work of Judith Butler, non-representational theory, the discipline of performance and the reworking of academic practices as performative. All four, it seems to us, offer useful insights for architectural theory. Judith Butler argues that gender is not inherent to bodies, but acquired through repeated performances of femininity or masculinity (Butler 1993), a recognition taken up by architectural authors such as Dana Arnold (2002, 129–31). Non-representational theory, exemplified by the works of Gilles Deleuze, emphasizes the flow of everyday life as embodied, contextual, technologized and creating affect or emotions. This outlook valorizes an everyday set of skills which are highly performative, in that they allow something that exists or is latent to become other than what is expected. The influence of non-representational theory, mediated through the works of authors such as Elisabeth Grosz, is very much present in architectural theory, as becomes evident in Section 6 of this volume and in a book on *The Body in Architecture* (Hauptmann 2006). The discipline of performance, the third manifestation, has deepened the recognition of theatricality as a metaphor for all kinds of human behaviour. The metaphor provides architectural theory with a means to grasp and perhaps utilize the multiple kinds of resonance in a term like 'authenticity', rather

than insisting on one inherent meaning (Verschaffel 2001) or as a way to frame diverse interactions between architectural spaces and social patterns (Harris 2005; Heynen and Loeckx 1998). Lastly, some architectural writers and practitioners are reworking their own teaching, research and presentations towards more performative methods.

But then, architects' presentations have always been highly stylized performances, typically using a multitude of seductive images to construct a narrative of inspiration, conceptualization, reworking and materializing, barely supported by words. This assemblage of revelations then magically coalesces into architectural designs that become buildings. The evident theatricality of this kind of performance is transformed and radicalized in what Jane Rendell calls 'site-writing', which turns lecturing (about) space into – literally – 'spacing' a lecture (lecture understood as a combination of reading, writing and performing/creating), where words as spatial inscriptions gain dominance again over images (Rendell 2005).

If embodied differences thus gave rise to critical interrogations about all kind of architectural and academic practices, there is another strand in recent architectural discourse about the body that seems strangely remote from the heavily theorized endeavours that inform postcolonial and gender studies. The propagators of *universal design* adopt a more upbeat, seemingly self-evident and straightforward tone that raises new criteria for an inclusive approach to architectural design (Preiser and Ostroff 2001). This field arose from a double motivation. On one front, the fact of an increasingly aging population, especially in Western countries, poses a challenge in terms of the suitability of conventional homes and other environments for people with weakening physical capacities, which in turn challenges designers to develop new building typologies and spatial strategies. On another front, political assertions of rights have extended to disabled people's demands for equal accessibility and the ability to enjoy all types of services and spaces. The adagio of universal design states that, since good design practices respect the diversity of all human beings in terms of spaces and objects that are accessible and useful to all, they will enhance the overall quality of design. Accessibility, safety, convenience and satisfaction are the key terms in this discourse, which is increasingly gaining a foothold in architectural and design curricula.

The universal design discourse may seem like a belated offspring of modernist functionalism, one that replaces the able-bodied, white, adult male as the subject of architecture with a more diverse but hence rather enigmatic character that is supposed to encompass all types of human differences. Because this discourse rarely engages theoretical issues, it tends to come across as undertheorized and even simplistic. To some degree, universal design does share modernism's laudable emancipating objectives, together with the belief that architecture can change the world, without acknowledging how these convictions are bound up with the forces of cultural hegemony and benevolent paternalism, such that any improvement will have some unexpected repercussions. Even more important is the basic assumption that it is possible to 'design for all'. As we have seen, architecture and design interventions always embody differences, accentuating, reflecting, framing, installing or transforming them in myriad ways. Thus it seems highly unlikely that we can simply do away with them. As some protagonists themselves admit, the word 'universal' in universal design is an ironic choice (Pedersen and Crouch 2002). Recent theoretical analyses should make us wary about goals that seem self-evidently beneficial for everyone and about strategies that claim to be universally valid. Yet, all the same, as architects and as theorists, we should never let circumspection lead us to abandon aspirations for a more just, inclusive and, yes, a more beautiful world.

CONCLUSION

Recent turns in architectural theory all share a reaction against *totalizing* analyses, whether they be Marxism or the modernist project itself, as Habermas has called it. Given the earlier dominance of the Frankfurt School's critical theory, this trend is sometimes labelled post-criticality (see Chapter 2). Architectural theory now recognizes diversity, discontinuity, contingency and inevitable if unpredictable changes over time. Many people seem to celebrate these qualities as inherently liberatory. Topics like gender, race and culture have shifted from oppositional dichotomies to include and embrace a spectrum of differences. Interest in cities and ecologies has further amplified these ideas (see Sections 7 and 8). The present condition is often described as an archipelago or a patchwork, evoking both multiplicity and fragmentation. Pragmatism has re-emerged as one sign of this effort to take account of diversity, 'things in the making' over time, and experimentation within a system (Saunders 2007). As William James put it in 1907: 'Pragmatism unstiffens all our theories, limbers them up and sets each one at work.' This trend also draws from other more recent sources, including Bruno Latour's Actor-Network-Theory which traces the multiple, mostly unanticipated associations between humans and 'things' as agents in the world (Latour 2007). An historian of science, Latour was thinking of microbes or information, but this type of analysis can clearly be put to work for architecture as well.

Architectural theory continues to evolve. There is growing attention to praxis, materiality and hybrid processes rather than fixed 'positions'. While this section highlights intellectual debates, we are also drawn to the many ways that theory has become more connected to real life experiments, especially small incremental changes, and to the exigencies of practice. If an earlier generation focused on exposing the negative effects of architecture, thoughtful architects and intellectuals around the world are now combining various theoretical concerns to suggest creative new forms and strategies, respectful of histories and cultural diversity, cognizant of the myriad interrelations between power, difference and embodiment.

2

Architecture, Capitalism and Criticality

Ole W. Fischer

ON THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF BEING 'CRITICAL'

In 1994, at the ANY conference in Montréal, Rem Koolhaas raised fundamental doubts about the critical potential of architecture as a discipline: '*The problem with the prevailing discourse of architectural criticism is this inability to recognize that there is in the deepest motivations of architecture something that cannot be critical*' (cited in Kapusta 1994). This statement, a short objection against the concept of autonomous architecture and against theory as a form of intellectual resistance could be seen as a prelude of the realist cynicism of *S, M, L, XL* (Koolhaas and Mau 1995) and the subsequent publications of OMA – if it would not have triggered an ongoing debate on the disciplinarity of architecture, and thus the question as to the interrelationship of theory, practice and society.

Taken literally, Koolhaas is right, of course, because the realizations of architectural projects consume large investments of capital, material and labour, and the architect has a clear-cut commission from his client (private or corporate), cooperates with engineers and contractors and collaborates with government officials (including building inspectors). Architecture is slow in realization, it resists change – in spite of the constant talk about dynamics, flexibility and variation – and it proves to be long-lasting. The complexity of architectural projects demands a high degree of specialization and division of labour, which leads to hierarchical structures and blurring of distinct authorship, which are typical of contemporary service and the administration sector. However, this is also true for other collaborative cultural productions, such as music, theatre or filmmaking, which does not necessarily inflect their 'critical' content or function in society.

A closer look at Koolhaas' remark may yield results at another level of architectural discourse – at the uncertain state of architecture between engineering, service industry and art. The concept of autonomy as a precondition for the critical function of the arts derives from modern aesthetics from Kant to Adorno, but is limited in architecture by criteria such as satisfying needs, utility, function or programme, if not to speak of construction, technology or economy. Therefore the comment of Koolhaas on the 'deepest motivations of architecture' might be a reminder of its specificity to relate and integrate these internal and external factors of the discipline in a productive way, which means architecture

is necessarily connected and engaged with society on multiple levels, and therefore inevitably affirmative and contiguous, or in the words of Koolhaas himself: it is the task of architecture '*to reinvent a plausible relationship between the formal and social*' (Koolhaas and Whiting 1999, 50).

The critical analysis of the 1960s and 1970s laid bare architecture's deep involvement with order, control, power and hierarchy (for instance Foucault 1977) and it debunked architecture's official history as religious, feudal and bourgeois representation, as capitalist distribution, and as politics of the body – in short: as an *ideological instrument* in the service of the ruling classes (see also Bentmann and Müller 1992). Seen from this perspective, Koolhaas' doubts and objections seem to be far more dialectical and 'critical' in regard to the material basis and cultural superstructure of architectural interventions than the search for a 'critical project' within the discipline might imply.

Finally, the questioning of the 'critical' potential of architecture and the provocative plea for affirmation, surrender and opportunism by Koolhaas has to be read in relation to the specific historic context and its 'hidden opponent' – that is the author, text or discourse to which the statement tacitly refers: in this case the group of architects and theorists involved with *ANY* magazine and the project of 'criticality' in architecture that they propagated.

CRITICALITY, POST-CRITICALITY, POST-THEORY?

'Critical architecture' has played a major role in the debates of architectural theory in the past three decades, at least at the influential universities on the east and west coasts of North America (see for instance Lillyman et al. 1994; Ockman 1985; Speaks 1996). Under the banner of 'criticality', the theory of architecture was recognized and professionalized as a regular academic discipline, with its own programmes and chairs, with distinct 'critical' magazines such as *Oppositions*, *ANY* or *Assemblage* – reflected by such European platforms as *AA Files*, *Quaderns* or *Archplus* – and with a series of publications, exhibitions and symposia, all of which lead to the effect that 'criticality' became a synonym for the theory of architecture. The current questioning of 'criticality' by a younger generation of architectural theoreticians addresses the 'critical theory' of K. Michael Hays and the 'critical practice' of Peter Eisenman, who, in analogous relation to minimalist and concept art, set out to reposition the discipline of architecture on explicitly theoretical foundations. Here, the term 'theory' refers to a conglomerate of philosophical, sociological and linguistic texts mainly by European authors – such as Althusser, Barthes, Lacan, Adorno, Habermas, Lefebvre, Foucault, Baudrillard, Derrida and Deleuze – that, through the agency of comparative literature, were transformed in a process of selection, fragmentation, translation and re-interpretation into an instrumental and operative meta-criticism that is suitable for a 'critical reading' of a wide range of social, cultural or artistic phenomena, including architecture.

The 'critical' edge of this 'theory' stems from the linguistic, psychoanalytical and neo-Marxist origins of these texts, which, in different ways, follow the traditions of progressive thought since the Enlightenment. These include the *Critiques* of Kant, who – in the literal sense of critique as strict self-examination or separation – defined the limits of the human faculty of cognition to create a new foundation of philosophical thought and help people achieve a freedom of reason. Marx's *critique of ideology* sought to expose the contexts of delusion of society and culture by attributing them to conditions of domination and production to help people achieve an economic-political awareness. In addition, Freud's *analytical criticism* described the limits of individual and collective consciousness so as to emancipate people from the power of the subconscious, the repressed,

and compulsion. Always, criticism manifests itself as a clash between the established, dominant status quo of culture and society and divergent possibilities, deviant latencies and the excluded *other* as a search for enlightenment, alternatives and changes.

The question facing 'critical architecture', however, is: 'critical – of what?' (Martin 2005). Strictly speaking, there are at least two divergent approaches within this academic debate that call themselves 'critical'. The first endorses the idea of the autonomy of the discipline with regard to external factors such as society, function or historical significance, and hence a reduction to the formal manipulation of the internal elements of architecture. The argument for autonomy is based on a linguistically post-structuralist model that interprets architectural elements as self-referential signs whose differentiation commences a process between figuration and abstraction (Eisenman 2000). The 'criticism' consists precisely in repudiating previous systems of legitimization toward uncovering a generative process between sign and form that leads to the (architectural) sign 'becoming unmotivated', a resolution of established meanings and thus an opening up of the architectural discourse. The concept of autonomy is disassociated from modern concepts such as technological progress or social interaction as well as from postmodern notions of interdisciplinarity between the humanities, presenting itself instead as 'inner-architectural' criticism, as a methodical-critical analysis of the architectural structure. The second argument opposes reification, mediation and fetishization of architectural objects, and searches for strategies designed to evade the pressure of visual commodification of the 'late capitalist' culture industry (Hays 1984). On the basis of a Freudo-Marxist analysis of post-industrial consumer society – in the footsteps of Walter Benjamin, Theodor W. Adorno and Jacques Lacan – we see dialectical-critical positions that claim that a critical architectural practice is possible within the prevailing social order by opening up an 'in-between-space' in which architectural forms are more than just the result of market forces. The strategies of this cultural and social criticism by architecture comprise a deceleration of perception, a silence of architecture, a refusal of pictoriality, staging and branding, an uncovering of architecture's staging devices as in Brecht's theatre, and the demonstrative exhibition of social constructions, conventions and negative effects such as objectification, alienation or discrimination. Both these academic strands of 'critical architecture' share the constant indexing of their 'critical' state against the discipline, their 'critical' intentions resist dominant social, economic and cultural forces, and the generative processuality of form by means of a complex system of references from the object to theory and vice versa.

After pop and media theory and (neo) pragmatism (Ockman 2000) had already questioned the idea of 'critical architecture' in the 1990s, the current debate about a 'post-critical' stance was kicked off by an essay by Robert Somol and Sarah Whiting in *Perspecta* (2002), in which the two authors distinguish between a 'critical project – here linked to the indexical, the dialectical and hot representation' and an 'alternative genealogy of the projective – linked to the diagrammatic, the atmospheric and cool performance'. Somol and Whiting's critique of critique was taken up, augmented and expanded by other theorists of the same generation, such as Michael Speaks (2002), Sylvia Lavin (2003) and Stan Allen (2004), and yet it is concerned with more than an academic generational conflict or a new style: the revision of the 'critical' tradition of theory concerns the relationship between architecture and society, or, to be precise, between architecture and power, capital and media. Realism, pragmatism, and professionalism appear as the new subjects of 'post-theory' – proactively challenging the utility and efficacy of critical thought, intellectual resistance and elaborative theoretical constructs in a competitive global market of architectural design. To 'solve',

not to 'problematize', marks the new 'post-critical' approach: the ideal of autonomy as a precondition of architectural 'criticality', which distances itself from building, is replaced by an immersion into practice. As a result, the relationship between theory and project seems to be reversed: whilst the 'critical' discourse favours theoretical writings, abstract conceptual models, and variously superimposed, textually based graphics (like a palimpsest), the 'post-critical' protagonists prefer to draw attention to shapes, images and the performative qualities of built objects. Diagrams, slogans, logos, and new media are deployed as a kind of 'mental PowerPoint' to reduce the complexity of architectural projects to recognizable icons, core messages, or brands, and thus to promote a fast, approximative perception and an intensive experience or atmospheric 'feeling' – particularly with regard to a broad audience of occupants, consumers and clients – as a deliberate contrast to the strained 'critical reading' of advanced, complex theoretical texts and built fragments of thought that, in terms of their conception, refuse to bow to emotional appropriation, everyday use, visual representation, or easy consumption, and require an 'explanation' by the professional critic.

In addition, as the common reproach of post-critics goes, 'critical architecture', which set out to question authors, power discourses, and social constructions, has itself meanwhile become a dominant institution, rather than producing unexpected interpretations, new perspectives and alternative concepts for action. Since, in this 'regime of criticality', theory plays a determining role in design, it reduces the architectural project to a 'sample', 'illustration' or index of the theoretical concept. The 'critical' author-architect inscribes a theoretical derivation into the project and limits the role of the occupant, viewer or critic to a 'reading' and 'reproduction' of this architectural 'text'. If, for example, we refer to such prominent 'critical' architects as Tschumi, Eisenman or Diller and Scofidio, we see a significant extent of coherence in the articles, reviews and publications on their work, because they regard themselves as 'conceptual architects' they view 'theory' and 'critical content' as essential factors of their design production. Yet this self-referential fallacy between academic discourse and 'critical practice' threatens to become inappropriate for architectural topics that go beyond the realm of established 'critical' themes, which, inversely, implies that 'critical architecture' degenerates into a style. What is more, the 'critical discourse' over the past thirty years has experienced an accelerated race for 'new' theories that, in view of its fast changes, give the impression of arbitrariness and fashion. Even the most severe critics of 'the system' have had to realize that criticism, revolt and subversion are part of the stabilizing repertoire of 'late capitalism': critical gestures have quickly been internalized, commodified and recycled for niche products or marketing strategies. In many respects, established academic criticism has proved to be an ineffective tool of resistance, liberation and change.

On the other hand, the leviathan of monolithic, hegemonic 'critical architecture' drafted by 'post-critics' seems to be a phantasmagoria itself, the projection of a great antagonist onto a small group of academic architects and theorists with limited influence on the discipline at large. This common 'uber-opponent'[1] obscures the considerable differences between the various positions in post-criticism, ranging, as it does, from first: an affirmative post-theory geared to performance, implementation and operationality that analyses future fields of design activity as a kind of neo-liberal think-tank and develops strategies of work organization, architectural intervention, and marketing, to second: a post-critical stance that progressively banks on the digital revolution, new materials and media, to third: an architecture of 'new sensuality' and affect (compare Deleuze 2005), focusing on staging moods, immersions and atmospheres.

In a sense, the 'post-critical' involves a repetition of the phenomenon of transatlantic cultural transfer: whilst under 'critical architecture' European philosophical texts,

political hypotheses, and linguistic methods were fed into the American academic discourse, later to be re-exported as 'theory', now the oeuvre of individual architects, such as OMA/Rem Koolhaas, MVRDV, UNStudio, FOA/Alejandro Zaera-Polo, or Herzog & de Meuron, serves 'post-critical' authors as evidence of a contemporary 'projective' practice. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, Europe has seen the emergence of a generation of architects who have proactively embraced the changed political and economic conditions in the deregulated markets of the EU and the transition countries, seeking to redefine the profession in terms of production, organization and effect. In different ways they have allowed architecture to benefit from IT, processing technology and material sciences, corporate management, marketing and consulting, combining them with strategies from art, media and fashion in order to position the strong architectural object as an event and identity-forming experience, thus lending added cultural value to architecture in the eyes of the public and decision-makers. Compared with these new operative instruments, the 'critical' apparatus proves to be inefficient in setting itself apart in an economy of attention and gaining a competitive edge over 'anonymous' investor architects and epigones by means of a politics of the proper name. In addition, the collapse of actually existing socialism and the crisis of the European left have created a general suspicion of ideology and any kind of 'theory' and 'criticism'. The consequence is a widespread weariness towards theory among staunch European architects, particularly those who had direct dealings with representatives of 'critical architecture' such as Herzog & de Meuron with Aldo Rossi, Rem Koolhaas with Peter Eisenman, or Alejandro Zaera-Polo with Michael Hays. What looks like smart European 'post-critical' pragmatism from the vantage point of American post-theorists is often nothing but indifferent scepticism, entrepreneurial realism, or a rhetorical retreat to seemingly impartial objectivity, professionality and 'architectural expertise' – in other words, a severe disenchantment with criticism that extends into the academic discourse of European universities and trade journals (Van Toorn 1997).

'CRITICAL THEORY' VERSUS 'CRITICAL' THEORY

Ensconced in the 'post-critical' project lies a double strategy: on the one hand, it is an attempt to overcome the schism between academic theory and design practice and to make contemporary architectural objects, phenomena and strategies accessible (once again) for reflection; on the other hand, 'post-critical' theory hinges dialectically on 'criticality' and attempts to set itself apart from it antithetically, as the prefix 'post' already suggests. However, as already stated, in 'critical' architectural theory, two different concepts of criticism overlap. One historical vector comes from the realm of socio-psychological philosophy and neo-Marxist criticism of society and culture, as espoused by the 'Frankfurt School', who coined the concept of 'critical theory' as opposed to the 'traditional theory' of scientific positivism and orthodox Marxism (Horkheimer 1937). This is the vector that informed the 'critical architecture' opposing reification, mediation and fetishization of architectural objects. A second epistemological trail leads to the theory-based textual criticism of comparative literature, which refers back to phenomenological, hermeneutic, semiotic and structuralist models, and later also post-structuralist, psychoanalytical and feminist reading strategies (such as deconstruction). This second trail inspired the 'critical architecture' based on the autonomy of architecture and the enhancement of the status of theory. While this mode of criticism aims to analyse, interpret, explain and possibly subvert human sign systems (hence existing cultural artifacts), socio-philosophical 'critical theory', on the other hand, seeks to accomplish a self-reflective analysis of 'societal totality', hence a criticism of the preconditions of science, culture and politics in capitalist society in order to change it as a whole. The core presumption of 'critical theory' is the failure – in consideration of the totalitarian ideologies of Fascism and Stalinism – of bourgeois enlightenment, whose promises of knowledge, self-determination, and rational analysis of nature and myth are said to have dialectically transformed into 'instrumental reason', into an economic-technological system of rule in which the irrationality of the myth returns as 'positivistic' affirmation of the existing (Adorno and Horkheimer 1972). Nevertheless there is much common ground between socio-political 'critical theory' and 'critical' literature/language theory, ranging from the choice of topics to mutual borrowing of methods, texts and authors who may be counted among both groups.

Manfredo Tafuri, the Marxist architectural historian from the 'School of Venice', played a major role in the construction, in this double sense, of a 'critical' architecture/theory in the 1970s. On the basis of the cultural criticism of the Frankfurt School, particularly Benjamin and Adorno, he defines the history of architecture as part of a broader materialist historiography as much as architectural theory as a critique of ideology, which is not limited to the formal analysis of individual objects or designs but rather discusses architecture as the obfuscation of social conditions. At the same time, however, he avails himself of linguistic and structuralist methods that go back initially to Barthes, Lévi-Strauss, Eco and Foucault, from where he proceeded to Lacan, Derrida and Deleuze. His eclectic meta-criticism that passes from the level of aesthetic form to the level of language of architecture (that is, semantics, structure and typology), and on to the level of language about architecture, coincides with the theoretical approaches of the New York Institute of Architecture and Urban Studies (IAUS) co-founded by Emilio Ambasz and Peter Eisenman. For them, Tafuri's analytical critique of language, his negative dialectics of modernity and his philosophical scepticism towards given societal realities and utopias seemed eminently suitable as a theoretical legitimization of 'critical' architecture, disseminated by the IAUS magazine *Oppositions* (Hays 1999) and pursued in the projects of the New York Five (Drexler et al. 1972). Tafuri's interest in the concept of autonomy met with that of architects like Aldo Rossi, Oswald Mathias Ungers and Peter Eisenman, albeit from a different perspective: these representatives of 'critical' architecture/theory consider autonomy on the level of form and structure, as a challenge to the function, meaning, construction, visuality and mediation of architecture. They framed architecture linguistically as an 'autonomous language' or as a culturally 'given' artifact independent of the author's intentions. Tafuri uses autonomy against the background of the Italian '*autonomia*' movement of anarchic communists and actionistic groups of the 1960s as a demand for socio-political engagement and economic, cultural and political participation, in opposition to the ruling capitalist system outside the established (and thus already compromised) institutions, such as the state, political parties or trade unions – indeed as an extension of class struggle. Ultimately, '*autonomia*' meant literally the self-organization of tenants in building cooperatives and the direct action of do-it-yourself and urban squatting, in short, the strive for 'architecture without architects' (Rudofsky 1964). For Tafuri, with reference to Horkheimer and Adorno, any kind of production within the capitalist order is always already contingent, collaborative and instrumentalized, which is why he insists on the autonomy of architectural history/theory from design practice (and thus constraints of justification) and on the critic's detachment from the object – very unlike the 'operative' theory of the 'critical' architect or the 'post-critical' version of 'engaged' criticism.

The misunderstanding between formal linguistic self-criticism of 'critical' architecture, and Tafuri's critique of ideology founded on economic, political and cultural arguments, could not be greater. The fact that Tafuri, who diagnoses the historical failure of modern architecture to enter into a critical relation with capitalism, has been used to

legitimize American 'critical' architecture/theory seems to be one of history's ironies, as Diane Ghirardo (2002) has already observed. And yet the protagonists of 'critical' architecture even hijacked Tafuri's resigned assessment regarding the 'end of architecture', using it to justify the autonomous, abstract, absolute operations with the drained architectural elements, finally proclaiming with Derrida the 'end of the end' (Eisenman 1984). Still, in the early 1970s Tafuri had made a full-scale attempt to clarify the role of criticism (and language) in architecture on the IAUS platform *Oppositions* (1974): there he distinguished, firstly, between language as technical neutrality (functionalism) and, secondly, the emptiness of signs after the dissolution of meanings (Rossi), and, thirdly, an architecture that sees itself 'critically', ironically or as a mass medium reduced purely to 'information' – and this category encompasses the projects of Stirling, Venturi and the New York Five, which he criticizes as subjective experimentalism, cynicism, or hermetic 'language games'. The fourth position espoused by Tafuri claims the interchangeability and futility of positions one to three, as 'criticism' remains inside the 'language of architecture', merely endlessly reproducing what has been said and what already exists[2] instead of analysing and realizing the underlying principles and possibilities of architectural and critical 'production' within the existing societal structures. To him, it is the task of architecture to change the reality of society with the 'plan' (urbanistic as well as political) to reorganize the production and distribution of labour and capital, which at the same time, however, implies that the architect must cooperate with public decision-makers and integrate into economic-political and administrative processes as an 'engineer' or 'producer' (in compliance with Benjamin's 1934 formula of 'the author as producer').

In a way, it is the European developments in architecture of the 1990s, as outlined above, that confirms the path of political, economic, administrative and technical integration predicted by Tafuri, albeit under contrary political circumstances of globalization. And whereas in the early 1970s Tafuri prophesized the imminent end of architectural avant-gardes as a result of the disillusioning effect of 'critical theory' – with the impossibility of a 'critical' project having been proven (Tafuri 1980, 91) – today an end of (critical) theory would appear imminent as a result of an operative practice that, ironically or ignorantly, embraces progress and technology, pursues instrumentalization through marketing and mass media, and flirts with its status as a commodity, spectacle or fashion – giving up in the end any attempt to criticize capitalism. Despite his utter resignation, even Tafuri betrays signs of admiring the discreet charm of omnipresent, adaptable and excessive capitalist production. But the decline of a culturally and politically critical consciousness in architecture is not caused by the 'temptations of the market' alone but also by the historical evolution of 'critical' architecture/theory: besides architectural formalism, post-structuralism challenged neo-Marxist 'critical theory' as one out of numerous political ideologies and demystified the autonomy of the critic vis-à-vis social conditions as a theoretical construction. What remains is a postmodern relativity of 'everything goes' and also the dominance of the linguistic analogy in the academia of the 1980s and 1990s, whose degree of abstraction is responsible for the loss of sensorial, material, atmospheric, temporal, aesthetic, emotional and performative qualities that are today being re-addressed by 'post-critical' authors.

AUTONOMY, CONTIGUITY AND NEGATION

George Baird (1995) has argued for acknowledging a more parallel and continuous development of modern, postmodern, structuralist and post-structuralist tendencies in architectural theory, rather than framing it as a revolutionary process of paradigm shifts. Exemplary for this complexity and ambiguity might be the position of Aldo Rossi. Seen from a European perspective, he is a left intellectual – a member of the Partito Comunista Italiano as well as one of the professors of Politecnico di Milano dismissed for his support of the student revolt of 1968/1970 – and father figure of neo-classical postmodernism. From a North American perspective, he belongs to the neo-avant-garde of the 1970s together with Eisenman, Hejduk and Tschumi. Rossi himself, however, believed in the continuation of the modern project, and with the *Architecture of the City* (1984) he wanted to reconstruct the discipline by proving its foundations in enlightenment rationalism, combining an ideological critique of history with a typological critique of architectural forms of the city that he considered as its fundamental reality. Therefore Rossi insisted on the autonomy of architecture – in the double sense of first a pre-existing historic fact of monumental, permanent primary elements and structural residential areas of the city detached from functional, technological, societal or economic determination, and second, a specificity of architecture as such, as a form of scientific knowledge. This self-reflection of architecture on its own history, formal logic and typological ideas enabled a revision and reassessment of Italian rationalism of the 1930s that implied the purging of its Fascist political content, especially with regard to Giuseppe Terragni, an interest Rossi shared with Eisenman (Eisenman 1998).

Rossi's autonomy project seeks to re-contextualize the architectural object within the (European) city and the 'collective memory' of its citizens, but at the same time de-contextualize it from political, economic and societal reality, even from contemporaneity, as Rafael Moneo noted, who went on, with reference to Tafuri, to sketch out the danger for architecture to be reduced to 'inoperative parameters' and 'pure game' (Moneo 1976, 18). But Rossi's attempt to take architecture away from the heated political discourse of the late 1960s and early 1970s, which risked the discipline dissolving into social work, functionalist technological positivism or technocratic instrumentalization, is driven by the melancholic insight that the critical alternatives of the modern movement are no longer available. Neither the utopian project of the radical avant-garde nor the emancipatory social reformist practice seem an option because both have been proven to be either ineffective or complicit with capitalist instrumental access to world, labour and humans. From this dystopian perspective of the impossibility for architecture to picture or produce an alternative reality within the existing societal relations, the Rossian project of autonomy – as a process of disciplinary separation, typological abstraction and archaic reduction – opens a fallback position of architectural practice evading social reality, a reality that forcefully returns back into these formal manipulations and poetic analogies, as Rossi's work demonstrates,[3] but an evasive position that aligns with the philosophical concept of *negation*, as introduced by the Frankfurt School 'critical theory' and transferred to architecture by Tafuri: '*This [simple] truth is, that just as there cannot exist a class political economy, but only a class criticism of political economy, so too there cannot be founded a class aesthetic, art, or architecture, but only a class criticism of the aesthetic, of art, of architecture, of the city itself*' (Tafuri 1976, 179).

Within the capitalist regime Tafuri (1980) denies any possibility of envisaging the 'architecture for a liberated society' or maintaining a critical stance within design, but he emphasizes the *negative* aspect of ideological critique for the history and theory of architecture. This is a clear reference to the *Negative Dialectics* of Adorno (1973), who conceptualized the task of philosophy as to unmask societal contradictions and to situate these as historic products in notional mediation, though with the important difference that Adorno concedes for art an autonomous space beyond the instrumental rationality

of capitalist production (Adorno 1984). Art gains autonomy through its negation of operational 'use' or 'function' as well as its distance from societal reality, yet at the same time art remains for Adorno a social practice or a product of societal labour and therefore determined by history, production process, techniques, influence, context, etc. Because of a historic split between signs and images, they have become operational in modern society, but Adorno proposes a reconstruction of their independence with the dialectical concept of mimesis. The resemblance of art to itself evades the identity thinking of linguistic categories and enables genuine experience of 'otherness' within modern instrumentalized society – what makes art 'critical'. On the other hand, art relates mimetically to society and recognizes societal reality – what makes art similar to the criticized. While the similarity is necessary to enable involvement by the observer, it is the formal autonomy that exposes the concealed social reality (repression, exploitation, estrangement, etc.) and puts art in opposition to and in negation of society (Heynen 1999, 174–192). This dialectic renders modern art abstract, dissonant, discomforting and anti-utopian; to picture a positive image of society (like socialist realism) has grounds in false premises just as much as 'committed' art, since the representation as much as the 'message' demand complicity with the audience. Adorno excludes affirmative, contingent, tangible art from his aesthetics, for without the distance of autonomy they turn into reified, popular, conformist commodities of 'culture industry' that reproduce the manipulative contexts of delusion.

Adorno's *Aesthetic Theory* (1984) implies a selection of specific genres capable of autonomy and negation, such as serious music, dramatic literature and abstract visual art (in short: elitist high culture). Architecture, however, functional, contingent or operative, hardly ever conforms to these conditions, even if it retreats to formal abstraction and 'post-functionalism' (Eisenman 1976). Yet Walter Benjamin – as much as Adorno a point of reference for Tafuri – scrutinizes the concept of autonomy as a relict of prehistoric magic ritual that survived in the bourgeois cult of the singular, crafted, auratic work of art – determined by restricted access, private ownership and authorial authenticity – and he contrasts it with the simultaneous collective reception of reproduced artifacts such as photo, film and architecture. In his famous 1936 essay on 'The Work of Art', Benjamin substitutes the contemplative immersion of the individual observer into the work of art of idealistic aesthetics with the dispersion of reproductions amongst the urban masses, where reception takes place in the state of distraction (Benjamin 2008). It is precisely the contingency by use and function that qualifies architecture for Benjamin as the 'prototype' of 'tactile' – in contrast to 'optical' – reception of the (new) mediated art of the masses. The daily, habitual, casual experience of reproduced art – or architecture – replaces 'cult value' with 'exhibition value', hence transforming art from a commodity fetish to an ubiquitous exercise for human perception that is able to reconstitute the historic unity of critical stance and delight. Whilst Adorno concentrates on the critical role of the work of art, as promising a different societal reality, Benjamin's hope resides in art's cognitive role as an experimental field for new forms of (aesthetic) demand, since he conceptualizes art received in distraction as an unconscious training for new skills of 'apperception' by the masses that precede the change in societal relations. And if Adorno excluded the economy of art from his theoretic reflection in order to emphasize its distance from reification and instrumental adjustment of the world, then Benjamin located a revolutionary aspect in the process of technological (re)production, distribution and mass consumption of art that constitutes a collective audience, reconciles art and science, and restructures human perception, imagination and consciousness. That is: he differentiated the dialectical relations between technology, arts and politics already laid out by historic materialism.

WITHIN THE INTERIOR SPACE OF CAPITAL

Adorno and Benjamin presented two alternatives for a critical artistic practice within capitalist society: on one hand there is the notion of resistance embedded in the autonomous work, and on the other hand there is the search for concepts to stimulate opposition from contiguous factors of production, programme or use. From a Marxist point of view, architecture is as much a part of society's productive forces (hence its economic base) as its cultural superstructure (hence its reproduction of capitalist hegemony). This dialectic was explored by the French sociologist Henri Lefebvre (1991, 26), who considered '(social) space as a (social) product' resulting from productive forces, modes of production and relations of production (that is, from human labour and its organization, from the instruments of labour respective technology and from resources). Following the theory of materialist dialectics, he defined the production of space as a historical process where different societies and therefore modes of production crystallize in different historical spaces; at the same time he aimed at a 'unitary theory' of space that covers physical, mental as well as social aspects. Since he regarded space not only as a product 'secreted' by society but also as a productive force of capitalism that reproduces social relations, he differentiated between three interrelated levels: first, 'spatial practices' of production and reproduction; second, 'representations of space', that is the conceptualized, codified, mental space manifested in signs contiguous to power and order; and third, 'representational space', which contains the life of inhabitants and users (Lefebvre 1991, 33). In this scheme, architecture belongs to the second category, which minimizes its critical potential, but opposition and subversion re-enter with everyday practice – the individual, imaginary and historic dimension of 'representational space'. This reflection on everyday life was augmented by Michel de Certeau (1984), who pursued the 'productive' side of consumer culture existent in the individual practice of bricolage, deviance and ruses. Yet, in contrast to Lefebvre, de Certeau understands 'practice' primarily as linguistic termini in the sense of 'pragmatics' and 'performance', and, following the speech act theory based on de Saussure, he differentiates between the system of written language (*langue*) as hegemonic, institutional and strategic, and the individual use of spoken language (*parole*) as temporal, trickery and tactical.[4] De Certeau denies, with reference to Foucault (1977), the possibility of an autonomous position within the strategic system of power, but he concedes the tactical use of space to create individual freedom operating within the structure set by strategy. Exemplary for the transfer from speech act to spatial practice is the pedestrian walking in the street as 'enunciation of the city' (de Certeau 1984, 97), subverting with the individual choice of path the dominant order imposed by planning, though the same example demonstrates the problematic equation of practising language (or everyday activities) with economic production and political participation – not unlike the mix-up of formal and political autonomy in 'critical' architecture.

This reflection on everyday life, space and practice is part of the sociological critique against post-war functionalism and modernist planning methods of the 1960s, which parallels Lefebvre with Jane Jacobs (1961) or Alexander Mitscherlich (1965). However, Lefebvre was not recognized in the English-speaking architectural debate until the 1990s, when he was called upon by authors, such as Margaret Crawford (1999) or Mary McLeod (1997), who distanced themselves from paternalistic New Urbanism and formalist avant-gardes (of postmodern, neo-modern or deconstructivist fashion). Sceptical of the dominant linguistic theories in academia that reduce architecture to questions of signification and form finding, this sociological critique calls for a return to 'the real' of lived experience without being patronizing, to an

examination of popular culture without being populist, and for taking action under existing social conditions without selling out. Sharing the optimistic assessment of everyday life by Lefebvre and de Certeau as rich, complex and transformative, this architectural and urban practice addresses ordinary programmes (housing, retail, conversions, street furniture) and small-scale interventions that question normative understandings of space and place, of private and public, of politics, participation and citizenship. Still, there remains a crucial gap between this informal urbanism, pragmatic realism and micro-political activism and the dialectics of Lefebvre, who introduced the concept of the everyday as a complementary vector of modernity in order to project a fundamental change in hegemonic societal relations.

The persistence of a utopian perspective, even a nondeterministic one full of tensions and contradictions, also separates Lefebvre from de Certeau, as much as their contrary understanding of 'place': de Certeau favours space (*espace*) as operative, actualized, oriented, over the notion of place (*lieu*) as stable, ordered and defined, with the first comparable to spoken narration and the second to written text, while Lefebvre defends the 'differential space' of place, history and individuality against the 'abstract space' of capitalist society, which he describes as universal, instrumental and homogenous – the space of commodities and power, administered by consensus and disintegrating traditional locality, relations and practices. This critique of the spatial homogenization was taken up, though with reference to de Certeau, by Marc Augé (1995), who developed the oppositional model of 'place' versus 'non-place', with which he distinguishes between the construction of identity by individuals interacting with each other in authentic places defined by history, centrality and recognition versus the non-personal, homogenized, generic environments of supermarkets, airports and hotel lobbies – the deterritorialized, transitional spaces of consumption and traffic.[5] Yet whilst Lefebvre associated 'differential space' with instability and social change, it was already de Certeau who returned to a phenomenological notion of identity and authenticity in the discourse on 'place' (Heidegger 1994, Norberg-Schulz 1980), which became the dominant paradigm in the anthropology of Augé, as his call for an 'organic social' demonstrates.

Even if Augé does not blame contemporary architecture alone for the withering away of place, his dirge on the loss of cultural differentiation and locality meets with the concept of 'critical regionalism' in architecture. The term, originally coined by Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre (1985), was propagated by Kenneth Frampton (1983) – an early member of the IAUS in New York – as an answer to universalization and 'scenography' of consumerist semiotic postmodernism, significantly introduced by a passage from Paul Ricoeur. With a detour to Benjamin's concept of 'aura', the authors suggested slowing down the process of visual commodification by working with local materials, techniques and typologies and by referring to context, history and season – altogether features that have to be experienced on site and that are difficult to reproduce in images. In contrast to earlier regionalism or (postmodern) vernacular tendencies, here the 'critical' denotes first a reflexive understanding of local inspiration and the notion of place, a dialectic of technological 'civilization' versus 'culture' exemplified in the work of Alvar Aalto or Alvaro Siza. Carried by Habermas' belief in modernity as an unfinished project of emancipation (Habermas 1983), Frampton asks how to reconcile regional diversity and specificity with the universal progress of reason (Frampton 1983). A second notion of the 'critical' became more prominent in the last revision of *Modern Architecture* (Frampton 2007, 344–389) where Frampton argues for the reconstruction of 'civic form' and 'public appearance' in the sense of Hannah Arendt (1958) as a sphere of direct encounter and interaction of citizens like the ancient Greek agora

(see also Baird 1995) against depoliticized mediation and commodification of the contemporary (built) environment. Yet regionalist as well as organicist tendencies are as much a product of rigorous modernization as they carry an anti-urban, anti-technological and anti-pluralistic undercurrent that sets an ideal oneness of community and culture against the experience of estrangement, fragmentation and loss in society, what makes them an ideological construct in need of a dialectical analysis as much as the enlightenment project they stem from (Dal Co 1979). Already Marx had hoped to overcome capitalist division of labour and estrangement with free, self-fulfilling production, and gave rise to an anti-technological resentment exposed in the Arts and Crafts movement and later through expressionism, organicism, regionalism and contemporary consumer-producer models. Apart from its cynicism, Koolhaas' counter- attack on the identity, authenticity and historicity of the (European) city has its merit in pointing out the liberating effects of thinking architecture beyond memory and place or utopist planning theories (1994). In contrast to Benjamin, however, who conceptualized the emancipatory potential of technical reproduction and the urban culture of the everyday, Koolhaas does not offer a critical project – such as the 'politicization of art' – any longer.

OUTLOOK: WHAT IS *LEFT* IN ARCHITECTURE?

How can architecture be resistant to the omnipresence of global capitalism and consumerist culture? Since crisis is an existential part of the process of capitalism, critical gestures are internalized, recycled and exploited as formal novelty and comment ('recuperation'), such as urban guerilla tactics for product placement and branding (Von Borries 2004), or situationist experiments for staging urbanity and creating events. However, if utopian planning, even in actually existing socialism, has not been able to project an architectural and urban alternative to imperialist representations of power and capitalist consumer culture, but instead has reproduced totalitarian environments, does this mean that a critical practice in architecture is as much 'falsified' as scientific Marxism (Popper 1945)? What about El Lisitzky's experimental Cloud Iron, exploring an architecture that articulates communal ownership of the ground and the new economic base of society? Or the examples listed by Tafuri: the 'Siedlungen' of the German Weimar Republic, the housing blocks of Red Vienna, the park and urban redevelopments of Olmsted, all taking a social stance within the system? If it is rather the social content of architecture than the formal autonomy that constitutes a 'critical' project within the discipline, then even the 'projective' could become part of the continuation and legacy of modernity as an unfinished project, as Hilde Heynen suggests.[6]

If critical thought is still to play a role and be possible in architecture, and critical practice is to be possible at all, criticism – and above all critics – must become aware of the mechanisms, conditions and dependencies of critical thought and critical production, make lucid its objectives and instruments, and understand how these questions are connected with each other and with the socio-economic, cultural and political whole, all of which go far beyond the current hefty academic exchange of 'critical' and 'post-critical' arguments. One example is the self-criticism of Bruno Latour (2004) who examined the crisis of critique against the background of the aggravated rhetoric of war (against terrorism) in 2003. With some concern, he notes the instrumentalization of criticism by political opinion-makers and controlled media, who have appropriated arguments and strategies of critical theory in order to use them for manipulative purposes, having understood that its analytical force promotes suspicion of *any* kind of argumentation, even if it goes against the interests of the enlightened public itself.

Precisely because the critical theory of the past three decades has challenged the legitimization of classical concepts of enlightenment such as 'truth', 'scientific method' or 'reality', unmasking them as social constructions, it contributes to the relativization and construction of 'realities' that have led to the perversion of the emancipatory goals of criticism, to a loss of meaningfulness, perspicuity and reality, and to anti-Empiricism instead of a renewal of empirical thought. But if criticism turns into a critical gesture or, worse, into arbitrariness, relativity and conspiracy theories (that is, into an instrument of disinformation political manipulation of public opinion and a product of media consumption) criticism must review its attitude, instruments and methods in order to adjust them once again to its original topics and objectives: instead of abstraction, deconstruction and subtraction of 'matters of fact', Latour demands realism, construction and addition – a critical theory that '*takes care of things*' (2004, 233).

Architecture has yet to take stock of the 'critical arsenal' in Latour's sense. Even if we look sceptically at this martial metaphor, critical theory and practice as potential, enrichment, participation and discourse – as 'gathering' in a political, spatial and disciplinary sense that interprets the contiguity of architecture with society, culture, media, technology, economy and production as a gift and not as a handicap, in order to progress out of this condition to arrive at specific architectural interventions and theoretical concepts – thus displays starting points that must be further pursued. We will then explore how the theory of architecture must be fundamentally re-formulated to move beyond the loop of the established academic machine of the 'critical', 'post-critical', 'post-theoretical' or, quite simply, cynical, affirmative camps and towards constructive criticism. In the redefinition of a critical agenda, the distinction between an operative criticism that examines the mode of handling the architectural material (that is, the architectural project, object, questions of form, structure, programme, construction, materialization, image, effect, atmosphere, etc.) and a content-based criticism that reflects on architecture as an exemplification of cultural, political and economic societal conditions has to be resolved. Instead of going on to separate meaning (or aesthetics) from performance (or politics) and mistake one for the other, a new critical theory in architecture will involve reflective and projective modes, contemplative critique and active intervention. The difference between theory and practice will not play such a major role as maintained by Tafuri, for a theoretical text is just as much a design and a cultural product, is as involved in interactions and dependencies, and is as much a part of a market as an architectural project.

Such a conception of criticism will gather and focus precisely these different factors, levels, and discourses of architecture so that the naturally ensuing interaction, friction and conflicts, arrive at emergent realities instead of settling for monolithic discourse systems and firmly codified disciplinary roles. By self-critically reflecting on its own status and the conditionality of architecture, dialectically examining replication and autonomy, visualizing the construction of 'reality' as one of various possible 'truths', this criticism will lift the architectural discussion above the formal expression of a contemporary mood, above service, fashion or lifestyle, recontextualizing it in society, culture and everyday experience. Critical thought deals with the public sphere, clients and their (political) views, production, funding and ownership, questions of accessibility, participation, urbanity and public space. It seeks concurrence, density, engagement, exchange, discussion and conflicts, and takes part in negotiating private and public interests, albeit not in isolation from the search for architectural quality and its criteria. In short, it scrutinizes the plausible relationship between form and society, as Koolhaas has already observed.

NOTES

1 George Baird goes so far as to talk about an oedipal complex of the younger generation, hinting at the manifold personal links between the authors of critical and post-critical theory (Baird 2004, 17–18).

2 The title of the essay should be understood in this sense: An architecture that locks itself in the endless loop of language, excluding all other links (*contiguity*), that speaks only of itself, is decoration, representation and social conversation – *L'Architecture dans le Boudoir* – is maximum formal freedom by maximizing rationalistic terror, a strategy that Tafuri compares to the literature of the Marquis de Sade and that alludes directly to the chapter dedicated to de Sade 'Excursus II: Juliette or Enlightenment and Morality' in Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectics of Enlightenment*.

3 The well-known 'Monte Amiata' housing block in the Gallaratese quarter of Milan designed by Aldo Rossi in 1969–1973 was originally a condominium investor project that referred typologically and spatially to the access arcade of Italian worker housing of the nineteenth century. Ironically it was seized by urban squatters in 1974 (Fezer 2003)

4 de Certeau (1984, 26): 'The actual order of things is precisely what "popular" tactics turn to their own ends, without an illusion that it will change any time soon. Though elsewhere it is exploited by a dominant power or simply denied by an ideological discourse, here order is *tricked* by an art. Into the institution to be served are thus insinuated styles of social exchange, technical invention, and moral resistance, that is, an economy of the "*gift*" (generosities for which one expects a return), an esthetics of "*tricks*" (artists' operations) and an ethics of *tenacity* (countless ways of refusing to accord the established order the status of a law, a meaning, or a fatality).'

5 Augé (1995, 77–78): 'If a place can be defined as relational, historical and concerned with identity, then a space which cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity will be a non-place. The hypothesis advanced here is that supermodernity produces non-places, meaning spaces which are not themselves anthropological places and which, unlike Baudelarian modernity, do not integrate the earlier places: [...]'

6 Hilde Heynen (in Rendell et al. 2007, 53): 'The driving force behind this position [projective theory] is the indignation concerning the fact that social reality continues to be oppressive and unjust, and the conviction that, as long as this situation remains persistent, the need for critique remains as urgent as ever.'