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# MICRO-STRATEGIES OF RESISTANCE

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Micro-strategies of resistance are particular confrontations with and resistances to the local impositions of dominating power. These incremental moves are not assembled from direct confrontations but rather operate as discrete traces within a plurality of resistances. Through a feminist critique, this chapter explores the implications that such an approach may hold for a feminist project, in terms of intersections of power relations and spatial practice.<sup>1</sup>

### Micro-strategies: space and architecture

#### Resistance practices

The practice of all architects is to some extent an interpretation of the context in which they are located, whether this interpretation takes the form of tacit or explicit representation. This theoretical chapter has evolved from research which explores the work of various architects and groups who, in the early 1980s, questioned political and/or professional orthodoxies in architecture around them. The scope of that larger study stretches wide, geographically and politically, including a number of countries in political transition such as South Africa, Russia, Romania and East Germany. The groups studied include the Paper Architects, Utopica, Form-Trans-Inform and Matrix.<sup>2</sup>

The enterprises of the kind I have explored tend to be politically motivated since they respond to the social and/or cultural condition within which they are situated, even if the material itself cannot, by definition, be strictly political. As Frederic Jameson writes, 'No work of art or culture can set out to be political once and for all... for there can never be any guarantee it will be used in the way it

1 An earlier version of this chapter was given at the conference, 'Alterities: "feminine" practices of space', June 1999, l'Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux Arts, Paris. All the components of this chapter are quotes, taken out of context and placed elsewhere. Their assemblage is a practice which invites re-readings, pointing towards a multiplication of meaning: a feminist approach which is not fixed

and complete but rather a network of shifting, plural and non-linear relations.

2 See Helen Stratford, 'Micro-movements of Resistance: The Questioning of Orthodoxies by Young Architects in the East and West in the 1980s and Early '90s', unpublished dissertation for Diploma in Architecture, University of Cambridge, June 1998.

demands.<sup>3</sup> In other words, even though a political reading can be made of the work, the work of art is 'in itself inert'.<sup>4</sup> In fact, in all the cases I have studied, it is less the architecture or the art 'form' which is deemed to be the ongoing location of protest than the actual *act* of creating them.

My search for these hidden practices was governed by a desire to study the response to an obliteration of opportunity, either in actual building processes or in wider forms of expression. Such a search can prove arduous. Those practices which do not fit the stereotypes are not understood by mainstream culture and the media where their message might be disseminated and can therefore be destined to obscurity. Further, the nature of resistance is not always necessarily overt or 'radical' but sometimes needs to be indirect: composed of subtle slippages and subversions.

For each case study, the socio-political context became the measure of the resistance tactic and the strength of the potential for resistance was aided by an understanding of the power relations which marked this context. In each case, the means through which certain power structures were stratified or set in place needed to be explored in order to gain an understanding of the relevance of their resistance strategy.

For the London-based feminist architectural collective Matrix, the domination of the building industry by men prompted a feeling of alienation and marginalisation and an awareness of the neglect of what they saw as women's needs in a 'man-made environment'.<sup>5</sup> Growing out of the late 1970s New Architecture Movement (NAM), of which many of the group had been members, Matrix began in 1980 and continued until its dissolution in 1996. In the context of the predominantly apolitical position of architectural practice and practices in Britain at that time, their book *Making Space* was one effort on the micro scale to raise awareness of this problem, asking how women – planners, architects, builders

3 Fredric Jameson, 'Is Space Political?' in Cynthia Davidson (ed.), *Anyplace*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995, p.194.

4 *Ibid.*, p.195.

5 Matrix were a group of feminist designers and a

practice. Members and contributors included Jos Boys, Frances Bradshaw, Jane Darke, Julia Dwyer, Benedicte Foo, Sue Francis, Barbara Mcfarlane, Marion Roberts and Anne Thorne. See also Julia Dwyer and Anne Thorne's chapter in this book.

and clients – might take part in the making of space.<sup>6</sup> While providing a key commentary on issues around the expression and production of inequality through language, representation and practice, this book documented a multitude of interventions conducted at the level of everyday activities including projects for women's communities, children's institutions and immigrant groups.

Through workshops, exhibitions and conferences as well as built projects, Matrix's practice subverted and challenged the traditional relationship between architect and client. In place of the independent, elitist and gendered role of the Architect, the practice focused on full participation in the design process from women who would eventually use the end product. Various methods were used, including sessions about a building's programme and how to make and read architectural drawings, to create situations through which women might attain a voice in the construction of the built environment.

The range and character of these practices and those of the other case studies, located at the level of everyday life and frequently discrete and hidden, informed the theories of resistance that linked all the separate case studies together. This 'theoretical' thread drew upon the work of Michel Foucault to question conventional notions of power and resistance.

### Theories of power/space

It is exactly the notion of micro-strategies composed of slippages and subversions, assembled from the materials and practices of everyday life, that so strongly resonates with the views of Michel Foucault.<sup>7</sup> In *Power/Knowledge*, Foucault comments:

Power is employed and exercised through a netlike organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and

6 Matrix, *Making Space: Women and the Man-Made Environment*, London: Pluto Press Ltd, 1984.

7 In *Geographies of Resistance*, Steve Pile describes how resistance practices can be 'tiny micro-movements of resistance'. 'Micro-Movements of Resistance' was

the former title of this chapter and the title of the dissertation which provided the practical case studies from which this chapter has been theorised; see note 2 above. Steve Pile and Michael Keith (eds), *Geographies of Resistance*, London: Routledge, 1997.

exercising this power. They are not only its inert or consenting target, they are always the elements of its articulation.<sup>8</sup>

Hence, for Foucault, power is never wholly expressed on a global scale, only at local innumerable points as 'micro-powers' in an 'endless network of power relations'.<sup>9</sup> Foucault explains that 'the overthrow of these micro-powers does not obey the law of all or nothing... There is a plurality of resistances, each of them a special case.'<sup>10</sup> In this way, as David Couzens-Hoy astutely observes, 'Change does not occur by transforming the whole at once but only by resisting injustices at the particular points where they manifest themselves.'<sup>11</sup>

Through the panoptic mechanism, Foucault famously extends his notion of power to the power/space relationship. However, this relationship cannot be specifically restricted to *architectural* space. By conjoining bodies and space, Foucault's panopticism is a 'generalised function': 'a way of making power relations function in a function and of making a function function through these power relations'.<sup>12</sup> Power becomes for Foucault a realm that is not deterministically connected to space yet inextricably depends upon it.

Architectural space cannot dictate use – there will always be a resistance of use at the level of the everyday: 'the architect has no power', says Foucault.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, in their relations and connections, spatial layouts, representations and practices can facilitate and support, to some extent, a politics of use within a specific socio-political context. Consequently, as Foucault comments, spatial layout 'can and does produce positive effects when the liberating intentions of the architect coincide with the real practice of people in the exercise of freedom'.<sup>14</sup> Ultimately, space is *never* free from its contextual

8 Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*, Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1986 p.98.

9 Michael Waltzer, 'The Politics of Michel Foucault', in David Couzens Hoy (ed.), *Foucault: A Critical Reader*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986, p.55.

10 M. Foucault, cited in Waltzer, 'The Politics of Michel Foucault', p.55.

11 David Couzens-Hoy, 'Power, Repression, Progress', in *Foucault: A Critical Reader*, p.143.

12 M. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, New York: Vintage/Random House, 1979, pp. 206-7.

13 M. Foucault, 'An Ethics of Pleasure', in Silvère Lotringer (ed.), *Foucault Live (Interviews, 1966-84)*, New York: Semiotext(e), 1989, p.267.

14 M. Foucault, 'Space, Knowledge and Power', in Paul Ranibow (ed.), *The Foucault Reader*, London: Penguin, 1991, p.246.

politics, *never* neutral. Most people live within a specific contextual field of space and spatial relations. In 'Foucauldian Feminism', M.E. Bailey describes how 'ideas of the "feminine" are the result of the interplay of previous historical understandings of femininity and the bodies these have produced', in a way comparable to that in which 'ideas and materiality are intertwined in a spiral of mutually informed contingency', for Foucault.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, one can presumably posit a resistance that prevents the coercion of a detrimental politics of use as a blockage, a subversion that, in its liminal position, relies on incremental moves rather than an overt formal strategy.

### Micro strategies: a feminist project?

#### Difference

The idea of a resistance, which represents the interests of a group that makes up over half the natural population of a country, can bring with it obvious erroneous assumptions and contradictions. There is a risk of arguing that the experiences concerning a history of gender oppression through sex/gender hierarchies are shared by all women, transcending divisions created by race, age, geographical location, social class, parental status, health, religion, ethnicity and sexual orientation. Indeed, the impulse to blend into an undifferentiated 'sisterhood' has been interpreted as 'a feminist version of imperialism'.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, as some feminist theorists have observed, 'the concept of a "woman's identity" functions in terms of both affirmation and negation', and if the essentialism of this concept is embraced, it risks reproducing the very patriarchal construction of gender which is being contested.<sup>17</sup> So, is Foucault's model of power/spatial relations useful for feminist praxis?

15 M. E. Bailey, 'Foucauldian Feminism', in Caroline Ramazanoglu (ed.), *Up Against Foucault: Explorations of Some Tensions between Foucault and Feminism*, London and New York: Routledge, 1993, p.104. See also Sandra Lee Bartky, 'Foucault, Femininity and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power', and Susan Bordo, 'Anorexia Nervosa: Psychopathology as the Crystallization of Culture', in Irene Diamond and Lee Quinby (eds), *Feminism and Foucault: Reflections*

*on Resistance*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988.

16 Sneja Gunew, 'Authenticity and the Writing Cure: Reading Some Migrant Women's Writing', in Susan Sheridan (ed.), *Grafts: Feminist Cultural Criticism*, London: Verso, 1998, p.115.

17 Patricia Waugh, 'Modernism, Postmodernism, Gender', in *Practising Postmodernism/Reading Postmodernism*, London: Edward Arnold, 1992, p.119.

### Diffuse

Foucault's model of power relations has been severely criticised by feminists for a levelling out of gender relations. Nancy Hartsock and Nancy Fraser have argued that, through dismissing gender configurations of subordination to power grounded in patriarchal relations, Foucault's conception of power in itself is gendered. Power is everywhere and so ultimately nowhere.<sup>18</sup> Also, Caroline Ramazanoglu and Janet Holland take Fraser's line in arguing that, for Foucault, power becomes 'such a "catch-all" category that it leaves him unable to distinguish between the exercise of different kinds of power, and so unable to judge between the morality of different kinds of constraints'.<sup>19</sup>

However, as other feminists such as Jana Sawicki and Moira Gatens have observed, it is *exactly* this diffuse model that has significant implications for a feminist project in its recognition of the more insidious and non-repressive, but generative, forms of power.<sup>20</sup> As Bailey argues, the collapse of the 'primordial monolith of "patriarchy" into the fragmented and diffuse, but undeniably interlocking, specific structures of masculinist power' criticises implicit or explicit essentialism in feminist discourse. It 'frees feminists to pursue specific local struggles without justifying these with reference to an entirely male system of power and consequent oppositional female powerlessness'.<sup>21</sup>

### Multiplicity

Foucault's plural and partial identities point towards what Sawicki describes as a 'shifting politics of difference'.<sup>22</sup> Here, according to Chandra Mohanty, there is no 'universal category of woman', but shifting spatial and temporal commonalities are produced at the intersections of various networks of power

<sup>18</sup> See Nancy Hartsock, 'Foucault on Power: A Theory for Women?' in Linda Nicholson (ed.), *Feminism/Postmodernism*, London: Routledge, 1989, and Nancy Fraser, 'Foucault on Modern Power', in *Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989.

<sup>19</sup> Quote of Fraser's 'Foucault on Modern Power', in Caroline Ramazanoglu and Janet Holland, 'Women's

Sexuality and Men's Appropriation of Desire', in *Up Against Foucault*, p.256.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Moira Gatens, 'Power, Bodies, Difference', in *Imaginary Bodies: Ethics, Power, and Corporeality*, London: Routledge, 1996, p.66.

<sup>21</sup> M. E. Bailey, 'Foucauldian Feminism', p.119.

<sup>22</sup> See Jana Sawicki, *Disciplining Foucault: Feminism, Power and the Body*, New York and London: Routledge, 1991.



relations.<sup>23</sup> Also, as Couzens-Hoy observes, Foucault resists any thinking rooted in totalising viewpoints and he maintains that ‘there is no such thing as power as a whole, and no standpoint from which the totality could be viewed or evaluated’.<sup>24</sup>

Ultimately, if Foucault himself glosses over gender configurations of power, his ethics, grounded in a resistance to whatever configuration *totalitarian* power might take, can prove relevant for feminists in contemporary society where the two regimes of dominating and generative power coexist and often intertwine.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, as Couzens-Hoy concludes, if for Foucault there is no social existence *without* power relations, this does not entail that particular, oppressive power relations are necessary. Furthermore, his rejection of the notion of universal progress does not necessarily ‘abandon the hope for emancipation, if by that one means the resistance at particular points to local exercises of power’.<sup>26</sup> Here then, resistance is not restrained to immutable boundaries, it aims to search for pertinent and progressive ways of considering the fluidity of boundaries among people which make it possible for difference to be embraced.

### Scale and intimacy

Foucault’s contention that the large-scale organisation of power is connected to the most minute and local practices witnessed at the detail and intimate levels of everyday life, not least at the site of the body, align with feminist understandings of the ‘personal as political’.<sup>27</sup> It holds particular relevance to those people who traditionally have been confined to the most local and personal realms of life. Here, at the extremities of the network, its effects are felt most severely. It is in the discourses of these marginalised groups, suppressed by rationalising discourses, which lay claim to reason and ultimately truth, that Foucault sees sites of resistance.

23 Chandra Mohanty comments how the intersections of ‘various systematic networks of class, race, (hetero) sexuality, and nation... position us as “women”’. See ‘Introduction’, in Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Ann Russo and Lourdes Torres (eds), *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1991, p.13.

24 D. Couzens-Hoy, ‘Power, Repression, Progress’, p.142.

25 See Irene Diamond and Lee Quinby, *Feminism and Foucault*, p.xiv.

26 D. Couzens-Hoy, ‘Power, Repression, Progress’, p.145.

27 See J. Sawicki, ‘Identity Politics and Sexual Freedom’, in Diamond and Quinby (eds), *Feminism and Foucault*, pp.186-7.

From a personal position of a minority within the architectural profession, Matrix understood more than other architects the effectiveness of micro-powers as pervasive agents of control expressed at the level of everyday life.<sup>28</sup> In *Making Space*, Jos Boys describes how 'the emphasis on individual mobility through private car ownership since the second world war' and the zoning aspect of post-1945 town planning were reflected in the way 'man-made surroundings lacked consideration for the less mobile'.<sup>29</sup> At a time when multiple car ownership was uncommon and the socially approved role for women was the major child carer, this resulted in isolation for women and a 'lack of mobility' at the level of daily activities.<sup>30</sup>

In 'Power, Bodies, Difference', Gatens describes how Foucault's 'micro-politics' are particularly pertinent to 'an investigation of the ways in which power and domination operate in relation to sexual difference'. She goes on to describe how 'social practices construct certain sorts of body with particular kinds of power and capacity'.<sup>31</sup> Likewise, Susan Bordo has explored how societal practices mark bodies through normalising processes, dominant cultural forms such as 'sexism, racism and ageism', which carry with them notions of 'acceptable' and 'abject' bodies.<sup>32</sup> Gatens describes how it is this marking which, in turn, 'creates specific conditions in which [these bodies] live and recreate themselves'.<sup>33</sup> In a later paper, she draws upon the work of Guattari, Deleuze and Spinoza to expand upon the processes involved in the construction of sexual difference. She describes how the historical relation between women and men may be read as 'clusters of specific affects and powers of bodies which are organized around an exclusive binary form (male/female), through various complex assemblages', social, environmental, cultural, legal and linguistic.<sup>34</sup>

28 Matrix drew attention to the fact that in 1984, 95% of architects were men. See *Making Space*, p.2.

29 Jos Boys, 'Women and Public Space', in Matrix, *Making Space*, p.41.

30 Ibid.

31 M. Gatens, *Imaginary Bodies*, p.67.

32 Susan Bordo comments that such dominant cultural forms as 'Sexism, Racism and "ageism"', while they do

not determine human value and choices, while they do not deprive us of "agency", remain strongly normalising within our culture'. Susan Bordo, 'Feminism, Foucault and the Politics of the Body', in *Up Against Foucault*, p.199.

33 M. Gatens, *Imaginary Bodies*, p.71.

34 M. Gatens, 'Through a Spinozist Lens: Ethology, Difference, Power', in Paul Patton (ed.), *Deleuze: A Critical Reader*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1996, p.178.

### Molecular

The notion of subjectivity as a social phenomenon, defined on the periphery rather than at the centre, as exteriority rather than interiority, is a key concept in the work of Guattari and his collaborations with Deleuze. Like Foucault, Guattari is concerned with 'the microscopic means of disciplinisation of thought and affect and the militarisation of human relations'.<sup>35</sup> In the first chapter of *Chaosmosis*, Guattari argues for a complexity of subjectivity. He opens the production of subjectivity up to 'machines of subjectivation',<sup>36</sup> which are not delimited to 'internal faculties of the soul, interpersonal relations and intra-familial complexes', but are instead found in 'non-human machines such as social, cultural, environmental or technological assemblages'.<sup>37</sup> For Guattari, these include 'the large-scale social machines of language and the mass media'.<sup>38</sup>

By attacking what he terms the countless varieties of 'micro-fascism' which are accepted through uncritical participation in hegemonic structures of power, Guattari targets the myth of the inevitability of hierarchy and authority. The possibility of 'other types of subjective arrangements', not based on relations of power, is dependent on 'an analysis of unconscious relations, of relations of micro-power, of micro-fascism'. It is focused on the struggle against the formation of the subject in 'constant power relations, in relations of alienation and in repression against bodies, thoughts and ways of speaking'. Guattari terms this reviewing of subjectivation on the micro-level 'micro-politics'.<sup>39</sup>

### Micro-politics

While Foucault's 'micro-politics' might run the risk of provoking passivity in the face of dominating and omnipresent

35 Felix Guattari, *L'Inconscient machinique: essays de schizo-analyse*, Fontenay-sous-Bois: Encres/Recherches, 1979, p.200, quoted in Gary Genosko (ed.), *The Guattari Reader*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1996, p.23.

36 F. Guattari, *Chaosmosis: An Ethico-Aesthetic Paradigm*, trans. Paul Bains and Julian Pefanis, Bloomington, IN: Indianapolis University Press, 1995, p.9.

37 See P. Goodchild, *G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, An Introduction to the Politics of Desire*, London:

Sage, 1996, p.15.

38 F. Guattari, *Chaosmosis*, p.9.

39 Guattari comments, 'The micro-political struggle of desire cannot be fought out on any front without determining first the machinic-semiotic composition of the power formations.' See 'The Micro Politics of Fascism', in *Molecular Revolution*, trans. Rosemary Sheed, London: Penguin, 1984, p.224.

40 P. Goodchild, *Deleuze and Guattari*, p.151.

power structures, to which resistance is only possible at particular points, Guattari's project specifically looks for sites of weakness in the structures themselves. For him, it is a question of expanding the assemblages that enter into the production of subjectivity in order to 'produce new kinds of subjectivity and new states of consciousness', 'lines of flight' which offer possibilities for change and movement.<sup>40</sup>

In a feminist context, Barbara M. Kennedy describes how 'micro-politics is an engagement with thinking about how struggles occur not only in groups, but through and even beyond multiplicities of identities, subjectivities and corporalities, internal to or functional through and across individual subjects and within subjects'.<sup>41</sup> In fact, this understanding of 'micro-politics' finds allegiance with many political positions including feminism. In 'A Thousand Tiny Sexes', Elizabeth Grosz describes how

[the] affirmation of localised, concrete, nonrepresentative struggles, struggles without leaders, without hierarchical organisations, without a clear-cut program or blueprint for social change, without definite goals and ends, confirms, and indeed, borrows from already existing forms of feminist political struggle, even if it rarely acknowledges this connection.<sup>42</sup>

As Kennedy describes, 'micro-politics is concerned with the micrology of lived experiences, across and between the spaces of any fixed, sentient or even fluid gendered subjectivity'.<sup>43</sup> This idea of the human being as 'multiply constituted' and 'traversed by diverse social formations' is taken further in terms of a specifically feminist agenda by the 'nomadic subject' of Rosi Braidotti. Here, the materialisation of bodies is not simply a passive inscription. In fact, the conception of human being as a component of a dynamic inter-related aggregate makes possible the potential to express being otherwise.

41 Barbara M. Kennedy, *Deleuze and Cinema: The Aesthetics of Sensation*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2000, p.21

42 Elisabeth Grosz, 'A Thousand Tiny Sexes', in

Constantin V. Boundas and Dorothea Olkowski (eds), *Deleuze and the Theater of Philosophy*, London: Routledge, 1994, p.193.

43 B. Kennedy, *Deleuze and Cinema*, p.21.

### Nomadic

If Foucault and Guattari's work is useful to feminism, Braidotti's concept of 'nomadism' seems to encompass these ideas from a specifically feminist perspective. For Deleuze and Guattari, the idea of nomadism expresses an alternative mode of thinking that operates beyond the conceptual structures produced by and productive of the established order or the State.<sup>44</sup> Braidotti's reading of nomadism politicises that of Deleuze and Guattari. For her, it offers a different way of thinking through the female feminist subject in terms of three simultaneous levels: (1) 'differences between men and women'; (2) 'differences among women'; and (3) 'differences within each woman'.<sup>45</sup> By focusing on the 'becoming of the subject' split over 'multiple axes of differentiation', such thinking resists 'assimilation or homologation into dominant ways of representing the self'.<sup>46</sup> It locates political agency in 'nomadic engagements' which shift between all levels and work through the 'stock of cumulated static images, concepts and representations of women, of female identity'.<sup>47</sup>

Feminist geographers such as Geraldine Pratt and Pauline Hanson have observed how 'gendered, racialised and classed identities are fluid'. They are constructed and sustained by geographies of place, space and time, but are produced in 'different ways in different places'.<sup>48</sup> Nomadism recognises the fluidity of these discontinuous locations. It implies both the necessary complication of the term *woman* and a constant reassessment of one's location in power structures. A continual re-mapping must take place on multiple levels associated with different locations in time and space and different economic and social practices, so as to posit an effective resistance against, and to move beyond, hegemonic constructions of gender which attempt to fix ideas about people in time and space.

Nomadism resists fixity and closure, but the idea of movement which is inherently liberatory is problematic.

44 See Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, London: Athlone Press, 1988.

45 Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1994, p.158.

46 Ibid., p.25.

47 Ibid., p.169.

48 Pauline Hanson and Geraldine Pratt, 'Geography and the Construction of Difference', *Gender, Place and Culture* 1.1 (1994): 9-12.

Women traditionally are defined within specific *fixed* places, whether literal or ideological, while the concept of fluidity in respect to femininity carries the notion of darkness, mysteriousness and decadence. Nonetheless, the acknowledgement of the identity of the 'nomadic subject' as fluid might serve to point towards a deconstruction of those static dualisms on which such androcentric notions of decadent female fluidity are based. As Janet Wolff has observed, the *reappropriation* of metaphors here becomes fundamental. The *specific* utilisation of such concepts as 'movement' and 'fluidity', by whom and within what particular context, determines whether they promote resistance to hegemonic functions and formations or whether they become their own academic reification and tools of hegemony themselves.<sup>49</sup>

#### **Micro-strategies: examination of the detail**

The traditional way of implementing architecture begins not at the minutiae but at the world's eye view. The architect stands above the site plan, reduced to convenient drawing board scale, and bequeaths to the world a heroic edifice. The topography of the micro-site involves a shift in scale from the universal to the specific which, like Foucault's genealogies, may recover a different perspective. To begin from the detail as a way of thinking through the 'micro', to begin from the realm of the intricacies of everyday life, might posit a way of offering a different way of thinking through architecture. Such an approach may focus on steps of inclusion which recognise a rich texture of difference, proposing points of connection rather than a totalising and exclusionary move.

In initiating localised counter-responses to everyday processes of stratification, micro-strategies operate at a molecular level. The introduction of the concept of micro-strategies to architecture aims to lead to a productive and critical reformation of the conventional ways of perceiving architecture. Here the 'molecular' does not oppose the intervention on a large scale but rather refers to the rejection

<sup>49</sup> Janet Wolff, 'On the Road Again', *Cultural Studies* 7 (1992), pp.224-39.

of any general or universalising emphasis, indicating ‘not a difference in scale but a difference in kind’.<sup>50</sup>

Ultimately, this reviewing of space, this movement composed of micro-resistances is neither located in the formal expression of the end building, nor constrained to the detail. Instead, it constantly shifts between all fragments of the building process to unveil local exercises of hegemonic power. In this way, these micro-points become the starting point for the means of expression for those whose space and discourses are circumscribed by the fragmented and diffuse, yet interlocking structures of masculinist power.<sup>51</sup>

Whether in the form of the ‘ornamental’ as effeminate and decadent or in the everyday as the domestic sphere of social life, as Naomi Schor describes in *Reading in Detail*, the detail has long been aligned with the feminine. However, it is *how* the micro is viewed and through *what* lens which is key. Micro here then is perhaps less a specific scale of looking than a *field of inquiry*. A dispersed framework through which to re-view space and spatial relations. Larger general terrains may be (re)viewed through the micro. As Schor comments, ‘To retell the story from the perspective of the detail is inevitably to tell another story.’<sup>52</sup>

50 Paul Patton, *Deleuze and the Political*, London: Routledge, 2000, p.43.

51 Matrix’s project, Jagonari Educational Resource Centre in Whitechapel, in which they worked with women clients/users on decorative components for the outside of the building, as ways of representing cultural and gender difference through ‘detail’, might be an example in this sense.

52 Naomi Schor, *Reading in Detail: Aesthetics and the Feminine*, New York: Methuen, 1987, p.4.

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