Paradoxes of Domesticity and Modernity

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## Conference Program

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### Discussion

**Teóricos francotiradores. La posibilidad de un pensamiento dibujado como práctica específicamente arquitectónica**

**Poché. Historia y vigencia de una idea**

**Ways of seeing**

**Notas sobre una arquitectura líquida**

**Aftermath**

**Artefactos energéticos: la energía como parámetro proyectual**

**Paradojas de Domesticity and Modernity**

**Play to the gallery**

**Rincones de la función**

**Con P de Pragmatismo**

**Martha Stewart. A contemporary icon**

**Proyectos enquistados. Entrevistas entre arquitectos**

**Estímulos y reacciones, deseos y afectos, fibras e hilos intencionales**
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 OUT, Arquitectura, Department of History, Theory and Architectural Composition, University of Seville, 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)

Lunch Time

14:30

“Anthology is ontology. The power of selection and the ‘worldmaking’”

14:45

“Anthology as collection: Althusser vs. Benjamin”

15:00

“Theorem. A case for an Anthology today”

15:15

“Historicizing the desire to historicize”

15:30 Discussion

16:00 Coffee break

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

María Antón Barco + Verónica Meléndez
ESNE, Madrid, Spain

Aída González Llavea
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 Espelgel
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


17:15 Discussion

FRIDAY 27·04·2018

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

Leandro Medrano + Luís Recamán + Mariana Wildenom + Raphael Grazziano
University of São Paulo, Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism, History of Architecture and Project Aesthetics Department, São Paulo, Brazil

Bélen Butragueño + Javier Raposo + Marisuln Salgado
UPM, Department of Architectural Graphic Ideation, School of Architecture (ETSAM), Madrid, Spain

Matías 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 Artes y 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. Liñan
Professor at the Master in Advanced Architectural Projects at the ETSAM (UPM)

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

10:00

“Space and the otherness. An anthology”

10:15

“Practical theorization in the digital era”

10:45

“Towards a (new) Historiography of Architecture for a Digital Age”

11:00 Discussion

11:30 Coffee Break

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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Ways of seeing
Seeing the invisible: new perceptions in the history of technology. Carrol Purrsell. 1995
Icon: Journal of the International Committee for the History of Technology, vol 1, pp. 9-15

Borondo, Jorge
1. Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura de Barcelona, 2018 MArch 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 society. 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 investigation 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 elderly. 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 user.
The essays title along with the quotation clearly suggested the hypothesis that Heynen matured about domesticity and modernity as the embodiment of the struggle for progress, rationality and authenticity, also bearing gendered overtones. In as far as modernity means change and rupture, it seems to imply, necessarily resolve and demonstrate alternative ways of reading and writing architectural history and theory that contemnporize the editors embedded cultural and political values. Heynen and Baydar are provoking us to rethink domesticity.

As explained in this article, the evolution of the reviews of this book is very significant, as well as the increasing number of scientific articles and books that scientific of times and its contents throughout the years since Heynen and Baydar co-directed the meeting at the Society of Architectural Historians and thirteen since the book was published. Why is it that today the scientific community is showing an even greater interest in the book than before?

In the contextualization process one considers that it could be due to two issues: on the one hand, the format of the book consists of a collection that combines two strategies that are very different and yet complementary, a panoramic vision with a wide and exhaustive study of the existing research, together with a series of essays which analyse specific case studies so that they are clearly focused. On the other hand, the key question is its content: the domesticity in architecture is studied with an interdisciplinary spirit, so that literature, philosophy, sociology etc. feed the debate.

Therefore, "Paradoxes of Domesticity and Modernity" seeks to contribute to the dissemination of 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. 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. The analysis presented here is produced from the reduced version and it is worth anticipating Heynen's objective so as not to be misled throughout the course of the paper since, on the whole, Heynen used two extensive sections to expose predominant discourses on the subject, "Modernity and homelessness" and "The gender of modernism." These two arguments reinforced each other and declared that modernity and domesticity are opposite terms.

In the first part, "Modernity and homelessness," Heynen explained the predominant discourse about the metaphoric "homelessness" associated with modernity. As the house was associated with women and femininity, this metaphor reinforced identifying modernity with masculinity. The conceptualisation of modernity as the embodiment of the struggle for progress, rationality and authenticity thus bears gendered overtones. In as far as modernity means change and rupture, it seems to imply, necessarily, leaving home. 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."
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”, Heynen contrasted less obvious discourses, “a focus on domesticity itself on the other hand reveals a rather different mode of interconnection.”18 Heynen suggested that there is a direct connection between the emergence of an ideology of modernity, on the one hand and the rise of industrial capitalism, the idea of the self, the “etymological nearness of ‘domesticity’ and ‘to domesticate’ is not a coincidence.” Heynen maintained that modernity and domesticity cannot be seen as opposites “if one opens up the scope of investiga- tion, it becomes less clear what is at play, as well the more hidden layers, and even economic determinants that are often concealed on the level of modernism 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 argument has focused on the relationship of the book and the book in which it 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 Heynen sets as co-editor has been appraised. Her essay in the first chapter offers a broad and multi-faceted introduction to modernity and domesticity, as an extended, complex approach to domesticity and modernity, as an introduction and a warning to this new re-lect of the term; and its recognition reveals that 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 invoking 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 to follow in the footsteps of the research.

Notes


2. Marshall Berman, “Introduction: Modernity. Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow,” in All That Is Solid Melts Into Air: Experi- ence of Modernity, (London and New York: Penguin Books, 1988), p.15 This citation expresses the deepest sense of the para- dox of modernity. The highlighted part of the text quotes what Heynen showed in her essay when she defines modernity. “There is a mode of vital experience—experience of space and time, of the self and others, of life’s possibilities and perils—that is shared by men and women all over the world today. I will call this body of experience “modernity.” To be modern is to find ourselves in an environment that promises us adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world—and, at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything we have known, everything we are. Modern environments and experiences cut across all boundaries of geography and ethnicity, of class and national relations. Modernity is the sense of possibility, of modernity can be said to unite all mankind. But it is a paradoxical unity, a unity of disunity: it pours us all into a mainstream societal deluge, of struggle and contradiction, of ambiguity and anguish. To be modern is to be part of a universe in which, as Marx said, “all that is solid melts into air.”


6. Ibid., 84.


8. Ibid., 557.


10. Ibid., 135.

11. Verfied from three main data bases: Web of Science, Scopus and Google Academic. For example, according to Web of Science on 31 May 2014, Negotiating Domesticity was cited 165 times, of which 121 correspond to the period of 2014-2018, this demonstrates the increasing interest in the book.


14. Whilst 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.

References


References

Benjamin, Walter. “On the Theory of Knowledge, Theory of Progress.” In The Arcades Project. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 462. In the words of Walter Benjamin, “It’s not that what is past casts its light on what is present, or what is present its light on what is past; rather, image is that wherein what has been come together in a flash with the now to form a constellation.” [Awakening, N2A:3]


23. Formerly it was thought that a fixed point had been found in what has been; and one saw the present engaged in tentatively concentrating the forces of knowledge on this ground. Now this relation is to be overturned, and what has been to be is the dialectical reversal—the flash of awakened consciousness. Politics attains primacy over history. (…) There is a not-yet-conscious knowledge of what has been: its advancement has the structure of awakening.” [K:121]

Biography


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."