Patrik Schumacher THE AUTOPOIESIS OF ARCHITECTURE

A New Framework for Architecture



Contents

Pro	Preface				
0	Introduction: Architecture as Autopoietic System				
	0.1		ecture as a System of Communications	1	
	0.2	A Unif	ied Theory of Architecture	4	
	0.3	Functi	onal vs Causal Explanations	14	
	0.4	The Qu	uest for Comprehensiveness	17	
	0.5	The Pr	emises Imported from Social Systems Theory	19	
	0.6	Archite	ecture's Place within Society	25	
1	Archi	itectural	Theory	29	
	1.1		nity of Architecture	29	
			Architectural System-formation and Self-regulation	30	
	1.2	The Ev	volution of Architecture	32	
		1.2.1	Architectural Theory as Mechanism of Selection	33	
	1.3	The No	ecessity of Theory	35	
		1.3.1	The Function of Architectural Theory	36	
		1.3.2	Types of Theories	39	
		1.3.3	The Necessity to Reflect Architecture's		
			Societal raison d'être	47	
		1.3.4	Super-theories	54	
		1.3.5	The Theory of Architectural Autopoiesis as		
			Domain-specific Super-theory	58	
		1.3.6	From Deconstruction to the Programme of		
			Critical Theory	62	
2	The Historical Emergence of Architecture				
	2.1	The Er	mergence of Architecture as Self-referential System	72	
		2.1.1	Inside-descriptions vs Outside-descriptions	72	
		2.1.2	Function Systems	74	
		2.1.3	The Historical Crystallization of Architecture	77	
	2.2	Found	ation and Refoundation of Architecture	81	
		2.2.1	Autonomization: The Origin of the		
			Discipline in the Italian Renaissance	81	
		2.2.2	The Refoundation of the Discipline as		
			Modern Architecture	87	

		2.2.3	The Exclusive Competency and Universal	
			Scope of Modern Architecture	89
		2.2.4	The Liberation from Traditional Formal Constraints	91
		2.2.5	The Switch from Edifice to Space	93
	2.3		-garde vs Mainstream	95
			A Prerequisite for Evolution	97
		2.3.2	The Autonomy of the Avant-garde	99
		2.3.3	Communications between Avant-garde	23
			and Mainstream	102
		2.3.4	The Reciprocal Dependency between	102
			Avant-garde and Mainstream	107
		2.3.5	The Time Structure of the Avant-garde	10,
			Process: Cumulative vs Revolutionary Periods	110
		2.3.6	Concrete Exemplars vs Abstract Principles	115
		2.3.7	Revolution and Philosophy	120
		2.3.8	Latent Utopias vs the Utopian Ambitions	120
			of the Historical Avant-garde	123
		2.3.9	Retroactive Manifestos	129
	2.4	Archit	ectural Research	132
		2.4.1	Architectural Research as Avant-garde	102
			Design Research	133
			Architecture Schools as Laboratories	138
	2.5		ecessity of Demarcation	144
		2.5.1	The Differentiation of Art and Architecture	146
		2.5.2	The Differentiation of Science and Architecture	155
		2.5.3	The Differentiation of Architecture and Engineering	160
		2.5.4	The Rationality of Demarcation	163
		2.5.5	The Specificity of Architecture within the	
			Design Disciplines	166
_				
3	Archi	tecture	as Autopoietic System – Operations, Structures	
		Processe		171
	3.1	Archite	ectural Autopoiesis within Functionally	
			entiated Society	177
		3.1.1	Niklas Luhmann's Theory of Modern Society	177
			Third Order Observation	182
			Codes and Media	183
	0.0	3.1.4	The Concept of Social Autopoiesis	184
	3.2	The Au	tonomy of Architecture	188
		3.2.1	Openness through Closure	190
			Irritations	193
		3.2.3	Communication Structures	195

3.3	The Elemental Operation of Architecture		
		Design Decisions	199
	3.3.2	Network-dependency of Elemental Operations	200
		Design Decisions and External Demands	202
3.4		ead-distinction within Architecture and the Design	
	Disciplines		
	3.4.1	The Primacy of Distinctions	205
	3.4.2		
		within the Design Disciplines	207
	3.4.3	The Double Reference of the Design Disciplines	209
3.5	The Codification of Architecture		
	3.5.1	Binary Codes	217
	3.5.2	Utility and Beauty as the Double Code of	
		Architecture	219
	3.5.3	Polycontexturality	224
	3.5.4	The Unique Double Code of Architecture	
		as Demarcation Device	226
	3.5.5	The Double Code of Architecture and the	
		Triple Code of Avant-garde Architecture	228
	3.5.6	Discursive Oscillation: Coping with an	
		Expanding Universe of Possibility	233
	3.5.7	Abstraction and Openness	238
3.6	Architectural Styles		
	3.6.1	The Concept of Style(s)	241
	3.6.2	The Rationality of Style(s)	254
	3.6.3	Styles as the Necessary Programmes of	
		Architecture	256
	3.6.4	Styles Regulate Form and Function	258
	3.6.5	Reluctant Styles	261
	3.6.6	The Inescapability of the Formal A Priori	263
	3.6.7	• , ,	267
	3.6.8	•	271
	3.6.9	Progress as Progression of Styles	273
3.7	-	as Research Programmes	277
		The Creativity of Styles/Research Programmes	279
		The Tenacity of Styles/Research Programmes	280
	3.7.3	The Structure of Styles/Research	
		Programmes: Autonomy, Hard Core, Heuristics	283
	3.7.4	The Great Historical Styles: Hard Core and	
		Heuristics	287
	3.7.5	Problem Domain and Solution Space as	
		Sources of Stylistic Innovation	290

		3.7.6	Paradigmatic Mainline and Speculative	
			Extrapolation	293
		3.7.7	Progressive vs Degenerate Styles/Research	
			Programmes	294
		3.7.8	Methodological Tolerance	297
	3.8	The Ra	ationality of Aesthetic Values	300
		3.8.1	The Historical Transformation of Aesthetic Values	302
		3.8.2	Aesthetic Values and the Code of Beauty	305
		3.8.3	The Mystery of Beauty	306
		3.8.4	Formal A Priori, Idiom and Aesthetic Values	308
		3.8.5	The Necessity of Aesthetic Revolutions	310
		3.8.6	Aesthetic Values: Designers vs Users	313
	3.9	The Do	puble-nexus of Architectural Communications:	
			es vs Projects	315
		3.9.1	The Unity of the Difference between	
			Themes and Projects	316
			The Difference between Themes and Projects	317
		3.9.3	The Interaction between Themes and Projects	318
4	The N	M edium	of Architecture	323
	4.1	Mediu	m and Form	324
		4.1.1	y y y y y y y y y y y y y y y y y y y	326
			The Medium as Revealing and Concealing	330
		4.1.3	The Medium as Universe of Possibilities	331
			Medium and Manner	333
			The Standard Medium of Architecture	335
			Recursive Self-reference	338
	4.2		edium and the Time Structure of the Design Process	342
		4.2.1	Différance: The Productive Vagueness of	
			the Medium	342
			The Diagram	346
		4.2.3		
			Structure of the Architectural Project	355
5	The Societal Function of Architecture			363
	5.1		ecture as Societal Function System	364
			Function vs Service	365
		5.1.2	Function Systems and the Functional	
			Exigencies of Society	367
		5.1.3	Framing as Societal Function of Architecture	371
		5.1.4	The Definition of the Situation as	
			Precondition of Social Interaction	376

	5.1.5	Framing Double Contingency	378
	5.1.6	Double Contingency Radicalized	383
	5.1.7	The relationship between Art and	
		Architecture in terms of their Societal Function	389
5.2	Innova	ation as Crucial Aspect of Architecture's Societal	
	Functi		391
		The Burden and Risk of Permanent Innovation	392
	5.2.2	The Innovative Capacity of Architecture's	
		Operations and Structures	394
		Variation, Redundancy and Adaptive Pertinence	396
5.3	Strategies and Techniques of Innovation		398
		The Power of Abstraction	398
		The history of Architectural Innovations	402
		Conceptual Manoeuvres	408
5.4	Key In	novations: Place, Space, Field	411
		The Emergence of Architectural Space	413
		The Hegemony of Architectural Space	417
		The Transcendence of Architectural Space	419
	5.4.4	From Space to Field	421
Concludi	ng Rema	arks	435
Appendix	1: Com	parative Matrix of Societal Function Systems	437
Appendix 2: Theses 1–24 References			
Picture Credits			