**PUBLICATIONS DATA COLLECTION - CHECK LIST**

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**CATEGORY F1 - CONFERENCE PUBLICATION**

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Detailed Publications List

Conference Publication

Organisational Unit: Architecture
Publication Number: 62272

Author Organisational Unit Classification
Loo, S Architecture Academic Level D (D)

Collection Year: Other
Publication Year: 2006
Title: Contesting Design in the General Terrain of Contemporary Public Space
Publication Category: Full Written Paper - Refereed (F1)
Funding Source: Not Funded Externally (A)
Grant Reference:
Related URL:
Digital Object Identifier:
Theme Area:
Theme Area:
FOR: Architectural Design (120101)
SEO: Expanding Knowledge in Built Environment and Design (970112)
TOR: Pure Basic Research
DEEWR Collection: Included
Editor: Terrance Mc Minn, Dr John Stephens, Dr Steve Basson
Conference Publication: Contested Terrains
Conference Name: 2006 Conference of the Society of Architectural Historians Australia and New Zealand
Date of Conference: 29 September - 2 October 2006
Conference Location: Fremantle, WA
Place Published: Fremantle, WA
Publisher: The Society of Architectural Historians
Volume: 2006
Page Numbers: 309-315
ePrints Reference Number:

Additional Information:

Citation Format:

PUBLICATIONS HOME PAGE
Proceedings

Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand
ABN: 33945473810

XXIII ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2006

SAHANZ 2006: Contested Terrains
Fremantle, Western Australia, September 29 – October 2 2006

Edited by

Terrance Mc Minn
Dr John Stephens
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Conference Theme

'Contested Terrains' describes the diverse and competing array of perspectives that coalesce around any given architectural historical subject. This theme builds on the complex interplay and tensions that derive from the varied range of histories, theories, meanings and values surrounding our sense and understanding of architectural and urban form. It accommodates the controversial, problematic, volatile, contradictory and ambiguous and asks what this implies for the history of architecture and related fields. In what ways, furthermore, can we begin to think, see and frame architecture and urban space as particular sites of contestation, as terrains inhabited and overlaid by the conflicting imperatives of history and theory or demand of academy, profession and community? To what degree should we celebrate or limit the conflict of such narratives and counter-realities? And does the idea of 'Contested Terrains' represent an opportunity or threat to our comprehension of architecture's identity, purpose and significance? 'Contested Terrains' articulate the profound and multiple collisions of narratives that impact on the way we historically experience, interpret and critically engage with architecture and the urban realm.
Keynote Speakers

ANDREW BALLANTYNE

Andrew Ballantyne is Professor of Architecture at the University of Newcastle, UK. His publications include Architecture Theory: A Reader in Philosophy and Culture (Continuum, 2005), Architectures: Modernism and After (Blackwell, 2004), Architecture as Experience (Routledge, 2004), What is Architecture? (Routledge, 2002), Architecture—A Very Short Introduction (Oxford University Press, 2002), Architecture, Landscape and Liberty; Richard Payne Knight and the Picturesque (Cambridge University Press, 1997). Amongst his many publications and articles, Dr Ballantyne's historical and theoretical research is directed towards an interdisciplinary appreciation of the cultural significance of buildings, working between literature, philosophy, sociology, archaeology and art history traditions. He is currently working on a new book on Deleuze and will become Chair of the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain during 2006.

ZEYNEP CELIK

Zeynep Çelik is distinguished professor of architecture at the New Jersey Institute of Technology. Her publications include The Remaking of Istanbul (Washington, 1986; California, 1993), Displaying the Orient (California, 1992), Urban Forms and Colonial Confrontations (California, 1997), and Streets: Critical Perspectives on Public Space (California, 1993—co-editor), as well as articles on cross-cultural topics. She served as the editor of the Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians (2000-2003) and is currently completing a book, titled Public Space, Modernity, and Empire Building: Ottoman Syria, French Maghrib, 1830-1914 and co-editing an interdisciplinary collection of essays, Walls of Algiers: Artistic, Cultural, and Urban Forms in the Colonial and Postcolonial City. Dr. Çelik has recently been granted a Guggenheim Fellowship and an American Council of Learned Societies Fellowship.

HELEN MALLINSON

Helen Mallinson is a principal lecturer in architecture. She teaches history and theory at the School of Architecture and Spatial Design, London Metropolitan University. Programmes include "Modern Architecture and Modernity", "The Forgetting of Air", "Interpretation... and Ornament". She was formerly head of the school, a visiting lecturer, critic and examiner in numerous schools of architecture and design, and active participant in several educational forums. Previous to this she taught design, worked as an architect and founded a workshop dealing with art, architecture and performance. Helen is currently completing a doctoral thesis at the London Consortium on the modernisation of air, pneuma and space in late seventeenth-century England. It deals with the pneumatic work of Robert Boyle in the history and philosophy of science. Recent publications include: "Metaphors of Experience: The Voice of Air" in The Philosophical Forum, vol. 35, June 2004 and, forthcoming, "Heart of Darkness: Air of Comfort" in Primitive: Original Matters in Architecture.
Sessions

West <> East

Session description

In this panel papers were presented which explore the ground of interface, or shifting ground, between Eastern and Western conceptions of building and environmental heritage. The East has formed a fertile ground in the modern period for Western projections of ideas on racial and cultural origins, as evidenced in the early 20th century Orient or Rome debate among archaeologists or architectural historians, or as a passive source for ideas of new beginnings, as can be detected in key passages of Le Corbusier’s early text, Journey to the East. Thus one key area for exploration is the way in which the cultural topography of the East has been used and appropriated by Western scholars in the formation of narratives of cultural origin. One such area has been the debate over origins concerning the status and provenance of Late Antique and Early Islamic and Byzantine palatial architecture. Art historical archaeological and architectural research has contested the vexed question of the provenance, boundaries, and degree of local innovation inherent this material culture.

Conversely, the East-West interface can be crossed through the agency of Eastern cultural groups, for whom the forms and institutions of the West may be said to have taken on an allegorical status. Thus, for example, the methodologies of archaeology, and the institutions of ethnographic and archaeological museums, Napoleonic in origin, were subsumed into the project of the formation of a national identity in Egypt, Iran, and Iraq. The mode of collection, juxtaposition and display of objects served to illustrate narratives of origin and national identity. Architectural objects, and the institutions they housed, could be understood allegorically, as standing for an advanced society that these agents of modernization and national formation sought to bring into being.

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Queer Space as Contested Terrain

Session description

Queer space is a highly specific mode of space, with its own complex meaning and significance. It is always already contested, not only because of the marginal character of queer subcultures and activities, but because of the contestedness of queer identities themselves - balanced between a desire for rights, recognition, and acceptance on the one hand, and distinctiveness, difference and alterity on the other. Queer space thus plays a key role in the construction and maintenance of community, society, and culture in a diverse slice of contemporary society. It is imperative that this role is understood, and while a significant literature has pursued this in general and theoretical terms, scant attention has been paid to the particularities of queer space in the context of the city, such as Sydney or New York, as this session proposes.

‘Queer’ is both a reappropriation of an older (often homophobic) term formerly interchangeable with ‘gay’ or ‘homosexual’, and a proud claim to alterity. This is also the queer of ‘queer theory’, arising out of feminism, gay and lesbian studies, and film and literary theory. ‘Queer Theory’ as articulated within the North American academy through leading theorists such as Judith Butler and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick proposes ‘queer’ as a more mobile and discursive, less essential notion than one which simply describes sexual preference. Sedgwick argues for ‘queer’ as a way of disrupting available thinking about sexuality rather than a search for category definitions. Likewise, as Classics scholar and queer theorist David Halperin puts it, queer need not be grounded in any stable sexual identity but ‘queer’ acquires its meaning from oppositional relation to the norm. The domain of queer theory now extends from the disciplines that nurtured it, across a range of academic fields including urban geography, design studies, art history and theory, cultural studies and philosophy of science.

Within this context, this session re-orients the discourse of queer studies towards the built environment and the culture of cities, opening and discussing a series of questions. These include: what is queer space and what role does it play in social, cultural, and political constructions of “queerness”? How does the built urban environment support or discourage the formation of queer identities? Is there still a need for a distinct gay culture within an increasingly diverse and accepting wider society? Consequently is there a need for distinct gay environments within cities such as Sydney? How does gay culture shift from being peripheral (hidden, clandestine, and exclusive) to being centralised (widely accepted, even ‘mainstream’) affect the way in which gay/queer culture is realised within the built environment? How does queer culture imagine and invent its own versions of the city? And what is the dialectic whereby the built urban environment is both constituted by and constitutes queer culture?

The session is significant in its critical approach to the contested political and ideological terrain around sexuality and space. It is an important contribution to cultural critique and to the theoretical literature of queer studies, urban sociology, urban geography, and architecture. The session is timely in its recognition and analysis of the role that architecture and urbanism plays in the formation and maintenance of subcultures, and in contemporary society more generally. It explores various ways in which the built environment contributes to the ‘construction’ of culture and subcultures, and articulates how both architectural space and the city can represent intangible ideas such as ‘queerness’.

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Contesting design in the general terrain of contemporary public space

Stephen Loo
Louis Laybourne Smith School of Architecture and Design, University of South Australia

ABSTRACT

Public spaces in the age of speculative capital have been described as extraterritorial and a-contextual as they arguably suspend or make unavailable communal life. Precincts of generic architecture can be described as places in which the socio-political system of the nation/state cannot fully mediate and transform extant life into local sovereign sense. The ontological constitution of the modern subject is marked by an Agambenian indistinction between the imperative to act according to the sovereign norms, and the radical potentiality not to (be or act). This paper investigates the implications of indistinct belonging to contemporary cities for design as an act of resistance. Using the work of Italian political militant and philosopher Paolo Virno on the relations between potential and act, the paper draws a diagram of design which is not an actualization of potential (say the material appearance of generic forms of architecture as testament to the constituent power of the general public), given by historical contingency (say the codes, legislations and normalizations that are in force owing to the constituted power of the sovereign). Rather, to Virno, the historical is given by a relation, postured in time, between potential as an unactualisable permanent not-now, and the act which is altogether incommensurable with potentiality. Virno’s reading unleashes a negativity that cannot be absorbed by the synthesising capacity of the dialectic.

I

When Brazilian Jean Charles de Menezes was shot to death in London’s Stockwell Station on 22 July last year on suspicion of being a suicide bomber, but posthumously cleared of association to the London train bombings, the mode of being in a public space, at least in the Western first world, was drawn into sharp relief. In the contemporary city, the extant infrastructure – train stations, airports terminals, shopping centres – become default public spaces, as they are the spatial thresholds between the local/national and its exteriority, the international/intercultural. These spaces are public not because they are where the public gathers or where they share a communal sense of belonging. These spaces are public precisely because no one truly belongs there, and that their individualities as citizens of a city are temporarily made contingent in the act of negotiation between here and there, local and international, and self and other. That is to say, these are the precise negotiations ‘in the matter of’ being public. If ‘the matter of things’ has the Latin prefix re-, ablative of res, meaning ‘thing’ or ‘matter’, then these negotiations at threshold spaces are the makings of a re-public.

The shooting of de Menezes reveals two conditions of belonging to contemporary public spaces that this paper attempts to unpick. The first condition is given by the new modes of being public that need to be considered in the rise of contemporary capitalism; a consideration that does not mean the search for new forms of urbanism or architecture but necessitates research for new relations between the terms ‘public’ and ‘space’, even if the conclusion is one of incommensurability or imposibility. The issue at stake here in belonging is ‘commonality’, that is, the issue of commonplaces. And there are three emanations of the commonplace which are interlaced in the arguments here: firstly, an epistemological commonplace that is the shared zone between two terms of ‘public’ and ‘space’; secondly, a generality, ubiquity, or everydayness, as in ‘commonplace’ concepts or generic abilities or common sense even; and thirdly, a commonplace as an actual material place, in the real, as one would refer to when talking conventionally about a public space, that which can be designed and may be habitable.

The second condition of belonging that arises here comes from Derrida’s notion of cosmopolitanism, whose determination lies in the complex distinction between the city and the State. de Menezes was a Brazilian citizen, living in Britain, under the imprimatur of the State which afforded him welcome under its universal duty to hospitality (this is the Levinasian sense of infinite responsibility to the stranger); but with conditional rights of residence that arise from various historical, legal, political and common or pragmatic conditions (e.g. restrictions to work, duration of permanent residency). That is to say, the urban cosmopolitan is a site of negotiation, inscribed by a common international, unconditional or natural right to be at, or to access, any point on the surface of the earth; as well
as conditional rights of residence determined between and within states. Derrida evokes the Kantian qualification to the right of residence as the right of visitation. A stranger in a foreign territory—one with its own laws limiting residence—has a right to be treated by locals without hostility, so long as they conduct themselves peacefully. The stranger however has no claim to be welcomed as a guest, although they have the right of visitation derived from a common ethico-theological possession of the surface of the earth. A stranger can therefore be moved on from a place, without the cause of death.

However, at Stockwell Station on 22 July 2005, de Menezes’s cosmopolitanism, his biopolitical potentiality given by the unconditional right to be there as a visitor was transformed inconspicuously into a danger to the configuration of shelter or home legitimated by new anti-terror laws which came in immediately after the London bombings. This law of sovereignty conditioned the affording of hospitality by the city, not by restricting access to public space, but by reconfiguring what is commonplace, or public, and in corollary, what is outside to be feared. As Derrida says, “Hospitality signifies the public nature of public space... hospitality whether public or private, is dependent on and controlled by the law and the state police.”

The fear is of a formless enemy, the anonymous terror suspect of indefinite political persuasion or socio-cultural and psychological inclinations, who may be a visitor or resident of the city, but an enemy of the state. The state sanctions their right to visit the city, in the name of cosmopolitanism, as international cities attempt to fashion their self image of tolerance, openness and hospitality. And also because the visitor has no prior conduct of public violence, and have shown no hostility towards the host. The state, unable to fully identify the enemy, installs draconian laws (such as Britain’s, and recently Australia’s, anti-terror laws), in the hope of bracketing the space of the stranger-enemy, in order to make them visible. It is this written law which becomes, as we shall see, the outward manifestation, and the trace, of the somewhat indeterminable common terrain of public space.

That is, laws and language of belonging as citizens take the place, owing to their being actualised, as the history of contemporary public space.

The fear of terror is a general fear, which Italian political militant and philosopher Paolo Virno calls “... a diffuse feeling, characteristic of our epoch... an anguish, which lacks a precise object... this is the feeling of precariousness itself. It is the relationship with the world as a whole as a source of fear.”

The distinction between fear and anguish, as Heidegger traced out in Section 40 of Being and Time, draws out the distinction between refuge and security, as we are discussing here, that plays out in the contemporary city. Fear is circumscribed and namable, with an outward cause that is recognized communally. In this way, the counterpart to fear is security, where fear is controllable by the community through laws and language which as consolidations of practices and customs—that is to say, an ethos—guarantees its abeyance.

Anguish however is evoked, according to Heidegger, purely by being exposed to the indeterminacy of the world, and is traditionally a comportment towards the interior, the individual, and as such, isolates the individual from public and its shared habits, languages and customs. Anguish comes from the insurmountable risk of life itself. Refuge from anguish traditionally speaking comes from transcendental practices, namely from religious experience, whereby the quest is for feeling at home. As the home is a stable existential territory, being at home becomes the antidote to the pervasive feeling of anguish.

However, contemporary capitalism has been able to put human existential territories—affectional states, senses of belonging, codes of morality, norms of behaviour, phenomenal comfort zones, and so forth—into its productive circulation, and is therefore largely responsible for disengaging the life of human beings from any stable forms of such territories. Productive labour in contemporary capitalism is the affective labour of human interaction which involves the creation and manipulation of emotion, corporeality, and experience, and networks of social relations and community forms that exist because of affectional and somatic emotions such as care and responsibility. What we have then, are constantly innovating forms of life. Individuals are used to no longer having fixed customs or beliefs, they have gotten used to the permanent mutability of life. Herein lies the constitutive power of the many, as many. To Virno, in all forms of life today, what is most shared, what is more in common, and in a certain sense, more public, is the experience of “not feeling at home.”

Virno continues by postulating that this common experience of not feeling at home by the many, that is the public, interestingly overturns the anguish/refuge dyad. Here the original experience is that we protect ourselves by finding refuge from homelessness. And I quote, “when we are intent in protecting ourselves, only then do we focus on the dangers with which we may have to concern ourselves.” That is, once we know what form our refuge takes, we then decide the form of anguish that threatens us in our refuge. And this search for refuge is most dangerous when we paradoxically find it by entrusting ourselves to sovereign laws and codes, namely, constituted power.

With the mutability of life which installs constituent power, and the unavoidable abstractions, languages, codes and laws that instantiate constituted power, the experience of contemporary public space made up of the many whose community is radically unknowable possesses the logic of constant movement, oscillating between determinability and indeterminacy, between different forms of refuge and sometimes diametrically
opposed sense of reassurance, and between: singular and generic. Norms, laws and symbols aggregate and disaggregate simultaneously, fluidly, dismantling as quickly as they are formed. Citizenship of public space described in this way accords with what Derrick postulates as the originary negotiations between the contradictory unconditional hospitality and the conditional rights of residence. Citizenship arrives through experience of new laws and new forms of democracy as they are put to the test, that is, in experimentation. Citizenship of public space is inherently processual: it is always in the making, always arriving, or to Derrick, it has not-yet arrived or yet to be recognized. And I would add that such belonging is always already spatial, because it reifies at the liminal zone between known abstract conditions of the urban and the indeterminate potentiality of that which cannot yet be known, whereby citizenship is the complex unending experience of the threshold.

II

What is the status of design in relation to citizenship of public space which is in itself no other than liminality? There has recently been a spate of theorizations of the city that reflect upon contemporary capitalism being immanent to the investment and production of what constitutes life, resulting in public spaces that are described as devoid of concrete instantiations of belonging and identity, or at least the indeterminacy of symbolic representation. I feel such theoretical activity shortsightens the possibilities of resistance through a major operative at work in the discourse, namely the concept of the ‘general’ or ‘generic’; if the generic remains unworked in relation to the three conditions of the commonplace I mentioned at the start of the paper: namely, as the epistemological interstices between ‘public’ and ‘space’, the moving to the forefront of a common sense as an organizing principle of the experience of the city; and lastly, the design of actual public spaces as an investment of temporality in its oscillation between constituted power of the state/nation and the constituent power of the many, or multitude.

The story of the contemporary city usually goes something like this: Cities in the age of speculative capital are extraterritorial or global, a-contextual and non-identifiable, as they arguably suspend or make unavailable communal life. When sovereignty loses place as the normative centre for control and command — when the walls of the prison and hospital fall — disciplinary control does not cease but is released into the social field. And geographical and functional space is no longer the precondition for governmentality, sovereignty, nor is subjectivist agency. Through and by the behaviour of what Virno, Antonio Negri and Giorgio Agamben among others have identified as the multitude, pressed by the flows of capital, control coagulates in particular parts of the city and takes form in structures such as airports, call centres, and shopping malls. These precints of generic architecture and transit zones are places in which the socio-political system of the nation-state, while they exist to organize the production of these spaces, cannot fully mediate and transform extant life, with its constituent power, into constituted forms of ‘sovereignty’.

Amongst the theorists of the city, Rem Koolhaas has provided us with well used image of the city that affirms the multivalent and formless conditions of contemporary urbanism: the ‘generic city’ that ratifies the production and appreciation of a kind of homogeneous, serial and banal space. To Koolhaas, the generic city defies mensuration, “is unshapable, where planning makes: no difference whatsoever” as the city seems to proceed by accident at an alarming rate, in a sort of aesthetic free zone where the street is dead and the skyscraper its definitive typology. The generic city therefore is a city that is liberated from the straightjacket of identity, the manifestation of ultimate neutrality, and yielded through the systematic application of the unprincipled.

Mobile forms of surveillance, the un-mappable knowledge relations resulting from immensely complex information flows, and the hybrid nature of education, family and commercialisation, disintegrates the inside/outside or constituent/constituted power distinctions. So in the generic city, architecture becomes porous, its materiality becomes inscribed by the transgressive nature of urban functions. For example, the school instals a self-governmentality in younger citizens whereby the public space outside the school building becomes synonymous with its classrooms; biotechnology such as harvesting of stem cells and associated research disengages the architecture of hospitals with the relations between the ill and healthy, and between the dying and living; and commodification has entered so deep within the home that affectual states associated with shopping equally occurs within the home and the mall.

Urban theorizations that proceed in this way rely heavily upon Giorgio Agamben’s concept of “bare life”, mobilised by the spatio-political configuration of the camp.12 Bare life or zoé is the unqualified life of natural (or domestic) reproduction that does not subscribe to constituted sovereignty, which is differentiated from bios, following Aristotelian political philosophy, or life qualified by the law/language towards a ‘usefulness’ within a political community. Bare life, as undifferentiated, un-inscribed vitality, becomes for Agamben the absolute biopolitical material, and the manifestation of pure potentiality. Sovereign life on the other hand is the concrete materialization, the act and actualisation, governed by law and language that maintain a visible order of identifications. Following an earlier discussion, it is sovereign life which forms the ground of knowability, substantialised as the history of public places. What is interesting here is the implications of the indistinct belonging to contemporary cities as given by an unqualified generic belonging, perhaps named by bare life (zoé) which itself is not a thing that is named, but is namability itself, the very openness or aban-
it appears obscene because of the silence of its formation and unpredictability of occurrence. Terror is therefore rife within control societies because the real constantly threatens to break into the chimera of the smooth space. Then comes the line of escape from terror that leads the city inhabitants back into protected enclaves such as gated communities and exclusive shopping precincts, returning the subject to disciplinary entrapment.

III

Design in this situation, whether of cities or architecture, is positioned outside the possibility of resistance, owing to the smooth flow between constituent and constituted power, and the relative unavailability of stable linguistic manifestations as the history of general places. Because of an Agambenian indistinction between the imperative to act according to the norms put in place by sovereign, and the radical potential not to (be or act) as an ontological constitutive category of the modern subject, design is relegated to unqualified, and perhaps unqualifiable, repetitions of preconditioned relations between the potency and actuality, between constitutive and constituted power, owing to the invisibility afforded by that indistinction. This is, as long as constituent power is caught in the paradox of sovereignty, where known abstract constitution order produces bare life as the limit condition of an exception that has become the rule, there can be no hope for design to remove itself from reifying the transcendentality of sovereign power, or imagining a form of political and architectural conduct that remains free of the modern state. The citizen of contemporary public space, even though ontologically indeterminate, unconditional, and durational (always yet to come), can never avoid deference to actualizations that are emanations of a conditional sovereign state. And the Agambenian focus on bare life and the state of exception is at the expense of the history of the production of abstraction and actuality. It negates the actual performativity of writing the history of public space itself, and the roles abstraction and actualization could play in problematising biopolitics.

How can we proceed to make productive the relations between design and the generic? The strategy lies in moving away from the indistinction of the potential / act dyad in order to redeem a concern for the role of abstraction and actualization, and with it (an)other possibility for the linguistic manifestation of public places, that is, their appearance in/as the writing of history. The critique of Agambenian ontology levered above comes from Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, whose alternative Spinozian vision of potentiality is manifest in an ultimately creative, productive and joyous corporeality. Hardt and Negri trace the emergence of a productive mode of power through social relations of the multitude, a form of being where the ontological condition emerges explicitly in the empirical, social, and corporeal plane, and bound to the possible and the contingent. To them the potenti-
tous. Intellectual skills, that which makes an individual a thinker, is no longer that which elevates that individual above the public, making them not at home so to say. But as feeling not at home is the fate of the many, the intellectual skills that are required to deal with this contemporary commonspace, that which makes the many all "thinkers", have risen to become desired, and hence commodifiable.

It is important to note that these skills are not coalescent, they can never become formalized as a set of collective intelligence, as they are not abstractions that can be exchanged through the principle of equivalence, but stand as the premise for heterogeneous operative possibilities. And the general intellect that makes appear this commonspace, is immanent with capital forces, it is self-generative and reconfigures the very forces that brought it to the forefront in the first place. The general skills so desired by the marketplace, for the very fact it self-proliferates and creates multitudinous forms of life, is public and has publicness as it is within the ambit of the many. However, it does not make a public space: it is not located as such; its relation to a geographical or topological space is the question that needs to be asked, at least for architects.

IV

How then do we respond to Virno's hopes for the construction of a new public sphere where singularity of the many, not the individual, can be valorised, without transcendent unity under the state or sovereign? The call to design needs to deal with the generic, as generic. Resistance, if it is possible, needs to be reinscribed in the generic. Design needs to accept that the power of the generic lies in its unactualisability: a potentiality that cannot have a corresponding materialization in space. Design needs to make performative, the inherent ambivalence, and even nihilism, in the generic. What we need to do is to reclaim the potential/act dyad as not indifferent, contrary to Agamben's definition. Potentiality is not subservient to actualization, but potentiality and actualization are incommensurable beings: the act does not realize potential, nor does potential exist only when there is an act. This move reclaims the role of abstraction which is inherent in actualised constituted power or sovereignty, but will not divorce constitutive power of the multitude in public places from constituted power, but to recognize its co-evolution in difference.

So what can design do? The following are, as a matter of an inconclusive conclusion, several trajectories that may be followed. So far as it is conceived conventionally, design as resistance starts from a particularity - a set of professional skills, a typology of aesthetic responses, a fixity of methods - which either deepens or defends that particularity. But this is what resistance is meant to resist, the reductive embodiment of the singular-generic in a serially determinate, normatively specifiable entity.21 It has to move away from this condition and
think about a solidarity that is public, but not spatial in the centripetal sense. An epistemological disjuncture needs to be put between public and place as we know it.

Place is not merely a specific local space, as the local which is common cannot be preempted, and is continually taking-place. The public cannot be seen to be made up of individuals, as the individuals in the multitude are co-extensive and this commonality/sharing is the ontology of the many. What this alludes to is a temporality, or more specifically, an ontological durationality, in the appearance of place. In this way place and the public, as well as architecture, images, languages, and so forth, are all entities that possess a self-consistency within the multitude. Their convergent interactions bring each other into existence, and their power to self-create differentially relies on a language of relations whose syntax cannot be foreclosed. So the public is not one who uses space, but one which has the potential to participate in what that notion of public space is. The public spaces, rather than is space out.

Design should seek to discern the material mechanism of the aggregation entities that can constitute adequate, affirmative relationships, and more powerful novel assemblages of life. It needs to strive for, through the indeterminacy of existential potentials, to present dynamism for what it is, by stripping it of any finalist significance. This is akin to what Isabelle Stengers calls an ecology of practices that is immanent to the emergence of life. Design needs to be able to utter the general intellect up to the forefront, to afford it a shape, or visibility in other ways than that which is necessitated by the flows of capital. The publicness of the intellect will always be the ground for design, for better or worse. Design or resistance is not preemptive in the sense that it attempts to safeguard certain forms of life already in place by valorising or representing specific socio-cultural or political instantiations, or affirming in form, the ambiguous general intellect. Design defends the potentiality of plural experiences, of non-representative democracies, of forms of life yet unknown, or coming.

Design needs to take risks. Following Stengers, a cosmopolitics is a kind of experimental togetherness, and not the condition for polite conversation. This poses a challenge to peace that underlay the idea of cosmopolitanism. Design needs to take charge of bring many concrete heterogeneous enduring shapes of value. These are repetitive, banal, ambivalent actualities that have been coagulated by systems of economics and the state. But this is precisely the site of phased controlled emergence, that design by acting to fold back these phases of emergence to create patterns of interruption, which open up to other, always partially grasping, production of life. Resistance is the condensation of the vital powers of emergence, not an oppositional practice, but pragmatics of intensified ontogenesis. Design is pragmatic application through experimentation, always at the edge.

Design invests the citizen of contemporary public space, replete with transcendent images of the international, back into the production of the local – the general intellect – as a point of resistance, in order for the body to spill over, demonstrating the effects of over-coding and excess. This is a practical politics of social bodies sets loose the immanent forces from the strictures of predetermined forms to discover their own ends, invent their own constitution.

Lastly, to be a designer of public places, one will need to be what Virno calls a virtuoso. The work of the virtuoso is not so much artistic or sublime, a capitalism based on communication, culture and information, virtuosity is a skill in improvisation, to know what to do in an unforeseen circumstance. Virtuosos are those who produce something which is not distinguishable or even separable from the act of production, they do not produce objects, but relationships with the public. Can design survive as a profession if its very ontology of futurity is replaced with immanence, that the act of design, rather than its results, is that which is valued and commodified?

The interesting question here is how to be 'professional' in design without the imperative of specialisation, or material/formal specificity, but for the citizenship of public space to embrace the ‘multitude’ . To Virno, the multitude is the form of the human being where the ontological condition emerges explicitly in the empirical, social plane, that always already maintains the incommensurability between the unconditional potential of being, and conditional design acts. Design needs to negotiate such incommensurability found in the general terrains of contemporary public space, working between the formal abstractions and representations of sovereignty, and unanticipatable new forms of solidarity that are yet to come.

4 Hardt and Negri, Empire: pp. 292-293
5 Virno, A Grammar of the Multitude: p.33
6 Virno, A Grammar of the Multitude: p.34
7 Virno, A Grammar of the Multitude: p.34
8 Virno, A Grammar of the Multitude: p.35
9 Derrida, On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness, p.23
11 Koolhaas, S M L XL: pp. 1250, 1251, 1261
13 Agamben, Homo Sacer: p. 45
14 Agamben continues: "... as for the potentiality to not-be ..., the act an never consist of a simple transition de potential ad actum: It is, in other words, a potentiality that has as its object potentiality itself, a potentia potentiae." Giorgio Agamben, The Coming Community, Michael Hardt (trans.) Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993: pp. 35-36.
15 Agamben, The Coming Community: p. 37
16 Agamben, Homo Sacer: p. 19
18 Diken and Bagge Laustsen, "Zones of Indistinction": p. 10
19 Virno, A Grammar of the Multitude: p.85
20 Virno, A Grammar of the Multitude: p.87
21 Brian Massumi, "Requiem for Our Prospective Dead (Toward a Participatory Critique of Capitalist Power)" in Deleuze and Guattari: New Mappings n Politics, Philosophy, and Culture, Eleanor Kaufman and Kevin Jon Heller (eds.) Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1998: p. 60