

Architectural Association School of Architecture
City/Architecture PhD Programme



End-of-Term Presentations
March 27, 2019

Wednesday, March 27, 2019
Programme

33 Bedford Square, First Floor, Front Room

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15.20 Gili Merin

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16.40 Ioanna Piniara

17.20 Lukas Pauer

18.00 Georgios Eftaxiopoulos

18.40 Brendon Nikolas Carlin

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Enrica Maria Mannelli

THE SOCIAL FACTORY

Social Movements from Autonomy to Precarity: Italy, 1962-2020



ROMA 1977. Ragazza e carabinieri. TANO D'AMICO

Tano D'Amico, *Girl and Guards, Rome* (1977)

This thesis studies the evolution of the “social factory”, focusing on Italy over the last 60 years as a case study. The concept of the social factory refers to a reading of the city as a system in which production is not limited to the workplace but is instead extended to the whole society. It is the process of exploitation and commodification of every aspect of the city, with the latter intended as the sum of spaces and relationships in which urban life takes place. The concept of the social factory was developed by Mario Tronti in the early 1960s as a reading of the Fordist society: *“At the highest level of Capitalist development, the social relation is transformed into a moment of the relation of production, the whole of society is turned into an articulation of production, that is, the whole of society lives as a function of the factory and the factory extends its exclusive domination to the whole of society”*.

Therefore, the city is a factory itself, planned to fulfil the main goal of reproducing the labour force, i.e. making people productive. It is a system driven by capital and profit, where every single part of it (factories, housing, parks) and activity (work, housing, leisure) has a precise role and is planned according to the main production system. In the Fordist era, the factory was the main space of production and the workplace for excellence; today, however, at a time when we see the relentless increase of creative jobs, we are unable to mark the spatial boundaries of the work field. In the last 60 years, we have moved from the factory assembly line to the contemporary creative factory that exploits intellectual work.

As an illustration of this shift in the nature of work, Italy represents an interesting case study on account of the extensive theoretical and political contributions made by Italian thinkers and practitioners in the 1960s and 1970s on this precise topic. This thesis proposes to investigate the evolution of the social factory from the urban perspective, with the aim of creating a compelling history of the spatiality of these shifts that complements existing literature. In order to question the relationship and the influence of these shifts on the urban pattern, this research will analyse several Italian cities during the last 60 years: Turin, the factory; Bologna, the creative city; Rome, the autonomous social centre; Milan, the cooptation of the autonomous social centre. In doing so, it questions the urban form in two ways: as an outcome of the capitalist system, reading urban planning as a means of capitalism itself; and as a contested spatiality in which the struggles of workers and citizens occur.

Ultimately, this research project aims to suggest an urban policy able to tackle the Roman social factory, and to enable a system of social factory workshops. It identifies the Centro Sociale Occupato Autogestito (Self-managed occupied social centre; CSOA) as an important moment within the evolution of Italian theories of autonomy, and as an opportunity to challenge the relentless nature of capitalism.

Thesis Structure

I. The Factory

Turin and Fiat: Working Class Struggles in the 1960s

II. The Squat

Squatting in Bologna in the 1970s by the Metropolitan Indians and the Theory of Autonomia

III. The CSOA

The Self-Managed Occupied Social Centre as the “Island”
where Radical Thought can be Cultivated

IV. The Creative District

Freelance Jobs and the Commodification of Creativity in Milan in the 1980s and 1990s

V. The Social Factory

A Project for Rome

An overview of the entire Thesis
will be presented on Wednesday, March 27

Cosimo Campani
LA FABBRICETTA
Material Production in Europe from 1970 to 2040



This thesis is concerned with the difficulties that the disciplines of architecture and urbanism have encountered in articulating the social questions which characterizes the contemporary European metropolis (and possibly its future evolutions). The main focus is how material production, such as manufacturing, returns as an important element in reading and designing the city.

Starting with general analysis on the contemporary city, the essay indeed attempts to tackle the broader historical, social and political issues emerging in today's metropolis. For the past thirty years a growing body of research has observed the socio-political role of immaterial production in a service-based economy (Lazzarato 1996; Negri 2000; Virno 2004;) abandoning important fields of research, such as the socio-political role of manufacturing. Along with this intellectual trend, as well as the disruptive forces of globalization, the project to escape the crisis from European industrial policies have to compete with large scale productions, where small and medium-sized economies are left behind (Becattini, 2009). As a matter of fact, this thesis becomes a counter-project, claiming for the emergence of new types of industrial districts, whose concern is to bring production back to the city, maintaining the ability to produce physical products as political statement.

Within this perspective, the *Fabbrichetta* represent an architectural and urban tool to speculate on the importance of new forms of organisations of labour, such as cooperatives, social movements, citizen initiatives and spontaneous modes of production, challenged by the contemporary territory - or a limitless city (Cacciari 2004) - where every traditional *forma urbis* needs to be reinterpreted.

La Fabbrichetta has the specific intent to reflect upon local-development as well as the problem of de-localization to conclusively defend the need for a socio-political re-conception of architecture and urbanism, in which researchers and practitioners go back to the fundamental questions of production within the city: How does production land concretely and precisely in spaces? And how the project of the *Fabbrichetta* deals with spaces and dynamics of new forms of material production?

Thesis Structure

Introduction

I.

The rift between material and immaterial work
Overcoming an Ideological Conflict

II.

Legacy of Fabbrichetta
The Case of Veneto From 70s to the 80s

III.

The Chinese Fabbrichetta
Prato, 1990.

IV.

Miniaturization and Technosouth
The Territory of Naples

Epilogue

An overview of the entire Thesis
will be presented on Wednesday, March 27

Gili Merin
TOWARDS JERUSALEM
The Architecture of Pilgrimage



Gili Merin, *Temple Church, London* (2019)

The thesis explores the ritual of sacred travel to the City of Jerusalem. It places pilgrimage as a project in which the pilgrim, as an independent subject who is led by spiritual orientation, contributes to the appropriation of the cities and landscapes that he or she is perpetually crossing. While pilgrimage is indeed acknowledged as a journey in pursuit of a religious objective, it will nevertheless be studied, in this thesis, as a powerful social and cultural vector that often destabilized the economic, civic, and political conditions of the places of worship. The thesis will expand the definition of pilgrimage to Jerusalem by including a variety of analogous ‘Jeruselems’ that proliferated around the world as pilgrimage sites in their own right. As such, it will place the ritual of travel to the City of Jerusalem as a flexible practice that is not geographically confined but could be enacted by the varied combination of text, place, memory, and visual imagination— all of which are inherent components of Christian devotion.

The thesis will unfold both chronologically and thematically in order to explore how the mentality of pilgrims and the scenography of pilgrimage has produced particular structures, landscapes, and representations that I refer to as the *Architecture of Pilgrimage*. Each of the five chapters looks both into a specific era in the history of Jerusalem pilgrimage (early Christianity, the Middle Ages, the beginning of Modernity and the 20th Century), as well as a particular theme, such as the fabrication of sacred landscapes, the intelligence of analogical thinking, the importance of movement in ritual, the politics of heritage and preservation, and the formation of collective memory. While these paradigmatic ideas did not necessarily originate in Jerusalem, the city’s condition allows their examination in a state of acceleration and saturation.

The design component of the thesis is a photographic guide of Jerusalem pilgrimage. It will depict archaeological sites of pilgrimage, analogical Jeruselems in Premodern Europe; and key sites of formal and spatial transformations by pilgrims-turned-occupiers of Jerusalem itself. As documentation, it will provide primary evidence of the current condition of Jerusalem pilgrimage. As representation, it will join a lineage of past endeavours that has used the medium of photography to frame spaces as a tool of architectural design. As a series, the images will unfold along the itinerary of the thesis and form a cartography of pilgrimage. As a project, it will trace, define, and speculate on a possible new route *Towards Jerusalem*.

Thesis Structure

I. Introduction

A Brief History of a Contested City

II. The New Topographics

The Invention of Christian Pilgrimage in the Fourth Century

III. The Basilica and the Rotunda

The Concept of Analogy and the Rise of Urban Pilgrimage in Medieval Europe

IV. Station to Station

The Crystallization of the Way of the Cross in the *Sacri Monti* of Northern Italy

V. Locating the 'Real' Jerusalem

The Scientification of Pilgrimage through Archeology and Photography Modernity

VI. Main Street Jerusalem

The Commodification and Heritage-isation of Pilgrimage in the 20th Century

V. Design Project

Abstract of Chapter III

which will be presented on Wednesday, March 27

The Basilica and the Rotunda

The Concept of Analogy and the Rise of Urban Pilgrimage in Medieval Europe

The chapter will explore Medieval pilgrimage sites that acted as an alternative to the City of Jerusalem. These *other* Jerusalems proliferated in scale, quantity, and complexity from the Seventh to the Fifteenth Century across Europe, mostly in today's England, Germany, and Italy. Their construction responded to a growing need of pilgrimage sites as the ritual was becoming both popular and difficult: on the one hand, it was now quantified by the Church into indulgences and pardons; at the same time, Jerusalem itself was closing its gates to Christians and Jews following the arrival of Islamic rulers. Hence, a multitude of sites had to serve as a replacement to the city in the East.

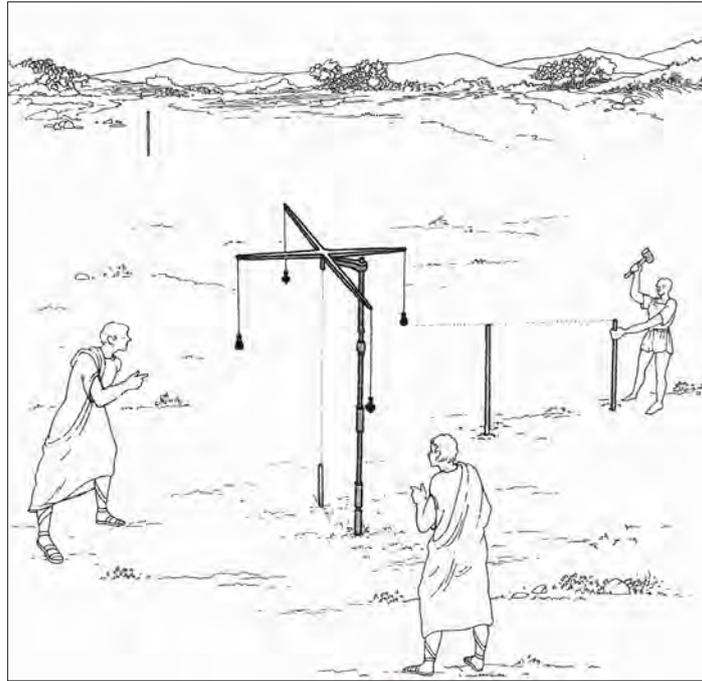
This chapter will examine these case studies using the concept of *Analogy* by treating these sites as analogous Jerusalems. Analogy (from the Greek *analogia* or the latin *proportio*) is a similarity found between two structural patterns or compositions. Plato suggested that analogous objects share an idea, an abstraction or a composition; Giorgio Agamben's reading of Aristotle defines analogy, not as an induction nor a reduction, but a transfer of intelligibility from one singular to another singular. A specific terminology identifies the analogy between a *source* and a *target*, the latter being analogous to the original. The target is then not a copy of the source: it borrows an abstract idea or a logic and is then recomposed in its own manner. In the context of this chapter, the *source* - that is, the structural pattern that is abstracted from the larger context, is found within Jerusalem's Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Its *targets*, or its analogies across the West, share, in this case, its spatial configuration: the architectural coupling of a Rotunda and a Basilica.

In Jerusalem, or the *source*, these two substantial components mark not only two historically-charged sites (the place of burial and the hill of crucifixion) but also two types of devotional containers - a centrifugal room encompassing a holy object, and an elongated, linear space for processions. The existence of these two points within one complex enables the reenactments of the ritual of movement between stations, a seminal component of Christian worship in general and Holy Land pilgrimage in particular.

Aylin Ayse Tarlan

FIGURE/GROUND

The Process of Prioritization in the Representation of Urban Form



G. Moscara, *Roman 'agrimensores' surveyors at work*

This thesis studies the position of Figure and Ground in urban representation, from the Roman urban survey plans to today's digital cartography. It will start by investigating the origins of the terms Figure and Ground in different fields such as optics, perception, Gestalt psychology, art and early representations of cities. Then, it will unfold both genealogically and thematically in a series of case studies of different representations of urban form.

The thesis problematizes the process of prioritization of information during the production of urban form, the object through which we can directly assess Figure Ground. This question becomes more and more relevant in digital cartography where the organization of data relies on software, thus leaving the process of foregrounding and backgrounding unsettled. The thesis will initially study this process through an investigation of the use of this terminology in urban representation and theory. The word "Forma" was first used to address an object during the Roman Centuria. "Forma", a document inscribed in a bronze tablet, collected the evidence of subdivision and privatization of land during colonization. It was a process of recording land ownership done by surveyors, marking the beginning of representation of urban form. Also the theme Figure Ground has been a major topic in more recent architectural discourses, since it was placed by Colin Rowe in *Collage City*. Though Figure Ground isn't merely an exercise of form; a black-white or mass-void drawing, as he mentioned and developed, it is an instrument of clarity. It creates legibility in the sake of hierarchy bringing with it ideological, cultural, political consequences. To further investigate this phenomena, the thesis will analyze a series of examples from *Forma Urbis*, Buffalini and Nolli to Cassini maps.

The genealogical research intends to explore the increasing scientific methods and technology used in the production of urban form. These representations, maps as we know them serve to make land ownership a readable data. First, it will explore *Forma Urbis* which is the projection of the city's footprint on to a two-dimensional plane marking the beginning of cartography, therefore the production of urban form. Although, there are many other ways of producing urban form; such as figures, monuments, memory, imagination and symbolism-a. All of these are displaced by the Forma being an abstraction through measure, which is instrumental to cadastral knowledge of the city. Then it will look at maps done by Leonardo Bufalini and Giambattista Nolli, who were both experts in cadastral survey and applied this specific technique into the maps of Rome which they produced.

These maps are particularly relevant because they created a gradual displacement of architecture as an artifact by the abstraction of cartography. These maps defined land ownership in the eighteenth-century Rome and were the basis for urban reform. We can observe a similar approach in the Cassini maps produced with a geodetic triangulation grid and served to detect limits of the kingdom's territory thus consolidate internal economic markets. So, to understand the process of making urban form, it is imperative to investigate closely the scientific methods developed in these specific case studies. The design component will follow this, aiming to explore digitally produced maps. As a documentation, it will provide an evidence on the current condition of mapping processes and as a project, it will speculate the process of prioritization of data using contemporary technologies.

Thesis Structure

Introduction

I.

Origins and Use

II.

Figure and Ground in Illustrative Maps

III.

Figure and Ground in Iconographic Maps

IV.

Figure and Ground in Road Maps

V.

Figure and Ground in Orthogonal Maps

VI.

Design Project

Ioanna Piniara

WE HAVE NEVER BEEN PRIVATE! The Housing Project in Neoliberal Europe



Learning from long-lasting communities: block settlement from the 1950s in Kessariani, central Athens.

The thesis puts forward an interpretation of the management of domestic space through the transformation of the concept of the *private* within the socio-economic regime known as neoliberalism. In this light, the thesis proposes a critical reassessment of housing *privatization* not merely as a policy introduced in the 1980s to promote new contractual relationships, but as a state-market partnership strategy, already stemming from post-war ideas on urban restructuring, to establish a change of ethos, culture and organization of housing. The thesis argues that, due to its economic usage associated with property and individualism, the private has hardly existed as such in the neoliberal era. The daunting failure of the market-based homeownership model and the alarming issues of alienation and care in the urban domestic realm, negate privacy as an affirmation of essential autonomy, while, on the contrary, raise links with its classical concept of deprivation.

The thesis deploys a typological study as the main methodological tool to demystify the rationale of the neoliberal city through selected urban housing schemes in London, Berlin and Athens, which mark both a geographical and chronological arrow of neoliberal advance: from anticipation to severe crisis. The Barbican Estate (1952-82) introduces council housing to a broader cultural project to recapitalize on urbanity by promoting a certain image of subjectivity and lifestyle in the city-centre. The International Building Exhibition (IBA) of 1987 renders housing policy as the regulator of advanced neoliberal conflicts between globally competitive architecture and urban form as the indicator of historical and proprietary relations. The last case study portrays the galloping neoliberalization of a society in lack of a strong welfare state tradition: the derailment of mass petit-bourgeois home ownership into an ill-practiced model of ‘villafication’ of the centre based on unsustainable debt. The conversion scheme ‘One Athens’ (2007-2014) opens up to the latest neoliberal trend: the colonization of urban housing infrastructure in crisis by large-scale international investment capital. Therefore, the projective part of the thesis proposes a shift from economy towards an *ecology of the private*. Ecology, originally denoting reasonable use of the habitat, addresses the housing question through an alternative system of values on the juridical, institutional and typological level which put forward different scenarios of symbiosis and the right to privacy as the right to the city: a refusal to be excluded from urban reality.

Thesis Structure

Introduction

The Public Production of the Private: A Brief Genealogy

I. Neoliberalism, Planning, and the Housing Sector

II. Neoliberalism as a Project of Urban Marketing

Ideas tested at the Barbican Estate (London 1952-1982)

III. 'The Inner City as Residential Area', IBA Berlin 1984/87

Housing Policy and the Preservation of Urban Form (Berlin, 1978-1989)

IV. The Vill(a)fication of the City Centre

The Rise and Fall of the Asset-Seeking Society (Athens, 1999-2019)

V. Towards an Ecology of the Private

Is-land Trust Communities

Abstract of Chapter V

which will be presented on Wednesday, March 27

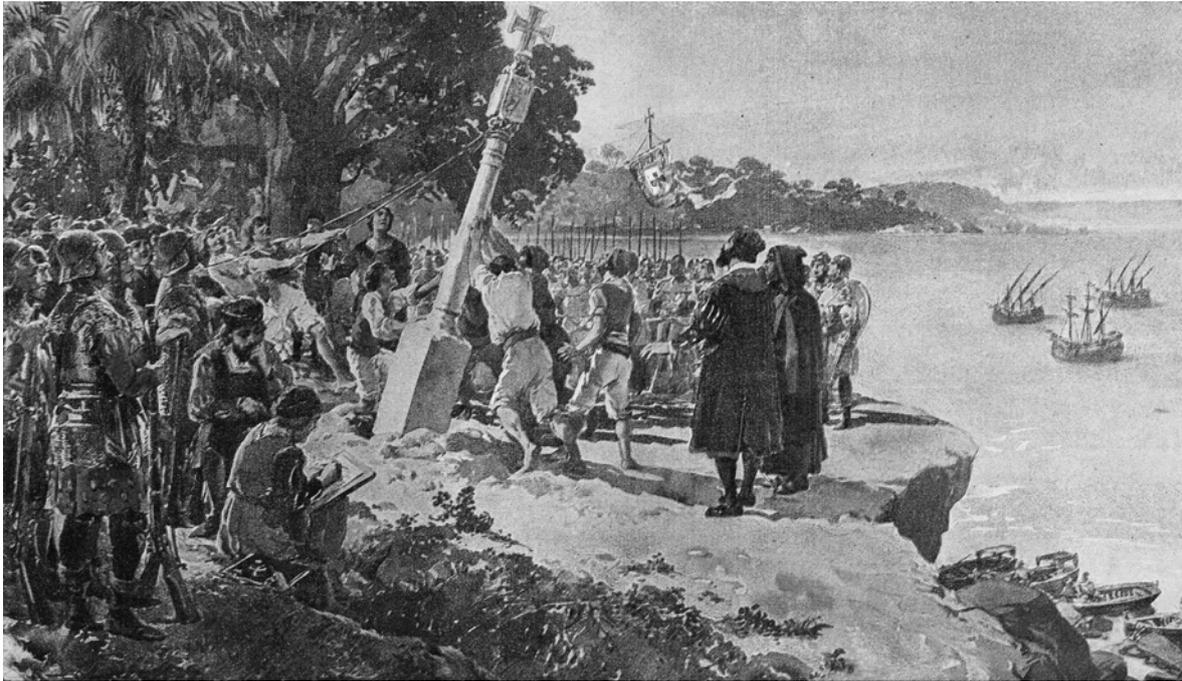
Towards an Ecology of the Private Is-land Trust Communities

This chapter consists of an anthropological account of the private and a strategy for a model of inner-city living in a joint endeavour to reinstate the private as a spatial question. The concept of ecology, as an operational and organizational principle originally denoting *reasonable use* of the habitat, is facilitated by Kant's idea of *common sense* as a way to temper ill-devised private sense. Thus, the spatial resolution aims to address privacy as the possibility of preserving personal autonomy through a practice of commoning.

The proposal aims to escape the neoliberal binary logic of private and public as corporate-individual versus corporate-state, and is structured on three levels: a juridical framework, an urban strategy and an architectural resolution. The first two concern some of the most historical, yet decaying, social housing programmes in central Athens, known as the 'refugee block settlements', and aim to challenge their image in people's imagination as accommodation for marginal communities. This will culminate in a project of retrofitting for a particular one, the 'Triangle' settlement in the district of Kessariani. The policy adopts the radical form of market-removed community-owned land found in the institution of the *community land trust* (CLT) which acts as a steward, and goes beyond this premise to promote the complete substitution of individual title with a system of concession for living units. The corresponding municipality is the juridical instrument which is responsible to instigate CLTs within its jurisdiction and foster collaboration between city administrations, especially in CLT areas that affect both.

As urban forms, these settlements are identified as *island ecologies*; they demonstrate distinct geometry, density and taxonomy that contradict the proprietary and canonical logic of urbanization, they engage directly with particular features of topography and nature, and they foster an idea of boundary based on openness rather than enclosure. As entities they can only resist the struggles against the capitalistic city under a common system of governance which is a confederation of islands within a municipal jurisdiction; an *archipelago*. Finally, the project of Kessariani, aims to flesh out this alternative set of values (inclusion, participation, trust, openness) that circumscribe the ecology of the private through protocols of *symbiosis*. These are manifest in three organizational aspects: housing typology, network of open green spaces and additional communal services.

STAGING FACTS ON THE GROUND On Territorial Markers in Contested Territories



Padrão Gameiro, Erguido pelos Portugueses na Foz do Zaire (1917)

Objects that are seemingly minor or banal can nevertheless have enormous territorial implications. Artifacts can legitimize the demarcation of boundaries to acquire authority on the ground. Presently, contemporary discourse tends to portray nation-state borders as thoroughly impermeable and easy to physically demarcate. However, the reality of physical demarcation between political entities throughout history is more vague, porous, and fluid. Still today, the world is fragmented into issue-related enclaves, which surpass the seemingly continuous borders of the nation-state; gated districts, segregated districts, sanctuary districts, special purpose districts, special economic zones, demilitarized zones, internment camps, refugee camps, etc. Their exception to the nation-state border forms the predominant condition of urbanization.

The problematic of this research is that scholarly discourse predominantly focuses on the concepts envisioned to frame territorial sovereignty such as the umbrella term of globalization. However, social relations are materialized in space. Still, sovereignty's actual materials implemented and executed as devices on the ground have rarely been subjected to theorizing throughout history. These often primitive but specific devices in their various historic appearances are subject and structure to this research; sanctuaries as markers in ancient times, freeports as markers in medieval times, beacons as markers in modern times, and co-lo facilities in contemporary times. The hypothesis of this research is that it claims the possibility of defining sovereignty as a material condition, becoming apparent through human-made spatial facts on the ground at various scales and technologies. In other words, this research links authority, an immaterial force, to its ground via the marker, a material form.

In its larger aim, it seeks to interrogate the ability of architectural design practice to manifest sovereignty in contested conditions where stable and extensive means of demarcation are challenged. This will ultimately allow the audience of this research to reconcile with a condition which has always been inherent but never been untangled.

Thesis Structure

I. Sanctity Markers

Ancient Sanctuaries, Procession Paths, and Power Projection as Scenographical Practice

II. Mercantility Outposts

Medieval Freeports, Trade Routes, and Power Projection as Extraterritorial Practice

III. Telecommunication Stations

Modern Beacons, Signal Lines, and Power Projection as Geodetical Practice

IV. Distribution Centers

Contemporary Depots, Supply Corridors, and Power Projection as Infrastructural Practice

V. Projective Kit-of-Tools

Identification of Applicable Design Techniques

Abstract of Chapter II

which will be presented on Wednesday, March 27

Mercantility Outposts:

Medieval Freeports, Trade Routes, and Power Projection as Extraterritorial Practice

This chapter establishes how commercial compounds played a fundamental role in how politically organized communities projected authority and influence over their land. It draws from social constructionism in its realization that meanings and associations placed on architectural types of merchant inns, market crosses, and counter houses were regionally and culturally constructed through contextual activities within medieval communities. This chapter illustrates how medieval communities appropriated the freeport as a device for laying claim to space through extraterritorial practice, which remains relevant until today. Through the design of enclosed compounds such as the aforementioned types, associations of merchants were clustered to exercise their communities' rights, privileges, and obligations. The chapter distinguishes between an Eastern paradigm of Arabo-Persian and Latin practices that originated along the Mediterranean Sea and an Occidental paradigm of Hanseatic and Portuguese practices that originated along the Atlantic Ocean.

The medieval Eastern practice of *Ahdname* as a type of negotiated charter capitulated a domestic authority's personal rights over specific subjects to a foreign authority. A merchant inn provided foreign merchants with a place of hospitality in order to ensure protection during their commercial activities across intercommunal trade routes. The multifunctional compound was outfitted with spaces to allow associations to temporarily lodge, store (warehouse), and sell (courtyard) their goods as well as to carry out community-building activities through locally provided amenities (altar, bathbasin, oven, etc). The merchant inn embodied an approach to intercommunal relations based on the reciprocal respect between different cultures.

The medieval Occidental practice of *Cartaz* as a type of imposed charter conceded a domestic authority's territorial rights over specific grounds to a foreign authority. Otherwise unauthorized to settle, a counter house enabled foreign associations of merchants to jointly own or rent property. The multifunctional compound allowed associations not only to permanently lodge, store (warehouse), and sell (courtyard) but also to lift (cranehouse), measure (weighhouse), tariff (customhouse), and insure their goods in-house. The fortified architecture of the counter house embodied an approach to intercommunal relations based on the asymmetric disregard of foreign cultures, which were viewed as outside the 'pale of civilization', beyond the sphere of 'international law'.

Ultimately, the chapter traces a shift from an Eastern to an Occidental paradigm in the approach to seeking protection from the imposition of trade duties and barriers. On the one hand, the Eastern approach is based on a personality of consular jurisdiction. Arabo-Persian and Latin envoys of commercial fraternities, guilds, or nations arbitrated disputes to defend common professional interests when maintaining intercommunal relations along trade routes. On the other hand, the Occidental approach is based on a territoriality of sovereign jurisdiction. Hanseatic and Portuguese trade agents did not rely anymore on the protective hospitality of domestic authorities but took matters in their own hands through often coercive means of imperialistic expansion, literally and figuratively putting their stake in the ground.

Georgios Eftaxiopoulos

STASIS

Towards a Critique of Flexibility in Architecture



Interior View of Facebook's MPK20, Menlo Park, USA (Washington Post, 2015)

Flexibility, nowadays, constitutes the canon. Within an environment of constant estrangement and uprootedness, it is applied as a technique in order to achieve living spaces that are able to accommodate a series of different occupations, lifestyles and needs. This thesis argues that flexibility, antithetically, operates as an architectural tool towards the transformation of spaces that become far from being 'free', and instead alienate and restrict their inhabitants. In a period during which production has become a totalizing condition and has spread into the entire city, flexibility translates into a contemporary disguise covering the rigidity and stiffness of the market. Camouflaged through its rhetorical etymology, it produces a strange paradox; on one hand, enabling change and potential, and on the other hand, dictating it.

Introduced as a concept in parallel to the rise of industrialization, flexibility's embodiment became the architecture of the industrial city. Providing a more efficient organization of production and larger construction possibilities capable of housing the grand machines of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, it manifested itself through the implementation of capital's demands. From the early warehouses and textile mills, to the invention of the assembly-line and the single-story multifunctional shed, it offered a high level of optimization, surveillance and control. It was its embedded attribute—to anticipate changes and develop a fertile ground for production to advance—, which at the end of the twentieth century emerged into a rationale for the unfolding of the domestic life and the guarantor of new ways of living.

Problematizing this positive aura, the project will read flexibility in its critical dimension and conceptualize it through the idea of stasis. In particular, it will claim that, within our constant flux, flexibility unfolds as a technique to achieve a state of stillness and stability, relinquishing change and fixity as a mutually exclusive condition. Conclusively, with the intend to look beyond its phantasmagoria, the thesis, rather than distinguishing between 'bad flexibility' and 'good flexibility,' will claim that flexibility can neither act nor represent the potentiality and the refuge from production and exploitation; suggesting a new condition. A design system that rethinks the city as a storage.

Thesis Structure

Introduction

The Genealogy of Flexibility

I. Just-In-Time

West India Docks and the Urgency for Accumulation

II. Flexibility takes Command

Crystal Palace and the Rise of Liberalism

III. Permanent Flexibility

Fun Palace and the Surplus Value in Free Time

IV. Hyper-Flexibility

MPK20 and the New Flexible Accumulation

V. Frangar, Non Flectar

A New Grammar

An overview of the Design Component (Chapter V)
will be presented on Wednesday, March 27

Brendon Nikolas Carlin

DETERRITORIALISING INTERIORS Non-Typological Housing in Contemporary Japan



Kazuyo Sejima + Ryue Nishizawa / SANAA, Shakuji Apartments - 2009 (copyright: wakiiii Flickr)

The thesis will put forward a critique of ‘award winning’ contemporary Japanese architecture and its relationship to the production of labour subjectivity through a close reading of selected examples of Japanese housing since 1950 which tend towards a condition to be referred to here as *non-typological*. Typology in architecture refers to the knowledge of *Types*, which can be described as composed of abstract ideas, criteria, categories, and rule systems for the distribution of form, programme and symbolism. Housing became an architectural, typological project when the strategically managed *reproduction* of labour emerged as the focus of a cultural project as political strategy. Since the end of the Second World War in Europe the U.S. and Japan several examples of housing have emerged which tend towards being devoid of, or effacing typological composition, whether spatio-strategic, representational or symbolic.

The thesis will focus on a close reading of a selected Japanese houses and housing that tend towards non-typological which have emerged surrounding 3 important moments of historical, cultural-economic rupture in Japan: the 1950s following the vast destruction of the Second World War, the 70s after a wave of major political turmoil and economic boom and 90s when Japan was plunged into the recession of what is referred to as the *Lost Decade*. Because Japanese houses are so influential for architects and the production of the city today, common characterisations that associate the work with terms or ideas like softness, lightness, innocence, and freedom have become mystifications of work that has radical political indications and implications and wide influence on architectural culture at large. When these projects are contextualised within a Japanese history of domestication, modes of production, labour management and subjectivity they reveal a pivotal significance to the urgent development of architectural theory.

Thesis Structure

Introduction

I. One Room

Towards Non-Typological Housing in Post War Japan

II. Concrete Voids

Non-Compositional Housing in 1970s Japan

III. A House with No Walls

Japan's *Lost Decade* and the Architecture of *Homelessness*

IV. Conclusion

Design Project

Abstract of Chapter III

which will be presented on Wednesday, March 27

A House with No Walls

Japan's *Lost Decade* and the Architecture of *Homelessness*

In a contentious interview with Koji Taki, Kazuyo Sejima revealed why she had left Toyo Ito's practice in 1986 after working there for six years. While working on the project for the Tokyo convenience store girl (ostensibly Sejima) who fled the nuclear family and floated glamorously on streams of information, she said she began to feel "twinges of resistance" to Ito's approach. He was perpetuating "old architectural concepts" she thought; her approach couldn't be more different - she saw architecture as an open stage. It would not wrap but accommodate or even encourage freedom of movement, allowing people to 'pass through' freely.

Sejima's predecessors in the 1970s, Takefumi Aida, Hiromi Fujii and Toyo Ito himself (before he 'opened' his houses), referred to later as the Japanese New Wave, designed darkly nihilistic and closed houses that turned their backs on the city. Beginning with her Platform Houses in the late 80s, Sejima and her protégées, Ryue Nishizawa and Junya Ishigami opened up and embraced a 21st century city that she often proposed might be 'non-ideological'. When considered within a cultural, economic and political context - the features which have become characteristic of their architecture: an openness of the interior, transparency towards exterior and lightness, 'frailty' and innocence in architecture - become illuminating material portraits of how contemporary forms of power tend to strip bare the façade, the plan, and references or orientation, and finally, any visibility of enclosure. In the case of Sejima and SANAA, this has left an architecture of an enticing, subtle comfort and beauty, painstakingly conceived of through hundreds of models per project as process, countless hours of labour and through innovations in architectural technology and paradoxically, employed towards an evacuation of any visible traces of history.