

Thinking is not innate, but must be engendered in thought. . . . The problem is not to direct or methodologically apply a thought which pre-exists in principle and in nature, but to bring into being that which does not yet exist (there is no other work, all the rest is arbitrary, mere decoration). To think is to create—there is no other creation.

Four **Architecture from the Outside**

Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*

Modern thought, from its inception and in its very density, is a certain mode of action. . . . Thought had already “left” itself in its own being as early as the nineteenth century; it is no longer theoretical. As soon as it functions, it offends or reconciles, attracts or repels, breaks, dissociates, unites or reunites; it cannot help but liberate or enslave. . . . At the level of its existence, in its very dawning, [thought] is in itself an action—a perilous act.

Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*

1. Thinking

A text, whether book, paper, film, painting, or building, can be thought of as a kind of thief in the night. Furtive, clandestine, and always complex, it steals ideas from all around, from its own milieu and history, and better still from its outside, and disseminates them elsewhere. It is not only a conduit for the circulation of ideas, as knowledges or truths, but a passage or point of transition from one (social) stratum or space to another. A text is not the repository of knowledges or truths, the site for the storage

of information (and thus in imminent danger of obsolescence from the “revolution” in storage and retrieval that information technology has provided as its provocation to the late twentieth century), so much as it is a process of scattering thought; scrambling terms, concepts, and practices; forging linkages; becoming a form of action. A text is not simply a tool or an instrument; seeing it as such makes it too utilitarian, too amenable to intention, too much designed for a subject. Rather, it is explosive, dangerous, volatile. Like concepts, texts are the products of the intermingling of old and new, a complexity of internal coherences or consistencies and external referents, of intension and extension, of thresholds and becomings. Texts, like concepts, do things, make things, perform connections, bring about new alignments.

Instead of a Derridean model of the text as textile, as interweaving—which produces a closed, striated space of intense overcodings, a fully semiotized model of textuality (a model that is gaining considerable force in architectural and urbanist discourses)—texts could, more in keeping with the thinking of Gilles Deleuze, be read and used more productively as little bombs that, when they do not explode in one’s face (as bombs are inclined to do), scatter thoughts and images into different linkages or new alignments without necessarily destroying them. Ideally, they produce unexpected intensities, peculiar sites of indifference, new connections with other objects, and thus generate affective and conceptual transformations that problematize, challenge, and move beyond existing intellectual and pragmatic frameworks. Instead of the eternal status of truth, or the more provisional status of knowledge, texts have highly provisional or short-term effects, though they may continue to be read for generations. They only remain effective and alive, however, if they have effects, if they shake things up, produce realignments. In

Deleuzian terms, such a text, such thought, could be described as fundamentally moving, “nomadological” or “rhizomatic.”¹

How to *think* architecture differently? How to think *in* architecture, or *of* architecture, without conforming to the standard assumptions, the doxa, the apparent naturalness, or rather the evolutionary fit assumed to hold between being and building? How to move beyond the pervasive presumption that subjectivity and dwelling exist in a relation of complementarity, either a relation of containment (space or dwelling contains or houses subjects) or a relation of expression (space or dwelling as the aesthetic or pragmatic expression of subjectivity)? How to see dwelling as something other than the containment or protection of subjects? In short, how to think architecture beyond complementarity and binarization, beyond subjectivity and signification? This is a question that cannot afford easy answers: for ready-made answers become a blockage for thought, for architecture, for building and creating. It is a question that thus cannot and should not be answered but must be continually posed, rigorously raised in such a way as to defy answers, whenever architecture, or for that matter any disciplinary practice, sinks comfortably into routine, into formulas, accepted terms, agreed-upon foundations, an accepted history of antecedents, or a pre-given direction.

Deleuze’s project, both in collaboration with Félix Guattari and alone, is in part about thinking, about how to think, to think while making or rather while doing: to think *as* doing. What is the place of philosophy in architecture, or of architecture in philosophy? Could it be that Deleuze’s work has something to offer in rethinking architecture? Or conversely, and equally plausibly: Is architecture not antithetical to the Deleuzian endeavor? Can there be such a thing as Deleuzian architecture, perhaps in analogous fash-

ion to the (relatively) easy absorption of the work of Jacques Derrida into architecture through a partially bizarre reading of deconstruction and poststructuralism, terms that have parallel trajectories in architecture and philosophy?² Can architecture incorporate/appropriate—that is, cannibalize—nomadology or rhizomatics as readily as it has deconstruction? With what effects might such a meeting, ingestion, or conjunction occur?

Deleuze's work seems to lend itself to a certain understanding of space, spatialization, and movement: his preference for geography over the typical privileging of history by philosophy is well known,³ as are his metaphors of territorialization and deterritorialization, and his fascination with baroque art, philosophy, and architecture.⁴ At the same time, he seems to disdain the pervasive architectural models that have dominated the history of philosophy—knowledge and its foundations, the edifice of truth, material base and ideological superstructure, even the tree of knowledge—which philosophy has needed in order to develop its own self-conception. If Deleuze is the great nomadologist, the thinker of movement, of difference, the cartographer of force rather than form, if his goal is to produce a certain quaking, or perhaps stuttering,⁵ then his work may provide a point of mobilization in the ongoing movement to destabilize and re-think architecture.

To “introduce” Deleuze to architecture is, in any case, a strange proposition. It remains unclear how this could be accomplished, given that the Deleuzian enterprise is so resistant to the notion of “application” (theory is not so much to be applied as to be used). When Deleuzian concepts are transported to other areas, jargon-filled replications of the terminology are spawned, but not the disordering effects of the analysis.⁶ Of course, Deleuze's work is not beyond appropriation or application—on the

contrary, not only have his writings been happily incorporated into the visual arts⁷ but his concepts have been wrenched out of context and applied willy-nilly to all manner of objects and relations.⁸ I am concerned here less with “applying” Deleuzian concepts to the architectural field than with raising some questions inspired by the Deleuzian project of reconceiving thought in order to avoid coming up with recuperable answers, in order to unsettle or make architecture itself, if not stutter, then tremble. Consequently, there is no single Deleuzian text, nor any specific architectural program, that I want to explore here: instead, I would like to examine how Deleuze’s reconceptualization of thought itself may have ramifying effects for architecture.

For Deleuze, philosophy is a site for the invention of concepts. Concepts can no longer be understood as self-contained nuggets of mental contents, nor as the blurred product of continuous streams of consciousness, but are complex assemblages perhaps best understood in terms of *becomings*, as event or advent. Thought results from the provocation of an encounter. Thought is what confronts us from the outside, unexpectedly: “Something in the world forces us to think.”⁹ Thought confronts us necessarily from the outside, from outside the concepts we already have, from outside the subjectivities we already are, from outside the material reality we already know.¹⁰ Thinking involves a wrenching of concepts away from their usual configurations, outside the systems in which they have a home, and outside the structures of recognition that constrain thought to the already known.¹¹ Thinking is never easy. Thought-events, like language-bodies, are singularities, which mix with and have effects on other materialities, with political, cultural, cinematic, or architectural events. Deleuze is the great theorist of difference, of thought as difference.

Derrida's work has had a surprisingly powerful effect on the discourses of architecture and urban planning—surprising because his interests *seem* so philosophical, so textually based and hermetically self-contained. The central Derridean notion of *différance*, or the trace, entails a notion of constitutive inscription: before the word and the thing, before the distinction between space and its “contents,” texts and their “ideas,” is an originary and impossible trace or difference that always infects the purity of the container with the impurity of its contents, and vice versa. Up to now, Derrida seems to have signaled the limit of tolerance of the “sciences of space” to “postmodern” (that is, French) philosophy. It remains to be seen whether Deleuze will be so happily accommodated.

Unlike Derrida who conceives of thought, or representation, as *différance*—that is, as deferral and detour, as the failure to reach a destination, instead of seeing difference as the inherent impossibility of presence (a project that is not without its effects in shaking up the singularity and self-sameness of the Logos)—Deleuze thinks difference primarily as force, as *affirmation*, as action, as precisely effectivity. Thought is active force, positive desire, which *makes* a difference, whether in the image form in the visual and cinematic arts, in the built form in architecture, or in concept form in philosophy. Deleuze's project thus involves the reenergization of thought, the affirmation of life and change, and an attempt to work around those forces of antiproduction that aim to restrict innovation and prevent change: to free lines, points, concepts, events, from the structures and constraints that bind them to the same, to the one, to the self-identical.¹²

Deleuze's project then is to free thought from that which captures or captivates it, to free thought from the image, indeed to free thought from representation, from

the “transcendental illusions of representation,” to give it back its capacity to effect transformation or metamorphosis, to make thinking itself a little bomb or scattergun:

Thought is primarily trespass and violence, the enemy, and nothing presupposes philosophy: everything begins with misosophy. Do not count upon thought to ensure the relative necessity of what it thinks. Rather, count upon the contingency of an encounter with that which forces thought to raise up and educate the absolute necessity of an act of thought or a passion to think. The conditions of a true critique and a true creation are the same: the destruction of an image of thought which presupposes itself and the genesis of the act of thinking in thought itself.¹³

The four illusions of representation¹⁴ veil the genesis and functioning of thought, for they separate a force from what it can do, and thus function as modes of reaction, as the conversion of active force into reactive force, in the terminology of Deleuze’s *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. This veiling of the thought is identified with a refusal of difference. Through these various tactics, pervasive in the history of Western philosophy, thought loses its force of difference, its positive productivity, and is subordinated to sameness, becomes reactive. If the goal of the intellectual is not simply the production of knowledge but, more precisely, the production of concepts, of thought, and if the disciplines, including architecture and philosophy, function to thwart thought, to stifle and prevent exploration, to inhibit the production of the new, then the function of the radical intellectual, whether philosopher or architect, is to struggle against whatever, in discourse and in practice, functions to prevent thought—which for Deleuze are the regimes of subjectification, signification, and representation that continually bind thought to unity or the

One. It is as if the forces of knowledge and power cannot tolerate difference—the new, the unthought, the outside—and do all they can to suppress it, by forcing it to conform to expectation, to fit into a structure, to be absorbable, assimilable, and digestible without disturbance or perturbation.

The question remains: How to disturb architecture, given the tendency of some architectural theorists to take in whatever seems outrageous without it seeming to have any effect or make any difference? How to infect architecture with its outside? In other words, how to force an encounter, to effect a transformation or becoming, in which the series that is architecture can be intercut with an element (or several) from its outside, from that series which is philosophy, in which the two series are thereby transformed through their encounter: the becoming-philosophy of architecture can only be effected through the becoming-architecture of philosophy. Deleuze poses a new understanding of difference, in which thought (thought in concepts, thought in images, thought in building materials) asserts its full force as event, as material modification, as movement beyond. Insofar as architecture is seeking not so much “innovation,” not simply “the latest fad,” but to produce differently, to engender the new, to risk creating otherwise, Deleuze’s work may be of some help, although it remains unclear more precisely how. This unclarity is not the risk Deleuze’s work poses, but its wager or problem (for thought is provoked by problems): How to keep architecture open to its outside, how to force architecture to *think*?

2. The Outside

In a certain sense, all of Deleuze’s works, as Deleuze makes clear in his reading of Foucault, are about the outside, the unthought, the exterior, the surface, the simulacrum, the

fold, lines of flight, what resists assimilation, what remains foreign even within a presumed identity, whether this is the intrusion of a minor language into a majoritarian one or the pack submerged within an individual. The outside or exterior is what both enables and resists the movements of territorialization and deterritorialization. It is what resists the globalizing sweep of the by now well-worn post-modern catchphrase “there is no outside” (of discourse, of patriarchy, of history, of power), a formula that encapsulates the lures of signification and subjectification. What plays the role of the excluded or expelled in Derrida’s work functions in terms of the outside in Deleuze.

Can the effects of depth, of interiority, of domesticity and privacy be generated by the billowing convolutions and contortions of an outside, a skin? What does the notion of outside, exterior, or surface do that displaces the privilege of interiority, architecturally, philosophically, and subjectively? The boundary between the inside and the outside, just as much as between self and other and subject and object, must not be regarded as a limit to be transgressed, so much as a boundary to be traversed. As Brian Massumi stresses in *The Politics of Everyday Fear*, boundaries are only produced in the process of passage: boundaries do not so much define the routes of passage; it is movement that defines and constitutes boundaries. These boundaries, consequently, are more porous and less fixed and rigid than is commonly understood, for there is already an infection by one side of the border of the other; there is a becoming otherwise of each of the terms thus bounded.

It is significant that Deleuze, like Derrida, does not attempt to abandon binarized thought or to replace it with an alternative; rather, binarized categories are played off each other, are rendered molecular, global, and are analyzed in their molar particularities, so that the possibilities of their

reconnections, their realignment in different “systems,” are established. So it is not as if the outside or the exterior must remain eternally counterposed to an interiority that it contains: rather, the outside is the transmutability of the inside. Presumably for this reason Deleuze wants to link the outside not with the inside but with the *real*. This is in no way to align the inside with the unreal, the possible, or the imaginary; it is to see that the outside is a *virtual* condition of the inside, as equally real,¹⁵ as time is the virtual of space. The virtual is immanent in the real.

Thought is a confrontation or encounter with an outside. Deleuze deals with this notion of the outside primarily in two texts, *Foucault* and *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*. Following a tradition perhaps initiated by Nietzsche, and following a zigzagging path through Artaud to Blanchot,¹⁶ Deleuze sees in Foucault, as we ourselves may see in Deleuze, the culmination of this confrontation between thought and its outside, between thought and the unthought. This conception of the outside or the unthought is already developed in Foucault’s archaeological period, most notably in *The Order of Things*, where Foucault suggests that man and the unthought are born simultaneously, as twin products of the nineteenth century: where Descartes had brought together consciousness and thought, modern thought dates from the rise of both man and the unthought:

Man and the unthought are, at the archaeological level, contemporaries. Man has not been able to describe himself as a configuration in the *episteme* without thought at the same time discovering, both in itself and outside itself, at its borders yet also in its very warp and woof, an element of darkness, an apparently inert density in which it is embedded, an unthought (whatever name we give it) is not lodged in man like a shriveled-up nature or stratified history; it is in relation to man, the Other.¹⁷

In the final chapter of *Foucault*, Deleuze develops this idea of the necessity of an outside and shows that it remains an ongoing concern in Foucault's writings, from his archaeological period through to his final writings. Deleuze suggests that in Foucault's final, ethical works there is no abandonment of his commitment either to the materiality of his various objects of analysis or to the peculiarly "outside," or estranged, pragmatic reading of subjectivity or textuality that Foucault posed, no return to anything like a phenomenological or psychological framework. These last works continue, but perhaps inflect, the trajectory of the outside already well-formulated in Foucault's earlier texts. Deleuze relates this trajectory to the question of interiority: Does Foucault present an analysis of interiority? What sort of interior might this be? Does Foucault's orientation to the issue of ethical self-formation mean that he is now committed to a notion of (subjective or psychical) interiority?

Up to now [in Foucault's work] we have encountered three dimensions: the relations which have been formed or formalized along certain strata (Knowledge); the relations between forces to be found at the level of the diagram (Power); and the relation with the outside, that absolute relation with the outside . . . which is also a non-relation (Thought). Does this mean there is no inside? Foucault continually submits interiority to a radical critique. . . . The outside is not a fixed limit but moving matter animated by peristaltic movements, folds and foldings that altogether make up an inside: they are not something other than the outside, but precisely the inside of an outside.¹⁸

Deleuze here describes three characteristics of a relation between two series (which he describes in terms of statements and visibilities in *Foucault*, but in very different terms in other texts). First, the relations can be understood

only insofar as each series is separate from the other, creating its own “zones of proximity,” its own modes of functioning. Second, insofar as both series are located in an outside, this outside is capable of asserting itself on the inside, the series it produces (statements, visibilities): these function as the unsaid or the unseen within discourse or representation. Third, insofar as both series are modified through the encounter of each with the other, with the drawing of lines to link them, they are capable of interactions or becomings. More than a *description* of Foucault’s claim, this is a general or abstract articulation of Deleuze’s own position (which is no doubt true of all of Deleuze’s writings: they are as much a reflection of his “methodology” as they are rigorous and attuned readings of texts marginalized in the history of philosophy). For Deleuze’s Foucault, the inside is an effect of the outside: the inside is a fold or doubling of the outside, a contortion of the exterior surface: “It resembles exactly the invagination of a tissue in embryology, or the act of doubling in sewing: twist, fold, stop and so on.”¹⁹

In Deleuze’s understanding of the time-image in cinema, the outside is what displaces the inside, what burrows from without to effect an interiority. The problem is posed to concepts, to thinking, from/as the outside, an outside that can only appear to thought as the unthought, and to sight as the unseen. The outside insinuates itself into thought, drawing knowledge outside of itself, outside of what is expected, producing a hollow which it can then inhabit—an outside within or as the inside:

Far from restoring knowledge, or the internal certainty that it lacks, to thought, the problematic deduction puts the unthought into thought, because it takes away all its interiority to excavate an outside in it, an irreducible reverse-side, which consumes its substance. Thought finds itself taken over by the exteriority of a “be-

lief,” outside any interiority of a “belief,” outside any interiority of a mode of knowledge.²⁰

This outside cannot be equated with Kantian noumena, with a prelinguistic Real (as in Lacanian psychoanalysis), or with an independent confirmable world (as empiricists claim). What is truly radical in Deleuze’s understanding is his claim that this outside must be thought itself²¹ or perhaps even life itself.²² The series are themselves the folds of an outside, constituted out of the same stuff. Thought is projected, captured, pinned down, insofar as it is caught up in the networks of power, knowledge, and subjectification:

The question: “What does thinking signify? What do we call thinking?” is the arrow first fired by Heidegger and then again by Foucault. He writes a history, but a history of thought as such. To think means to experiment and to problematize. Knowledge, power and self are the triple root of a problematization of thought. In the field of knowledge as problem thinking is first of all seeing and speaking, but thinking is carried out in the space between the two, in the interstice or disjunction between seeing and speaking.²³

It is not in the convergence but in the disjunction of series that the outside is active in the production of an inside. This may be why, for Deleuze, the middle is always the privileged point to begin, why thought is perhaps best captured *in between*. Thought starts in the middle, at the point of intersection of two series, events, or processes which, however temporarily, share a common milieu. The interiority of these series is of less interest than the way these two series are capable of being aligned to connect, to create their plane of consistence or coexistence, which is made possible through the operations of this outside. Becoming is the way in which each of the two series can

transform: becoming is bodily thought,²⁴ the ways in which thought, force, or change, invests and invents new series, metamorphosing new bodies from the old through their encounter.²⁵ Becoming is what enables a trait, a line, an orientation, an event to be released from the system, series, organism, or object that may have the effect of transforming the whole, making it no longer function singularly: it is an encounter between bodies that releases something from each and, in the process, releases or makes real a virtuality, a series of enabling and transforming possibilities. Becoming-animal only makes sense insofar as *both* the subject and the animal are transformed in the encounter.²⁶

Thought is what comes between a cause and its habitual effect, between one being and another, a fissure between strata that allows something from them to escape, to ramify. It is an unhinging—perhaps a deranging—of expectation, order, organization, to replace them not with disorder or disorganization but with reordering. Rather than assuming a pure positivity, the jamming effects of thought do not simply actively produce (new thoughts and new things or assemblages) but intervene, to insert a stammer, a hesitation or pause within the expected; thought may actively function to passively interrupt habit and expectation by allowing something already there in the series, in the subject or object, to become.²⁷ Thought, life, is that space outside the actual which is filled with virtualities, movements, trajectories that need release. It is what a body is capable of doing without necessity and without being captured by what it habitually does, a sea of (possible) desires and machines waiting their chance, their moment of actualization.

3. Building

This notion of the outside may prove to be of some relevance to architecture. Indeed, it is doubly relevant, for it

signals the notion of an outside as the edifice or exterior of a building, as well as a broader notion of the outside of architectural discipline itself—a spatial as well as a nonspatial outside. Can architecture, like both subjectivity and signification—two models that have dominated the contemporary forms of its theoretical self-reflections—be rethought in terms of the outside, in terms of surfaces, in terms of a certain flatness, in terms of dynamism and movement rather than stasis or the sedentary? Can architecture inhabit us as much as we see ourselves inhabiting it? Does architecture have to be seen in terms of subjectivization and semiotization, in terms of use and meaning? Can architecture be thought, no longer as a whole, a complex unity, but as a set of and site for becomings of all kinds? What would such an understanding entail?

In short, can architecture be thought, in connection with other series, as assemblage? What would this entail? What are the implications of opening up architectural discourses to Deleuzian desire-as-production? Can architecture work (its or an) *outside*? What is it to open up architecture to thought, to force, to life, to the outside? By outside I do not mean the practical, financial, and aesthetic exigencies of building design and construction, nor even the demands on architecture to align with the environment, a landscape, interior design, interior or exterior artworks, which in a certain sense are all “inside” architecture and its history, part of the necessary structure of compromise that produces a building as a commodity. Rather, I refer here to what is alien, other, different from or beyond it. Can architecture survive such assaults on its autonomy? Can it become something—many things—other than what it is and how it presently functions? If its present function is an effect of the crystallization of its history within, inside, its present, can its future be something else?

These are also questions that Derrida has helped architecture pose to itself—the question of the indeterminacy of address, the openness of all systems to the undoings the future proposes—but they are formulated, albeit in different terms and with different aims and effects, through Deleuze’s writings as well. Deleuze may be seen to share certain of Derrida’s political concerns;²⁸ nonetheless, his work offers something quite different from Derrida’s architectural contributions and appropriations. Deleuze remains a philosopher throughout: when he analyzes artworks, when he explores architecture, when he interrogates cinema or literature, it is in terms of their concepts, their modes of thinking-doing, their movements, crossovers, and linkages with philosophical issues, systems, and texts that he draws out or diagrams. This is not to say that he subordinates them to philosophy, makes them simply philosophical illustrations, or the objects or occasions of philosophical speculation. Rather, he is interested in the autonomy, the specificity of these different practices and their modes or manner of interchange with their outside. These are the two series he interrogates together—art, literature, cinema, science or architecture, and philosophy—seeking their plane of consistency and their modes of becoming.

Where Derrida could be described as the philosopher who insists on bringing the outside, the expelled, repressed, or excluded, into the inside by showing the constitutive trace it must leave on that which must expel it (that is, the impossibility of keeping borders and delimitations clear-cut), Deleuze could be understood as the philosopher who evacuates the inside (whether of a subject, an organism, or a text), forcing it to confront its outside, evacuating it and thereby unloosing its systematicity or organization, its usual or habitual functioning, allowing a part, function, or feature to spin off or mutate into a new

organization or system, to endlessly deflect, become, make. If we are no longer to explore the textuality of building—its immersion in discourses, its textual implications and investments, its own modes of marking, as Derrideanism entails—but to explore the possibilities of becoming, the virtualities latent in building, the capacity of buildings to link with and make other series deflect and transform while being transformed in the process, Deleuze's work may prove crucial. I am not able to address this possibility adequately in specifically architectural terms; it is something for those trained or working in architecture: the question of the unthought, the unbuilt, the outside *for architecture* itself. It is a question that I believe needs to be posed in all seriousness whenever the formulaic and the predictable take over from experimentation and innovation, realignment and transformation.