

Between Architecture and Landscape Architecture

Editorial

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, architecture and landscape architecture face living cultures that are permeated by digital technology and affected by demographic and climatic changes on a global scale. The extent of the resulting challenges let us sometimes forget what is true for both architecture and landscape architecture: *global* tasks need, in most cases, *local* and *spatial* responses. Architects and landscape architects must deal not only with the question of how to respond to global tasks in designs for concrete places, but also with how these places can be *experienced spatially*. The deliberation of these questions requires a terminology that is descriptive and also clarifying and with which one can argue without being deterministic. Theory of architecture means, among others, to verbalize spatial phenomena. *Cloud-Cuckoo-Land* has addressed this topic many times in the last twenty years, and in this issue it is oriented to the relationship of architecture and landscape architecture.

The hypothesis of this issue is that the terms “architecture” and “landscape architecture” are not sufficient when it comes to characterizing how spaces can be experienced. The authors in this issue present examples of spaces that cannot be classified into these categories, but are nevertheless architectural, and thus underpin the hypothesis of the issue. The described spaces are related to, transfer into, or intersect with other spaces and thus fall through the categories. We could label them, beyond “architecture” and “landscape architecture,” as an “architecture in between”—but what would we gain by so doing?

Spaces and Transitions of Spaces

The issue does not intend to discuss categories but rather spaces and transitions of spaces, that is, the structure, direction, and succession of spaces. The intention is to speak more precisely about the experience of spaces, the

1 An important contribution is:
Alban Janson, Florian Tiggers 2010.

spatial transitions from here to there, from top to bottom, or from inside to outside as sensuously and temporally situated spaces.¹ The chapter headlines — *sequences, hybrids, islands, thresholds, joints, mimeses* — are only a few terms to describe spaces which can exist without defining architecture and landscape architecture. Atmospheres and immersions might be others. The terms do not form a self-contained conceptual construct, system, or grammar, but outline, metaphorically speaking, a provisional net of fragile terms that describe spatial relations beyond architecture and landscape architecture. In order to evaluate if the terms collected in this issue are helpful for characterizing the potential experiences of spaces between the categories of architecture and landscape architecture, we can use our own experiences of spaces as a rich and crucial reservoir. The reader can decide if these terms describe the mentioned phenomena sufficiently or can propose better ones. Since speaking cannot be divided from thinking, the topic is also relevant for the way spaces are designed, interpreted in journals, mediated in the Internet, and evaluated in competitions.

Critiquing Categories

Why is it so difficult to use the terms “architecture” and “landscape architecture” in critical discourse? On the one hand, different phenomena can be specified with these terms, for example (a) a built space; (b) an educational and research field; and (c) a professional discipline. This becomes a problem if all of these are considered to have the same preconditions, since it is a big difference, if we speak of a built space, a research area, or a discipline. This ambiguity can only be solved when we clearly define the context in which a specific term is used. On the other hand, a built space cannot always be assigned to one category, because its defined attributes might not fit. Such an attribute could be, for example, that architecture provides protection against unwanted creatures or climate conditions, as Adolf Behne said in his *Der Moderne Zweckbau (The Modern Functional Building)*, “Man’s primordial reason for building is to protect himself [...] he would not build were it not for definite, compelling, urgent purposes.”² What “protection” and “purpose” really mean is open for broad interpretation however. There are many built spaces in which openness is integral to the project (for example *Metropol Parasol* by Jürgen Mayer H.) or in which weathering is part of the original idea (for example the *Bruder Klaus Field Chapel* by Peter Zumthor). The attribute “protection” might often be an important condition for denoting “architecture,” but in principal it is neither necessary nor sufficient for defining architecture in general. Similarly, the use of plants is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for defining “landscape architecture.” For any attribute that seems a necessity for the categories of “architecture” and “landscape architecture,” you can find a contradicting example.

2 Behne 1926: 9.

Another difficulty is that, in practice, research, and teaching, the categories of “architecture” and “landscape architecture” have historically changed. For Vitruvius *architectura* included areas that are rarely related to architecture today, such as clock and machine building.³ Since industrialization, new disciplines emerged such as architecture in its narrow, modern sense, architectural engineering, urban planning, and garden art.⁴ In the twentieth century, these disciplines were further differentiated—garden art or garden architecture, for example, into an social-science open space planning; an ecologically oriented environmental planning; and an aesthetically focused landscape architecture.⁵ For three decades, efforts have been made to integrate these three areas under the label “landscape architecture,” grounded on the idea that social, ecological, and economical demands in today’s democratic service-based society necessitates such an integration. Other disciplinary fields have emerged in recent years, such as *Urban Design* and *Landscape Urbanism*, which aim at further integrating practical fields rather than further differentiating *architectura*. Historical analyses would reveal that the borders of these categories are flexible because they are influenced by societal changes.

3 Cf. Führ 2004: 16 and Nagler 2011.

4 Cf. Amt 2009: 32–37.

5 Cf. Körner 2001.

These are only a few observations to show the shortcomings of characterizing spaces by using the categories “architecture” and “landscape architecture.” On the other hand, such categories are helpful, for example, when dealing with jurisdictional and organizational questions at the university, during the design and construction process of spaces, or in professional institutions. Categories are helpful here because they are in a context of operability such as defining responsibilities, costs, or deadlines.

Terms as Models

Since categories are not helpful when it comes to describing how spaces are experienced, we propose in this issue to understand terms such as *sequence*, *hybrid*, *island*, *threshold*, *joint* and *mimesis* as models for spaces and then to check in built spaces if these terms can help accurately describe spaces between the categories of “architecture” and “landscape architecture.” The advantage of such terms is, in contrast to the categories of “architecture” and “landscape architecture,” that they can exemplarily express a constitution or even historicity of spaces. However, what is true for all models is also true here: There are differences between the original (the designed/built space) and the model (sequence, hybrid, island, etc.) as the latter is meant to “emphasize and often over-emphasize particular appearances and properties of the original.”⁶ We should not forget that such models can be accepted only as long as they can be confirmed in spaces.

6 Stachowiak 1973: 157.

Sequences

The examples presented in the articles of the first chapter, “Sequences,” show that architecture and landscape architecture are not experienced like pictures on the wall. Instead, we move through spaces, more or less guided by our interests, and we experience them with all of our senses. Spaces can affect a person’s behavior to do or not to do something. The fact that a space can motivate shows that a space is not placeless or timeless, but specific. Such a space is not independent of other spaces, but can be perceived as different from other spaces. When experiencing a series of spaces as *belonging together* we can call them a “sequence.” One of the tasks of architectural disciplines is to create such sequences with material and performative means. Sequences can cross the boundaries of buildings and outdoor areas, and this is one of their advantages when compared to models of spaces such as boxes or containers.

Wolfgang Meisenheimer describes the work of the architect as a “material and performative work.” This is manifested in the fact that both the “objective attributes of built things and spaces,” and the “affectedness of the observer by ‘subjective’ experiences” are considered together. Meisenheimer states that while a person’s subjective experience is constitutive for the sequence, different people can perceive the result of a material and performative work in similar ways. Based on this position, he proposes “topological space structures” such as *place, path, district, zone, field* and *boundary*, which should contribute to better specify the structure of sequences. His approach is relevant for this issue because his terminology describes spaces that transition between interior and exterior spaces. The categories of “architecture” and “landscape architecture” are irrelevant here and are replaced by models that avoid these categories.

Katja Friedrich observes in her article that the experience of sequences does not mean to only walk through spaces like a flâneur, but to appropriate them through everyday activities. If such an appropriation is successful, a sense of “home” occurs. She explains that a “home” does not end at the front door (“being inside”), but that it can include the outdoors (“being outside”). Architects do not build “homes,” but create built preconditions for appropriation. Thus, “home” cannot only be assigned to the category of architecture, and, at the same time, “home” cannot be considered anti-local.

Till Boettger reveals in his analysis of Richard Meier’s *Museum Park* and *Museum Angewandte Kunst* in Frankfurt, Germany, that sequences between architecture and landscape architecture do not consist of “space fields” (“landscape”) and “space containers” (“buildings”). Instead, sequences consist of “space volumes” that are open in different ways. Boett-

ger is interested in the transition of these space volumes and assumes that these transitions are an experience of “interspace,” of being in between space volumes, or of a “threshold space.” In addition to Katja Friedrich’s position, who understands a threshold space—for example, the space around the front door—as the material precondition to constitute social relationships, Boettger further defines that a threshold space must form a contrast to its surroundings—in the case of the Frankfurt museum complex, the contrast of building and planting elements. Boettger thus sheds light on the relationship of sequence and threshold: a threshold is part of a sequence, considered as a succession of associated spaces.

Thresholds

Boettger also shows in his article that thresholds have defined beginnings and ends. Between a beginning and an end, thresholds have zones of transition from one space to another. In most cases a threshold between two spaces belongs to one of the two spaces—or space volumes in Boettger’s words—, but surpasses it, sometimes considerably. If this occurs, a threshold cannot be assigned to one space but arrives at an “ambiguous in-between condition of suspense.” A door, for example, is in most cases a building part. As such, the door is only part of a threshold space that organizes the type and degree of private and public conditions. This threshold space is more than the door, because the opening simultaneously modifies its surrounding space. Vandana Baweja discusses, in her article, the porch as such a threshold space between inside and outside. She shows, by discussing the development of the Florida Tropical Home between 1933 and 1949, how the porch was fundamentally reinterpreted during this period and how it gained autonomy. She starts with discussing different types, for example the entrance porch which signifies the transition from the public to the private space, or a porch attached to bedrooms or the kitchen which were fully enclosed by an insect-screen and therefore almost form an inner space. Later, the porch became larger and larger and changed more and more from a “transition space” between inside and outside to an independent “in-between space” that contained elements from both architecture and landscape architecture. In the 1949 Birdcage House, we eventually see a space which resembles, on the one hand, a fully furnished living room, and which contains, on the other hand, a swimming pool. This particular “porch” could therefore also be interpreted as a “hybrid space” (see below).

Elisabeth Schrenk discusses in her contribution the outside spaces between housing rows of modern city planning in the 1950s and 1960s. According to Schrenk, these areas have been de-qualified as “distance-green” until today. They have been understood as distance-keeping borders, but not as transitions. They are perceived as barriers, not as thresholds. As

borders without permeability they have not been spaces that could be “appropriated” — in Friedrich’s words — because they were missing the built preconditions for that. In a kind of catalog, Schrenk asks key questions of how to encourage appropriation of these spaces. Diversification and differentiation of both outdoor spaces and apartments and precise correlation of spaces are introduced as possibilities to change these areas into inspiring threshold spaces. Here, the relevance of threshold spaces for practical living becomes very evident.

Joints

Joints consist of interlocking ends of things or spaces. They are not additional parts, but an interlacing of things and spaces. For Jürgen Hasse, cemeteries are joints per se. Architecture and landscape architecture interlace in cemeteries into “joint-spaces” of funeral culture. These spaces indicate an intermediation between the practical world and transcendental ideas, as well as between past and present. Joints are, for Hasse, also “heterotopias” as defined by Michel Foucault, in which you not only practically live, but also experience something different—here moments of remembering a deceased. In such spaces things come together that seem to be of different worlds: practical demands are aesthetically conceptualized and spatially articulated. This seems to be the very task of architecture and landscape architecture when creating spaces of funeral culture: to fulfill neither only the demand of practical corpse disposal nor the one of formal monumentalization, but to create a joint space for both.

Hybrids

Interlacing different things or spaces can lead to something new, which can be called a “hybrid,” a “hybrid thing,” or a “hybrid space.” Hybrids are, in Robert Venturi’s words, not “either-or” but “both-and” formations. The “both-and” of the hybrid generates a surplus, which exceeds the value of the separate things or spaces.⁷ In this way, Kristin Barry investigates excavation sites of ancient building complexes as hybrid spaces of landscape architecture and architecture. These ancient sites merged with the landscape as they decayed and are therefore, when detected, more landscape than building. While, on the one hand, this landscapeness allows to understand the historicity of the site, the task of excavation sites is, on the other hand—particularly when they are open to the public—to visualize the original setting, to present a vision of the once existing architectural complex. The goal is to *both* communicate “historicity” *and* provide an “image of the past,” which is achieved by a hybridization of landscape architecture and architecture. These educational goals are accompanied by

⁷ Venturi 1966: 30–38.

another goal, the preparation for tourism. Again, elements of landscape architecture and architecture are added to channel the stream of tourists, which might contradict the educational goals. Barry therefore shows potentials and dangers of hybridization, which, in worst case, do not lead to the desired additional value — which would justify hybridization —, but to its opposite, an undesired distortion.

Karen Henrique too addresses in her article the hybridization of architecture and landscape architecture, in a very different context, however. Her hypothesis is that housing complexes in flooding areas must interlace landscape architecture and architecture in order to become more resilient. Henrique introduces projects in which parts of inside and outside spaces are shaped in a way that allow an appropriation by nature — that is by water — for a certain amount of time. Other indoor and outdoor spaces become flexible in their use as access or retreat spaces. Changeable spaces that cannot always be differentiated into architecture and landscape architecture can better respond to surroundings that change from land to water and vice versa. Hybridization is here proposed as a contribution to resiliency of architecture and landscape architecture in a time of climate change.

Stefan Körner's article is on the "hybridization of built city and wild nature." Körner states that "nature" is not "primordial" since it is, as everything else, culturally influenced — here his approach touches the ongoing discourse on the anthropocene.⁸ For Körner this does not mean, however, that there is no "nature" and that "nature" cannot be perceived anymore. Particularly in the cities, animals and plants have found ways to live and grow "naturally." Asking about the relevance for architecture and landscape architecture, Körner concludes that the conscious confrontation of built city elements and vegetation that is left alone (more or less) and that interacts well within the urban habitat (for example, steppe heath) could be an answer for the urban problems resulting from global warming and water shortage. Interlacing the built environment of the city with a vegetation that adapts to these city conditions allows a hybrid to occur that generates both aesthetic and ecological benefits: on the one hand, the contrast of "wild nature" and built environment can be a strong aesthetic experience, and on the other hand, the use of multiple plants adapted to the urban habitat can increase biodiversity and decrease maintenance of public parks. In summary, all three articles in the chapter "Hybrids" circle around ongoing, highly relevant discourses, and all of them discuss hybrids as a potential solution for today's challenges.

⁸ Crutzen 2002.

Islands

Islands are solitaires, as figures they stand out from the ground. As contrasts, solitaires are inextricably connected to their surroundings. Changing surroundings (the ground) lead to changing islands (the figure). With this understanding Hamed Khosravi describes the landscape architectures by Gabriel Guevrekian as islands. Guevrekian's gardens were surrounded by walls, which separate an inside from an outside. The outside is "wild nature," hostile and unplanned; the inside enables cultural life and is geometric: triangles, cubes, and spheres made of walls, plants, fountains, and sculptures. Surprisingly, this garden concept includes both architecture and landscape architecture, and, even stronger, it dissolves the difference of architecture and landscape architecture. Guevrekian's use of geometric primary forms and color contrasts are mirrored in the contemporary modern villas, which were attached to his (outdoor) gardens. These outdoor designs correspond to their adjacent buildings, they form a, mainly geometrically stylistic, unity. The islands consist of house *and* (outdoor) garden which together stand out from its surrounding unplanned nature.

Mimeses

Mimesis is an imitation of a phenomenon. One thing seems to be another thing, but it is not the other. Mimesis has been utilized as a design principle in architecture for a long time, not only by imitating natural phenomena (for example in capitals), but also by imitating cultural phenomena (for example in topiary elements). Thomas Thränert investigates mimetic principles in his article. He considers "finding" and "forming" to be two fundamental acts of architectural design about 1800. Tree trunks were marked as places through the process of being found and, by adding additional elements, being formed. The surroundings, in which an architecture was erected, had to be formative for the creation of the place. For example, elements of the surroundings (such as small rock formations) were used to build grottos and thus became part of the enhancement of a place, while the grotto became simultaneously a building and a landscape element.

Margitta Buchert shows mimetic principles in projects of today. She investigates the works by the architecture office SANAA, which cannot be understood without mimetic references. Buchert sees in the work of SANAA "landscapeness as an architectural ideal." On the one hand, SANAA is part of an architectural tradition of creating a relatedness to the specific place, which can be seen in the architects' analyses and abstractions of morphological structures that they find in the surroundings. On the other hand, SANAA is not the only one following this principle, which connects to the current aesthetics of transition that is well known in digital design, too.

Mixing

The topic of this issue relates to an architectural paradigm that has been relevant since the 1960s. In the last decade it has been discussed more extensively, partially because of population increases in metropolitan regions or population decreases in rural areas. This paradigm can be called “mixing” and is relevant in all scales of spatial planning. Numerous examples in the current issue demonstrate that differences have eroded and new mixing has occurred, so that we are interested in further investigating this topic. Therefore *Cloud-Cuckoo-Land* takes this journal issue as an opportunity for a conference at the Technical University of Berlin on January 28-29, 2016, including an additional issue, to further discuss the topic of “mixing” in architecture and landscape architecture. The differences between local and global or between private and public, for example, have been challenged by the Internet. Technology has dissolved the difference between nature and culture, so that the term “anthropocene” has become an ubiquitous word in everyday language. In an urban planning context, the concept of the functionally divided city has been replaced by the functionally mixed city, and urban and rural areas merge increasingly. These and other phenomena of mixing will be discussed at the conference.

Curators

Sebastian Feldhusen is a research assistant and doctoral student at the Technical University of Berlin; managing editor of *Wolkenkuckucksheim* | *Cloud-Cuckoo-Land* | *Воздушный замок*; and designer and critic of architecture and landscape architecture. Recent research projects include the relationship of the phenomena of “model,” “quality,” and specific “works” in architecture and landscape architecture. www.entwerfen.tu-berlin.de

Ute Poerschke is a professor of architecture at the Pennsylvania State University, USA. She is a co-principal of *Friedrich Poerschke Zwink Architects* | *Urban Planners* and co-editor of *Wolkenkuckucksheim* | *Cloud-Cuckoo-Land* | *Воздушный замок*. Her research focuses on functionalism in architecture and the relationship of technology and architecture. Her book *Funktionen und Formen* was published by Transcript-Verlag in 2014. www.fpz-architekten.de and <http://stuckeman.psu.edu/arch/ute-poerschke>.

References

Amt, Stefan. "Von Vitruv bis zur Moderne – Die Entwicklung des Architektenberufes." In: Entwerfen. Architekturausbildung in Europa von Vitruv bis Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts. Geschichte – Theorie – Praxis, edited by Ralph Johannes, 10–45. Hamburg: Junius, 2009.

Behne, Adolf. The Modern Functional Building, edited by Rosemarie Haag Bletter and translated by Michael Robinson. Santa Monica, CA: Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1996.

Führ, Eduard. Denken im Bestand. Zur Praxis der Architekturtheorie. Hamburg: material-Vlg., 2004.

Führ, Eduard, and Heinz Nagler. "Editorial." Cloud-Cuckoo-Land, International Journal of Architectural Theory, vol. 16, issue 29, 2011. <http://www.cloud-cuckoo.net/journal1996-2013/inhalt/en/issue/2011-1.php> [22.12.2015].

Janson, Alban, and Florian Tiggers. Grundbegriffe der Architektur. Das Vokabular räumlicher Situationen. Basel: Birkhäuser, 2010.

Körner, Stefan. Theorie und Methodologie der Landschaftsplanung, Landschaftsarchitektur und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Freiraumplanung vom Nationalsozialismus bis zur Gegenwart. Berlin: Technische Universität, 2001.

Stachowiak, Herbert. Allgemeine Modelltheorie. Wien: Springer, 1973.

Venturi, Robert. Complexity and Contradiction. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1966.

Recommended Citation

Feldhusen, Sebastian; Poerschke, Ute. "Editorial. Between Architecture and Landscape Architecture." Cloud-Cuckoo-Land, International Journal of Architectural Theory. Vol. 20, Issue 34, 2015, www.cloud-cuckoo.net/fileadmin/issues_en/issue_34/editorial_en.pdf [31.12.2015]. pp. 17–26.