

Choral Works in Architecture in terms of Hermeneutics

By

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A Dissertation Submitted to the
Graduate School in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE

Department: Architecture

Major: Architecture

Izmir Institute of Technology
Izmir, Turkey

June,2003

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Abstract

Discussions of the theoretical foundations of architecture increasingly refer to hermeneutics, a branch of continental European philosophy concerned with human understanding and the interpretation of written texts. Perez-Gomez, Vidler, Vattimo, Palmer and some contemporary theoreticians draw heavily on hermeneutics to question the ethical and epistemological latency of architecture. The concept of “hermeneutics as architectural discourse”, which was first introduced by Perez-Gomez, naming “choral works”, offers insights that may contribute to the understanding and procession of architecture regarding this issue of architectural epistemology. After briefly reviewing the historical development of hermeneutics as a method of interpretation, from its classical use through the modern debates, and confining the boundaries of “choral works” as architectural meaning, this thesis examines the contributions of choral works in architecture in terms of hermeneutics to the contemporary production methods and strategies of architecture. This background provides perspective for a review of recent hermeneutically-oriented architectural production modes. This includes the “event” diagrams of Bernard Tschumi redefining programming and de-structuring in architecture, Eisenmann’s “space of between”, Libeskind’s “traces of the invisible” for coding the affective structures of narratives and “hypersurface” theories confining [de] territories by computer aided design parameters.

Öz

Mimarlığın temelleri üstüne yürütülen teorik tartışmalar artan bir şekilde kıta Avrupası felsefesinin insanın yazılı metinleri anlama ve yorumlamasıyla ilgilenen bir kolu olan hermenötiğe(yorumbilim) referans vermekteler. Perez-Gomez, Vidler, Vattimo ve Palmer gibi birçok çağdaş teorisyen de mimarlığın epistemolojik ve etik yeterliliklerini, olasılıklarını sorgulamak ve yeniden değerlendirmek için yorum bilimi ile ilgili çalışmalar yapmaktalar. İlk önce Perez-Gomez tarafından felsefeye “koral çalışmalar” adıyla sunulan “mimari söylem olarak hermenötik” kavramı ise, mimarlığın epistemolojisi göz önüne alındığında mimari anlama ve sürece katkı sağlayabilecek açılımları içinde barındırır. Yorumbilimi'nin bir yorumlama metodu olarak tarihsel gelişimini, klasik kullanımlarından modern tartışmalara kadar, kısaca özetledikten ve “koral çalışmalar” düşüncesini mimari anlamlandırma olarak değerlendirdikten sonra, tez; yorum bilimi bağlamında mimarlıktaki koral çalışmaların çağdaş mimarlık üretim metodları ve stratejilerine yaptığı katkıyı inceler. Bu da: Bernard Tschumi'nin yapı-bozum ve programlamayı açıkladığı “event/olay”diagramlarını, Eisenmann'ın “space of between/aralığında mekan”nını, Libeskind'in metinlerin etkin yapılarını kodladığı “traces of the invisible/görünmez izleri”ni ve bilgisayar destekli tasarım parametreleriyle sınırsallaşmaların tanımlandığı “hypersurface/hiperyüzey” teorilerini inceler.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Definition Of The Problem

Discussions of the theoretical foundations of architecture increasingly refer to “hermeneutics”, a branch of continental European philosophy concerned with human understanding and the interpretation of written texts. Perez-Gomez, Vidler, Vattimo, Palmer and some contemporary theoreticians draw heavily on “hermeneutics” to question the ethical and epistemological latency of modern discourse on architecture. The concept of “hermeneutics”, which was first introduced by Perez-Gomez in architecture to deduct the mis-readings of modern discourse, offers insights that may contribute to the understanding and production of architecture regarding the issue of architectural epistemology. Consequently, many outstanding contemporary architects like Eisenmann, Tschumi, Libeskind etc. instrumentalized “hermeneutics” in their critics to modern discourse through architectural practise. This includes the “event” diagrams of Bernard Tschumi redefining programming and de-structuring in architecture, Eisenmann’s “space of between”, Libeskind’s “traces of the invisible” for coding the affective structures of narratives, “hypersurface” theories confining [de]territories by computer aided design parameters and “tangent” architecture by Yazgan standing in-between the context. The thesis aims at revealing and analyzing the projects of those architects who instrumentalize “hermeneutics” so as to criticize modern discourse and the “rational” on architecture which is also rooted from the very beginning of “Enlightenment”.

The common “hermeneutical” critic in both architects or architectural perspectives of the thesis rests on the counterpoint to the idea of “rationalization” which grows parallel with “Enlightenment”. “Rationalization” can be understood as the human faith in determining any event or subject in the cosmos into predictable and controllable units and is ideologically rooted from the very inception of “Enlightenment” through 17th and 18th centuries. The developments in cosmology in 17th and 18th centuries, strated by Copernicus and Galileo and culminated by Newton put an end to the medieval interpretation of the cosmos as the earth being centre of creation. It had been

proved that the earth, and mankind with it, is a small sphere revolving around the sun in an infinite universe. Thus the discourse of the Church in relation to the cosmos and mankind could not be sustained any more. The idea of universe as a mechanism whose laws were accessible to human reason brought an 'optimism' in relation to man's situation in the world. With the unprecedented increase in man's capacity to control the nature, and the faith to determine his own destiny, the man of Enlightenment believed that as if everything had been under his control. ("History of Architecture" Lecture Notes, Iztech, 1996) By the way, 'to relate everything into predictable and controllable relations' and 'to rationalize' the world became the globalized project of 'his' science, consequently, of applied science which is 'technology'. According to Heidegger, 'objectifying idea' or rationalism had been utilised in its most excessive form in man's history. (Heidegger, 1951)

In this socio-cultural, political and technological contexts, not only **architecture**, but all cultural systems are determined in terms of this *new* paradigm. Specifically, architecture was merely evaluated with respect to its qualities of centrality, wholeness, continuity, hierarchy and etc. Which brings forth within modern discourse. Architecture was being supervised by its permanency, wholeness and continuity; its production in terms of dwelling; its centrality, hierarchy and physical representation on behalf authority; its service to its existentials (such as economy, utility, health etc...) and its harmony, beauty and balance correlated with fine arts. Mathematical logic has been substituted for metaphor as a mode of architectural reproduction and its only meaning is simply represented to be equivalent to the communication of its 'information'. (Derrida, "70 Sonrası Mimarlık Tartışmaları, 1996)

"Rationalization" also commanded architecture to segregate its *form* and *semantics*. Architecture, as a 'system' was not only segregated to its counter parts of *meaning* as: (1) the formal, or syntactic dimension which corresponds to its structure itself to the relations among its elements; and (2) the transcendental, or semantic dimension, that is the reference of each element to the reality of desirable and experimentable world, within Baroque paradigms, Moreover, its transcendental dimension was rejected formerly by *structuralists* who sustained the 20th century modernism, thereby denying the importance of historical horizon of meaning. (Perez-Gomez, 1995)

The architectural meaning which was finally iterified, segregated and disregarded in modern discourse is contemporarily subjected to alternative

understanding and interpretation methods in contemporary rhetorics of architecture. Architecture, being a system, on which the *spatialization of history* was formalized, reacts to this epistemological argument in terms of a method of understanding; *hermeneutics*. Hermeneutics offer insights that will contribute to identify and territorialize architecture in terms of its own ontological perspective. By the way, it refers to the problematic of *experience* and calls for phenomenology in order to decipher *contingent* connotations in architecture. Hermeneutics, going beyond its conventional study as a method of interpretation, is a legitimate tool for architects and designers to enrich architectural meaning. By the way, Hermeneutics' field occupies this 'historical' and 'humanist' ways of understanding alternative to the 'universal' and 'rationalized' meanings of technological epoch which determines the process of architectural understanding till Enlightenment.

1.2 The Definition Of The Study

The thesis focuses on and analyzes the epistemological, consequently ontological, roots of architectural space in terms of a new method of understanding; *hermeneutics*. Therefore, case studies with respect to different hermeneutical processions of architectural space are held so as to clarify the concepts and hermeneutical interpretation in architecture as the common critic to modern discourse.

Architectural works in terms of Hermeneutics are mainly dealt with the idea of contingencies of interpretation producing architectural space. They not only show the potentials of the 'present' in space but also the 'contingent' relations which shall be evaluated as a critic towards 'rational' understanding of space in modern ideology. Within the modern paradigms stimulated 'rational' discourse, disables any event or space in a unique meaning, interpretation or a transferable knowledge, hermeneutical studies rather emphasize on the immanancy of *interpretation* as an historical essence.

Architectural studies in terms of Hermeneutics are described by the architectural theorist Perez-Gomez as: *choral* works. Chora, as a common understanding in Ancient Greek implying a space lying between two places or limits, intentionally introduced by Perez-Gomez so as to define a unique kind of architectural space which has the attributes of; being in-between and, acting on a place. Rather than the 'universal' and

'rational' paradigms of modern ideology, hermeneutics offer a range of discursive understandings.

The thesis reveals and analyzes such discursive projects with respect to their differing attempts of hermeneutical processions of architectural space. Both the architects are also theorists suggesting an alternative way of understanding and producing architectural space and all the selected cases are correlated with the **texts** that are applied on them by their architects to decline their hermeneutical referances.

1.3 The Method Of The Study

The study of the thesis mainly focuses on the reveal of relations between the specific architectural works and their conceptual and philosophical connotations. The study is framed within the projects which are directly supported by written texts and in terms of "Hermeneutics" which is referred as the primary philosophical field of interest in those written texts.

Accordingly, in the second chapter, Hermeneutics, as the referred philosophical field of interest, is analyzed through a historical perspective regarding methodological and chronological issues. The analyze rests upon etymological and epistemological concerns. In terms of etymology; concepts and phenomenons that are prescribed in the thesis are analyzed to decline their verbal and spoken – semiotic - roots. The ancient uses and their modern representations are clarified so as to comprehend their vectorial movement throughout history. In terms of epistemology; concepts and phenomenons that are prescribed in the thesis are analyzed to decline their paradigmatic and systematic roots.

In the third chapter, the concepts and phenomenons which are prescribed in the second chapter are analyzed in terms of architectural discourse. Their instrumentalization and forms as architecture are described. In the fourth chapter, case studies are designated to epitomize alternative methods of understanding and producing architectural space focuses on *choral works*. Hence, it becomes possible to render discursive phenomenons regarding the same issue, juxtaposing them each other. Specific projects of understanding and producing architectural space are evaluated so as to analyze their methods of conceptualizations.

1.4 The Importance Of The Study

The main issue of the study is to name the kind of discourse that may help us better articulate the place which our design of the built environment may play in the technological society at the end of the millenium. Hermeneutics as an architectural discourse may seemed to be the ontological answer despite the indispensable and unique 'ration' of technology in the realm of architecture. As the **text** is considered to be an open ended fiction, a latent trace, autonomous from the writer's trail and is subjected to polysemy in contemporary philosophy, hermeneutics as an architectural discourse, is pointed out to be a latent methodology which gives the opportunity to trace out the possibilities of architectural space simultaneously with the ever-changing contexts and information flow.

Consequently, hermeneutics allow for a valid attempt especially where architectural discourse intersects with social sciences and philosophy. It involves attributes such as 'other', 'mythical' or 'erotic' etc. which are ignored by 'modern' architecture. Finally, Hermeneutics as an architectural discourse shall be evaluated as an alternative response to the critics of determinancy of modern science and technology in architectural realm.

1.5 Assumptions / Limitations

The study is specifically focused on the architectural works that held by Hermeneutical concern of selected architects, whom claim to propose an alternative method of understanding architectural space. The context of each alternative method is designated in terms of etymology and epistemology. Moreover, the projects, which are so far intended to clarify their outstanding attitude, are analyzed in terms of these methodologies. The projects, all of which issue a critic to modern discourse on architecture, are contemporary examples.

Chapter 2

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF *HERMENEUTICS*

2.1 Introduction

Discussions of the theoretical foundations of architecture increasingly refer to hermeneutics, a branch of continental European philosophy concerned with human understanding and the interpretation of written texts.

The basic issue in Hermeneutics and hermeneutical interpretation theory will be a broader concept of *interpretation*. *Interpretation* concept is widely diffused and commonly used in our daily life: a scientist calls his analysis of experiment as ‘interpretation’, while an architectural critic also calls his criticism of a building as ‘interpretation’. Someone who translates from a language is called ‘interpreter’, while the anchorman ‘interpretes’ on the news. We ‘interpret’ on our friends behaviours, a letter from our hometown, or the signs on the road. In fact, we ‘interpret’ from the moment we wake up in the morning till we fall asleep. When we wake up, we take a look to the clock and we ‘interpret’ what it means: we remember which day it is, by the way, what is to be done and make a plan for future; we wake up and ‘interpret’ on every mimics, gestures and words from the people we meet during the day. Consequently, interpretation is the basic attribution of human mind and his existence may said to be a continuous interpretation process.

Though, *interpretation* in terms of its relation to a *text* rather than a *subject* is different –historically- from its *understanding*. *Text* always carry the traces of the human being, on the other hand, a *subject* can be a text as much as an *object of nature*. Occupying *subject* with *text* will miss an indispensable difference. Everyman is in the will to identify a *text* other than a *subject*, consequently, Hermeneutics serves a ‘method’ or ‘theory’ to bring out the traces of man in the text so as to bring out its meaning –in its historicity. (Palmer, 1977) **This proces of bringing out the contingencies of man’s traces in a text is the main concern of Hermeneutics.** Hermeneutical understanding is consequently an archeology of-for understanding the *text* . Natural sciences(Naturwissenschaften) has methods to analyze –understand-

subjects of nature. However, a *text* needs Hermeneutics – a ‘science’ of understanding- so as to understand itself as a *text*. Indeed, any ‘scientific analyze’ may be adapted to a *text* –accepting them mere –‘silent’- nature facts. Though, any *text* is differentiated from any nature fact being ‘alive’ and incapable of being translated originally, needs more comprehensive and sensible ways to be understood. **Hermeneutics’ field occupies this ‘historical’ and ‘humanist’ ways of understanding.** (Palmer, 1977)

2.2 Etymological definition, territory and meaning of Hermeneutics

The word *hermeneutics* was coined in the 17th century on the basis of the Greek *hermeneuein*, ‘to interpret’, which signified equally a declamation of a text, an explanation of a situation or a translation from a foreign tongue. (*Merriam-Webster Dictionary On-Line*, “<http://www.merriam-webster.com>”) *Hermeneuein* itself derived from the name of Hermes, the winged messenger god of ancient Greece, who both delivered and explained the messages of the other gods. His identity(Hermes), rooted from the god of Thoth, the ibis-headed scribe of the gods in ancient Egypt, carry his traces to Islamic prophet of Idris. (Babaoğlu, “İzm’ler Dizisi:13/Hermetizm”)

The term [*Hermeneutics*, or the science of *interpretation*], having consequent etymologic signifieds, rather implies -in established rhetorics of philosophy- the developed methods, principles and attributions so as to interpret on the most hardly recognizable (intertextual) texts of sacred boks, poems and philosophical texts in their ‘most correct form’. (Ulaş,2002)

Hermes is not only the god of pasture but also the god of poets and singers. He is the protector god of travellers and merchants. Dreams and chances are all his grants. The spirit of deads are guided by him to Hades. He is also the god of gamblers and burglars. (Babaoğlu, “İzm’ler Dizisi:13/Hermetizm”)

Jean Pierre Vernant, a very famous writer on this issue, is narrated by Perez-Gomez that among the six major divine couples that appear on the base of the great statue of Zeus at Olympia, only the coupling of Hermes and Hestia cannot be accounted for through genealogy. This pair in fact seems to present a religious articulation of space and movement, of center and path, immutability and change. While Hestia refers, of course, to domesticity, femininty, the earth, darkness, centrality, and stability, all qualities of what we could call as ‘interior space’, Hermes is identified with masculine

values of mobility and threshold, of changing states and openness to contact with the outside world, a realm privileged by the Greeks as you know – the light and the sky – qualities that are all associated with the external, public spaces of action. (Vernant, 1974)

It is significant that Hermes is depicted to be related to the function of translating incomprehensibles to the cognition of man. Also, other connotations of the word (Hermes) implies the process of making incomprehensible recognized. Ancient Greeks believed that Hermes invented language and writing – the instruments allowing man to quote meaning. (Palmer, 1977)

Martin Heidegger, who identifies *philosophy* being mere *interpretation*, clearly relates philosophical hermeneutics with Hermes. Hermes ‘brings the message of destiny; *hermêneuein* explains this message loaded thing, replacing it with the message.’ This explanation is also a *forming, determination* by explaining what is said by the poems. According to Socrates, they are the messengers of Gods [Botschafter] in Plato’s dialogue ‘Ion(534e)’, ‘hermênês eisin tôn theôn.’ Hence, tracing their ancient roots in Ancient Greek, modern concepts of ‘hermeneutics’ and ‘hermeneutical’ will promote the process of ‘presenting to cognition’, while this process is deeply involved with language and language is the perfect media in this process. (Heidegger, 1951)

This process of translation and message transfer owes to Hermes’s ‘presenting to cognition’, occupies both three ancient meanings of *hermêneuein* and *hermêneia*. If we accept in verbal terms (*hermêneuein*), these are: (1) expressing phonically in words, namely ‘declamation’; explaining a situation, namely ‘explanation’; (like) translating from a foreign language, namely ‘translation’. (Palmer, 1977)

2.2.1 In terms of ‘narration’

The first way of interpreting *Hermêneuein* is ‘to express’, ‘to adduce’ or ‘to say’. This way is related with Hermes’s function of ‘declamation’.

‘To express’ has some different issues rather than other verbal attributes in this function. The term, not only describes ‘to say’, but also has connotations about interpretation. Hence, the agent is subjected much to a style of expression. This ‘differance’ may be rendered in the singer’s interpretation of the song or the director’s interpretation of the symphony. Consequently, this way of interpretation is a form of speech. Similarly, oral expressions or singing are such interpretations. In ancient

Greek, *hermêneia* may be corresponded to an oral speech of Homer. Plato, depicts Homer in his *Ion* and within his accents, expressions and renders, *interprets* him exceeding his understanding and recognitions. By the way, he becomes, like Hermes, a medium to Homer's words. (Palmer, 1977)

2.2.2 In terms of 'justification'

The second way of interpreting *Hermêneuein* is 'to explain'. Interpretation as 'explanation' points an indirect way of understanding. Besides, words do not only narrate an event but they explain, rationalize and justify them. Someone can express something besides explaining; expressing something is an interpretation but explaining it is also another form of interpretation. (Palmer, 1977)

Aristotle uses *hermêneia* in his sentences such that it points out a mental action tends to the ethical issues(true-false distinction) of something. In these terms, *interpretation* is a fundamental action regarding the true judgements about something. According to Aristotle, a pray, an order or a question is not an expression but grounded from it; it is a secondary case which is comparable to the things that mind accepts as expression. (Aristotle accepts *meaning* as an expression/statement.) Original sentence or interpretation, such as, 'the tree is brown' expression comes before any will or any expression tells for using it. Thus, *interpretations* tells us statements which are identified to be true or false rather than actions such as a pray or an order which are depicting a state in action. Aristotle calls this 'speech containing righteousness and falsousness'(17a2). ("Aristotle/The Basic Works", 1941)

2.2.3 In terms of 'translation'

The third way of interpreting *Hermêneuein* is 'to translate'. If a text is written in the readers' language, then the reader is in the question of missing the clash between the text's and reader's *horizons*. But if the text is written in another language then, the contraries between the tendencies and horizons can not be ignored. Anyway, translating from a foreign language will carry the same structural problematics with the translations from own languages.

Translation is a special kind of *interpretation* which desires 'to present cognition' in the process of interpretation. Hence, somebody brings forth the alien,

uncanny and incomprehensible means of meaning to the linguistical field of another. God Hermes is also a medium/translator between one world and the other. Translation work, is somehow different from the mechanical function of the translator machines. Translation shows us the reality that, language itself contains the spatial interpretation of the world it structuralizes and translator should be the one regarding this structure of language. Translation, gives us the consciousness about the language sturcturing our world of view and our perception. Finally, language can be evaluated as a treasure collecting the collective memory; we exist in it and as long as it exists and see in the eyes of it. (Palmer, 1977)

As it was mentioned in the introduction, architectural interpretation is rather dealing with last two –in general, third- cases of interpretation. Architecture represents ‘what is to be understood’. Although its textuality may be incomprehensible due to its objectives such as its place, time or rhetorics, its basic intention is to be interpreted through its contingencies and traces of its historicity.

2.3 Cartography of *Hermeneutics*

2.3.1 Hermeneutics before *Enlightenment* – as a theory of *exegesis*

Hermeneutics as a general science of interpretation can be traced back to more domain-specific applications in the ancient Greeks' study of literature and in ancient Biblical exegesis. Regarding texts as organic or coherent wholes, rather than collections of disjointed parts, the Greeks expected a text to be consistent in grammar, style and ideas. Accordingly, they codified rules of grammar and style that they used to verify and emend textual passages. By extending the logic of part and whole to a writer's or school's entire output, the Greeks were also able to attribute works with uncertain origin.(Mallery, J., Hurwitz R., Duffy G., 1987) Although the Jewish Rabbis and the early Church Fathers deployed similar philological tools, their Biblical exegeses were better known for the development of allegorical readings, frequently at the expense of the texts' literal meaning. Their interpretations found within the visible sign a hidden sense in agreement with the intention which they beforehand ascribed to the text. Since instances of this method are found for the Vedas, Homer, the Koran and other sacred writings, it seems a typical strategy for reconciling an enlightened or moral world-view

with texts whose “outward” earthiness or banality seems beneath the dignity of the gods being celebrated. (Babaoğlu, “İzm’ler Dizisi:13/Hermetizm”)

The Middle Ages witnessed the proliferation of non-literal interpretations of the Bible. Christian commentators could read Old Testament stories simultaneously as precursors of analogous episodes in the New Testament, symbolic lessons about Church institutions, and allegories about spiritual traits. In each case, the meaning of the signs was constrained by imputing a particular intention to the Bible, such as teaching morality, but these interpretive bases were posited by the religious tradition rather than suggested by a preliminary reading of the text. Thus, when Martin Luther argued that Christians could rediscover their faith by reading the Bible themselves, Catholic Church officials not surprisingly responded that the Bible was too obscure to read without their guidance. The Protestant exegesis, which appeared after Luther's translation of the Bible, tended to view the texts as responses to historical or social situations rather than expressions of theological principles. Assuming that the New Testament documented the Christian faith, one reader's guide proposed that contradictory statements and difficult passages in the New Testament could be clarified by comparing their possible meanings with contemporaneous Christian practices.(Ulaş, 2002) The example suggests that interpretation might rely on empathetic understanding, the interpreter's self projection into the author's space.

After the Reformation, *analogous interpretation* method of texts dominated the Middle Ages' interpretation were left and especially within the studies of many German philosophers, hermeneutical interpretation of texts were considered to be the most correct form of *interpretation*.(Kılınç, 2001)

Johann Ernesti, suggesting in his handbook on interpretation(*Institutio interpretis Novi Testament*) in 1761 that, “ the meaning in the sacred text should be determined just as in the way that the meaning in other texts are determined”.(Ulaş, 2002) Being a touchstone, the book secularizes and diminishes the *differancé* between the sacred and the mundane. Though, the text was still to be considered to be a whole in itself and in order to grasp the meaning of this whole, the ideal reader should not miss any partial or contextual situation depicting the writer's theoretical index and the historicity of the text.

Indeed, it was just such empathy that Schleiermacher and Dilthey raised to a methodological principle in their attempt to create a general hermeneutics. (Ulaş, 2002)

2.3.2 Methodological Hermeneutics of Schleiermacher and Dilthey

Schleiermacher proposed to join classical philology's focus on grammar and style and Biblical exegesis' concern for themes, creating a general hermeneutics with principles independent of domain specific interpretation principles.(Kılınç, 2001) Schleiermacher compared the reader's approach to a text with the efforts by participants in a dialogue to understand each other, and he depicted the dialogue in terms of a speaker who puts together words to express his thoughts and a listener who understands this speech as part of a shared language and as part of the speaker's thinking.(Ulaş, 2002) The listener can comprehend the words and sentences because they are drawn from the language's lexicon and follow its grammatical rules, but the listener can also recognize the intentions behind the words by virtue of being in the same situation and sharing a common human nature with the speaker. Since Schleiermacher's concept of understanding includes empathy (projective introspection) as well as intuitive linguistic analysis, it is much richer than the idea in modern communication theories that understanding is merely the decoding of encoded information. Interpretation is built upon understanding and has a grammatical, as well as a psychological moment. The grammatical thrust has a bootstrapping flavor: It places the text (or expression) within a particular literature (or language) and reciprocally uses the text to redefine the character of that literature. The psychological thrust is more naive and linear. In it, the interpreter reconstructs and explicates the subject's motives and implicit assumptions.(Palmer, 1977) Thus Schleiermacher claimed that a successful interpreter could understand the author as well, as or even better than, the author understood himself because the interpretation highlights hidden motives and strategies.

Broadening Schleiermacher's hermeneutics, Dilthey developed a philosophy of method for history and the human sciences that he believed could produce objective knowledge but avoid the reductionist, mechanistic, ahistorical explanatory schema of the natural sciences. (Kılınç, 2001) Dilthey argued that texts, verbal utterances, art and actions were meaningful expressions whose "mental contents" or intentions needed to be comprehended. He claimed that investigating human interactions was more like

interpreting a poem or discourse, than doing physics or chemistry experiments. Dilthey termed the desired comprehension of events and expressions "understanding" (*verstehen*) and attempted to distinguish it from the explanatory knowledge (*erkennen*) generated by the hypothetico-deductive method of the natural sciences.(Ulaş,2002)

Dilthey initially followed Schleiermacher in identifying understanding as empathy guaranteed by the notion of a common human nature. Although he recognized that the outlook and values of people varied over different historical periods and cultures, Dilthey argued that, because historians themselves thought and acted, they could relive and understand what people in the past were trying to express and accomplish in their writings, speeches, actions and art. Nevertheless, many of his contemporaries criticized this position because it relied on introspection and an underspecified, non-critical psychology. Stung by this criticism and influenced by the neo-Kantian idea that works of art and literature embodied the formal values of their respective periods, Dilthey revised his position. He began to emphasize that texts and actions were as much products of their times as expressions of individuals, and their meanings were consequently constrained by both an orientation to values of their period and a place in the web of their authors' plans and experiences. In this revision, meanings are delineated by the author's *weltanschauung*, or world-view reflecting a historical period and social context.(Mallery, J., Hurwitz R., Duffy G., 1987) *Understanding* (*verstehen*), the basis for methodological hermeneutics, involves tracing a circle from text to the author's biography and immediate historical circumstances and back again. *Interpretation*, or the systematic application of understanding to the text, reconstructs the world in which the text was produced and places the text in that world.

This circular process precludes an interpretation of a text from being unique and scientifically objective, like the explanation of a chemical reaction, inasmuch as knowledge of the author's or agent's world may itself critically depend on the present interpretation. Dilthey and his recent followers, Hirsch and Betti, claim, however, that interpretations become more valid as they assimilate more knowledge about the author and the author's values, instead of reflecting the interpreter's own values or sense of reality.(Kılınc, 2001) Dilthey's method in effect bootstraps from a whole (a biography, a set of works) whose themes may be repeatedly respecified through the elaboration of one of its parts (the action or work). The process eventually reaches stability because

successive interpretations of the work or action serve to constrain subsequent refinements in the background model of the author. The strength and validity of such constraints depends on the currency and robustness of that model. Increases in temporal and cultural distance between the speaker and interpreter decrease the reliability of interpretation, but this neither forecloses the possibility of such a model nor denies the potential for a valid interpretation.(Mallery, J., Hurwitz R., Duffy G., 1987)

2.3.3 Hermeneutics in social sciences

The hermeneutic tradition provides a basis for prescribing and criticizing the conduct of inquiry and the development of knowledge in the natural, social and cognitive sciences. Its representatives have figured prominently in debates concerning how valid knowledge can be acquired and whether there is a need for a separate methodology in the social sciences.

Dilthey distinguished the cultural and social sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*) from the natural sciences on the basis of their objects and the appropriate means for knowing them. The natural sciences concerned phenomena which, opaque to thought, could only be studied from the "outside" through observation of uniformities in their behavior and the construction of causal laws to explain those uniformities. In contrast, the human sciences had objects such as texts, verbal expressions and actions which could be investigated from the "inside" through an understanding of their authors' experiences and intentions. An interpretive or hermeneutic methodology could more reliably and intelligibly account for these objects by reconstructing the internal cognitive processes which motivated and gave meaning to each of them. The use of hypothetico-deductive methods employed in the natural sciences could only capture the external correlations among these objects at some high level of abstraction. (Kılınc, 2001) Dilthey's arguments were embraced in the early 20th century by many social scientists, including the sociologist Max Weber, whose paradigmatic studies of social institutions interpreted human behavior as intentional action, structured by the agents' goals and belief. However the physics model of the social sciences also persists and is currently manifested in such techniques as Skinnerian stimulus-response modeling of human behaviors and statistical content analysis, which determines the meaning of texts through frequency count of their words.(Mallery, J., Hurwitz R., Duffy G., 1987)

Contemporary hermeneuticists, such as Apel, Habermas, and Ricoeur, strengthen Dilthey's distinction by noting that in the human sciences the subject of investigation and the investigator can communicate with each other. The equality suggests that an appropriate methodology will resemble discussions in which members in a community justify their actions. The tools of the natural sciences are simply incapable of representing the key concepts in such discussions, namely motivation, belief, and intention, and the complexity of their interactions. Intentional actions are embedded in groups of varying size and are constrained by (re-) created rules and norms - socio-cultural traditions. Because of the complexity of these intertwined and mutually-defining webs of relationships, scientific access to them is difficult and "uncertainty principles" abound - whether these involve the difficulties of isolating the object of study from its milieu or changes which communication between the investigator and the subject produces in the subject. These conditions reinforce the notion that cultural and social studies have the role of clarifying the beliefs, plans, motivations, and social roles that led cognitive agents to produce their texts and actions. The inquiry becomes a "dialogue" through which the inquirer comes to understand the tradition in which the author or agent is embedded, so that he may either consent to or repair the tradition, as Gadamer demands, or even reject it, as Habermas permits. (Ibid) Phases of understanding may be alternated with phases of validating knowledge, as Ricoeur's hermeneutic arc suggests, or of seeking explanations to opaque behaviors, as suggested in Apel's model of psychoanalysis. In any event, hermeneutic studies are inherently interactive and produce self-understanding. In this way, they extend the original mission of hermeneutics to mediate cultural traditions by correcting misreadings or distortions. (Palmer, 1977)

Logical positivists have nevertheless rejected the claims for a separate method for social and cultural sciences as groundless challenges to their own program of creating a unified scientific method based on an unambiguous observation language. Abel, Hempel and others argue that empathetic understanding and the attribution of rule following are psychological heuristics, unverifiable hunches or intuitions, based on personal experience. Although Abel concedes that they may be useful in setting up lawlike hypotheses for testing, he concludes that they are neither necessary nor sufficient to constitute a human science. (Mallery, J., Hurwitz R., Duffy G., 1987)

There are several rebuttals to these claims. First, methodological hermeneutics, which Dilthey initiated and which Betti and Hirsch continue, holds that an interpretation can be "objective" and "valid," if not verifiable, providing that the investigator resists temptations to make the text relevant for her own practical affairs. This strategy regards the text as an embodiment of the values of its time and suspends credibility regarding its truth and acceptability, according to present standards. But, knowledge of values expressed in other texts and records from the period are allowed to constrain the possible interpretations. Second, the idea of an interpretive or hermeneutic social science has received indirect support from ordinary language philosophy, an analytic that eschews the mentalism to which the logical positivists so strenuously object. The support comes from the sociologist Peter Winch, who generates recommendations for a social science on the basis of the later Wittgenstein's analysis that particular word use and discourse patterns - "language games"- reflect and constitute activities in semi-institutionalized, functional areas of life - "life-forms." Winch consequently contends that the analysis of social actions (both verbal and non-verbal) has a necessarily holistic, situation oriented, interpretive character, rather than a generalizing, explanatory one. Third, philosophical hermeneutics is not concerned with verifiable accounts and, as noted above, it denies the possibility of objective knowledge. Instead, it argues that only a person who stands in history, subject to the prejudices of his age, can hope to understand it. A valid understanding of an event, interaction or text is one that bridges history or socio-cultural differences to highlight the inquirer's situation. (ibid)

2.3.4 Ontological Hermeneutics of Heidegger

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger undermines the notion of objectivity in Husserl's phenomenology, and by extension, in methodological hermeneutics. (Hofstadter, 1975) Husserl argues that objective interpretation is possible using his transcendental phenomenological method that requires bracketing the subjectivity inhering in the interpreter's *life-world* (*Lebenswelt*), the world of personal experience and desires.(Husserl, 1960) Heidegger denies that this bracketing is possible. He claims instead that the understanding of a situation is directly mediated by a fore-knowledge, or sensitivity to situations, that is comprised by the understander's life-world. Therefore,

suspending that life-world would preclude the possibility of understanding, altogether. Heidegger reaches his conclusion by contending that as a necessary part of human "being-in-the-world" (*Dasein*), things are perceived according to how they are encountered and used in one's everyday routines and tasks.(Hofstadter, 1975) Perception and apprehension thus move from fore-knowledge to an *existential understanding*, a largely unreflective and automatic grasp of a situation that triggers a response. This understanding must be incomplete because *Dasein* is both historical and finite. It is historical in that understanding builds from the fore-knowledge accumulated from experience. It is finite due to "thrownness," the necessity of acting in situations without the time or ability to grasp the full consequences of actions or plans in advance. Only when actions fail to meet the exigencies of the situation and "breakdown" occurs, do individuals stand back and assume the theoretical attitude of science which sees things "objectively," as discrete objects separate from the self and resistant to one's will.(Mallery, J., Hurwitz R., Duffy G., 1987)

Heidegger brings hermeneutics from a theory of interpretation to a theory of existential understanding. He "depsychologizes" hermeneutics by dissociating it from the empathetic perception of other beings. Understanding now appears as a *no-longer-conscious* component of *Dasein*; it is embedded within the context of specific situations and plans, with, in effect, finite computational resources.(Kılınç, 2001) Therefore, interpretation (*Auslegung*) which depends on such existential understanding (*Verstehen*) is not the general logical method found in classical philology, but refers to a conscious recognition of one's own world. Dilthey's methodological hermeneutic circle is consequently supplanted by the more fundamental *ontological hermeneutic circle*, which leads from existential understanding situated in a world to a self-conscious interpretive stance. This self-consciousness, however, cannot escape its limitations to achieve a transcendental understanding in the sense of Hegel, who considered rationality the ability to reflectively accept or reject (transcend) the received socio-cultural tradition. According to this reading of Heidegger, fore-knowledge is accumulated over time and constrains successive exercises of existential understanding. But self-conscious understanding cannot choose which elements in the experience based foreknowledge are respecified in the bootstrapping process.(Mallery, J., Hurwitz R., Duffy G., 1987)

2.3.5 Philosophical Hermeneutics of Gadamer

In his philosophical hermeneutics, Gadamer follows his teacher Heidegger in recognizing that the ties to one's present *horizons*, one's knowledge and experience, are the productive grounds of understanding. However, Gadamer argues that these limits can be transcended through exposure to others' discourse and linguistically encoded cultural traditions because their horizons convey views and values that place one's own horizons in relief. He stresses the role of language in opening the subject to these other subjectivities and their horizons. In forcefully stressing the role of language in opening the subject to other subjectivities in constituting traditions, Gadamer places language at the core of understanding. Consequently, *understanding* for Gadamer does not scientifically reconstruct a speaker's intention, but instead mediates between the interpreter's immediate horizon and his emerging one.

For Gadamer, understanding is bound and embedded in history because understanding deploys the knower's *effective-history*, personal experience and cultural traditions, to assimilate new experiences. Thus, the initial structure of an effective-history constrains the range of possible interpretations, excluding some possibilities and calling forth others. As effective-history constitutes the *prejudices* brought to bear in understanding, it simultaneously and dialectically limits any self-conscious attempts to dissolve those prejudices. Gadamer thus explicitly opposes the scientific ideal of prejudiceless objectivity in interpretation. In this respect, he moves beyond Heidegger, who regarded so-called scientific objectivity as a derivative of existential understanding. Gadamer does not deny the importance of either *scientific understanding* or *critical interpretation*, a form of interpretation that introspectively questions assumptions unreflectively inherited from cultural traditions. His focus on the human context of knowledge emphasizes the need for repeated attempts at critical understanding, through which people can gain the insight needed to correct their prejudices. But, if prejudices may be individually overcome, their fact is inescapable. It imposes *a priori* limitations on the extent to which a self-reflective methodology can eliminate distortions from scientific inquiry. The *critical self-consciousness* of a rational agent who introspectively questions received traditions may counter distorting consequences of effective-history, but it at best only leads to successive approximations of objectivity.(ibid)

The resulting theory of meaning differs from the methodological hermeneutics of Schleiermacher and Dilthey, which identifies the meaning of a text with its author's intentions and which seeks to decipher the text by uncovering the world-view *behind* it. For Gadamer, understanding recreates the initial intention embodied in the text, by elucidating the subject matter that the text addresses (its *aboutness*). The process moves the text beyond its original psychological and historical contexts and gives it a certain "ideality" of meaning, which is elaborated in a dialogue between the interpreter and the text. The dialogue is grounded in the concern which the interpreter and the author share toward a common question and a common subject matter. In confronting a viewpoint reflecting a different set of horizons, the interpreter can find his own horizons highlighted and reach critical self-consciousness. In seeking the key question, the interpreter repeatedly transcends his own horizons while pulling the text beyond its original horizons until a fusion of the two horizons occurs. The interpreter's imagination can also play a role in the dialogue with texts and carry the understanding of the subject matter beyond the finite interpretation realized in methodological hermeneutics. Nevertheless, the interpretations are constrained by the questions posed, since each question calls forth frameworks within which the subject matter must be understood. (Ulaş, 2002) The meaning of a text then is not fixed, but changes over time according to how it is received and read. Thus for Gadamer, to understand is to understand differently than the author or even one's own earlier interpretations, precisely because the process involves creating new horizons by bootstrapping from the old horizons which they replace. But the notion of bootstrapping in Gadamer moves beyond the one in Heidegger because Gadamer allows prejudices to come into a conscious focus that may direct their individual supersession.

Gadamer does not merely work through Heidegger's philosophical program. He also redirects philosophical hermeneutics along partly Hegelian lines by appropriating substantial parts of the Hegelian transcendental philosophy that Heidegger eschewed. Gadamer's concepts of the openness of language and the ability of people to transcend their interpretive horizons are based on Hegel's dialectic of the limit, in which the recognition of limits constitutes the first step in transcending them. The concept of understanding as a concrete fusing of horizons is derived ultimately from Hegel's idea that every new achievement of knowledge is a mediation, or a refocusing of the past within a new, present situation, which attempts to explain mind and logic on the basis of

the dialectical resolution of more basic and antithetical concepts. As each opposition is resolved, the resulting synthesis is found to be opposed to yet another concept and that opposition must also be dialectically resolved. This purely subjective and continual unfolding interacts with and is conditioned by experience, particularly the experience of language, which tends to mold the developing subject in conformity with the traditions encoded in linguistic utterances and in the language itself. However, Gadamer clearly resists Hegel's notion of the self-objectifying, transcendental subject. Instead, he views the logical and ontological categories with which Hegel marks the unfolding of thought as distillations of the logic inherent in language, particularly the German language, whose use as a tool for speculative philosophy Hegel brought to perfection [40]. This view affirms the relativist position that thought and reason are always determined by the historical traditions of a linguistic community. (Mallery, J., Hurwitz R., Duffy G., 1987)

2.3.6 Phenomenological Hermeneutics

Faced with the diversity of hermeneutics, and other continental philosophies including structuralism and phenomenology, Ricoeur strives for a grand synthesis in his phenomenological hermeneutics. Ricoeur argues that phenomenology and hermeneutics presuppose each other. The connection between hermeneutics and phenomenology traces to Heidegger who took the term "hermeneutics" from Dilthey to distinguish his own philosophical investigation of everyday being from Husserl's transcendental phenomenology, which tried to achieve objective knowledge by suspending concern for the subject's life-world. (Ulaş, 2002) To capture knowledge of that world, Heidegger retained Husserl's notion of eidetic phenomenology, which assumes immediate registration of phenomena in a picture-like but uninterpreted manner. Like Heidegger, Ricoeur also follows Husserl to eidetic phenomenology, but like the late Heidegger and, particularly, Gadamer, Ricoeur recognizes the ontological basis of understanding in language. For Ricoeur, then, the subject's being is not identical with immediate experiences. So, instead of attempting a direct description of *Dasein* like Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, Ricoeur sees the need for a hermeneutic theory of interpretation to uncover the underlying meaning constituting *Dasein*. Through its emphasis on the pre-linguistic, eidetic phenomenology supplies a means of distancing observation from

linguistic descriptions that immediately call up preconceptions. This distancing is precisely what is required for interpretation to proceed. Since the task of uncovering the underlying objectivity cannot be achieved through the suspension of subjectivity, Ricoeur concludes that Husserl's project of transcendental phenomenology can only be realized through the application of a methodological hermeneutics to an eidetic phenomenology. (Mallery, J., Hurwitz R., Duffy G., 1987)

Ricoeur also argues that structuralism and hermeneutics can be complementary approaches to analyses of language, meaning, and cultural symbolism, for reasons similar to those he advanced for the complementarity of eidetic phenomenology and hermeneutics. *Structuralism* refers to a mode of inquiry which inventories elements of a system and notes the grammar of possible combinations. It is exemplified by Saussurean linguistics and Levi-Strauss' anthropology [67]. Ricoeur finds the value of structuralist analysis lies in its ability to catalogue phenomena and describe their possible combinations, but its weakness lies in its inability to provide anything more insightful than behavioral descriptions of closed systems. Nevertheless, the ability to generate structural descriptions complements the hermeneutic method, which interprets these descriptions by assigning functional roles to the phenomena. (Palmer, 1977)

In his treatment of psychoanalysis, particularly the interpretation of dreams, Ricoeur shows the complexity involved in this hermeneutic task of assigning functional roles to words and symbols. The analyst must develop an interpretive system to analyze the dream-text and uncover the hidden meanings and desires behind its symbols, particularly those which have multiple senses (polysemy). Allowing for the possibility of multiple levels of coherent meaning, hermeneutics aims at ascertaining the deep meaning that may underlie the manifest or surface meaning. Ricoeur distinguishes two approaches for getting at the deeper meaning: a *demythologizing* one that recovers hidden meanings from symbols without destroying them (in the manner of the theologian Bultmann) and a *demystifying* one that destroys the symbols by showing that they present a false reality (in the manner of Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud). The demythologizers treat the symbols as a window into a sacred reality they are trying to reach. But the demystifiers treat the same symbols as a false reality whose illusion must be exposed and dispelled so that a transformation of viewpoint may take place, as, for example, in Freud's discovery of infantile illusions in adult thinking. Thus, there are two

opposing tendencies, a revolutionary and a conservative hermeneutics. Whereas the critical hermeneutics of Apel and Habermas falls within revolutionary demystification, the phenomenological hermeneutics of Ricoeur and the philosophical hermeneutics of Gadamer fall in the more conservative camp of the demythologizers. (Mallery, J., Hurwitz R., Duffy G., 1987)

Ricoeur attempts a dialectical resolution of the Habermas-Gadamer debate, arguing that the hermeneutics of tradition and the critique of ideology require each other. He denies the alleged antinomy between the ontology of tradition which limits possible meanings (Gadamer) and the eschatology of freedom which seeks to transcend these constraints (Habermas). If, as Gadamer believes, understanding should be conceived as the mediation between the interpreter's immediate horizons and his emerging horizon, then the interpreter must distance himself to some degree if he hopes to understand the text. That is, when confronted with a text, the interpreter must adopt a stance of critical self-understanding, not unlike the stance adopted in the critique of ideology. Hermeneutics thus incorporates a critique of ideology. (Ulaş, 2002) Likewise, the critique of ideology incorporates tradition. The ideal of undistorted communication and the desire for emancipation do not begin with Habermas. They arise from a tradition - from the tradition of the Greek conception of "the good life", from the exodus, and from the resurrection. Thus the interests voiced by Gadamer and Habermas are, in Ricoeur's view, not incompatible. One is an interest in the reinterpretation of traditions from the past and the other is the utopian projection of a liberated humanity. Only when they are radically and artificially separated, argues Ricoeur, does each assume the character and tenor of ideology. (Mallery, J., Hurwitz R., Duffy G., 1987)

Chapter 3

HERMENEUTICS AS ARCHITECTURAL DISCOURSE

3.1 Introduction

The developments in cosmology in 17th and 18th centuries, strated by Copernicus and Galileo and culminated by Newton put an end to the medieval interpretation of the cosmos as the earth being centre of creation. It had been proved that the earth, and mankind with it, is a small sphere revolving around the sun in an infinite universe. Thus the discourse of the Church in relation to the cosmos and mankind could not be sustained any more. The idea of universe as a mechanism whose laws were accessible to human reason brought an ‘optimism’ in relation to man’s situation in the world. With the unprecented increase in man’s capacity to control the nature, and the faith to determine his own destiniy, the man of Enlightenment believed that as if everything had been under his control. (AR221/History of Architecture Lecture Notes) By the way, ‘to relate everything into predictable and controlable rations’ and ‘to rationalize’ the world became the globalized project of “his” science, consequently, of applied science which is ‘technology’. According to Heidegger, ‘objectifying idea’ or rationalism had been utilised in its most excessive form in man’s history.(Heidegger, 1951)

In this socio-culturel, political and technological contexts, **architecture**, being the ‘castle’ of this *new* paradigm was being supervised by its permanancy, wholeness and continuity; its production in terms of dwelling; its centricity, hierarchy and physical representation on behalf authority; its service to its extentials (such as economy, utility, health etc...) and its harmony, beauty and balance correlated with fine arts. Mathematical logic has been substituted for metaphor as a mode of architectural reproduction and its only meaning is simply represented to be equivalent to the communication of its ‘information’.(Derrida, “70 Sonrası Mimarlık Tartışmaları, 1996)

“Yet, in a world dominated by the viewpoint of science and technology, architecture increasingly has difficulties to demonstrate its value and relevance to society and to establish a true identity as a legitimate discipline all its own. The problem that architecture faces is not how best to accommodate itself within the

techno-scientific world view and *paradigm of thought*. Regardless whether it veers towards science and engineering or towards art, or attempts to find a compromise, it is destined to further lose its identity and its very existence is in question. The problem, as Heidegger points out, is first and foremost for architecture to *understand its very own nature.*" (Perez-Gomez, 1998)

For architecture this problem is fundamental to its nature as a discipline. If our dwelling - and, thus, architecture - is a continuing, open-ended question, then design, the process through which a work of architecture comes into being, is first and foremost a discourse and a form of inquiry. It is not the assembly of building components, of 'answers' to limited, superficial questions derived from previous solutions; or the composition of abstract geometry and form to be subsequently 'translated' into a building. The meaning of a work of architecture - and its logic - comes from 'within' rather than 'without' (i.e. it is not 'imported' from previous precedents, normative theories, or aesthetic ideologies).(Perez-Gomez, 1994) As the nature of the work emerges and its understanding becomes clearer, so does its form as the manifestation of this understanding. According to Pérez-Gomez, *design* is, therefore, an evolutionary learning process, a process of exploration, discovery, understanding and interpretation, i.e. it is fundamentally a *hermeneutic* process. Furthermore, since its subject is the question of our being and our dwelling in this world, design is more than a process of solving functional, spatial, technological and formal problems: *it is inherently a phenomenological and ontological process.*(Perez-Gomez, 1999)

But *design as the guardian of the issue of dwelling* cannot exist without the material act of building. As was mentioned by Vidler, through architecture - and, thus, through design - we enter into a dialogue and a discourse with the world around us.(Vidler, 1992) Through the shaping of the earth and organizing its material into a spatial and tectonic framework we engage the forces and phenomena of nature, reveal its order, and make this order part of our own. It is evident that building cannot be reduced to just 'construction', nor separated from the question of dwelling, and, thus, the process of design, without subverting both. Trying to understand and bring forth the essence and meaning of a work is synonymous with the exploration of its *material form and order* and, thus, the inquiry into the formal, phenomenal and tectonic *nature* of building. This assumption becomes fundamentally critical in terms of Hermeneutics,

especially when it is clarified that architectural theory is not a *science*, but inevitably technological due to its modes of production.

Hermeneutics as architectural discourse deals mainly with *our historicity*, yet the Grand Narrative of progress, consequently the realm of technology as the fundamental *determinant paradigm*, has ended, in the words of Vattimo. (Vattimo, 1988) It suggests architecture as the disclosure of a social and political order from the chaosmos of experience, starting from the perceptions of meaning that our culture has shared, embodied in historical traces, while projecting imaginative alternatives going beyond stifling and repressive inherited institutions. Accordingly, architectural practise must be guided by a notion of the common good as it preserves a dimension of politics in the human search for stability and self-understanding. By the way, it is primarily **ethical**. It stands for human experience and interpretation. Pérez-Gomez identifies *architecture* as **“architecture communicates the possibility of *recognizing* ourselves as complete, to dwell poetically on earth and thus be wholly human... This *recognition* is not merely linguistic (like a semantic pair where a=b), it occurs in experience and like in a poem, its ‘meaning’ is not seperable from the experience of the poem itself; as an ‘erotic’ event it overflows any reductive paraphrasing, overwhelms the spectator-participant, and has the capacity of changing one’s life.”**(Perez-Gomez, “<http://mcgill.ca/arch/archdocs/7lamps.htm>”)

3.2 Architectural studies in terms of Hermeneutics: *choral* works

Architectural studies in terms of Hermeneutics are described by the architectural theorist Perez-Gomez as: *choral* works.(Perez-Gomez, 1992) Chora, as a common understanding in Ancient Greek implying a space lying between two places or limits and a tract of a land, intentionally introduced by Perez-Gomez so as to define a unique kind of architectural space which has the attributes of; being in-between and defining the boundaries. Rather than the ‘universal’ and ‘rational’ paradigms of modern ideology, hermeneutics offer a range of discursive understandings.

Hermeneutics as an architectural discourse can be identified as an architectural -deconstructive- strategy so as to confine the *architectural meaning* contextually. This strategy is employed with not to destroy; maintain or renew or reinscribe but to battle with the very meaning -of architectural meaning- without proposing a new order. It does

not engaged in reversing values aimed at an unaesthetic, uninhabitable, unusable, asymbolic and meaningless –architecture- rather, destabilize meaning. To destabilize meaning does not imply doing so towards any new and stable end, thus it cannot mean to end meaning nor change meaning. Nor yet to conserve a “true” meaning. To destabilize meaning is to maintain (a respect for) all of the meanings as a necessary consequence of the congenital instability of writing.

That is what is important to understand in terms of architecture; that there is still a space of participation as much as it is a space of contemplation, in spatial and temporal terms. As the space is existentialized within the *event* of the participant, it still serves, *gives* him the possibility to identify the *difference* between the binaries which constitutes his thought and ethics. That is why; the architectural studies in terms of hermeneutics is related to an ethical project, or a locus of political action, just as was declined by the theoretician Perez-Gomez.(Perez-Gomez, 1992)

3.2.1 Etymological definition, territory and meaning of “chora”

Chora is a common word in ancient Greek meaning place, though differently from *topos*, which means the location where something is. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary On-Line, <http://www.merriam-webster.com>) Neither does it mean finite or infinite space, neither *kenon* nor *apeiron*. (Derrida, 1997) Chora designates the container of something and has associations with words which mean to hold, or to room for. It is used for the post, station, office, the ‘place’ that a persons holds or a room that is filled.(The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language Fourth Edition. 2000 <http://www.bartleby.com>) Plato identifies this receptacle/container with the space of chaos: ‘a kind of shaking implement that seperates the four basic elements out of itself, to constitute the world as we know it.’(Plato, “Timeaus”) Connected etymologically to the Indo-European chasho, chaos maintains its connotations as a primordial gap, opening or abyss, as well as a primordial substance.(Merriam-Webster Dictionary On-Line, <http://www.merriam-webster.com>)

Chora has to do with interval rather than both sides; it is what you open to ‘give’ place to things, or when you open something for things to take place. It is a kind of hybrid being. Chora is not exactly the void, though it looks as if it were void, and it’s not temporal in the sense of a sensible world. Furthermore, it has nothing to do with *topos*, though Plato sometimes uses the word *topos* – a determined place – instead of

chora. Chora is the spacing which is the condition for everything to take place, for everything to be inscribed. According to Derrida, chora is irreducible to all values to which we are accustomed – values of origin, anthropomorphism and so on. Chora looks as though it were giving something, ‘giving’ place. (Derrida, “Khôra”) Following Derrida, *chora* may be understood to be the sum or process of the interpretations that is inscribed ‘on’ it, though it is certain that it may not be reducible to them. It is the receptable. (Derrida, “Khôra”)

It was Plato, who first introduces the term ‘chora’ to philosophy, in his essay ‘*Timaeus*’, where he identifies the primary elements of cosmos and the creation of the universe. Plato’s primary material is androgenous; it’s both male and female; it’s both the receptable and the semen, the substance, a receptable of all visible and sensible things, which is itself invisible and formless, ‘all embracing and possessed in the most puzzling way, of intelligibility, yet very hard to grasp.’ Thus, Plato concludes that: there must be three components to reality: first, the unchanging form, uncreated and indestructible being, imperceptible to decide all the other senses, which is the object of thought, immutable being; second, that which bears the same name of the form it resembles, but is sensible, has come into existence, is in constant motion, and is apprehended by opinion with the aid of sensation, becoming (the old relationship between the ideal chair and the specific chair which you are sitting. The ideal chair is being, the specific chair is becoming); and third, chora, which is eternal and indestructible, which provides a position for everything that comes to be and which is apprehended without the senses by a sort of superior reasoning and is so hard to believe in. Perez-Gomez describes chora as: **“We look at it, indeed, in a kind of dream and say that everything that exists must be somewhere and occupy some space and that what is nowhere in heaven or earth is nothing at all... so it is a substance of dreams; chora is the substance of dreams.”**(Perez-Gomez, 1992)

3.3.2 Choral works as architectural meaning

“A Choral work is both the cosmic place and the abstract space and it also the substance, the material, of the human crafts. The conception of *space* and *substance* in a molar body destructs the common distinction between contained space and material container. Most importantly, however, it would point to an invisible ground that exists beyond the linguistic identity of being and becoming: in

fact that naming the chair the ideal and the specific create an identity and there is an invisible ground that exists beyond it, that exists beyond the linguistic identity of being and becoming, of words and world, of signifier and signified, while also making language and culture possible in the first place; it is the region of that which exists.” (Perez-Gomez, 1992)

This reflection will be helpful when we return to discuss the problem of architecture’s potential meaning in the context of our technological world, a meaning that perhaps signals at the end of Western metaphysics that is what is important to understand in terms of architecture; that there is still a space of participation as much as it is a space of contemplation, in spatial and temporal terms. As the space is existentialized within the *event* of the participant, it still serves, *gives* him the possibility to identify the *difference* between the binaries which constitutes his thought and ethics. That is why; the architectural *interpretation* problematics in terms of hermeneutics is related to an ethical project, or a locus of political action, just as was declined by the theoretician Perez-Gomez.(Perez-Gomez, 1992)

For architecture this political action is fundamental to its nature as a discipline. If our dwelling - and, thus, architecture - is a continuing, open-ended question, then design, the process through which a work of architecture comes into being, is first and foremost a discourse and a form of political action through ethics. It is not the assembly of building components, of ‘answers’ to limited, superficial questions derived from previous solutions; or the composition of abstract geometry and form to be subsequently ‘translated’ into a building.

“...keeping the mark of the erasure. It’s the form of the limit that is to be decided. Choral study enables architecture to find new means of de-programming from the traditional reading of architectural representation and and to introduce the possibility of the discursive rather than the figurative, in architecture.”(Eisenmann, 1997)

Architectural theoretician Perez-Gomez exemplifies Ancient Greek “tragedy” so as to clarify a choral work confining an architectural space: as an event in-between the Apollonian/Dionysian, being/becoming, the binarities.

“Framed by architecture, by building, tragedy inhabits a space of transition, its ultimate theme being the event in-between the Dionysian and the Apollonian. The event takes place in the choir, the space of the chora, for an epiphany of what Plato called metaxy. The receptacle, chora (dance platform or orchestra) takes its shape through mimesis, from Being and Becoming. We must recall how in his poetics Aristotle posits mimesis as a function of art. Rhyme, rhythm, eurhythmy and harmony are attributed of what the spectator recognizes as a universal ground in the possible but improbable plot, always new and striking, and yet uncandidly familiar. It is both a space for contemplation and a space of participation, a space of recognition. It is my contention that in this liminal understanding of architecture as a space for the dance, as a place for the poetic mobility that distinguishes human beings from the other animals and in chora-graphy (choreography) woven by language in a narrative form, we find the ever present origin of the work of architecture, perhaps, an approximation to its invisible significance, one that always alludes us it seems.” (Perez-Gomez, 1992)

By the way, Perez-Gomez, taking an ontological point of view, places architecture into the realm of language where its subject and itself is subjected to a never-ending process of exploration, discovery, understanding and interpretation. While, he points out the oscillations in-between, he criticizes modern mentality emphasizing constancy, looking through human existence comparing it to the Ancient Greek World where the absolute assumption is everything is in the process of change. Quoting Vöglin, “changing answers to the self-same questions reveal a progressive differentiation that we may call as the order in history which is never fully clarified and must always be re-articulated in the language of myth and art.” Hermeneutics thus denies a nihilism of our cultural inheritance, allowing for the possibility of an ethical practice while contemplating on the *virtual* forces of late-industrial consumer society.

Chapter 4

CHORAL WORKS IN ARCHITECTURE IN TERMS OF HERMENEUTICS

4.1 Introduction

Choral works in architecture in terms of Hermeneutics implies a range of architects' projects which criticise modernist ideology and "rational" discourse, emphasizing on the "other" alternatives that are potential in human temporality. As the architectural action is an act of affirmation, not a act of negation, taking place in a space that is, from its inception, social, consequently cultural and linguistic, those projects which analyzed below are also the alternatives for a political and ethical action. What they suggested has formal characteristics and offers a more suitable way of undersanding, consequently, interpreting the existences.

Although these projects move around a similar terminology, converting similar metaphors, tschumi proposes "event" as the determinate interpretation of the object, while eisenmann refuses any kind of mere objects' events, emphasizing an event scheme considering both existences –so called, subjects and objects-, tracing out their common, superimposed and juxtaposed, contingencies. On the other hand, hypersurface architecture suggests an in-between exchange surface which integrates both *substance* and *space* on an unfolding surface, since libeskind emphasizes "traces" latent in the imprints of past experiences.

4.2 Event

4.2.1 Conception of Event

Event -or in terms of his own rhetorics: *les événement-* is the primal determinant paradigm in Bernard Tschumi's architecture.(Tschumi, 1993)

Event stands for many conceptions in its conventional and unconventional uses. It narrates *action* and *activity*,(Merriam-Webster Dictionary On-Line,

<http://www.merriam-webster.com>) It replaces the effect of *shock* as was stated in Tschumi's 'Event Architecture'. For Nietzsche and Heidegger, *Existence* is perceived as *Event*.(Nietzsche, 1968) (Heidegger, 1977) According to Foucault, an *event* is not simply a logical sequence of words or actions, but rather 'the moment of erosion, collapse, questioning or 'problematization' of the very assumptions of the setting within a drama may take place - occasioning the chase or possibility of another, different setting'.(Foucault, 1966) Derrida identifies the term with 'interruption of the narrative'. (Derrida, 1997) Moreover, Rajchman consolidates Derrida's render as 'event as a chance or possibility that has been predicted in a certain history rather than another'.(Anyhow, 1998)

Event also holds the primary position in philosophical hermeneutics in terms of epistemology. Philosophical hermeneutics considers *understanding act* as man's self-interrogation of the world which was born into, comprehension of his own existence inside the borders of his own experience and sequencing his present through his past.(Palmer, 1977) Hermeneutics commissioned *understanding* concept with a different (ontological) use and content. Vattimo's *truth* which is released from its metaphysical use and *Existence* concept clarifies *truth* and *Existence* as *event* – something everlastingly interpreted, written and created -; by the way, *truth* can be experienced by man (for example, confronting an art work) though consideration of that kind of knowledge as "rational" means that it became an object of transfer however. Vattimo insists that truth may only exists through the specific context and relations of the *interpreter* of that experience.(Vattimo, 1992)

4.2.1 Event in Bernard Tschumi's Architecture

When we come back to Bernard Tschumi's architecture, 'event' concept is as dominant as it has changed its meaning territory throughout years. The insertion of the terms 'event' and 'movement' in Tschumi's architecture was influenced by Situationist discourse and by the '68 era according to his words.

'Les événements, as they were called, were not only 'events' in action, but also in thought. Erecting a barricade (function) in a Paris street (form) is not quite equivalent to being a flaneur (function) in that same street (form). Dining (function) in the Rotunda (form) is not quite equivalent to reading or swimming in

it. Here all hierarchical relationships between form and function cease to exist. This unlikely combination of events and spaces was charged with subversive capabilities, for it challenged both the function and the space.’ (Tschumi, 1975)



fig 1. '68 les evenements

At that time –in 1970’s, Tschumi believed that there was no architecture without event, no architecture without action, without activities, without functions. Architecture was seen as the combination of spaces, events, and movements without any hierarchy or precedence among these concepts.

A few years later, Tschumi designed his foremost project for an invited competition, a citypark in Paris, France: Parc de La Villette. The main recognizable elements of the *Parc* are –so called- *folies* which are to be defined by Derrida as emergences of disparate multiplicities.(*CHORA L WORKS*, 1997) These points called folies were points of activities, of programs, of events in Tschumi’s words.(Tschumi, 1987) Tschumi elaborated on this concept, proposing the possibility of an "architecture of the event" that would ‘eventualize’, or open up that which, in our history or tradition, is understood to be fixed, essential, monumental. He had also suggested earlier that the word ‘event’ shared roots with ‘invention’, hence the notion of the event, of the action-in-space, of the turning point, the invention.

‘Architecture is not about the conditions of design, but about the design of conditions that will dislocate the most traditional and regressive aspects of our society and simultaneously reorganize these elements in the most liberating way, where our experience becomes the experience of events organized and strategized through architecture.

It is my contention that far from being a field suffering from the incapability of questioning its structures and foundations, it is the field where the greatest discoveries will take place in the next century. The very heterogeneity of the definition of architecture -- space, action, and movement -- makes it into that event, that place of shock, or that place of the invention of ourselves. The event is the place where the rethinking and reformulation of the different elements of architecture, many of which have resulted in or added to contemporary social inequities, may lead to their solution. By definition, it is the place of the combination of differences.’(Tschumi, 1992)

However, it will be interesting to note that Tschumi resists to confine architecture in mere means of *event*, or programme in architectural pragmatics. He criticizes Michael Erloff, who understands “*event*” as a catalyzer of “experience” category to the propaganda of “experience” and a reflection of a certain utopia, as “Reducing architecture to mere space and event as its prolongation is similar to reduce architecture to mere façade.” He believes that, in order to be effective in our mediated culture, in our culture of images, architectural theory must combine the idea of function or action with that of image. Indeed, architecture finds itself in a unique situation: it is the only discipline that by definition combines concept and experience, image and use, image and structure. Philosophers can write, mathematicians can develop virtual spaces, but architects are the only ones who are the prisoners of that hybrid art, where the image hardly ever exists without a combined activity.(Tschumi,1993) It will be delicate to describe Tschumi’s “*event*” architecture as a “better” strategy. This strategy, indeed, is better from the established social strategies, proposes new relationships between space and events through *programming*.

‘If architecture is both concept and experience, space and use, structure and superficial image -- non-hierarchically -- then architecture should cease to separate these categories and instead merge them into unprecedented combinations of programs and spaces. "Crossprogramming," "transprogramming," "disprogramming:" I have elaborated on these concepts elsewhere, suggesting the displacement and mutual contamination of terms.’(Tshumi, 1987)

By the way, it claims political and social aims for better future, just as stated by the outstanding theorist Pérez-Gomez in his article, “*Architecture as Science: Analogy or Disjunction?*”.

‘Hence, I support the idea to quit the indifference of programme by architecture. *Programme*, being a narrative, a world view, is an indispensable part of the project. We should imagine a more convenient and poetic life through language. The ethical responsibilities of architect goes far beyond the formal strategies within his allowances and destructions through programme. Fiction of latent utopias for our present society, emergence of possibilities that are to be interrogating the staticity of constitutions, historicism and their violent forces so as to built new ones, is what I have predicted for architecture in terms of its relations with science and technology.’(Perez-Gomez, 1995)

Though it will be crucial at that moment to correlate Tschumi’s idea of *event* to the idea of *chora* where the visitor not only participates but also contemplates everlastingly in an “in-between” space stressed between the dichotomies of ethical and aesthetical binaries. Tschumi proposed event such that, flows and vectors often intersect unprogrammed spaces: the place of the “in-between”, the space of all potentialities, is activated by the motion of bodies in it.(Tschumi, 1992)

However, it will be indispensable to distinguish *programme* and *event* in that sense. According to Tschumi; **”a program is a determinate set of expected occurrences, a list of required utilities, often based on social behaviour, habit or custom. In contrast, events occur as an indeterminate set of unexpected outcomes. Revealing hidden potentialities or contradictions in a program, and relating them to a particularly appropriate (or possibly exceptional) spatial configuration, may create conditions for unexpected events to occur. For example, one may combine or assemble programmed activities so that they charge a spatial configuration in such a way that, by mixing otherwise common or predictable programmatic items, they generate uncommon or unpredictable events. I have often called that particular spatial configuration the “in-between.”(ibid)**



fig 2&3. the “unpredictability” of the event during '68 les evenements

After recognizing the basic attributions and intentions of *event*, it may be legible to follow exemplary cases. The first project will be Bernard Tschumi’s proposal for Le Parc de La Villette competition which was also applicated between 1990-1994 in Paris, France.



fig 4. Park De La Villette

Park De La Villette is one of the most outstanding project in Bernard Tschumi’s career. As the site was considered to be a public parc in 1979, it was finalized during the Mitterrand Era as a part of the “Grand Projects”. The city parc, which rests on thirtyfive hectar land and the buildings sorrounding within were processed to 1990’s. It was “Science and Industry Museum” which was firstly constructed, then Tschumi was appointed to design the overall campus after winning the competetion he was invited for La Villette.

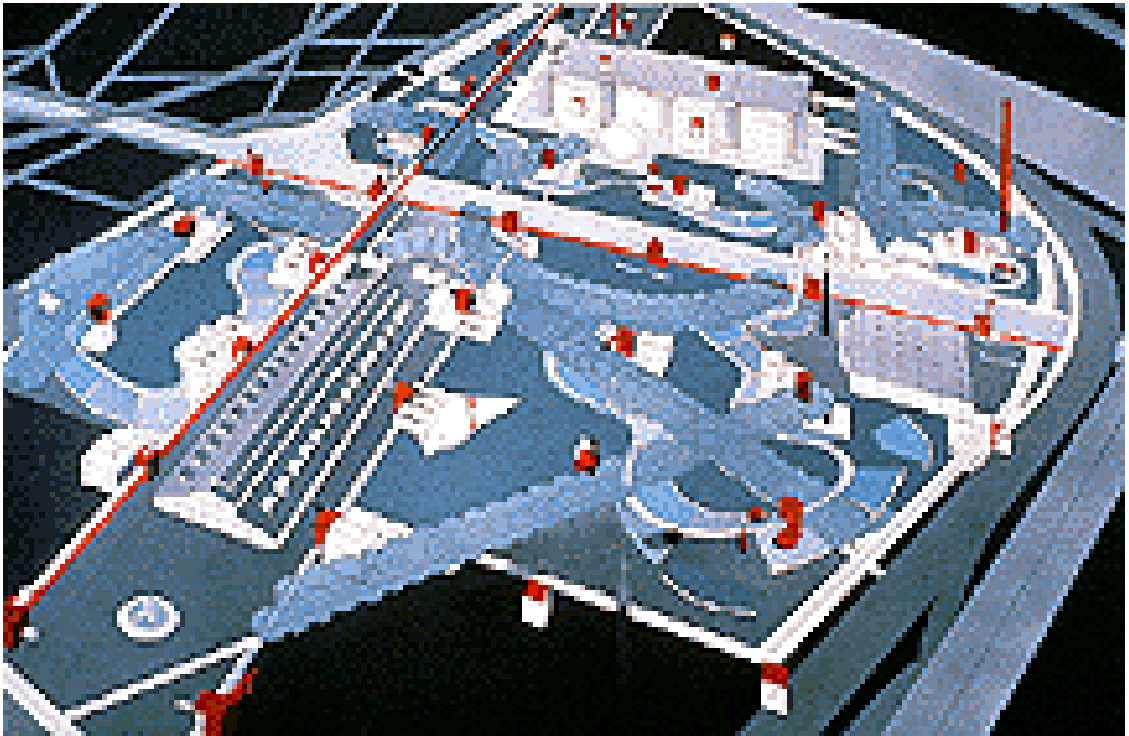


fig 5. Park De La Villette / top view

Tschumi's winning scheme had been conceived as a large metropolitan venture, derived from the disjunctions and disassociations of time. It attempted to propose a new urbanistic strategy by articulating concepts such as "superimposition", architectural "combination" and "cinematic" landscapes. Tschumi described the Park as "the largest discontinuous building in the world".(Tschumi, 1987)

Tschumi claims that the general circumstances of the project were to find an organizing structure that could exist independent of use, a structure without center or hierarchy, a structure that would negate the simplistic assumption of a casual relationship between a program and the resulting architecture.(ibid)



fig 6. Park De La Villette / Promenade

Indeed, the abstraction of the grid as an organizing device suggested the disjunction between an architectural signifier and its programmatic signified, between space and the use that is made out of it. The point grid became the tool of an approach that argued, against functionalist doctrines, that there is no cause-and-effect relationship between the two terms of program and architecture. By the way, contingent events and traces are subjected to gain existence in terms of Tschumi's strategies which will be analyzed consequently.

Superimposition; acts as the coexistence of three system of narrations: system of points, system of lines and system of surfaces. Each represents a different and autonomous system (a text) whose superimposition on another makes impossible any "composition" maintaining differences and refusing ascendancy of any privileged system or organizing element. The principle of heterogeneity – of multiple, dissociated and inherently confrontational elements – is aimed at disrupting the smooth coherence and reassuring stability of composition, promoting instability and programmatic madness ("a Folie") as suggested by Bernard Tschumi.(ibid)

Cinegram; is the idea of montage (which presupposes autonomous parts or fragments and their non-contextual interaction that will produce the unprecedented, the other, the unfamiliar, etc.) on the basis of the *plan* in the notion of the composition. Tschumi defines cinegram as the inscribing of movement through the rapid succession of photograms.(ibid) Contiguity and superimposition are two aspects of montage and montage as a technique includes such other devices as repetition, invention, substitution and insertion. These devices suggest an art of rupture whereby invention resides in contrast – even in contradiction.

Deconstruction; can be understood as to avoid all attempts to homogenize the Park into a totality. It eliminated the presumption of a pre-established causality between program, architecture and signification. Moreover, it rejected context encouraging intertextuality and the disperse of meaning. It is the main attitude towards the Park as a system of information.

“Our aims were to displace the traditional opposition between program and architecture and to extend questioning of other architectural conventions through operations of superimposition, permutation and substitution to achieve a “reversal of the classical oppositions and a general displacement of the system” as Jacques Derrida has written in another context in *Marges*. Above all, the project directed

an attack against cause and effect relationships whether between form and function, structure and economics or (of course) form and program, replacing these oppositions by new concepts of contiguity and superimposition. “Deconstructing” a given program meant showing that the program could challenge the very ideology it implied.”(ibid)

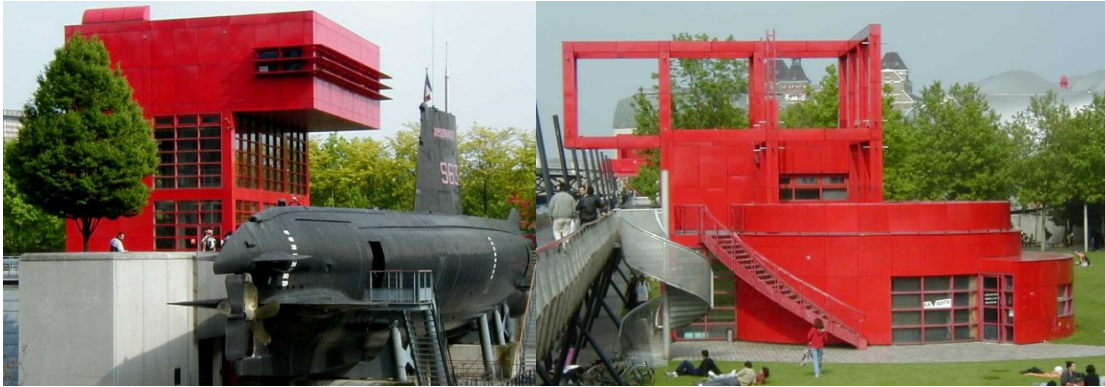


fig 7. Park De La Villette / Le Point De Follies

Bernard Tschumi interrogates the foundation of the binary dichotomies which preconsume the understanding and process of architecture, while he traces out the contingencies immanent in human events and understanding, and intense on a *choral* space where the superimposition strategy allows for multiple ways of understanding/narrating the event/text.

“The Parc de la Villette project thus can be seen to encourage conflict over synthesis, fragmentation over unity, madness and play over careful management. It subverts a number of ideals that were sacrosanct to the Modern period and, in this manner, it can be allied to a specific vision of postmodernity. But the project takes issue with a particular premise of architecture, namely, its obsession with presence, with the idea of a meaning immanent in architectural structures and forms which directs its signifying capacity.”(Tschumi, 2000)

Finally, it will be clarifying to issue “*rituals*” concept, understanding the interaction between *space*, *movement* and *event* in Bernard Tschumi’s architecture. Yet, the relation between architecture and program intentionally can be one of indifference, reciprocity, or conflict, rituals deals with reciprocity in Tschumi’s words as suggested in his book, *Event Cities*2.

“The difficulty of relating events and spaces does not lie on the theoretical level. In fact, the very nature of architecture would make it easy to demonstrate that conceptual space and real space, abstract parameters and the depths of human experience are “architecturally” independent. The difficulty lies in the practical application... of course, people do not let themselves be manipulated the way spaces are. There are ceremonies that determine space, and spaces that determine ceremonies. “Ritual” treats the former, for the latter still carry reminiscences of early twentieth-century behaviourism. Here, the ceremonies, or rather these rituals (after all, a ritual is a formalized event in the same way that architecture is a formalized space) determine a set of spaces. They *regulate* these spaces.”(Tschumi, 2001)

4.3 Space of between

4.3.1 Conception of *space of between*

Space of between; is the conceptual term that is chosen by the architectural theorist, Peter Eisenman so as to define the *zones of undecidabilities* or, in turns, *events* that take place inside these zones as the *processes of the interstitial* in his projects.(Anyplace,1996) The interstitial – which means; about the void or crack between two entities – is somewhat a modification of the material condition in Eisenmann’s work.

These modifications which he called ‘poché’ – the crack or void between the two side of a wound – from an inert mass between forms, or as something from which void is cut, to something highly mobile and volatile can be seen as the subversion of the form of both traditional solids and their traditional organizations in space. Narrating Eisenmann: “**The idea of the interstitial is a condition between form and space, between figure and ground, between all affective and a conceptual experience of space. The processes of the interstitial do not begin from either a container or a contained, even though all architecture is in some way traditionally legitimated by its function as container. Instead, it is possible to think of a container that is more amorphous and mutable, like a series of ballons filled with sand that conceptually can both push into space and be pushed into. These zones of alternation or**

pulsation produce an interstitial condition that is neither all solid nor all void but rather something that contains both. This alternation of void and solid is no longer experienced in a linear sequence; it is understood as a nonvisual sensation that also requires the experience of the subject in space. This effective experience begins to question the hegemony of visual representation in architecture.”(Anyhow, 1998)

As the transformation of flows and vectors are realized as a processional structure in Eisenmann’s architecture, the overall body is composed of a series interstitial layers from the periphery to the interior. By the way, the internal structuring of his buildings are claimed by himself to reveal alternative spatial possibilities.

4.3.2 Space of between in Peter Eisenmann’s Architecture

One of the most prominent figures in contemporary architecture may said to be Peter Eisenmann with his radical attitude towards *architectural process* and *interpretation*. Consequently, what qualifies this radical attitude is his concept for *space of between* or “transarchitecture” in Derrida’s spelling.(70 Sonrası Mimarlık Tartışmaları, 1996) No doubt, Eisenmann’s architecture is in the inquiry of uncovering many concepts and spatial strategies, but also *destabilizing* the former ones.

As he has stated in his writings, Eisenmann proposes a critique to object oriented information systems where the object, in this specific case: the human existence, has the metaphysical powers of logocentrism and phonocentrism.(Re:working Eisenmann, 1993) These two concepts, which were firstly introduced by philosopher Jacques Derrida on the basis of “Deconstruction”, explain the domination of the knowledge of human participation in any architectural space.(Deconstruction: Omnibus volume, 1989) Consequently, the participant who experiences the space and evaluates due to his binary model of information, is seen as the unique and “true interpreter” of the space according to those two conceptual acceptances.

“Architects always relate what they are doing to the human figure; classic architecture really means anthropocentric architecture, and for some four hundred years “since the Renaissance”, the idea of an originary scale – the human body – has dominated architectural thought... In my own work, I have been

mounting a critique of the systematic privileging of anthropocentric origins such as scale and function in traditional architectural aesthetics.”(Anyhow, 1998)

Eisenmann’s architecture, not only destabilize the knowledge of the “true interpreter”, but also points out a much richer system of latencies: *chora*. While, it may be wiser to identify this architecture in terms of Heideggerian concepts of ontology which he also admits to be influenced in some senses of the relation between poetry and building.(CHORA L WORKS, 1997)

Heidegger ontologically classifies all kind of existences in two, consequently it will be better to identify these two - *existences* and *Existence* - terms so as to recognize the scheme.(Heidegger, 1977) What Heidegger depicts about *existences* are the whole subjects and objects existing in the universe while the meaning he appointed to *Existence* is rather different and complex as Vattimo claims the term to be one of the most “*difficult to obscure*”.(Vattimo, 1998) Everything in the world *exists*, consequently *Existence* is the common and immutable [iz-ness] of everything *is* though it does not resemble any of these. This ontological philosophy considers both objects and subjects as *existences*, by the way there is no ontological differences between them. The real ontological difference lays between *Existence* and subjects/objects world – world of *existences*.(ibid) According to Heidegger, the ontological difference concept is systematically suppressed and forgotten by Western metaphysics which ignores the problematic of *Existence* till Plato – as this discourse dislocates and decenters the thinking/reasoning human existence.(Heidegger, 1975) It may be speculative to appoint *Existence* with *chora*, however, the related subject in Heideggerian sense in Eisenmann’s architecture will be its approach towards subjects and objects which replace the meaning of each other and have no real separatrix between. Rather, Eisenmann points out the real separatrix between *existences* and *Existence* where there is an oscillation of territories of both terms. We are acknowledged the *absences of existences*, including subjects and –so called – objects and the *presences of the absence of Existence*.(CHORA L WORKS, 1997)

‘For me, the system of presences represses what I believe you call *difference*, which requires the simultaneous operation of both presence and absence... The architecture I am pursuing is one in which presence and absence operate equally... To put it in another way, traditionally, architecture centers, and

its textuality speaks of center and presence. What we are trying to do is to create architectural texts which, while centering, at the same time speak of an *other*, a decentering.’(Anyplace, 1996)

Moreover, there is one special issue differentiates *space of between* from the other cases/paradigms of *choral works*, that; as *chora* strategy in terms of hermeneutics traces out the contingencies of man in a text, Eisenmann’s architecture traces out both the contingencies of the tectonics/syntactics of architecture. The tectonic/syntactic/grammatic elements are de-composed in such a way that, the procession of them operates highly different from their traditional kind of utilization.

After recognizing the basic attributions and intentions of *space of between*, it may be legible to follow exemplary cases. The first project will be Peter Eisenmann’s proposal for CCA Competition in NY, United States.

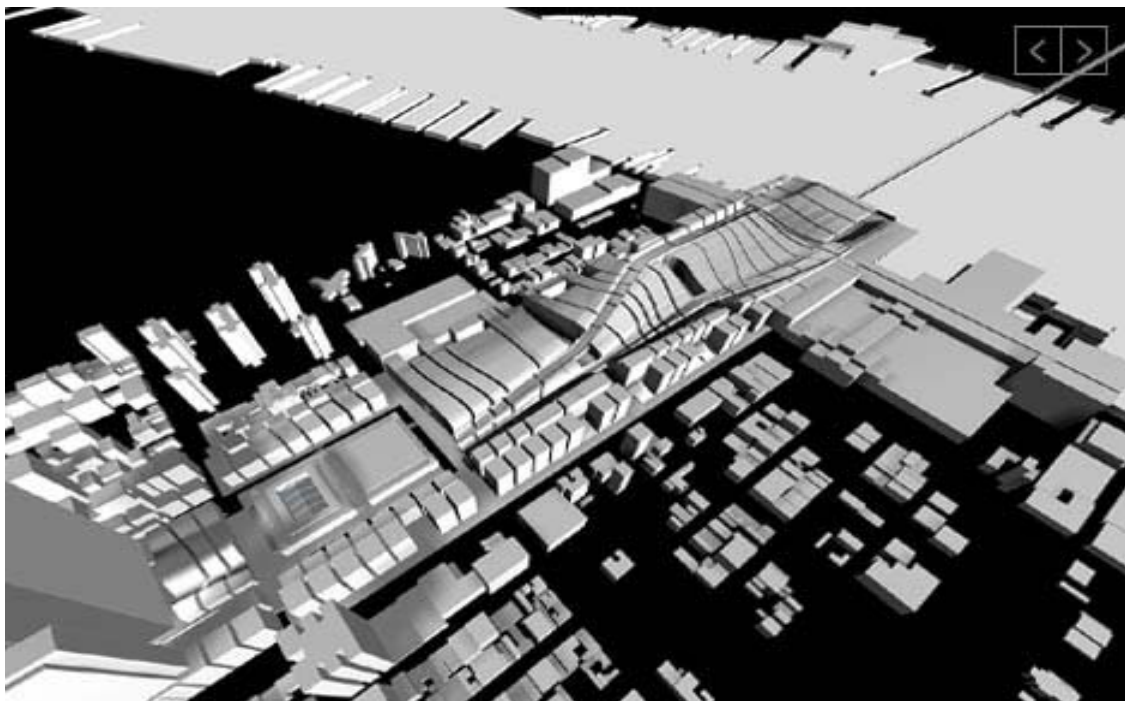


fig 8. CCA Competition Proposal / 3d render

The striated urban pattern, composed of positive solid buildings are converted into a new striation strategy, thus a new contextualism questioning its inner and outer structure was projected in Eisenmann’s CCA West Side, NY Project. Consequently, as the voids are confined within solids, solids are also confined within voids. Moreover, the striated parallel structure enables the project to confine new and continuous public

spaces where the inside activities are de-territorialized in a positive way so as to continue along their nearby context of the outside. Striation strategy also enables to confine exciting and unfamiliar space inside and outside of the complex. The visitor/participant has not only the chance of recognizing different constitutions but also has the ability to create his own spaces. It promotes circulation, by the way, confine new public plazas and boulevards.(Anyhow, 1996)

‘In the world of digital information that occupies the postmodern city, there is also a different space/time condition, one that resides between the former classical dialectic of reality and appearance: this is the virtual. The virtual is a condition in real space that contains the oscillation between past and present time, between figure and ground, between smooth and striated space. This "between" condition of the virtual paradoxically retrieves actual spatial content, that is, the affective experience of space. Equally, the forms of computational space exceed even the most extreme forms of architectural expression, because the human hand can only draw what the eye has seen. An architect cannot presage what the computer can produce.’(ibid)

The basic attribution of the project was produced from the tension between the concepts of *urban*, in the city and the *individual* in senses of *ground* and *figure*. The project was formalized by ‘*computer morphing*’ of which technique is being used in cinema, video and photography so as to transform a shape or man to something/someone else.

‘The architectural idea for the west-side project is twofold. The first idea is to warp the ground formerly a flat datum of gridded space in order to make it figural. This warping gives the figured ground a + charge. As this positive (+) vector pushes upward and outward from its former ground datum (0), it creates an equal and opposite reaction in the space that is now pushed back into the ground, producing another + (if void) charge in what would formerly have been, in the figure/ground dialectic, a negative (-) charge. The double positive charges that result from the warping process lead to a figure/figure condition.

The second architectural idea activates the section of the figure/figure condition in different but complementary ways. The sectional space between the building objects (+) meets the new ground, which is now a positive surface (+). The intersection of these two figures creates an interstitial space that would traditionally be seen as residual (-), or between. Here, however, this residual space is activated, so that pushing into the objects and the ground surface creates a positive (+) void space. This residual space, which was produced by the addition of solids, is now seen as figural, or +.'(ibid)

During the methodological evolution of the project, the site had been the place of a serial transformation where the striation process of forms and lines were recorded. The existing fabric of this part of the city was utilized so as to produce the new plans and sections which are finally both the evolutions and traces of it. Consequently, the spaces composed of solids and voids are as conscious as they are contingent, moreover as the outside is contingent in the inside, the inside is contingent in the outside.(ibid) Finally, Eisenmann proposes this new contextual scheme in his formal point of view.

'In the history of architecture, from the Gothic to the Baroque to the modern, buildings have always been conceptualized as figural objects on a fundamentally neutral ground. In a major shift away from this thinking, our project proposes a figure/figure rather than figure/ground urbanism. While generated from the complexities that lie within a traditionally gridded ground, the new folded (or "natural") topography introduced in our project overflows this grid, forming an excessive matrix of interconnectivity that both is between figure and ground and reconstitutes each. As such, the project reframes former urban systems and opens them to more varied interpretations. This allows for an alternative urban strategy, one that is already within the existing context and that enables the old and the new to together redefine the whole. Rather than being seen as new, or as different from the old, this strategy blurs those differences through the process of the virtual, or the oscillation of (+/-).'(ibid)



fig 9. CCA Competition Proposal / model view

Another project which identifies Eisenmann's choral study will be his proposal for the competition of the Genocide Monument for all the Jews massacred in Europe, where his formalization of the haptic qualities directs the attention to the tension

between the *place of an event* and the place of *chora*. Eisenmann, referring to quantum physics, distinguishes any subject for being latent to be conceived rather than the experience of an object, in case: human existence.(Anytime, 2000) He claims a subject to have contingent correlations with other subjects and objects. Hence, he points out the indifference between object and subject, rather underlines the contingencies of existences, emphasizing *traces* and *events* of them.

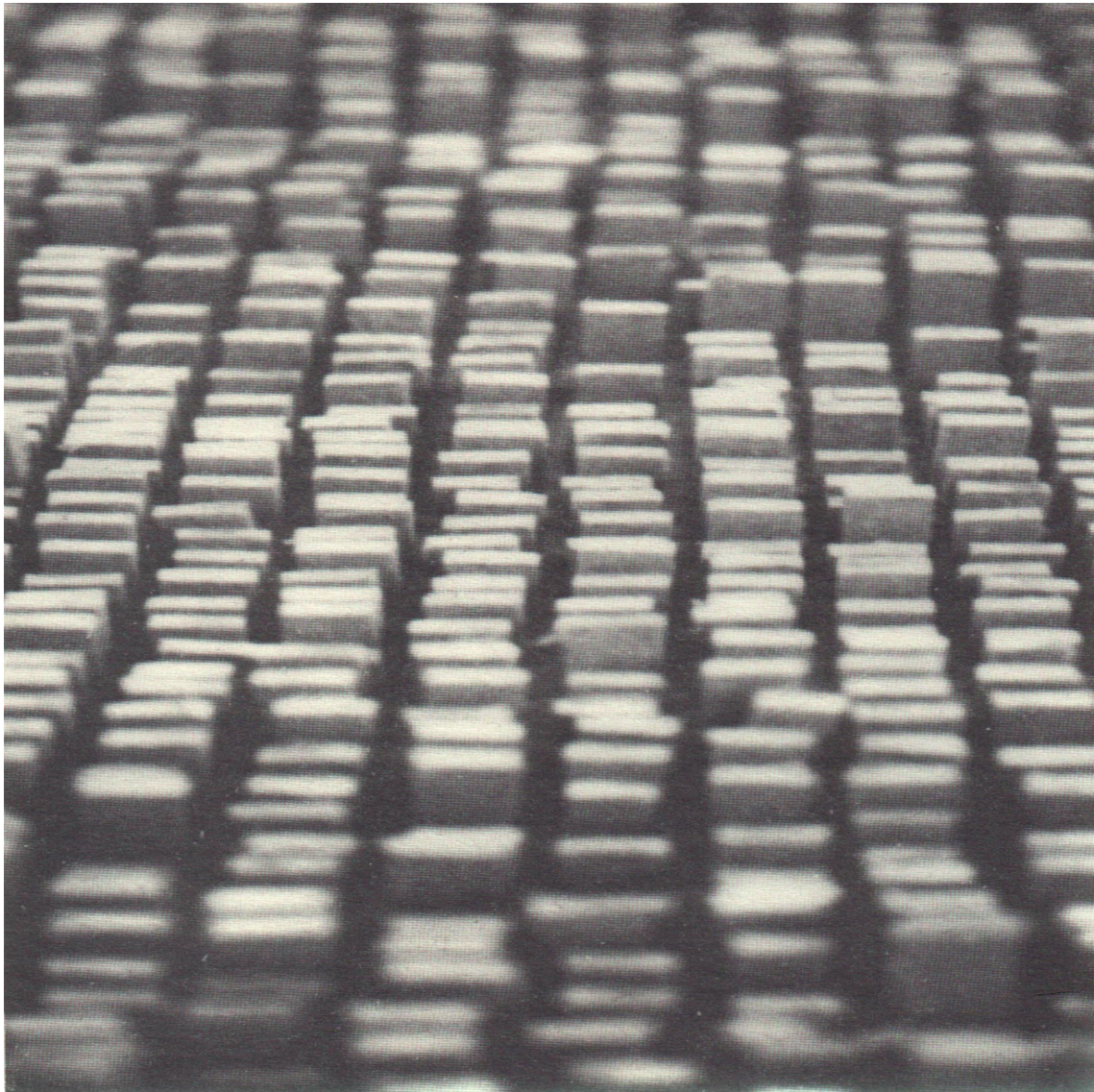


Fig 10. Eisenmann's proposal for the Genocide Monument / model view

Eisenmann questions the conventional historical interpretation of the subject within the understanding of the object/visitor whom experiences the subject through time. Accordingly, object, moving inside and outside of the subject, understands it better. This attitude arranges understanding act of the object within a series of signs,

such that: a grid, an axis, a marche or a promenade, by the way, a consecutive order which is performed by a series of sings/perceptions guarantees the simultaneity of experience and subject with respect to the understanding of the object. Eisenmann, referring to te Einstein's Relativity Theorem which suggests time as the fourth dimension of space, disintegrates the time of subject from the time of object, which means that it is possible to disintegrate the inner time of the subject of remembrance from the time of experience. And, it was the event of Genocide which begins that division.(ibid)

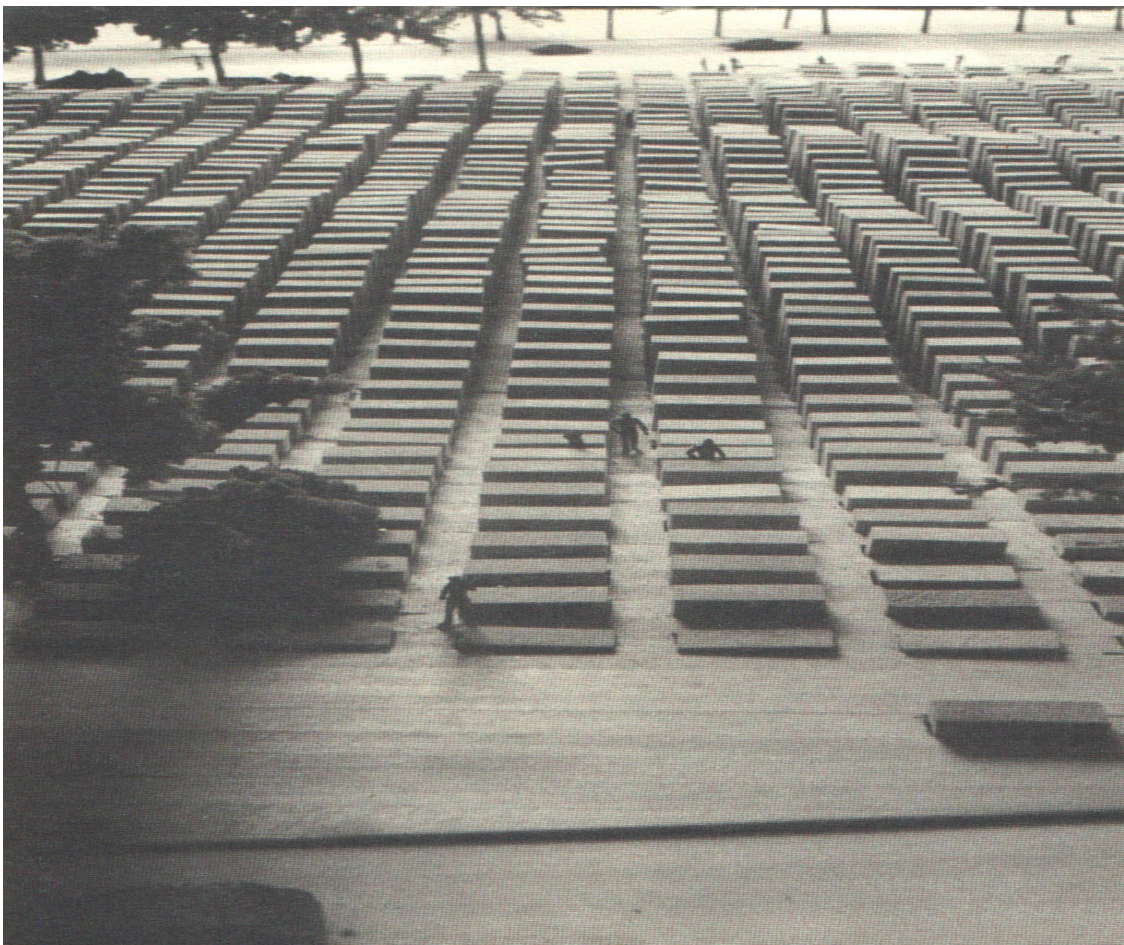


Fig 11. Eisenmann's proposal for the Genocide Monument

Genocide enforces the memory to carry its active sensations being alive, is much different from nostalgia by which we remember what we want to remember rather than what they were actually. The memory of Genocide is an active situation where the remembrances of the past sustain in the present. At that point, Eisenmann's project proposes a new memory concept rather than nostalgia and consequently, distinguishes

the time and continuity of the monument from the time of experience or any possible unique understanding.

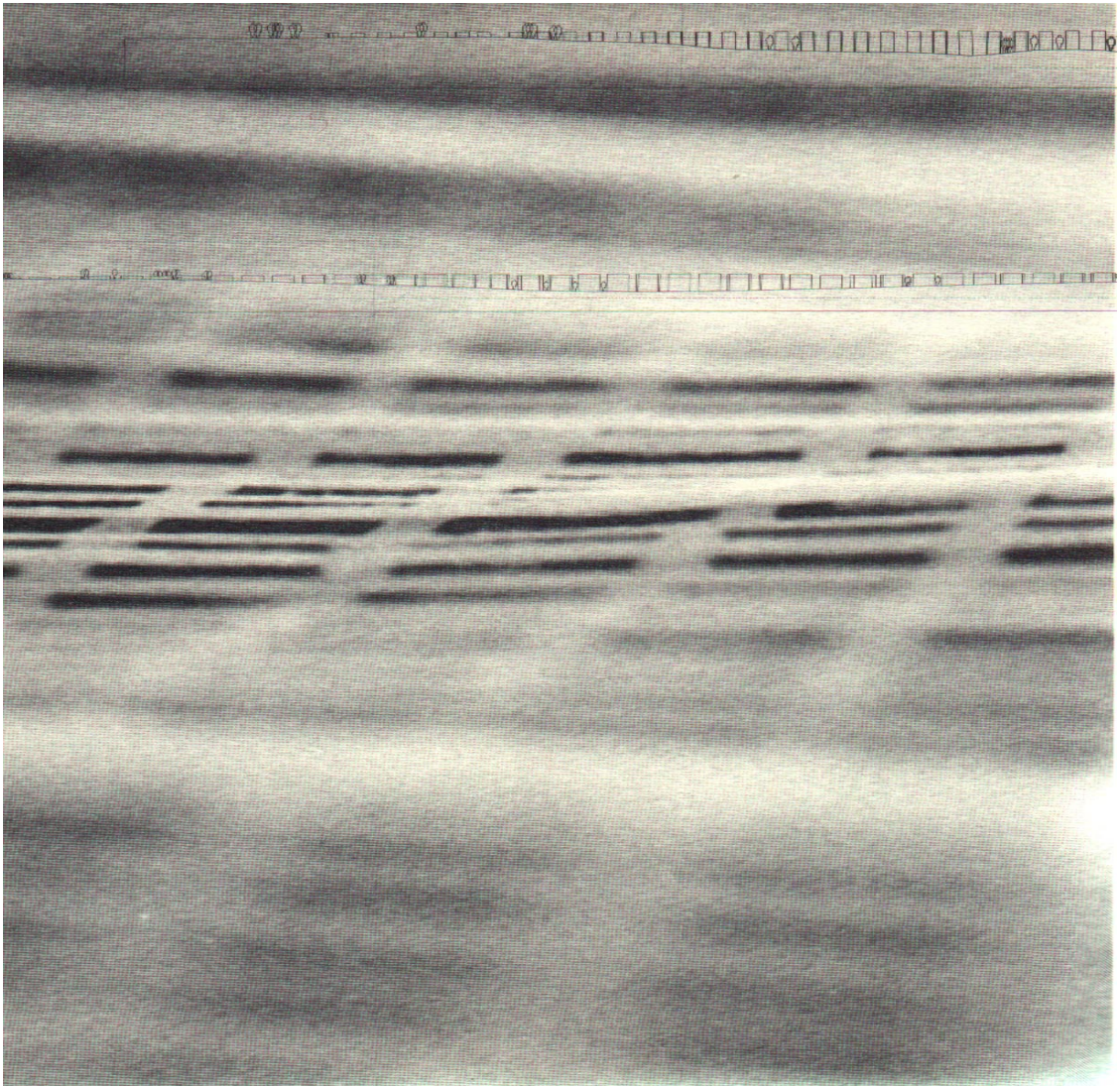


Fig 12. Eisenmann's proposal for the Genocide Monument

4.4 Trace

4.4.1 Conception of trace

Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines *trace*; as a course or path that one follows or a mark or line left by something that has passed. The term also signifies a sign or evidence of some past thing or in verbal means, to discover by going backward over the evidence step by step and to discover signs, evidence, or remains of something.(*Merriam-Webster* Dictionary On-Line, <http://www.merriam-webster.com>)

However, tracing out its contingencies of territoriality, one should argue over its differences from any residue of something that was formerly present. Consequently, it will be deliberate to identify *imprint* as the present sign of any word or event in its own context. Rather, *trace* may be evaluated to be a living organism which contains the latent data to re-produce its latter knowledge. It is its former connotations they carry within by which any word or event re-produce its former possible meaning.

“On each signifier, there exists *traces* of former words and *other* words that are ignored, so as to become itself. Every kind of words/signifiers carry such kind of traces on themselves. They are the evidences of their former meanings. Every word in any sentence or any signifier in any signification chain connotes such kind of *traces* of which complexity can not be consumed.”(Sarup, 1995)

According to the discourse on this thesis, *trace* is another strategy to trace out the *unthinkable*, the *monstrous*, the *gender-less*, the *repressed* and the *other* within the formerly presents so as to question the repressive, thinkable forces of the post-industrial technological realm, as stated by Perez-Gomez:

“The world of our experience includes the artifacts that make up our artistic tradition, the revelatory moments we call architecture, moments of recognition in spatio-temporal forms that are completely new, yet strangely familiar when finally articulated in language. Understanding these forms of specific embodiment and articulating their lessons in view of our own tasks, we will have a greater chance to construe an appropriate architecture, an intersubjective reality that might fulfill its social political task as an affirmation of culture. The issue for architecture is the disclosure of a social and political order from the chaosmos of experience, starting from the perceptions of meaning that our culture has shared, embodied in historical traces, while projecting imaginative alternatives going beyond stifling and repressive inherited institutions.”(Perez-Gomez, <http://mcgill.ca/arch/archdocs/7lamps.htm>)

4.4.2 Daniel Libeskind’s *Trace* Architecture

Daniel Libeskind is one of the speculative architects in contemporary architecture whom not only admired by his formal strategies, on the contrary protested to stylize this strategies rather than progress them. Libeskind's most dominant concept fulfilling those formal strategies is [memory] *trace*. While the memory of any – of his – project – respecting the site, context, utilities, programme etc. - can not be confined in a specific territory, the imprints on his architecture are well rooted from much complex and infinite [memory] traces.



fig 13&14&15. The Traces – Jewish Museum In Berlin

“Lines of history and of events; lines of experience and of the look; lines of drawing and of construction. These vectors form a patterned course towards 'the unsubsidied' which paradoxically grows more heavy as it becomes more light. I think of it as that which cannot be buried: that which cannot be extinguished: Call it Architecture if you want.”(Libeskind, <http://www.daniel-libeskind.com/wordsandideas/index.html>)

On the other hand, there are serious critics about the intentions and their formalisations in Libeskind's architecture. Especially that is made by Tanyeli, Libeskind is being accused for designing an architecture too much of representation rather than being in-between, tracing out the contingencies of the “text” from history. Nevertheless, it should be noted that, the haptic qualities of Libeskind's buildings, with their progressive spaces, latent auras fulfilled with light, sound and sensible events, are not less than this representational activities. By the way, there are miscellenous

interpretations of his architecture whether what this thesis discourse is his understanding and conception of *chora* in his studies which also foresees him to design the “in-between”, the “marginal”, the “uncanny” or the “other”.

“Architecture, which is evoked only by words, makes one almost feel 'at home' in language. By surrounding oneself with language one almost comes to believe that one has escaped from the opacity of space and that what remains 'out there' is only an empty stage set. Perhaps language and its meaning is grounded in the spaces of architecture, and not vice-versa. Consider the functions of foundation, circumcision, territorialization, openness and closure. These are all experiences of space - and of a certain kind of architecture - which provide a symbolic model and understanding of life itself. Is architecture not the quintessential 'taken for granted', the unthinkable, the monstrous, the gender-less, the repressed, the other? Perhaps this is the point of its madness, perhaps it is your conscience: The knot of life in which what is recognized is untied. And what thinking person does not want a fire-place, a home, a Utopia, 'the way it is', 'the way it was'? What thoughtful person is not grateful for the beams of clear lines directed by this silent ray?”(ibid)

The most significant project of Daniel Libeskind in his career is, indeed, the Jewish Museum in Berlin in which the visitor was depicted by Libeskind as being *between the lines*.(Libeskind, <http://www.ooo.nl/royal/libeskind/home.htm>) The Jewish Museum is a museum which explicitly thematises and integrates, for the first time in post-war Germany, the history of the Jews in Germany and the repercussions of the Holocaust.

The design of the Jewish Museum engenders a fundamental rethinking of architecture in relation to this program. The museum exhibits the social, political and cultural history of Jews in Berlin from the 4th Century to the present. The new extension is connected to the Baroque building via underground axial roads. The longest one leads to the Stair of Continuity and to the Museum itself; the second leads to the Garden of Exile and Emigration and the third axis leads to the dead end of the Holocaust Void.(Libeskind, <http://www.daniel-libeskind.com/projects/index.html>)

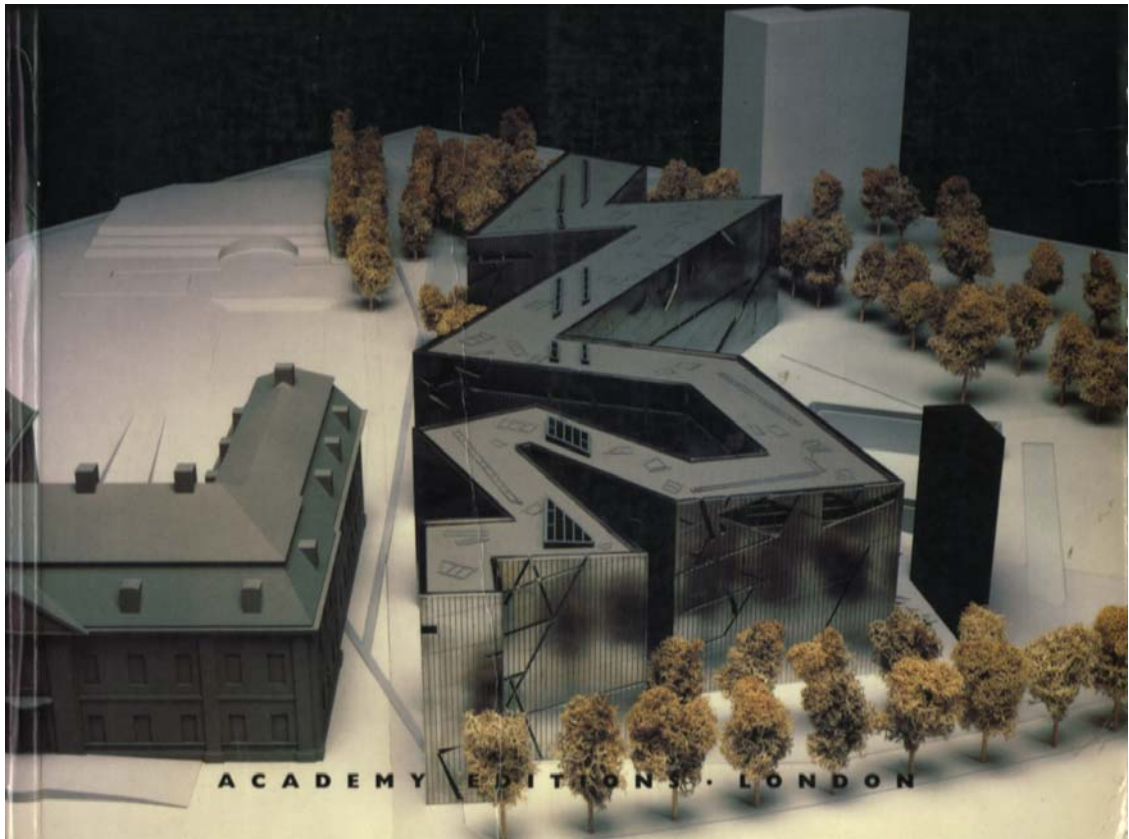


fig 16. Jewish Museum In Berlin / Cover Image of Charles Jencks' "Architecture Today"

“The Spiritual in architecture is urgent, though it seems to have become an embarrassment, a rumor on the street. The spiritual, appropriated by the fundamentalist right, has been expropriated from culture and history, eliminated from discourse through which it should be reclaimed. One should attempt to retrieve the spirit of architecture, to recall its Humanity, even within a situation in which the goal and the way have been eclipsed. The erasure of history and its carriers, the obliviousness of the market economy to the degradation and ongoing genocide of human beings must be countered with a deeper awareness and action.”(Libeskind, <http://www.daniel-libeskind.com/wordsandideas/index.html>)

The displacement of the spirit is made visible through the straight line of the Void which cuts the ensemble as a whole, connecting the museum exhibition spaces to each other via bridges. The Void is the impenetrable emptiness across which the absence of Berlin's Jewish citizens is made apparent to the visitor. By the way, Eisenmann's attitude to build a *choral* space may be compared in the case they both

trace the same metaphorical identity: the unaccessible – or impenetrable - : the *Void*. (Libeskind, <http://www.daniel-libeskind.com/projects/index.html>)

Nevertheless, the attitude towards this kind of a *Void*-al identity serves humour to some point of perspectives, like the one belongs to Charles Jencks, who implies this identity which is “hard to be understood and to obscure” as a Great Void in some sense of irony. Jencks claims that: **“For some people nothing has more credibility than the Great Void and the seriousness with which certain New Yorkers pursue this *nihil* would suggest it is located near midtown Manhattan. But, since architecture is supposed to be a constructive art with a social base, an architect who designs for emptiness and non-being is slightly humorous. Who’s to say? A Deconstructive, anti-social architecture has as great a right to exist as the same traditions in art, literature, and philosophy (as long as one builds it for oneself or a knowing client) and it should not come as a surprise that all are equally mandarin/ the ultimate difference, Derrida’s coinage for the “difference that escapes language,” the eternal unknowable and “otherness”, is the individual isolated from the group and now even removed from himself in schizophrenia.”**(Jencks, 1993) However, Libeskind believes that architecture is and remains the ethical, the true, the good and the beautiful, no matter what those who know the price of everything and the value of nothing may say. Consequently, Libeskind’s architecture can be accepted as a critique to the existing realm of post-industrial consumer society which rests on the metaphysical traits of technology and science. (Libeskind, <http://www.daniel-libeskind.com/wordsandideas/index.html>)

“In its opacity and resistance, architecture rebels and communicates that only the superfluous, the transcendent, the ineffable is allied to us: the sky, the stars, the gods. I would like to confess my fascination for this strange activity, quite distant from the obsessive technologism, globalized marketing and withered modernism progressively eradicating spiritual life.

I would like to share with you something about the nature of the approach to architecture which I am following, through buildings which not only house exhibitions within them but as architectural works 'exhibit' the world; are indeed the 'production' of the earth.”(ibid)

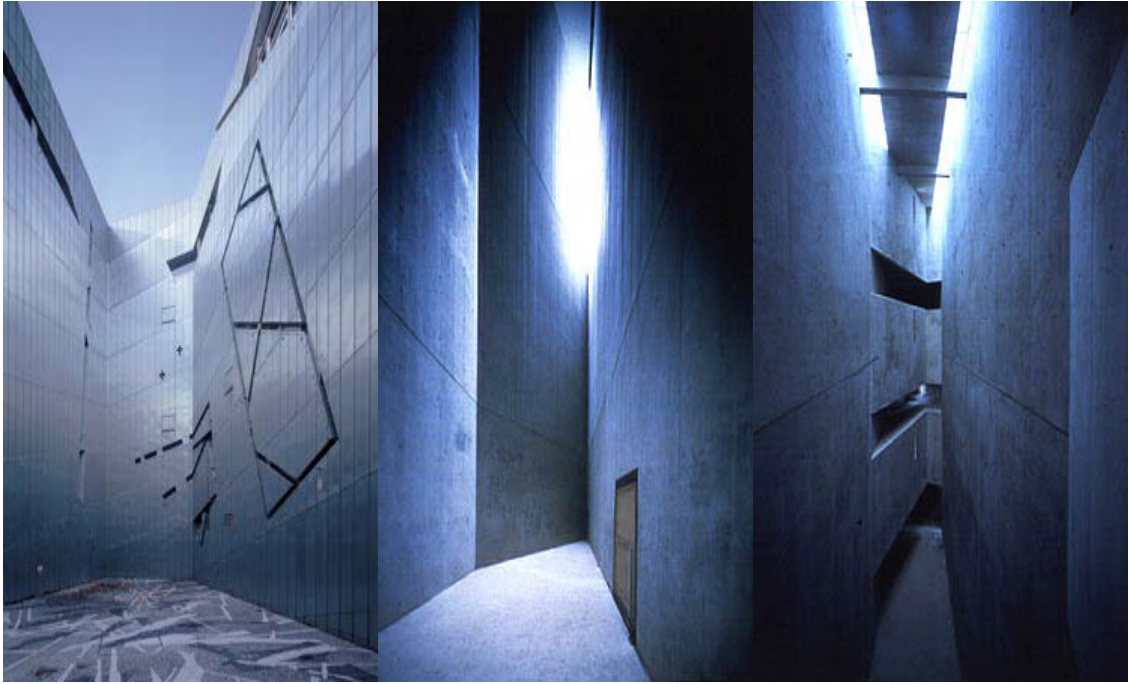


figure 17&18&19. The Void – Jewish Museum In Berlin

Libeskind's emphasis on the – impenetrable – *void* or what Eisenmann depicts as the presence of the *absence of Presence* can be explained as an architecture reduced to a sign of its absence. What he calls his “unoriginal signs” thus reveal the paradoxical faith behind loss: **“one experiences a parching, suffocating dryness... When the depth of Symbol is drained from it, brought to the surface and flattened – the abyss into which it has fallen become visible: a gleam of light is the dry soul, wisest and best.”**(Libeskind, <http://www.daniel-libeskind.com/wordsandideas/index.html>) Evidently we are faced here with a rather ascetic vision, a hopelessly hope, which wards off the *Void* by capturing it in a web of complications, scrawls and disorienting traces.

“The power of building is certainly more than meets the eye. It is the non-thematized, the twilight, the marginal, event. But architecture forming this background is a surplus beyond obvious need: that which itself has no legitimacy in a proper foundation. This has led some to ask whether the true and the real need to be embodied at all. Whether one needs architecture or just a simulation mechanism. Whether architecture can flutter nearby like a spirit, the bell or the Internet. It cannot.”(ibid)



fig 20. The Tombstones – Jewish Museum In Berlin

As Giovanni Vattimo defines in his book, “The End Of Modernity” any *work of art*, Libeskind’s projects carry similar connotations for carrying memory and traces within, they bring out the (linguistic) messages from *past*. Accordingly, they resemble to a monument or a tombstone, just like the Grand Pyramids in Egypt, sustaining his existence within *time* rather than coping with it.(Vattimo, 1992)

4.5 Hypersurface

4.5.1 Conception of hypersurface

What Stephan Parrella, the theoretician of *hypersurface* concept in architecture answers to the question, ‘What is a hypersurface?’ is that; **“with varying degrees of inhabitability, a hypersurface is the envelopment of exchanges between human agency and matter. Hypersurface is a zone of exchange between consciousness (language or text) and levels of the inorganic. Hypersurface requires reciprocal relations where exchanges are the operative principle. These exchanges are intensities stemming from multiple planes of imminence.”** By the way, the projects

produced out of the general thesis of hypersurface architecture entail new relations and affects between media (inclusive of both print and the electronic as stated by Marcus Novak) and topological surfaces in architecture.(AD / Hypersurface1, 1999)

Hypersurfaces are *in-between zones* where there is a direct and continuous interface between thought and matter, consequently new relations between media and matter change the possibilities of thought in terms of its binary polarities. According to Stephan Parrella, hypersurface architecture not only questions the very foundations of post-industrial technologic age but also offers an alternative relation and interdynamic.(ibid) While the electronic paradigm transforms *image* to *form* in terms and physics of its technological realm of cyberspace and architectural form is also coming to question its Cartesian foundations during the last decade, hypersurface architecture considers and deconstructs both in senses of ‘hyper’ (media) and ‘surface’ (topological architecture). Consequently, the interdynamic becomes the unravelling of the world of the image enmeshes with the unfolding of form into the image.

Just like any other *choral* work, hypersurface concept points out an in-between state where the binary qualities of Western metaphysics are dissolved into. As it suggests a spatial strategy which allegorically resembles Eisenmann’s *sand on the beach*, the media-tic side – or the imprints of the feet on the sand – interactively is subjected to be read in multiple ways of participant’s event while the surface – or the beach – transforms itself like an animated scene where it also offers the potential to experience the surplus space of its transformation, the literal coexistence of differential geometries as movement, like image and form.(CHORA L WORKS, 1997)

“Hypersurface geometry offers us a way of thinking about architecture that does assume real/irreal, material/immaterial dichotomies. It is to consider an architecture prior to those assumptions, that entails a condition also prior to the assumption of a split between body/subject/building. To think this architecture is not an act of construction or deconstruction but a nearly self-generating between-state. The generation of it occurs in an interplay and interaction between the delimited forces, energies and desire/life in substance(Deleuze) and language (Derrida). The architectonic translation of surface is structure/substrate. HYPER regards reconfigured manifestations of subjectivity/desire not over and above but as a having-risen-within. Hyper-surface is the delimited combinatorics of bodies/buildings as an interactive substrate configured by intersubjective digital

praxis... hypersurface is the word we are using to describe any set of relationships that behave as systems of exchange. A system of exchange that when physically constituted as the present is the presupposition of one set of points or the dynamic deformation of the space of one set of points into the adjacent set of points in the production of the new. The presupposition of the set of points is not simply a construction of successive points but coexistence of the two. We can write pairs of points that describe this dynamic; past/present, image/form, two-D/three-D, memory/matter and so forth.”(Hypersurface Architecture2, 2001)

4.5.2 Hypersurface Architecture

Peter Zellner announces hypersurface architecture as: **“an architecture capable of addressing –or, better yet, choreographing – the dance between the doubled worlds of the real-actual and the virtual-potential is beginning to present itself. Dutch historian and critic Bart Loostma has written, “Instead of trying to guarantee the eternal life of an existing architecture in a different medium, our strategy today should be the contamination of that architecture with other media and disciplines in order to produce a new and more robust mongrel.” and added that “these experimental forms promise to occupy the coterminous territories of the real and virtual. In them, we begin to experience a world no longer divided by virtuality but one made rich with spaces of animated potentials and realities.”(Zellner, 1999)**

Architectures which are being qualified as hypersurface can be evaluated and identified with one of their codings, that is; the *paradox of their topology*. a continuous looping into and out of, back and forth, on a surface without end or beginning, which has neither interior nor exterior, but which is always experienced as a single, alien entity. Also, the computational programs enables hypersurface architects to engage kinematic sculpting of space, moreover, they develop dynamic, mutable and evolving design techniques and new spatial paradigms. The use of animation software has also inscribed duration and motion into static form. Rather than creating an architecture that is essentially the organization of the stationary; inert forms, these architects view spatial design as a highly plastic, plastic art in which the building form itself continuously evolves through motion and transformation. With complex time sequences and simulations, forms are no longer defined by the simple parameters of scale, volume and

dimension; multivalent and shifting external or invisible forces and inclinations can also affect forms. By the way, it would be exemplary to lance different cases and paradigms defining hypersurface fiction.

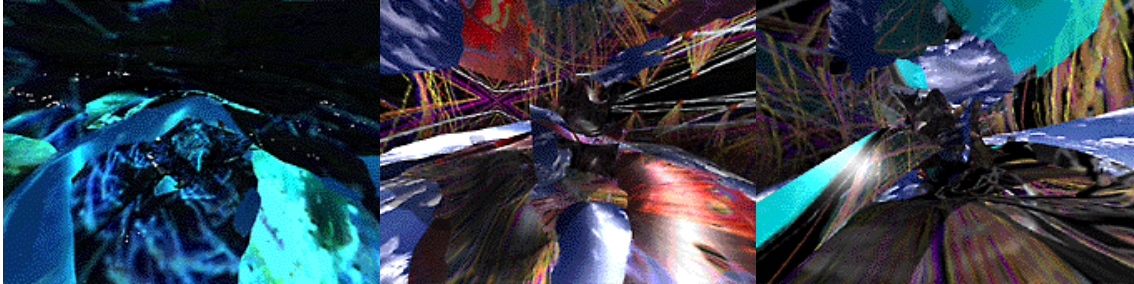


fig 21&22&23. Stephan Perrella's Hypersurface Architecture

“A *hypersurface* is a new theory of liquid-embodied architecture to displace the nostalgia and re-realization being carried into the spatial conceptions of new-media technology. We shouldn't think cyberspace with conventional assumptions. Hypersurface delimits reductions assumed in biases prevalent in disciplinary categorisations. Epistemological thought hasn't produced what it promised prior to its entry into cyberspace; there are only further degradations to come. It is not a matter of deciding to go into cyberspace. We are always already in it, before the literal condition. An understanding before dichotomous assumptions is a way to inhabit the world. This is not an argument for the creation of art in cyberspace, rather, it is a matter of rescuing art from its superfluous role in relation to architecture. Hypersurface comes after deconstruction, but continues the critique of Cartesian assumptions embracing anti-humanist/anti-logocentric discourses after May '68. Further, it is the receipt and re-deployment of the architectural telegrams sent in the 60's by the group Archigram. (Their dream was of a city that built itself unpredictably).”(ibid)

The first case may be the architecture of Stephan Parrella whom conceptualizes hypersurface architecture suggesting an architectural thought-sense strategy of specificity as a means to absorb and negotiate schizo-culture and to construct inhabitable event-surfaces. His conception of *hypersurface* is the affect of a deterritorialization of two realms into each other: human agency and topological formsurfaces.(ibid) The concept intertwines surface and structure, image and object, to

create emergent realms that dynamically rearrange the relationship between time and space, the real and the virtual.



fig 24&25&26. Perrella's Proposal For The Institute For Electronic Clothing

For architect and theorist Stephen Perrella, the entwining of the virtual and material strata of everyday life has produced an irresolvable, mutant culture, a schizophrenic yet fertile condition in which technology, consciousness, instrumentalities (forms and spaces), economy, representations (images) and identities have intermingled to produce a deep, dense swirling topology of real and mediated human affiliations. Perrella describes this condition as the “hypersurface”, a problematic complex that emerges from the interaction of these commingling and competing constructs. Hypersurface theory explores this phenomenon to discover modes of cultural operation that might bypass schizophrenic or nihilistic responses that mirror the contemporary world. Neither matter nor media but something in-between, hypersurface architecture is Perrella's concept for informational and spatial structures that respond critically to these broader cultural transformations.(Hypersurface Architecture1, 1999)

“Instead of the real and ideal being separate realms, the divisions sustained by transcendental metaphysics, both divisions now impleat, becoming interfused... in our existing technologically saturated contexts there are horizons through which our lives are drawn... the process and logic of pervasion stemming from tele-technology intermixes television with the Internet, the Internet impacts upon built infrastructure, and so forth, creating a convergent, enfolded, organization [of layered physical and electronic strata]... these interpenetrating layers, fueled by consumer capitalism, will reconfigure the topology of human agency. Emergent forms of representation will unfold due to radical interweavings.”(Zellner, 1999)

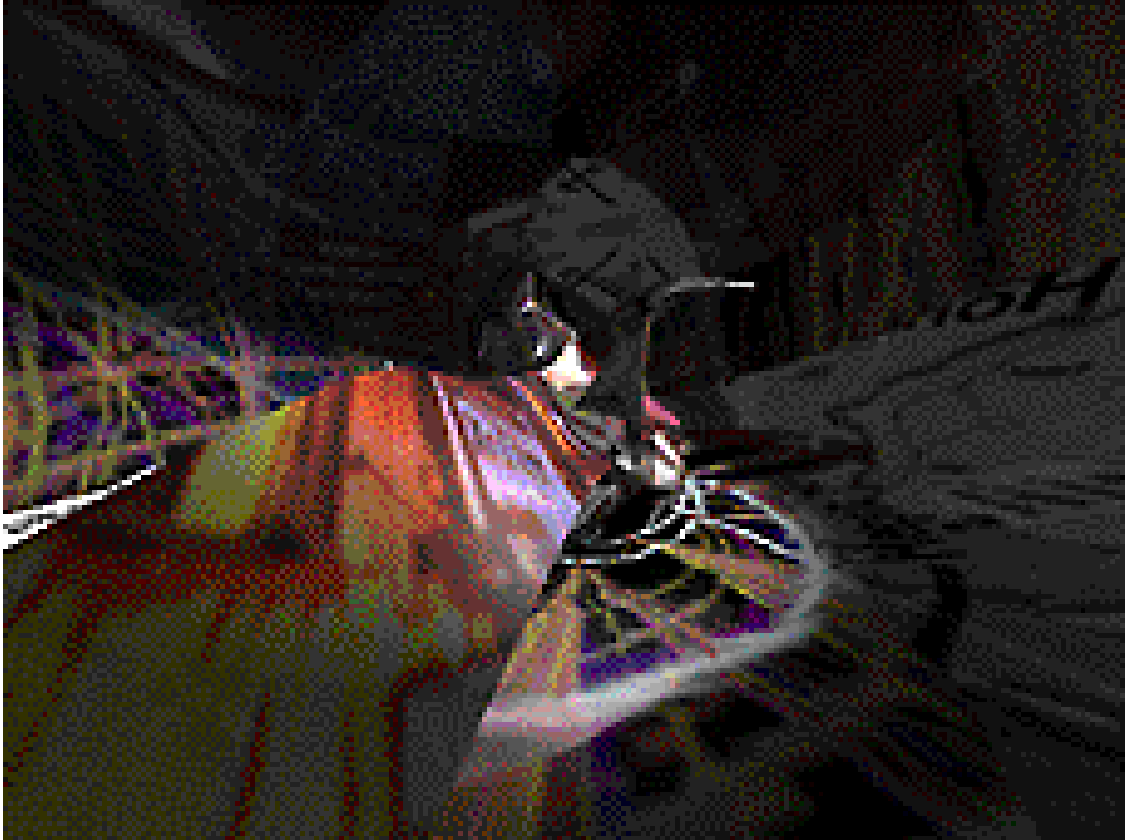


fig 27. Perrella's Proposal For The Institute For Electronic Clothing

Perrella's earliest hypersurface study, the Institute for Electronic Clothing experimented with texture-mapping and coordinate-manipulation using three-dimensional modeling softwares. First, a computer-generated wire-frame model was deconstructed. The model's coordinates were then stretched, pulled, tweaked, bent, enfolded and warped, resulting in a form that might be better described as a fabric than an object, over which texture-mapping can be used. According to Zellner, a seminal construct emerges: a radical relationship between form and image that rejects, rather than polarizes, the usual dichotomies of structure-ornament or substance-signification. Form is neither augmented nor enriched by image; rather, image and form are seamlessly integrated, flowing into each other as a unified topology – a hypersurface.(Zellner, 1999)



fig 28. NOX Architects' 3d renders / Objectile

Another case for hypersurface architecture may be the works of NOX Architecture in which we find a kind of digital genetic engineering, crossbreeds the body's motorized biology with electronic life, generating liquid forms in which human action and architecture are synthesized. Lars Spuybroek, who founded and is presently directing NOX Architecture has written that: **“we are experiencing an extreme liquidization of the world, of our language, of our gender, of our bodies... [we have entered] a situation where everything becomes mediated, where all matter and space are fused with their representations in media, where all forms is blended with information.”(ibid)**

Before analyzing the projects of NOX in terms of chora and in-between states, it should be stated that the concept of “beach” is re-considered as a determinate strategy in works of Spuybroek. As the beach, conceived as a field in which everything is open and indeterminate, for a NOX project in Noordwijk, The Netherlands(1997), this is expressed in a two-part design: a boulevard and the New Palace Hotel, which are based on two characteristics of soft matter: plasticity and memory. NOX's idea is to partly pave the beach with asphalt to melt the division between beach and road behaviour into a new dynamic hybrid mix of cars, pedestrians and cyclists. From the ground, the hotel gathers up the “swarm” and forms a “vortex” that shoots up into the sky.(ibid)

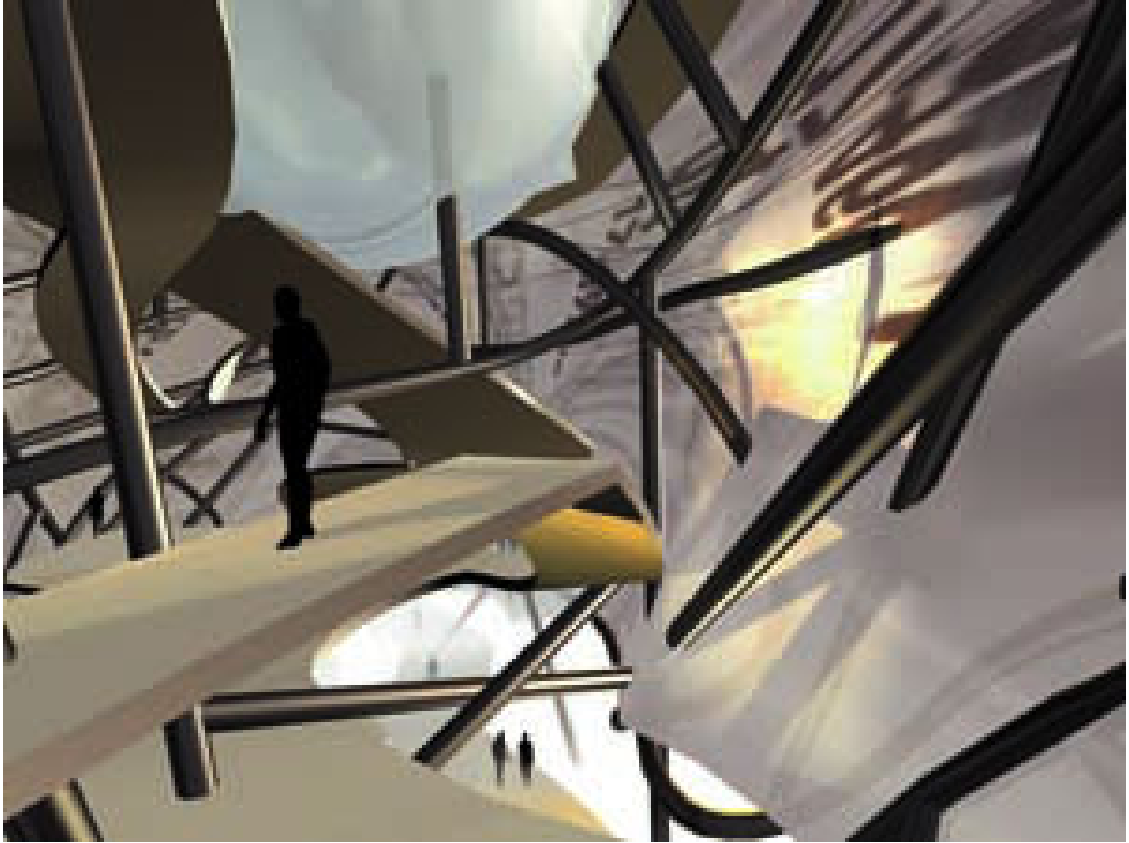


fig 29. NOX Architects' "In The Beachness" Project / 3d render

“In the “Beachness” Project, as the swarm spirals upward developed in a structure of steel and translucent fabric, they shake off their relation with the ground and float into the sky. Inside, the space will feel like a flotation tank: a translucent capsule partly filled with very salty water in which one is immersed in diffuse light. All rooms will be equipped with such tanks, and many will have images projected on them. Visitors circulate on a spiraling steel staircase against the translucent fabric backdrop as wind and electronically amplified sounds howl past. Instead of having rooms that passively face the horizon, like any other Hotel Bellevue with rooms on the outer wall, the horizon is tilted over ninety degrees and wrapped with a landscape. The hotel therefore has No Rooms with A Sea View: People will find themselves on the horizon itself.”(ibid)

Motor geometry, or the computational instrumentalization of movement in space, creates a new type of three-dimensionality, deframing architecture so that a looping of perception and action (the optic and the haptic) induces a sense of endlessness. In this stressed field Spuybroek suggests that we react like skateboarders:

“We have a sense of direction, we have a sense of intentionality. We throw ourselves into time by movement. But then it is not a road or path we walk down. Our roads may be straight, but our tracks certainly are not. It is a vector with a point of action, and in that sense every act is an act of faith. Once underway we adapt, change our minds, engage other forces, but we do not just see these as resistance, no, they are like the curbs and obstacles for the skater. We use them as push-offs, as points of inflection in the curve... first of all the movement should be going from floor to wall and vice versa. That is: in the architecture itself... it’s about creating tension and suspense in the programme... on the one hand – to structure and separate actions, in short with the instrumentality of the programme... on the other hand, we vitalize action through animation, by replacing fixed points and fixed geometries by moving geometries, going from points to knots to springs, and we vitalize action through suspense, by shifting B from space to time, by multiplication of action.”(ibid)

In the final case, the whole system of the structure refers to such a condition in which events are mutual exchanges of the body and its environment - like the imprints of the foot on the beach and the sand particles attached on foot.

One of the NOX Architecture’s most significant project; is the H2O Pavillion for Dutch Ministry of Transport which was also constructed. Located on an island southwest of the mainland, the pavillion was designed over three years as a building/exhibition/environment in which geometry, architecture and sensory-triggered multimedia installations come together in an integrated spatial experience, and as such is one of the first built examples of NOX’s soft architecture. A kind of “smart” building, the pavillion has an internal logic and sentience that responds to the activities and movements of the visitor.(ibid)



fig 30. NOX Architects' "The FreshH2O Expo" / 3d render

“When the splines are pulled in their virtual states, they deform in unison according to parameters determined by programming scripts and routines developed by NOX. In the built project this creates an environment in which floor blends into wall, wall into ceiling and where nothing is horizontal. At every moment the visitor is placed on a vector and must rely on his or her own motor system and haptic instinct to stay level – a firsthand experience of the NOX’s challenge to Euclidean perception and space.”(ibid)

The freshH2O Expo’s complex structure, developed and modeled on high-end workstations running advanced animation and simulation software, is a braid of sixteen splines that are shaped like an elongated worm of steel ellipses and semicircles. Within the 3d-modeling software used to design the pavilion, the splines are defined as active and reactive forms – unlike lines, which are traces of actions. (ibid)

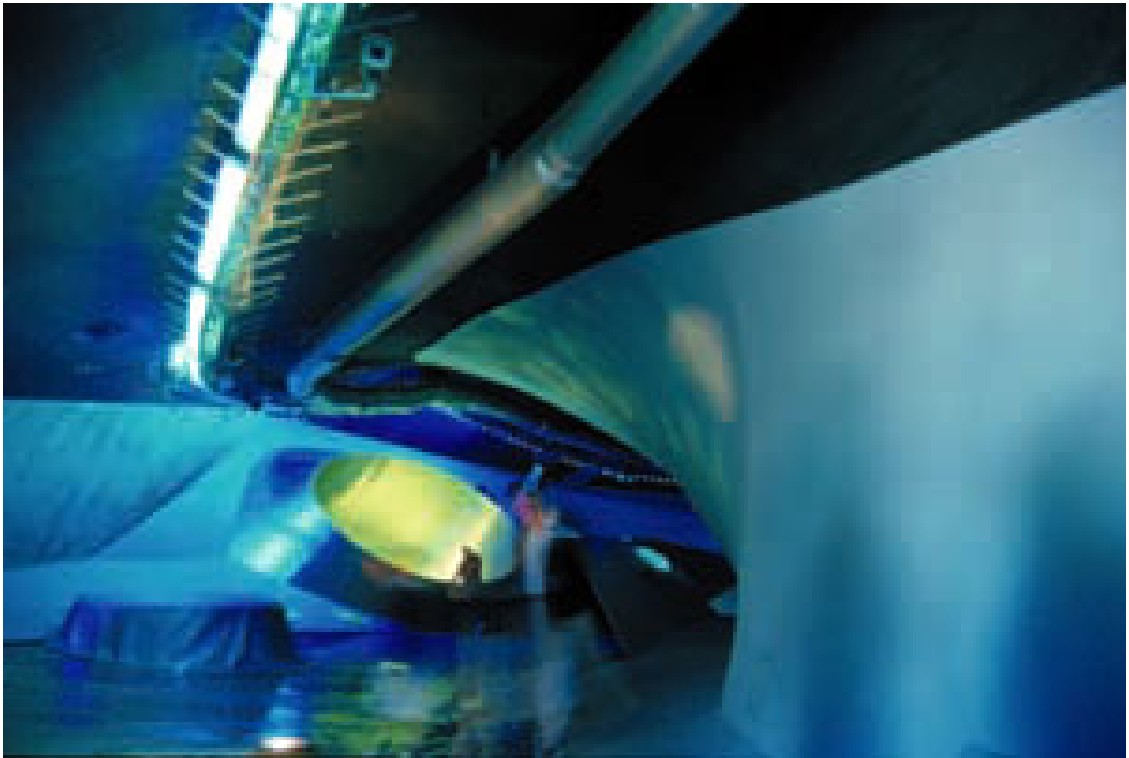


fig 31. NOX Architects' "The FreshH2O Expo" / Interior View

“The liquid in architecture not only means generating the geometry of the fluid and the turbulent, it also means the dissolving of all that is solid and crystalline in architecture, that is: not only its materiality, but even the functional and programmatic, and especially the orthogonal basis of perception with the horizontality of the floor crossing the verticality of the window. With the fluid merging of skin and environment, body and space, object and speed we will also merge plan and volume, floor and screen, surface and interface, and leave the mechanistic view of the body for a more plastic, liquid and haptic version where action and vision are synthesized.”(ibid)

One another significant architect, whose work is progressive around the themes which are submitted by chora, and consequently hypersurface, is Kas Oosterhuis whom synthesizing complex geometries, human action and environmental data, creates information-dense “body-buildings”.

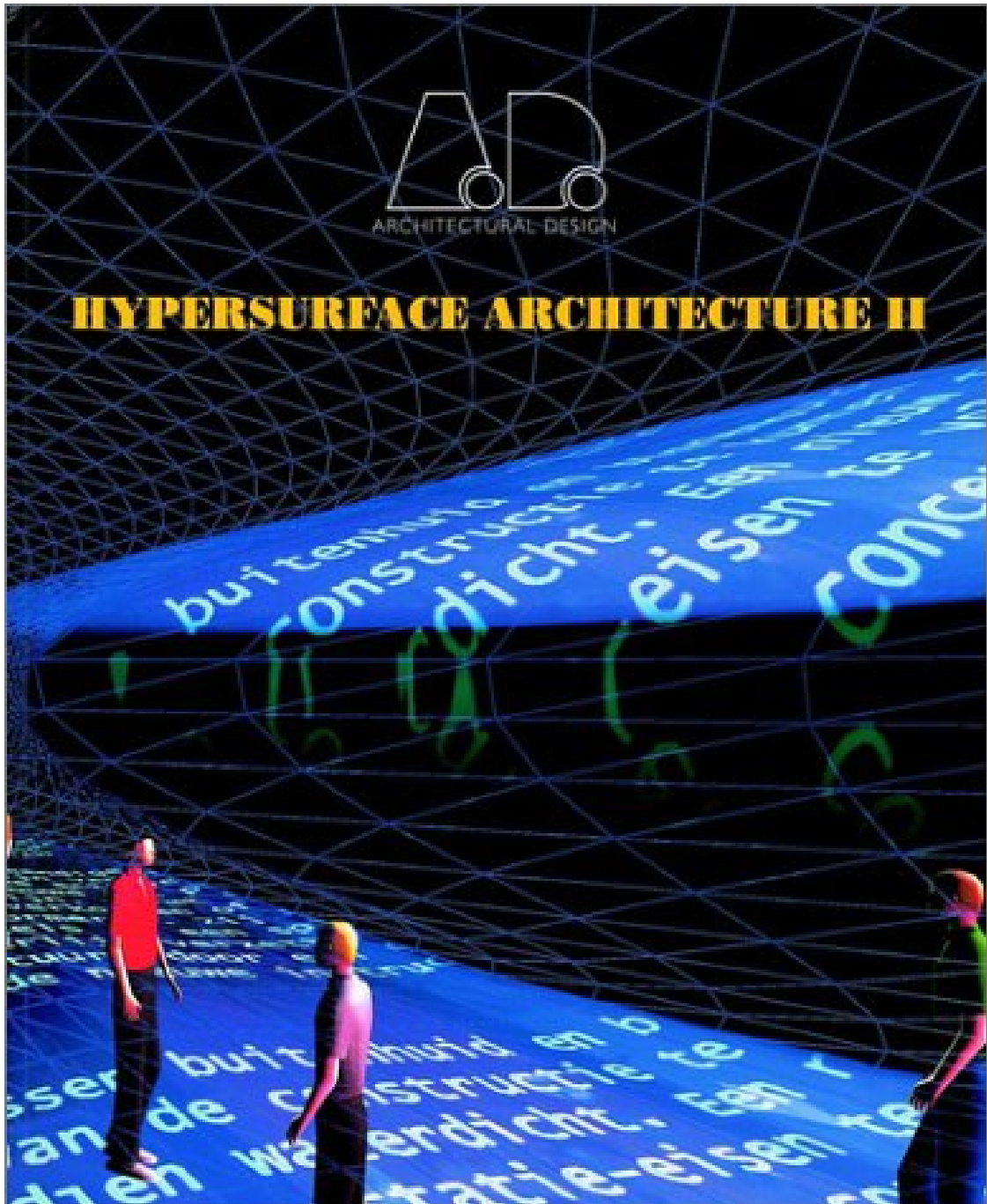


fig 32. Oosterhuis's "transport2001" / 3d render, Cover of AD2001 "Hypersurface Architecture2"

Oosterhuis holds that the invention of building forms can no longer follow the paradigms and precepts of a classical discipline wedded to outdated codes and established traditions. Rejecting the dominance of Platonic geometries – the simple volumes of the cube, sphere, cylinder and the cone as the basic elements of architecture – he views architecture as an evolving, technologically enhanced means of organizing sophisticated spatial data and programming information into structured mediums that synthesize complex geometries and aspects of human action.

“Buildings are becoming data structures that we can no longer totally control and that can influence their immediate (and perhaps global) contexts according to unpredictable and unknowable behaviour. Building projects – architecture – is like placing an attractor into the future. All information will head towards that attractor from then on. This particular stream of information is thus energized and vectorized. All transport of materialized information, all immaterial concepts for assembling the product; all whimsical ideas are converging at that attractor at that place and at that particular time...”(Hypersurface Architecture2, 2001)

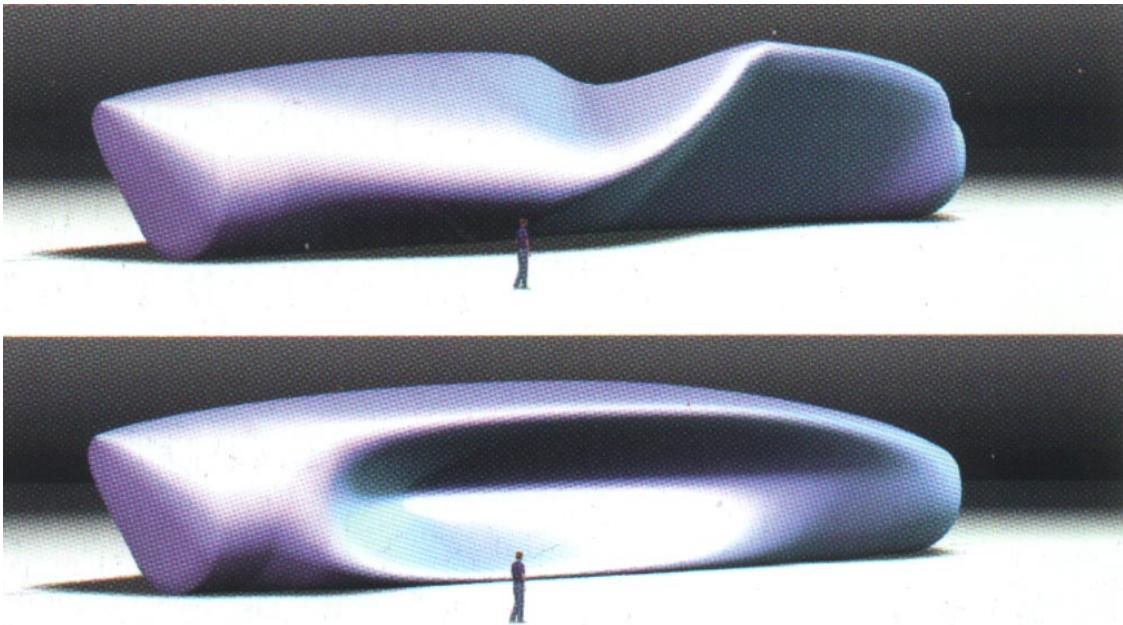


fig 33. Oosterhuis's transPORTst2001 / 3d render

One of Oosterhuis's outstanding project is transPORTs2001. Oosterhuis, to create a public experience that would capture the intertwining of physical and virtual structures in a coherent entity – or organism -, devised a “performin” structure for ports around the world that can be manipulated on a website, where “players” can modify the building through a real-time evolution game. Website input combines with local factors to alter the building's interior atmosphere and structure. A spaceframe is composed of pneumatic bars that are individually controlled by software so that they work together like the filaments in a muscular bundle. Outer and inner skins of waterproof molded-

rubber sheets allow the structure to be flexible in two directions at the same time.(Zellner, 1999)

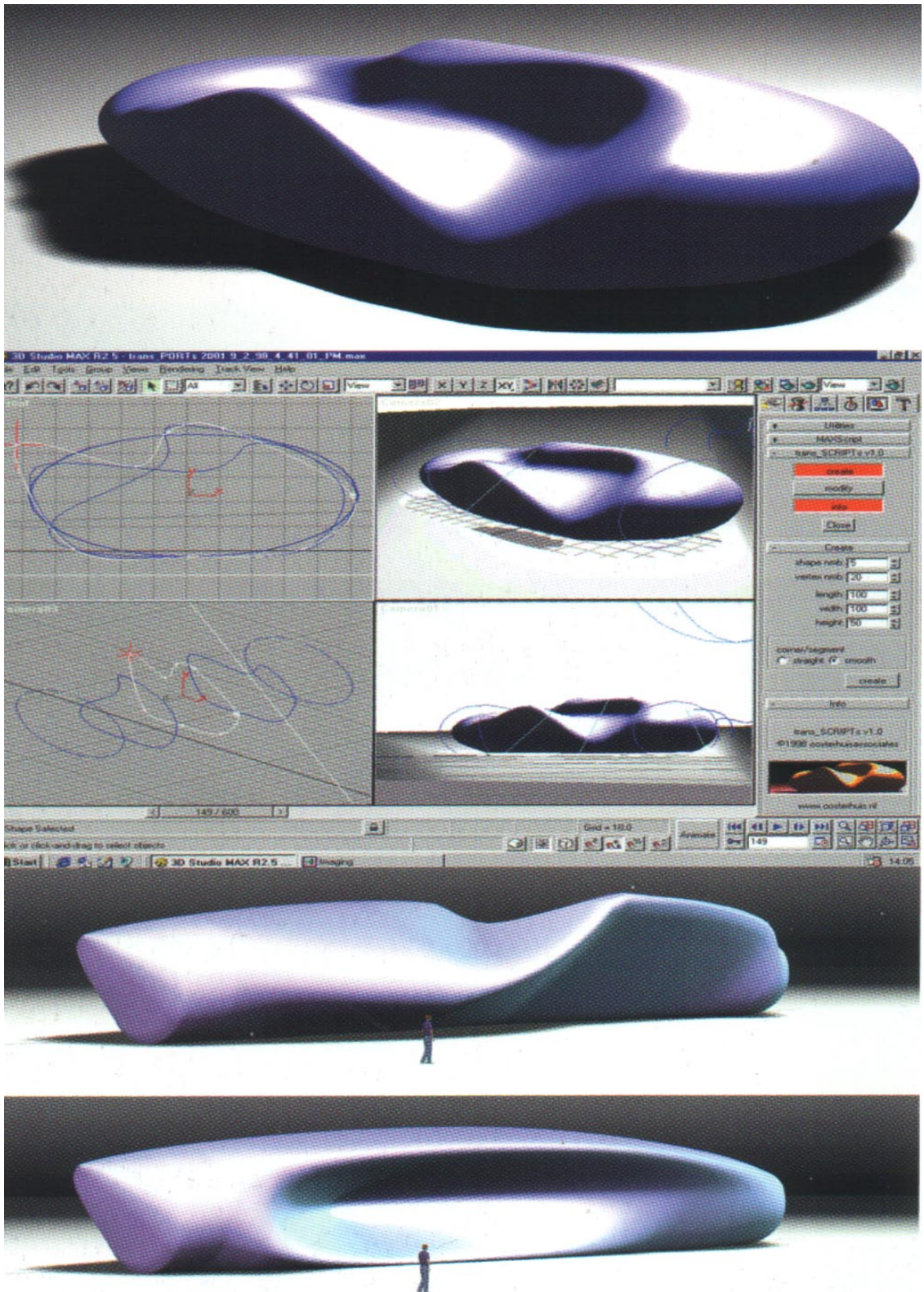


Fig 34. Oosterhuis's transPORTst2001 / 3d render&analyse

Buildings, like other expressions of contemporary design – cars and electric appliances, for example – contain ever-growing amounts of data and are increasingly semi-autonomous. Oosterhuis suggests that our overconstructed and encroaching artificial environments are, ironically, developing into virtual ecosystems of housing, electrical fields, transportation infrastructures, cars, communication devices and computers.(ibid) These systems are evolving toward a form of independence in which human will no longer be central to the ongoing correlation of data, materials and networks. In other words, once human can no longer directly control the products and networks of communication that have given rise to the Information Age, a certain vitality will become resident in the systems and networks.

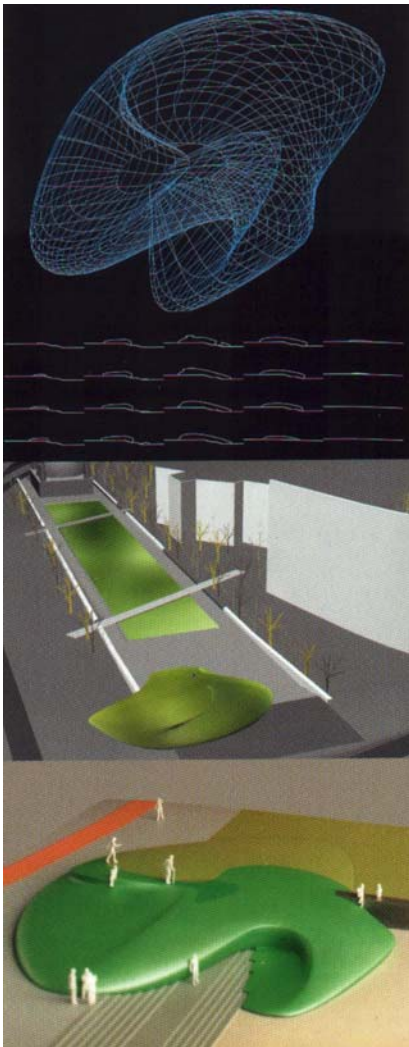


Fig 35. Oosterhuis's Parascape – active landscape and sculpture / 3d render

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

While Enlightenment idea enabled a paradigm shift which convinces man to the simulation of control and foresee his own destiny and nature, human episteme relates everything into predictable and controllable ratios. However, since the last decade, after the epistemological conceptions of Nietzsche and respectively, the ontological conceptions of Heidegger, the paradigm of 'rationalization' which formalizes itself in its excessive state of technological determinacy, was started to be interrogated epistemologically. At that point, hermeneutics offers a new strategy in which the knowledge of the subject is reduced to mere interpretation and truth phenomenon is determined in terms of 'event'.

“Vattimo’s *truth* which is released from its metaphysical use and *Existence* concepts clarifies *truth* and *Existence* as *event* – something everlastingly interpreted, written and created -; by the way, *truth* can be experienced by man (for example, confronting an art work) though consideration of that kind of knowledge as “rational” means that it became an object of transfer. Vattimo insists that truth may only exist through the specific context and relations of the *interpreter* of that experience.”(Vattimo, 1992)

Architecture, being a system, on which the *spatialization of history* was formalized, re-acts to this epistemological argument in terms of a concept; *hermeneutics*. The idea of the hermeneutical space, or *choral works in architecture* in Perez-Gomez' words, was a common understanding and interpretation of space since Ancient Greek although it gains its significant character criticising the “rationalization” and “technological determinism” in contemporary rhetorics of architecture. It may be stated as; since Hermeneutics demands for a broader concept of spatialization in which the *interpretation* and *event* is privileged for some epistemological and ontological reasons, the idea of *choral works in architecture*, or a *choral* strategy enables architects to fulfill a critique for the actual *technological* paradigms of *determination* which is

also supported by contemporary philosophies, such as deconstruction, situationism, new pragmatism, etc.

The thesis discourses on these kind of *choral* works in architecture which inquires the possible meanings and traces in the spatialization of architectural work and their interpretations. In both projects, *hermeneutics as an architectural discourse*, as an alternative way of understanding space, proposes an ethical inquiry about the present situations, in case, present constitutions and interpretations of architecture. By the way, it not only serves a critique for these constitutions and interpretations which are overwhelmed by the technological determinacy, but also present an ethical project, paradoxically; a formal project which aims at a better future and negotiate the eschatology of Western metaphysics. It is formal and keeps the faith for being formal by being ethical which means it predicates - alternative – forms and lifes that are much beautiful, good and useful as stated by Daniel Libeskind: **“Architecture is and remains the ethical, the true, the good and the beautiful, no matter what those who know the price of everything and the value of nothing may say.”**(Libeskind, <http://www.daniel-libeskind.com/wordsandideas/index.html>)

It was the architectural historian Alberto Perez-Gomez who also acknowledges us with the attributions of Hermeneutics as architectural discourse. As Perez-Gomez stated below, with a slight difference from metaphysics, this interpretation strategy is involved not with the qualities of existences, - such as subjects/objects, good/bad, meaning/structure etc. – but with the latencies of both, always in a revealing-concealing way.

“In hermeneutics, truth is interpretation, always a revealing-concealing, never posited absolutely and objectively. On the other hand, hermeneutics accounts for change, growth and perhaps even evolution... changing answers to the self-same questions reveal a progressive differentiation that we may call, with Eric Vöglin, the order in history, one that is never fully and finally clarified and must always be re-articulated in the language of myth and art (and in our own times demands a demystification of the scientific “answers” supposedly provided by sociology, anthropology, biology, etc.). hermeneutics thus denies a nihilism of despair (or a cynical, amoral attitude) that might emerge as a result of the homogenization of our cultural inheritance, allowing for the possibility of an *ethical*

practice while fully acknowledging the “dangers” of late-industrial consumer society.”(Perez-Gomez, <http://mcgill.ca/arch/archdocs/7lamps.htm>)

Finally, it should be noted that; the architectural space, which was intentionally being understood and represented in terms of its binary qualities throughout history, is to be questioned within its hermeneutical interpretation in contemporary rhetorics. Hermeneutical interpretation aims at tracing out the differentiating vectors between those binary qualities, consequently standing *in-between*, it tasks the interpretation of the participant and his contemplation determining the binary qualities of architectural space. However, it is both the space and the substance. Quoting Voegelin: **“it is the disturbing moment in the in-between of ignorance and knowledge, of time and timelessness, of imperfection and perfection, of hope and fulfillment and ultimately of life and death.”(Perez-Gomez, 1992)**

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