ARCHITECTURE AS AN IMAGE OF THOUGHT: DELEUZE, CINEMATIC MOVEMENT AND TIME

This project explores the concept of movement as a misunderstood element of architectural modernism. Following Gilles Deleuze, movement is posited as a vital component of a significant paradigm shift shaping philosophy, science and the arts, as well as the cultural experience of modernism in general. A more comprehensive understanding of movement provides a means for articulating its associated issues, as well as strategies for incorporating it into architectural theory, historiography and practice.

Deleuze’s cinema diptych acts as an organizational and pedagogical tool to consider the implications of (re)defining movement, which no longer constitutes a simple quantitative displacement. In these texts, movement is treated instead as a means for considering ongoing, qualitative change that occurs through perception, affect, action and the intervals linking them. That is, cinema becomes an interface negotiating creative, formal and experiential inputs.

For Deleuze, cinema most clearly evinces the mechanisms of thought as movement and has a privileged relation to the spatial and temporal practices defining us and our visual and built environments. While the cinematic event is distinct from the architectural event, Deleuze’s ability to posit cinema as a mode of thought can inform our capacity to similarly treat architecture and its constitutive theories as images of thought and philosophical encounters. Conversely, architecture can inform Deleuze’s enterprise, extending his concepts from philosophy into critical design practices to focus on the spatial implications of creatively constructing and reforming our built environment according to the dynamics of thought as images of movement and time.

As such, the trajectory from ancient notions of movement to the movement-image and the time-image affords strategies for perceiving and comprehending architecture not as immobile or static sections, but as mobile sections of duration and as direct images of time, uniting the living present to critical histories of the past and productive visions of the future. These concepts are extended to (re)interpret architectural works by key figures within modernism, including Le Corbusier, James Stirling and Peter Eisenman, with particular focus on the creative genesis of their processes, the production of the new and the Outside of thought.

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