

ARCHITECTURE AS A PROJECTION OF MULTIPLICITIES

Kristanti Dewi Paramita

*Universitas Indonesia
Indonesia*

ARSNET, 2022, Vol. 2, No. 2, 82-87

DOI: 10.7454/arsnet.v2i2.63

ISSN 2777-0710 (online)

ISSN 2777-0702 (print)

Correspondence Address: Kristanti Dewi Paramita, Department of Architecture, Faculty of Engineering, Universitas Indonesia, Kampus UI, Depok 16424, Indonesia. Email: kristanti.dewi@ui.ac.id

The discussion regarding multiplicities in architectural discourse aims to establish the alternating and open, pluralistic view regarding spatial meaning, experience, and practices. Reading architecture through the lens of multiplicities avoids the tendency to fixate and formalise; instead, it yearns for variety, incompleteness, and relativity of space (Abudayyeh, 2021; Amin, 2008; Sennett, 2019). Discussion of the multiplicity of architecture can focus on how it is being shaped, for example, due to the opposing contextual forces that create different emergences of architecture (Lukasz & Kaminer, 2007). Another discussion of multiplicity refers to the condition where various spatial configurations and temporal occupations are happening in a multilayered way (Abudayyeh, 2021; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). This edition aims to dwell on multiplicities as an essential concept that drives distinct exploration of architectural design methods.

The notion of multiplicity stems from the proposition that space is essentially a homogenous entity. Yet, the objects in it unfold in such a way that creates a differing and juxtaposing presence of such space (Bergson, 2001). With the idea of multiplicity, there is an objection to the notion of hierarchy (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Mullarkey, 1995). Without constraints of hierarchy, architecture is no longer preoccupied with the idea of a controlled, unitary form of space but instead operates on the locally expanding field conditions (Allen, 2012).

The expansion of the field of architecture suggests a potential towards finding multiple meanings in the experience and design of space. Some discourses highlight such a variety of meanings through the notion of "situated multiplicity", where distinct backgrounds and situations of people generate different experiences of space (Amin, 2008, p. 8). Such alternating meanings have been part of the consideration in the built environment, which calls for multiple interpretations regarding the value of space towards society. For example, the setting of exhibition space "relies both on what visitors bring to exhibitions as well as what exhibitions bring to visitors" (Kratz, 2011, p. 29).

The emergence of architecture based on multiplicity aims to transcend boundaries and temporalities. Such transcendent qualities highlight the need for architectural manifestation in the state of becoming, creating a shift from "things to processes" (Attiwill, 2012, p. 1). Instead of expecting the eternal quality and robustness of architecture, such a state of becoming generates appreciation towards traces of inhabitation, celebrating the

overall progression of time within the space instead of erasing them. Traces in surfaces, such as "gaps, flakes or cracks that are generated by weathering, accidents and human occupation through the years" (Warakanyaka & Yatmo, 2018, p. 69), demonstrates the transformation of space through layers of time. This transformation gives signals of the evolving spatial presence, rejecting the emphasis on architectural newness and eternity.

Likewise, the multiplicity of architectural boundaries generates further inquiry into the process of territorial production, which shifts along such focus on the state of becoming. Some planning approaches emphasise the openness of the boundaries, leaving seeds of spatial structures for the community to figure out what their space ought to be (Sennett, 2019). Such ideas of seed-planning value incompleteness and looseness of form, which often exist in a dispersed way instead of being bounded (Franck & Stevens, 2006; Paramita & Schneider, 2018; Sennett, 2019). Articulation of territory based on the multiplicity of architecture does not necessarily depend on fixed physical boundaries. Instead, the territory is translated through "specific patterns of concentration and the dispersal of objects and events" (Brighenti & Kärrholm, 2020, p. 29).

In the digital age, some discourses refer to territory and networks as similar and interrelated things (Brighenti & Kärrholm, 2020), creating forms of territories that are less dependent on their geographic position (Lyster, 2016). In such forms of territories, the network enables the reproduction of individual and collective identities (Lyster, 2016) through virtual mediating arrangements (Brighenti, 2014). The multiplicity of identities shifts the focus from an individual as a finite user to the process of individuation itself (Attiwill, 2012). Architecture thus may respond programmatically towards such a process of individuation, engaging the multiplicity between the real and the virtual environment (Yatmo et al., 2020).

The operating mechanism of multiplicity has been discussed interchangeably with the notion of flexibility, despite some significant differences (Abudayyeh, 2021). Operating spatial multiplicity values different layers of spatial functions and components in one particular time, while flexibility adheres to one function of space, which then alternates into another over time (Abudayyeh, 2021; Lukasz & Kaminer, 2007). However, instead of dwelling on such disparity, some principles of flexibility may inform the spatial operation of multiplicity further especially in the way it aims to resist functionalism (Forty, 2004). Among architectural disciplines, the discussion of multiplicity may be strengthened by the indeterminacy of flexible architecture, which allows a softer outlook on the configuration of space and its related technologies.

This issue of ARSNET aims to broaden our understanding regarding spatial multiplicity and how it may inform architectural design methods. The notion of multiplicity is discussed by challenging the experience and practices of various architectural settings, from dwelling to public space and from real environments

to virtual ones. Katlego Pleasure Mwale, Susan Osireditse Keitumetse, and Laurence Mwale discuss the need to challenge current museum exhibition practices, stressing the importance of developing a multi-layered exhibition approach that invites multiple interpretations from its visitors. In doing so, it is argued that such multiple interpretations enable the reproduction of heritage, demonstrating the existence of museums as 'living' instead of simply as something to be preserved.

A similar focus on exhibition space is emphasised by Kezia Nathania and Arif Rahman Wahid's exploration of the layers of time among the narrative environments. The authors develop scenarios of temporalities that overlap, intertwine, or stand independently, forming spatial trajectories shaped by not only chronological events but also causally related ones. The diverse strategies of temporalities demonstrate how time manifests within the spatial experience, developing the order and the pace of navigation in such space. These scenarios of temporalities, offered through transitions of graphics, the play of lighting, and spatial organisation, demonstrate possibilities of non-linear design approaches within the scope of a narrative environment.

Inquiry regarding forms of representation that values the notion of multiplicity is contributed by Defry Agatha Ardianta and Miftah Adisunu Nugroho Alui. Through their reading of *becak* as a form of local paratransit in Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia, the study aims to rediscover the existence of *becak* not only as a vehicle of mobility but also as an important social and spatial component within the collective urban space. The existence of *unformed drawings* serves as a form of spatial inquiry that does not aim towards a conclusive proposition of architecture. Instead, it enables the author to reveal the layers of spatial configurations and operating mechanisms of *becak* in its stationary position to aid the social needs of society.

Ferro Yudistira and Ratu Baina position their inquiry on the multiplicity of individuation, addressing framing strategy to build one's sense of presence across the real and the virtual environments. The paper questions the existence of a screen as a framing tool which mediates and establishes relations that produce both direct and mediated experience. Expansion of the architectural field towards the virtual requires the multi-layered construction of self, using techniques such as immersions, mapping and miniaturisation that generates alternative dimensions of space shaped by technology.

A more operational inquiry into spatial multiplicity is exhibited by Raudina Qisthi Pramantha, Firda Febritha, Berti Dara Suryani, and Alya Agustina. The paper aims to appropriate the folding mechanism as a design strategy for an adaptive dwelling environment. Discussion of folding in architecture values space's internal and external fluidity, utilising responsive and dynamic spatial components. Using the folding method for adaptive dwelling design is a part of a deeper inquiry into the dwellers' livelihood that vibrantly unfolds over time, shaping the position, configuration, and overall experience of such living space.

Within the above line of inquiries, this edition of ARSNET aims to unpack the position of multiplicity in architectural discourses and elaborates on how such notions alter the meaning, boundaries, temporalities, and operations of design. The emphasis on multiplicity enables architecture to perceive the diverse social, environmental, and spatial forces of processes not as restricting constraints, but instead as a liberating means towards new possibilities of architectural programming.

References

- Abudayyeh, R. (2021). The changing room: Towards an interior multiplicity. *Interiors*, 11(2-3), 324-340. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20419112.2021.1962619>
- Allen, S. (2012). Field conditions. In M. Carpo (Ed.), *The digital turn in architecture 1992-2012* (pp. 62-79). Wiley.
- Amin, A. (2008). Collective culture and urban public space. *City*, 12(1), 5-24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13604810801933495>
- Attiwill, S. (2012). Beyond building: Interior designs. *Proceedings of IDEA Symposium 2012, Interior: A state of becoming* (pp. 1-7). Curtin University.
- Bergson, H. (2001). *Time and free will: An essay on the immediate data of consciousness*. Dover Publications.
- Brightenti, A. M. (2014). *The ambiguous multiplicities: Materials, episteme and politics of cluttered social formations*. Palgrave Pivot.
- Brightenti, A. M., & Kärrholm, M. (2020). *Animated lands: Studies in territoriality*. University of Nebraska Press.
- Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia* (B. Massumi, Trans.). University of Minnesota Press.
- Forty, A. (2004). *Words and buildings: A vocabulary of modern architecture*. Thames & Hudson.
- Franck, K. A., & Stevens, Q. (2006). *Loose space: Possibility and diversity in urban life*. Routledge.
- Kratz, C. A. (2011). Rhetorics of value: Constituting worth and meaning through cultural display. *Visual Anthropology Review*, 27(1), 21-48. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-7458.2011.01077.x>
- Lukasz, S., & Kaminer, T. (2007). Trans-disciplinarity: The singularities and multiplicities of architecture. *Footprint*, 1, 1-5. <https://doi.org/10.7480/footprint.1.1.663>
- Lyster, C. (2016). *Learning from logistics*. Birkhäuser.
- Mullarkey, J. C. (1995). Bergson's method of multiplicity. *Metaphilosophy*, 26(3), 230-259. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24438894>
- Paramita, K. D., & Schneider, T. (2018). Passage territories: Reframing living spaces in contested contexts. *Interiority*, 1(2), 113-129. <https://doi.org/10.7454/in.v1i2.34>
- Sennett, R. (2019). *Building and dwelling: Ethics for the city*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Warakanyaka, A. A. S., & Yatmo, Y. A. (2018). Tracing the progression of inhabitation through interior surface in Semarang Old Town. *Interiority*, 1(1), 65-78. <https://doi.org/10.7454/in.v1i1.9>
- Yatmo, Y. A., Paramita, K. D., & Atmodiwirjo, P. (2020). *Future landscape of Architecture: Data, Methods, and Programming*. Department of Architecture, Faculty of Engineering Universitas Indonesia.

