Paradoxes of Domesticity and Modernity
Martínez Millana, Elena

Publication date
2018

Document Version
Final published version

Published in
Critic|all, 3rd International Conference on Architecture Design & Criticism

Citation (APA)

Important note
To cite this publication, please use the final published version (if applicable). Please check the document version above.

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### Conference Program

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THURSDAY 26 · 04· 2018

14:30 - 16:00  panel #1 [anthology problematized]

- Alessandro Canevari
  Università degli Studi di Genova, dAD, Genova, Italy
- Marcos Pantaleón
  Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Departamento de Proyectos Arquitectónicos, Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura, Madrid
- Giacomo Pala
  Institute of Architectural Theory (Architekturtheorie), Innsbruck, Austria
- Jorge Minguet Medina + Carlos Tapia Martín
  Grupo de Investigación DUT, Arquías. Departamento de Historia, Teoría y Composición Arquitectónicas, ETS Arquitectura, Universidad de Sevilla, Spain

Moderators:
- Ignacio Borrego
  Full Professor at the Technische Universität Berlin
- Sergio Martín Blas
  Associate Teacher of the Architectural Design Department at the ETSAM (UPM)

16:00 Coffee break

16:30 - 17:45  panel #2 [the spanish perspective]

- María Antón Barco + Verónica Meléndez
  ESNE, Madrid, Spain
- Aída González Llávona
  Universidad de Castilla La-Mancha, Escuela de Arquitectura de Toledo, Departamento de Proyectos Arquitectónicos, Área de Historia y Composición, Toledo, Spain
- Amparo Bernal + Iñaki Bergera
  Polytechnic University of Burgos, Graphic Expression Department, Spain / University of Zaragoza, Architecture Department, School of Engineering and Architecture, Spain

Moderators:
- Carmen Espegel
  Tenured Professor of the Architectural Design Department at the ETSAM (UPM)
- Jesús Ulargui
  Tenured Professor of the Architectural Design Department at the ETSAM (UPM)

17:00 "Writings on Photography and Modern Architecture in Spain. A critical reading of a Contemporary Anthology"

17:15 Discussion

FRIDAY 27·04·2018

10:00 - 11:30  panel #3 [anthology today]

- Leandro Medrano + Luís Recamán + Mariana Wilderom + Raphael Grazziano
  University of São Paulo, Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism, History of Architecture and Project Aesthetics Department, São Paulo, Brazil
- Belén Butragueño + Javier Raposo + Mariasun Salgado
  UPM, Department of Architectural Graphic Ideation, School of Architecture (ETSAM), Madrid, Spain
- Mattias Kärholm + Paulina Prieto + Rodrigo Delso
  Lund University, Architecture and the Built Environment, Lund, Sweden, and Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura de Madrid, UPM, Spain
- Guido Cimadomo + Vishal Shahdadpuri Aswani + Rubén García Rubio
  Universidad de Málaga, Departamento de Arquitectura, ETS Arquitectura, Málaga, Spain and Al Ghurair University, College of Design, Dubai, Emirates Arab United

Moderators:
- Juan Elvira
  Assistant Professor of the Architectural Design Department at the ETSAM (UPM), Professor at IE University
- Lluís J. Lilian
  Professor at the Master in Advanced Architectural Projects at the ETSAM (UPM)

11:00 Discussion

12:30-14:00 Key-note speaker

- Hilde Heynen
  Full Professor Architectural Theory. University of Leuven. KU Leuven, Belgium

"Configuring a discipline. Anthologies in architectural theory"

Closing cocktail
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Borondo, Jorge1
1.Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura de Barcelona, 2018 MBAch Candidate, Barcelona, Spain, jorge.borondo@gmail.com

‘Ce que nous voyons ne vaut – ne vit – que par ce qui nous regarde.’
-Georges Didi Huberman

Ruth S. Cowan describes in her article ‘The Consumption Junction: A Proposal for Research Strategies in the Sociology of Technology’ how what is truly important is not the study of the veracity of ideas, but rather how these affect society1. If we were to paraphrase society as a collection of subjects, we could argue that value doesn’t reside in things themselves, but above all in the representation provoked within ourselves. We could also argue that the construction of our sensibility might depend on this performance.

Cowan’s writing belongs to the book ‘The Social Construction of Technological Systems’, published in 1987, which gathered a collection of thirteen articles where new ways of understanding technology - and therefore, its history- were introduced. The book and its authors displayed a new approach to investigating referred to as SCOT (Social Construction of Technology), where the complexity of the technological crucible -its evolution, development and representation-, unfolded as an ocean of social, technical, economical and political ideas. Consequently diffusing the mask belonging to the myth that was in charge of sponsoring a history -of technology- written exclusively by a handful of white men. At the same time, the creation of the technological object was understood as a collaboration of several relevant social groups.

In the same book, Trevor Pinch and Wiebe Bijker crumbled the evolution of the bicycle as a consequence of a sensible and relevant pilgrimage through artisan events. The image of the present artifact -the bicycle- is a byproduct of the incessant answers to the ‘problems’ of several social groups; from the production depending on the engineer, up to the skirts of women or the reflexes of the elderly2. Just as in the means of natural selection, the artifact manages its evolution by adapting to the changes in its perception. When the bicycle was, for instance, conceived as a naïve sport-related device -enjoyed by young men-, both the brakes or the lower saddle were not a requirement from any social demand (since the subjects –and the eyes- responsible for such request were not yet at stage). Elder or more cautious people, women, and other figures quite distant from the regular white man archetype, adapted technological representation to make it mirror society. Its evolution was therefore not exclusively driven towards form, but mostly regarded the progress in its perception as an instrument with which to interact with society, and its reflection.

And so it seems that the technological object reveals itself as a work (ouvrage) possessor of a social dimension. The way in which the bicycle is perceived might discuss the space of the absence; the empty space between the subject and the object. The space that lies between what sees and what is seen is suddenly colonized by natural connotations of responsibility or sensibility when the gaze empathizes with and not just through. To perceive -even an image- is also to build. When the space between the subject and the object is woven through an expansive design, a change in the cultural scheme and in the conception of the innovative process is definitively required.

Underlying the crust of time -the time of the object, apparently neutral- we tend to discover a mirror braided by the people. A dual mirror, projected both into its process and into its usage. In the first place, the infinite development of technology is a consequence of an accumulative and orgasmic dance of determinants and social processes. It doesn’t derive from an instantaneous miracle bound to an individual genius -being that the inventor or the architect-. And therefore, its usage blends with the experiences of the user3.
Paradoxes of Domesticity and Modernity


Martínez-Millana, Elena

1 Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Departamento de Proyectos Arquitectónicos, Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura, Madrid, Spain, elena.martinez.millana@upm.es

This article aims to put a new perspective on the essay by Hilde Heynen “Modernity and Domesticity. Tensions and Contradictions." It seeks to shed light about its most radical contributions so as to value them. It also intends to show something that is equally important, its immediate context in the book Negotiating Domesticity: Spatial Productions of Gender in Modern Architecture, in which it was published for the first time.

Firstly, an analysis will be carried out on the impact and reception the book and essay had on the scientific community. In order to do this, several published reviews over a period of time will be examined; also, the main data bases will be consulted to quantify the variations of the above cited references. In this first section, it will be possible to substantiate that the essay has attracted more interest over the course of time.

Secondly, the essay will be evaluated with the objective to visualise the analytical operation in which Heynen overturned the common opinion of the scientific community about the relationship between domesticity and modernity. She highlighted the most profound oxymoron, “a paradoxical unity, a unit of disunity.” In this second section, her significant contribution to the theory of architecture—and conclusively to human thought—will be evaluated so that it is not only construed from the masculine experience.

The book Negotiating Domesticity began to take shape at the annual meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians in 2003, shortly after the general reaction against the theory of architecture which occurred at the end of the 1990s. At this meeting, Hilde Heynen and Gülşüm Baydar co-directed the session “Domesticity and Gender in Modern Architecture,” concluding in a book published in 2005, two years after the conference. Domesticity is a testimony of the editors’ interest, together with the other authors who contributed to it, in revitalizing architectural research from the gender perspective. The sixteen authors delved into the relationship between domesticity, gender and modern architecture throughout the different sections of the book. The essays’ title along with the quotation clearly suggested the hypothesis that Heynen matured about the divergence between domesticity and modernity which he raised in 1992.1

Henderson did not develop any theory about the first chapter by Hilde Heynen “Modernity and homelessness,” which is an initial step that sets the stage for the argument put forward. “To be modern is to find ourselves in an environment that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are.” 15 Moreover, she added even greater praise: “It promised adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world—and, at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are.” 15 Henderson’s criticism about the absence of a singular argument and qualified the book as a platform: “Negotiating Domesticity has provided a sustaining platform, not an argument, for interdisciplinary discourse that is only beginning to bear fruit.” 16 Furthermore, she added even greater praise: “It promises adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world—and, at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are.” 15

Heynen began her essay with a meaningful quote from the book by Marshall Berman, All That Is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity, “To be modern is to find oneself in an environment that promises adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world—and, at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are.” 15

Heynen’s essay. In the second part of this paper, a new vision is provided to value it. Here a reduced version of the original essay is added with a homonym title, which Heynen prepared for the colloquium “Gender Studies: een genre apart? Een stand van zaken” for the Sophia Belgian Gender Studies Network in 2005.12 It should be mentioned that recently the full article has been re-published and translated into Spanish, and due to the length of the document it was divided into two.13 The analysis presented here is produced from the reduced version presented at the colloquium and for the “Modernity and femininity, this metaphor reinforced identifying modernity with masculinity: “The conceptualisation of modernity as the embodiment of progress, rationality and authenticity bears gendered overtones.” In as far as modernity means change and rupture, it seems to imply, necessarily, leaving home.”17 Later, in the second part, “The gender of modernism,” Heynen delved into the gender of modernity and made reference to the argument upheld by Christopher Reed about the divergence between domesticity and modernity which he raised in Not at Home. The Suspension of Domesticity in Modern Art and Architecture. The main reason that Reed offered to justify this divergence was to associate modernity with the idea of avant-garde, because “as its military-derived name suggests, the avant-garde (literally ‘advanced guard’) imagined itself away from home, marching toward glory on the battlefields of culture.”18

...
So, faced with the dominant discourse that established the gender of modernity as masculine as opposed to the feminine domesticity, in the third part “The cult of domesticity”, Benjamin contrasted less obvious discourses, “a focus on domesticity itself on the other hand reveals a rather different mode of interconnection.” 18 Benjamin suggested that there is a direct connection between the emergence of an industrial society on the one hand and the rise of industrial capitalism and imperialism on the other, “etymological nearness of ‘domesticity’ and ‘to domesticate’ is not a coincidence.” Benjamin maintained that modernity and domesticity cannot be seen as opposites “if one opens up the scope of investiga-
tion, one will see how much of it as well the more hidden layers, and additional economic-deterministic layers, that often remain concealed on the level of modernist discourses and practices, it becomes clear that there is also a certain complicity between modernity and domesticity.” 19 This perspective gives way to numerous discourses, for example, the essays that are included in Negotiating Domesticity.

This article has aimed to explain why the essay “Modernity and domesticity. Tensions and contradictions” should be included in the Criticall Un-Biology, through two reflections that reinforce each other. The first one has focused on the relationship of the book in which this was published, where two significant issues could be demonstrated: at the same time it has been established that the scientific community’s interest is on the increase, the structure of the book that Benjamin sets out as co-editor has been appraised. Her essay in this first chapter offers a broad and deep reflection on domesticity and modernity, as an essay that warns us to keep in mind the re-
ter of the term; and its recognition reveals that it is the opportune moment to rethink domesticity in the architecture of the past and its connection with the present. 20

The second argument has served to exemplify the utility of Negotiating Domesticity, through Heynen’s essay, by involving the reader from the beginning on the ambivalence of domesticity, by visualising its paradoxes in modernity. Meaning that Heynen’s essay invites the reader to reconsider domesticity and to blow up all previous material on “what has been.” 21 Thus Heynen managed to provide a consistent basis to help identify the virtues and shortcomings of past and current domesticity, and encourage people to follow the footsteps of the research.

Notes


ce of Modernity, (London and New York: Penguin Books, 1988), p.15 This citation expresses the deepest sense of the para-
doctrine of modernity. The highlighted part of the text quotes what Heynen showed in her essay when she defines modernity.


6. Ibid., 84.


8. Ibid., 557.


10. Ibid., 135.

11. Verified from three main data bases: Web of Science, Scopus and Google Academic. For example, according to Web of Science the book Negotiating Domesticity was cited 186 times, of which 121 correspond to the period of 2014-2018, this demonstrates the increasing interest in the book.

12. Hilde Heynen, “Modernity and Domesticity. Tensions and Contradictions” (paper presented at the colloquium “Gender stud-
ies, een genre apart? Savoirs de genre: quel genre de savoir?” held at Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium, October 20-21, 2005), 101-107.


14. What if the full text has a length of approximately 10,000 words, the version here has 5000; the main issues are raised and comply with the rules of the length of the text for the Critical Un-Biology.


Satoyama (里山) es un término japonés que se aplica a la zona existente entre las colinas al pie de las montañas, el piedemonte, y la llanura cultivable. Literalmente, sato (里) significa tierra arable o gleba y tierra humanizada, y yama (山) significa colina o montaña.

Ukiyo-e (浮世絵), “pinturas del mundo flotante” o “estampa japonesa”, es un género de grabados realizados mediante xilografía o técnica de grabado en madera, producidos en Japón entre los siglos XVII y XX, entre los que se encuentran imágenes paisajísticas, del teatro y de zonas de alterne.

Biography


She is associated professor at Escuela Técnica Superior de Madrid, within Juan Herreros’s Unit (2008-), associated professor at the IE. School of Architecture, IE University (2013-), co-leading the Final Thesis Project (2013-2017) and teaching in different Design Studios levels.

“An architect who designs, teaches, investigates and builds is, at some point, bound to blend these fields into a single, creative milieu of methodological, projectual and intellectual interests. I intend to keep running a challenging, multidisciplinary practice through which to address different projects from a wide range of scales and fields. In parallel, I aim to keep developing my academic profile by implementing the very many theoretical findings derived from my PhD research into new teaching methodologies.”