

ISTANBUL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY ★ INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

**FROM ARCHITECTURE TO INFRASTRUCTURE:
THE REDUCTION OF A PROFESSION**

**M.Sc. Thesis by
Gürsu ALTUNKAYA**

**Department: Architecture
Programme: Architectural Design**

OCTOBER 2009

**FROM ARCHITECTURE TO INFRASTRUCTURE:
THE REDUCTION OF A PROFESSION**

**M.Sc. Thesis by
Gürsu ALTUNKAYA
(502061037)**

Date of submission: 07 September 2009

Date of defence examination: 30 October 2009

Supervisor (Chairman): Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aytanga DENER

Members of the Examining Committee: Prof. Dr. Semra AYDINLI (ITU)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bülent TANJU (YTU)

OCTOBER 2009

İSTANBUL TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ ★ FEN BİLİMLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ

**MİMARDAN İMARA:
BİR MESLEĞİN YOZLAŞMA HİKAYESİ**

**YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ
Gürsu ALTUNKAYA
(502061037)**

**Tezin Enstitüye Verildiği Tarih: 07 Eylül 2009
Tezin Savunulduğu Tarih: 30 Ekim 2009**

**Tez Danışmanı: Doç. Dr. Aytanga DENER
Diğer Jüri Üyeleri: Prof. Dr. Semra AYDINLI (İTÜ)
Doç. Dr. Bülent TANJU (YTÜ)**

EKİM 2009

PREFACE

I am grateful to a number of people for their support during the writing of this work:

To my advisor Assoc. Dr. Aytanga Dener for her repeated trust and understanding, to my family, to Deniz Mallı, Özgür Karasu and Emre Aydilek for their support and comments, and to Bilge İldiri, without whom this work couldn't have been completed.

September 2009

Gürsu ALTUNKAYA

CONTENTS

PREFACE	iii
SUMMARY	vii
ÖZET	ix
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. THE SEPARATION OF ARCHITECTURE	3
2.1. The Separation of Architecture as <i>Useful</i>	3
2.1.1. The Development of the Idea of <i>Useful as Functionalism</i>	3
2.2. The Separation of Architecture as Hot Medium	4
2.2.1. Hot/Cool Medium in Marshall McLuhan	4
2.2.2. Architecture as Hot Medium	5
3. ARCHITECTURE AS THE OUTCOME OF CONDITIONS OF PRODUCTION ..	7
4. THE REDUCTION OF ARCHITECTURE TO INFRASTRUCTURE	9
4.1. First Separation and Reduction: The Separation of Architecture from Other Fields of Activity	9
4.1.1. The Modern Division of Labour	9
4.1.2. The Separation of Architecture from Other Fields of Activity	11
4.2. Second Separation and Reduction: The Separation of Images of Architecture from the Reality of Architecture	12
4.2.1. The Rise of the Society of the Spectacle	12
4.2.2. The Rise of Ocularcentrism	13
4.2.3. The Critique of Ocularcentrism	14
4.2.4. The Separation of Images from Real Life	16
4.2.5. The Separation of Images of Architecture from the Reality of Architecture	18
4.3. The Reduction of Architecture to Infrastructure	19
4.3.1. Early Modernist Theories and the Stress on Usefulness	19
4.3.2. The Reduction of Architecture to Infrastructure According to the Modern Division of Labour	19
CONCLUSION	23
REFERENCES	25
CURRICULUM VITAE	27

FROM ARCHITECTURE TO INFRASTRUCTURE: THE REDUCTION OF A PROFESSION

SUMMARY

Architecture is an outcome of conditions of production. Modern architecture is an outcome of the industrial mode of production and bears a resemblance to all other products of the industrial era.

The modern conditions of production bring forth an accumulation of spectacles. Images become separated from other aspects of life and exist in a world of their own. As a consequence, the unity of life is lost. In the industrial era, architecture, too, has become a spectacle. It has been separated from some of its aspects and has therefore lost its unity.

The separation of aspects of life from each other causes a loss of unity in life and reduces all aspects of life. This separation of aspects of life from each other begins with the modern division of labour.

The reduction of modern architecture to infrastructure begins with the modern division of labour as well. This separation of fields of human activity alone effects a reduction in all fields: one human activity cannot be conceived in isolation from others. When a certain activity is separated from others it is reduced, since it is robbed of its sources within those fields from which it is now isolated.

Modern theories of architecture, with their stress on usefulness, have helped to separate architecture from other fields of human activity, most importantly from the arts. Separated from its subjective qualities (which are in Modernism exclusively attached to the remainder of the arts) and crushed with the stress made on usefulness, architecture has been reduced to infrastructure.

MİMARDAN İMARA: BİR MESLEĞİN YOZLAŞMA HİKAYESİ

ÖZET

Yaşamın diğer alanları gibi mimarlık da üretim biçimlerinin bir sonucudur. Modern mimarlık endüstriyel üretim biçiminin bir sonucu olarak endüstriyel dönemin diğer ürünleriyle benzerlikler gösterir.

Modern üretim biçimleri yoğun bir gösteri üretimini beraberinde getirdi. İmgeler yaşamın diğer alanlarından ayrıldılar ve kendilerine ait bir dünyada var olmaya başladılar. Bu yüzden yaşam bütünlüğünü yitirdi. Endüstriyel dönemde mimarlık da bir gösteriye dönüştü. Bazı özelliklerinden ayrılarak bütünlüğünü yitirdi.

Yaşamın alanlarının birbirinden ayrılması yaşamın bütünlüğünün yitirilmesine yol açtı. Bunun sonucunda yaşamın tüm alanları indirgeni (yozlaştı).

Yaşamın alanlarının birbirinden ayrılması ve indirgenmesi modern toplumsal iş bölümü ile başlamıştır. Modern mimarlığın altyapıya indirgenişi de modern toplumsal iş bölümü ile başlar. İnsan uğraşlarının birbirinden ayrılması tüm uğraşların indirgenmesi (yozlaşması) için yeterlidir çünkü bir uğraşı alanı diğer uğraşı alanlarından ayık olarak tasavvur edilemez. Bir uğraş diğerlerinden ayrıldığında indirgenir (yozlaşır) çünkü diğer uğraşı alanlarındaki kaynaklarından mahrum kalır.

Modern mimarlık kuramları faydaya yaptıkları vurguyla mimarlığın diğer uğraşı alanlarından, özellikle sanattan ayrılmasını hızlandırdılar. Öznel niteliklerinden ayrılan (koparılan) mimarlık - ki bu nitelikler Modernizmde kasıtlı olarak mimarlık dışındaki sanatlara mahsus bırakılmıştır - faydaya yapılan vurguyla yozlaşarak altyapıya indirgenmiştir.

1. INTRODUCTION

Architecture does not exist in a world of its own, isolated from historical events. Architecture is an outcome of conditions of production. Moreover, this relationship of architecture with conditions of production is a dialogue, where architecture, in theory and in practice, reacts to these conditions, and shapes them to an extent. The modern conditions of production, i.e. industrial production, is based on an ever finer division of labour. This division of labour starts with the establishment of the religious order, which is a the first ruling class.

The effectivity of the modern free market is based on this division of labour, which serves the needs of the ruling class. Effectivity is a key concept of the Western world and since the Renaissance, especially after the industrial revolution, it is based on progressivity. As a result of the fine division of labour, aspects of life are separated from each other and are reduced because individual aspects of life are separated from their sources within other aspects of life and are denied an integration with these other aspects. For the individual, a feeling of isolation and loss of sight over the big picture, and alienation to work and life follows. The specialized individual works as if behind an invisible assembly line. In this respect, the alienation of the industrial worker to the product is generalized as a proletarianization of the whole world.

The Modernist definition of architecture, which is based on functionalism, has been both an effect of modern conditions of production and a reaction to them. Modernist architecture theories are an attempt to make architecture the leading profession of the industrial revolution. Modernist theoreticians of architecture have taken the demands of the industrial mode of production and presented them as their own demands. The motivation behind this approach is a better survival in the then newly developing free market which is based on serial production. Architects, insisting on concepts such as type and standardization, and on the employment of modern materials, have attempted to make architecture the leading profession of the new era. Therefore, when their objectivist theories present architecture, they stress the functionalist aspect and leave out some other (subjective) aspects because these are contended to be a hindrance to progress.

In this thesis, to establish a background, existing studies on functionalist theories of architecture will be discussed. In specific, the thesis will focus on the concepts that have been used in these theories to define architecture as a distinct field and thus to separate it in this way from other fields of activity. Usefulness is one of these concepts and has been used in Modernist architecture theories to establish a stress on functionality. In the thesis, it will be contended that architecture has been reduced to infrastructure, partly due to this emphasis on functionality. Subjective aspects of architecture have been left out and this has left architecture without its sources within these subjective fields and therefore left architecture incomplete. To support this argument, Modernist theories of architecture, which are based on functionalism and therefore stress usefulness, will be discussed, and it will be argued that through this stress on usefulness architecture has been separated from other fields of activity, most importantly from the arts. In addition, other concepts, such as the perception of architecture by the viewer as a hot medium, have been used to define and differentiate, and thus separate architecture from other arts. Thus architecture has been reduced to infrastructure and has been given the corresponding infrastructure role within the modern division of labour.

Comments by Guy Debord (based on Karl Marx) on the modern division of labour and on the reduction of everyday life, along with the Canadian National Occupational Classification (NOC), will be used to establish a background for this argument. The theory of Guy Debord is of great importance because he treats such issues like separation, alienation and reduction according to the logic of the market from an everyday-life point of view. The NOC is important as an official document of a developed capitalist country and informs about the ways in which the division of labour has affected the organization of society.

2. THE SEPARATION OF ARCHITECTURE

The reduction of architecture begins with the separation of architecture from other fields of human activity, most importantly from the arts. Theories of architecture have contributed to this separation. *Usefulness*, from Vitruvius' Rules of Architecture to the functionalism of Modernist architecture, is the most prominent property that has been used to define, thus differentiate and separate architecture from other fields. The stress on usefulness in architecture caused its distancing from the arts and the shedding of certain related qualities that have formerly been intrinsic to architecture.

2.1. The Separation of Architecture as "Useful"

"Architecture should be durable, useful and beautiful." (Vitruvius, 2001)

These *rules* of architecture of Vitruvius can be translated into this definition of architecture: "Architecture *is* durable, useful and beautiful." However, this definition is not as sound as it seems before the translation. Anything can be durable, useful and/or beautiful. Moreover, architecture that isn't durable, useful and/or beautiful may exist, thus, these three properties aren't valid as criteria for a definition of architecture. Therefore, using usefulness to define architecture and separate it in this way from other fields is logically unsound.

2.1.1. The Development of the Idea of *Useful* as *Functionalism*

Usefulness resurfaces again in the history of architecture as *functionality*.

Functionality travels in the idea "Form follows function" from eighteenth-century Italian philosophers to the US via Horace Greenough and is circulated there within the Chicago School in architecture. The idea returns to Europe via Adolf Loos and Le Corbusier.

The phrase "Form follows function" originates in the Enlightenment and in the minds of eighteenth century Italian philosophers Lodoli and Milizia and informs Boullée and Ledoux in the nineteenth century.

Itolaphile American Horace Greenough brings the phrase back to the US and it circulates with Louis Sullivan and young Frank Lloyd Wright in the Chicago School of 1890s. It attracts great attention in the 1893 Chicago Exhibition.

This conception returns to Europe as follows: The Chicago Exhibition "is visited by Adolf Loos (who also meets with Sullivan)", whence "Form follows function" "returns to Europe with Loos and combines (in the mind of young Le Corbusier, for one, who meets with Loos on the latter's return) with the teachings of English socialist William Morris as filtered and transformed by critics Hermann Muthesius and Karl Scheffler, who were influential in the prewar Werkbund in Germany (actually founded by Muthesius) and who followed closely the career and thought of Peter Behrens, architect to the industrialist AEG." (Saunders, 2005)

The idea is carried into today's discourse as "'Form follows function' establishes itself as the unquestioned truth and unquestionable motivation, dominating all others, of European Modernism, and then, with the help of Wright, two world wars, and an army of bow-tied polemicists, of modernism, small m or large, everywhere since." Benedikt finds it a tragedy that "'form follows function' is true neither of nature nor of economic development." (ibid.)

2.2. The Separation of Architecture as Hot Medium

Architecture, when defined as a hot medium, seems to be distinct from the arts in this way. This results in the theoretical separation of architecture from other fields. However, the definition of architecture using hotness of the medium as criterion is logically unsound, as will be explained below.

2.2.1. Hot/Cool Medium in Marshall McLuhan

Marshall McLuhan, in his book "Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man", defines *hot* and *cool* media. In his two basic examples, he describes the radio as a hot medium, and the telephone as a cool one. (McLuhan, 1965)

A hot medium, is one "that extends one single sense in 'high definition'". (ibid.) High definition is defined as the state of being well filled with data. A photograph is, visually, *high definition*. A cartoon is *low definition*, simply because very little visual information is provided.

Hot media do not leave much to the audience, are therefore low in participation, while cool media leave much to be filled in, and are therefore high in participation. It is accepted that, in our time, as a principle, the hot form excludes, and the cool form includes.

2.2.2. Architecture as Hot Medium

According to Neil Denari, his *formagraphics* "gives architecture a way to compete in a world that is ever more dominated by cool (in the McLuhanesque sense) forms of 2D media." He thinks that "architecture is a hot medium: we look at it, we use it, but we don't watch it." (Speaks, 2006)

Denari apparently refers to McLuhan's definition of cool medium, in which a cool medium is described as a low definition medium, i.e. a medium that provides very little visual information, and therefore includes the viewer in that it demands deeper participation from the viewer to reveal further information.

Denari thinks that "most people experience quite a bit of their daily lives in 2D", and that's why he wants to "expand the experiential possibilities of buildings by making greater use of 2D techniques of communication. This means, for example, intensifying the photographic qualities of the building facade to the point that it arrests your gaze and makes you want to scan and take in all its information." (ibid.)

Aside from the arguable correctness of his reading of McLuhan's book, however true Denari's definition of architecture according to hotness/coolness of the medium may sound, it is problematic. That we don't watch architecture is true for most everyday situations but not for all. Thousands of tourist are watching buildings in sightseeing tours over the world. These tourists probably watch buildings as hard as they have ever watched a painting or sculpture. Considering this, the definition of architecture as hot medium is incorrect.

3. ARCHITECTURE AS THE OUTCOME OF CONDITIONS OF PRODUCTION

Guy Debord thinks that "modern conditions of production" affect the whole of life by transforming it into "an accumulation of spectacles". (Debord, 1995)

According to this idea, architecture as we know it (architecture after the industrial revolution) is also an outcome of modern conditions of production (i.e. post-Fordist production) and can be said to have transformed into a spectacle. Architecture does not exist in isolation from these modes of production. After the industrial revolution, serial production became the leading mode. Architecture had to be affected by this mode of production. Accordingly, architecture theories adapted to the logic of serial production.

As a continuation of this, in the last decades we have witnessed how architecture was affected, this time by post-Fordist production, and how buildings began to be produced according to this logic. No longer was architecture only produced as a serial product, but also advertised and varied towards more successful marketing. Moreover, the image world of architecture magazines have established an ocularcentric world of their own, which is an extension of the advertisement world of post-Fordist production.

Paul Walter Clarke argues that "the shift in architectural philosophy from modernism to postmodernism reflects a (...) transition in advanced capitalism and accordingly in the production and control of space and space relations." He thinks that "phenomena like modernism and postmodernism are political agendas." (Cuthbert, 2003)

Yet Clarke does not think that architecture is passively determined by conditions of production:

"The practice of architecture may be economically contingent, yet it is also capable of autonomous developments engendered by struggles, conflicts, innovations, contradictions and ambiguities." (Cuthbert, 2003)

Capitalism affects a creative destruction. In that sense, postmodernism is not a reaction to modernism's failure. Modernism and postmodernism are successive stages of capitalism. What is consistent is the intentional destruction of the built environment for the accumulation of capital.

The built environment is a vast investment field for surplus capital. Consequently, through the process of capitalist development, urban form will be more and more affected by the needs of capitalist accumulation.

Following deindustrialization cities will atrophy if not redeveloped to facilitate and reinforce capitalist production and consumption. Otherwise investment will move elsewhere.

"Capitalism has a demonic appetite to build and rebuild. Each new construction adds value to the urban matrix. The built environment both expands and expends capital. Construction in central city areas forces other enterprises and occupancies to the periphery. Construction in outlying areas gives greater worth to the center." (ibid.)

"Buildings occupy space. If the location, not the building becomes more valuable, then the existing building prevents the realization of that value. Under these circumstances, it is only through the destruction of old values in the built environment that new values can be created. With a voracious appetite, capitalism bites its own tail." (ibid.)

Clarke contends that there is a perpetual struggle in which capital builds a physical landscape appropriate to its own condition at a particular time, and then destroys it, generally after a period of crisis, at a later stage. (ibid.)

4. THE REDUCTION OF ARCHITECTURE TO INFRASTRUCTURE

The reduction of modern architecture to infrastructure begins with the modern division of labour. With division of labour begins the separation of fields of human activity from each other. This separation of fields of human activity alone effects a reduction in all fields: one human activity cannot be conceived in isolation from others. With the modern division of labour (which is both an outcome of the free market and in turn increases the effectivity of the market) comes specialization. But when a certain activity is separated from others in this way and is assigned to a certain type of professional, the activity, because of the high degree of specialization and effectivity the market expects of it, is reduced, since it is separated from other activities and robbed of its sources within those fields from which it is now isolated.

Modern theories of architecture, with their stress on usefulness, have helped to separate architecture from other fields of human activity, most importantly from the arts. Separated from its subjective qualities (which are in Modernism exclusively attached to the remainder of the arts) and because of the stress made on usefulness, architecture has been reduced to infrastructure.

The second reduction is the separation that occurred *within* architecture. This is the separation of the images of architecture from the reality of architecture. With the rise of ocularcentrism, which is linked to a need to control in general and to the need of corporate capital to control the market in specific, the perfect (i.e. perfectly controlled and manipulated) images of architecture have been separated from the reality of architecture and have acquired a world of their own in journals of architecture.

4.1. First Separation and Reduction: The Separation of Architecture from Other Fields of Activity

4.1.1. The Modern Division of Labour

For Debord, the modern division of labour and the spectacle are interrelated. According to him, separation is the basis of the spectacle. Religious contemplation was "the outcome of the establishment of the social division of labour and the

formation of classes.” He states that power was disguised as a mythical order, and that this order ”justified the cosmic and ontological ordering of things that best served the interests of the masters.” (Debord, 1995)

According to Debord, the spectacle is a form of the sacred and it is ”hierarchical power evolving on its own, in its separateness, thanks to an increasing productivity based on an ever more refined division of labour, an ever greater comminution of machine-governed gestures, and an ever-widening market.” (ibid.)

This ends all community and critical awareness and the separated forces of society haven’t yet found a way to reunite. The first step in the history of division of labour is religion, in which power creates an order of its own. The division of labour in all its effectivity is reflected in work and life, and affects the way people work and live. A machine-like organization of life results in machine-like modes of activity. The division of labour also separates aspects of life from each other. The division of labour starts with the specialization of power, and the specialization of power lies at the root of the spectacle.

The spectacle plays the role of ”spokesman for all other activities, a sort of diplomatic representative of hierarchical society at its own court, and the source of the only discourse which that society allows itself to hear.” Thus the spectacle is both modern and archaic. (ibid.)

Debord’s critique of specialization and division of labour can be traced back to Marx. Marx points out that class society depends on the division of labour inaugurated through the division of mental and physical labor. Capitalism further expands this division of labour by creating the need for the management and control of ever greater domains of social life.

Capitalism produces a whole array of specialists (psychologists, professors, scientists, etc.) who work to perpetuate capitalism. We usually ”don’t choose to be dependent on specialists, it is just the way the system is set up.” (Matthews, 2005)

Division of labour is the oil of the free market. It increases effectivity, thus minimizes financial loss. Under diverse categories, it creates more exchange value. In layman’s terms: It sells better. A car is produced in various colours to attract more

customers. Similarly, a service is rendered under various names (artist, architect, craftsman, etc.) to attract more customers, to increase exchange value.

The Situationist International, which Debord was a member of, were in general antiseperationists, which is reflected in their antipoliticism as an extension of their antispecializationism. A good example of the array of specialists that capitalism produces is the role of specialists called politicians. Although people don't actively support representative democracy, they are represented irrelevant of their wish to be represented or not.

The Situationists' antipolitical critique includes leftist politicians. The leftist opposition in fact mirrors the specializationism of capitalism. The Situationists thought that the leftist role of militant fits perfectly within the world of separations that the situationists hated: the militant is a devout believer in a cause to which others must be converted, and in the service of this cause the militant feels obliged to speak for *the people* and say what is good for *the people*. The leftist militant is therefore seen as a potential bureaucrat.

The Situationist International's critique of class society and their affirmation of communism resulted in their critique of specialization. This can be traced back to Marx, because it was he who stated that in a communist society there are no painters but at most people who paint among other activities.

If a complete refusal of specialization is implied in Debord's and others' Marxist theory, this is hard to accept entirely. However, issues like the *reducing effect* of specialization on certain aspects of life, the separation of aspects of life from each other, and the separation of members of the society from each other, are worthy of discussion.

4.1.2. The Separation of Architecture from Other Fields of Activity

Architecture has been separated from other fields of human activity (most importantly from the arts) and has become established as a distinct service category. The stress on usefulness in architecture has helped this distinction and thus the separation and distancing of architecture from other fields (most importantly from the arts), causing a loss of unity of life in general and a loss of unity within

architecture due to the shedding of certain qualities of architecture that are not centered on usefulness.

"The generalized separation of worker and product has spelled the end of any comprehensive view of the job done, as well as the end of direct personal communication between producers." (Debord, 1995)

According to Debord, the accumulation of alienated products proceeds and "the triumph of an economic system founded on separation leads to the *proletarianization of the world.*" (Debord, 1995)

In industrialization, the alienation of the worker to the product has been followed by consecutive attempts at eliminating the worker altogether and replacing it with technology. In this respect, architects of today, who work in an assembly-line fashion, are "proletarianized" and alienated to their product. Architects may in the end be replaced with more advanced technology, if artificial intelligence (the most basic form of which is the pattern recognition applications of today) is developed to a certain point.

4.2. Second Separation and Reduction: The Separation of Images of Architecture from the Reality of Architecture

4.2.1. The Rise of the Society of the Spectacle

"All that once was directly lived has become mere representation." (Debord, 1995)

According to Debord, in societies in which modern conditions of production prevail, the whole of life presents itself "as an immense accumulation of spectacles." The spectacle is "both the outcome and the goal of the dominant mode of production." (Debord, 1995) The spectacle is not something added to the world but it reflects the dominating state of social life. It is a reflection of choices made in the sphere of production. The spectacle is an outcome of the existing system and it serves to justify its aims. It furthermore ensures the permanency of that justification.

Throughout history, dominant modes of production and the societies which are their direct reflection can be outlined as follows:

History can be broadly divided into three stages: Pre-medieval, medieval and industrial. In the pre-medieval era, the economy is static, thus society is state-centered. In the medieval era, the economy is dynamic. The state breaks down under the dynamic economy and gives way to feudalism. In the industrial era (i.e. after the industrial revolution) the dominant mode of production is mercantilism, in which the state supports the bourgeoisie, which in the end takes control of the state.

According to Debord, "the bourgeoisie is the only revolutionary class that has ever been victorious; the only class, also, for which the development of the economy was the cause and consequence of its capture of society." (ibid.)

In Russia, because capitalism was underdeveloped (less diversified), it quickly transformed into socialist bureaucracy. Socialist bureaucracy was a substitute for the ruling economic classes of modern capitalist states, and it functioned in similar, spectacular, ways.

Debord's class view, especially his separation of the bourgeoisie from the proletariat, contradicts with his own critique of separation. Nevertheless, he makes sense when he speaks of "the proletarianization of the world". (See Chapter 4.1.2 above.)

Another apparent contradiction is between his complete refusal of anything that can remotely be called *spectacle* and his critique of the loss of playfulness in life. He does not at all recognize spectacle (or spectacles) as a playful (although at times deceitful) aspect of life. He again makes sense when he successfully defines *spectacle* not as a conglomeration of shows, but as the reduction of life to a show-like state and the separation that this dictates.

4.2.2. The Rise of Ocularcentrism

The origin of the rise of ocularcentrism in the 20th century can be searched in the shift of the center of gravity of modernism in visual arts from Paris to New York in the years after 1945, when abstract expressionism became the leading style and was widely understood as the high point reached by the arts.

"Whether or not, as Serge Guilbaout has provocatively contended, this shift was tantamount to a theft based on the calculated Cold War strategy of purging art of any political implications, it certainly meant purifying art of any extraneous interference, such as a narrative, didactic, or

anecdotal function, and imbuing it instead with a claim to universal value in itself." (Weiss, Haber, 1999)

According to Jay, the criticism of Clement Greenberg (whom Jay describes as "a recently disillusioned Trotskyist rapidly shedding his political past") was "pivotal in elevating what he called the 'purity' of the optical to the defining characteristic of modern art." (Weiss, Haber, 1999)

For Greenberg, pure visuality meant the presence of atemporal, essential form, the old Platonic dream now paradoxically realized - or at least ever more closely manifested - in the world of visual appearance on the flat surface of a canvas.

Greenberg's modernism was reminiscent of the strictly self-referential formalism of earlier critics like Roger Fry and Clive Bell, but was now for the first time successfully elevated to a position of cultural hegemony. His standards could be applied not only to define genuine art, but also to decide qualitatively between its good and bad exemplars.

4.2.3. The Critique of Ocularcentrism

The new movements of the late 60s and early 70s "shifted the ground away from the postwar consensus. Pop Art undermined Greenberg's rigid distinction between high and low, provocatively blurring the difference between commodity and disinterested aesthetic experience." (Weiss, Haber, 1999)

Minimalism, like performance art and happenings of the period, restored the temporal and corporeal dimensions of aesthetic experience against Greenberg's stress on atemporal visual presence.

The theories - which were in most cases French - that, against the idea of high modernist pure opticality, explicated and legitimated these changes can be divided into three categories: 1) those that stress the importance of language as opposed to perception 2) those that emphasize the forgotten role of the (often sexualized) body, and 3) those that stress the political implications of certain visual practices.

With Structuralism, including writers like Saussure, Lévi-Strauss, and the early Barthes, all cultural production began to be conceptualized in terms of language and

textuality. It had become possible to read rather than simply look at pictures, movies, architecture, photographs, and sculpture.

Derrida, according to W.J.T. Mitchell, goes one step further and defines image as "nothing but another kind of writing." (Mitchell, 1986)

According to Jay (Weiss, Haber, 1999), art historian Norman Bryson, in his book "Vision and Painting: The Logic of the Gaze" of 1983, "lamented the suppression of corporeality in the dominant tradition of viewing in the West from the Renaissance through modernism." (Bryson, 1983) In what is called the *Founding Perception* of that tradition, the gaze of the painter arrests the flux of phenomena. The painter recreates what he sees atemporally, in a moment that lasts forever and is thoroughly visible. The viewing subject, when he/she looks at the painting, identifies himself/herself with the painter, with the *Founding Perception* and recreates that first vision of the painter.

According to Jay (Weiss, Haber, 1999), Duchamp has a disdain for ocularcentric art, which he calls retinal art, "the art of pure opticality and visual appearance" and this has "earned him a place in the pantheon of current American critics of ocularcentrism." Duchamp "has been enlisted as a weapon in the battle against the society of the spectacle as a whole, even if Debord and Situationists themselves had thought his attempt merely to abolish art, rather than both abolish and realize it, was flawed." (Knabb, 1981)

Art critic Rosalind Krauss thinks that Clement Greenberg detests Duchamp's art because of "its pressure towards desublimation. 'Leveling' he calls it. The attempt to erase distinctions between art and non-art, between the absolute gratuitousness of form and the commodity. The strategy, in short, of the readymade." (Krauss, 1993)

In Duchamp antiocularcentrism and antisubjectivism go hand in hand. Duchamp is indebted to the writer Raymond Roussel's demolition of the idea that works of art expressed a creator's interiority by acting as a transparent pane - a window through which the psychological spaces of viewer and creator are open onto each other.

Krauss compares Duchamp's antipsychologism, his denial that works reveal the artist's soul or even his intentions, to the antisubjectivism of both the Minimalist artists of the 1970s and the *new novelists* of the same era, and thinks that it is no

accident that the work of Robert Morris and Richard Serra was being made at the time when novelists in France were declaring: "I do not write. I am written."

According to Jay (Weiss, Haber, 1999), Jonathan Crary writes that the autonomization of sight, occurring in many different domains "was a historical condition for the rebuilding of an observer fitted for the tasks of 'spectacular' consumption". (Crary, 1990)

According to Jay, "Techniques of the Observer" "deliberately combines Foucault's celebrated critique of surveillance in the carceral society of panopticism with Debord's attack on the Spectacle". For Crary, "both regimes of visual power have worked in tandem to rationalize vision in the service of the status quo." (Weiss, Haber, 1999)

4.2.4. The Separation of Images from Real Life

Images have become separated from other aspects of life and unfold as "a pseudo-world apart, solely as an object of contemplation". Images have become autonomous, therefore "the former unity of life is lost forever". The spectacle is "a concrete inversion of life, and, as such, the autonomous movement of non-life." (Debord, 1995)

The spectacle gives the sense of sight the place formerly occupied by touch and therefore sight is elevated above all other senses. Sight being the most abstract of the senses is the most easily deceived, therefore the most adaptable to the generalized abstraction of present society.

However, the spectacle is still not perceptible to the naked eye because it is immune from human activity, inaccessible to any projected review or correction. It is the opposite of dialogue, it has an independent existence and establishes its own rules.

The spectacle brings together a wide range of apparently disparate phenomena. These phenomena are the appearances of the spectacle, which is a social organization of appearances that needs to be seen as a greater picture. The spectacle proclaims that all social life is mere appearance. Therefore, the spectacle is a visible negation of life. It has its own visual form.

"The spectacle manifests itself as an enormous positivity, out of reach and beyond dispute. All it says is: 'Everything that appears is good; whatever is good will appear.'" (Debord, 1995)

The spectacle demands a passive acceptance and its acceptance is secured because it seems incontrovertible and it has monopolized the realm of appearances.

Debord seems to contend that the spectacle makes appearance seem equal to existence, and that it suggests that appearance by itself is a virtue.

Being has been obviously downgraded into *having*. This has been brought about by an earlier stage of the economy's domination of social life. In the present stage of the economy's taking over of the whole of social life, *having* is shifting to *appearing*. *Having* must derive its immediate prestige from *appearing*.

In other words, having is in itself not enough for attaining prestige. What one *has* must also *appear*, i.e. one must display what one has, as a sort of spectacle.

But only the spectacular unreal is allowed to appear, and not a reality that can be lived directly. This argument challenges the very reality of appearances.

The spectacle begins with the religious illusion, of which it is the material reconstruction. Religious mists haven't been dispelled by the spectacle, but have been brought down to earth. The image of paradise is no longer projected onto the heavens, but onto material life itself. Hence the spectacle exiles human powers in an other world and perfects the separation within human beings.

Debord's criticism of the elevation of sight over touch is not as relevant as his criticism of the separation of the senses from each other. It is not the elevation of one sense over another that reduces life, but the reduction of all senses as a result of their separation from each other. This also corresponds to the separation of aspects of life from each other. This separation effects a loss of unity. Images acquire a life of their own, apart from other aspects of life. The same may be said of today's magazine-based architecture world.

4.2.5. The Separation of Images of Architecture from the Reality of Architecture

It can be said that the image of architecture has taken the place of architecture itself. With the rise of ocularcentrism, vision in architecture is separated from other senses and becomes autonomous, and the unity of architecture is lost.

The ocularcentrism of today's architecture may be an indication of its status as spectacle. Debord describes this development as a separation of images from other aspects of life, where the representation of life takes the place of life itself. He also mentions that sight occupies the special place once occupied by touch. (Debord, 1995)

According to Pallasmaa, in Western culture sight has been regarded as the noblest of the senses throughout history. Already in Ancient Greek thought certainty was based on vision and visibility. Pallasmaa states that "beginning with the Greeks, Western culture has been dominated by an ocularcentric paradigm, a vision-generated, vision-centered interpretation of knowledge, truth and reality." (Pallasmaa, 2005)

The dominance of the eye and the suppression of the other senses tend to push us into detachment, isolation and a feeling of exteriority. This reverence for sight has produced imposing and thought-provoking structures, but has not facilitated human rootedness in the world.

"The gradually growing hegemony of the eye seems to be parallel with the development of Western ego-consciousness and the gradually increasing separation of the self and the world; vision separates us from the world whereas the other senses unite us with it. Artistic expression is engaged with pre-verbal meanings of the world, meanings that are incorporated and lived rather than simply intellectually understood." (Pallasmaa, 2005)

Sensory experience becomes integrated through the body, or rather in the very constitution of the body and the human mode of being. Consequently psychoanalytic theory has introduced the notion of body image or body schema as the center of integration.

4.3. The Reduction of Architecture to Infrastructure

4.3.1. Early Modernist Theories and the Stress on Usefulness

According to Clarke modernism was gestated by the requisite urbanism for industrialization and was in turn "instrumental in the later urban reorganization that produced the corporate city of the mid-twentieth century. This period also brought the full flowering of the professionalization of architecture." (Cuthbert, 2003)

"By ostracizing the ornament and emphasizing the significance of the surface structural relations as the vessels of contained functions, it was thought that the building could be made a rational product, that the consumer was obtaining indeed a utility, a real one, and not a signifier of value." (Tzonis, 1972)

In other words, to emphasize the falseness of signifiers (the falseness of symbolism), architecture is formally reduced. (Representation and symbolism is ostracized.) At the minimum that it is reduced to, architecture equals to a utility, to infrastructure. This is the main argument of this thesis as well, and will be discussed later.

Tzonis goes on to argue that "the exposure of the structural skeleton, the articulations of functions, the adoption of elementary geometric forms, did not in the least make the skeleton more effective or improve the contained functions; these were all attempts to build up a new visual vocabulary for a language that now had a new purpose, the temporary abandonment of power to the producer of rapidly obsolescing products." (Tzonis, 1972)

According to Clarke, "the early modernists appropriated the technology of modern capitalism and, in so doing, also embraced the social logic of that technology regardless of how neutral they considered it. (Cuthbert, 2003)

4.3.2. The Reduction of Architecture to Infrastructure According to the Modern Division of Labour

The division of labour is not entirely advantageous for architects. It presents certain limitations. The frustration of architects all over the world in being limited to a certain routine is obvious. Architects are forced into a behaviour that is suited to the

definition of the word "architect". Architects are therefore limited to a behaviour that places them within a certain niche, both in society and in the market economy.

The National Occupational Classification (NOC), authored by the Canadian Government, which organizes over 30,000 job titles in 520 occupational group descriptions, classifies architecture and civil engineering under "Natural and Applied Sciences and Related Occupations" (which will be named the "Infrastructure Group" below), while it classifies artists and interior designers under "Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport" (which will be named the "Production Group" below). (HRSDC, 2009)

What "Natural and Applied Sciences and Related Occupations" have in common is their role in the facilitation of production. Science is recruited in the service of applied science, which in turn not only increases production (in the form of research and development), but also increases the exchange value and consumption of products (in the form of marketing science).

The common requirements for the occupations in this group are standardization and the exclusion of talent, both of which serve effectivity. According to the job descriptions in the NOC, talent is not a necessary requirement for architects and engineers, while both architects and engineers have to be formally trained, must pass an examination and must register, all of which sums up the very definition of standardization.

This group will henceforth be called "The Infrastructure Group" because of the exclusion of talent as a requirement and the stressed requirement of standardization, all of which seem to imply a machine-like organization, which is similar to an infrastructure in its effectivity. (Or to utility, as quoted from Tzonis in Chapter 4.3.1.)

What "Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport", as the Production Group, have in common is their role in the production of spectacles (which could give them an alternative name: The Spectacle Group), and spectacles produce a significant amount of exchange value. (It has been shown through surveys that the presence of a star in the cast is the primary reason for which audiences go to see a certain film, while athletes are the primary producers of spectator sports. This very name given to these sports shows that their primary function is the Spectacle.)

Unlike the Infrastructure Group, talent is a common requirement for the Production Group, while this time standardization is excluded. (According to the NOC, formal training, passing of an examination and registration are not necessarily required from artists and interior designers.) (ibid.)

The requirement of talent and the exclusion of standardization may allow persons employed in this group a creative autonomy, but only to the extent that this creativity serves the production of exchange value.

CONCLUSION

Modern society is organized around spectacles, which are the goal and end product of the modern (industrial) production, as can be inferred from Debord's theory. Modern societies accumulate commodities, causing a geographical and temporal homogeneity, i.e. the "quality of place" is losing against "the abstract space of the market", while the "restless becoming in the progression of time" is losing against the "tranquil side-by-sideness in space" of the capitalist market.

In this society of the spectacle, images acquire a life of their own and are separated from reality. Thus, different aspects of human life are separated from each other and the unity of life is lost.

Architecture, too, has been separated from aspects which were formerly closely integrated to its nature. Thus, architecture has lost its unity. Architecture has become a spectacle, where its images create a world of their own, apart from real life. These images of architecture are geographically and temporally homogenized as well.

The division of labour and the spectacle are closely related. As discussed by Debord, the spectacle in history begins with the specialization of power, meaning the establishment of the religious class. The spectacle thus begins with the division of labour itself.

The definition of architecture by past and contemporary theoreticians is of great importance, as this definition effects a certain perception of architecture. Within the modern division of labour, architecture is situated according to this definition, which is based on functionalism.

When Debord's theory, recent events and the example of the National Occupational Classification (NOC) is considered, architecture, with the stress of functionalist architecture theories on usefulness, and with the effect of industrialization, has been given a place within a group of occupations that seem to have been reduced to

infrastructure, while other occupations have been placed in a group that seems to be producing the spectacle in a more direct way.

REFERENCES

- Bryson, N.**, 1983 *Vision and Painting: The Logic of the Gaze*, p. 94, Yale University Press, New Haven / USA
- Crary, J.**, 1990, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 19, 24, MIT Press, Cambridge / USA
- Cuthbert, A. R.**, 2003, *Designing Cities: Critical Readings in Urban Design*, pp. 28-44, Malden / USA
- Debord, G.**, 1995, *The Society of the Spectacle*, pp. 12-122, Zone Books, New York / USA
- Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC)**, 2009, National Occupational Classification, <<http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC>>, accessed 01.09.2009
- Jameson, F.**, 1984, Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism, *New Left Review*, **1984/07-08**, New Left Review, London / UK, p. 66
- Knabb, K.**, 1981, *The Situationist International Anthology*, p. 9, Bureau of Public Secrets, Berkeley / USA
- Krauss, R. E.**, 1981, *Passages in Modern Sculpture*, pp. 76, 270, MIT Press, Cambridge / USA
- Krauss, R. E.**, 1993, *The Optical Unconscious*, p. 142, MIT Press, Cambridge / USA
- Matthews, J. D.**, 2005, An Introduction to the Situationists, <<http://anti-politics.net/distro/download/sits8.6-imposed.pdf>>, accessed 01.09.2009
- McLuhan, M.**, 1965, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, pp. 22-23, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York / USA
- Mitchell, W. J. T.**, 1986, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago / USA
- Pallasmaa, J.**, 2005, *The Eyes of the Skin - Architecture of the Senses*, John Wiley & Sons Ltd., Chichester / UK
- Saunders, W. S.**, 2005, *Commodification and Spectacle in Architecture*, pp. 20-21, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis / USA

- Speaks, M.**, 2006, The Building Is The Message, *Modern Painters*,
2006/12-2007-01, LTB Limited, UK, p. 66
- Tzonis, A.**, 1972, Towards a Non-oppressive Environment, p. 87, Simon and
Schuster, Boston / USA
- Vitruvius**, 2001, Ten Books on Architecture, Cambridge University Press,
Cambridge / UK
- Weiss, G., Haber, H. F.**, 1999, Perspectives on Embodiment: The Intersections of
Nature and Culture, pp. 165-182, Routledge, London / UK

CURRICULUM VITAE

Şevket Gürsu ALTUNKAYA

Born in 1979 in Zonguldak.

Tevfik Bey Sok. No: 11 D: 20

Kazasker / İSTANBUL

Istanbul Yeditepe University, Faculty of Engineering and Architecture, 1999-2005.

Istanbul Technical University, Institute of Science and Technology, 2006- .

Hochschule für Technik Stuttgart, Germany as an Erasmus exchange student, 2007-2008.

