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Spatialization of oppression: Contemporary politics of architecture and the urban

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Considering both ongoing and unprecedented global problems – from the refugee crisis, the US-Mexico border, terrorist attacks, detention camps, numerous worldwide urban demonstrations, to climate change, the housing crisis and the coronavirus pandemic – the lack of comprehensive and multidisciplinary research focussed on the nexus of politics, architecture and the urban is surprising. There have been a number of exemplary studies concerned with the spatialization of *politics,* however what is missing is a wide-lens discussion. Current studies tend to treat architecture and the urban as an instrument of power,[1] focus on a single theory for a very limited audience,[2] and/or interrogate neoliberalism as the only malicious force responsible for such crises.[3] Such studies also mainly draw upon examples from the so-called Global North (particularly Western European and Anglophone contexts) and consequently remain limited in their geographical and institutional reach.[4] This handbook addressed the identified gaps and maps and connects the complex spatial trajectories of *politics* across multidisciplinary fields whilst covering diverse geographical and socioeconomic contexts. The gap in the literature was first identified through a conference and an edited journal issue. In July 2019, we organized an international conference, *Political Matters: Spatial Thinking of the Alternative*, at The University of Auckland in New Zealand. An aspect of this conference included facilitating workshops and discussions with the presenters as well as the audience, which subsequently informed the co-edited and peer-reviewed journal *Interstices: Journal of Architecture and Related Arts* on the same theme as *Political Matters*, published in December 2020. This process was foundational to the handbook as it enabled some of the identified thematic concerns, collaborators and reviewers to be brought into this project. As well as the global list of contributors in these handbooks, when necessitated, we engaged in Zoom discussions with some of the collaborators, which further helped shape the focus and narrative.

A number of other critical handbooks have been written on architecture and the urban, all of which are commendable in their own right. *The SAGE Handbook of Architectural Theory* (2012), for example, is successful beyond its novel methodological process of production as the sectional topics open up a breadth of themes that assist in understanding the theorization of architecture.[5] Although the *SAGE Handbook* notes that architectural theory has been largely Anglo-American, its rectification is minimal, with the inclusion of Australia and New Zealand amounting to only about six papers. At the urban level, we have the *Oxford Handbook of Urban Politics*, also published in 2012, which addresses urban and political links across myriad examples and issues, from policy to sustainability, however the focus remains on the US and Europe.[6] Likewise, the urban tends to be understood through population growth and the densification of cities. Another example is the *Routledge Companion to Critical Approaches to Contemporary Architecture* (2019) which aims to define the architecture and spatial practices of the 21st century from a broad range of critical perspectives (including architecture, art history, urbanism, geography, media studies, environmental studies and sociology).[7] This *Companion,* however, does not clarify what such *critical approaches* may be and reads as a collection of essays with no instructions for use; that is, there is no attempt to 'guide' the reader through particular connections, nor to suggest particular conclusions.

Our handbook – *The Routledge Handbook on Architecture, Urban Space and Politics: Volumes I and II* – exceed these two limitations. Emerging and established contributors from diverse disciplinary

backgrounds and practices (from art, fashion, environmental science, geography and international relations through to architecture and urbanism) present chapters that engage with an expanded geographical reach (from the so-called Global North to the alleged Global South) and utilize multidisciplinary methodologies (from ethnographic to theoretical). The chapters in this first volume of the handbook situate the question of architecture/urban and politics in various contexts, including Australia, Brazil, China, Columbia, East Asia (Bangladesh, Nepal, Phillipines, India), Eastern Europe (Estonia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia), Iran, Israel-Palestine, Northern Ireland, the UK, the US and Western Europe (France, Sweden, Greece, Belgium). The significant geopolitical regions that are not covered in the first volume are Africa, China, the Persian Gulf, China and Oceania, however they are discussed in Volume II. The large scope of this project necessitates two volumes, something advocated and supported by the anonymous reviewers of the proposal for this project, and welcomed by Routledge. As such, we invite readers to use the two volumes together for a more holistic global perspective. Nevertheless, and despite all efforts, the focus remains disproportionately on the so-called Global North. We identify 10 themes through which the nexus between architecture, urban space and politics may be understood: in Volume I: *Violence and War Machines*; *Security and Borders*; *Race, Identity and Ideology*; *Spectacle and the Screen*; *Mapping Landscapes and Big Data*; and in Volume II: *Events and Dissidence*; *Biopolitics, Ethics and Desire*; *Climate and Ecology*; *Urban Commons and Social Participation*; *Marginalities and Postcolonialism*. Additionally, there is an introduction to each theme before a collection of chapters with a culminating conclusion to each volume.

This being said, our handbook is not the first to critically look at architecture or the urban, and is not all-inclusive (from topics to geographical contexts). However, it is the first that spans across two volumes to investigate the complex spatial trajectories of *politics*. In Volume I and II, we frame cutting-edge contemporary debates, and present studies of actual projects that address spatial politics. For architecture and the urban to have relevance in the 21st Century, our position is that we cannot merely reignite the approaches of thought and design that were operative in the last century. Moreover, we can no longer afford to reduce them to a neutral backdrop of political realities. Architecture and urban space should be understood as political forces in and of themselves. There is explicit evidence of the inherent role that architecture and the urban play in numerous human-made crises. In Volume I, where each chapter was at least double-blind peer-reviewed, we first start by pointing out the need to investigate the complex politics of spatialization to make sense of the operational nature of spatial oppression in our contemporary times. To understand the nexus between politics and space, architecture and the urban have to be redefined. Without this reformulation, we argue, it is impossible to understand the political role of architecture and urban space, whether oppressive, affirming, neutral or liberational.

Our overall aim, across the two volumes, is to investigate how space can actively constitute political realities by offering real alternatives and fostering new forms of identification, whilst enabling the overturning of complicity and allowing difference to be expressed. To do so, however, we first need to better understand how architecture and the urban are used as a tool for oppression. As such, the first volume of this handbook addresses the ways in which architecture and urban space are oppressed by, struggle against, operate within or are constructed by politics; the forthcoming second volume will specifically seek to foster more liberatory forms of architecture and the urban. Volume I examines modes of oppression through the five themes stated above. Each theme starts with an introduction on the topic written by established and emerging scholars, including William B. Taylor, Anoma Pieris, Stephen Gray and Anne Lin, Francesco Proto and Ate Poorthuis, respectively. These introductions provide a survey of key historical and current issues around each topic, through multiple case studies and theories, and are written in an accessible way particularly for

undergraduate students whilst also briefly describing the relevance to each chapter. This volume is concluded by Stephen Walker.

Why do we need to rethink the politics of spatialization now?

Our 21st Century, contemporary situation, is uniquely characterized by pervasive forms of neoliberalism, the declining role of nation-states, the rise of transnational corporations, new forms of surveillance, new aesthetics of extreme violence facilitated by techniques of media and broadcasting, the displacement of surplus humans produced by an economy of global violence and, never-ending wars infiltrating every aspect of our societies – many of these characteristics were given a new visibility by the coronavirus global pandemic – and at the time of writing this chapter, the erupting violence in Ukraine. Architecture and urban space are not only implicated within these forms of power, but more importantly are essential tools for the perpetuation of violence, segregation, inequity and surveillance. This is the focus of this handbook. By 'contemporary,' we draw upon the philosopher Giorgio Agamben's definition of the term, that is, to sustain a particular relationship with our time whilst also keeping a distance from it in order not to get blinded by its lights, but to see the darkness of the present too.[8] However, such distance is not reserved for critical thinkers alone: it must be accessible to all willing to be political subjects.

Neoliberalism, as a new chapter of capitalism which generates its own new crises, is undoubtedly one of the key and ongoing characteristics of our times. As pointed out by the political theorist Wendy Brown, neoliberalism may not only be about "economizing everything," it also tends to be a moral anti-democracy project.[9] Neoliberalism is not just about ending social regulation and wealth redistribution, or the removal of the obstacles that interfere with the market, nor a reaction to economic distress. In the name of the free market, neoliberalism eliminates democratic processes, it marketizes politics and it replaces legislated social justice with traditional morality.[10]

It is common knowledge that architecture and urban projects are highly tied to economies because of the way they are produced. For architect and critical theorist Nadir Lahiji, architecture is embedded in capitalism and has embraced the neoliberal economy and its ideologies since the 1980s.[11] Architectural theorist Douglas Spencer expands on this idea by suggesting that although the architecture of the late 1990s and early 2000s claimed to be dynamic and counter to dominant hierarchies, it was indeed deeply intertwined with, and reinforced by, neoliberal capitalism. In fact, it was used as a tool for refashioning human subjects into compliant figures, such as student-entrepreneurs, citizen-consumers and team-workers – a prerequisite for the global implementation of neoliberalism.[12] Hence, our 21st century world is marked by an economic model which might be an anti-democratic moral project well-supported by architectural and urban productions. However, *neoliberalism is not the only evil to be put on the table* – although it is the most obvious one. We argue that war and violence, as well as perception and aesthetics may be oppressive regulators and as such politically affect access to space, resources and information.

Borders, for example, have the capacity for violence, because they divide and segregate certain classes and ethnicities of people and are deployed as tools to fabricate information. The state narratives claim that borders are a natural part of the human world, that they have to be militarized in order to keep the insiders safe against an outside threat. However, borders perpetually produce the violence that surrounds them.[13] Borders may increase the chances of injury or death in the process of crossing; they deprive the poor from access to wealth, resources and various opportunities that are enclosed and guarded by the security infrastructure.[14] To feel secure has become more essential than being free, which is a contradiction of the neoliberal order. For the philosopher and political theorist Achille Mbembe, a society of security aims to "control and govern the modes of arrival" rather than to affirm

freedom.[15] And borders – to be understood as processes not just things – are clear manifestation of this contradiction. However, borders should not be reduced to a symbol or a symptom, because they provide a space for racial segregation and annulling certain lives. Mbembe captures this idea well by defining the concept of 'borderization' as:

> the process by which certain spaces are transformed into uncrossable places for certain classes of populations, who thereby undergo a process of racialization; places where speed must be disabled and the lives of a multitude of people judged to be undesirable are meant to be im-mobilized if not shattered.[16]

Our time is also marked by the rise of transnational corporations as a new form of governmentality that comes with the capacity to intensify inequality at a global scale, and colonize every aspect of life with far-reaching and unprecedent surveillance technologies. One can see it clearly in the rapid change in information and surveillance technologies. For the Marxist sociologist Manuel Castells, the information age in the 21st century is marked by a new mode of informational and global production. We are also dealing with *surveillance capitalism* that profits from the collecting and selling of our behavioral patterns, as theorized by social psychologist and philosopher Shoshana Zuboff. For Zuboff, surveillance capitalism is an unprecedented market form, a coup from above, that operates inside the digital milieu in which we are only raw material. To re-emphasize, we are no longer products of the system, we are raw material *for* and *of* it. The system monetizes our every move online, commodifies human nature, and then sells the behavioral data to customers interested in "prediction products."[17] Eventually, surveillance capitalism modifies our behavior toward profitable outcomes. The dark side of it, would be, for example, when these "prediction products" are sold to health-insurance companies that use data to exclude certain people from accessing healthcare.

Violence imposed on certain groups of people, facilitated by surveillance capitalism, is according to the philosopher Slavoj Zižek, systematic. Zižek defines different types of violence based on their degree of visibility to us. For example, the catastrophic effects of economic and political systems is the least visible form of violence and one that goes unnoticed due to the eruptions and effects becoming normalized within economic and political systems.[18] Whilst it is important to consider the oppressive side of control societies, the philosopher Gilles Deleuze reminds us to ask who benefits from these socio-technological mechanisms of control.[19] For example, by suggesting that cities have always been smart and intelligently built, anthropologist Shannon Mattern frames the idea of the 'smart city' as a catch-phrase that is used by property developers, technology providers and civic authorities to sell us certain products or claims.[20] Therefore, the excessive production of big data made possible and supported by "algorithmic governmentality" (big data usually mean anything that can be digitized and recorded) conceals who is making profit from it, and hides the level of surveillance that it enables.[21] What we lose as a result of this algorithmic governmentality, Mattern argues, is the exposure to alterity, something that was easily accessible and possible when one wandered physically through a city.

It is possible to believe that the smart city agenda is indeed here to enable greater transparency of information, security and better access to infrastructure. Simon Marvin and Andres Luque-Ayala suggest that "companies such as IBM, Hitachi and Cisco are increasingly targeting the urban market"[22] through the rhetoric of smart urbanism by implementing the technologies of the corporate sector, and under the pretext that the smart software/hardware will "improve the quality of urban services whilst making the city more efficient and sustainable."[23] Yet, the unspoken agenda is that these digital platforms are nothing other than a new city-scale system of operation imagined to establish new typologies and hierarchies of information as well as map and predict their connections. For the urbanists Marvin and Luque-Ayala, the impetus for such interconnectivity is informed by the desire to establish a system of total control.[24] The smart-city agenda is the new horizon of governing.

It is there to establish the standards for the empirical cataloguing and classifying of data to understand the relations between humans and non-humans; however, such knowledge informs the imminent digital geographies of incarceration.

We are living in an era of "new visibility of extreme violence" facilitated by techniques of media and broadcasting.[25] According to the philosopher Étienne Balibar, the new technologies simultaneously cover and uncover extreme violence, and as such they do not necessarily provide better access to reality, because they actively exclude certain events. The role of media – including how certain events are represented, framed or dismissed – is investigated by the philosopher Judith Butler who questions how images work, how they assault our senses, given that "the senses are the first target of war."[26] Both Balibar and Butler go beyond a mere focus on the role of media in representing the various kinds of extreme violence; Balibar points out that violence circulates between economics and politics, [27] what is produced as a result is "life zones" and "death zones" separated by a "superborder."[28] As a result, there are surplus humans that can be, or should be, thrown away. Violence is not new. What makes our era different is that extreme violence has become more visible to us, whilst creating an illusion that we have access to the whole story – which we do not. All images and narratives are strategically framed to serve hijacked political ideals.

Deciphering the ways through which violence operates, or the ways through which spatial tools are deployed for the perpetuation of violence, is not always simple or self-evident. The writings of the urbanist, cultural theorist and aesthetic philosopher Paul Virilio suggest as much. Virilio observes that the political landscape of cities is informed by war and militarization.[29] For the human geographer Stephen Graham, post-Cold War cities, from infrastructure networks to public spaces, are indeed fertile contexts where both military and terrorist violence are (re)produced.[30] The sociologist Paul Hirst affirms this by noting that space is not a neutral "container," it shapes how human armed conflicts are fought. This becomes even clearer if we think of space (from temples to railway networks) as something to be conquered and deployed in war-making.[31] The city is deployed as a creator and regulator of violence.

Softer versions of violence were seen in the transformation of cities from the 17th Century onwards. Cities were imagined as being able to respond to various problems through the perception of them as either efficient or inefficient machines or bodies that were healthy or ill.[32] Given the belief that all social issues could be addressed by redesigning cities and their infrastructure, the social became implicated with the civic and as such a sphere of politics. However, that such modes of regulation were not exclusive to the city proper were seen with Jeremy Bentham's panopticon, which "turned utopia inside out," and as the principles of regulation in the city-wide transformation were implemented into architecture proper.[33] Indeed, for the architectural historian and critic Antony Vidler, modern architecture is inseparable from the conquests of modern urban planning. For Vidler, "[t]he great age of confinement" corresponded with using institutions such as prisons, schools and hospitals to protect "society against its own peculiarities."[34] Authority was placed at the center, and the transformation of cities and architecture was interconnected through regulation.[35]

Indeed, architecture has historically been a nexus of space and oppression. We see this in the earliest theorization of architecture, the treatise of Vitruvius, where a relationship between the dwelling (the structure) and the inhabitant (the body) was established, alongside instructions on the design of war machines, ballistae and catapults. The 'Vitruvian body' was under attack from its inception. Even if we neglect reading the chapters of Vitruvius dedicated to war machines, the much-repeated image of a man inscribed in Euclidean geometry that we have come to call 'Vitruvian man' was itself the imposition of a standard of measure thrust over all bodies and buildings to come. The normalization of a body whose geometry did not correlate to any existing human body continued with the modular body of Le Corbusier's Modulor. Here the body and the architecture were simultaneously deployed

to promote the virtues of the machine in the name of efficiency, hygiene and standardization. At the level of the city, normalization has historically been implemented through a system of gathering, cataloguing, organizing and publishing truths that perpetuate inequity.[36] Evidence of this is found in the social disadvantages documented in detail through field surveys and the science of statistics, or the ways in which the early 20th century Chicago School of Urban Sociology empirically analyzed crime, urban poverty and social relations. Certainly, the urban was seen to have economic and political implications. Le Corbusier's utopian urban plans were social reformers, and the reformation was a scientific process that required standardization. Despite the focus of Modernism on standardization and functionality, even furniture design was produced only through craftsmanship, with restricted access to products by the wider social fabric. Indeed, products of modernism were mass-produced after the style was modified and practiced on at an international level in what became known as the International Style. Undeniably, governance is intimately connected with architecture and the urban.

More recently, the intimate relations of the urban and industry are manifested in Laleh Khalili's writings on international relations, where she points to maritime ports as "the clearest distillation of how global capitalism operates today."[37] She argues that our time is marked by contemporary global capitalism, with China as its factory fuelled by oil derived primarily from the Arabian Peninsula. In total, 90% of the world's goods manufactured in this factory travel by ship, hence the significance of maritime trade, logistics and hydrocarbon transport. The resulting system of maritime transportation and trade is not, she writes, "an enabling adjunct of trade but is central to the very fabric of global capitalism."[38] The invisible borders at sea, maritime transportation and ports are sites where racial labor hierarchies are maintained to reinforce colonial regimes of profit, law and administration.[39] Violence also operates through mundane spaces we hardly notice. The architectural and urban designer and educator Michal Sorkin notes an increased insecurity manifested in barricades placed in front of buildings and public spaces such as airports, and by parents who track their children using GPS in constant fear of the 'other', showing the reverse effect of demand for security in the aftermath of 9/11 and the war on terror. [40] Here, we should point out that although architecture can influence human behaviors, it is not always deterministic as Michel Foucault reminds us.[41] Architecture can support the exercise of power, as evident in the example of the panopticon, but there is nothing inherent in the form that guarantees liberation or oppression.[42]

The phenomenon of governance and borderization in our time has gone beyond border-walls and is manifested in urbanization. Spatial regulatory frameworks at an urban scale can be instruments that reinforce social, class, race and gender divisions, as evident in the zoning of Los Angeles,[43] or an instrument of warfare as evident in urban development in Beirut in anticipation of a near-future armed conflict.[44] Borderization can also lead to the rise of ghettoization and slums, which, according to the Marxist historian Mike Davis, are conditions of neoliberalism, and symptoms of economic and political inequality.[45] The 1990s saw urban dwellers become the majority of the world's population,[46] and nearly a billion were living in slums. The result of this is an ever "deepening polarization of cities, caused by neoliberal globalization, [which in turn] is providing many conditions that are ripe for extremes of civil and militarized violence."[47] From the automation of urban warfare to the ways in which the military operates in urban terrain and the ways in which military battlefield techniques find their way into popular video games, the line between war and peace is fuzzy. Creativity has merged with defence and the Pentagon and Hollywood work side-by-side.[48] To a great extent, the world of culture has been hijacked. For example, much of the wealth of the Guggenheim Foundation is due to its violent ties with global mining and resource extraction in the Congo and Chile; its legacy of power and control is concealed under the global branding of buildings designed by star-architects all around the world. The Guggenheim Museum has depoliticized the space of the museum by defining it solely as a zone for aesthetics.[49] We can no longer distinguish news from noise, or trust museums when they are sponsored by arms manufacturers, as noted by the filmmaker and writer

Hito Steyerl who questions the plausibility of making in this context.[50] Indeed, as 'the masses', we are given freedom of expression, yet we are not given the right to change the legitimized model.[51]

The importance of politics in relation to architecture and urban space

Discussing politics is impossible without discussing its relation to space. Exclusion, colonization, division, warfare, denial of access to space or to stage a politically constructed rhetoric are all inherently spatial. The literary critic, philosopher and Marxist political theorist Fredric Jameson notes:

> [E]verything about the discussion of architecture itself is now political; and also that political discussion somehow seems quite impossible without reference to architecture, that is, to space generally, to the way the urban is organized, to the way geopolitics is organized. [52]

Indeed, organization of space has become an inevitable part of any political practice. In the complex unfolding of contemporary politics, architecture and the urban are tied to an entangled web of violence; image production; colonization; discrimination on the basis of gender, sex and ethnicity; and, the already established evils of neoliberalism. To treat space and the spatial as empty or neutral, seems to deny the lived experience of space as a contestation. Violence continues to be integral to the exercise of political systems, and is most explicit when it reduces complexity. For the architect and architectural theorist Mark Wigley, there is "no space without violence and no violence that is not spatial." [53] We see this violence operating on a geopopolitical level. The formation of nation states in the 17th century was contingent on balkanization (decentralization / fragmentation) through the artificial construction of borders. While on one hand, the invocation of liberty and humanity during the French Revolution coincided with mass killing, on the other hand, sovereign states were created by uniting citizens based on factors such as language or common descent; newly created states were largely ethnically homogeneous. Evidence of decentralization is also seen on an urban level for purposes of creating enclaves, or as a spatial strategy to control racial diffusion, for example, the "browning of America."[54] The desire for homogeneity results in a discriminatory regime that allows the state to label certain acts as violent on the pretext of promoting justice and peace. For example, post 9/11, placing anyone who looked Arabic under notable scrutiny at US borders was permissible as it was done in the name of security. Likewise, the change in planning regulations post 9/11 was facilitated in the name of homeland security, morality and emergency preparedness. Values such as justice and freedom have been taken for granted, with their framework and social implementation often unquestioned.

For Deleuze and his psychoanalyst collaborator Félix Guattari, there is no empty, neutral or 'background' space in which violence and war is perpetrated. Indeed war results only when sedentary space "striated, by walls, enclosures, and roads between enclosures" runs up against nomad space which is "smooth, marked only by 'traits' that are effaced and displaced with the trajectory."[55] The point is that space cannot be differentiated from its occupations and expressions. In Northern Ireland during 'the Troubles,' the main prison in which republicans were held was called the 'H-blocks' by the Protestant population and 'The Maze' by the Catholics. It is not that the space was a singular thing named in two different ways. It was, in this context, two very different spaces, depending on which side of the war one found oneself. Overall, terms such as 'terrorism' and 'state intervention' are near meaningless and merely political assignations that seek to codify different spacialities associated with violence. The architect and spatial/visual theorist Eyal Weizman suggests that when morality is exercised in the name of justice, it is a little like a "criminal being able to solve a crime."[56] In other words, it is not about justice but the immanence of law as its ability to announce and define the guilty from those who are not. Thus, power is contingent on reducing complexity and monopolizing the narrative whereby violence is used to justify actions for the justice-oriented purposes of those who hold power. Enacting violence is connected to the perpetuation of justice and

morality, exercised in the name of peace.[57] Thus, for the smooth space to become codified, the government deploys the military to maintain peace, thus ensuring it is maintained only through violence and war.[58]

Although violence is not new, and even though space is never completely smooth and uncoded, what makes it unique in our times is the pivotal role of the media in any information war;[59] the recruitment of the audience is linked to a theater of spectacle. The critical theorist Samuel Weber likens the nexus of theater and violence to a stage on which violence is enacted and is never completely contained.[60] For the spectacle to operate, "images must appear to be clearly localizable […and…] appear to be intelligible in and of themselves, without requiring the spectator to look elsewhere."[61] This was evident in the reporting of the Gulf War, whereby CNN provided the first live coverage of a conflict in the world – a war constructed as a spectacle for spectators of a consumer society. For the sociologist Jean Baudrillard, there was an absence of 'real' images of the Gulf War, meaning that what *actually* took place is not known given the construction of distant images and loose narratives that accompanied it.[62] History was inscribed 'live'. The reporting of this war was mediated by digital technologies that were later deployed in schools of architecture with direct impact on architectural representations.[63]

We live in an age of myth, with mainstream broadcast media being the most powerful medium in this fabrication. Virilio likens the media screen to Alzheimer's disease, in that it "collapses memory's close-ups and cancels the coherence of our fleeting impressions."[64] It projects a frictionless, slippery and flat world that stretches "from shipping ports to airports, from banking software GUIs (graphical user interfaces) to web browser layout engines and data security protocols," [65] enacted in the name of 'info-terror' where fabricated information is used to justify the military/policy response to terrorism.[66] In this frictionless and tenuous vacuum of information, an obedient culture is established through a crisis of meaning. Yet, meaning can be rediscovered through humanitarian interventions undertaken in response to the crisis. [67] For Virilio, both the Kosovo and Iraq wars were waged with electronic counter-measures;[68] this was multi-media warfare from a distance that enabled a twisted narration of what actually took place. For example, during the Kosovo humanitarian intervention,

> [t]he U.S. Airforce destroyed the countryside, bridges, electric power plants, etc., but according to these figures provided by NATO, they destroyed only thirteen tanks, twenty tank transporters, and some fifty or so vehicles – all that for a bombardment that lasted seventy-eight days with one thousand sorties – four hundred in the beginning and one thousand in the end.[69]

On home turf, the screen is used to create support for such *humanitarian* responses, through a combination of fear and entertainment.[70] While there are more channels, the news sources are not only reduced in complexity but also homogenized. This age of myth dominated by global broadcasting media has created its spectators, the consumer society. As famously theorized by the philosopher and filmmaker Guy Debord, image is the final form of commodity. We are ideologically manipulated by the mass media to buy the appearances they produce. Being drawn into this spectacle means that images produced in this mass culture colonize our unconscious.[71]

The unceasing production of images, and the freedom to produce them, is reminiscent of Benjamin's philosophical critique of the mechanical reproduction of works of art. Whilst he notes that the unique existence of a work of art disappears in a plurality of copies, he also maintains that the "growing proletarianization of modern man and the increasing formation of masses are two aspects of the same process."[72] Benjamin likens this to fascism, which gives the masses freedom of expression but not the right to change property relations.[73] Consequently class relations cannot change – relations that reduce people to wage laborers and create a society in which the masses can wear a dress on which

Tax the Rich is painted but they still cannot *tax* the rich. Here we are referring to Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's gown at the Met Gala 2021.

Architecture and urban space are intrinsically political not only because they are a mechanism for the organization of people in space or used as objects for a consumer society, but also because aesthetics play a key role in the production of politics. It is philosopher Jacques Rancière who reveals the commonality between aesthetics and politics by arguing that both delimit "the visible and the invisible, the audible and the inaudible, the thinkable and the unthinkable, the possible and the impossible."[74] Aesthetics are not about art theory or art:[75] aesthetics are what constitute a sensible experience that distinguishes those allowed or able to share this experience.[76] For example, similar to a kind of literacy, one requires a level of knowledge to understand, appreciate or enjoy an architectural monument – just as one needs to know what facilitates safety, wellbeing or participation in a neighborhood. If a person cannot make sense of what is a good city, what is a bad one, what is a good home, what is not, then that person is excluded from a life of informed decisions and participation in society. To be a political subject, a person must have access to equally distributed common knowledge. Without this experience, a person cannot be a political subject and thus remains voiceless and invisible. At a basic level, the aesthetic experience can also be understood through the lens of experiential access to space and sights. For example, the 35-kilometer-long highway in Paris – Boulevard Périphérique – which separates the city from the suburbs, has a very uneven logic of access to the Paris municipality. Those living in the wealthiest western suburbs have visual access when they enter the city because they can use the bridges that cross over the highway, while those citizens who live in the precarious and marginalized northern suburbs use underground tunnels. This is an unconscious experience captured in Matthieu Kassovitz's 1995 film *La Haine*, and dramatized in the Paris riots of 2005.

Those who are relegated to the margins, and are forced to participate in 'silence,' are those who have been colonized and discriminated against. Investigating the spatial contours of racism and sexism that create injustice in urban life and urban space, and juxtaposing this with the way in which architecture contributes to the formation of national identity, produces an excellent example of politics at play. For bell hooks, our current period of postmodernity and its rhetoric of openness, difference, and rejection of one size fits all, veils the presence and continuation of injustice and power relations.[77] Architecture, for example, maintains an "inherently patriarchal" value system. [78] It operates within the intersection of oppressive systems of gender, class, race and sexual domination.[79] The marginalization of women in architectural practice is called a "tragedy" by the architectural historian Despina Stratigakos,[80] who traces the absence of women from architecture back to the 19th century.[81] However, their lack of presence does not mean that women have not been fighting to achieve equality – quite the opposite. However, the ongoing gender discrimination in architecture is because the profession's gendered borders have remained near-invisible and impenetrable.[82] This absence has been enforced by various regimes, including but not limited to missing female role models, lack of representation of female architects in popular culture, the politics of prize-giving, erasure of women architects from historical records and lack of public awareness about the deep-rooted bias against women architects. Indeed, the politics of space is always sexual,[83] and architecture has a multifarious role in the construction of gendered identities or sexed-subjectivities.

Architecture as a system of representation is particularly gendered. It can construct women as the object of the gaze of men. We have only to think about the architecture of Adolf Loos and his earlier work such as Steiner House (1910) and Rufer House (1922) where the gaze is directed inwards towards the interior and a traditional everyday domestic life is framed by the architecture; to his later work such as Müller House (1930) and the House for Josephine Barker (1928); and the staged photographs of Le Corbusier's works such as Villa Garache (1927), Villa Savoye (1929) and Immeuble Clartè (1932). The gendered nature of architecture has been well examined by the architectural

historian Beatriz Colomina, whose psychoanalytical analysis of space shows that the organizing geometry of architecture is not gender neutral.[84] Architecture is an active constitutive element that produces gendered subjects by creating spaces in which gendered identities perform and are made visible,[85] influencing our sense of gender.[86] As architectural theorist Hilde Heynen points out, whilst modernity located women in the domestic realm, men were placed in the public sphere.[87] Significantly, the development of skyscrapers has been accompanied by the deployment of phallic language such as shaft and tip to describe various parts of the structures.[88] Indeed, the development of cities in the 19th and 20th Centuries had a direct impact on gender. Looking at the same period from a different perspective shows that despite factories being tied to the regulation and governance of the working class, they also offered the opportunity for women to enter the work force and participate in paid labor, meaning that they attained a level of independence. However, such a move toward independence had an impact on the cleanliness of homes and this was perceived as a gender-based domestic failure.[89]

Whilst advocacy for equal rights has continued in various waves of feminism, it is now self-evident that not only do architecture and the urban have a role in the construction of gendered-subjects, they also have an inherently discriminatory structure that remains a subject of contention. If architecture does not respond to gender diversity, it runs the risk of being a marginal profession.[90] During the 1990s, developing ways forward through changes in policies and standards in the US was a responsibility largely assigned to the American Institute of Architects, Equal Employment Opportunities Commission or the universities. However, even if equitable numbers were achieved, spurred by the establishment of charters such as the Athena SWAN in 2005, we still run the risk of entering 'corporate feminism' territory, in which the glass ceiling has apparently been eliminated and women have attained the right to earn as much as men. However, this ultimately fosters only the universalization of gender and the structuring of power,[91] rather than challenging the very construct of gender.

That inequities in education are more than gender-deep is the investigative focus of architectural scholar Carla Jackson Bell. Bell shows that African American architects have been made invisible throughout architectural history, theory and practice.[92] One of the ongoing structural problems in architectural education is the limited and exclusionary scope of Eurocentrism, which consistently underrepresents different ethnicities, minorities and women.[93] By silencing certain cultural perspectives in the curriculum, specific groups of students are unable to identify with the content taught or find role models amongst the teaching staff. For architectural scholars Huda Tayob and Suzanne Hall, the architectural curriculum is built on the centrality of privileged and normalized knowledge. This curriculum is one "of racialised hierarchies endemic to capitalist systems and cultural life that extend from colonialism to coloniality, slavery to incarceration, liberalism to subordination, and sovereignty to populism."[94] The Eurocentrism of architectural education has shown little change over the last 50 years according to Carla Jackson Bell, who writes that architectural education has remained virtually unchanged since the Bauhaus.[95] In other words, the field of architecture has turned a blind eye to the necessity of transformation in education.[96] Whether architectural education is to provide training for a service profession or to teach architecture as cultural discourse,[97] it is subject to a political narrative whereby it ignores questions related to whose story is being told and whose voice is being silenced. Pedagogical approaches matter because they have a direct consequence in a "society that reproduces itself through its school systems."[98] Inequity is seen in degree classifications, with white students being four times more likely to obtain a first-class degree than minority ethnic students in England.[99] Additionally, only 26.5 % of architecture students have been female.[100] The gender pay gap in Higher Education in the UK currently sits around 15.5%, and the race pay gap is 17%.[101]

At the class level, the architect and scholar Kevin Rhowbotham argues that access to British education is correlational to relative wealth, where "the rich get the best education." This is in stark contrast to the 1960s, when access was based on a meritocratic and mass-education model, and the "last time people moved significantly between classes."[102] Given the impact and spread of the ever-pervasive capitalist mode, and the embeddedness of architecture in this economic model, architecture is limited in its reach to make the city democratic or sustainable. Likewise, with the neoliberal and corporate model invested in profit and optimization on one hand, and standardization and complicity with various professional and statutory regulations on the other hand,[103] architectural education remains incapable of dealing with the current issues. Instead, architecture schools compete between themselves around identity and distinctiveness and overall rankings. Such preoccupations rob time and energy and hinder schools from addressing "grand problems of the moment" and cooperatively working through "issues beyond the fettered territories of commercial practice."[104] For Rhowbotham, architectural schools have lost a sense of direction.[105] Their operational systems are outdated, with the design 'crit' remaining one of the most unchallenged methods of presenting and reviewing design projects,[106] grounded in the legacies of the 19th century examination model.[107]

One way of engaging with the grand challenges is to reimagine the thinking and structuring of pedagogy. The accepted thinking is that 'pedagogy' is reserved for, and synonymous with, educational environments. Likewise, it is often identified as an educational technique or practice. For the architectural scholar Thomas A. Dutton, however, such identifications undermine the potential of pedagogy, and pedagogy needs to be identified "with the social production of meaning generally."[108] Thinking pedagogy from this perspective creates an opening to challenge the normalized meaning of society and to create opportunities for the "voiceless and powerless to construct counterhegemonic processes for social advancement."[109]

According to Mbembe, racial injustices preceded those associated with class.[110] Mbembe's argument is that the concept of humanity in Euro-American thought has been framed by excluding blackness, given that this 'other' race is a degraded one and as such is there to be exploited.[111] This manufacturing of knowledge is traceable to the Atlantic slave trade and mercantile labor, and is operational to this day. Ultimately, to engage in discussions around race is also to engage in questions around territoriality.[112] At the level of urban planning, race issues were obvious in the US from 1846, when ethnic, racial and gender segregation became a matter of planning policy. At the level of architecture proper, these issues were manifested with the 1956 construction of the Pruitt-Igoe complex in St. Louis, where modernist progress not only regarded social welfare but also race as a concern to be managed through planning. Moreover, the nostalgic nod to the community life found in the writings of Jane Jacobs does not take into account the presence of discrimination against people of different gender, ethnicity and race.[113] Undeniably, this discrimination remains present today, with the recent deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor signifying the pernicious nature of ongoing racial violence, and discussions about the incidents confirming the long legacy of colonial conceptualizations of race. It is such conceptions that pedagogy must confront, and architectural education is not immune to colonial assumptions and bias. Dutton was likely right in noting that a political vision is correlational to proposing a pedagogy.[114] Put simply, pedagogy is inseparable from politics.

The need to maintain Western European and Anglophone contexts as the 'center' is driven by the compulsion to establish a periphery, defined by its lack of the values and knowledge found in, prescribed and controlled by the center. We see this very clearly in essentialist stereotypes about the Orient – for example, where the Arab is aesthetically constructed as a deficient, unchanging social and political entity.[115] In other words, the Orient is always set against an ideal West and framed within a position of lack; Orientalism is about asserting oppositions, and is directly connected to Western colonization.[116] Likewise, we see this with the semi-colonial historical construct of the

Balkans as the abnormal and monstrous peripheral zone of Europe.[117] Colonization did not end in the 19th century; instead, it was simply altered through the production of knowledge aided by aesthetic depiction.

For Virilio, colonization through aesthetic means is manufactured through technology. He argues that the West and Anglo-Saxons "have derived a sense of superiority from their technical superiority, a determination to treat the rest of the world as nothing more than an object predestined for their machination."[118] This is inclusive of the ways in which spaces are colonized through war, from the use of digital technology and robotics to the ways in which technology is used to defend the accused during trials. In the Nuremburg Trials, for example, the Nazi architect Albert Speer used technology and its developments "[t]o prove that he was only an instrument, certainly guilty, but that technological advances, in particular in the field of communications, had issued in the catastrophe."[119] Since WWII, the visibility of such paradoxes is harder to place on trial given that war is "buried in respectable laboratories and well-funded research agencies."[120] With this in mind, the question that arises concerns the relevance of architecture as we know it, and the role of the urban.

Defining and re-defining architecture and the urban

For architecture and the urban to have relevance in the 21st century, we cannot maintain the approaches of thought and design that were operative in the previous century. Likewise, to understand the nexus between politics and space, architecture and the urban must be redefined. Without this reformulation, we argue, it is impossible to understand the political role of architecture and urban space, whether oppressive or liberational. Traditional definitions reduce architecture to the passive background of political action and regard it as an object devoid of any agency, in addition to treating the city and the urban as interrelated and bounded. Such reduction means that architectural discourse and the profession are unable to face contemporary challenges. As such, we argue that architecture should be understood as a political force with agency.[121] Moreover, the city and the urban should be understood as processes and relations on a planetary scale. Thus, when focusing on architecture and the city, solutions cannot be sought in nostalgic replicas of times gone by or found in supposedly apolitical technology and the technological fabrication of buildings.[122] Moreover, if architecture and the urban are to contribute to everyday life and the various processes of living, then experience and knowledge need to be positioned in a way that leads to "more transformative notions about how life might be lived, both theoretically and practically."[123] Likewise, from form to program, answers need to be sought beyond mere theorizations or pragmatic solutions.[124] Dutton argues that there is a need for architects to "link organically with politically transformative movements, which, in turn, necessitates developing professional practices that ensure a mutual interaction between publics and architects."[125] For Vidler, who remains an admirer of socialist utopian ambitions, and utopia in general, change – via Jameson – should be based on "resistance to present conditions, the potential for critical assessment and the re-imagination that is essential for any future action."[126]

To reach a more affirmative definition of architecture, the architectural theorist Andrew Ballantyne draws upon its difference from mere buildings. He questions the architectural history that has documented and displayed the most remarkable monuments such as palaces, cathedrals, castles and pyramids whilst failing to consider that these extravagant buildings are irrelevant to the majority of architects whose job is to design comfortable, economic everyday spaces.[127] What architecture is, Ballantyne suggests, is contact with the solid object of a building, when a building induces an unknown feeling, an unpredictable epiphany in the observer or the userof different cultural backgrounds.[128] His broadening of the definition of architecture to include the multiplicity of affects on different people is a political matter on which Rancière has elaborated. For Rancière, aesthetics are intrinsically linked to politics, because aesthetics represent a sensible distribution system:

> I call the distribution of the sensible the system of self-evident facts of sense perception that simultaneously discloses the existence of something in common and the delimitations that define the respective parts and positions within it. A distribution of the sensible therefore establishes at one and the same time something common that is shared and exclusive parts.[129]

Consequently, architecture is intrinsically a matter of politics not only because it is a mechanism for the organization of people in space,[130] or an object of spectacle shaped for a consumer society,[131] but also because aesthetics are an inherent part of architectural discourse, which is in itself a political matter.

Another lens through which architecture is defined beyond an autonomous object is found in Marxist and neo-Marxist critical writings, many of which are informed by the works of architectural historian Manfredo Tafuri. These studies have extensively examined the relationship between our discipline and its productions (buildings and cities) and capitalism and its ideology. Mainly concerned with modern architecture, Tafuri writes that "the entire cycle of modern architecture" emerged and developed to resolve the contradictions of the "capitalist reorganization of the world market and productive development."[132] He portrays a tragic destiny for architecture in *Architecture and Utopia* because the ideology of design has been essential to the "integration of modern capitalism in all structures and superstructures of human existence."[133] Design is used to sustain capitalism: it is not extraneous to it. It is not necessarily the connection between architecture and the economy that constrains architecture, but rather that architecture is produced through the ideology of capitalism; it is integrated into the logic of capitalism.[134]

However, despite architecture (and invariably the city) being implicated in capitalism, the philosophers and political economists Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels drew our attention to the significance of cities as creators of public life that they associated with action and change given that the modern city and industrial capitalism are entangled with each other.[135] More recently, the philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre reminds us that the overthrow of capitalism must be urban given that that is where space is produced.[136] Likewise, the geographer David Harvey reaffirms that the overthrow of capitalism will indeed begin on the urban street, not in factories.[137]

The implication of defining architecture as more than a building, with aesthetic qualities produced within the capitalist mode of production, is also to acknowledge architecture's relationship with contingency. For Jeremy Till, "architecture has avoided engagement with the uncertainties of the world through a retreat into an autonomous realm,"[138] and he calls for an understanding of architecture as a "complex social and institutional mess."[139] The uncertainty and contingency upon and through which architecture operates means that architecture as a profession and a product cannot be detached from the economy, society, politics and culture.

What all these approaches have in common is the emphasis on defining architecture as a static, defined, determined and fixed object without agency. This point is partially picked up by Albena Yaneva, who examines the agency of spatial practices by discussing buildings in terms of what they *do* rather than what they *are*, via actor network theory (ANT). For Yaneva, "space is not a neutral, passive and inert backstage of political actions; rather, it has an impact on political efficacy by virtue of physically preventing or mandating certain actions."[140] Yaneva argues that buildings are not solely representations of ideas but artefacts that are connected to other objects and peoples, and have an impact on them. Yaneva's argument is therefore different from studies that limit the relation between architecture and politics to ideology, states or activism. For her, the nexus between politics and architecture has been historically understood in six ways: architecture reflects politics and can produce political effect; architects are agents of power, and architectural styles mirror political shifts;

politics is imprinted on cities; architecture helps the construction of identities; and, building types embody politics. Politics and architecture in all these frames are understood as dichotomous and from two different worlds. However, their nexus is more complex than a simple binary: it is not unidirectional, it is always causal and mediated. Buildings are not static – far from it, they are dynamic and co-produced. Architecture is enmeshed in a complex process-based building-making-people network.[141] Although Yaneva expands the definition of architecture by analyzing the transformation of buildings to-be, buildings in-use, buildings in-renovation, buildings in-becoming, all the examples she uses are single buildings, and none are linked, not even remotely, to the challenges of our 21st century, such as the refugee crises, climate change, racism, inequality, colonization and surveillance.

Unlike Yaneva's use of ANT, the sociologist Harvey Molotch uses this method to understand the processes of making various gadgets, appliances for buildings, in order to reveal the ways in which contemporary society operates between humans and objects; the operation and experience are largely – he argues – commodity driven.[142] The links between capitalism and space are also resonant in the thinking of Harvey, for whom urban planning emerged as a tool of economic governance. Harvey argues that through the infrastructural re-engineering of mid-19th Century Paris, Haussmann "helped resolve the capital-surplus disposal problem by setting up a proto-Keynesian system of debt-financed infrastructural urban improvements" by situating the Crédit Mobilier and Crédit Immobilier banks on Saint-Simonian lines.[143] Undeniably, the urban can be designed by re-structuring social relations and influencing the behavior of its citizens.

Since the fall of Keynesian welfare, and the establishment of neoliberalism, the sole connection of finance, banking and capital with *specific* buildings or *specific* cities has subsided. Drawing on Henri Lefebvre's concept of planetary urbanization, urban theorist, geographer and sociologist Neil Brenner maintains that capitalism has stretched beyond the city. Brenner argues that the urban needs to be reconceptualized beyond the physical confines of cities because "[m]ore than ever before, it can be said that the Earth's entire surface is urbanized to some degree, from the Siberian tundra to the Brazilian rainforest to the icecap of Antarctica, perhaps even to the world's oceans and the atmosphere we breathe."[144] Indeed, the association of this urbanization with densification and population increase is outdated; to understand the urban, one needs to seek answers in the hinterland, given that the planetary stretch is correlational to the neoliberal forms of urban governing.

The significance of the global city has been magnified in studies focusing on neoliberalism's ties with globalization. As Marvin and Graham suggest, the emergence of neoliberalism coincided with Anglo-American countries experiencing intense infrastructural privatization, which continued with the fall of the Eastern Bloc where various networks became unevenly incorporated into the global capitalist divisions of labor and flows of capital, information and technology.[145] For the sociologist Saskia Sassen, the global city is not bounded; it is a complex network of production from financial innovation to small investment, including the export of raw money.[146] Brenner's moves beyond Sassen's belief that global cities are a series of globally connected nodes eclipsing the significance of place, and where the "highly digitized economic sectors turned out to be the first step towards conceptualizing the Global City function."[147] Brenner sees global cities not as nodes, but as "sites of both socioeconomic and institutional restructuring in and through which a broader, multi-scalar transformation in the geography of capitalism is unfolding."[148] His thinking is driven by the impetus to reconceptualize the urban beyond an expansive city, because the globe has been urbanized, and there is no outside in a world dominated by global capitalism. Within the urban, we simply have variations of implosions (concentrations) and explosions.[149] His spatial thinking is reminiscent of Foucault's writing on heterotopias, which he considers to be spaces essential to the city,[150] even as counter sites that operate "in such a way to suspend, neutralize, or invert the set of relations designated, mirrored, or reflect by them."[151] Despite some heterotopias proving resistant to

disciplinary regulations, given that they are still a part of the system and structure, there is, for Foucault, no 'outside.'

Another body of work that deploys the urban beyond something bounded includes writings that address how the expansion of urbanization is driven by infrastructure. The period from the 1850s to the 1960s was one of intense centralization and the standardization of urban networks and the creation of the invisible city of pipes and conduits. Thus, infrastructure networks became not only sets of connections within the city, but embedded symbols of hidden territorial scale and space.[152] The factors that have enabled the intense spread and development of urban infrastructure include the sheer scale and reliance on technology, including the speed at which infrastructure is connected and optimized.[153] Infrastructures are not only underground pipes or cables, but also regulatory conditions, tariffs, arrangements and rules that structure the spaces around us. These infrastructures remain invisible yet they control and regulate our lives, and extend beyond the reach of governments in the global market. The architect and urbanist Keller Easterling brings the discussion of infrastructure (free trade zones, the expansion of broadband wireless networks, and the International Organization for Standards) into architectural discourse, first by suggesting that these seemingly apolitical, technical concepts intersect and maintain a disposition that impacts global economies and governance; and second by questioning the role, agency and autonomy of architects in a time when most urban plans and buildings are all administered without the aid of architects.[154] For Molotch, designing infrastructure, from airports to streetscapes, in the name of security is suggestive of spatializing systems of power – at all levels of their design, consumption, implementation and experience.[155] Seemingly, security is a way of governing and suggestive of militarization.

For Graham, militarization is tightly interconnected with colonialism, given that the imposition of neoliberalism becomes the means to 'de-modernize,' disconnect, immobilize and destroy the physical, social and cultural matrix of a city, in an attempt to control environments that do not conform to a neoliberal and colonialist ideal.[156] The deployment of these colonially tested strategies of walls and forts, together with the law, is what Graham calls 'Foucault's Boomerang.'[157] Here, Graham is using Foucault's thinking on disciplinary spaces to argue that disciplining is not just exercised in colonial zones but is also like a boomerang that returns and is implemented on home turf. The relationship between a colony and colonizing the 'homeland' is not a new one, remembering that the Haussmannization of Paris was influenced by the text *The War of Streets and Houses* (*La Guerre des Rues et des Maisons*) authored by the French General Thomas Robert Bugeaud who served in Algeria in the 1840s.[158] We also see this in the concept of the concentration camp, which was invented during the colonial wars between the English and Dutch over the control of Southern Africa at the beginning of the 20th century, and then later imported into Europe as German National Socialist policy. Foucault's relational disciplining was evident in Nazi Germany and has since been implemented in the Israel-Palestine conflict, as seen through the use of language. Effi Eitam, a retired Israeli Defence Force (IDF) brigadier, described Palestinian settlements as "'cancerous tumours' within the 'ordered host' of (greater) Israel,"[159] the metaphorical narrative replicating Hitler's descriptions of Jewish enclaves in his autobiographical manifesto *Mein Kampf (*My Struggle*)*.[160] Here, language is used to construct an image of an elusive Palestinian cancer within the healthy body of Israel; the construct is used as a justification for the deployment of the IDF to clean up and sanitize the decaying body of the nation.[161] This linguistic construct is a common tactic in any nationalist discourse, with clear polarization whereby a threat can only be resolved through a military response.[162] Today, the colonially tested tactics seen in barriers and check-points in places such as the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are significantly altered and deployed in the West, and according to Graham, they are particularly evident during political summits or sports events. For example, in 2014, during the NATO summit, parts of Cardiff and Newport were surrounded in a 'ring of steel' fence that criss-crossed roads, parks and public spaces to keep the world leaders safe, while severely affecting the public's movement and access to space.

In the outlined hyperreal and planetary spread of the urban, the understanding and relevance of the contemporary city through the much-referenced lenses of the historian and sociologist Lewis Mumford and the urban planner Kevin Lynch appear to be polemical. For Mumford, the city is first a social institution, with the "the physical organization of a city, its industries and its markets, its lines of communication and traffic" being subservient to the social.[163] He writes that the city "is a geographic plexus, an economic organization, an institutional process, a theater of social action, and an aesthetic symbol of collective unity."[164] For Lynch, a city extends beyond its physical form to include human experience, perception and social life. The city is not a machine that wears out over time due to mechanical repetition, and nor is it a biological cohesive organism or a cosmic order with eternal form; rather, the city is unified by signals.[165] Similar to a settlement, the city is a consciously changed arrangement, whose overlapping systems are tied to different parts, each with a history and a context.[166] Each part of the city "contains information about its local context, and thus, by extension, about the whole."[167] The ability to understand the whole clearly started fracturing in the 1960s.

Even at the level of the city proper, we can observe that invisible power relations and class struggles are problematizing the belief that a city is bounded. For example, ghettos are not only a lower-class district, but as sociologist Loïc Wacquant shows in his works on urban marginalities, they are also a constructed symbol to advance marginality and territorial stigmatization. In fact, the reorganization of the city through such symbols is driven by deep-seated power that governs the ways in which certain cities or parts of cities evoke symbolic struggles of class and ethnicity. For Wacquant, such symbols mark territorial stigmas which not only signify the lived experience of those living in adversely affected areas, but also can play a determinist role in their identification and perception.[168] In other words, Wacquant suggests that these zones are a symbolic expression of deep-seated and wider socioeconomic problems.

From a different perspective, the sociologist Sharon Zukin examines ghettos in terms of the formation of retail zones and the tailoring of consumer aesthetics, which are connected to a whole network of exploitation found in factories from India and China to Bangladesh. For Zukin, engaging with questions concerning the politics and economics of ghettos is intimately and equally connected with concerns of culture.[169] That is, the formation of the new middle class is correlational to the development of an aesthetic associated with retail culture, immigration and deindustrialization.[170]

At the other end of the socio-economic spectrum, we also have a culture of ghettos called 'gated communities.' Their presence was prominent in the writings of the 1980s LA School of Urbanism which provided a new lexicon to map the city – from gated communities and corporate citadels to zones of consumption opportunities and spectacle.[171] Later authors drew on Octavia Butler's futuristic 1993 novel *Parable of the Sower* and the concept of balkanization to describe a divided population in terms of those who live in gated communities and those who did not, with the repercussions leading to various forms of inequity and strife. In the LA lexicon of the city, this condition was driven by global restructuring and market economics, the outcome of which is a series of balkanized enclaves distinguished from each other socially and culturally, yet also politically and economically polarized. In other words, the divisions have become polymorphous and aspects such as gender, skill and ethnicity are amplified. For the urbanist and environmental planner Daphne Spain, the rise of gated communities is correlational to "the increase in women's labor participation," and invariably "their inability to provide informal security" as they are no longer at home.[172] Indeed, the 'new' middle class puts into question the role of gender, given that for the urban historian Dolores Hayden, domesticity is now tainted with the privatization of labor, products and designs.[173]

Even at the level of architecture proper, architectural design can no longer tell us what is happening inside a corporate building, unlike in the 1960s when glass towers were synonymous with office

work.[174] Previously, the significance of this was seen with the rise of 'star architects,' and the spread of shopping centers and gated communities. Architecture was a way to brand cities, as seen in Frank Gehry's Bilbao Guggenheim Museum, whereby the iconic building transformed the city's identity.[175] Dubbed as the 'Bilbao effect,' it is an example of what Ballantyne sees as the "index of the value-system of the society" in that the authorities invest more in the brand than in the needs of those living in that city.[176] Even when architecture is sustainably regenerated, it is used as a tool to spike-up prices and foster gentrification. Moreover, this is a likely outcome of regarding architecture and the city as separate; however, for Vidler, to think of them as separate not only leaves questions regarding "the form of the public realm unanswered," but also treats a single building as a "designer accessory" and a symbol of progress amid "a sea of urban blight."[177] In this context, the city is indeed a museum, and the urban pervasively stretches across the planet. Indeed, the 21st century requires a reconceptualization of both the city and the urban. For this reason, this handbook brings together the city and the urban using the term 'urban space,' which will be further addressed in Volume II. Analysing architecture and urban space together is critical, given Deleuze's warning that "we are taught that corporations have a soul, which is the most terrifying news in the world."[178] This is seen in the 2018 proposal by Apple/Foster and Partners to create an Apple Store in Stockholm. The proposal represented Apple's general attempt to blur the "boundaries between public and private space" given that Apple stores are usually identified with a town square, a gathering space, "where everyone is welcome."[179] Although the proposal was revoked, it signifies the role of corporations in further privatizing urban public spaces.

It is not that Foucault's disciplinary societies have been abolished, but that the conditioning of governance has become more carefully and surreptitiously regimented in control societies. Control extends beyond institutions and specific object(s) of technology to encompass a whole territory: legal, economic, geopolitical, historical, public and private. The control has becomes continuous and extreme. By way of relating this to a geopolitical context, it is clear that it is not that the ideologies of the Cold War are over, as we see with the Russia-Ukraine crisis, but that their implementation and spatialization have become more complex and subversive; violence and the justification for violence can be (dis)guised through a digital interface, made operational from the air alone despite the deployment of ground forces, hijacked through economic means, where the human body becomes a tool through which the various technologies and territories addressed by Deleuze can operate. The transformed Cold War appears to be enmeshed in the emergence of a new political spatial order, the contours of which remain foggy as we prepare this Volume. To conclude, the nexus between architecture, urban space and politics is far from simple, binary or singular. There are multiplicities of 'politics' involved that architecture fosters, neglects, enacts or evades. With the complex and invasive roles of information technology, neoliberalism, media and globalization, it is becoming more and more difficult to identify where and how spatial practices – including architecture and the urban – inform, retain or sustain agency. This handbook is seeking to do this by mapping the constitutive elements of our contemporary world, as well as spotlighting the role of architecture and the urban in ever-expanding centrifugal and centripetal regimes.

Endnotes

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