RESIDENCES SECONDAIRES:
HOW EISENMAN HOUSES FICTIVE STRUCTURES OF HISTORY

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Résidences Secondaires:  
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abstract

Writing, designing and building constitute three moments in the representation and organization of reality and fiction in architecture. These three interdependent moments joined by fragile links disrupt the boundaries between architectural criticism and practice in architecture and promote interaction between the critic and the practitioner.

My thesis focuses on the link between writing and designing. Peter Eisenman exemplifies the architect’s transitory position between writing and designing. His interdisciplinary investigations look for architecture’s other possibilities through criticism and practice, thus engaging architecture in interpretive activities. Writing will be examined not as a critical tool for design, but as an instrumental device that leads to design. On the one hand, language as a critical device explicitly grounds Eisenman’s postponment of questions concerning architecture for architecture’s benefit from the realm of ideas. On the other hand, its use as an instrumental device implicitly demarcates potential formal aspects of language as an agent of Eisenman’s design and my own investigation in new modes of criticism of architecture.

I structure this essay on a dual analysis of the case study by displacing architectural criticism from its house to another house, that of literary criticism, architecture’s résidence secondaire. While, architectural criticism is concerned with questions of understanding the interdependent mechanisms of form, function and ideas with respect to space, time and representation, literary criticism reveals the dislocating mechanisms of Eisenman’s fictive structures of his own history in time.

My interest in interactive criticisms advocates an open-ended process that writes and re-writes an event in different texts.

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introduction
Writing, designing and building constitute three moments in the representation and organization of reality and fiction in architecture. These three interdependent moments linked fragility disrupt the boundaries between architectural theory, criticism and practice in architecture and promote interaction between the critic and the practitioner.

My thesis focuses on the link between writing and designing by revealing aspects of their potential interaction. Writing will be examined not only as a justificational tool for design, but mainly as an instrumental device that leads to design. Thus I select two vantage points to look at writing in order to construct my argument: first, writing as criticism of architecture; and, secondly, writing as an agent in design.

If, traditionally, architecture’s main concerns were reflected in building and material form, recent theoretical investigations engage the architect to look for other possibilities. These possibilities open the perspectives of architecture as a pluralistic and interpretive activity. Stemming from the philosophical or literary investigations of language, they introduce the role of text to architecture and search for compatible relationships.

Architecture has always been associated with language, both instrumental and critical. Language is a symbolic form which does not merely “grow into a vehicle of thoughts, an expression of concepts and judgements”\(^1\), but itself is a potential avenue of artistic expression for the architect. In other words, language does not simply reproduce the nature of things, but on its other extreme becomes a phantasmagoria, suggesting, producing, positing a dynamic world of its own. Following Cassirer’s urge to understand language not “as imitation but as an organ of reality”\(^2\), we reduce it to a fiction. We may perceive “the

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1. Ernst Cassirer. Language and Myth. p.98
2. ibid. p.7
intellectual realm of language in which the word not only preserves its original creative power, but is ever renewing it; in which it undergoes a sort of constant palingenesis, at once a sensuous and a spiritual reincarnation."

My stimulation with the topic derives from recent debates which examine possible interactions between philosophy, literature and architecture. On the one hand, twentieth century linguistic theories, such as structuralism, post-structuralism and Deconstruction implicitly activate architectonic elements in their formation which place architecture in a particular condition within their realm. On the other hand, architecture explicitly adopts philosophical and literary methods in the formation of theory and design. An understanding of their possible interactions will provide the adequate tools and knowledge in order to experiment on new forms of criticism.

Post-structuralism, as its defenders claim, is a re-examination of the modern project. This re-examination announced a new era of transformation in the conditions of cultural production and artistic creation, as well as in social, political and economical practice. It is a transformation that works within the cognitive project of the modern and is not an opposition to modernism, as post-modernism tried to accomplish by setting itself up as a polarity to the modern project. The method of re-examination is not given. Method, in the etymological sense is a modern idea.

Architecture has been questioned by post-structuralism as well. The post-structuralist attitude emerged out of the need to give back to Architecture qualities that the modern had excluded, such as the sense of historicity and tradition. The spectacular progress through technology, the emergence of new materials
and methods, that characterized the modern, disrupted continuity thus promoting an autonomous architecture. Under the post-structuralist scope, architecture is not seen as an autonomous discipline; rather its potential is examined from many directions. Architecture takes its paradigms and examples from inside and outside of the discipline. While philosophers are engaged in the implications of textual meaning and narrative, the architectonics of the text, architects, and especially Eisenman, reverse the analogy to invent textual architecture. As a result Eisenman interprets Architecture as language. He reads building as text. He is not interested in the making of architecture according to the classical laws of symmetry, proportion and eurhythmy. Instead, for him architectural practice is the representation of thoughts.

"What are words for an architect?"  
Peter Eisenman, who has been involved in the architectural debates since the 60's, exemplifies the architect's transitory position between writing and designing. His work, writings and design, attempts to light new lamps for old with respect to architecture. He wants us to see architecture as text. My interest here, unlike Eisenman, is not asking which lamps are old and which new, or trading old lamps for new, but finding out what kind of light Eisenman's lamp throws on architectural problems. I will focus on how this lamp can justify or conceptualize a certain amount of his architectural production and if it does so, how it serves as a vehicle of producing knowledge which has the potential to instruct and motivate the architect for further investigation in architectural issues.

Eisenman's work spanning almost 30 years has been continuously subjected to criticism. My interest towards his work lies on his double position towards Architecture which endow him
During the 60s, as director for the Institute of Architecture and Urban Studies in New York, he promoted intellectual discussions and emphasized the need for theory in practicing architecture. In a period where construction had been depressed, he actively promoted a new way of looking at architecture and created a new market nationwide. The official publication coming out of the I.A.U.S. was a journal called *Oppositions*. The journal could be used by Eisenman as a means to promote his work. Nevertheless, Eisenman was flexible enough to use other available means of publication. As Stanford Anderson said: "As far as propagandizing his position or the New York scene, his lectures, Progressive Architecture issues, Five Architects, White/Gray were more polemical and more effective than *Oppositions.*" 6

Eisenman is a controversial figure in the field and his work is questioned severely by architects, because of Eisenman’s idiosyncratic way of practicing architecture. His involvement with architectural theory and academia engages him in a double enterprise. His practice of architecture must be reconciled with both Architecture, as a cultural activity, and Architecture, as Building. Yet he always manages to keep his name on the top of contemporary debates through his investigations on architectural theory. And, without any doubt, he builds. First of all, let us be clear that I am not interested in what he builds. My discussion is between writing and designing, that is, texts and drawings or models.

He has always shown interest in dealing with architectural theory used as an instrument for practice and not only as justification of practice. This structural performance of theory emerged after the 60’s. At that time the cultural center of international discourse was Paris. Structuralism was the dominant theory. One was concerned with interacting scientific systems rather than universal theories. But this was a discourse that paid little attention in architecture. Eisenman was one of the first architects to initiate that kind of discourse in architecture. 6

Eisenman’s work belongs to the modern project. His intellectual activities of the 80s respond to the “modern Weltanschaungen” that have dominated Western civilization for more than 150 years. His work is both a critique of and a development...
from the modern. Within the theoretical model he builds are all the ambiguities and abstractions of modernism. While it carries a high potential, it cannot transcend a purely subjective tone. Eisenman’s theories of form and of the understanding of form, of the inherent possibilities of physical arrangements to transmit meaning, explore the possibilities of newly defining notions such as representation, presence and origin. Yet does architecture resist concepts that reject materiality, function and shelter? Or, can architecture transcend its physical manifestations and associate itself with the realm of ideas?

My thesis is structured on the analysis of two projects by Eisenman - Moving Arrows, Eros and Other Errors or “Romeo and Juliet”, Venice 1985 and Choral Work in the Parc de la Villette, Paris 1986 - which combine texts and drawings/models. Both projects are intellectual investigations into architecture based on the interrogation of the “dogma of classical ordination” - anthropocentrism - “and traditional figurative presence” - representation. They are experimental projects on architecture as text. Their main concern is to write a new theory in architecture, prove that while looking for the Other in Architecture we can create imaginatively. Moreover, both of them focus on the text. They are conceptual projects, based on the rewriting of a story. Lastly, neither of them has been built. My focus, therefore, can remain between writing and designing.

The projects I selected to work on are both primary and supplementary to this analysis. Primary, because their criticism intends to verify the “correctness of discourses on architecture”, if it can be sustained. Supplementary, because through this analysis, I will express my thoughts on architectural writing as a tool of artistic creation. My goal is not a descriptive -

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John Whiteman. Site un-scene- Notes on Architecture and the Concept of Fiction, AA Files, p.76
vertical/horizontal/ in sections - analysis of the two projects. Instead, my goal is to develop creative writing in the making of criticism in architecture. In my analysis I favor an interpretation of the two projects which allows me to shift from architectural criticism to literary criticism and explore their potential interaction. This activity demarcates both the dynamism of formal aspects of language and Eisenman's intellectual stance in contemporary architectural debates. Language plays both an explicit and implicit role. Its use as a justificational device explicitely grounds Eisenman's intellectual stance in contemporary architectural debates, while its use as an instrumental device implicitly demarcates potential formal aspects of language in the making of criticism.

Although the thesis should make sense as an argument, it will remain open-ended. Thus it does not conclude. It can be added to Eisenman's work as a complementary event. It is a selective, descriptive, critical analysis of Eisenman's work which seeks to add, transform, dissect and interpret. Without harming Eisenman's work, it wants to respond to its potential to investigation.

The thesis develops in three stages according to the following model: I.case study II.theoretical investigations III.case study reexamined

Although this structure implies methodology, I do not want to structure my criticism according to a specific scientific model. Instead, I conceive it as researched, worked out, put together, pulled apart, and put back together, not according to a theory of valid procedures in such undertakings, but intuition. I rely on my sense of rightness and wrongness, of doubt and assurance, of deficiencies and appropriateness.
At first, I briefly refer to Eisenman’s theoretical explorations through time. Since the 60’s Eisenman’s involvement with linguistic theories promotes an interdisciplinary architecture. In the 60’s he experiments in architecture using Chomsky’s linguistic theories; in the 80’s he shifts to post-structuralist models. Deconstruction and Derrida’s notion of différance substitute the structuralist model. The new consciousness of history and the function of temporality that the Derridean notion of différance introduces are the driving forces of Eisenman’s late work.

In the first chapter I will introduce the two projects. Eisenman in both projects pushes representation to its limits. His methodology in making architecture is described in the following diagram:

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text  design  text  design
Moving Arrows, Eros and other Errors
Derrida as participant
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Eisenman posits the two projects to differ from each other. I will argue that this long term goal has not been achieved. Behind the model an inherently rigid rationality hinders the roads of intuition and imagination which could lead to the desired creativity.

The “Romeo and Juliet” project generated a new start for Eisenman’s intellectual investigations. The project, a submission to an international competition of ideas in architecture,
became a critique of previous modernist, formalist projects of negation in art, and a statement towards a new unlimited reality. Its conceptual framework and representational format, a mixture of texts and drawings in a collage pattern were innovative, a notable mental exercise in architecture. At the “Choral Work” project Eisenman intended to reinvent architecture. He collaborated with the French philosopher Jacques Derrida. The Eisenman-Derrida collaboration promised an unusually glamorous event. One of Eisenman’s stated goals was to write a text-in-between. The final outcome does not accord with the designer’s expectations. The intellectual exchange in their discussions was very promising. However, the inspiration was never traced on Eisenman’s drafting paper, defeating the initial goals.

My intention in this chapter is to identify the lack of intuitive power at the formation of Choral Work. Although Eisenman sets new conditions in conceptualizing architecture for this project, he still works within the earlier program exemplified by the Romeo and Juliet project. My critical stance will remain outside of the subject-matter. I will be as distant as possible and make a thorough analysis of the genesis of the two projects, drawing analytical diagrams, quoting other criticisms on the project for the sake of plurality and intellectual discourse and my reader may extract his own assumptions.

In the second chapter, the essay partially refers to the evolution of twentieth century linguistic theories for a better understanding both of how the shift from architectural criticism to literary criticism made possible and how Eisenman developed his intellectual stance in contemporary architectural debates through his reading of these theories. I will first describe the shift from structuralism to post-structuralism and point out parallel pat-
terns of evolution in Eisenman’s work. The question of history and function of time will be identified as the key-concept which allows the shift to take place in both cases. The analysis will also provide the theoretical tools for a more extended investigation of the way in which architects criticize architecture and other architects. Considering interpretation as a means of criticism, I shall identify its emergence from Post-structuralist theories first developed in the United States.

Thus, in this chapter I define the theoretical framework for a re-reading of the case study. This suggests an interpretation of the case study as a constant interweaving between architectural and critical writing. This signifies an interaction between the critic and the practitioner. The interaction suggests that they cross the disciplinary boundaries between criticism and action that gives birth to new modes of creation.

My interest in interactive criticisms is to account for the possibilities of architecture to create new ideas that should prove instructive to the architect in both theory and practice. The node that activates the interaction is to be found in the concept of history which organizes text and drawings, language and forms reflecting the subject in a creative process. Eisenman uses the notion of history in both projects. In the “Romeo and Juliet” project he reinscribes the three texts of Romeo and Juliet in a new textual and formal narrative. In the “Choral Work” he projects the participant authors including himself in the object. This could be interpreted as a narcissistic reflection - a reconstruction of the self. A fusion between the subject and the object appears in the formation of the object.

The reference to history activates the process. This process cannot be confined within the realm of architectural activity.
Eisenman is not working within the realm of architecture anymore, but within philosophy and literature. He postpones questions concerning architecture for architecture’s benefit from the realm of ideas.

Architects and critics have generally studied Eisenman’s work in detail for its significance in architecture and for the importance of his methodology. Without wishing to undermine the significance of these studies, I need to go further in my investigation and to decipher Eisenman’s intrinsic goals, purposes, claims, rhetorical nostalgias and aphorisms. In the third chapter, I dislocate his fictive structures of history from their architectural house to their résidence secondaire, their literary house. My analysis is inscribed within the project’s duality between building a fiction and building a reality. A fiction which is inscribed in the architect’s intentions and a reality which is inherent in architecture and distinguishes it from the other arts.

If his work is not an architectural artefact, is it valid to be analyzed as a literary, intellectual event? If so, can we use established ways of criticism that refer to the work of literature, in order to analyze Eisenman’s projects? Criticism in architecture, which borrows its tools from different fields inside and outside architecture, registers intentions, actions, concepts that would otherwise never been revealed. The shift from architectural criticism to literary criticism displaces temporarily Eisenman’s work from architecture to literature. It is an intentional act that lasts as far as this paper lasts. The analysis demarcates the notions of history and time as elements that structure the dialectical relationship between text and drawings and project Eisenman’s utopian dream between reality and fiction in architecture. I will identify Eisenman’s résidences
secondaires where he inhabits his fictive structures of existing texts and projects, thus creating his own history.

Although at this point my analysis will end, this is the beginning of an investigation in its own terms. My interpretation aims to be a reappropriation of a knowledge to which the reader has already been exposed. This implies an intelligible reader who is prepared to absorb the unexpected manipulations and interpretations of the author. It is an exchange between the author and the reader through the medium of the text. Thus the chapter will be incorporated in the thesis as an instant along the open-ended process of the formation of the project.
theories in retrospect
Eisenman, through his work, writing and design, promotes an interdisciplinary architecture. For him architecture is not an autonomous, self-sufficient field. He uses models taken from outside theories and applies them in design. His practice is based on the appropriation of structuralist and post-structuralist linguistic models. A retrospective analysis of his methodology demarcates his rational way of thinking in architecture according to a clear mathematical function, that of analogy. In this chapter I will make a brief reference to the model-theories outside architecture that Eisenman has used in his work.

In his involvement with linguistics and the Chomskian model, Eisenman experimented with an application of the structuralist theoretical model of language in architecture for almost two decades. Linguistics, when applied in architecture reveal the inadequacy of the analogy between architecture and language, as it is perceived as an instrumental device for design. Peter Eisenman, experimenting with Chomsky’s transformational grammar of linguistic theory and formal models, opposed the modern aesthetic and retrieved architecture from political interests in his argument for architecture’s autonomy. He affiliated architecture to language. But this particular semiological inquiry in architecture gradually lost their initial dynamics and were solidified in the discourse of architects-critics.

During the 60’s Eisenman’s selective interpretation of the Chomskian model of linguistic transformational grammar and its transposition into a theory of syntax, semantics and pragmatics in architecture proved to be incompatible with Chomsky’s theory. His uncritical use of the Chomskian model in applying it to architecture by drawing arbitrary analogies, formed a theory of architecture that was incapable of meeting the requirements for intelligibility or creativity. For him the system - the
Chomskian linguistic theory - pre-exists his own project, which he develops through appropriation.

Chomsky establishes a basis for linguistics on an understanding of the types of mechanisms, or structures, that make linguistic communication possible. He introduces the importance of the study of a universal grammar, that determines the rule of all natural languages since language is common to the whole human species, even though particular languages obviously vary. Thus he studies a system of learning language under the premises of a universal grammar along with other, accidental ones. The basic component is to be found in the rules of syntax, which are identified by their structural dependence. "The fundamental insight in Chomsky is that sentences can be analyzed into abstract structures, and that these structures can explain more about language and meaning than was possible before. There is a continuous increase in explanatory power and empirical scope in transformational grammar. This explanation focuses, ultimately, on the mind. The aim of the transformational grammar approach is to provide a theory that can account for the infinite variety and appropriateness of language. The abstraction process that Eisenman describes has no such explanatory power. On the contrary, in conjunction with the notion of intent, it necessarily excludes any."  

After the collapse of inductivist theories and the awareness of the impossibility of validity of the modernist claim "form follows function", Eisenman rejected functionalism as naive and focused his attention on the internal, inherent logic of form. He distinguishes between syntax, semantics and pragmatics, assigning specific architectural interpretations to each. He defines pragmatics as the concern with the relationships of form to function, the use of technological means for the solution of
theories in retrospect

the program. Semantics is the relation of form to meaning, which has traditionally come under the heading of iconography, the study of symbolism, and the interaction of physical objects with the cultural environment. Syntax in architecture corresponds to an analysis of the ability of the potential of form itself to communicate: the mediation of form and function through a structure of formal relationships.²

Parallel with this taxonomy, Eisenman introduces the distinction between the conceptual and the perceptual. His aim is to go beyond “visual phenomena and their associated meanings” to a more fundamental “conceptual” understanding of form and object”.³

Eisenman adopts a fragmented interpretation of linguistics, thus violating the original theory. He uses the terminology and categories of transformational linguistics chiefly in order to provide a vocabulary for his formalist bias which will grant it some theoretical legitimacy. He has so impoverished the notions of syntax, semantics and pragmatics, that his “linguistic” model, unlike Chomsky’s, is unable to function without the added insights of expression and intent.

In the 80’s, Eisenman - always concerned with the unexplored possibilities of architecture - shifts his theoretical model from that of structural linguistics to post-structuralist linguistic theories. According to his view, the architect must find methods to embody more complex organizations of multiple and contradictory meanings while at the same time meeting his responsibility to shelter and function.

This shift follows the analogous shift in the philosophical field - from ahistorical, formalist structuralism to historical post-

² Peter Eisenman. Notes on a conceptual architecture, p.51

³ Jonathan Mathews. The implication of theories of knowledge and meaning for theories of architecture, p.88
structuralism. This time his stimulus derives from his exposure to the philosophical work of Jacques Derrida and particularly from the Derridean notion of *différence*.

4 Jacques Derrida

"When I chose the word...among other things I wished to translate the Heideggerian word 'Destruction' or 'Abbau'. Each signifies in this context an operation bearing on the structure or traditional architecture of the fundamental concepts of ontology or of Western metaphysics. But in French "destruction" too obviously implied an annihilation or a negative reduction much closer perhaps to Nietzschean 'demolition' than to the Heideggerian interpretation or the type of reading that I proposed...

Déconstruction: action of deconstructing. Grammatical term. Disarranging the construction of words in a sentence.

Déconstruire: To disassemble parts of a whole. Grammatical term. To deconstruct verse, rendering it, by the suppression of meter, similar to prose.

From the "Letter to a Japanese Friend" by Jacques Derrida in *Derrida and Différence*, p.1

5

Derrida has been criticized from French thinkers for his thorough investigations and references to German philosophers like Husserl, Heidegger, Hegel, which indicates an implied conflict between French and German schools of thought. I quote the following:

According to Derrida, Deconstruction is neither an *analysis* nor a *critique*. It is not a *method* either. In certain circles and institutions the very word Deconstruction is metaphorically attached to the technical and methodological metaphor, but when Derrida was asked "What Deconstruction is not?", he said: "everything of course", and to "What is Deconstruction?", he said: "Nothing of course". Deconstruction, promoting the notion of process, avoids binding itself to a rigid definition.

Although it seems to take the same direction with structuralism, since the word signifies a certain attention to structures, it is also an anti-structuralist gesture; structure should be decomposed.

Deconstruction has been associated with post-structuralism which was unknown in France until its 'return' from the United States.

Derrida's contribution to the institution of literature and philosophy promotes "deconstruction as a means of dismantling..."
the architecture of texts that sustain the western tradition of metaphysics". Thus, he unveils the repressive power of metaphysics and liberates a new order of textuality. But although Deconstruction achieves the displacement of the traditional concept of literature, it is finally being accepted, incorporated into traditional criticism. Unfortunately, it runs the risk of becoming institutionalized, of being "domesticated within the institution that it claims to subvert". Nevertheless, his innovative propositions for another kind of writing and reading disrupt well established traditions of writing in the humanities as well as in philosophy, literary criticism, and other fields. Derrida challenges the traditional demarcation between these disciplines, as well as between other disciplines. Hence his interest in architecture and art.

Traditional Western thought gave precedence to speech over writing. The reign of speech - the so-called Logocentrism in Western philosophy - perpetuated the myth of the "full presence." This myth perpetuated the existence of Eternal Truth. What lies behind is that it deconstructs the logic of the absolute presence, the basis of Western tradition. It might be said that Derrida subverts "the basis" by emphasizing the activity of writing. But just to prove that writing prevails over speech would only be a reversal of hierarchies within a traditional system of thought. Derrida goes further in developing his theory.

Although Derrida is seen as giving precedence to writing - that is, literature over philosophy - he essentially works within the same tradition he claims to subvert. For Derrida, "...philosophy and literature are two poles of an opposition and one cannot isolate one from the other or privilege one over the other. I consider that the limits of philosophy are also those of litera-
Derrida locates a new tradition which is neither philosophical nor literary, it is "...a modification of the concept of writing"\textsuperscript{9} rather than a simple promotion of it.

In January 1968, three months earlier than the revolutionary events of May 1968, Derrida gives a lecture on "La Différence" at the Sorbonne. A direct linking of the political to the philosophical events is perhaps artificial, but both political and philosophical scenes were highly charged at this time. Unexpectedly, the notion of \textit{différence} becomes the main point of discussion in Derrida's deconstructive theories. The Derridean notion of \textit{différence} explains the evolution of writing from language, starting from an initial significant sign - the trace. The trace is described as a non-existing element because it is considered just a theoretical device.

Derrida, in the notion of \textit{différence}, opposes the Heideggerian notion of difference and the structuralist concept of sign. The Heideggerian notion of difference is described as "genesis."\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Différence} is not the genesis - that of and between that govern the emergence of beings. For Derrida there is no genesis; there is merely the play of traces. \textit{Différence}, though, cannot be reduced to one definition, it refuses any definition. It is neither "a master-concept, ...a prepackaged invitation to a reductive simplification"\textsuperscript{13}, nor "the latest substitute in a long series of fundamental principles."\textsuperscript{13}

"But there are two strategic movements converging in this term \textit{différence}. The first is that of condensation of the Nietzschean, Saussurian, Freudian, Levinasian, and Heideggerian (and even Hegelian) versions - a condensation all the more interesting in that it does not claim exhaustively to capture each of these versions, let alone the whole thought of each thinker. The second movement is of the textual release of \textit{différence} back
into an economy of terms including trace, hymen, supplementary, and so on, a movement that must block every reductive reading, whether sympathetic or critical." Différence operates beyond the metaphysical logos and is "neither a word nor a concept." It is this "sameness which is not identical." Derrida's notion of différences is the concept of economy as such. Différence allows for the movement which is directed to subvert philosophy. Traditional philosophy is concerned with static forms, structures, substances, and essences as such. "The platonic forms do not move, we should recall. Thus, with Derrida we turn toward a universe of movement, of forces, of play, which also nonetheless contains or exhibits a certain calculus and a certain system." Historical activity identifies with the Derridean notion of différences which transcends the ahistorical Saussurian model of the sign. Derrida in the notion of différences includes the notion of deferral which postpones the stable relationship between language and meaning and this adds to it the notion of time. He argues that it is impossible to grasp all mechanisms of meaning at any moment. The system cannot be totalized because of its change in time. In this way he essentially opens the system to misreadings, to a non-static condition. He identifies a structure of language which is against the static platonic notions of form and meaning - it undermining a stable relationship between signified and signifier. By introducing the function of time, he opens the question of historicity which is a post-structuralist characteristic.

For Eisenman, Derrida's philosophical analysis and his questioning of the fundamental notions of presence and origin that différences introduced - notions that have been considered as givens since the birth of philosophy in ancient Greece - provide genuine material that could be tested in architecture. The
différence intends to subvert traditional philosophical systems of perception and knowledge. In reading Derrida, Eisenman envisions these new possibilities in architecture, which, even if still amorphous and ambiguous, are promising. With respect to architecture, différence penetrates its totality and connotes subversion of fundamental architectural notions, such as representation, presence, origin and human scale. He is engaged in creating a new theoretical model for architecture. While Derrida is exploring the architectonics of the text, Eisenman reverses the function by exploring the possibilities of architecture as text: of so-called textual architecture. Eisenman uses the Derridean notion of différence in order to seek an architecture which “writes different texts” other than the single “anthropocentric” text which he finds to be underlying all traditional theories and processes of architectural design. Yet, the method he uses remains the same with the one he adopted while he was working on the linguistic model. It is that of the appropriation of an external theory to the internal system of architecture. A closer analysis of his work shows that his theoretical shift from linguistics to post-structuralist theories “is disconcerting because it had no noticeable effect on the work”.

It is true that Derrida’s theory of différence is stimulating to the architect. It becomes the foundation for a visual exploration in architectural production. It is the structure that challenges traditional representation. Representation has been the main issue in the avant-garde debates of the modern movement. Although, the modern avant-garde established its radical positions through its abstinence and its rejection of traditional figurative representation in the name of abstraction, its metaphorical implications attach it historically very strongly to the notion of representation. Historical investigations of the modern movement revealed the limitations of the utopian avant-gardist
dream. Eisenman’s work is definitely associated with modern practices. He recognizes these limitations and takes a strong stance in favor of the initial goal of the avant-garde practices, thus challenging the notion of representation.

For Eisenman architecture is not associated with traditional representational elements, either figurative or abstract. Architecture is described “as a second language.” He constructs this analogy in order to introduce the notions of time and “originary” value that Derrida includes in his analysis of the notion of différance. A second language is compared to the mother language. The notion of time does not imply that the second language comes after the mother language in a negative sense, because of their originary value.

Thus, architecture as a second language can be associated to text. The notion of text introduces essential multivalence in architecture. “It does not cancel or deny prior notions of narrative or structure nor does it necessarily contain them, but exists simultaneously with them.” It is shown to mean more than one thing. Our perception of representation that “suggests some sort of correct truthful relationship between the object of architecture and what is signifying” has been dispersed in a multivalent, doubtful temporality.

Eisenman undertakes a difficult task. He attempts to redefine representation within the realm of architecture. Architecture as a discipline, or even more as it is perceived within Eisenman’s practice, cannot be separated from its material substance. If it is assessed only as a cultural activity, it restricts itself within the theoretical realm - the field of concepts and ideas and loses the opportunity to be tested in reality. Eisenman attempts to pass over this weak transitional point between the two realms; that
of architecture as a soft box of ideas and architecture as a concrete box that shelters. He has to find the keys to open the boxes and let ideas and materials interact in the name of non-representation. The impossibility of the interaction eventually produces two different projects: a method of design descriptive of Eisenman’s work and a design product.
Moving Arrows, Eros and Other Errors

Choral Work

Between fiction and reality
The Projects

1. Moving Arrows, Eros and Other Errors, Venice 1985
The project is Eisenman’s entry for the 4th International Exhibition of Architecture for the Biennale of Venice ’85. The given site is in Verona, Italy, and includes the castles of “Romeo and Juliet”. He is honored with the Stone Lion of Venice.

Eisenman continues his intellectual investigation in the 80’s in the Parc de La Villette project. The project is a collaboration of the New York architect Peter Eisenman and the French philosopher Jacques Derrida after Bernard Tschumi’s invitation to them to design a part of the garden at the Parc de La Villette. The invitation is neither a strange irony nor a coincidence. Tschumi invited Eisenman and derrida to collaborate in a design for one of the gardens along the “promenade cinematique” of the “parc urbain du XXle siecle” in the Park de La Villette while Eisenman had already, in a sense, contributed to Tschumi’s initial scheme as we will see later. In 1982 Tschumi entered the competition for the Parc de La Villette. He shared the first prize with Rem Koolhaas. Now, Tschumi’s project is under construction.

Both projects are perceived through text and drawings/models. The “Romeo and Juliet” project followed by the “Moving Arrows, Eros and Other Errors” text is a description of a theory for design, a method and a process. It is a justificational means of a design process in architecture. The “Choral Work” project is followed by the text “Why Peter Eisenman Writes Such Good Books?” written by Jacques Derrida. In contrast to the “Moving arrows, Eros and Other Errors” text, the Derridean text does not

contribute to architecture. It summarizes Derrida’s experience in collaborating with Eisenman for an architectural project. It is not meant to be a statement in architecture or a new celebration for architecture which opens new perspectives or educates new readers.

The part of the project which mostly identifies its qualities are the transcripts of the meetings between Derrida and Eisenman. Although there were only five meetings in New York, Paris, Trento and New Haven which took place within a span of eight months, the exchange of ideas between the architect and the philosopher were rich enough to provoke a series of events and keep the project alive in architectural circles. That is why, in my description of the project I will present some parts of the dialogues that are relevant to the discussion, fragments that reconstruct the project, its goals, its process of making and the collaborators’ conflicts and agreements.

Both projects are intellectual investigations on architecture based on the interrogation of the “dogma of classical ordination and traditional figurative presence”. Eisenman conceives of classical ordination as the canon that architecture must be anthropocentric. He refers to anthropocentrism as a naive and limited representation of the world. His investigations, very much filled with the anxiety of rejecting anthropocentrism, state a claim for more complex and rich interpretations that are manifestations of differing ways of being. Still, he struggles to create an architectural reality. His experiment is engaged in producing a built environment. What is interesting in exploring these projects is its duality between building a fiction and building a reality. A fiction which is inscribed in the architect’s intentions and a reality that is inherent in architecture and distinguishes it from the other arts.

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*John Whiteman. “Site Unscene: Moving Arrows, Eros and Other Errors”, AA Files #12, p.76*
The interplay between reality and fiction is even inherent in the titles. In the discussions between Eisenman and Derrida in “Choral Work”, Eisenman said:

“Moving Arrows, Eros and Other Errors”... The title came to me when, after I had given a paper at a theological conference, a very old Anglican cantor said to me: “what was that you said, ‘moving eros’?” I replied, “No! Moving errors” and thus began this wonderful play on words. Jeff says my texts are calculated to prevent people from reading the project, though I do not agree.\(^3\)

PE: ...I would like to use as a subtitle to Choral Work that thing I made up with you in Paris, SONSANSONSENS.

JD: I don’t know. I’m afraid it is a little too playful in French.

PE: Okay. Choral Work then.

JD: Yes, it is fantastic.

PE: It has three or four meanings that I can think of immediately.

JD: It is musical.

PE: Yes, and there is togetherness. For me, it means coral as enclosure, coral as stone and coral as color, choral as a group musical work, and chor as of chora.

JD: It reminds me also of “firework” - choral work, fire work, something work.

PE: Great, now we have everything - we have you, me, a theory and a title.

JD: It remains to do the work.\(^4\)

The “Romeo and Juliet” project represents Eisenman’s first effort at expressing discursive ideas in the realm of the sensible, in a figurative way. The idea was the transference of Romeo and Juliet back to the site through a process.

“The story of Romeo and Juliet was first written about these two castles. The story was transposed from the site of the castles to Verona, and from the sixteenth century, when it was written, to the thirteenth century. Though we
don't know if there is any historic truth to the story, in Verona you can actually visit the “house of Juliet”, the “church where they were married”, the “tomb where they were buried.” Hence, the fiction of Romeo and Juliet has taken over the reality.

What we wanted to do was to reimprint the castles in what we called a “hyper-fiction” - that is, a fiction of a fiction; to re-fictionalize the house of Juliet, the church of their marriage and the tomb where they finally came together in architecture. We took the labyrinth to be the architectonic concretization of the narrative dialectic of Romeo and Juliet between fate and free will - when you enter into it, your fate is predetermined. Furthermore, in the early texts of Romeo and Juliet there is an actual labyrinth. So, through the vehicle of the labyrinth, we attempted to express three structural aspects of the Romeo and Juliet story: division, union and dialectical relationship. The programme evolved through our work process - at least, that's where we were when we finished...

The three structural relationships which pervade the narratives also can be found to exist at a physical level in the plan of the city of Verona: the cardo and decumanus divide the city: the old Roman grid unites it: and the Adige river creates a dialectical condition of union and division between the two halves. Similarly, places in Verona can be located as key loci in the narrative supposedly existing in Verona today are Juliet’s house (the point of their division); the church where the couple was married (the point of their union), and Juliet’s tomb (the ultimate point of their dialectical relationship of togetherness and apartness). The strange presence of these fictional “realities” in Verona sets the stage for this project’s further transposition of reality and fiction. The project brings back the fictional elements of Verona to the reality of Montecchio, creating a simultaneity of experience of text and object.

These are presented in three axonometric drawings, and three scalings which are made by registering the three glasses in different superpositions. In each scaling there are present elements (in colour), elements of memory (in grey), and elements of immanence (in white)."5

Eisenman introduces the method of superpositions and scalings in order to construct text and drawings. The project is based on three existing texts: the Da Porto, the Bandello, and the Shakespeare versions of the story. The new text is the outcome of superpositions of the three original texts. It basically reconstructs, rewrites the narrative in an intertextual activity.

The visual representation is also organized on the method of
superpositions and scalings:

The first superposition reveals the idea of division found in three texts. When the walls of the castle of Romeo are superposed on the walls of the old city of Verona, the three elements of the site of Montecchio (at the same scale as the city of Verona) fall in a divided relation to the walls of the real castle of Juliet; a simulated castle of Juliet falls inside the real castle of Juliet; a simulated church falls within the wall of the real castle; and a simulated castle of Romeo falls outside of the walls of the real castle of Juliet, hence the idea of division. Thus the first scaling involves the transposition of place and superposition of scales in time to reveal aspects of the structure of the textual narrative. The castle (which is analogous to Romeo) attempts to unite a Verona divided between the Capuleti and the Montecchi. The Adige River which both joins and fractures the city of Verona also acts upon the castle of Romeo so that it becomes, in its left hand segment, a presence and in its right hand segment, part memory - the absence of its former presence and part trace - the presence of an absence - an immanent castle. The castle of Romeo is thus a palimpsest and a quarry, where the stones which are removed from the actual walls of the castle from the grid of the city of Verona.
The second superposition reveals the idea of union found in the three texts. Here the castle of Juliet, which appeared as a passive trace in the actual castle of Romeo, now appears as an active trace at the actual church of Montecchio. The tower of the castle surrounds the church. Superposed over the tower of Juliet is the tower of an active trace of the castle of Romeo. The church of Montecchio is an active presence registering the idea of union. The third superposition reveals the idea of dialectical relationship between union and division operating in the texts. Now the castle of Juliet is registered as an active presence over the tomb which is the cemetery in the city of Verona.

In the labyrinth, three re-presentations of the concepts of division, union, and their dialectical relationship are found, created by superposing three scalings. At this lowest level of the labyrinth the foundations of the actual castle of Juliet are found. This is the level of hyperreality (the fiction turning into reality). Here another series of scalings is set in motion, and a return to reality through the tower of the actual castle of Juliet.

The first scaling involves the cemetery of the city being superposed over the grid of the old city of Verona so that there is a self-similar registration of the axes of the old cemetery (treated as a cardo and decumanus) superposed on the actual cardo and decumanus of the old city. The cemetery is now analogically the city. In this scaling the tower of the castle of Juliet is registered on and becomes analogous to the house of Juliet in the city of Verona (this becomes the locus of the descent into labyrinth). The castle of Juliet thus becomes the house of Juliet in the cemetery of Verona as the city
of Verona.

In the second scaling, the cemetery is enlarged so that the church of Verona
is located in the same relationship to the axes of the cemetery as is Juliet’s
house to the axes of the city of Verona in the previous scaling. Here the house
of Juliet as the castle of Juliet becomes analogous to the church, in the
cemetery.

A third scaling is made; the cemetery is again enlarged so that the tomb of
Juliet in the cemetery of Verona occupies the same position relative to the
axes of the cemetery as the house and the church at the previous scalings.
Now the house of Juliet as the castle of Juliet in the cemetery of Verona as
the city of Verona finally becomes the tomb of Juliet in the cemetery of
Verona. This closing of the text detaches this analogous process from the
pursuit of a geometric ideal. It is this closure potential in self-similarity
which opens the possibility for a textual architecture.

The Romeo and Juliet project generated a new start for
Eisenman’s intellectual investigations. As a submission to an
international competition of ideas in architecture it became a
critique of previous modernist, formalist projects of negation in
art and a positive statement towards a new unlimited reality, by
John Whiteman. "Site Unseen: Moving Arrows, Eros and Other Errors", AAFiles #12, p.76

the last superposition

"exploring 'positive' techniques concerning the construction of symbolic meaning against the more visual and certainly more accepted 'negative' theories of artistic production".

Another aspect worthy of notice in this project is Eisenman’s change of method as compared to his previous work. His previous method of systematic transformational, singular logic has been avoided, giving place to a new multivalent concept of architectural method. The new method rejects the modernist idea that the structural logic of the project should reflect and reveal the structure of its meaning and its interpretations. Thus, Eisenman presents a "new symbolism - the technique of architectural composition and the problems of meaning that are made thereby".

i bid. p.78
The Romeo and Juliet project is also interesting “because it achieves a positive advance regarding the question of the limits of architectural sense”\(^8\). This is Eisenman’s “trick” which gives him access to the world. The translation is not accidental. It is carefully selected so that the meaning of the narrative makes a direct analogy to that of superpositions in the site. The final representation reflects the narrative. Thus the static reality of architecture with respect to time and space is able to reproduce the unfolding of a narrative inscribed in a different time and space, which is dynamic. The Romeo and Juliet project remains an architectural research project between fiction and reality, involving at the same level text and visual representation.

Similarly to the “Romeo and Juliet” project, the “Choral Work” project has been worked on the idea of bringing into figuration an idea: that of chora. The project is a design for three sites in Tschumi’s garden for the Parc de La Villette.

The Eisenman - Derrida collaboration promised an unusually glamorous event. There was no better combination to be arranged for the needs and expectations of both in the 80’s. The first meeting was based on a mutual exchange of information on the projects in which each had recently been involved. Eisenman presented the “Romeo and Juliet” project. This was his latest intellectual achievement and he expected to go beyond it. But time will defy him. Derrida brought his manuscripts of chora to the table. Chora involved his analysis and interpretation of the classical notion of Chora as presented in Plato’s philosophical text Timaeus. When referring to Derrida, we should keep in mind that Derrida’s primary affiliation to architecture is that of a metaphor. His concern is the architectural reading of texts and not the possible applications of deconstruction to architectural discourse. That is why, when Derrida
is asked to contribute his philosophical theory to architecture, his radicality towards deconstructing texts becomes a conservatism towards buildings.

His contribution starts with the presentation of his theoretical project of the Platonic "Chora". "Chora is the place in general, the residence, the habitation, the place where we live, the country. It has to do with interval; it is what you open to give place to things, or when you open something for things to take place. Chora is not exactly the void, though it looks as it were void, and it's not temporal in the sense of a sensible world... It is not eternal either, in the sense of stable presence which is not altered by time... It is the place where everything is received as an imprint."

The notion of Chora was at once accepted and taken to be very promising. Its challenging interpretations through time, by several philosophers, made it more attractive to the architect's eyes, because it suggested its many possibilities and its flexibility in interpretations and, thus, in representations.

Derrida's interpretation of the Platonic Chora, thus, becomes the programme that will physically embody Tschumi's garden. At the first two meetings Eisenman avoids materializing the discussion, although there is an intense expression of the need to elaborate on the programme, to check its potential in the physical world. Eisenman resists working within this process in a manner that would follow a conventional method of design. Rather, he is more interested in the description of the process itself as a philosophical or even scientific method - what I would describe as a "mental game". Thus, he holds the discussion for some time in an intriguing exchange of thoughts between fiction and reality, mythos and logos.
TL: You have to go through all three, and the meaning, chora, lies in-between. It is not the thing itself.

JD: Chora is the openness, the chasm.

PE: I do not think it matters that ordinary Parisians understand everything, but they must realize that they are in the presence of a textual activity, a simulation. They should sense something else and feel dislocated. This is the important thing - the dislocation from the ordinary expectation of what is garden. It will be like reading Finnegans Wake for the first time.

JD: You have to be amazed by it.

PE: That's right, you have to be amazed. The second point I wanted to add is that besides avoiding figure/ground, we are also trying to avoid a typical typology, such as the maze. That is why we are working with the quarry, which does not belong to the traditional architectural typology.

When we dig up a particular stone, it comes from a particular location; its meaning is in its specificity. So when we move a stone, we leave a gap, a presence of absence of that stone. We have not disturbed the earth, we have not imported anything, we are merely building by rearranging what is there, using the material of the earth. Of course, we have to invent what that earth is - it could be brick, stone, glass, etc. It will be made of materials that come from the earth, which we will pile up in certain ways so that the traces, the gaps, the markers and layers of textual activity will be clear. 10

The concept of Tschumi’s project derived from that of Eisenman’s of 1978 for Canareggio in Venice, which in turn had drawn its references from Le Corbusier’s design for the hospital of Venice in 1965. Neither of these projects was built. Le Corbusier’s project superposed a regular grid on the irregular urban tissue of Venice. Eisenman in an effort to keep the memory in his project for Canareggio adopted the grid which he prolonged at the neighboring site and kept it as a trace of the past in the future. He placed his objects, following this grid; massive objects deprived from any relationship to human scale. Finally, a diagonal cutting the site represents the fourth dimension of the unknown past and the opening possibilities of the unknown future.

10 ibid. fourth meeting of Peter Eisenman, Thomas Lesser and Jacques Derrida in New York, 3 April 1986
Consequently, Tschumi's project consists of a square 120 meter grid of extending throughout the 55ha of the park. The crossed diagonals and a series of curved halls and irregular spaces are juxtaposed on this grid. Following Canareggio, 33 buildings cover the grid in the form of folies, having the size of a house and the function of restaurants and recreational spaces.

TL: Here are Venice, the Canareggio project, Tschumi's project and the La Villette site at their original scale. One thing we discovered is that the distance between the grid elements in Tschumi's project is exactly twice that in the Canareggio project. Then, we scaled the grid squares in Peter's project up to the size of the squares in Tschumi's and we discovered that there are twice as many Tshumi squares, even though they are twice as far apart. In other words, the density of Peter's elements is half that of Tschumi's. When we scaled Peter's squares down to Tshumi's smaller squares, we discovered that the exact opposite is happening. Now, the density of the elements in Peter's project is exactly double that of Tschumi's.
Thus, when Tschumi asked Eisenman and Derrida to participate in this project by designing a small part of the garden, they considered the relations between the previous projects and felt strongly that their proposition would be a superposition on that of Canareggio and that of Tschumi’s. The new grid keeps the same dimension with that of Venice, but when reduced at the same scale, it is double the size of the Venice project. Eisenman and Derrida placed the diagonal axis of the Venice project on top of Tschumi’s diagonal axis; they are the generative lines of the houses’ rotations. Some of them have been inserted in earth in order to evoke the idea of the past, others at the ground level represent the present and the future is signified with the height given to the rest. The site has been conceived as a mold that carries negative and positive imprints of the past and the future.

The story that generates the project is again an intertextual narrative which uses three pre-existing projects relative to the authors and site:

PE: In this case we also have three texts: Bernard Tschumi’s, Jacques Derrida’s and Peter Eisenman’s, which is not yet given. Interestingly, each of these is a text on a text: Bernard’s can be seen as a text on mine for Venice; mine will be a text on Jacques Derrida’s; his is a text on Plato’s Timaeus. We therefore have both a closed and an open circle. Derrida opens the circle, changing it to a spiral. But the process will be as much conditioned by Tschumi’s text as by Derrida’s.

What is interesting me as I read the “chora” text is that I feel that I was actually making “chora” before I knew about it. The Romeo and Juliet project is a case in point. There is something there, a level of correspondence, perhaps a misreading. What we may want is to write an in-between text, one which connects Derrida’s chora with Tschumi’s Eisenman.12

One of the stated goals of Eisenman and Derrida, as already mentioned, is to write a text-in-between. Their collaboration remains at the conceptual level. Eisenman is in charge of the design. Derrida tends to refrain from expressing possible visual representations of his conceptual ideas on chora. In the
end, when he is asked to design a kind of sculpture that would confirm his own participation at the project, he denies any sort of affiliation with architecture. Instead, Derrida's great concern is positioned on the reader. How would the reader be able to read this text while he walks in the park?

JD: So, okay, let me be the La Villette Socrates. Socrates will then ask questions and will want to understand how this multiplicity of layers and levels of text could become not only an architectural object, but something more. How can it become something specialized, in which a reader, trained or not, could receive? Or, how does it train what will be the pedagogy, so to speak, of our training a new reader? What would this training be in terms of architecture? The pedagogy will take place at the site, the reader or visitor will have to be trained by what we are going to do, trained to read, to interpret, and perhaps to write a new text. We won't call this newspaper architecture, but it will have that effect.

PE: Its meta-purpose will be to train new readers, perhaps even training them to write. Now, that possibility is very exciting.¹³

TL: Do you remember Peter’s discussion at our last meeting of the levels and layers of time and place? Well, what I did was to set up a scheme with four elements - the site of La Villette, Tschumi’s project, the site of Canareggio in Venice, and Peter’s project there. I then arranged these four elements vertically, one on top of the other, and elaborated them through their four possible permutations. By letting its horizontal level represent a different time as well as a different condition of solid and void, form and receptacle, a system was created in which each element is related to the others in various conditions of past, present and future, absence and presence, and materiality: solid or void.

As you can see, the first column of the diagram, which shows Tschumi’s scheme and La Villette as presences and Peter’s scheme and Venice as absences, represents facts as they exist relative to the site. So, we will not build that column, but the other three, “fictional” columns. For example, in the next condition, we have Venice as a future for Bernard’s project and La Villette as the present for Peter’s Canareggio. So, in this permutation, Bernard’s scheme is the influence on Peter’s scheme. Each column contains a different fiction, created by different ordering of the four elements in the horizontal conditions of presence and absence, solid and void.

PE: That is correct. The three columns represent the three sites, and, as you can see, at each site there are always two elements in the present, one in the future and one in the past.

JD: Where is present?

PE: Always in the middle. The top row is future, the bottom is past, and the middle two are present.
Let me try to explain the operation of scale in this scheme. The first column shows the two sites and two schemes at real scale, which is never the case in the fictional columns. So in the second column, for example, Bernard’s scheme and La Villette are at actual scale, while Venice at the top and Peter’s scheme at the bottom are at different scales.\(^{14}\)

In contrast to the Canareggio project, the Eisenman/Derrida project for La Villette contains figurative elements including traces and reconstruction of the ancient walls of Paris and of the
slaughter house that existed within the site before Tschumi's intervention. The superpositions made by Eisenman and Derrida connected the differences between past, present and future: Paris and Venice, their project for La Villette and that of Tschumi, the project of Tschumi with that of Canareggio and that of Le Corbusier's hospital, the ancient French and Venitian slaughterhouses, life and death, the urban idea and the park idea, the city and the place, the house and la folie.

TL: Everything that is underground, negative form, has a reading as a receptacle, either past or present. It depends on how deep it goes into the ground. The present has solids and voids, the past has voids, and the future has voids. Perhaps we can find a better analogy, a better way to read the system diagramme.

Let's look at site one (column 2). Venice, which appears at the top, is scaled up, is solid, and is the highest. It is the future plan. The only part of Venice which you will see is the canal of Venice as a wall, three or four meters high. Bernard's scheme, the second element in the column, is at full scale, since it is in the present, and solid, but it only comes a little bit out of the ground. The notation we are using for present is a little bit up or a little bit down. La Villette, the third element in the column, is also in the present, but as a small void. It is a receptacle, as in its superposition it is both the wall of Paris and the canal.

Peter's scheme, the bottom element in the column, is the past, and is a deeper void. In the next site these things will change as per the permutation in the next column, in terms of scale, solid and void, registration and so on.

PE: It is not important that anybody understand this scheme. It is by virtue of the notations that it will be seen as a text. Walking through, people will begin to see the differences.

JD: To change their minds.

PE: You have a ground plane, and you have these shaped cuts in the ground plane at a certain height, as well as objects above the ground plane at a related height, let's say one meter. But as in archaeology, the deeper one digs, the further into the past one moves, and conversely, therefore, the higher above the ground plane, the further into the future. So the negative pieces - the past - and the solids of the future could be at a depth/height of three meters. We can arrange it so people will be able to walk down into the excavations as well as up on to the objects and walls. We could also use coloured materials: red for the pieces that Tschumi and I shared; blue tile or gravel to simulate water, and so on. If we colour some of the solids blue, we would have a reversal of water and wall. This would be the physicality of the three sites, using the theoretical scheme we've discussed.
What I think we are trying to do, which is already present in the Romeo and Juliet project, but which has become clearer to me through our discussions, is to drive a wedge between metonymy and metaphor as the dialectic poles and suggest an aperture which could be referred to perhaps as allegory or analogy. Our work on these three sites is an attempt to dislocate the notion of metaphor and metonymy through a dislocation of time and place. What I mean by that is the following: site A will be a place which has a presence of site A but will also have another time and another place in it, as will sites B and C. So each of the three sites will contain its own presence as well as its own absence of presence in a continuous relationship. Site A will contain the absence of B and C; site B the absence of A and C, and so on. Each site will have the absence of the other sites as a trace - in one sense
the memory and in another the future. The viewer will always have presence, memory and immanence, so that there is always a dislocation of the directionality of the narrative. The visitor does not understand at site A the conditions of the traces of sites B and C, but when the visitor gets to those sites, he or she realizes that they have both a memory of where they have been and an anticipation of the future. Then, upon arrival at site C, the structure closes in a sense, because you have the presence of memories of past and future. However, these tenses, these past, present and futures of the sites, can themselves been displayed in different chronological times.

The concept of time and place dominated the discussions. One recognizes the importance of elaboration of these notions as the meetings proceed:

PE: Let me be specific about the idea of different times. We are talking about La Villette in 1867, when an abattoir occupied the site of the park, about Paris in 1848, before the abattoir, when the walls of the city occupied the site, and about Paris in 1968. We are also talking about the time of Tschumi, the time of Venice, and the future: the superposition of Tschumi with the past suggests a trace of the future.15
The notion of the multivalence of time introduced in the scheme through temporal dimensions - past, present and future - identifies the generative model of Eisenman's work, which is evident in both projects. It signifies Eisenman's major shift from a-historical structuralist formalism to historical interpretations of language in architecture which strikingly place the subject and the object within history. The historical activity identifies with the Derridean notion of différance. Différance, as already has been stated, introduces the notion of historicity of language. The function of time destabilizes the relationship between language and meaning. Similarly, in "Choral Work" the notion of time makes impossible a clear demarcation of boundaries of presence and absence, representation and origin, reality and fiction.

Now, let's talk more about place. Each site will contain, through superposition, a part of the other sites, as well as the notion that A, B and C are one site at a different scale. The three can thus be read as a whole, as a unity - as A with pieces of B and C, B with pieces of A and C, etc. Each site speaks of another scale of activity, so there is also the site of Canareggio, which was itself the site of an abattoir, as well as other places which operate parenthetically. We can bring in other places in the superposition at differing scales. Finally, and this is tricky, we can say that each site is a tissue of three layers, in which tissue 1 interacts with tissue 2 at another site, and so on. I can conceptualize it, but to demonstrate it for you will require us to build an extraordinary model; it's very difficult. These three tissues superpose and interact with each other so that if you pull one tissue out of site A, it interrupts sites B and C. There is thus neither time nor place, but analogy.

JD: I understand, at least conceptually, though I cannot visualize it.16 When both Tschumi's and Eisenman's projects are built, then one will understand whether it is possible to perceive all these dimensions of non-places loaded with the fictions of memory and future. As both Eisenman and Derrida confessed visualization of the conceptual ideas was very difficult, if not impossible.

In both projects Eisenman pushes the logic of representation to
its limits. He, who always testified the process of his designs through the rationality of logic, now acknowledges the impossibility of our senses and perceptions and wants to go beyond it. He deals with architecture, which involves a great deal of reality and not with art. This is the crucial point of these projects. Eisenman, although aware of this difference between the architectural project and the work of art, decides to project himself to the limits and investigate the possibilities of architectural representation as well as its symbolic and spiritual meanings.

The method he uses is that of scalings. He argues that this is not a measuring device. However, the reader has his doubts. It may not be a measuring device during the process of designing the project, but if the final project claims its own reality and place within the built environment, it definitely needs a measuring device. Eisenman’s scaling process has been criticized as being a totalizing one, although he generally attacks totalization in any form. Eisenman argues that his scaling process liberates architecture from its traditionally totalizing limitations of the aesthetic and the representational; his scaling system is motivated by other criteria.

Scaling proposes three destabilising agents: discontinuity, which confronts the metaphysics of presence; recursivity, which confronts origin; and self-similarity, which confronts representation and the aesthetic object. A presence is a physically real form, whether a solid, such as a building, or a void, such as space between two buildings. If architecture recognises only presence, it will admit no discontinuity. In scaling, discontinuity differentiates absence from void. Absence is either the trace of a previous presence, it contains memory; or the trace of a possible presence, it contains immanence. In its most reduced sense, recursivity is the elaboration of self-same forms, for example, a square, divided into four squares. Recursivity only confronts origin when it is in a condition of self-similarity. Self-similarity refers to anologic repetition and not to geometric mimesis usually found in an aesthetic object.

Strictly speaking discontinuity, recursivity, and self-similarity are mutually dependent aspects of scaling. They confront presence, origin and the aesthetic object in three aspects of the architectural discourse: site, program
and representation. the first aspect which is confronted is the idea that site is a reality containing only presence. to privilege “the site” as the context is to repress other contexts, is to become fixated on the presences of “the site”, is to believe that “the site” exists as a permanent, knowable whole. Such a belief, as has been discussed, is untenable today. By treating “the site” not simply as presence but as both a palimpsest and a quarry, containing traces of both memory and immanence, “the site” can be thought of as non-static. 17

But, nevertheless, scaling is totalizing: first, because it is structured as a closed narrative entirely determined by origin and end; and, secondly, because of this it prohibits textual openness and indeterminacy. Thus, with scaling Eisenman seeks to replace one totality, traditional design, with a new and different totality.

Nevertheless it still keeps its deconstructive (if we may use this terminology without referring to a specific style but to a methodology) qualities as a design process. “Scaling plays not only with architectural design motive, but with aesthetics and representation, with scale, solid and void, simultaneity and materiality in such a way as to stay within the tradition of architectural design while exploring the possibility that design processes can produce something other than the discreet, unified and universalizing whole. Scaling is an effort to respect and play with the becoming symbolic of the arbitrary. Not, of course, the truly arbitrary, which does not exist; scaling does not aspire to invent new forms out of nowhere. Rather it produces a more playful disposition of the sources of the symbolic-reference, scale and so forth. It seeks to subvert: the autocratic and authoritative relationship of the word over the object, figure/ground relations, the hierarchy of scale, the hierarchy of solid versus void, the privilege of the ‘now’ of perception and the traditional presence of the architectural whole. In short, it seeks to subvert all of the bastions of architectural totalization without simply negating these issues.” 18

17 Peter Eisenman. Moving Arrows, Eros and Other Eros

18 Jeffrey Kipnis. Twisting the Separatrix, p.15
Model in Definition

Eisenman’s methodology is described in the following diagram:

- Theory outside architecture
- Theory for design

Choral Work
- Text design

Moving Arrows, Eros and other Errors
- Derrida as participant

Eisenman posits the two projects to differ from each other. However, this long term goal has not been achieved. Behind the model an inherently rigid rationality hinders the roads of intuition and imagination which could lead to the desired creativity.

The “Romeo and Juliet” project generated a new start for Eisenman’s intellectual investigations. The project, a submission to an international competition of ideas in architecture, became a critique of previous modernist, formalist projects of negation in art, and a statement towards a new unlimited reality. Its conceptual framework and representational format, a mixture of texts and drawings in a collage pattern were innovative, a notable mental exercise in architecture. At the “Choral Works” project Eisenman intended to make a new statement for architecture. He collaborated with the French philosopher Jacques Derrida. The intellectual exchange in their discussions was very promising. However, the inspiration was never traced on Eisenman’s drafting paper, defeating the initial goals.

According to the model Eisenman uses a theory external to architecture, namely Deconstruction, which provides the initial
conceptual givens. He reads Derrida and explores architecturally the deconstructive possibilities of *différance*. The project is in process. He reflects on the potential of the theory by appropriating it into architecture.

The first step of appropriation is at the level of writing. Eisenman expresses his thoughts on the process of the project in a text. The text serves as a reflection of thinking. This reflexivity serves at once as a medium, the method, and the foundation by which Eisenman grounds the theoretical impetus of the project. The text becomes the reflection that signifies the process that takes place between the subject as an intelligible and knowledgeable agent and its image not as reproduced by a mirror on a polished surface, but as a transformation from a cognitive reality to a pragmatic one.

The second step demarcates the transition from writing to designing, from text to drawing. The process is in flux. Eisenman is working in team with his designers. He provides them with the text containing his written ideas and they respond to the ideas in drawings. They meet again and they reflect on the relationship between text and drawings. They keep the parts that are considered as successful interpretations of the text and remove the rest. The text may change, it is not considered as a stable factor which initially contributes to the design. It is part of the design process and is open to additions, transformations. The results can be hardly predicted during the design process. As Jeffrey Kipnis said: "When Peter has been most successful, ..., has been when he has abandoned a single goal and given himself up to a process."

In "Choral Work" the text is an account of the collaboration. It is Derrida's contribution to the project, reflecting sometimes conspicuously, sometimes ironically tensions and disagree-
ments. The differences may be circumscribed in the separate intellectual/creative fields of the two collaborators. Derrida working within the field of philosophy was interested in seeing the deconstructive commitments of the philosophical discourse on architecture. The project would legitimize his claims that the best example for deconstruction may be found in Architecture.

The word “Deconstruction” has an immediate appeal to architectural discourse. It seems to designate some kind of architectural operation. Derrida employs this architectural connotation in his writings. But when it is transformed to a methodology, one would argue that architecture resists Deconstruction.

A brief summary of deconstruction as given by Jeffrey Kipnis in his analysis for the Parc de La Villette project, “Twisting the Separatrix”, clarifies questions of what this recently so fashionable concept of deconstruction is: “Above all, deconstruction is possible only because it is always already occurring. What is new about it, what gets named with the new name ‘deconstruction’, is a new respect for the instability that is always already at work, that is irrepressible and yet that every totality, radical or conservative, and every scene of stability must attempt to repress, to disrespect. Architecture is a major test for deconstruction precisely because it is a scene of the proper and a scene of stabilities unlike any other - physical, aesthetic, historic, economic, social and political”.

But what sounds awkward and creates a lot of doubts in the possibilities that deconstruction opens to architecture is the fact that Kipnis right at the beginning of his analysis give in a manifesto style the general motifs of deconstruction for architectural design: “Do not destroy; maintain, renew and re-inscribe. Do battle with the very meaning of architectural
meaning without proposing a new order. Engage in no reversal of values aimed at an unaesthetic, uninhabitable, unusable, a-symbolic and meaningless architecture. Rather, destabilize meaning. To destabilize meaning does not imply doing so towards any new and stable end, thus it cannot mean to end meaning nor change meaning. Obviously, neither does it mean to conserve a “true” meaning. To destabilize meaning is to maintain (a respect for) all of the meanings which get meant as a necessary consequence of the congenital instability of writing. “One does not declare war: another strategy weaves itself between hostilities and negotiation.”

Instead, Derrida never attempted to describe a specific deconstructive model for architecture. He sees Deconstruction’s possibilities in Architecture in a broader philosophical sense. Deconstruction cannot be an architectural metaphor. It not only deconstructs the construct as the word connotes, but it deconstructs as well “the strictly architectural construction, the philosophical construction of the concept of architecture. The concept is governed by the model both in the idea of the system in philosophy as well as in the theory, practice and teaching of architecture”.21

On the other hand, Eisenman is the architect. His expectations from this collaboration summarize a long trip and agony in architecture. The need of the architect to build must always embody complex organizations and contradictory meanings than merely function and shelter. Thus, he seeks for non-traditional design methods that will produce another architecture.

I would argue that Eisenman’s retrospective reflection on the final results of the “Choral Works” project does not accord with
the designer’s expectations. At the Parc de La Villette Eisenman intended to make a new statement for architecture. The statement would provide the architectural community with new speculations. This time he felt that he could get the needed inspiration from philosophy. He collaborated with Derrida. Unfortunately, the inspiration was never traced on his drafting papers. Nevertheless, the transcripts of the dialogues of this collaboration between Eisenman and Derrida merit attention. There lies hidden the thirst for inspiration and the dramatic frustration of both protagonists. Now, Eisenman realizing the incompleteness of the project is clever enough to edit a book on the project, including all discussions and confrontations between the architect and the philosopher. He aims to displace the significance of the project from that of drawings to that of the dialogues between the philosopher and the architect.

Eisenman, obviously, is biased in this collaboration. Derrida has his own role in the act. In a Greek tragedy, he would be the Deus ex-machina whose role is to solve the inconsistencies. Conceptually the project is meant to be a critique of the basic architectural tendencies towards anthropocentrism, aestheticism and functionality. Eisenman expects Derrida to answer these questions.

PE: What is exciting on this circumstance is that you are going to provide the crutch for me to overcome the certain resistant values that I constantly face.

This could be considered as a naive intention, because although philosophy talks about these fundamental problems, its achievement till now has been to open these questions; there is no way of stabilizing, fixing some answers in the time of acceptance of the other and its possibilities. Thus it must be assumed that Derrida will not play this game of concretization of wisdom.
Instead, his role is to leave the options open. Otherwise, one would be disappointed and would question his contribution or his consistency to his profession.

First of all, let us see how fruitful this collaboration has been. Because “though the relationship produced exactly what it was prepared for, it is not clear that it produced what was anticipated. In this sense it might be said that the event was fecund but not fertile; from it come offspring but not progeny.”

Jeffrey Kipnis. “Twisting the Separatrix”, p.3

Thus, the collaboration was a fortunate meeting in its testing of the possibilities of a clear and definite discourse between text and design or in a larger sense on a questioning of rigid disciplinary boundaries that separate philosophy and architecture. On the other hand, it was unfortunate in its results. However, had it been successful, it would most probably be disappointing for us to see how easily these boundaries can be dissolved, cutting through all resistances, habits and vested interests and based only on a friendship between an architect and a philosopher.

The setting of the team and its infinite discussions oriented the process of design inevitably towards conceptual architecture. Everything seemed to be perfectly set up. There were numerous ideas. In the course of the discussions, there was a general agreement on the main concept and its underlying meanings. What was then the problem? I will define it as the missing of the magic click.

The click which would allow the transcendence from writing to designing to be done; the click that is the source of happiness and release for the architect when it is there, but may transform into a frenzied nightmare in its disappearance; the click that is
the mode of translation from ideas to forms, from meaning to space, from critical conceptual representation to visual aesthetic representation; the click, that finally in the process where everything is scientifically organized, planned to avoid possibilities or eliminate the statistics of a failure, is the intuitive factor introduced which provides the last touch, the identity of the project, the signature of the author.

Thus this missing click became the nightmare of the project. This absence was the impetus for the already mentioned tensions and disagreements. Apparently, the scene was perfectly prepared. The actors had to perform intuitively. But the lack of authenticity in the process proved to be misleading. The architectural result was a standardized project. This was imposed for the following two reasons:

At first, Eisenman stuck on his previously defined method of scalings.

PE: I don't want to repeat Romeo and Juliet; I never repeat a project. I want to push past, beyond, in order to find the mistakes. I would like, for example, your thoughts on what was missing from Romeo and Juliet, so that I can push further. We have to push one another, just as I am pushing you towards providing a structure, a formal analogy of your text.

JD: For the moment, I have nothing to say about Romeo and Juliet. If you force me to compare the Romeo and Juliet project with this one, I would say that it is still very historical and emotional, not naked enough. The atmosphere of chora is naked; there is no love, no story; it's desert.  

Secondly, Derrida readily accepted the method of scaling which in any case reflected his historical interpretation of his philosophical project - chora. The analogy was strong enough to be endorsed. “Everything happens as if the yet-to-come history of the interpretations of chora were written or even prescribed in advance, in advance reproduced and reflected in
a few pages of the Timaeus ‘on the subject’ of chora ‘herself’ (‘itself’). With its ceaseless relaunchings, its failures, its superimpositions, its overwritings and reprintings, this history wipes itself out in advance since it programs itself, reproduces itself, and reflects itself by anticipation. “

There is no doubt that the design process and final project is inscribed within Eisenman’s work of the 80’s. In its final gesture the garden clearly carries Eisenman’s signature. He does not allow Derrida to intervene, though they initially had agreed that it should happen.

The disjuncture and conflicting interests are subtly shown in Derrida’s text that accompanies the drawings and becomes very clear when Eisenman said in our interview of November 1988: “I love Jacques. He loves me. But we did not collaborate. I learnt a lot from him. The notion of chora did not appear in the Parc de La Villette. It will show in my following projects.”

The project could be read as a superposition not only of projects but of texts. If we assume that the Derridean Chora does not appear in the Choral Work, or that the drawings are not the real product of this collaboration, we could easily argue that there is no telos in this project, it cannot be considered as a complete project. Not because it did not fulfill its initial goals, but rather because it is conceived as open-ended process. It is another mental game that resists a specific interpretation which would unify it, would close the circle in a totalitarian perspective. It is a discussion on the possible interactions between philosophy and architecture, architecture itself, architecture in philosophy, architecture of philosophy and a great example of their resistances. Derrida, while engaged in this collaboration with Eisenman, felt himself to be too strongly the philosopher to
assume any architectural responsibility. He was, therefore, as he said to Jeffrey Kipnis, “resistant to architecture while at the same time hoping, no doubt, to be more of an architect than Peter - in other words, to inspire Peter to architectural works, that is, to be at the origin of and responsible for [their] work in common...there was, within the sincere and mutual friendship of this collaboration, a war, a ruse, a strategy of resistance and denial.”

Although he is a philosopher, he feels very strongly the work he is engaged with, that of deconstruction, has architecture as a principle target and he reflects on these questions of strange coincidences: “The architectural writing which interests me is not compatible with the dominant philosophical and architectural tradition. All of my work, thus, can be seen as if I have become a philosopher and a philosophic deconstructor in order to liberate an architectural writing which had not been possible. I am not saying that I can now write such an architecture, but that I perceive myself as writing in a discursive form which is analogous to the architecture of which I dream, an architecture which has been repressed and forbidden.

How can I begin to describe this architecture which I know of, but do not yet know?”

Thus, a constant questioning of these issues will produce a second project parallel to that of the design. The parallel project is composed of a series of superposed texts: Plato’s Chora, Derrida’s Chora, the transcripts, Derrida’s text “Why Peter Eisenman Writes Such Good Books?”, Jeffrey Kipnis’ “Twisting the Separatrix”, a book that is now edited in Eisenman’s office. All texts unconsciously develop a noticeable mode of writing, based on a kind of Derridean tradition of writing organizing their data on redefining positions, meanings, incentives, signatures, authors, coincidences, metaphors, metonymies, allegories, margins, frames, readers, time and place.
From Structuralism to Post-Structuralism:

the temporal dislocation of history
Structuralism, post-structuralism and Deconstruction emerged from linguistic theories that developed in the beginning of 20th century. A brief reference to these theories is important for a better understanding of Eisenman and contemporary theories. I will first describe the shift from Structuralism to post-structuralism and point out parallel patterns of evolution in Eisenman’s work. The question of history and function of time will be identified as the key-concept which allows the shift to take place in both cases. The analysis will also provide theoretical tools for a more extended investigation of the way in which architects criticize architecture and other architects. Taking interpretation as a means of criticism, I shall identify its emergence from post-structuralist theories first developed in the United States.

Structuralism, post-structuralism and Deconstruction are leading philosophical movements that pose problems of redefinition, complexity, refinement, plurality, diversity, and methodology. They project a new mode of thinking that shake traditional modes of scientific thought. As a result, extensive initial work is necessary in the field of contemporary criticism before we can proceed with research on a specific project.

Structuralism characterizes French philosophical thinking in the 60’s. It found wide recognition in the United States and in the 80’s it waned within the frame of, or in parallel to, post-structuralism and Deconstruction. Post-structuralism and Deconstruction may be seen as evolving from structuralism. It is true that post-structuralists commonly claim no affiliation with structuralism; in their minds their practice is not based on any kind of analogy, opposition or reaction, to structuralism. Nevertheless, it appears that post-structuralism develops structuralist formal possibilities in specifically defined historical, political, social, economical environments. Even by virtue of
their location in place and time, an inherent affiliation is implied. Post-structuralist thought significantly transforms and enriches structuralist activities by introducing the notion of time and history, thus locating and dislocating structuralist thought in a dynamic place and time as opposed to a static synchronic moments. The boundaries between structuralism and post-structuralism cannot be clearly defined. However, post-structuralism promotes interaction, plurality and contradiction which produce new meanings, new relationships.

Linguistic Theories and Semiotics

In the study of language Ferdinand de Saussure opposed the inherited view of language as separate units, words, each of which possessed a separate meaning. This traditional view required a diachronical, or historical, dimension which subjects the linguistic unit to observations and change. Saussure's study rejects a substantive view of language for a relational one. It is not a diachronical study, but a synchronic one, which stresses the structural dimensions of language while repressing its historical dimensions.

Saussure considers the whole of language in premising two fundamental dimensions: that of langue and that of parole. Langue is the sum of all verbal images shared in all individuals. The relationship between langue and parole separates the social from the individual. Parole is individual, active and intelligent. One has "to make explicit the system [langue] which underlies and makes possible meaningful events [parole]. He is concerned with the system as a functioning totality [synchronic analysis]; not with the historical provenance of its various elements [diachronic analysis], and he must describe two kinds of relations: contrasts or
oppositions between signs [paradigmatic relations] and possibilities of combination through which signs create larger units [syntagmatic relations]”.\footnote{ibid. p.22}

Saussure constructs his linguistic theory around the concept of sign.\footnote{ibid. p.22} By taking the linguistic sign as the norm, he argues that all signs are arbitrary, involving a purely conventional association of societally delimited signifiers and signifieds. The essential approach of the study is to separate the signified from the signifier of the sign, because the link proves to be arbitrary. Consequently, there is no stable relationship between meaning and language or between object and language. Saussure in his analysis of the linguistic sign establishes two agents which define the formation of the sign: the social forces and time. He insists that they are inseparable. Social forces encourage the perpetuation of linguistic signs. Time refers to their change. But, the two facts are interdependent: “The sign is exposed to alteration because it perpetuates itself. That is why the principle of change is based on the principle of continuity, it implies varying degrees of shifts in the relationship between the signified and the signifier.”\footnote{ibid. p.22} The implications of the proposed theory destabilized the whole Western philosophy based on the rationale and acceptance of the inseparability of signifier and signified as a given. Language is not examined within a context, but is considered a structural element, a code, a system.

Linguistics’ contribution to other disciplines in the humanities and social sciences was, according to Jonathan Culler, “that without opposing the notion of causal explanation, they can shift from a historical to an ahistorical perspective and attempt to describe systems rather than trace the antecedents of individual events; it is not to discover temporal antecedents and link them in a causal chain, but to specify the place and function of
The bond between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary. The word arbitrary also calls for comment. The term should not imply that the choice of the signifier is left entirely to the speaker; I mean that it is unmotivated, i.e. arbitrary in that it actually has no natural connection with the signified.

Principle II: The Linear Nature of the Signifier
The signifier, being auditory, is unfolded solely in time from which it gets the following characteristics: (a) it represents a span, and (b) the span is measurable in a single dimension; it is a single line. ...auditory signifiers have at their command only the dimension of time. Their elements are presented in succession; they form a chain. This feature becomes readily apparent when they are represented in writing and the spatial line of graphic marks is substituted for succession in time.

Ferdinand de Saussure. Course in General Linguistics, p.65.

Jonathan Culler. The Pursuit of Signs, p.30

Malcolm Bradbury. My strange Quest for Mensonge: Structuralism's hidden Hero, p.5

Saussure’s theories introduced a new discipline, that of semiotics. If one wants to weigh the significance of semiotics, one need only consider the way in which research and writing in the humanities and social sciences are affected by the presence of a new articulation of knowledge; new objects, questions or criteria. Semiotics is the discipline which seeks to describe the underlying systems of distinctions and conventions that enable objects and activities to have meaning. It stresses the role of symbolic systems in human experience and thus reorganizes our perception of the world from that of autonomous objects to systems of relations. In the 1960's the evolution of semiology - that is, the formal and structural analysis of language - gave to language the top priority among theoretical investigations in the humanities and social sciences.

The emergence of semiotics was enough to mark the end of signification, the end of the possession of a proper sign. "It is proving beyond doubt that we find ourselves in the age of the floating signifier, when word no longer attaches property to thing, and no highbonding glues can help us. It discloses to us a world of parody and pastiche, quarry and quotation; and having shown us all this, it teaches us how to enjoy it." This message continually transforms the epistemological foundations of knowledge and science.

Thus, we can no longer be sure in the names we attach to things. Once the concept of sign has been destroyed and displaced, it
has lost any coherent meaning. There is no one meaning in the sign. Instead, it projects itself onto a plurality of meanings open to manipulation. Writing becomes a language game, one which, according to Derrida demonstrates the difference that exists between the internal reality of language and the external reality of the world. This is shown in the ambivalence and plurality of his readings.

From Structuralism to Post-structuralism and Deconstruction

Structuralism has its precedent in the Saussurian linguistic model and semiotics. Based on the arbitrariness of the link between the signified and the signifier which destabilizes the relationship between meaning and language, it studies the systems of language. Structuralism can be defined as a method of analysis in "which individual elements are considered not in terms of any intrinsic identity but in terms of their relationship within the system in which they function." It examines the structure of these systems from an impersonal, scientific perspective. It is committed to large-scale projects, such as elaborating a grammar of plot structure or the possible relationships between story and discourse. Thus it traces a formal analysis of language in an ahistorical context. It is concerned with a synchronic analysis of the function of language and generation of systems that define different meanings.

Post-structuralism and Deconstruction are suspicious of the closed system within which structuralism operates and the "apparent ease with which structuralism 'decenters' the subject." Having spread quickly in Europe and America, they put under question the incompleteness of purely formalistic, ahistorical analysis that structuralism was offering. They devel-

6 "Introduction: posing the question" in Post-Structuralism and the Question of History, edited by Derek Attridge, Geoff Bennington and Robert Young, p.1

7 "Introduction: posing the question" in Post-Structuralism and the Question of History, edited by Derek Attridge, Geoff Bennington and Robert Young, p.2
Terry Eagleton concludes that post-structuralism represents a "hedonistic withdrawal from history" or even more a "liquidation of history." What is apparently under question though, is not the presence or absence of history, but as Jameson said "the crisis of historicity itself." Fredric Jameson, "Reflections in Conclusion" in E. Bloch et al., Aesthetics and Politics, p.198

opened out of historical necessity to reconsider and reexamine the project of structuralism. The re-examination occurs in the question of the concept of history. In a sense post-structuralism introduces history into structuralism; it activates the diachronic aspects of language which structuralism had suppressed.

History is the new consciousness. As an instrumental device, it conceptualizes phenomena in time and place, identifies relationships, locates ahistorical formations within their own history and dislocates them into new realms for the sake of a new history yet to be generated. As a hermeneutic device, the concept of history serves as post-structuralism’s agent to interpret reality. Post-structuralism inaugurates three temporal agents - past, present and future - in order to identify itself in history as a totality, while creating its own history. The function of time destabilizes the arbitrary relationship between signifier and signified, between language and meaning; this destabilization makes any relationship impossible. The temporal dislocation of past, present and future suspends the impossibility of meaning into memory, reality and immanence.

Criticism on post-structuralism’s unlimited affiliations with history allow numerous hypotheses concerning their relationship to emerge. An extreme hypothesis opposes post-structuralism against history. Although this assumption may question post-structuralism’s validity, post-structuralism develops a versatile organism which absorbs all contradictions, opens questions and reveals differences that may reject itself while simultaneously resurrect itself. Post-structuralism arises from its contradictory functions which never intend to resolve their intricacies.

Whether we can accept it or not, post-structuralism and Decon-
struction have dominated our lives. Their trends transcend the boundaries of philosophy and penetrate everyday life. They start with the questioning of hierarchies, which separate worlds and fields in categories. They use these fields as a means to present new ways and frameworks of consciousness and perception. Philosophy and science are not exclusive abstract worlds above all any more. Their relation to the real world is much more complex than simple exchanges of experience and paradigms for testing abstract theories. Malcolm Bradbury argues that structuralism, post-structuralism and Deconstruction "come along to complete the process, demythologizing, demystifying and deconstructing our entire basis of thought, and suggesting other ways to use it. They have required us to redefine, all our values and transform all our epistemologies, or at the very least to take a two-week holiday in the sun with someone we love very much and work out all our future priorities very carefully."

Their dominance is obvious in the way with which Bradbury portrays contemporary phenomena. "Where Existentialism was intense and heavy, strong on plight and anguish, Structuralism - Deconstruction, in keeping with the times, is clean absurdism or cool philosophy; it is laid back, requires no weighty back gear, and goes very well with Perrier water and skiing." His writing appropriates meanings of his penetrating critique and converts them to a style of writing. His ironic, unexpected tone becomes the medium which strongly depicts the transformations that proceed in thinking. There is a tremendous experimentation in writing. Meaning is not extracted only from the content, but also from the methodology and structure of the text. One's intelligibility is not only tested in the argument, but in the creativeness of expression and language as well.
Malcolm Bradbury. *My strange Quest for Mensonge: Structuralism's Hidden Hero*, p.4

For Barthes the distinction between work and text is made in different levels:
- "the work is a fragment of substance, occupying a portion of the space of books (in a library, for example); the text on the other hand is a methodological field."
- the text is a process of demonstration, and it is experienced only in an activity of production: "the work can be held in the hand, the text is held in language, only exists in the movement of a discourse (or rather, it is text for the very reason that it knows itself as Text); the text is not the decomposition of the work, it is the work that is the imaginary tail of the Text." p.169.
- "The text's field is that of the signifier, as opposed to the closed field of the sign in the work.
- "the generation of the perpetual signifier ... in the field of the text (or better, of which the text is the field) is realised not according to an organic process of maturation or a hermeneutic course of deepening investigation, but, rather, according to a serial movement of disconnections, overlappings, variations. The logic regulating the text is not comprehensive (to define “what the work means”) but metonymic; the activity of associations, contiguities, cross-references coincides with a liberation of symbolic energy (lacking it, man would die)"

"The text is radically symbolic: a work conceived, perceived and received in its integrally symbolic "It is also the philosophy that goes along with everything else we know so well now - our chiliasm, our apocalypticism, our post-humanist scepticism, our postmodernism, our metaphysical exhaustion, our taste for falafel. After all, we find ourselves, in these strange times, the children not just of the end of a bitter and war-torn century, in which the great hopes raised by the new science have turned sour upon us, leaving behind little but the invention of the pill and a few buildings by Richard Rogers, but of an entire millennium, almost a thousand years long, of Christian and post-Christian Western history."

This attitude does not mean that we have lost all hope. Instead, we are in a challenging position, where all options are open. However, now it is much more difficult to conceptualize the world as a totality or even more to identify ourselves within a specific framework. The enterprise becomes strenuous and one has to be selective and critical in the formation of the process of organizing knowledge and conceptualizing it in a worldly framework.

Structuralism provides the field with categories and concepts that can be applied in the activity of criticism and interpretation. Its contribution lies in the composition of alternative structural models. Such an attitude, however, generates complex relationships, metaphors and analogies, thus making criticism and structuring of the problems quite adventurous. The work of Roland Barthes serves here as an example of how structuralism and semiotics affected the realm of writing and criticism. In his work he instrumentalized Saussure's linguistic theories in a structural, semiotic analysis of literature. For Barthes the text carries more meanings than the author's meaning. Thus, the aim of criticism is not to reestablish the true meaning of the text according to the author's writing, but to unveil the hidden rules and the process of its structural method.
Post-structuralism and Deconstruction use structuralist models of criticism as leading forms on which they apply methods of interpretation. They activate the notion of historicity of language, language in context and time. The activity represents a diachronical analysis of an enterprise which emphasizes the notion of process - it being considered a structural, functional element.

To recapitulate, post-structuralism and Deconstruction employ the concept of history as well as undermine a structural specificity, which gathers structuralism under their umbrella. Post-structuralists defend their project as being autonomous and authentic by claiming no affiliation to structuralism. Instead, structuralism, because it rejects historicizing, opens itself to the critic and gives him the freedom not to make a pragmatic, historicist analysis of the project. The notion behind the displacement from structuralism to post-structuralism is the invention of something new from something existing. In the age of plurality one cannot oppose Derrida's statement which traces significant historical bonds between structuralism and post-structuralism: "...I am very mistrustful whenever people identify historical breaks or when they say, 'this begins here'...It is not a question of precursors - the notion of a precursor here would efface all the originality of the thing - but of recurrences which would not efface the singularity or the idiom of each text."

Language still prevails in its resistance to and oppressive power over literature. There is an endless exchange between language and literature. The language games, their expressive ambiguity, plurality and unidimensionality demonstrate a resistant attack of literature against language from the inside. The movement from structuralism to post-structuralism is a dis-nature is a text." It is structural, but decentered, without closure. The text is plural. It is irreducible to meaning, answers not to interpretation, but dissemination. Etymologically, the text is a tissue, a woven fabric. "The intertextual in which every text is held, it itself being the text-between of another text, is not to be confused with some origin of the text: to try to find the 'sources', the 'influences' of a work, is to fall in with the myth of fiction; the citations which go to make up a text are anonymous, untraceable, and yet already read: they are quotations without quotation marks." p.172.

- "The text... decants the work... from its consumption and gathers it up as play, activity, production, practice,... "Playing" must be understood here in all its polysemy: the text itself plays and the reader plays twice over, playing in the text as one plays a game... but... also playing the text in the musical sense of the term."

- The destruction of metalanguage... is part or the theory itself: the discourse on the text is that social space which leaves no language safe, outside, nor any subject of the enunciation in position as judge, master, analyst, confessor, decoder. The theory of the text can coincide only with a practice of writing." p.174. Roland Barthes, "From the Work to the Text", in Art after Modernism, Rethinking Representation

placement of interests from language to text, from linguistic code analysis to reading, from speech to writing.

In accordance with structuralism, post-structuralism redefines the role of the critic and the architect as authors and provides them with cognitive and linguistic options as alternatives to the classical notion of representation. I define these options as “allegory,” “metaphor,” “invention” and “recognition of the heteromorphous nature of architectural language as games.”

**Interpretation and Criticism**

My argument is based on the premise that “a good critical theory ... has its own kind of validity, not because of its scientific verifiability of its single propositions, but of the scope, precision, and coherence of the insights that it yields into the properties of single works of art and the adequacy with which it accounts for diverse kinds of art.”

Thus, “in this view the long-continuing war among critics, far from proving the futility of the critical enterprise, has in fact been fruitful, both in stimulating new kinds of poetry and in educating readers to aspects of art that would otherwise have been overlooked.”

Some reflections on the notion of criticism as they are projected in contemporary debates ground the intentions hidden behind the structure of my thesis. It is generally assumed that criticism must seek a comprehensive view of what it is doing, that it must try to attain an understanding of the fundamental principles which make it a discipline and a mode of knowledge, showing that it has other goals in mind.

After the 60’s, “the activity of criticism has become bound up...
with the sign and the debates of literary theory bear upon the possibility of mastering it. Criticism is the pursuit of signs, in that critics, whatever their persuasion, are incited by the prospect of grasping, comprehending, capturing in their prose, evasive signifying structures. Criticism occurs because the signs of literature are never simply given as such but must be pursued, and different modes of criticism can be distinguished by the accounts they give of this pursuit.”

These tendencies developed new modes of criticism both in America and Europe. They open criticism to the concept of the plurality of meanings and interpretations. New Criticism in America has been developed as an interpretive criticism.

The role and the status of interpretation has been the main task of recent reviews of critical and theoretical works. Recent criticism in the United States advocates that new interpretations validate or become the purpose of writing. Evidently, this attitude created a decisive impact on all developments in contemporary criticism. Interpretive criticism, according to Jonathan Culler, has been presented differently in America and in Europe. While in Europe it has been perceived as an intertextual reading, where “to read is always to read in relation to other texts, in relation to the codes that are the products of these texts and go to make up culture, in America it implied a self-contained encounter between innocent reader and autonomous text.”

Interpretation is manifested within two distinct categories: that of systematic poetics and that of systematic criticism of intentional interpretation. The former is catalogued as a criticism of ‘naive induction,’ because it tries to study individual works of literature without a proper conceptual framework. Even more it allows the notion to grow that “the critic should confine
Structuralism began to happen when language became an obsessive preoccupation of intellectuals: Could a literary work be at once an artefact and a commodity on the open market? Barthes maps something of the historical development by which writing for the nineteenth-century Symbolist poets becomes an intransitive act: not writing for a particular purpose on a specific topic, as in the age of classical literature, but writing as an end and a passion in itself. If objects and events in the real world are experienced as lifeless and alienated, if history seems to have lost direction and lapsed into chaos, it is always possible to put all of this in brackets, suspend the referent and take words as your object instead. Writing turns in on itself in a profound act of narcissism, but always troubled guilt of its own uselessness. Terry Eagleton. Post-Structuralism, Literary Theory: an introduction, p. 139.

Interpretation of an intentional kind uses a preconceived conceptual framework of certain categories as hermeneutic devices, which can be defined as theories of modes, symbols, myths and genres, “categories of experience basic to human psyche that allow in their application to discover the true or deepest meaning of literary works”.  

But the most important contribution of post-structuralist theories to the role of criticism starting from literary criticism and extending its influence to other disciplines is that “there is no clear division for Post-Structuralism between criticism and creation: both modes are subsumed into writing as such. Writing lends its expressive formulations of meanings, its flexible linguistic molds to manipulation. It becomes the fictive object which allows artistic desires and events to happen. It is “an end and a passion in itself” by virtue of its ability to transcend meaning and reside in the pleasure of writing and reading.

“For the structuralist, criticism is a form of metalanguage, a language about another language which rises above its object to a point from which it can peer down and disinterestedly examine it. But as Barthes recognizes in Système de la mode, there can be no ultimate metalanguage: another critic can always come along and take your criticism as his object of study, and so on in an infinite regress.” Criticism is not a supplementary happening in the original, main work. Instead, it is part of the process, it is distinctly located in time and it allows for its dislocation in history by interaction and regression. “If we think here of the role of the ‘critic’ or the ‘reader’ we can see that

it has extensively been to put an end to doubt concerning a work’s meaning, and therefore its worth - to offer the reassuring security of an explanation and an evaluation: in short, to return the reader from the uncomfortable and precarious position of producer of meaning to the easier position of consumer.”

Barthes denied the existence of true meaning in the text. By acknowledging New Criticism’s potential, he argues that criticism should not only be the reproduction of the text’s meaning, but a real production providing additional meaning to the work. The critic’s text is not a supplementary work adding to the main text’s literature, but it is compatible with the studied text, a new creation in the field of literature. The reader is involved in the production. He traces his knowledge over the text in a sense that Barthes in taking an extreme position will identify as: “the birth of the Reader be at the cost of the Death of the Author.” For Barthes, the critic is engaged in a dialogical relationship with the author which reflected the structure of the “intelligibility of our time”.

Today there is an uneasiness in confining ourselves to ways of criticism which imply a singular view. Our perception of the procedure of criticism, which usually hovers between undecidability and ceaseless dissatisfaction, designates interactive mental activities between the critic and the text, the text and the reader. If Deconstruction demonstrates a method of criticism, its position is “to resist the totalizing and totalitarian tendencies of criticism. It attempts to resist its own tendencies to come to rest in some sense of mastery over the work. It resists these in the name of an uneasy joy of interpretation, beyond nihilism, always in movement, a going beyond which remains in place, as the parasite is outside the door but also already within, uncanniest of guests.”

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22 Victor Burgin. The Absence of Presence in The End Of Art Theory, p.33


24 Hillis Miller. “The Critic as Host” in Deconstruction and Criticism, p.252
In my criticism, I benefit from the notion of interpretation, which gives me the freedom to work on a previous work, while not criticizing it per se. So, my critique of Eisenman’s work is not a critique per se. Instead it demonstrates a possible application of my interpretation of criticism in architecture. I would argue that my critique on Eisenman’s work supports the argument. While this analysis refers to his original work - Eisenman’s projects - it can be studied separately as a new creation. Even more, while it emphasizes its own value as a piece of work, it belongs to an open-ended process of the production which adds to Eisenman’s work. This activity presupposes the critic’s ability to invent new forms of writing that provide the reader with the adequate data which makes the interpretation clear. It suggests an interpretation of the case study as a constant interweaving between architectural and literary writing. This signifies an interaction between the critic and the practitioner. This interaction strongly suggests that both cross the disciplinary boundaries between criticism and action; it gives birth to new modes of creation. “The critic’s attitude should and more often be frankly inventive, in the traditional sense of invention so fruitfully employed by Vico, which means finding and exposing things that otherwise lie hidden beneath piety, headlessness, or routine”.25

From Architectural Criticism to Literary Criticism

Architects and critics have generally studied Eisenman’s work in detail for its significance in architecture and for the importance of his methodology. Without wishing to undermine the significance of these studies, I need to go further in my investigation and decipher Eisenman’s intrinsic goals, purposes, claims, rhetorical nostalgias and aphorisms. In the third chap-
ter, I draw my interpretation from Eisenman's intricate interplay between reality and fiction in his usage of history in both projects, in narrative and in drawings. In so doing I dislocate his fictive structures from their architectural house to their résidence secondaire, their literary house.

This shift from architectural criticism to literary criticism is made possible because of Eisenman's idiosyncratic way of practicing architecture. His involvement with architectural theory and academia engages him in a double enterprise. His practice of architecture must be reconciled with both architecture, as a cultural activity, and architecture, as Building. Through the manipulation of his ideas, Eisenman posits himself in the center of his activities and experiments. Metaphorically, he installs mirrors which reflect his image on his project. These mirrors reaffirm propriety, the post-structuralist agony of authorship and signature.21

My criticism is an interactive process between architectural criticism and literary criticism. It is a reflection on how the third element - the concept of history - organizes text and drawings, language and forms reflecting the subject in a creative process. Eisenman uses the notion of history in both projects. In the Romeo and Juliet project he reinscribes the three texts of Romeo and Juliet in a new textual and formal narrative. In the Choral Works he projects the participant authors including himself into the object. According to Lacan's theories of the self this is a narcissistic reflection - a reconstruction of the self. A fusion between the subject and the object appears in the formation of the object.

The active subject is not only reproduced as its mirror-image in the passive object, but the concept of the history of the subject

26 "Mirror on mirror mirrored is all the show". (W. B. Yeats, "The Statues", Collected Poems of W.B. Yeats, New York, Macmillan,
and its actions that mediates as a reflection and creates the object, unifies subject and object into a totality, through the medium of the process. The reference to history is the concept that activates the process. This process cannot be confined within the realm of architectural activity. It tends to transcend the limitations of the discipline by using a doubling performance - that of the reflection's reflection, the mirror's mirroring. Eisenman is not working within the realm of architecture anymore, but within philosophy and literature. He postpones questions concerning architecture for architecture's benefit from the realm of ideas.

If his work is not an architectural artefact, is it valid to be analyzed as a literary, intellectual event? If so, can we use established modes of criticism that refer to the work of literature, in order to analyze Eisenman's projects? Criticism in architecture, which borrows its tools from different fields outside and inside architecture, registers intentions, actions, concepts that would otherwise never been revealed. The shift from architectural criticism to literary criticism displaces temporarily Eisenman's work from architecture to literature. It is an intentional act that lasts as far as this paper occurs. The analysis demarcates the notions of history and time as elements that structure the dialectical relationship between text and drawings and project Eisenman's utopian dream between reality and fiction in architecture.

Although at this point this analysis has already reaches the final step, I would like to emphasize that this is the beginning of an investigation in its own terms. My interpretation aims to be a reappropriation of a knowledge to which the reader has already been exposed. Thus this implies an intelligible reader who is prepared to absorb the unexpected manipulations and interpre-
tations of the author. It is an exchange between the author and the reader through the medium of the text. Thus the chapter will be incorporated in the thesis as an instant along the open-ended process of the formation of the project.
résidences secondaires: le nouveau lecteur
The extraordinary richness of our society and the rapidity of historical transformations in the age of electronic storage and retrieval systems have changed our conceptual, social, political and economic values. Ours is a flourishing era for simultaneous exchanges between reality and fiction that fuse into everyday life. The relationship between reality and fiction has always been one of the main fields of investigation in art and literature. Investigations aspiring to discover some kind of Eternal Truth failed. Whatever relationship we are able to describe is never a fixed one but an evolving content in an intricate process of self-discovery and self-creation. The “subject” at the center of this investigation is a fictive structure.

The statement by Baudrillard exposes the schizophrenia of our times. He identifies our perception of space as mere sign which disrupts the balance between the real and illusion. Space is not experienced three-dimensionally in time; it has been substituted by its exchange value. Peter Eisenman identifies with Baudrillard’s statement and reevaluates space and time in his projects by rejecting anthropocentrism and experimenting on architecture as text. He searches for the as yet undiscovered alternatives to our perception based on established axioms, such as space, time, human scale.

In the 80’s Eisenman reconsiders his formalistic work of the 60’s, finding it restrictive. In so doing he introduces an Architecture-in-Between; an architecture which refuses to be what it is - space and time - but insists on being the concept of architecture, the new, the different, the other, something that was always there, but we have never experienced before, an “Alien” Architecture; an architecture which is suspicious of its materi-

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"Y a-t-il un pacte d’architecture? Un pacte initiatique celui qui change les coordonnées du réel et de l’illusion, cette ligne au-delà de laquelle les visiteurs (par exemple du parc de Tschumi) se trouveraient initiés à un autre espace, séduits par un autre objet que leur propre comportement quotidien?"

Avant, toutes choses étaient menacées par leur double, aujourd’hui elles le sont par leur résidence secondaire: Musée: résidence secondaire pour les œuvres. Parc: résidence secondaire pour les arbres et le paysage. Galeries marchandes, forums, etc.: résidences secondaires pour la marchandise et la valeur d’échange. Espaces de liberté, lieux d’expression multiple: résidences secondaires de la spontanéité et de la créativité. Minitels et roses: résidences secondaires de la sexualité. L’écran,
tous les écrans en général: résidences secondaires de l'image et de l'imagination.


"Is there an architectural pact? A pact that changes the coordinates of the real and of illusion, this line beyond which the visitors (for example of Tschumi's park) would be themselves introduced in another space, seduced by something other than their everyday experience.

Before, all things were threatened by their double, today they are by their "résidence secondaire": Museum: résidence secondaire for artefacts. Park: résidence secondaire for trees and landscape. Malls, forums, etc.: résidences secondaires for commodities and exchange value. Spaces of freedom, of multiple expression: résidences secondaires of spontaneity and creativity. Minitel rose: résidences secondaires of sexuality. The screen, all screens in general: reality but nevertheless expresses the problematic nature of contemporary public spaces, urbanity, culture, technology and art in a complete and intelligent way; an architecture which is fused into multiple temporal dimensions - that of the past, present and future - which "dislocates not only the memory of internal time but all the aspects of presence, origin, place, scale, and so forth;" an architecture which seeks to destabilize the object, which is suspicious of its existence; an architecture where the subject gazes at the object through a series of mirrors. The mirroring of the subject creates duplicates. Its reflection is the architectural product, the new formation.

Eisenman manipulates that concept of complex webs connecting reality and fiction, in order to expel truth from the house of history and to install fiction in its stead. Opposing the traditional focus on the apparently antithetical claims of truth and fiction, he renders his material into a blend of narrative and form. For Eisenman, fiction becomes the quintessential element for the construction of his project. Fiction is dispersed in both narrative and form, thus creating a network that unifies the project. Fiction and the fiction-making process are a central constituent of the truth of any life as it is lived and of any art representing that life. Reality is restored in a two-fold way in Eisenman’s project. The reality of the fiction is the intermediary level between reality and fiction. We can see it, we can read it. However, Eisenman’s art comes from architecture, which involves a discourse and a practice addressed to concrete reality - the built environment. Thus, he cannot dismiss reality.

Eisenman summarizes his new reality under the rubric of history. History is understood in a self-reflexive, self-critical way. It is his own history with respect to his previous projects and its endurance in time. He divides it into the three temporal
dimensions - past, present and future. It is his point of departure for the creation of the fictional edifice. The three periods of time - past, present and future - are the narrative medium for the complex interplay between reality and fiction. The past is the moment of history that is already there, that has existed. It plays the role not only of the precedent, of the already finished, completed act in its own time, but establishes the constraints upon, and the given for, the project itself. The construction of the past promises an adventurous event. Eisenman challenges reality - a prior reality through memory and imagination. Memory has the status of remembered fact. It cannot play merely the role of a convenient repository in which the past is preserved inviolate, always ready for retrospective inspection at any future date. Instead, the past as well as the future are constantly involved in an interplay to reveal the present.

Eisenman, as the narrator, in his textual interplay between history and time reveals literary aspects of architecture. His mixing of past, present and future depicts Eisenman’s new perception of history. We, then, must see what history does for Eisenman. Even though he uses the periods of time in order to give life to his argument, his arbitrary selection is not easily reconciled with our perception of history as a line in motion, where past, present and future cannot be defined or immobilized. Instead, they are inscribed by Eisenman in their own interrelated ephemerality. Eisenman succeeds in identifying himself and his project within history by claiming that it presents this specific present moment of action as always implying its own past and future.

In Eisenman’s projects, the core of truth is an existing narrative, a fiction; in the ‘Romeo and Juliet’ project, it is the play and in the “Choral Work”, it is Plato’s notion of “Chora” in his Threshold IV, p.72

maeus. The process of making the project, which is the foundation of a new reality, creates a new fiction. Selecting specific narratives, Eisenman no longer wants to offer a faithful and unmediated reconstruction of a historically verifiable past. Instead, he attempts to express a version of the historical act itself, in which the materials of the past are shaped by memory, imagination and intention to serve the needs of present consciousness. Present and future take the role of placing, absorbing, and embracing the dislocating fictions of memory and the imagination of the past. Memory and imagination become so complementary to the three periods in time - past, present and future - that it is impossible for the observer/reader to distinguish among them. The memory of the past has been elaborated through the activity of imagination in order to generate the celebration of history and fiction.

Between the narrator/architect and his texts/drawings exists a central point of reference, which is time itself - past, present and future. He anchors his work in existing texts in an intertextual relationship that moves beyond the meaning of each isolated text. It creates a new knowledge of the texts; their existence is suspended in illusion, in which the author projects his own understanding. His new work, then, becomes an event which, apart from being firmly located in the present, is a concrete linguistic structure made up from the interplay of the three original plays. Time becomes unstable because of Eisenman’s arbitrary use of it; it is a rhetorical linguistic illusion. It is the fictional element that creates a new discourse in the architect’s transformation of the texts (in “Romeo and Juliet”) and the projects and authors (in “Choral Work”). Their interrelation in the new narrative offers them a different validity. The architect pulled them out from their permanent residences - that of human consciousness as story-tellings or myths - and gave them a new
one - a résidence secondaire. He creates an illusion by appropriating past experiences in another spatial and temporal dimension. For example, in Baudrillard, primary elements such as trees displaced from nature find their "résidences secondaires" in parks; paintings or artifacts from altar to museums. Eisenman develops the concept of résidences secondaires one step beyond displacing space and time in a textual activity. Time - past, present and future - dissolves into a spatial displacement called "the present" and existing texts or projects dissolve into a new intertextual narrative, and then into space.

In the “Romeo and Juliet” project the multivalence of time unifies three different plays based on the Romeo and Juliet story. They are tied in their own intertextual totality through superposition of time and meaning. His text is the text of between. Its textuality comprises of incomplete fragments which will never return to their original condition of full presence. In the “Choral Work” the enterprise becomes an autobiographical act, where Eisenman places earlier projects beside Plato’s text and, in the process, creates significant new identities for his own work. But the meaning derived from this abstract exploration of universal laws and forms is nothing more than a mirror-image of the author himself. It is an invention which represents more the internal consciousness of the author (and his collaborator, Derrida - their aspirations, expectations, personalities) than the external reality.

In “Choral Work”, the interplay of the three authors and their projects establish its own historical presence and identity. Thomas Lesser argued that this interplay was inspired by a desire to devalue the importance of the author, to ignore his unique existence. I would argue that the reader perceives strongly the author’s presence at all moments, in textual and formal collusions, in real and fictive interplays.
History and time becoming metaphors for writing and designing are the instrumental devices that the author uses in order to produce a new order, a new theory, analogies, equations, models, hypotheses, myths and cosmologies. Language and form is transformed to a theater of possibilities where the author and the reader not only experience the act, but they experience the author as well. They experience the author not by touching or seeing him, but by experiencing his metaphors - these being text and form.

Eisenman undertakes a dialectical interplay between his own impulse to self-invention and the received model together with its surrounding culture. This interplay, subsequently, affirms the strong contract between the author and his emerging project. Although he claims that he intends to eliminate questions of authorship and erase his own identity, his unique textual method of playing with history and culture imprints his signature. We are not aware of this paradox as we read the “Romeo and Juliet” project. The contradiction of authorship becomes very relevant in the “Choral Work”, however. Its goal is openly stated. In the texts Eisenman and Derrida deny their authorship of the final project. They claim that they can obliterate themselves by bringing together in the same sites different authors and different projects. Even if the reader were willing to believe them, it would be naive not to take account of the act of the making of the project, which in itself implies an author.

If we want to analyze it further, Eisenman, as he continues to design the project, is not only the narrator. He conceptualizes a relationship between narrator, narrative and form that are consistently interdependent and linked. His intentional misreadings of realities in fictions, and his new rhythms of fantasy-form formations in reality recapitulate a new consciousness, an
extreme perception of the present world wavering between the
nostalgia for a lost consistency of the past and the stimulation
of the endless possibilities of the future.

I would in no case attempt in this thesis to draw some conclu-
sions appropriate for a biographical note on Eisenman. Thus,
I reverse its significance by arguing that Eisenman’s projects
are themselves a kind of autobiographical act; or, more generally,
the autobiographical act of a modern man confronted by the
burden of historical traditions and the a-historical awareness of
his increasing trans-cultural exposures. He re-writes the story,
stressing the ambiguity between the real and the fictional. This
destabilization of reality uses fiction as a device to stabilize,
locate names and actions in place that have already lost their real
meaning.

Here one may ask: “Does Eisenman’s method of design, to the
extent to which he manipulates historical material, discredit the
real nature of his project, or does it confirm to it?” If we assume
that reality has some fiction in it and fiction is in some sense real,
then Eisenman’s reality-fiction device seems legitimate.

History is manipulated by Eisenman to disperse the project’s
placement in time. The superposition of archaeologies - old
texts - erodes the uniqueness of the story, the flow of its mean-
ing, and the possibility of finding any isolated, clearly defined
structure. The use of the notion of history as the key concept in
the structure of the new narrative would imply an intention to
refer to some sort of chronological order. Instead, it promotes
an inquiry that rejects the traditional view of continuity in time.
Disruption occurs. Simultaneously superimposed periods of
time, which is Eisenman’s reality, deny a chronological order;
however, in fiction they keep their original, real continuous
sequence in time. Then chronological historical referentiality becomes a fiction again. But all hope has not yet been lost. Neither project endorses a pessimistic view of the reality of the world. Instead, Eisenman’s appealing fiction is unveiled within the present moment. Because he acts in the present, we can always isolate momentarily this moment of action and its reality. The diachronic and synchronic interplay of history in Eisenman’s project finds its predecessor in the structuralist binary opposition of the diachronic and synchronic relationship.

Eisenman’s insistent and obtrusive dramatization of the process of composition exceeds passive reconstruction of temporal dimensions and enters the field of prose. Eisenman’s intellectual statement of the 80’s - I consider the two selected projects as Eisenman’s intellectual, reflective work in architecture - can be seen as a reaction to the formalistic work which he started in the 60’s. The crucial change is in his use of the notion of history, which plays three different roles. It can be seen as an instrumental, a post-structuralist, or a therapeutic device.

History has been excluded from modernist projects and from Eisenman’s previous a-historical formalist experiments with linguistic analogies in architecture. In the 80’s, however, history regained its old respect in all fields, after the need to historicize the modern project. Eisenman thus reconstructs architecturally his own interpretation of history. History and the multivalent function of time becomes the instrumental device that conceptually unifies the process of the project and the idea of process as a method that is understood to be proceeding through time. History becomes the new concept, an autonomous, structuring recollection of temporal moments which composes the new fiction.
Even more, we could take an extreme stand and investigate Eisenman’s decision to base his entire project on the notion of history and its periods as a therapeutic device according to Freudian theories of therapy. Eisenman after having worked for 15 years on formalistic experiments in architecture, realizes the limitations of his project and the need for a new perspective on architecture. Reconsideration of the mechanisms that make architecture and its ideas implies a therapy and a recovery by introducing the new. Freud showed that man is capable of healing himself by a retreat to early experiences. The historical act could be a successful impetus of this notion of art as therapy. Has his project accomplished its therapeutic task, though? History has been transformed into a device which comes to exorcize the formalistic a-historical monsters of the past and create a new consciousness that is ready to reconcile the project with myths of fantastic infantile dreams. It is a recovery and a reflection. Eisenman becomes the writer, who uses narrative (in “Romeo and Juliet”) or projects and authors (in “Choral Work”) and their relative existence in different moments as an occasion to work out, re-write a particularly challenging aesthetic task. His enterprise is a convenient resource for the making of fiction.

Eisenman structures his fiction on a dialectical relationship between writing and design that is, texts and form. He uses analogy of texts and superposition on the texts in space to formulate his dialectic. Eisenman posits that his representational method confronts the traditional authority of architectural representation. He endorses the method of superpositions and scalings in order to disturb representation’s “singularity which mediates and separates text from object.” He claims that this activity unites figuration with discourse in order to create text. Very soon the prescribed method of transition from text to

3 Peter Eisenman. "Architecture as a second language", p.74
form proves to be deceptive. Eisenman’s reflection and grasp of adventurous opportunities is analogical transformation from text to form. In his fiction he operates as both the writer and the architect. As an architect he reads and then rewrites himself once again in space. In his reading of his own fiction, one would expect him to distance himself from his written work and act critically for his architectural transformation. If we assume that Eisenman’s goal was not only to resurrect the earlier text and make it alive but even more to transcend it, we may say of the “Romeo and Juliet” project that the enterprise was too immature to transcend itself. On the other hand, “Choral Work” revealed its full resistance to transcendence due to practical questions of materiality, function and finance.

In his description and execution of the projects, Eisenman intentionally avoids the creation of hierarchies. Entities and characteristic chronological states of past, present and future dissolve simultaneously in a playful network of analogies. What we extract from Eisenman’s method as a whole is like a double exposure in which he achieves a superposition of a complex binding of preexisting texts on an authentic memory or, at least, a nostalgia of them. In a hall of mirrors formed by the reflection of the previous authenticity of the texts, Eisenman envisions the reflection of the present condition that forms from his activity - that of superpositions and analogies. He uses historical elements to construct a dynamic synthesis of individual existences - the texts. Their being as a series of contiguous and interrelated episodes brings forth an affirmation of their potential existence in the present as well as their enacting power.

Presumably, his projects remain as statements at an intellectual level and are not really concerned with practical architectural matters such as scale, measurement, space and time. Instead, he
invents scalings up and down. Scalings that enclose a fiction and formally re-inscribe it in unending, interrelating images. His method, thus, becomes a statement of another reality or the possibility of the existence of another reality - a reality which is beyond the limit of our conventional expectations made up from human needs and cultural desires in time. It is this breaking of conventions that gives freshness to the hidden rationale of the project. The process of scalings creates a memory of a fiction in a series of juxtapositions. Its validity is in the symbolism it achieves, which is new to architectural representation. The process is that of transformation from one world to another, from that of the narrative to another narrative, to site, to representation.

There can never be a recovery of the former narrative. The original meaning of the narrative is disrupted by its new functioning. What is real is the present condition. If the notion of the present is considered as motion, it cannot be immobilized. One returns to the past in order to penetrate the mystery of one’s origin. In a time when presence and origin are severely under question, Eisenman preaches for their extinction, as he unconsciously digs out man’s archaeology to unveil their riddle. Thus, he superposes myths upon existing myths, fictions upon existing fictions, in order to build his “ideal” reality. He writes a new mythology for man in which he sees himself, locates and grounds himself historically. His work is an unconscious imperative for individual motivation toward self-re-creation.

Finally, memory disappears as a device. Eisenman has written his own story, his own fiction and is again ready to rewrite it, not in words but in forms. If his use of history is intended as a game between reality and fiction, his text and drawings are devices intensifying the agony of unclarity hovering between
the two contrasting realities - reality and fiction.

Eisenman’s projects operate on two fundamental conceptual levels: first, the subject matter - that is, the visual representation in drawings, and secondly, the interplay between fact and fiction.

First, the subject matter ceases to be the most important element in his design. It has an intellectually and emotionally passive role in his restless formal explorations of his narrative. His written fiction is translated to another formal fiction hardly defined by its own reality. Eisenman’s visual representation of the narrative based on his concept of superpositions and analogy avoids traditional representations of light and shadow, mass and void, flatness and depth. Instead, he employs a diagrammatical representation in different layers depicted by colors and axonometrics. These modes of representation culled from everyday experience and perception of space have been used primarily to reproduce the narrative in form rather than merely as a technique gleaned from formal or functional questions of space. In the process of designing Eisenman initially considers space as a whole solid or a whole void. By using transformations and dissections he re-creates the narrative traces in voids or solids, accordingly. Space loses its integrity, changing from a discrete whole to ambiguous, interdependent fragments. The function of form is to counteract the process of habit encouraged by routine everyday modes of perception. Eisenman invents methods that allow for a reverse of a common process in making architecture. That is, a process which “creatively” deforms the usual, the normal. His goal is to restructure the ordinary perception of visual realities, to design a “new” reality which will replace the no less fictional one which we have inherited and to which we have been accustomed.
Secondly, Eisenman’s projects reveal an interplay between fact and fiction - the true and the false components in an array of illusionistic devices that range from a fictive narrative to actual pastings of the selected projects upon superposed different scalings. Eisenman’s concerns in architecture as a text - the so-called textual architecture - is a preoccupation with techniques by which form is read as language. He intends to specify and differentiate his technique from its ‘ordinary’ perception as architectural language, to free it from traditional perspectival and anthropocentric theories, and wishes to direct it to a philosophical, conceptual investigation of ideas in architecture. Metaphors in text always allow for changes and free interpretations. Thus, once again, the ghost of form tries to escape its house in Eisenman’s projects and find refuge to its résidence secondaire - the text.

“I do not believe in sketches. Architecture is textual”.

In Eisenman’s work in order to understand form we have to read his text. Form is treated as a viable communicative instrument that translates and depicts the text. Form is not autonomous nor self-expressive. It depends on the text. It is non-verbal, rhythmic, associative and connotative, and stretches language and text from the textual to the visual realm. Thus form no longer only pertains to the architectural realm. Its transcendence from a visual to a textual expression is inscribed in the field of literature. If so, architecture then suspends itself. Form alters its original activity from being a mode of ordinary architectural language to a mode of experimental language.

Eisenman’s preoccupations in the 80’s share a good deal of common ground with post-structuralist linguistics by introducing the notion of historicity in his work. He is fundamentally interested in the work’s content, message, its history, its socio-
logical, biographical and psychological dimensions. He is em-
phatically concerned with the “how” and the “what” of archi-
tecture. It is a synchronic and diachronic interaction of text and
form, which differentiates these two projects from his previous
experiments.

I propose a reading of Eisenman’s explication of “Text” in
comparison to other formulations, such as the formalist, herme-
neutic and structuralist. Eisenman borrows these notions of
“text” as a means, a device, to displace architecture to literature,
to dislocate architecture to text, to formulate his résidences
secondaires. Although his method may open architecture’s
other possibilities, it is still limited to a preconceived strategy.
It is a strategy that transforms text to architecture rather than
reveals an architecture as text. Eisenman uses the notion of
architecture as text in order to dislocate architecture, that is to
dislocate the natural, conventionalized language of architec-
ture.

At first, he considers text not as mere narrative but as represen-
tation of structure of form of narrative. He incorporates the
structuralist notion of text as a structured node in a system of
signification. This is an attempt which disregards the semantic
aspects of work by looking only at syntax. This implies and
unravels a second level of reading of the text with the recogni-
tion of the semantic or content aspect of syntax/structure/form.
Such an analysis takes its paradigms from Krauss’ article5. She
introduces the critical notion of text as emerging from work
when it is no longer accepted as a “transparent” medium
through which meaning is conveyed. The text relates to the
notion of the mechanism, the device, the apparatus of meaning
and to understand a work as text is to consider it as a device. The
device reveals all the aspects of its making: how it is made, its

structuring, its implementation, its materials.

Secondly, Eisenman refers to Barthes' notion of text as a network as opposed to work as an organism. He claims that text is a differential network; a fabric of traces referring endlessly to something other than itself. Eisenman in endorsing Barthes' positions on the notion of text, considers that text as network is a fundamental condition of displacement in architecture. It is neither a complete work nor a metalanguage; not a "stable object" but a process.

Eisenman's text focuses on the nature of the narrative. In the interrelations of texts and projects he employs poetic modes of structuring the narrative. He does not simply describe a story which is a basic succession of events, but also structures a plot. Plot is a mode of writing in which the story is creatively deformed.

Consequently, what do these developments of the idea of the text mean for architecture? What is an architectural text and how can it inform a strategy for dislocation?

Both texts, R&J and the dialogues, challenge the traditional notions of architecture/presence/here and now/space and time/human scale that meant univocal meaning.

For Eisenman, text is the means that exceeds the immediate response to visual representation.

Eisenman acts in an idealist world of architecture, where he structures his criticism on an unique abstract interpretation of reality. The loaded realities of the modern world engage him in the search for a new imagery that combines reality and fiction. But his tendency to dig out the origins of words in order to redefine reality and fiction leads him to a complex system of
interrelated symbols which end up being mere rhetorical constructions.

To recapitulate, Eisenman’s résidence secondaire dissolve into words, unspeakable syllabes confronting reality. Its fictive structures can stand still only in their symbolic forms preaching for the rescue of symbolic spaces which are about to disappear. Eisenman uses text as a device for imaginary interplays between reality and fiction. His intentions are quite clear. He wants his architecture to be read in order to be seen. He wants his architecture to be dispersed in a fiction of multiple realities between words and images. He wants his architecture to transcend traditional aspects of solid and void, presence and absence, flatness and depth and not to be dependent on human scale. His texts are promising and polemical. The drawings, however, still depend on the text. Architecture fails to be architecture of text-in-between or textual architecture, it is architecture of text, a visual analogy of text. It fails to give fresh, multiple connotations of other realities that may exist outside text and its verbal meaning and associative value in form.

His technique of representing space retains its multiple meanings, thus implying that no one way of representing a thing is absolute. However, this implication is problematic. The passive transition from texts to drawings reduce the importance of the drawings. The drawings do not reflect the dynamism of the texts. They do not speak. His drawings reflect the need for a new spirit, but architecture still resists this transcendance. Instead, he uses text in a two-fold way. Text as a participatory agent in design and text as a justificational means. Text is the programme and its critique. Eisenman hovers between the two spheres of architectural practice and architectural criticism. He acts and simultaneously theorizes himself. He interrogates his
process, analyses it, justifies it, locates it in time and dislocates it in space. Architecture has postponed its form and function. Architecture is suspended in words, space and time.

Eisenman in his texts and drawings writes his own history. His history is not a recovery of the lost past; it is a metaphorical act of restoration, interpretation of the past projected into the future. He re-inscribes the past in a second resurrection of his identity, his own emancipation in a new identity; whether this identity is valid or not, it does not matter; it is another reality.

The reinscription of himself in history and time can be seen as an enactment, a re-enactment and an extension of earlier phases of identity formation through language and form. “The act of composition may be conceived as a mediating term [agent] in the whole enterprise, reaching back into the past not merely to recapture but to repeat [the laws, canons and rhythms of prior] formations, and reaching forward into the future to fix the structure of this identity in a permanent self-made existence as literary text [and architectural project].” It is, thus, not a passive, transparent record but a decisive act of self-definition in the present time. Present activity suggests an always evolving pattern, where memory of the past and imagination are re-inscribed into the future leaving open spaces for the past of the coming future to be inscribed in its own contemporary consciousness.
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