Cairo, khōra and deconstruction:
Towards a reflexive reading of place

A Thesis Submitted to the
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Abstract

Cairo, the Egyptian capital, has grown into a complex, multicultural, and high density city. The dynamics of which is reflected through her everyday realities in public urban spaces, which show a growing tension between the different involved parties, formal/ informal, private/ public, administration/ people, and place/ people. Simultaneously, Jacques Derrida, among few other researchers, questioned the misrepresentation of Cairo-space through the monolithic image of the historic Islamic city, which helped to isolate her from reality and develop the complex and dynamic patterns of relations and tension. Accordingly, we approach the paradox of the misrepresentation of the city and question the role of architects and urban designers towards the city space, as they lack the tools to approach these multiplicities and dynamics.

 The main aim of the research is to develop reflexive reading strategies of place, with special reference to Cairo-space, which operates between multiple projections of place through both abstract theory and contextual realities. Accordingly, we draw on a multi-disciplinary approach that considers both theoretical and empirical data. We approach different theories of place developed through post-structuralism with particular emphasis on deconstruction –khõra–;social studies of place particularly environmental psychology, that intrinsically operate within an architectural background. Accordingly, we consider a case-study of public space in Cairo to reflect on the reading strategies rather than develop a reading of Cairo-space.

Consequently, we are adopting a reflexive methodology to approach the dynamics of our multidisciplinary approach, and which operates on four levels of interpretation; data construction through theories of place and the case study in Cairo; primary interpretative framework of place which was developed through a preliminary reading of theories of place; critical interpretation which considers deconstruction reading strategies; and finally, self reflection that re-approaches the reading strategies critically through 'khõra'.

Acknowledgments

Brenda Galvan-Lopez, Rittirong Chutapruttikorn, and Tamer Ahmed. Lastly, I offer my regards to all of those who supported me in any respect during my study.

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Abbreviations

CCBA	Cairo Cleaning and Beautification Agency الهيئة العامة لنظافة وتجميل القاهرة
CSUS	Cairo School for Urban Studies
CTA	Cairo Transportation Administration الإدارة العامة لمرور القاهرة
NOUH	National Organization for Urban Harmony الجهاز القومى للتنسيق الحضرى
PPS	Project for Public Spaces
r	reality
R	Relations
SEM	Space, Event, Movement
SGAP	Specialized Gardens Administration Project مشروع إدارة الحدائق المتخصصة

Prologue

This thesis was developed through an anti-positivist perspective, and so does not follow a traditional thesis structure. This prologue, therefore, introduces the research structure and layout in order to help readers navigate the arguments through the chapters.

The research was developed through an inductive approach that starts from specific observations and moves towards more general theory adopting open-ended questions to explore 'place', which is the main research subject. This setting is presented in the flow diagram on the margin. Simultaneously, the research aims to develop 'reading strategies of place' rather than studying a specific phenomenon; a case study for example. The thesis follows a basic inductive research process: highlighting specific observations that developed and guided the research definition: the four instances introduced in chapter one – the start point –; exploring the literature 'similarities and consistencies' on these observations: the preliminary reading of place in chapters two, three and four; introducing a primary hypothesis or theory: the primary framework of place developed in chapter two; exploring the introduced theory in chapters six, seven and eight; and finally the development of general theory: reading strategies of place in chapter nine.

The researcher is also inserted as a research subject following a post-structuralist perspective. The post-structuralist approach acknowledges and encourages the link, communication, between the researcher and the text. The researcher both influences and is influenced by the research, rather than the limitation to an exploration of the researcher and/or his/her experience as a research subject. '...the author's life is inscribed in the text which becomes a part of the author's life, consequently shaping and re-arranging the author's life after the text' (McQuillan, 2001). At the same time, the insertion of the researcher in the text helps the development of the reading singularity of the research in space and time, '.which is influenced by the discourse, the context and the author. This singular reading displaces the traditional unity of meaning. The tracing of the researcher through the research content also implicates the research methodology, reflexivity, which 'requires the investigator to reveal his or her epistemological assumptions' rather than being interested in achieving an objective perspective. This is reflected in the research plot, which is developed through the researcher's observations concerned with her place, her city, educational and professional background as an architect, and finally her interest in philosophy and theory emerging from the 'lack of a body of literature in architecture theory in Egypt as well as the Arabic region'.

The research setting
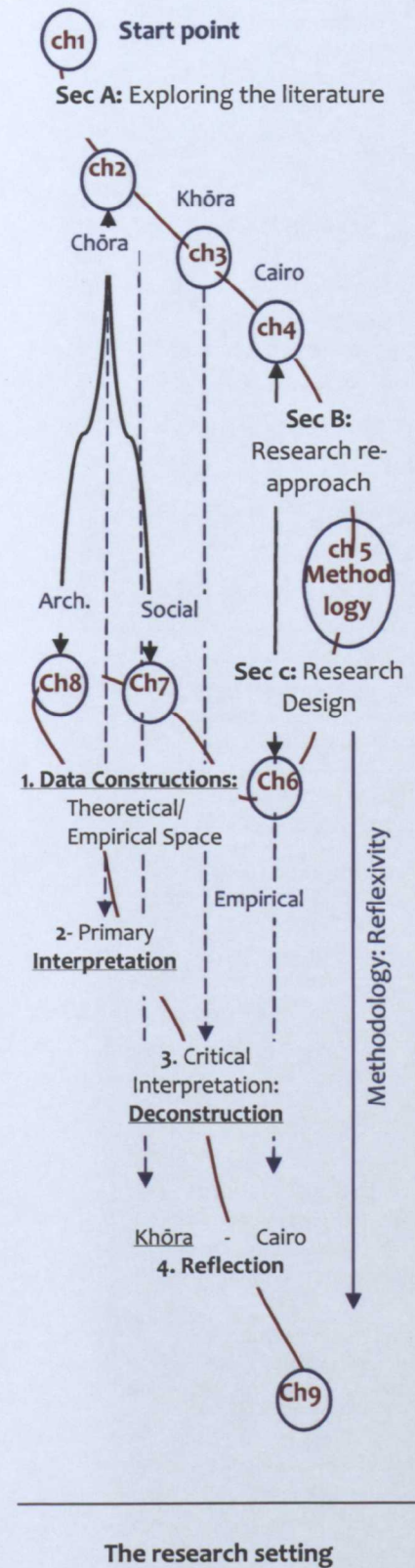
1 Introduction (A start Point)

Qs: What is 'place' in philosophy, social studies and architecture? How is Place approached?	Qs: Cairo space/ theory?

2 Approaching Place	3 Khōra-Deconstruction	4 Cairo Space

Reading Place

Chōra-to-Khōra   Cairo

Approaches to Reading Strategies

Primary framework of Interpretation: PLACE	Critical Interpretation: Deconstruction

RE-visiting: Questions; objectives
Towards a reflexive reading of place between multiple projections of place, **Post-Structuralism**

5. Reflexive Methodology

1. Data construction; 2. Primary interpretation; 3. Critical interpretation; 4. Reflections
(Thinking Diagrams)

7.Social space 8.Arch. Space	6. The Cultural Park for Children

Data Construction:
Setting: Discourse of place
Actors: Author/ Reader - Designer/ User - Narrator/ Commentator

Reading Strategies:
9. ...(Starting Points)

Towards Reflexive reading of place

The research thus continues to explore 'space/ place' through both empirical data, particularly Cairo space and theoretically, particularly 'Khōra'; both of which are emphasised as the research subjects through the methodology self-reflection stage, rather than the researcher or the researcher's experience. Finally, 'the main aim of the research is to develop a reflexive reading of place...', and through the research development the researcher becomes the reader, or a reader in the long tradition of reading place...

A reflexive reading of place, refer to the second diagram on the margin, was conceived through four instances that involved the reading of urban space: in architecture theory and practice; and Cairo's public space; a cultural event confronting the traditional reading of Cairo space perceived through the reflections on Cairo of French philosopher Jacques Derrida; and a demonstration of the lack of literature on theories of place in the region. These instances present the initiating observations of the research aim, objectives and questions; as well as establish the research particular context: Cairo, discourse: theory of place, and author: the researcher. Consequently, these specific observations are developed into general theory through the research. These instances also helped the recognition of the complexity and dynamics of the place and questioned the different approaches to reading place in architecture, social studies and philosophy. At the same time, the controversy of Derrida's reflection is highlighted, together with the possibilities of the associated project of deconstruction to help development of a new reading approach to place in general and Cairo in particular.

The Introduction is developed in **section A** to question the different readings of place, and the possibilities of their integration through the recognition of their similarities and differences. The development of the concepts of *'space/ place'* –*'Chōra/ topos'*– in philosophy and social studies is investigated in chapter two, with particular emphasis on their links with architecture theory and practice. This review emphasises the resurfacing of neo-platonic chōra, particularly through Derrida's deconstruction reading of place and Plato's work, which he refers to as **Khōra** acknowledging her proper feminine name, in chapter three.

This **preliminary reading** of place, as the research subject, also reviews the approaches and strategies to reading place. A **primary frame of interpretation** of place, together with **deconstruction reading strategies** are introduced in chapters two and three respectively, and are developed through the research methodology in chapter five. A preliminary reading of **Cairo space** is presented in chapter four, which attempts to provide a first layer of interaction between the reading strategies developed in chapters two and three and the empirical data of the city's public space. This reading of place reviewed the development of the concepts of 'space/ place'

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–what place?– and the strategies of reading place –How?– as well as a reading of Cairo urban space.

This rich literature review then necessitated a re-think – **a turning point: section B** – which revisits the development of the research in terms of: problem definition, questions, objectives and the implication of working within a poststructuralist background. The introduction and discussion of the **research methodology** is thus presented in chapter five; reflexivity, which reviews the 'reflexive methodology' which adopts a four part methodology involving data construction, primary interpretation, critical interpretation and self reflection. Self reflection is developed through the study of place as the research subject, particularly 'Khōra' and 'Cairo', which explores the margins of the presented reading of place. The primary and critical interpretations are developed through the primary framework of place, and through deconstruction reading strategies as presented in chapters two and three respectively. The data construction stage and critical interpretation are introduced in **section C** and developed through chapters six, seven, and eight. Data construction involves three discourses: on Cairo, social space and architecture space, all of which were introduced in the preliminary reading of place. The construction of each discourse involves actors, and the author-reader relationships of each space are introduced through each chapter/ space. Accordingly, the **re-, de-, construction** of these discourses identifies the multiple actors involved and their reading/ representation of place through the discourse, and develops through successive internal reflexive instances as these multiple actors reflect on place and on each other... The primary framework of place presents a primary reflexive instance which aims to develop itself as it approaches the interpretation of each discourse. The deconstruction critical strategies introduced in chapter five between the reading of meaning and event re-approaches these interpretations.

The developed **reading strategies** seek to develop an integrative reading of place through recognition of the singular (influenced by discourse, institution, etc.); and temporal (influenced by reading perspective in space and time) attributes of a reading, thus approaching a relational perspective that goes beyond the paradox of place in-between social and physical space, identifying each in terms of relationships oscillating between the conceptual, the physical and social content, and the context (political, economic, etc.). Finally, I propose a reading of place through sequential fragments of people, place, context, mind, author/ reader, etc. Each of these fragments could operate at different scales between conceptual space and reality; and the sequential reading helps the recognition of multiplicity and the dynamics of place as a transformational process without hierarchy or classification.

'A doctor can bury his mistakes but an architect can only advise
his client to plant vines'
(Frank Lloyd Wright (1953) in Fullan, 2007)

This research reading thus grew to acknowledge the continuing interest in studying space/place since the time of Plato (360BC), an interest that has oscillated between progressions and re-readings of his *'Chōra'*, and has portrayed a singular reading of place through **architecture and urban space** that aims to continue the tradition of re-reading space/ place; to be continued by others in the future...

Cairo: **my city**
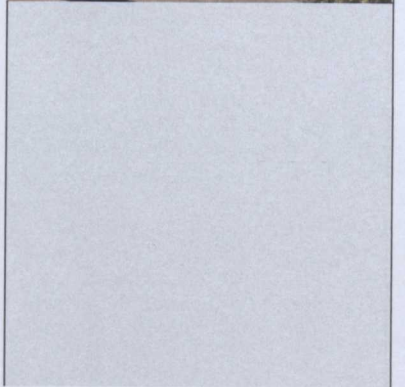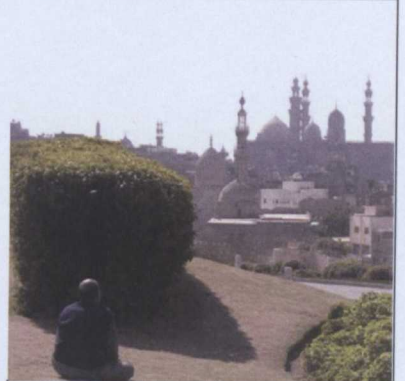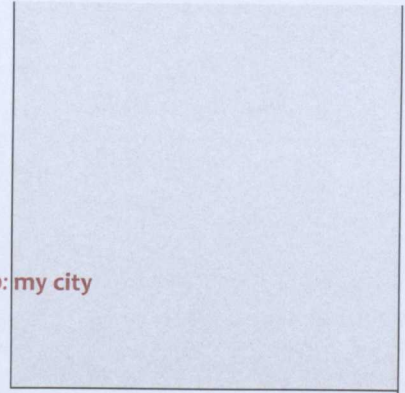
What if **Derrida** were an **Egyptian?**
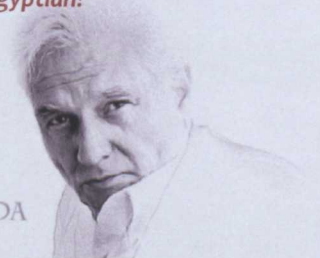
JACQUES DERRIDA

What is the place of **Egypt** in **deconstruction**?
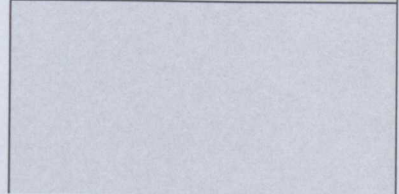
Chapter I: Four Instances...

1 Four Instances...

1.1. Towards Place

The research approach was developed in between four instances: a question, a quotation, an affiliation and an observation, each of which is a reflection on Cairo public space, and on architecture theory and practice of place. These instances draw attention to the difficulty of approaching the observed chaos in Cairo space, and the need to develop architecture theory in the region. Accordingly, these reflections helped to develop the research problem, its aim and objectives, by questioning how we could work through theory to approach the issue of Cairo space. In this chapter, we represent a review of these instances and the development of the research approach. Finally, the thesis title and research outline is explained.

1.2. Four Instances

My research idea was developed in between four instances that do not follow any particular order. These instances involve a question: what if Derrida were an Egyptian[1], arising from a consideration of the visit of the French philosopher Jacques Derrida to Cairo in 2002. This visit developed a considerable deviation from the consensus reading of Cairo in the literature; Derrida's reflections on the city, its image, history and social realities, and what he described as the misrepresentation of the city holds the potential for an alternative reading. At the same time, a quotation by the architect and theoretician Bernard Tschumi (2001a) is highlighted, emphasising the hybrid reality of architecture. This quotation helps in defining the architectural place in between idea and reality, architectural concept and social realities. Simultaneously, this is complemented by an exploration and observation of Cairo space which reflects the multiplicities, chaos and conflict between Cairo and Cairenes[2] (Cairo people) and raises questions about my role as an architect in perception of this space. This question helped to develop the final

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[1] Taken from Geoffrey Bennington (1992), 'Mosaic Fragments: if Derrida were an Egyptian'.

[2] 'Cairenes' is used by many ethnographers and writers to refer to people of Cairo; Cairene is the English pronunciation of the Arabic word (Caheryeen – قاهريين) which means the people of Cairo.

instance; my personal affiliation to architecture theory and philosophy, which was deepened by the evident lack of literature on architecture theory concerning the region. This section hence traces and explores these instances.

1.2.1. A question: *what if Derrida were an Egyptian?*

> *'Hieroglyphs and pyramids, Thot and Isis, colossi and the Sphinx:*
> *Egypt repeatedly returns to hunt Derrida's writings. From the*
> *two (or three) great Plato readings to the great Hegel readings,*
> *via discussions of Freud and Warburton, Egyptian motifs*
> *regularly appear at important moments in the texts.*
> ***What is the place of Egypt in deconstruction?'***
> (Bennington, 1992:97)

Jacques Derrida, the French philosopher, was born and brought up in Algeria (Bennington and Derrida, 1993), an Arabic, Islamic, and Middle-Eastern country. His name is forever associated with his deconstruction project (Hill, 2007; Collins et al., 2005). Accordingly, his work is controversial; it is considered both the *'most significant in contemporary thinking'* and a *'corruption of all intellectual values'* (Collins et al., 2005:1). Derrida visited Cairo in February 2002 where he gave a series of lectures at the Egyptian Supreme Council for Culture (Al-Ahram-Weekly, 2000a). These lectures and his reading of Cairo were predictably controversial, and accordingly developed a strong opposing debate. This section presents a review of Derrida's lectures about Cairo, his ideas and comments, which questions the traditional reading and representation of Cairo space.

a. A radical reading

> *'Unhappy he who claims to be his own contemporary*
> *Derrida does not: I would imagine him, rather, with Plato and a*
> *few others, at Heliopolis[3], in Egypt'*
> (Bennington and Derrida, 1993:8)

---

[3] 'Heliopolis', which means the 'eye of sun', 'Ain-Shams' in Arabic has been the name of the city since the time of the Pharaohs, Today the city is known by both names Heliopolis and Ain-Shams.

6

On his visit to Cairo, Derrida gave a series of lectures[4], reflecting on philosophy, deconstruction and the humanities in general, and more specifically with reference to Egyptian identity, especially through the lecture *'Egyptian References: Origin, Orientalism and theory of Deconstruction'*. Derrida therefore engaged with the Egyptian audience through a representation of the perspective and conceptions of his work as well as through his reading of Cairo, and Egypt in general. The lectures were given in French; although many Egyptians are well-acquainted with the language, it is the English language that is more widely understood. Despite this, this event attracted many Egyptian academics and intellectuals.

However, while specialists were invited and *'some 50 observers selected'*, the event was structured so as to put off the so-called *'non-specialists'* (Al-Ahram-Weekly, 2000b) and were held away from the university and the students. On the last day of his visit, Derrida explicitly expressed his regret at not having met any students (Al-Ahram-Weekly, 2000b). The context of these lectures and the audience involved made the discussion and representation a reflection of the conventional and traditional stream of thought within the political and intellectual parties.

With reference to the Egyptian context, Derrida reflected on the concept of hospitality, *'the difference between the conditional and unconditional hospitality'*, and the multiplicity of the Egyptian/ Cairene cultural identity (Al-Ahram-Weekly, 2000b). Accordingly, he discussed *'the meaning of place; and the psychological complexity'* of the people; in relation to the Egyptian/ Cairene context, and its geographical and historical setting. In response, the audience questioned Derrida about the legitimacy and relevance of deconstruction to the Egyptian socio-political context; and more specifically its relevance to the historic context (Al-Ahram-Weekly, 2000b). The majority considered deconstruction *'peripheral'* to the Egyptian context and the Arab world in general (Rakha, 2001). Their questions *'retained an emphasis on the dominance of Western thought'* on a *'post-colonial'* culture; and stressed their attempts to integrate with the

---

[4] It was rather difficult to find the script of Derrida's lectures, which was archived neither in western publications nor in Egypt. Accordingly, I resorted to newspaper articles as well as an article published in an Arabic journal of philosophy as a secondary source of Derrida's visit to Egypt.

Arab culture, *'making it all part of us'* (Al-Ahram-Weekly, 2000b). This highlights the dominance of the image of the city as part of the Arab world, a form of regionalism. Al-Messirri (2005) expresses several reservations concerning Derrida's perspective of the multiple identities of Cairo; if these multiplicities meant that Cairo has no identity, or has lost, or is losing her identity.

In response Derrida moderated his philosophical perspective saying *'You know, I've only been here three days!'* as he explained that the audience was not obliged to *'engage with deconstruction'* if it was not part of their beliefs. He further explained that he was not a dreamer of utopia. He did not support globalisation –as opposed to nationalism – either, but displaced *'globalisation'* with *'mondialisation'*, a sub-term of Internationalism, which implies a crossing and blurring of the boundaries between nations rather than their unification through globalisation.

1.2.2. An observation: *Cairo-space*

Fatimid Cairo, the Egyptian capital, was founded in 969 AD by Gawhar Al-Sekly. Later, Al-Muez Ledin Allah Al-Fatimy, the Fatimid leader, called the City Al-Qahira, the city victorious (Fig 1.2). Today, the city of Cairo has grown into a high density, overcrowded metropolitan city with a population of over 8.5 million inhabitants and a density of over 40,000 persons per square kilometre (A.R.E., 2007), (Fig 1.1). Although the metropolitan area of Cairo has increased significantly, the urban public spaces, mostly referred to as green areas, have notably diminished (El-Messiri, 2004). Built on former agriculture and desert land, the city constitutes a densely laid urban fabric with few spaces in between (Rabbat, 2004).

Simultaneously, the last two decades have witnessed a growing concern, on both the national and international level, to relieve Cairo of pollution and environmental and social stresses. This was complemented by an increasing academic interest in the study of Cairo urban space, evidenced by the launch of the *'Cairo School of Urban Studies'* (CSUS) in 2006 (Singerman and Amar, 2006a) as well as by the foundation of

professional bodies such as the *'National Organization for Urban Harmony'* (NOUH) in 2001, that provide architectural and urban consultations within the local government[5].

Cairo Government - 2009

Qaluibya Gov.

New Cairo

East reg.

North

West

Giza Gov.

South reg.

Helwan Gov.

Fatimid Cairo - 969

Jawhar's trench

HUSAYNIYYA

Bab al-Qantara · Bab al-Futuh

Mosque of al-Hakim

Bab al-Nasr

BARJAWAN
Hara

AL-MAQS

port of al-Maqs

Aqmar Mosque

JAMALIYYA

Dar al-Wizara

Bab al-Rih

Garden of Kafur

Bab al-Zumurrud

Bab al-Adid

Bab al-Id

Dhahab

Bab al-Id

Great Palace

Bayn al-Qasrayn

Small Palace

Bab Zuhuma

Bab Turbat al-Za'faran

Bab Qasr al-Shawk

Bab al-Khukha

WAZIRIYYA

Bayt al-Hikma

Bab Daylam

JUDARIYYA

DAYLAM

Bab al-Sa'ada

Mosque of al-Azhar

Bab Barqiyya

KUTAMA

AL-RUM
AL-SUFLA

Bab Zuwayla (1)

Bab al-Faraj

Bab Zuwayla (2)

Jawhar's wall

Tala'i Mosque

Bab Qarratin (Mahruq)

YANISIYYA

Badr al-Jamali's wall

Birkat al-Fil

N

0 100 200 300 400 500 m

Fig 1.1 Cairo Government 2009, borders and region (Cairo-Government) (above)

Fig 1.2 Fatimid Cairo (after Ravaisse) (Raymond, 2007:32) (right)

The people of Cairo, the Cairenes provide another milestone in the story of Cairo's public space: *'Crowding squeezes Cairenes out of their homes. But where to go? There are precious few green spaces...'* (Rodenbeck, 2005:17). The next section explores the Cairenes's perspective towards formal public spaces as well as their adaption to these and other more informal spaces.

a. Cairenes: the people of Cairo

'Cairo ... is overcrowded with people of vastly differing backgrounds, heterogeneous cultural values and rapidly changing class structures'
(El-Messiri, 2004:221)

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[5] 'Cairo School of Urban Studies' and 'National Organization of Urban Harmonization' is discussed further in chapter four

This section aims to understand the development of public space in Cairo through the observation of the Cairenes relationship to public space. However, it should be noted that public participation in policy making concerning public spaces is rare and without precedent (El-Messiri, 2004). Scholars consider that the introduction of the concept of public gardens/ space in Cairene society is relatively new (El-Messiri, 2004). Controversially, Fatmid Cairo was developed around the garden of 'Kafur' (Fig 1.2), (Rabbat, 2004). The diversity of the Cairene/ Egyptian social culture helps to raise the question 'whose Cairo?' which is the title of an article by AlSayyad (2006). Part of Cairo's public space, with special reference to the historic city, has been developed as a tourist attraction, and many spaces are fenced keeping Cairenes outside (Singerman and Amar, 2006a; Abaza, 2006). Fenced spaces include both some touristic spaces as well as small green islands[6]. However, the few existing public spaces play a vital role in the public life of Cairenes.

> 'All Cairenes objectively consider distinctions between classes of
> public space in their discourse. The wealthiest say they do not
> mix with the poorest of society, because they fear crime, insults,
> filth... The popular classes say they fear feeling out of place,
> standing out.'
> (Battesti, 2006:503)

Three social categories of public spaces can be identified: private, public, and informal. The social distinction or disjunction between the private and the public is evident within the socio-culture structure of Cairo (Singerman and Amar, 2006a; Battesti, 2006; El-Messiri, 2004). On the one hand, the rich are present in exclusive clubs, gated communities, and private gardens; i.e. isolated from the public. On the other hand, the users of public gardens/ space represent the poor social classes (Battesti, 2006; El-Messiri, 2004).

> 'One of the things that I love about Cairo is the way Cairenes
> take over the Nile bridges at holidays and festivals, sometimes
> to the virtual exclusion of vehicular traffic...
> ... a reclamation of network space'.
> (Internet-web-blog)

---

[6] Refer to chapter four.

Another interesting phenomenon is the Cairene approach to informal settings. They look at other informal settings, such as sidewalks and squares, rooftops, bridges, etc. and turn them into places for commerce, entertainment, playgrounds, open-air mosques, cafes and restaurants, special ceremonies (Singerman and Amar, 2006a; Battesti, 2006; Rodenbeck, 2005; Salama, 2004). Abaza (2006; 2001) draws attention to a new informally adapted public space that was developed within indoor commercial malls, and which helps Cairenes escape pollution and other environmental stresses. This phenomenon of informal public spaces contradicts the scholars' conception that public spaces are relatively new to Cairene society. It is apparent that Cairenes need and appreciate the life of public spaces. However very few spaces are accessible to the public owing to both the scarcity of urban spaces, and the exclusion of Cairenes from many places through regulations or socio-economic segregation.

1.2.3. A quotation: *architectural space*

> *'Indeed, architecture finds itself in a unique situation: it is the*
> *only discipline that by definition combines concept and*
> *experience, image and use, image and structure... architects are*
> *the only ones who are the prisoners of that hybrid art, where*
> *the image hardly ever exists without a combined activity'*
> *(Tschumi, 2001a:257)*

It is natural, since I am an architect, to involve an instance that reflects on architectural space; a reflection through Cairo space. This instance is inspired by the work and writing of the Post-Structuralist architect and theoretician Bernard Tschumi. It is worth noting here, that Tschumi and Derrida worked in collaboration, together with Peter Eisenman, in Parc de la Villette, Paris; the project that momentarily brought together deconstruction (through Derrida) and architecture theory (through Tschumi and Eisenman), and introduced a long open conversation between the two approaches.

Post-structuralist architecture, and Tschumi in particular, are pre-occupied with the disjunction between the abstract idea and the social realities of place; concept/ experience, theory/ practice, space/ activity, image/ use, etc. (Kamel and Abdelwahab,

2006). Tschumi (2001a) considers architecture to be a prisoner in between these disjunctions. He perceives architecture space as being in-between the abstract concept and the experiences of people in the use and activity within the space (Fig 1.3). Simultaneously, he considers the fundamental expansion of architectural space within the urban context, social, economic, political, etc. Accordingly, as shown in Fig 1.3, architecture space operates on two levels, in between abstract idea and reality, which we shall call '*place*', and in relation to its wider urban context, which we shall call '*context*'. I thus project this reading to Cairo space.

> *The definition of architecture...must expand to an urban dimension. The complex social, economic, and political mechanisms that govern the expansion and contraction of the contemporary city*
> (Tschumi, 2001a:22)

Concept (idea, theory, philosophy...)
Architect/ Designer

Economic

Socio-cultural   Spatial

Within
Urban context   **Architecture-space**   **(In-between)**
Idea & reality
Cairo-Space

Historic   Political

Institutional

Experience (use, activities...)
People
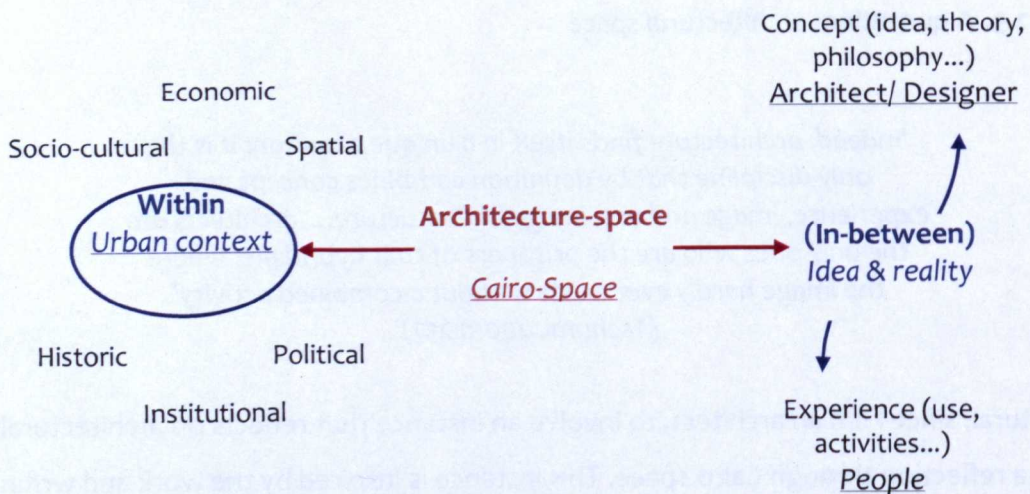
Fig 1.3 Architecture space in between concepts and experience, in the urban context

1.2.4. An affiliation: *architecture theory*

> '*In fact, no comprehensive social science examination of contemporary Cairo has been published since Janet Abu-Lughod's Cairo: 1001 years of the city victorious... drafted in the 1960s at the high point of the turbulence and optimism of Gamal Abd Al-Nasser's revolution*'
> (Singerman and Amar, 2006a:21)

12

The researcher's personal affiliation helped to formulate the main thesis through a theoretical rather than an empirical study. This affiliation was reinforced by the evident lack of a body of literature in architecture theory in Egypt as well as the Arabic region. As discussed in this chapter, there has been a concurrent interest in the development and study of Cairo space, manifested through the foundation of NOUH and CSUS, and simultaneously, the dilemma of Cairene public space has pre-occupied many scholars. The various dimensions of public space, identified as spatial, historic, social, cultural, political, economic, and institutional, are explored. However, these studies mainly considered particular dimension(s) rather than the relations between them; so reflecting only one side of Cairo, whereas Cairo space shows as divergent, dynamic and continuously changing. These studies of Cairo urban space also, show the dominance of the historic dimension. Elsheshtawy (2004b:2) demonstrates the dominance of *'a singular and short-sighted theme – namely socio/ religious reading of urban spatial patterns'*, which linked the city to reflections and pre-conceptions detached from the surrounding reality; and accordingly, influenced the emerging relations and patterns of power in Cairene public space. This dominance therefore resulted in a recurrence of the polarisation conflict between Islamic concepts, tradition, and nationalisation on the one hand and western concepts, modernisation, and globalisation on the other. Elsheshtawy (2004b) also acknowledges the development of the city through the modernisation process, which needs to be explored further. However, the studies of Cairo, as with other *'traditional Islamic cultures'* lacks a comprehensive theory of urban space (Hakim, 1999).

1.3. Cairo space: beyond prevalent readings and representations

The four instances that helped formulate the research approach have been discussed in the previous section (see Fig 1.4). These instances reflect on two main issues. The first considers the *'mess'* in Cairo space involving the paradox that developed between public space and Cairene. Derrida's reading of Cairo space recognised this mess as he reflected on the unseen, ignored multiplicities, complexities and potentials through a monolithic

historic image misrepresentation. And the second considers the lack of theoretical body of work in the region to help in approaching this dilemma, a miss in architecture space.

Accordingly, this helped to raise two main questions:-

1. *'How to'* approach, read and understand the paradox of Cairo in between Cairene and Cairo space; people and place?

It is important to clarify that this question is not concerned with an investigation of the identity of Cairo space, but rather to investigate *'how to'* investigate this identity.

2. How can architects and urban designers contribute towards the reading and representation of the city?

This question intrinsically seeks a theoretical contribution, which as demonstrated in (Fig 1.3), reflects on both place, in between idea and reality, and context

Taken together, these four instances help to highlight architecture theory in correlation with philosophy, particularly Derrida's deconstruction project, on the one hand and with social studies that consider the empirical study of place on the other. Accordingly, these two questions help to develop the problem definition, aim, objectives and preliminary questions through Cairo space, architecture theory, philosophy (particularly post-structuralism and deconstruction), and empirical social studies of place. This section discusses the development of the problem definition and research question as well as the research scope and significance.

A question:
What if Derrida were an Egyptian?

A quotation:
Paradox of Architecture space

An observation:
Paradox of Cairo space

An affiliation:
Architecture theory

A mess:
Cairo Space

A miss:
Architecture Space

Problem definition:
How to develop our miss in architecture
theory to approach the mess in Cairo space?

Main aim:
To develop a multidisciplinary framework to
approach place (Cairo Space)

How?
Objectives

Cairo Space:
Referential case study

Social Studies:
Empirical approach

Place:
How to approach through:

Philosophy:
Poststructuralist/
De.Con.Struction

Architecture Theory:
Architecture and Urban
Design

Fig 1.4 Research approach

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1.3.1. Problem definition

The research development has reviewed two simultaneous paths. The first reviewed the paradox of Cairo public space in between people and place, which has arguably, developed through the inherited conceptions and/ or misconceptions of her identity and representation. Interestingly, Derrida challenges these conceptions which have led to a further alienation and misreading of her true self. The second reviewed the inherited paradox of architecture space between idea and reality, which simultaneously, reflected on place experience as well as on the wider urban context. This overview helped to formulate a double sided problem definition that considered an approach to the paradox of Cairo space through the study of the paradox of architecture space. Accordingly, the thesis synopsis outlines a multidisciplinary study of architecture space that reflects on theories and philosophies as well as social studies of place in order to approach the study of Cairo space.

1.3.2. Main aim

The goal of this study is to reconstruct a reading of the multi-relational dimensions of Cairene public space, in order to help architects and urban designers to address and manage these multiplicities, and hence, restore the quality of urban life in Cairo through public space. The main aim is to develop a multidisciplinary framework of place, with special reference to Cairo space that operates on two levels of place: place and context. Although, the use of a 'framework' implies the development of a consistent analysis to provide a well-defined classification and clear image of place, in fact the research is attempting to read the not well-defined, the inconsistencies, and missreadings of a rich, complex literature of place and its everyday realities. Accordingly, the expected framework would not provide a consistent reading or analysis strategy but leads to strategies for approaching this paradox.

1.3.3. Research scope and significance

The research approach has developed through a particular interest in the study of Cairo public space, which is then generalised through a theoretical approach to place. Accordingly, Cairo public space is identified as in-between the abstract idea and place realities that extend to the contextual space. However, this is a rather broad theme, which necessitates the identification of sub-themes that reflect the research interest:

-   The research is conducted within an architectural perspective, which helped to orient the study towards a literature of place developed in correlation to or with a reflection on architecture and urban design;
-   The main aim of the research, as discussed, is to develop a theoretical framework, hence the empirical study of Cairo public space presents a referential case study;
-   Finally, the involvement of the deconstruction project implies the adoption of a post-structuralist framework, themes and methods which will be further discussed in the methodology chapter.

Simultaneously, the research significance is developed as:
-   It addresses a lack in the literature on theories of place in the local region;
-   It represents a new step towards an intra-disciplinary approach to the study of place that works in parallel lines
-   Finally, the research aims to initiate and foster new avenues for the study of place-making in architecture on both the national and international level

1.4. Cairo, Khōra and deconstruction

The research background, problem definition, and the development of the research aim and associated questions have been reviewed in this chapter. I now complement this review with an explanation of the development of the research title and outline.

1.4.1. The Name ~~Crossed-Out~~ Explained

The research is entitled **Cairo** (case study of place), **Khôra** (place in between architecture and deconstruction), **deconstruction** (reading strategies), **towards a reflexive** (between Cairo, Khôra, deconstruction and place: social, architectural and empirical), **reading of place** (research subject). The title however, has developed throughout the course of the research through a process of crossing out. This practice of crossing out, or erasure, is taken from Heidegger[7] and Derrida[8]. However, crossing out in the context of this research also attempts to replace the ~~crossed-out~~ by another synonymous term.

The main aim of the research, as introduced in this chapter, is to develop a **framework** to approach place on two **levels.** The questions raised in this chapter help to develop and guide the exploration of place through the preliminary reading of the literature on place in theory - philosophy, architecture and social - and Cairo space. This preliminary reading is developed in chapter five through the re-visitation of these instances. The main aim of the research is thus developed into a **reflexive reading of place**, adopting a reflexive methodology and crossing out or erasing of the earlier approach, ~~a levelled~~ **reading** ~~framework~~. Simultaneously, the preliminary reading considers the changing literature of place with a view to the production of a trace of synonymous terms that reflect changing concepts and ideas of place. For example, Categories of place are defined through the trace of ~~elements, set, facet,~~ constituents, as will be discussed in the research.

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[7] [Heidegger's crossing out] '...points to being in its ontological difference from beings. On the hand, it points to the fourfold, to the manifest grasped in conjunction with the hidden side of reality in short to Being' (young, J., 2002:17)

[8] Derrida adopted Heidegger's crossing out, '... to write a word, cross it out, and then print both word and deletion... since word is inaccurate ... it is crossed out... and let both the word and deletion stand because the word was inadequate yet necessary' (Sarup, M., 1993:35)

1.4.2. Research outline:

The research is developed in five sections, (Table 1.1):
- The introduction presented in this chapter;
- A preliminary reading which approaches the literature on place, deconstruction Khōra, and Cairo space;
- A revisit to the research questions, development and design which simultaneously explores the methodology strategies and tools;
- A re-reading of Cairo, social and architecture space through the reflexive methodology;
- Discussion and reflections.

Subsequently, the research involves both empirical and theoretical data (Fig 1.5). The preliminary reading of theory of place in chapter two enables the construction of social and architecture space to be re-approached in chapters seven and eight. This theoretical review is complemented by a review of Cairo in literature as well as a virtual tour through space, which also helps the choice and development of the case study to be re-approached in chapter six. The preliminary reading of place also helps the development of the reflexive methodology adopted in chapter five through, the primary framework of place developed in chapter two, together with a review of the deconstruction project as reading strategies of deconstruction, and self-reflection through a recognition of Khōra, (in-between architecture and philosophy), and Cairo space. Finally, the re-approach to social, architecture and Cairo space also involves consideration of empirical and theoretical data on the margin of these spaces.

Section	Chapter	Content
Introduction	1. Four instances…	The development of the research back ground and approach.
Preliminary Reading	2. Approaching Place	Approaching place through philosophy, social studies and architecture theory: the development of architecture space and social in relation to philosophy as a way of thinking; and the development of a primary framework to read place.
Preliminary Reading	3. Khōra-Deconstruction	A review of the deconstruction project as reading strategies; and its relation to architecture which is manifested through the concept of khōra.
Preliminary Reading	4. Cairo Space	A review of Cairo space through a virtual walk in the city through temporal, spatial, formal, and a visit to Al-Azhar park, attempting to read her space beyond the traditional image.
Research Design & Methodology	5. A turning-point: reflexivity	A turning-point which revisits the research questions, problem definition, aim and objectives, reflecting on the research post-structuralist context, and multi-intra-disciplinary approach. And a review of the research methodological approach, methods and tools through reflexivity: re-reading place (empirical, social and architectural spaces) through the primary framework developed in chapter two, and in reflection to the preliminary reading of deconstruction, Khōra, and Cairo in the previous chapters.
De-, Re-, Con-Struction Reading	6. De-, Re-, Con-Structing Cairo Space	The first reflexive reading instance of 'the Cultural Park for Children', an empirical case study in Cairo space. On the margin, this reading reflects theories of place, deconstruction, and Khōra-Cairo.
De-, Re-, Con-Struction Reading	7. De-, Re-, Con-Structing Social Space	The second reflexive instance, reading social space as introduced in chapter two and involves Canter (1977) and Relph (1976); and Canter (Facet theory of place, 1997). On the margin, this reading reflects Khōra-Cairo.
De-, Re-, Con-Struction Reading	8. De-, Re-, Con-Structing Architecture Space	The reflexive reading of architecture space, through Markus and Tschumi (1980s) in reflection to deconstruction, facet theory and Khōra-Cairo on the margin.
Concluding Remarks	9. …To be Continued	Reflections and discussions; and more instances to explore further

Table 1.1 Research outline

Theoretical Data | **Empirical Data**

Background

1- Four Instances

Preliminary Reading

2- Approaching Place

3- khōra-Deconstruction

4- Cairo Space

Theories of Place: Arch. / Social space

Framework of Interpretation

De-con-struction

Design & Methodology

5- A Turning-Point: *reflexivity*

Khōra - Cairo

Case Study

Re-, De-, Con-Struction Reading

6- Cairo Space

7- Social Space

8- Architecture Space

Discussion & Reflections

9- ...to be continued

Cairo, Khōra, and deconstruction: **Towards a reflexive reading of place**

Fig 1.5 Research Outline and Diagram

Section A

Cairo, khōra and deconstruction: Towards a reflexive reading of place

Exploring the Literature

As discussed in chapter one, this research studies 'space/ place' in-between idea and reality, theory and everyday realities. It works through an intra-disciplinary approach which draws on architecture theory, philosophy, and the social studies of place, and is based on a post-modern/ post-structuralist[1] perspective. The study is conducted within the context of the public space of Cairo, the capital of Egypt, my home country. The **preliminary set of questions** presented in this section **will guide the literature review** reading in the following chapters. These questions will **be re-approached** and developed **in chapter five.**

The research questions are divided into two parts; the first investigates 'place' in literature: in architecture theory, philosophy, and social studies; the second investigates place through the specific case of Cairo. However, as previously discussed, this second part is used to investigate and develop a theory to read place rather than to explore the context of Cairo; 'public-space' is generalised as place. Accordingly, it investigates the development of a theory through the case of Cairo. Three questions are developed to question space/ place:

1- **What is 'space/ place' in architecture theory,** with special reference to post-structuralism?

This question looks into the development of a theory of place in architecture in-between the conceptual place developed through philosophy and poststructuralist theory in particular:

2- What is 'space/ place' **in philosophy** particularly in relation to post-structuralism and deconstruction?

It examines the realities of place experienced by people and approached through empirical studies in the social sciences:

---

[1] The post-modern/ post-structuralist perspective is discussed further in chapter five

3- What is 'space/ place' **in social studies,** particularly as perceived through Environmental Behaviour studies and Environmental psychology?

These three points raise further complementary questions about the relationship between these three lines of thought about place, and **how they approach the reading of place?**

4- How are these three perspectives of place in architecture, philosophy, and social studies related to each other? What are the similarities and differences between them?

5- Could 'place' be approached through these three perspectives? Or do they represent contradictory approaches?

This part of the research is library-based drawing on the contemporary literature of place developed in architecture, philosophy and social studies. However, it is conducted from an architectural perspective, so the literature from philosophy and social studies is reviewed in terms of its relationship to architecture in order to narrow the scope of the study. These questions are explored in chapters two and three, questioning the reading of place, **'what?',** and the approach to these readings, **'how?'**

Chapter two studies the development of the concepts of *'space/ place' –'Chōra/ topos'* in general, introducing two reading spaces: **social space** and **architecture space.** These perspectives of 'what place?' are adopted later as the research subjects in chapters seven and eight respectively, and culminate in the proposal of a **primary frame of interpretation** of place to approach the reading of place 'how?' Consequently **chapter three** highlights the association of the deconstruction project to the reading of *'space/ place'* through the resurfacing of *'neo-platonic chōra'*. The research questions are thus approaches through **Khōra,** 'what', and the **'deconstruction reading strategies',** 'how'.

The last question considers the development of 'place' using the case of Cairo

6- How can the study of Cairo space help the projection of a theory of place, and vice versa?

This question is tackled in chapter four through an exploration of Cairo space: temporal, spatial, and formal, together with an attempt to develop a primary interaction between the empirical data of Cairo space and the reading strategies developed in chapters two and three beyond the traditional monolithic traditional reading of her space elaborated in chapter one.

Traditional
PLACE

Architectural
PLACE

Relph
1976

Canter
1977

Markus
1980s

Tschumi
80s-90s

Canter
1997

New
PLACE
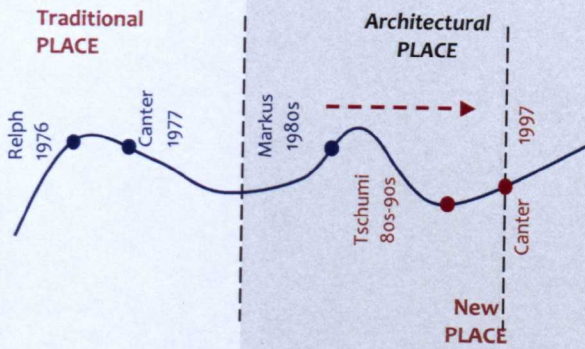
Chōra   Topos
Kenon

Void
Space   Place

Chapter Two: Approaching Place

Cairo, khōra and deconstruction: **Towards a reflexive reading of place**

2 Approaching Place

2.1. What Place?

> 'Any study of place also entails a bridging of interest across
> different academic paradigms, particularly... cultural studies
> and human-environment studies.'
> (Dovey, 2005:16)

As discussed in the previous chapter, architecture space lies in between idea and reality, architecture concept and people's lives, while simultaneously being embedded within the wider context, political, economic, etc. Accordingly, this research considers the role of architects and urban designers in place-making rather than studying people's lives within place. The aim of the research is to develop a framework to help towards an approach to reading place. This framework is also expected to operate on two levels: first, in between the idea and the reality of place, and second at the urban context level: social, cultural, etc. Simultaneously, this is a multidisciplinary study working across philosophy, social studies and architecture theory (Fig 2.1). Philosophy, particularly post-structuralism and deconstruction, helps to formulate the research setting, the approach to the research subject, place-reading, in conjunction with theories of place in architecture and social studies. Consequently, this review reflects a wide spectrum of reading, which is then narrowed and guided by literature concerning integration in collaboration with architecture theory and practice.

Accordingly, this chapter attempts to approach the research questions presented in chapter one, by exploring the concepts of 'space/ place' in architecture, philosophy and social studies. The first part traces the development of the associated concepts and definitions of 'space/ place', from Plato's 'chōra' to Derrida's neo-platonic 'khōra' in philosophy, and its resonance in architecture from Vitruvius to Tschumi. The second part explores the social studies approach to place and attempts to integrate with 'architecture space'. This part therefore addresses the second set of questions presented in chapter one, examining the similarities and differences between these different approaches to place, discussed here, and exploring the prospect of developing a primary framework for reading place.

*'...This does not entail collapsing them into a newly totalizing
metanarratives. Rather, it is recognition that different
knowledges, soundly based within their own paradigms may be
useful to a multipicitous understanding of the built form'*
(Dovey, 2005:16)
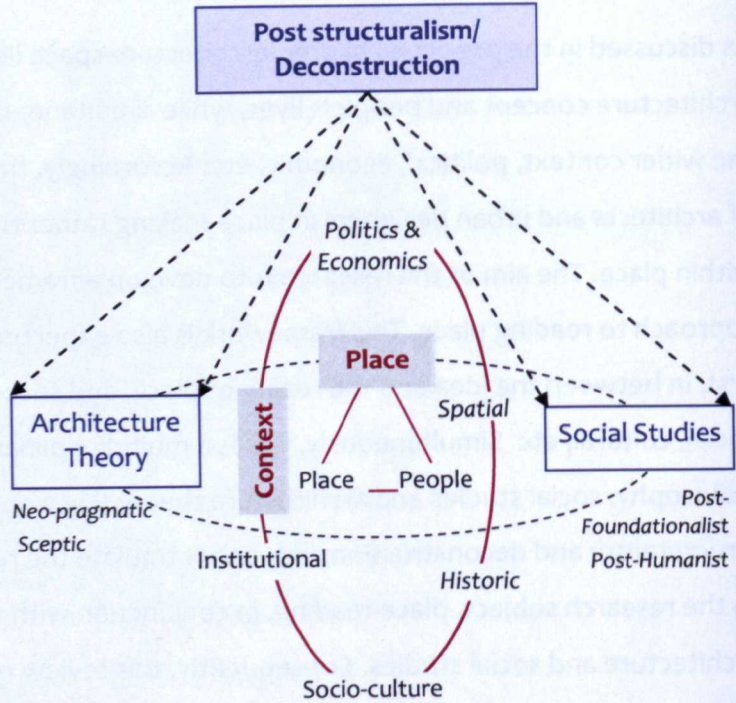
Fig 2.1 The post-structuralist multi-disciplinary approach to place in
this reasearch

2.2. Architecture space

*'The complex cultural, social, and philosophical demands
developed slowly over centuries have made architecture a form
of knowledge in and of itself'*
(Tschumi, 1980:102)

Architecture space is a medium of thoughts, actions, and activities; interactions,
between the self and the other as well as between people and their spatial
environments. These interactions imply a rational and/ or emotional relation(s) between
their components. Hence, 'architecture space' is concerned with both the physical as well

as the conceptual *'space of knowledge'* of architecture (Tschumi, 1980). Pérez-Gómez (1994:2) considers architecture space as *'embodying wisdom'* within the built environment. The different readings of architecture have emphasised one of these reflections, the physical space (Tschumi, 1980). However, the reading in this research is concerned with the combined conception of architecture space as **a space of knowledge of physical space in context.**
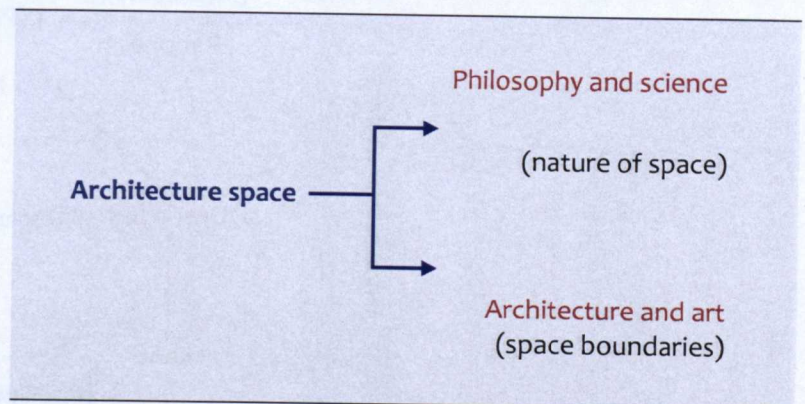
Fig 2.2 Architecture space in between boundaries and nature

According to Deleuze and Guattari (1994), architecture theory as a way of thinking crosses the boundaries of philosophy, science, and art (Fig 2.2). On the one hand, they consider art and simultaneously architecture as essentially concerned with creation of space experience and sensation (Nilsson, 2004). Architecture and art hence follows a pragmatic approach to *'make space distinct... to determine its boundaries'*, while on the other hand, philosophy and science are more concerned with understanding *'the nature of space'* (Tschumi, 1975a:29-30).

2.2.1. Philosophy and science

Philosophy and science are both interested in the study of the nature of space. Philosophy considers the materialisation and production of concepts and notions of reality, while science deals with functions and relationships (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994). Accordingly, interpretations of the *'nature of space'* in philosophy and science oscillate between a rationalist approach, where space is *'a material thing in which all material*

things are located', and an empiricist approach, where space is *'something subjective with which the mind categorizes things'* (Tschumi, 1975a:29).

Chôra/ Topos

Modern space/ place

Back To Chôra

Transcendent
Plato
(427-348 BC)

Absolute-and-relative

Immanent
Aristotle

(Intelligible)/
Rational

Galileo

+ (Pragmatic) +

(Sensible)/
Empirical

Newton

Descartes   *Absolute Vs Relative*   Locke, Leibniz

Spinoza

Kant
Hegel

(Intelligible + Sensible)
Absolute-and-relative

Husserl

Nietzsche

Heidegger

Derrida
(1930-2004 AD)
(Intelligible)

Absolute- Relative?

**Deleuze,
Foucault**
(Pragmatic)

Fig 2.3 Space/ place in philosophy and science from Plato to Derrida

The Back to Chôra section, based on Agamben and Heller-Roazen
(1999:239) is presented in black ——
My addition are presented in red and blue — — — —

This duality in the way of thinking between rationalism and empiricism has dominated the thinking of space/ place for a long time. This section attempts to explore the development of the concept of space/ place in philosophy from the time of Plato's chôra, the *'Timaeus'* (Plato, 1937 [360 BC]). It also examines Plato's differentiation between intelligible/ rational and sensible/ empirical ways of thinking, *'The Republic'* (Plato, 1892 [380 BC]), where he emphasised the transcendence of intelligible thinking and discarded the world in between these two approaches. This will be discussed

further. However, it is important to stress that this study is not interested in the differentiation between space and place. Rather it is interested in the exploration of the concepts and themes developed relative to them. Casey (1997) classified these concepts in his book, *'the fate of place: a philosophical history'*, as 'ancient philosophy of place', 'modern space', and 'back to place'. The latter reflects an affinity to 'ancient philosophy of place'. This three phase classification is adopted in this study, (Fig 2.3). The first phase is chōra and topos as developed by Plato and Aristotle respectively. Galileo then presents a transition to modern science and modern space[1] (for further details see Galilei, 2008 [1615]). The second phase considers the *'supremacy of modern space'* (Casey, 1997), through the works of Newton, Descartes, Locke, Leibniz. The third phase, the return to ancient philosophy and particularly chōra, is based on Agamben and Heller-Roazen's (1999:239) diagram. Kant and Spinoza mark the transition between modern space and the emerging interest in ancient philosophy, through the works of Husserl, Nietzsche, and Heidegger, and Derrida's interest in Plato's chōra in particular. Simultaneously, Agamben and Heller-Roazen (1999) draw attention to the relationship between transcendent and immanent thinking[2], with Heidegger at the centre.

As shown in (Fig 2.3), ancient philosophy of place draws a holistic approach to place through Plato's transcendent intelligible logic, and subverted immanent sensibility. The modern space reflects the duality between rational vs. empirical, absolute vs. relative space. Kant attempts to reconcile this duality through transcendent thinking, whereas Heidegger approaches place through indirection. Finally, Derrida's return to neo-Platonic chōra follows a transcendental rational thinking (Broadbent, 1991b). These three phases will be discussed in the following sections. As previously emphasised, this study is not particularly interested in exploring space and place definitions and differentiation. Accordingly, 'space/ place' are used as originally quoted by their authors, in order not to lose their intended meaning, or use space/ place as a general term.

---

[1] Galileo *'used sensory-observation to override 'mental sets' of those who relied entirely on logic and intellectual process'* (Broadbent, 1991b:59).

[2] Transcendent: beyond or above the range of normal or physical human experience; Immanent: existing or operating within ...the universe (Blackburn, 1996)

a. Chōra/ topos/ Kenon

*'Chōra and topos were often used synonymously to refer to
space and place'.*
(Rickert, 2007:254)

Broadbent (1990) reflects on the historic modes of thinking, Greek and Roman, Spanish, and Islamic. These modes constituted three basic ways of thinking: using pure geometric forms, a concern for human senses and experience, and trial and error. Consequently, these ways were developed over centuries into coherent philosophies of rationalism, empiricism; and pragmatism[3] respectively. These approaches echo Plato's (427-348 BC) modes of thinking, intelligible, sensible, and pragmatic.[4] Plato also included divine revelation in his modes of thinking, but ignored creativity (Broadbent, 1991b), (Fig 2.4). Accordingly, Broadbent (1991b) discusses how rationalism and empiricism, the intelligible and the sensible, have dominated western philosophy and metaphysics since Plato.

Plato's modes of thinking
ntelligible/
ensible
(supremacy of the binary)
ivine Revelation [Inspiration]
ragmatics (Excluded)
reativity (Excluded)

Fig 2.4 Plato's world
(Broadbent, 1991a:37)

For Plato, the intelligible is superior to the sensible. This dominance helped to ignore the *'world'* between them including pragmatism, which is measured by arithmetic and geometry (Broadbent, 1991b:37). Hence, Plato's has dismissed pragmatism from philosophy and modes of thinking for many centuries. Broadbent discusses two other in-between worlds: divine revelation, which considers the 'presence' of God, and

---

[3] In philosophy, Rationalism: the theory that reason rather than experience is the foundation of certainty in knowledge; Empiricism: the theory that all knowledge is based on experience derived from the senses; Pragmatism: an approach that evaluates theories or beliefs in terms of the success of their practical application, The Oxford Dictionary of English (2005).

[4] Intelligible: *(Philosophy)* able to be understood only by the intellect, not by the senses; Sensible: done or chosen in accordance with ... prudence [good sense]; pragmatic: dealing with things sensibly and realistically in a way that is based on practical rather than theoretical considerations, The Oxford Dictionary of English (2005).

inspiration. Creative imagination which relates to works of art, architecture... a world where 'creative people literally 'dream up' new, strange and wonderful idea' challenges Plato's intelligible world and was thus also excluded from his work (Broadbent, 1991b:37).

Aristotle[5] (384-322 BC), as the student of Plato, believed in the binary sensible/ intelligible. However, he also believed in the supremacy of sensible thinking (Broadbent, 1991b), (see 'sense and Sensibilia' in Aristotle, 1984 [350 BC]:693-731). He also, used a 'logical system' , 'Prior Analytics' as evolved by Aristotle (1984 [350 BC]:39-114), and 'space and time' intelligible thinking to explain his sensible observations of the world (Broadbent and Glusberg, 1991:58; Tschumi, 1975a:29). Subsequently, Pragmatics were dismissed until brought back by Galileo (1564-1642) when he demonstrated the value of bringing 'pragmatic experiment' together with 'intelligible thinking' and 'sensible observation' rather than accepting the supremacy of the intelligible world (Pérez-Gómez, 1994; Broadbent, 1991b).

(Fig 2.6) represents these two traditional modes of thinking. The first sphere reflects Plato's 'tripartition... intelligible, sensible and the intermediate' (Launter, 2003:84). The latter considers the Divine revelation, which Aristotle called 'theology' (Broadbent, 1991a). Plato believed in the 'transcendence of the intelligible' through the transcendent divine (Launter, 2003:84) while Aristotle favoured immanent sensibility (Casey, 1997), (Fig 2.5). The latter view of immanent sensibility could reflect the production of creativity and internal inspiration which was excluded by Plato.

Plato Transcendent Intelligible
Intelligible/
    Transcendent Divine
     revelation
        Sensible
- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -
Aristotle Immanent sensible

Sensible/
    Immanent Creative
     inspiration
        Intelligible
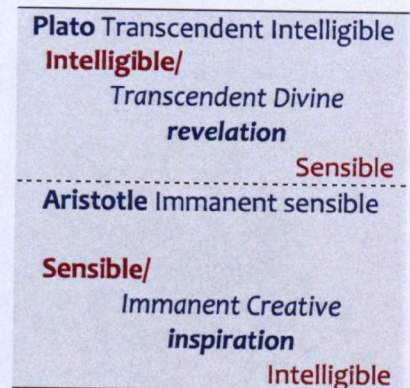
Fig 2.5 The intermediate of Plato and Aristotle: Divine Revelation & Creativity

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[5] '... Aristotle laid the foundations of both physics and metaphysics... the latter [constitutes]: ...the nature of 'Being qua Being' ...ontology; the structure of the universe ... cosmology; and the nature and existence of God... theology' (Broadbent, 1991b: 38).
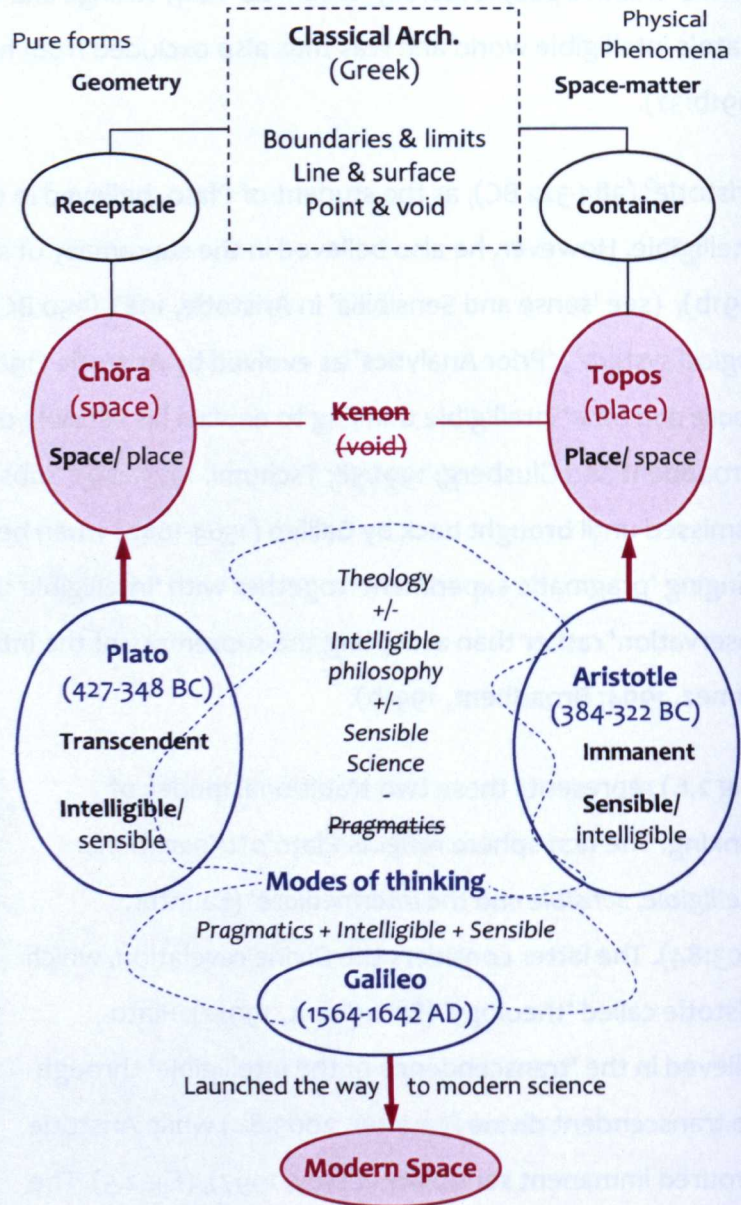
Fig 2.6 A reading in ancient philosophy of place, chōra and topos

Simultaneously, Plato and Aristotle approach spatiality through 'chōra' and 'topos' respectively, see 'Timaeus' (Plato, 1937 [360 BC]) and 'Physica' (Aristotle, 1984 [350 BC]). Chōra and Topos are 'often used synonymously to refer to space and place' (Rickert, 2007:254). Literally, Chōra refers to land, city, and region. In Timaeus, chōra also, refers to the milieu, site, location, and the surrounding territory (Rickert, 2007; Grosz, 1995). However, Plato's chōra is also associated with metaphors like mother, nurse, receptacle

40

(Derrida, 1995b; Grosz, 1995). These metaphors are elaborated in the following chapter. Aristotle on the other hand, approached spatiality through the concept of space-matter, 'topos', a place which *'subsumed chōra... as material space'* as part of itself (Rickert, 2007:253; Casey, 1997). Accordingly, chōra and topos reflect on the space/ place binary, (Fig 2.6); chōra acknowledges the dominance of space, space is subverted through topos as part of place.

Kenon, the void, is another spatial concept closely related to the *'theory of creation'*, *'how things come to being'*, and accordingly to how a *'no-place'* becomes a place (Rickert, 2007; Casey, 1997:3). The *'mutual coexistence'* of space-matter helped to reject this void in both Plato and Aristotle. It is necessary to note that Kenon is not included in the research scope here. Finally, Galileo's approach of involving pragmatic thinking along with the sensible and the intelligible has launched the way to modern science and eventually to modern space. This will be explored further in the next section.

Consequently, Casey (1997:57) argues that both Plato's and Aristotle's *'different ways of reading'* space and place respectively are presented through Greek urban space and architecture. Plato on the one hand, adopted a transcendent intelligible approach that emphasised space and interpreted it as chōra, which he simultaneously described as a receptacle. The receptacle is the creation space that changes chaos into order, geometry, and pure forms in particular. This definition is discussed further in the following chapter. Accordingly, Plato's reading *'superimposes'* geometry and order on the *'sensible bodies'* through space, chōra, the *'receptacle of chaos'*. On the other hand, Aristotle followed an immanent sensible approach to read place which subverted chōra as material space, and defined place as a *'bounding container'*[6], *'the outer limit of the contained body rejoining the inner limit of the containing place'* Accordingly, place is a physical phenomena shaped by immanent senses rather than a transcendent geometry. Greek architecture was hence, in between chōra and topos, the receptacle and the

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[6] The container theory of space is a metaphysical theory according to which space is a background against which objects rest and move, with the implication that it can continue to exist in the absence of matter. http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/metaphysial

container, interested in the architecture boundary and limit, line and surface, point and void (Casey, 1997: 38, 58, 69, 71).

b. Modern space/ place/ void

> 'Such is modern space… not modern spaceS. Modern space is
> ultimately one: …absolute, and infinite, homogenous and
> unitary, regular and striated, isotropic and isometric
> [homogenous measurement and direction].'
> (Casey, 1997:193)

Many of the early modern thinkers of space, like Newton (1642-1727), Descartes (1596-1650), Leibniz (1646-1716) and Spinoza (1632-1677), worked across both philosophy and science, which helped the development of the *'double identity'* of space. This modern space, in general, is homogenous, static and universal, where place is a subset of this universal space. Accordingly, modern space is indifferent *'to the specialness of place, above all its inherent power'* (Casey, 1997:137, 133). Fig 2.7 considers the reading of this modern space through the ideas of Newton, Descartes and Leibniz. These early approaches to modern space developed through the argument on the *'supremacy of space'* over place. Modern space also, considered the separation between absolute and relative space which were traditionally brought together through both Plato's and Aristotle's reading (Casey, 1997).

Newton (1802) while following Galileo's approach of involving pragmatic, intelligible and sensible ways of thinking, adopted an *'intelligible'* absolute space (Casey, 1997:142; Broadbent and Glusberg, 1991). This absolute space *'embraced the void'*, *'before any occupation by bodies or forces…'* (Casey, 1997:139, 147). Accordingly, it broke the link in between Aristotle's space-matter: the container became detached from the inside material. Space is *'an absolute unit'* that can exist without matter and possesses authentic properties independent of the matter (Pries, 2005:172). And the absolute container consists of *'determinate boundaries and/ or dimensions'* which imply that objects or matter are either inside or outside these boundaries (Weiss, 2005:711).

Consequently, Newton's absolute space is intelligible, self-sufficient, independent, and static, *'immobile'* and non-extensive (Casey, 1997:142).
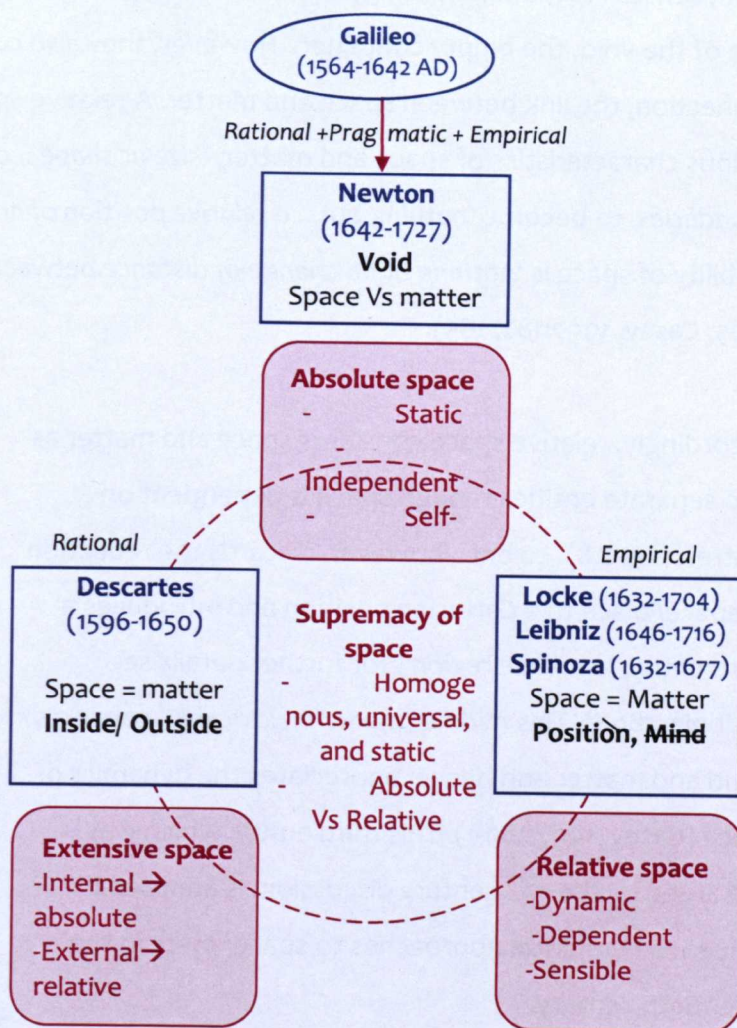
Fig 2.7 A reading in modern philosophy of space and place

By contrast, Locke, Leibniz and Spinoza adopted a sensible *'relative space'*[7], which is *'a movable dimension or measure of the absolute space it occupies'*. Hence, Newton defines this relative space as sensible, dependent on its relations to matter and space, and dynamic, mobile and multiple-located, not confined to the boundaries of one space

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[7] The relational theory of space is a metaphysical theory according to which space is composed of relations between objects, with the implication that it cannot exist in the absence of matter. Its opposite is the container theory. http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/metaphysial

(Casey, 1997:142, 143). Relative thinkers of space *'reasserted the precedence of the senses'* through a sensory relation dependent space (Broadbent, 1991b:40). This raised the question: *'was space inherent to the totality of what exists?'*, matter, body movement, mind, senses (Tschumi, 1975a:29). Simultaneously, thinkers of relative space rejected the idea of the void, the empty container. However, they also continue to deny the connection, the link between space and matter. A relative space therefore, subverts the various characteristics of space and matter, *'size or shape... capacity or volume'* or *boundaries,* to become *'nothing but... a relative position of anything'.* And the relative mobility of space is *'nothing but a change of distance between any two things'* (Weiss, 2005; Casey, 1997:182, 165).

Accordingly, relative space considers space and matter as two separate entities though space is dependent on matter, (Fig 2.8). Leibniz, however, discards the reduction of space/ place to a Cartesian position and introduces a third entity, *'a middle region',* for further details see (Leibniz, 1898). This middle region *'inextricably'* connects mind and matter and hence, appreciates the dynamics of place (Casey, 1997:180-1). This third entity, which was discarded by the 17th century discussion, is adopted by influenced empirical approaches to space/ place in the twentieth century.
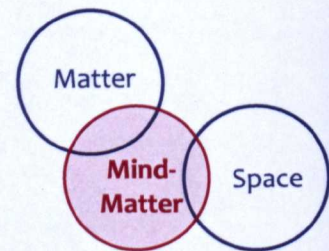
Fig 2.8 The introduction of mind-matter as a third region between matter and space

But, the seventeenth century favoured Locke's (1975 [1696]) reductionist approach, position/ point. Absolute and relative spaces hence, reflected on the power relation between space and matter (bodies). An absolute space gave power to space/ place that dominated and contained the subject, matter/ bodies, *'object before subject'* (Tschumi, 1975a:29). A relative space, on the other hand, gave power to the subject, body and matter, space/ place are determined by the relationship between them, which therefore helped give rise to the interest and emphasis on the body in space. These two approaches continued to be reflected throughout theories of space, particularly social space (Weiss, 2005).

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*'We understand that this world, or the universe of material substance, **has no limits to its extension**... we are always able to, not merely to imagine other indefinitely **extended spaces** beyond them; but also to clearly perceive that these are as we conceive them to be, and, consequently, that they contain an indefinitely **extended material** substance' .*
(Descartes, 1984 [1644]:49)

Discarding pragmatics, Descartes (2006 [1637]:29) returned to an exclusive rational/ intelligible way of thinking: *'I am thinking therefore I exist'* (Broadbent, 1991b). He attempts to reconcile both theories through the concept of *'extensive space'*[8](Descartes, 1984 [1644]). This simultaneously brings to the discussion the idea of *'inside/ outside'*, internal and the external space, *'...we sometimes consider the place of a thing as its internal place (as if it were in the thing placed); and sometimes as its external place (as if it were outside this thing)'* (Descartes, 1984 [1644]:46). However, his attempt was described as *'unsatisfying'* by adherents of both approaches (Casey, 1997:162). A key concept for Descartes'(1970) extensive space is the equivalence between space and matter. For him, *'Not only does matter occupy space, but space is matter'* (Casey, 1997:153) and the extensions of both matter (body) and space are identical. Accordingly, he rejects the void, *'The existence of a vacuum involves a contradiction, because we have the same idea of matter as we have of space'*, in favour of an infinite extended space (184). The internal is equivalent to the volume of material body, and hence inherits its physical properties. The external, on the other hand, constitutes the relationships between two bodies.

Architectural modern space, universal, homogenous and infinite, is a space of matter and body function. Form follows function; *'form ... subordinated to function'*. Simultaneously, Newton's absolute space yielded the *'international style... all over the world'* (Berque, 1997:337). Consequently, Broadbent (1990) explores rationalist and empiricist tendencies in modern architecture as well as their revivalism, neo-rationalist and neo-empiricist architecture. Rationalists, like Aldo Rossi (1981), prefer working within logic rather than trusting in human senses. Therefore, they are more concerned with the purity of the physical form than with the effect of this design on people's

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[8] For further information on *'Extensive space'*, see (Descartes et al. 1984)

experience. On the other hand, neo-empiricists, like Gordon Cullen (1961) and Kevin Lynch (1960), trust in human senses. They approach architecture through the people's perspective, drawing on senses, cognition, perception etc. (Broadbent, 1990).

c. Back to Chōra

The separatist notion of modern space is a reflection of western binary metaphysics; space/ place, absolute/ relative, space matter. Simultaneously, Leibniz's attempt to blur this separation by suggesting a middle region was discarded until the twentieth century. And Descartes attempt to combine both relative and absolute space was *'unsatisfactory'* to both approaches. Interestingly, these binaries were *'constructively and un- problematically combined'* through chōra and topos, which brought together relative and absolute space. Consequently, later approaches to space/ place, *'...extending from Bergson [1859-1941]...to Deleuze [1925-1995]... will vindicate the high esteem in which place has held in ancient philosophical accounts'* (Casey, 1997:133, 136).

The study of this particular era in which many great thinkers have contributed to the development of the discussion, is vast and divergent. Accordingly, Agamben and Heller-Roazen (1999), (Fig 2.9), draw two parallel lines of thought, the transcendent through Kant, Husserl and Derrida, and the immanent through Spinoza, Nietzsche, Foucault and Deleuze, with Heidegger at the centre. Mullarkey (2006) worked through this diagram to expand and distort, and particularly blur the distinction between immanence and transcendence. Simultaneously, Hiller (2005) reflects on *'straddling the post-structuralist Abyss between transcendence and immanence?'*. However, this reading reflects on this diagram in considering an approach to place ranging from Kant to Derrida, and hence takes special interest in Kant and Heidegger, and particularly Derrida, whose approach to place is discussed in chapter three.

Immanent

Transcendent   Spinoza

Kant

(Intelligible + Sensible)
Absolute-and-relative

Husserl   Nietzsche

Heidegger

Derrida   Deleuze,
(1930-2004 AD)   Foucault

Absolute Relative

(Intelligible)   (Pragmatic)
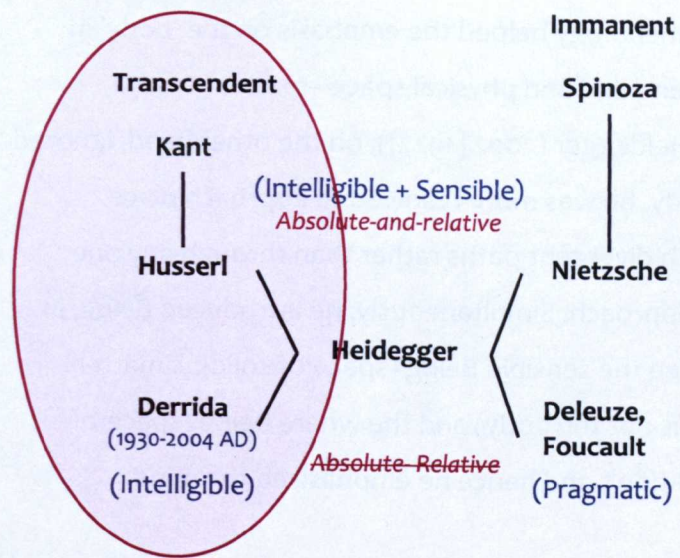
Fig 2.9 A reading in post-modern/ post-structuralist philosophy of place
Adopted and modified from (Agamben and Heller-Roazen, 1999:239)

'[For modern thinkers]… *space was generally accepted as a cosa-mentale, a sort of all embracing set with subsets such as literary space, ideological space, and psychoanalytical space.'*
(Tschumi, 1975a:29-30)

Immanuel Kant's thinking (1724-1804) is perceived as a transition between modern space in the 17th century reflecting Descartes, Leibniz and Newton, and the development of the 20th century thinking through a *'phenomenological'* approach, *'by the way of the body'* (Casey, 1997:187). Kant (2008 [1781]) *'skilfully'* approached the reconciliation between the simultaneous binaries, rationalist/ empiricist thinking, absolute/ relative space (Casey, 1997; Broadbent, 1991b:40). However, Kant's attempt resulted in the isolation of space from the *'physical world'*, leaving it trapped in the *'human mind'* (Casey, 1997:136); *'… an ideal internal structure, an a priori consciousness, an instrument of knowledge'*, … a cosa-mentale (Tschumi, 1975a:29).

Towards the 20th century, Kant's approach to phenomenology helped the emphasis on the 'body' in between mind and physical space –matter (Casey, 1997).Heidegger (2002 [1927]), on the other hand, ignored the body, he was more resolved to approach place through divergent paths rather than through any one fixed approach. Simultaneously, he introduced ~~Being~~, in between the sensible Being (space of solidity, matter which is not the body) and the where being (space-of-occupation), and hence he emphasised the mind.

Place/ Space
Space of knowledge (Intelligible) (Mind)
Body - **Experience**
Physical space (sensible)
Space-of-occupation
Space-of-solidity
Movement between spaces
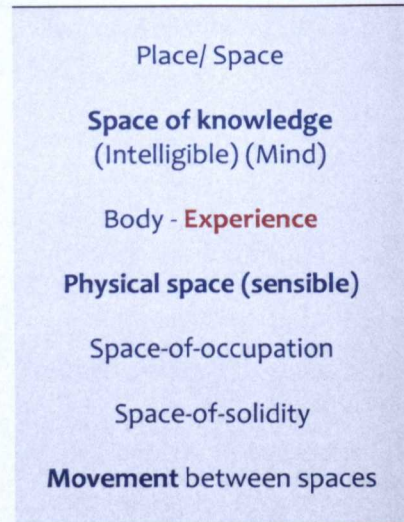
Fig 2.10 Reading Place/space

> '*If postmodernity is to be the age of form (modernity have been that of substance and function)...*
> *(Berque, 1997:337)*

Berque (1997:336-42) traces the evolution of modern space into postmodernism through an illustration of art and architecture space. He argues that post-modernism has '*...led us beyond any modern or non-modern, western or non-western culture*'. As discussed in the last section, modern space subverted form through functionalism. Postmodern space, on the other hand, is a space of form dissociated from function. However, it risks the conversion of functionalism into formalism, which takes after '*past or foreign styles*'. Simultaneously, modern space also, subverted the body to function, '*...to the accomplishment of series tasks*'. Berque (1997) brings about the 'form of the body' along the 'form of space' as an attribute of postmodern space. Accordingly, the duality of modern space, which helped to distance realities of space, i.e. '*architecture presence*', from its representation, was submersed in postmodern space. The later therefore constitutes the 'landscape', the wider context of place; form, body and space, are engaged with the context.

Finally, modern space adopted objectivity, the *'complete separation of the subject from the object...'* (Berque, 1997:341). Postmodern space, (Fig 2.11), on the other hand, embraces subjectivity through the insertion of the research subject in context, where it *'objectifies itself as a subject... to observe its own moves on the scene of its own subjectivity'* (341). Ultimately, post-modern space recognises the intelligible and sensible, the physical and the phenomenological, the dualities which modern space failed to appreciate.

Post-modern space

Formalism (Body & Space)
Architecture Presence
Vs
~~Space of representation~~
Contextualism (Arch. landscape)
Body and space IN context
Subjectivity
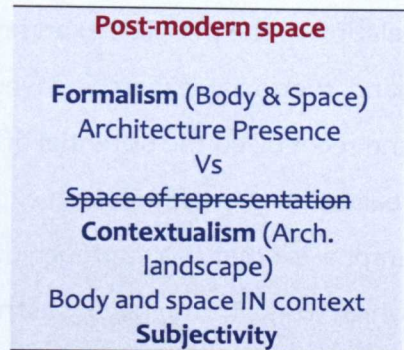
Fig 2.11 Reading Post-modern space

Kant (2008 [1781]) & Husserl (1970): **Pure** Phenomenology
Heidegger (2002 [1927]) & Merleau-Ponty (1962; 1996): **Existential** Phenomenology
Gadamer (1977) & Ricoeur (1976): **Hermeneutical** Phenomenology

Phenomenology

Place

Architecture Theory

Place ———— People

Social Studies

A. Pérez-Gomez (1983)
Arch. & modern science

E. Relph (1976)
Place and Placeness

C. Alexander (1977)
Pattern language
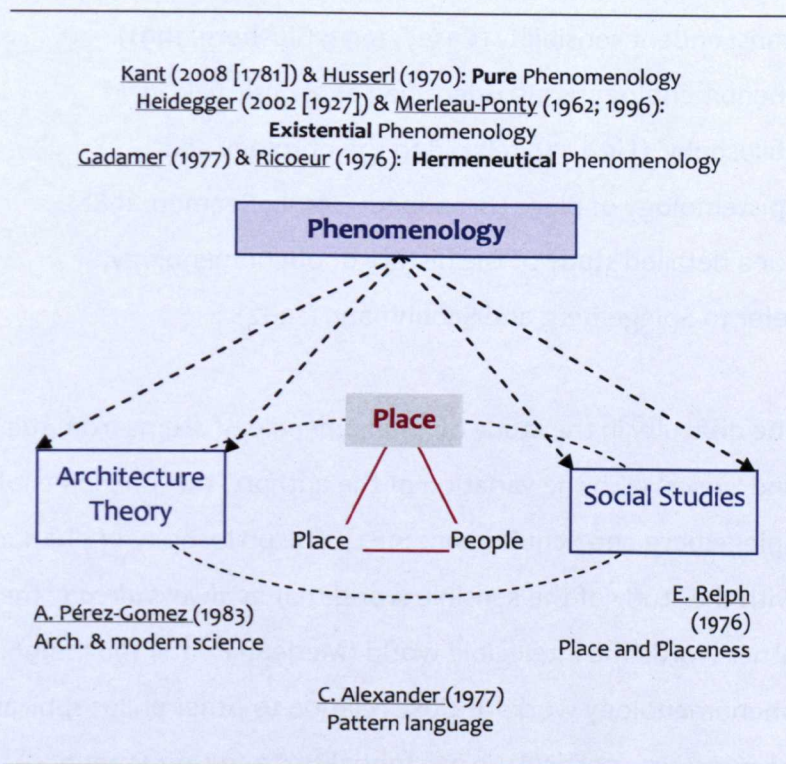
Fig 2.12 The Phenomenological approach to place together with architecture theory and social studies

At this point, it is interesting to reflect on the significant role of phenomenology in bringing together architecture theory and the social studies of place (Fig 2.12). On the one hand, architect and urban designer interest in phenomenology stemmed from dissatisfaction with design approaches, particularly *'formalism and functionalism'*, in

relation to the people's experience of place (Seamon, 1987: 4; Groat, 1981). On the other hand, the social researchers were dissatisfied with their positivist philosophical position and recognised the potential of phenomenology to give a better understanding of the realities of everyday life and experience in place (Seamon, 1987). It is important to emphasise that this approach differs from the research position adopted in this thesis which works through a post-structuralist background, refer to Fig 2.1.

'*Phenomenology*' was first introduced by Lambert in 1764 to approach the sensory study of the physical environment. Kant (2008 [1781]) and Husserl (1970) adopted Lambert's definition into philosophy as a transcendent sensibility (Casey, 1997; Glusberg, 1991). Phenomenology is also identified as '*a basic field in philosophy*' (Fig 2.13), related to the ontology and epistemology of place (Broadbent, 1991b; Seamon, 1982). For a detailed study of the history of phenomenology, refer to Spiegelberg and Schuhmann (1982).

Ontology
the study of beings or their being
Epistemology
the study of knowledge
Logic
the study of valid reasoning
Ethics
the study of right and wrong
Phenomenology
the study of our experience
(Smith, 2009)

Fig 2.13 Phenomenology is a basic field of philosophy

The difficulty in the study of '*phenomenology*' stems from the variations in its definition and '*styles*' with the variation of the authors, the '*phenomenologists*' (Seamon, 2000; Spiegelberg and Schuhmann, 1982). The philosophy of phenomenology is concerned with the study of the sensible world that '*is always already there before reflection*', in other words the intelligible world (Merleau-Ponty, 1962; 1996: vii). Furthermore, phenomenology works in close relation to other philosophical and methodological perspectives, particularly existentialism[9] and Hermeneutics[10], and accordingly adopts different perspectives and '*styles*' that vary between the '*pure phenomenology*'[11] of Kant

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[9] 'Existentialism in the broader sense is a 20th century philosophy that is centered upon the analysis of existence and of the way humans find themselves existing in the world... through free will, choice, and personal responsibility' http://www.allaboutphilosophy.org/existentialism.html

[10] Hermeneutics in Philosophy is 'the study and interpretation of human behaviour and social institutions', http://www.thefreedictionary.com/hermeneutics

[11] Pure phenomenology, 'transcendental constitutive phenomenology studies how objects are constituted in pure or transcendental consciousness, setting aside questions of any relation to the natural world around us (Smith, 2009)

(2008 [1781]) and Husserl (1970), the 'Hermeneutic Phenomenology' of Gadamer (1977) and Ricoeur[12], and the 'Existential phenomenology'[13] of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty' (Seamon, 2000) (see Fig 2.13).

Phenomenology is concerned with the study of people's experience in place through 'perception, thought, memory, imagination, emotion, etc.' (Smith, 2009). Accordingly, the role of architects and urban designers is defined through 'place-making' (Seamon, 2000), where place 'is the subjective condition of our sensibility, without which no external intuition is possible for us' (Broadbent, 1991b: 40). The relation between phenomenology and architecture is addressed in Pérez-Gómez's (1983) book, 'Architecture and the crisis of modern science' (Seamon, 1987). His argument perceives the development of architecture theory as a consequence of the evolution of western thought in the late renaissance through to the early 19th century (Seamon, 1987; Groat, 1984). He is concerned with the study of modern architectural functionalism, and the prevalence of positivist epistemology in philosophy which helped the 'transformation [of architecture] into a set of operational rules' (Pérez-Gómez, 1983:5).

Pérez-Gómez draws on Husserl's (1970) argument in 'The crisis of European sciences and transcendental phenomenology' concerning the formal and transcendent production of meaning. The formal production, on the one hand, is concerned with the immanent meaning derived from internal relations, for example between constituents of place. On the other hand, the transcendent production of meaning is a 'reference' or a relation to an external reality, for example a historic reference. The separation between these two forms of production is a by-product of modern theory as '...the transcendent dimension of meaning has been questioned' and more excessively structuralism appeared to be '...unable to accept the reality of s specific phenomena' (Pérez-Gómez, 1983: 5). Groat's (1984) review of 'Architecture and the crisis of modern science' highlights the development of Pérez-Gómez's 'chronicle' study of architecture theory as a

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[12] Hermeneutical phenomenology studies interpretive structures of experience, how we understand and engage with things around us in our human world, including ourselves and others.

[13] Existential phenomenology studies concrete human existence, including our experience of free choice or action in concrete situations

consequence of western philosophy through incorporation of the 'phenomenological' study of place. She thus reflects on Relph's (1976) phenomenological study of place and in turn Seamon (2000) reflects on the significance of Relph's approach to a 'sense of place' that goes beyond the perceived place. Groat also considers the similarities between Relph's approach and Canter's (1977a) in developing similar three-part models of place. Both Relph's and Canter's models and approach are introduced later in this chapter and discussed in details in chapter seven.

Heidegger's (2002 [1927]) phenomenological study of the human relationship to the environment is considered a significant resource for architects (Seamon, 2000; Seamon, 1982). Heidegger is concerned with the study of people's relations to place, where personal, social spaces develop and the production of meaning through these relations is implied. He thus argues that the separation between people and place and the assumption of directional relations between them is a misrepresentation of the 'actual lived experience' (Seamon, 2000:162). Christopher Alexander's (1977) 'The pattern Language' is an 'implicit' study of phenomenology and architecture which relates the contribution of physical design to the 'sense of place' and thus towards the development of the quality of place (Seamon, 1982).

Mugerauer (1994) perceives phenomenology as 'midway' between positivism on the one hand and post-structuralism and deconstruction on the other, while at the same time he refers to the phenomenological attempt to harmoniously integrate the relationships between people and place, author and research, etc. (Seamon, 2000). However, we perceive this composed reading of place as a key difference between a phenomenological and a poststructuralist approach. Post-structuralism, and more particularly deconstruction, intrinsically questions this harmony, order, continuity, etc. striving for change, plurality and dynamism (Seamon, 2000; Mugerauer, 1992). Furthermore, phenomenology approaches the reading of place through empiricism: sensible transcendence that believes in the ability to understand phenomena through the sensible experience. Post-structuralism, on the other hand, approaches the reading of place through rationalism: an intelligible transcendence that favours intellectual reason on sensible experience (Seamon, 2000). However, both approaches seek the

continuous exploration of the research subject, e.g. place, as phenomena and theory respectively, without prior description, theorisation or anticipation, introducing a degree of ambiguity and *'uncertainty'*. However, a phenomenologist anticipates the clarity and understanding of the study to be uncovered more through the development of the research (Seamon, 2000). And a post-structuralist[14] anticipates *'demonstration of inconsistencies and fragmentations, and the possibility of multiple interpretations'* (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000:152) i.e. Phenomenology perceives harmony between people and place whereas post-structuralism perceives violent, conflict relationships,; these will be discussed further in chapter eight. The study of relation between phenomenology and deconstruction, and Derrida's deconstructionist reading of Husserl's phenomenology has been reviewed by authors like Mugerauer (1994): 'Interpretations on behalf of place', and Watkin (2009): *'Phenomenology or deconstruction'*.

Mugerauer (1994) reflects on the growing significance of post-structuralism and deconstructionism in architecture and social studies, (see Fig 2.1). Concurrently, there is a growing interest in place from various philosophers and thinkers who are trying to locate place in relation to different fields of interest, history, religion, geography, etc., rather than attempting to find a fixed definition of place (Casey, 1997). It is worth noting that it was Derrida, Eisenman and Tschumi, who addressed the new emerging philosophy of place through architecture. Derrida's project of deconstruction and the re-emergence of Platonic Chôra, khôra, in architecture will be discussed in the following chapter.

2.2.2. Vitruvius to Derrida: *the art of architecture space*[15]

*'Vitruvius was the first ... to cover the entire field of
architecture in systematic form'*
(Kruft, 1994:21)

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[14] This will be further discussed further in section B

[15] I represented an earlier version of 'Vitruvius to Derrida: towards re-reading architecture space', at 4[Th] EAAE-ENHSA sub-network workshop on architecture theory, *'Architecture Theory: a technical practice'*, Fribourg Switzerland -14th-16th October 2009

A review of the nature of space/ place in philosophy and science has been presented in the previous section. Consequently, the architecture quest to place-making, *'making space distinct'* (Tschumi, 1975b:29) is reviewed in this section. This quest involves the study of space boundaries as well as experience, through a reflection on architecture space as a space of knowledge of physical space in context (place) as previously highlighted.

In Architecture, Pollio Vitruvius (70/80 – 15 BC) is a key figure, and one who has been considered the *'most influential'* writer (Markus and Cameron, 2002). Architecture classicism 'begins with Vitruvius' (Mallgrave, 2006:8), to whose text ' Vitruvius: the ten books on architecture' (Vitruvius, 1960), 'at least until the eighteenth century, all other texts referred' (McEwen, 2003:1). And architecture space was thus strongly related to and represented through his famous triad Fermitas (structure), Utilitas (function), and Venustas (aesthetics), (see Table 2.1). Many architecture writers believe in the power of Vitruvius' triad, for example Markus and Cameron (2002). However, the dominance of this triad, which is shaped within a roman context, is questioned by architecture historians, '...what is a modern historian to make of architecture so circumscribed?' (McEwen, 2003:301). Simultaneously, (Tschumi, 1980) traced the development of architecture beyond this circumscription, as he observed it and questioned the unrecognised changing limits within architecture space, through space, movement, and event. Accordingly, he introduces anther displacement to the discourse on architecture space through concept, content and context, (Table 2.1).

> *'...does architecture fail to realise the displacement of limits it*
> *has held for long?'*
> *(Tschumi, 1981a:108)*

Consequently, McEwen (2003:301) reflects on the current 'trend ... to bypass master narratives and focus instead on the fragmentary, the subversive, the marginal, the feminine'. This trend is strongly associated with post-structuralism and particularly with Derrida's deconstruction project. However, evidently he did not bypass Vitruvius and other master narratives on architecture. On the contrary he questioned these

traditionally established 'sanctions' in architecture theory and literature (Collins et al., 2005). He also considered the destabilisation of the authorship, title, edges and boundaries in architecture through the deconstruction of these 'master narratives'. Interestingly, he considers the projection of architecture deconstruction through the deconstruction of Plato's Chōra as will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Architecture Presence *Boundaries:* *regulations and norms*	Vitruvius		
	Fermitas	**Utilitas**	**Venustas**
	Structure stability and building material	*Appropriate spatial accommodation*	*Aesthetics, Harmony, Symmetry and unity*
1960s *Markus*	anything could be built provided that you could pay for it Formal rules **space** (place morphology and organisation)	**Function** (user activity program)	Structural linguistics **Form** (style and geometry)

'The 20thC has disrupted the Vitruvian trilogy'
(Tschumi, 1980)

Tschumi (minimalist)	the accident is the norm and continuity the exception	'Body-in-**space**', 'space–of-**movement**', 'intrusion of **events** into architecture spaces'	**Destabilisation:** today we favour a sensibility of the disappearance of unstable images
(maximalist)		**Concept** (space), **content** (movement), **Context** (event)	

Architecture **Presence**	Edges and boundaries Architecture *Deconstruction* **Derrida**

Table 2.1 Vitruvius to Derrida: architecture space

For Derrida, a deconstructive architecture... means
interrogating architecture's 'traditional sanctions' that
buildings should be useful [Utilitas], beautiful [Venustas] and
inhabitable [Firmitas]'
(Collins et al., 2005:131)

Accordingly, this section explores the reading of architecture space from Vitruvius to Derrida, (Table 2.1). The first part reflects on the development of Vitruvius' trilogy in architecture, as the boundaries and norms of architecture. The next part explores the development of the concept of *'boundaries and edges'* in architecture through a reflection on the inside/ outside binary.

a. ~~Fermitas Venustas Utilitas~~ Space, movement, event

'Firmitas, Utilitas, Venustas'
(Vitruvius, 1960)

Vitruvius Triad		
Fermitas	Utilitas	Venustas
Structure	Function	Aesthetics
Firmness	Commodity	Delight
Thomas Markus		
Construction	Utility	Beauty
Bernard Tschumi		
Structure Stability	Appropriate spatial accommodation	Attractive appearance

Fig 2.14 Vitruvius Triad, readings and interpretations

This section approaches two readings of Vitruvius' trilogy by Thomas Markus and Bernard Tschumi, (Fig 2.14). Markus (1987) on the one hand, emphasises the role of Vitruvius in architecture today, *'Vitruvius is alive and well'* (Markus and Cameron, 2002:19), and his famous trilogy known as *'firmness, commodity, and delight'* is still present in today's architectural theoretical discussions, which constitute *'themes as*

language and human body' (Markus and Cameron, 2002:21). In the 1980s, Thomas Markus echoes Vitruvius' trilogy in his triad of space, form and function. Tschumi, on the other hand, questions the dominance of the Vitruvian triad on contemporary architecture theory and negotiates its diminution throughout history, *'The twentieth century has disrupted the Vitruvius trilogy'* (Tschumi, 1981a:108). Accordingly, he explores the development of architecture discourse from Vitruvius's trilogy towards a *'...combinations of spaces, events, and movements...'* (Tschumi, 2001a:255). Simultaneously, he displaces this 'minimalist' triad through another maximalist one that involves *'concept, context and content'* (Tschumi, 2004). This section therefore studies the development, or more accurately the displacement, of these boundaries through the reading of Tschumi.

> *'If the fundamental role of architecture is to make humans at*
> *home in the world, Vitruvius's... raises the question, in what*
> *world? And on whose terms?'*
> (McEwen, 2003:302)

Fermitas

Vitruvius's 'fermitas' considered the stability of the structure and foundation as well as the appropriate use of building materials (Mallgrave, 2006:8-9). This consensus was displaced by another in the 1960s which declared 'that anything could be built provided that you could pay for it' (Tschumi, 1980:109). Hence, by the 1980's the concern for structural stability was displaced by formal considerations. The latter displacement was echoed in Markus' 'space', which considers morphology, typology, and organisation, as the formal properties of space (Markus, 1987; 1982b). Today, Fermitas, 'solidity, firmness, structure, and hierarchy', is displaced again by relativity, quantum theory and uncertainty; the new displacement hence, calls for a 'new regulation', where 'the accident [is] the norm... and continuity the exception' (Tschumi, 1989:218-9) (Table 2.1).

Venustas

Simultaneously, 'venustas' considered aesthetic rules through the lens of symmetry, *harmony, unity, order and arrangement inspired by the perfection of the human body, 'all in line with Pythagorean and Platonic principles'* (Markus and Cameron, 2002:19). These strictly physical considerations of aesthetics were displaced by structuralist and

language preferences, which introduced an architecture of metaphors and symbols. This approach is reflected in Markus's triad through the architecture form, defined as style and composition (Markus, 1987; 1982b). On the one hand, style involves 'symbolic, semiotic and abstract content of style' (Markus, 1982a:5), and on the other, architectural composition involves formal 'geometric properties, the proportions, articulation, colour, ornamentation, and surface treatment' (Markus, 1987:468). Again, Tschumi (1989:217) highlights the displacement of these physical and linguistic structural 'preferences' of a static, balanced, symmetrical, and harmonious architectural image towards destabilisation. *'Preferences are changed not as a style but as a destabilization'.* These new preferences are hence, traced in architecture *'disjunction, dislocations, deconstruction'.*

Utilitas

Utilitas, the use and definition of this term is highly debatable. For Vitruvius, utilitas represented the 'appropriation of spatial accommodation' (Tschumi, 1980:108); the appropriate arrangement of spaces to accommodate and facilitate the use-of-space, which includes activities, as well as economic and construction considerations (Mallgrave, 2006). Accordingly, 'Utilitas', in reality, refers to the space-of-Utilitas, rather than the Utilitas-in-space. Markus (1987; 1986; 1982a) adopts a similar definition of the space-of-'function'. Again, form and space accommodate the 'function experience', as defined through the *'functional statement'* in the architectural programme and which has been simultaneously defined by society (Markus, 1986:486; Markus, 1982a:5). This entails a cause-and-effect relation between function and space, body and space, people and place. However, Tschumi (2001a:4) argues that *'...in contemporary urban society, any cause-and-effect relationship between, form, use, function, and socioeconomic structure has become both impossible and obsolete'.* He also, debates the complicated displacement 'from a space-of-body to the body-in-space' (Tschumi, 1981a:110-111), (Table 2.1). This displacement involves both the movement of the body in space and the generation of *'spaces of movement'.* These generated spaces help the 'articulation between the space of senses [body] and the space of society [social context]'. Simultaneously, this articulation entails the *'intrusion of events into architecture spaces',* which are *'independent but inseparable from the spaces that enclose them'* (Tschumi,

1981a:111). Consequently, Tschumi distinguishes the event from function, either the function in space or the space of function.

b. Space/ Concept, Movement/ Content, Event/ Context

*'To bring context and content to event and movement is a way
to confront them with the realities of both culture and
production.'*
(Tschumi in Michele, 2009:29)

Both Vitruvius' and Markus' trilogies considered a rational approach to defining the boundaries and limits of architecture, norms, regulations and guidelines which were to apply to architecture. Simultaneously, Tschumi's triad highlighted the displacement of these triads in 20th century architecture. He also, emphasised the obsoleteness of the rational cause-and-effect relationship between the three components of both triads. Accordingly, his triad space, movement, and event brought about the destabilisation of the architectural structure and aesthetic image, and the displacement of the space of function[16]. It is necessary to highlight the duality of this displacement, the body-in-space and the space-of movement, which helps both to blur the distinction between the components in both Vitruvius' and Markus' trilogy and to bring about the 'event' between them.

Subsequently, Tschumi reflects on the schematic displacement of the *'old trilogy'* through *'mental, physical, and social space or, alternatively... language, matter and body'*, which simultaneously responds to the *'conceived, perceived, experienced'* architecture space (Fig 2.15).These categories recall 'space/ place' in philosophy, -namely mind, matter, and body-. However, he also questions the authority of these categories or components as limits and norms, *'...but can distort them at well'* (Tschumi, 1981a:111, 112).This reading is represented in (Fig 2.15). Components of architecture space are represented as distinct entities, of mind, body, and matter (space-matter). Accordingly

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[16] Tschumi studied the architectural experience through these three levels of reality in Tschumi, B. (1994b) *Manhattan Transcripts*. London: Academy Editions. (Michele, 2009)

spaces of conception, perception and experience are developed in between mind and matter, mind and body, and body and space respectively. The latter space of experience brings about the event. Simultaneously, the mental space represents the mind in relation to space, body and matter, through perception and conception; the social space represents the body perception and experience in space, mind and matter; and finally, the physical space embodies the mind conception and body experience. On consideration, this reading was made possible, through Kantian emphasis on the body as a separate entity in place, rather than as a part of space-matter. This emphasis helped the creation of two distinct spaces though interaction, the corporeal-space and space-matter.

'The Cartesian body-as-object has been opposed to the phenomenological body as-subject, and the materiality and logic of the body has been opposed to the materiality and logic of space'
(Tschumi, 1980:110)
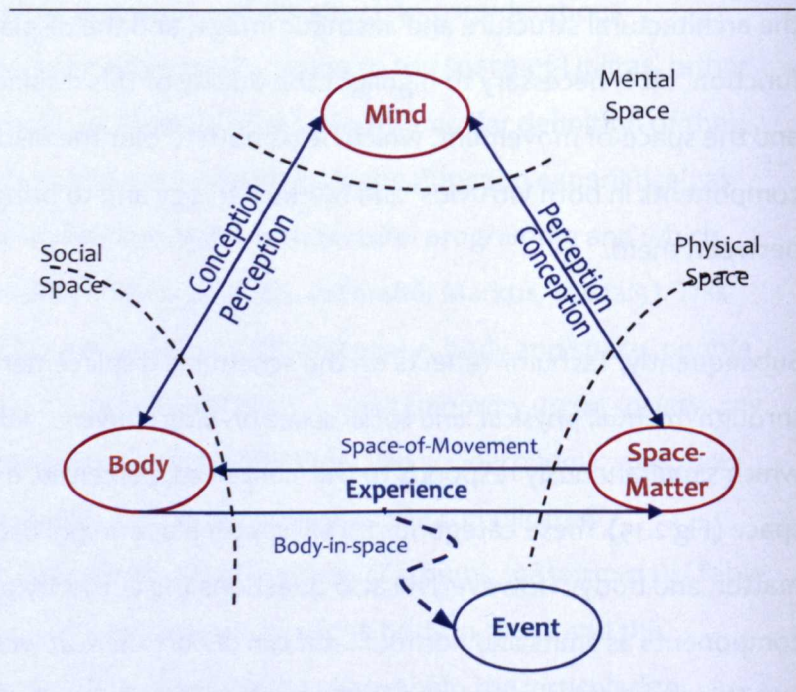
Fig 2.15 Vitruvius' Trilogy displaced and distorted as perceived by Tschumi

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Tschumi (1980) reflects on yet another phenomenon related to 20th century architecture, namely the reduction of architecture space into two streams, 'maximalist' and 'minimalist'. The latter concentrates on the details in architecture, style, technique, etc. The maximalist, on the other hand, extends to the urban context, social, cultural, political, as well as the programme. Accordingly, he negates the separation between these two streams, which are evident in modern and postmodern architecture. Consequently, he complements the 'new trilogy' and his own trilogy, 'Space, Event, Movement', with another trilogy of 'Concept, Context, and Content' (Tschumi, 2004) (Fig 2.16).
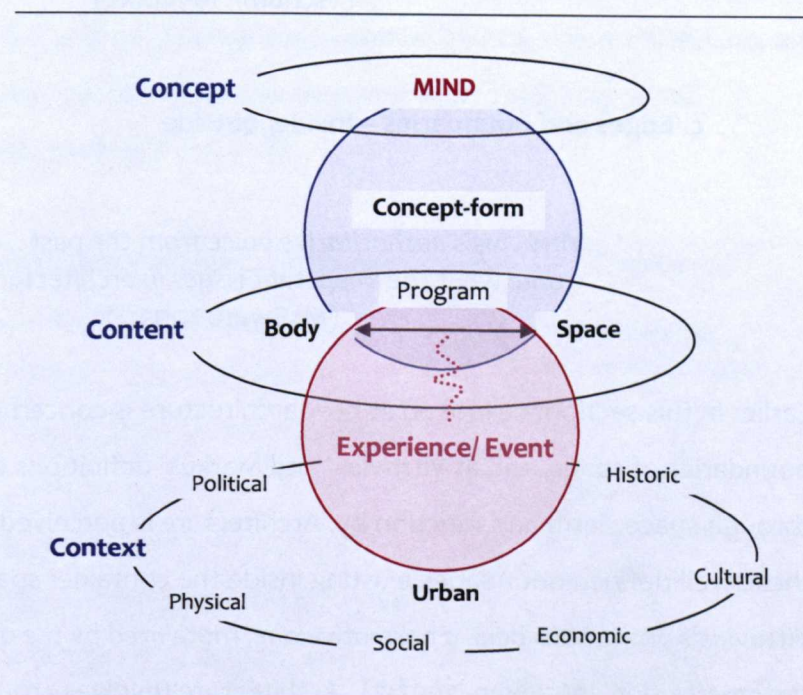
Fig 2.16 Tschumi's complementary trilogies of Place, Space, Movement, Event and Concept, Content, Context

Tschumi (2004) emphasises that there is no architecture without concept, content or context (Michele, 2009; and Walker, 2006; 2004). Hence, he introduces the concept-form which precedes content and context; architectural space is 'a neutral container [that] can house any number of activities' (Tschumi, 2004:12). Through the concept-form, he rejects modern functionalism; form does not follow function, and concept does not follow content. Accordingly, the concept-form brings a high level of abstraction' to architecture space: 'complexity that includes materials, movement and programmes'

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(Tschumi in Michele, 2009:12). At the same time, he (Tschumi, 2004) differentiates between his approach to context and 'contextualism', which implied *'aesthetic conservatism... in the 1980s and 1990s'* as previously discussed. For Tschumi, the context exceeds the physical and visual setting to include the *'historical, geographical, cultural, political or economic'* urban context (Tschumi, 2004:11). Finally, Tschumi argues against any static definition of architecture space, boundaries and limits as discussed in the following section.

'Architecture: a form of knowledge whose limits are constantly questioned'
(Tschumi, 1994b:xx)

c. Edges and Boundaries – Inside/ outside

' ...Vitruvius's authoritative voice from the past ...defined for all time what the important issues in architecture were...'
(McEwen, 2003:2)

Earlier in this section we looked at how architecture is concerned with the definition of boundaries of space, and at Vitruvius' and Markus' definitions of these boundaries through space, form and function by. Architecture is perceived as revolving around these well-defined boundaries existing inside the container space. Simultaneously, *'... Vitruvius's project has been a normative one, motivated by the desire for rational systematization'* (McEwen, 2003:3). Architecture revolves around a fixed theoretical core and the boundaries are well-defined.

'...the body... the starting point and point of arrival of architecture'
(Tschumi, 1980:110)

At the same time, the body has been present at the core of architecture space. However, as discussed earlier, this presence has in reality subverted the body through both modern functionalism and postmodern formalism. Concurrently, the displacement and alteration of these boundaries is reviewed through Tschumi's trilogies of space,

movement and event, and concept, content and context. Tschumi refuses a static definition of architecture space and boundaries, and considers their displacement as a continuous process. Accordingly, architecture no longer revolves around one static core but around multiple cores '...*around which issues revolve and occasionally intersect: space, programme, body, envelopes, global versus local, economy of means, typology versus topology, concept form, etc.*' (Michele, 2009:27).

Earlier in this chapter, we also reflected on architecture space as a space of knowledge of physical space in context, and accordingly, explored the development of architecture space in close relation to philosophy. This review examined the tradition which regards philosophy as an outside space of knowledge transcendent to practice, architecture, art, science, etc. Thus philosophy '*elevates his or her subject-matter [practice] to the conceptual level*' (Mullarkey, 2006:193) (Fig 2.17).

In his reading of post-continental philosophy, Mullarkey challenges philosophy to accept '*new philosophical thoughts*' through these practices. This challenge is brought about and made possible through his reading of transcendence in relation to immanence. The transcendent knowledge '*which is outside both literally and figuratively*' is also '*multiple and relative*'. At the same time, the immanence of the practice, or physical space, and the '*...frame, the place where one takes a stand, is never permanent*' (Mullarkey, 2006:193). Accordingly, the transcendent knowledge, roaming outside, is only approachable from the inside through a temporal frame of immanence.
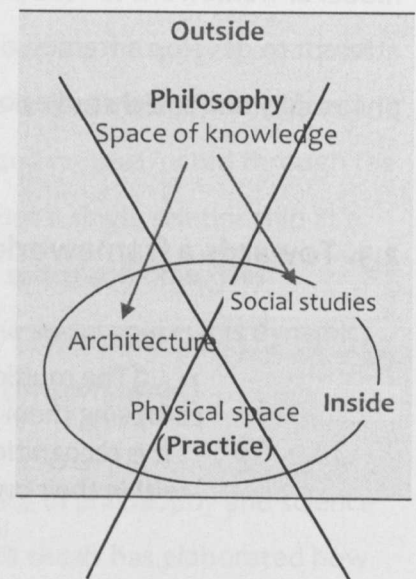
Fig 2.17 Reading Outside/ inside Architecture Space

This reading breaks the boundaries between inside and outside practice. These boundaries elevate philosophy and theory to an outside space of knowledge which transcends practice. The dependence of the transcendent on the immanent makes it appear to be inside the boundaries; knowledge transcends from the inside, the practice,

the physical space. Simultaneously, this reading could be projected on to place, boundaries and edges, inside/ outside, content/ context.

Architecture space – Philosophy – Social studies

Fig 2.18 Three approaches to place

This review of place draws concurrently on philosophy, social studies and architecture theory, (Fig 2.1). Philosophy and science question the nature of place, and architecture and art define the boundaries of this place and its experience, while social studies is interested in the experience of people, body and social, both physical and phenomenological, through an empirical approach. The next section explores the latter approach to place reading, which has developed a concern for the development of a model or framework to read place in relation to architecture. In this way we shall attempt to develop a framework that draws on architecture space (theory and practice), philosophy and social studies of place.

2.3. Towards a framework of <u>PLACE</u>[17]

> '[The multidisciplinary study of place] *does not entail collapsing them into a newly totalizing metanarratives. Rather, it is recognition that different knowledges, soundly based within their own paradigms may be useful to a multipicitous understanding of the built form'*
> (Dovey, 2005:16)

The main aim of the research, as discussed in chapter one, is to develop a *'multidisciplinary framework that approaches place on two levels: 'place and context'*, which simultaneously reads through the *'not-well defined place'* complexities and inconsistencies in theory and practice. Accordingly, it is intrinsically appropriate now to

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[17] An earlier versions of this section was represented as 'Platonic chōra: towards a model of place', at AHRA (Architecture and Humanities Research Association) 5TH annual research student symposium 3rd December 2008

explore previous models, frameworks and approaches to reading place. To begin with, we shall explore social studies, particularly environmental psychology, which seeks to approach place through integration with architecture. Consequently, the study models of place are developed through these studies, as well as the approaches of Markus and Tschumi discussed earlier in this chapter. The aim of these readings is to develop a primary framework of place, which recognises these different approaches rather than neutralising them.

2.3.1. Social Space Vs Architecture Space

'When architects say that people must be taken into account in
designing, they are saying almost nothing; they are making
vague experiential claim involving themselves'
(Johnson, 1994:62)

Place is provided by architects and urban designers; this place is continuously used and appropriated by people. Hence, an in between relationship is constructed through an architectural conception of the ideal place deconstructed and reconstructed through the social realities of people's everyday lives. However, this is not a single relationship at a specific place and time, but multiple relationships through space and time. This understanding of place, is not limited to the physical nor the social space; it is dynamic, changing and constitutes multiple relations and processes (Nilsson, 2004).

We have traced the development of concepts of space/ place in philosophy and science on the one hand, and architecture and art on the other. This thesis has elaborated how philosophy and science have sought to understand and explain the nature of place, and architecture has sought to identify the boundaries of place. However, the division line between architecture and philosophy has become blurred as both approaches integrated and reflected on one another. Consequently, both approaches have tended to focus on concepts of space/ place through a rational logic in approaching the phenomenon, understanding and defining its boundaries. Accordingly, there were two

spheres of relations in the context, space and body. However, in general these reflections have emphasised space/place rather than people.

Simultaneously however, architecture has worked in close relationship with the social sciences to approach the concept of place, emphasising the people in the place in particular (Schneekloth, 1987). However, both disciplines have developed a degree of dissatisfaction with the favouring of spatial requirements over people in one discipline (architecture) and the reverse in the other (Schneekloth, 1987). Social studies[18] have worked through an empirical and pragmatic approach to place (Seidman and Alexander, 2000; Broadbent, 1988). Accordingly, these studies were interested in the phenomenological experience of place, placing the body in a comfort zone; *'one should design for visual, thermal, and aural comfort and for delight'* (Broadbent, 1988:74). The late 80s witnessed a major change in direction in social studies, which embraced post-structuralism. Accordingly, social studies of place converted from a humanist and foundationalist position into a post-humanist and post-foundationalist one (Schneekloth, 1987).

A humanist approach asserts the transcendence of humanity, i.e. people, which is reflected in the appropriation of architectural space to people's needs and requirements (Macarthur, 1993). As discussed in the previous section, the *'body-in-space'* idea was initiated in the debate through Kant, Heidegger, and phenomenological reflections and concerns. This was reflected through an interest in place experience, body activities and movement on the one hand, and the experience of the senses, mind-body, on the other. Hence, there was an emphasis on function in architecture. However, this involved an interest in the space of function rather than the function in space; also the body was subverted to the space of function. Post-humanism therefore considers a different notion of humanism, which draws on the materiality of the body through its inscription in context, space and time (Macarthur, 1993). Simultaneously, the involvement of the context initially reflected the instant physical setting of place with special concern for

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[18] We are using a general term 'social studies'; Moore, 1997) uses Environmental-Behaviour-Studies as a general term to environmental psychology, behavioural and social geography, environmental sociology, human factors, social and behavioural factors in architecture, and urban social planning

historic settings. However, this context was further developed to include the landscape, and the urban context, social, political, economic, and cultural. Post-structuralist architecture took this position further by detaching architecture space from social and functional requirements (Macarthur, 1993).

Consequently, foundationalism is basically concerned with setting the foundations, the scientific methods and categories of an approach to a unified social truth (Seidman and Alexander, 2000). Post-foundationalism recognises a different reality, *'a more complex, multidimensional type of argumentation... that moves between analytic reasoning, empirical data, normative clarification and remains reflective about its own practical social implications'* (Seidman and Alexander, 2000:2). Accordingly, a post-foundationalist approach to social studies considers general theories, *'without foundation'*, like post-structuralism and cultural studies. Hence it blurs the division between the different disciplines and approaches to social theory, sociology, environmental psychology, behaviour and urban studies (Seidman and Alexander, 2000). Accordingly, in the following section we shall explore the attempts to integrate architecture theory through this post-modern/ post-structuralist context of social studies.

a. Towards integrating Architecture Space

'What architects have begun to realize is that they do have a
duty of care towards known users and anonymous others in
designing buildings, and that conventional theory, as the
discourse of design, intervenes on their behalf while designing'
(Johnson, 1994:68)

Moore explored the possible integration of Environmental-Behaviour-Studies with architecture theory. However, he considered architecture as a normative theory with design guidelines and rules; and environmental studies as positivist explanatory theory, *'answering the why'* (Moore, 1997:4). Accordingly, he considers three possible links between environmental studies and architecture theory. The first examines the development of design guidelines and looks at post-occupancy evaluation studies. The second considers the development and testing of architecture theory based on

environmental-behaviour-studies. Groat (1995b) and Sime (1985) reflect on models of place developed by Edward Relph (1976) and David Canter (1977). Groat and Sime drew attention to the similarities between the two models, though each was developed within different disciplines and epistemological backgrounds: human geography and environmental psychology respectively. Groat, Sime, Groat and Després (1991), and Lawrence (1982) explored the involvement of these models, either directly or indirectly, in earlier approaches to social studies of place. However they also criticised them for the limited attention paid to the physical attributes of place dealt with by the architect, and to people's interaction with these attributes. Subsequently, Groat and Després considered the potential of integration with architecture theories, particularly Canter's model, through questioning architectural style, composition, type, urban morphology and place.

The third linkage attempts to integrate social studies and architecture theory *'at a conceptual level'* through a perspective/ normative theory, *'making strong normative statements... and explaining why* [environment-behaviour] *relationships... occur'* (Moore, 1997:30). Moore (1997) introduces Robert Venturi and Christopher Alexander among others as key figures in the development of this approach. In his book *'complexity and contradiction'*, Venturi (1988) puts the emphasis more on architecture design, *' the richness and ambiguity of the modern experience'* (Moore, 1997:31). He expresses his ideas in two ways, *'perception'* and *'program and structure'*. Venturi then extends this architectural approach to the urban scale, landscape and townscape, where contradiction between the inside and the outside is an essential characteristic of urban architecture (Broadbent, 1990). Christopher Alexander (1977) on the other hand, is more controversial. Moore (1997) on the one hand considers Alexander's approach through normative theories as harmonious to both architecture design and Environmental-Behaviour studies. On the other hand, Sime argues that 'Pattern Language' is explicit evidence of the dangers of *'ignoring the relationship people have to places'* especially as outlined in the early works of 'Pattern Language' and 'Timeless way of Thinking' (Sime, 1985:31).

Lawrence questions the involvement of structural theories of place, which eventually opened the way to post-structuralist involvement led by Derrida. Accordingly, he discusses the application of these approaches in architecture through *'the syntax of the built environment'*, and *'architecture semiotics'* (Lawrence, 1989:51,57). Moore criticises Lawrence's approach as rich in theory, yet not *'so elegant, diagramable or memorable'* (Moore, 1997:43). Another structuralist approach to place can also be traced: Canter's Facet Theory of place, which sought to integrate with architecture through Markus' approach to place (Canter, 1997). This theory is discussed further in the next section.

Finally, Derrida's approach to place through khōra and deconstruction will be explored in the following chapter. However, Tschumi's earlier post-structuralist reading of architecture space was reviewed in the first section, which also reflected a three-fold approach to place. Markus and Tschumi's views of architecture space show many similarities, differences and conflicts.

2.3.2. ~~Model~~ projections of PLACE

This chapter has reviewed two approaches to architectural place developed by Thomas Markus and Bernard Tschumi respectively. This review is then complemented by three models developed in social studies; the early three-fold models developed by David Canter and Edward Relph, as well as the Facet Theory of Place which integrates with architecture through Markus' trilogy. Accordingly, five projections of place are presented as theoretical case studies of place reading: Canter (empirical based, 1977) and Relph (phenomenological, 1976); Markus and Tschumi (architectural, 1980s~); and Canter (Facet Theory of place, 1997) (see Fig 2.19).
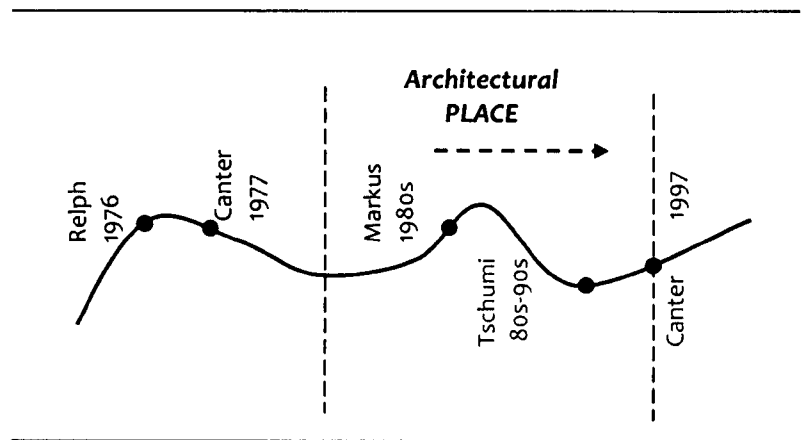
Fig 2.19 Five case studies of Place in theory

This section attempts to develop a brief reading of these theories in order to identify the similarities and dissimilarities, through the identification of the involved elements/ components of place and any apparent relations between them. Accordingly, these theories are generalised through the primary framework of PLACE. This preliminary reading is followed up by a thorough reading in chapters seven and eight. However, it is important to emphasise here, that the main aim of this preliminary reading is to identify the constituents of PLACE, in general, as well as the existing relations between them.

a. Edward Relph (1976) and David Canter (1977)

'... despite the vastly different analyses presented by Canter
and Relph, both authors actually propose three-part models of
place that are described in very similar terms'
(Groat, 1995b:3)

Canter and Relph presented similar three-part models of place. Relph considered place experience, the 'sense of place'; place is represented as physical features, activities and functions, and meaning (Relph, 1976). Canter's psychologist approach simultaneously read place as physical environment, actions, and conceptions (Canter, 1977a). The two models introduce three-interrelated elements of place that are irreducible to one another, and related through union and intersection respectively.

Actions/ Activities	Conceptions/ Meaning	Physical attributes/ features
Body ←	Mind →	Space-matter
People	**People-place**	**Place**

R= Intersection/ Union?
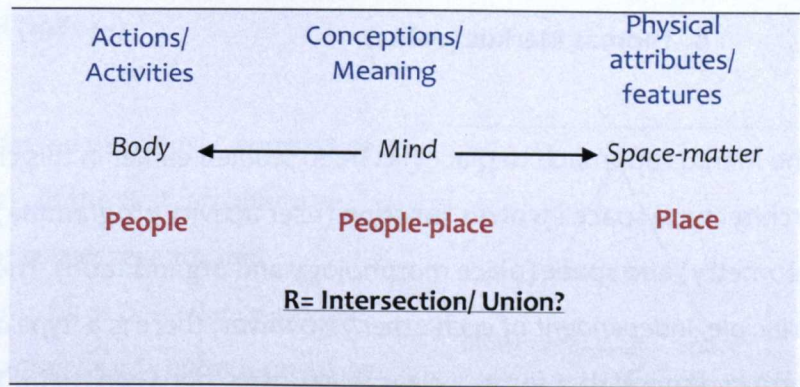
Figure 2.20 The Relph and Canter models on the reading of place

On the margin, the two models reflect through the previous readings of place through architecture and philosophy constituted by mind, body and space-matter (refer back to Fig 2.15). This thesis attempts to generalise both models through an examination of their similarities (Fig 2.21). Hence these models are abstracted into **place** (physical attributes and features: space-matter), **people** (actions and activities: body), and **people-place** (meanings and conceptions given by people to place: mind) as well as the relations (R) between them, developed here through unions and intersections.

People-place

R= Union Vs Intersection

People   Place
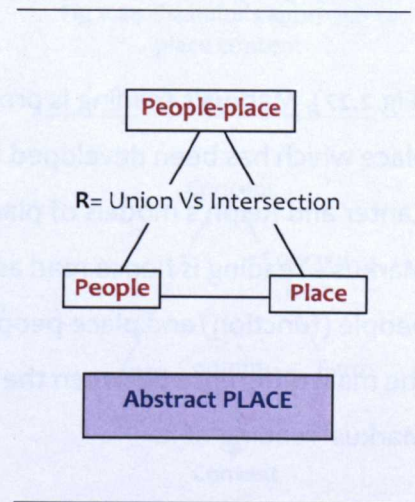
Abstract PLACE

Fig 2.21 Abstract Place

The aim of this thesis is to develop a general model of place that could help in understanding the different readings; for example, the 'people' could refer to the movement of body, architecture programme, people's activities, space function. Simultaneously, this abstract Place approaches the content of place, rather than the wider context, although 'people', for example, could also refer to the social context. This place is then projected on to the other reading.

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b. Thomas Markus (1980s)

The Markus approach to place has been studied earlier in this chapter. For Markus, architectural space involves **function** (user activity programme), **form** (style and geometry) and **space** (place morphology and organisation). These three entities are 'in principle, independent of each other'. However, there is a 'typical **conjunction** of function, form and space' that forms a clear relationship between them. This relation is a social product; i.e. architecture is carrying **meaning** to society in general and users in particular (Markus, 1986).

(Fig 2.22), Markus's reading is projected into the abstract place which has been developed through a reading of both Canter and Relph's models of place (Fig 2.21) and (Fig 2.22). Markus's reading is hence read as place (space-and-form), people (function) and place-people. The latter considers the main difference between the abstract PLACE and Markus' reading of it.

Meaning?

Conjunction

Function ——— Space
Form
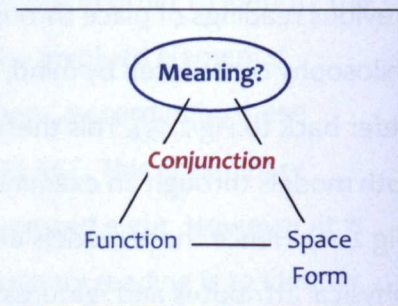
Fig 2.22 The Markus' approach to place

For Markus, place carries meaning to people rather than people giving meaning to place, as previously introduced by Relph and Canter. Simultaneously, Markus does not consider the mind-body relation in his reading; meaning is immanent in place and people are reflected through space of function (Fig 2.23).

Function	Meaning	Space & form
People	~~People-place~~	Place
	Place-people	
~~Body~~	*Mind*	*Space-matter*
	R= Conjunction	
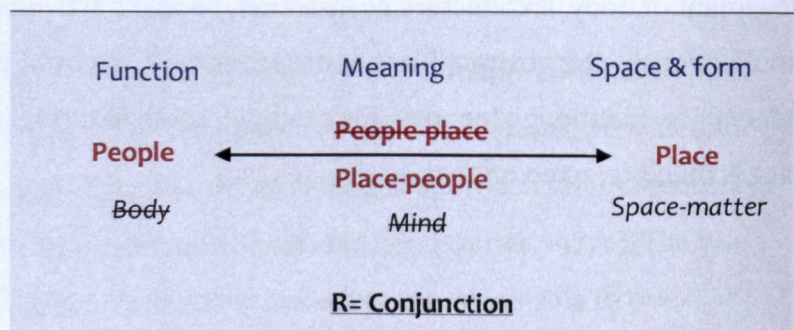
Fig 2.23 Markus' model of a reading of place

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c. Bernard Tschumi (1980s~)

Tschumi's approach, as discussed previously, consists of two complementary trilogies. In the first, architecture space is *'the combinations of **spaces**, **events**, and **movement**s without any hierarchy or precedence among these concepts'* (Tschumi, 2001a:255). Simultaneously, he refuses any relation between expected place and expected use. Consequently, disjunction replaces the relation (s) and non-relation(s) between these mutually exclusive entities, body movement, space, and event (Tschumi, 2001a). The second trilogy approaches a different dimension of architecture space, through **'concept, context, and content'** (Tschumi, 2004). These two trilogies are projected into the abstract model. There is no people-place relation, no meaning; place content constitutes the experience of the movement-of-body-in-space, which brings about the event (see Fig 2.24). However, the **event goes beyond the abstract place**. In Fig 2.25, on the other hand, there are no people; the concept-form relation is emphasised, while the **context goes beyond the abstract PLACE**.
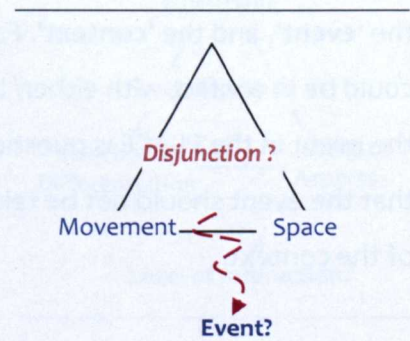
Fig 2.24 Tschumi's approach to place content
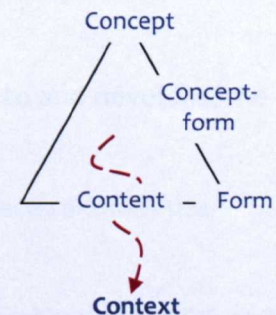
Fig 2.25 Tschumi's approach to PLACE in context

Tschumi's reading disregards the people-place or place-people relationship (Fig 2.26). It consists of two readings that separate place, the space-matter. The first accentuates the intimate presence of body-in-space, and the second considers both the abstraction and realisation of the form through the *'concept-form'*. Accordingly, the two readings help to accentuate the disjunction between people and place. Simultaneously, the previous approaches of Canter, Relph and Markus' constitute three irreducible, interlocking and well-defined elements of place. Tschumi on the other hand, blurs the distinction between place constituents through the introduction of intermediate, in-between definitions, i.e. body-in-space, concept-form. Therefore, the anticipated relations in the

proposed abstract PLACE are weakened and destabilised through the concept of disjunction. The involvement of **'meaning'** is questioned as well as the introduction of the **'event'**, and the **'context'**. For Tschumi, an event is an occurrence, an incident that could be in conflict with either/ both place and people. Accordingly, the involvement of the event in the PLACE is questioned. However, it needs to be taken into consideration that the event should not be taken as an equivalent of meaning/ conception of place nor of the context.
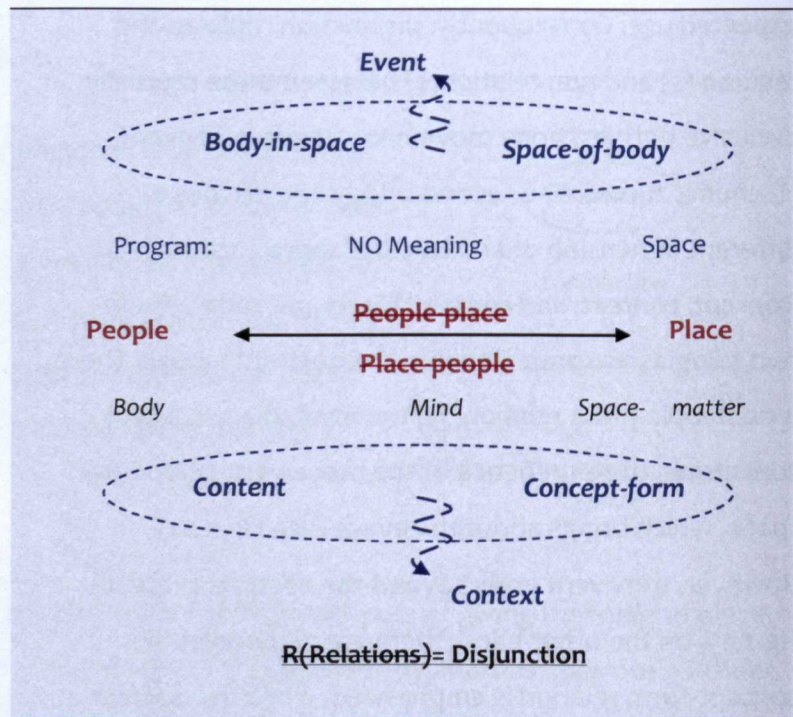
Fig 2.26 Tschumi's model of a reading of place

d. David Canter 1997

'Canter (1997) has developed a more complex 'facet theory', suggesting four interrelated facets of place: functional differentiation, place objectives, scale of interaction, and aspects of design, each with a number of subcategories'
(Gustafson, 2001:6)

As discussed earlier, Canter developed his earlier model (1977), into the 'Facet Theory of Place', which integrated architecture space through Markus' trilogy. The facet theory of place provides a structural framework to address the multiplicities and dynamics of social space (Canter, 1997; Canter, 1983a). Another important contribution of this theory is the concept of 'facet', which is a unit of categorisation, a set of elements rather than a single element as in his earlier model (Canter, 1983a).

Place
Objectives

Facet Approach

Functional
Differentiation

Design
Aspects

Level of Interaction?
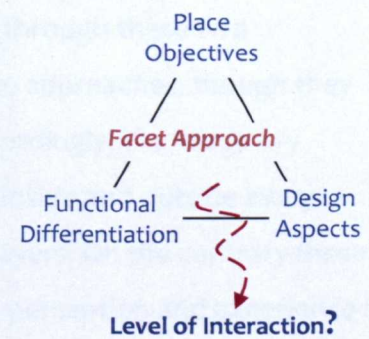
Fig 2.27 Canter's later approach to PLACE 1997

Accordingly, not only, does it help the introduction of the constituents of place but elaborates further on them through the definition of their included subsets. The facet theory of place consists of four facets (Fig 2.27),

- Facet A: functional differentiation, which corresponds to and develops, the activities and actions, people
- Facet B: place objectives, which extends the people-place relation, the conception
- Facet C: level of interaction, this facet goes beyond the abstract PLACE, as it reflects on levels of contextual interaction
- Facet D: aspects of design, which develops the notion of place through the integration of Markus' trilogy

(Gustafson, 2001; Canter, 1997)

Canter's facet theory of place resembles some of the features included in Tschumi's reading of place. Both approaches extend to the context of place. Canter considers the level/ scale of the context: -local, intermediate, distant- whereas Tschumi extends to the wider urban context, historic, cultural, etc. Also, both readings blur the boundaries of the well-defined elements of place, in favour of sets of elements and intermediate sets, respectively. Consequently, meaning is deleted from Tschumi's reading. However, although this is not discussed explicitly by Canter, it is embedded in the relations between the facets.

Facet C:
Level of interaction

Facet A:
Func. Differentiation

Facet B:
Place Objectives

Facet D:
Design Aspects

Actions

Conceptions

Physical attributes

Body

Mind

Space-matter

People

People-place

Place

R= ~~Intersection~~ Facet Approach
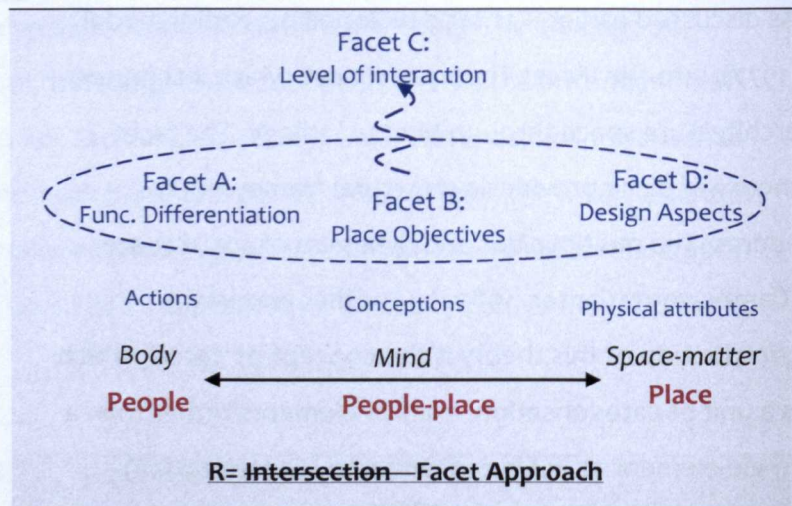
Fig 2.28 Reading the 'Facet Theory of Place'

2.4. And PLACE

'Remember: architecture was first the art of measure, of
proportions. It once allowed whole civilizations to measure time
and space. But speed and the telecommunications of images
have altered that old role of architecture. Speed expands time
by contracting space; it negates the notion of physical
dimension...
Of course, physical environment still exists'
(Tschumi, 1989:216)

This chapter has reviewed the development of the philosophy of space, place and void;
of chōra, topos and kenon in ancient philosophy, which considered space/ place as
whole. This holism was bisected by modern dualism, which reflected on internal and
external spaces, matter and space, contained and container. In an increasing affinity
towards ancient philosophy and attempts to recover its 'holism', 'modern space'
developed a concern with mind, as intermediate between space and matter, as well as a
phenomenological emphasis on the body in space. These considerations developed into
the 20th century approach that thinks in terms of heterogeneity, indirections,
complexity and dynamics of place, and reverts to Platonic chōra, space, mind, and body.
Simultaneously, we reviewed the development of architecture space from Vitruvius to
Derrida, through a reading of Markus and Tschumi. Thus, the reading of architecture
space is explored through both a minimalist and a maximalist approach. The main aim of

this research, as developed in chapter one, is to develop a framework to read place on two levels, place content and context, which are endorsed through these two approaches. However, we have also made it clear that these approaches, though they complement each other, do not operate on two levels. Accordingly, the imaginary boundaries of classification between content and context, inside and outside every space, physical, corporeal do not exist, as well as levels or layers. On the contrary these spaces, mind, space, body, conceptions of space and body, perception and experience in space and context, interact and interrelate in complex and dynamic ways. Consequently, this review was complemented by an exploration of the social studies of place, which showed a growing interest in the study of the relationship of people to place through an empirical approach. Social studies of place, like philosophy and architecture theory, recognise the heterogeneity, multiplicities and dynamics of place, as well as the dissolving boundaries between the different disciplines. Both social studies and architecture theory have thus acknowledged the need to integrate their approaches to place. These integrative attempts have helped to develop two models of place, by Relph 1976 and Canter 1977, which have influenced many studies in social research. In addition, Canter developed his model further in order to integrate architecture theory. Accordingly, this chapter attempts a preliminary reading of these models of place together with both Markus' and Tschumi's theories of architecture space. Finally, this review provides an overall reflection on space/ place to assist in the development a primary framework of place, which will be elaborated later.

2.4.1. Space/ place and PLACE

> '... architecture: how do built places convert space into place?'
> (Casey, 1997:310)

As stated previously, it is not the aim of this research to reflect on space/ place definitions, but to concern itself with the themes and concepts that developed in relation to them. Accordingly, approaches to space/ place in philosophy developed into a considerable debate on the two definitions. In addition the author's own terms have been used so as not to change the intended meaning. Social studies, on the other hand,

hold a clear definition between anonymous space and place that is essentially developed through people connections and relationships. Simultaneously, architecture is often associated with place-making, converting space to place. However, this has also reflected on architecture spaces, space of knowledge, spatial space, social space, contextual space. Accordingly, it is necessary to explain the position of this study and the use of the different terms throughout the research:

- Space, is used to reflect on the different spaces associated with architecture and place, a subset of place
- Place, is the set that includes all the different space subsets
- PLACE, refers to the framework, reading, or projection of place that approaches place and subset spaces.

2.4.2. A framework of PLACE

To this end, a preliminary reading of five theories of place is introduced: Canter and Relph (1970s), Markus and Tschumi (1980s) and Canter again (1990s). This preliminary reading helps the development of a primary model of place comprising **people, place, and people-place** (Fig 2.29). This model provides a general approach, which assists the recognition of the similarities and differences between these theories. Consequently, Markus' approach provides a different reading of people-place relation through place-people, with a different understanding of meaning in place. The abstract model considers the production of meaning through people, while Markus considers the production of meaning through architecture, place. Tschumi however, rejects people-place relation, and simultaneously, meaning. Canter (1997) on other hand, embedds meaning in the relation between people, place, people-pace as well as context. Accordingly, this preliminary reading helps to question people-place relation(s) and **meaning.** In addition, Tschumi introduces the production of the **event**, through the body experience in place; however, this 'event' is not discussed in other theories though they do reflect on the experience of place. Finally, both Canter (1997) and Tschumi consider the **context** of place, as well the different **levels** of approaching place. The **relations (R)** between the constituents of place have been highly controversial, through intersection, union, conjunction, disjunction and facet approach.

Accordingly, the primary framework of place is developed through people, place, and people-place relations. This model questions meaning, event and place interrelation (R). Finally, this framework acknowledges the insertion of place in context as well as the temporality of reading frames or levels of place. The aim is to explore this context and levels, as well as their relationship to PLACE.

Context?   **Event?**

Meaning?

People-place

Rs

People ———— **Place**

R= relation(s)
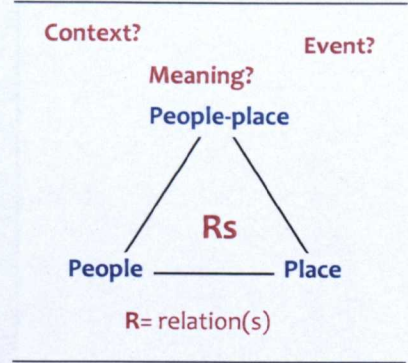
Fig 2.29 Abstract framework of PLACE

'What is Place?

What takes place under these names?

Who is Khōra?'

'What deconstruction is not?
Everything of course!

What is deconstruction?
Nothing of course'

Chapter Three:

**Khōra-
Deconstruction**

Cairo, khōra and deconstruction: **Towards a reflexive reading of place**

3 Khōra-Deconstruction

3.1. An architecture space: *khōra-deconstruction*

'Here is my idea: design chōra, the impossible place: design it'
(Derrida in Casey, 1997:312)

Tschumi asked Derrida to collaborate with Peter Eisenman in making *'Parc de La Villette'* in Paris in 1985. Derrida promptly, perceived two spaces, architecture and writing; architecture is *'a writing of space'* (Derrida, 1986). And he proposed *'chōra'*, build chōra, as presented in his incomplete essay on Plato's Chōra, as the design theme (Morgan, 2006). However, *'...chōra is precisely what cannot be designed...'* (Casey, 1997:312). Derrida's proposition set off an awkward interaction between architecture, deconstruction and khōra, and helped to raise many questions; who is khōra? what is deconstruction? how do they interact? The previous chapter studied the development of themes associated with space/ place in philosophy, architecture and social studies. This chapter goes on to explore the association of architecture space to khōra and deconstruction strategies.

*But older **architects** like Peter Eisenman and Frank O. Gehry, as well as younger architects like Bernard Tschumi, ... been working out of same ideas in practice, producing buildings **without any of his [Derrida's] philosophical help and support**?'*
(Broadbent, 1991a: 28)

However, a dialogue between architecture and deconstruction has already started before Derrida's interaction with architecture space. The work of seven architects that contrasted the image of international style[1], *'... a contrast of perfection and violent perfection'* (Glusberg, 1991: 9). These architects were called *'deconstructivist architects'* by Philip Johnson and Mark Wigley (1988), rather than ~~'deconstructionist'~~.

Deconstructivist Architecture
Bernard Tschumi
Peter Eisenman
Frank O Gehry
Zaha Hadid
Daniel Libeskind
Rem Koolhaas
Coop Himmelblau

Fig 3.1 Seven Deconstructivist architects

[1] The most common characteristics of International Style buildings are rectilinear forms; light, taut plane surfaces that have been completely stripped of applied ornamentation and decoration
http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/291280/International-Style

Johnson and Wigley (1988) associate the work of these architects with *'Russian Constructivism'*[2] and thus the title choice. However, they acknowledge that this is not a revival movement, ~~'neo-constructivism'~~, but rather the re-investigating and questioning of the modern movement in a *'similar process [that] it is hardly surprising that they discover forms much like those of constructivists'* (Broadbent, 1991a: 24)

> *'**Wigely: ... I was not so interested** in the many essays he has written about architecture. My interest was in finding out to what extent he was already operating as an architect... **I have never asked** students **to read a single text by Derrida**, despite having devoted a decade of my life thinking about his work'*
> (Wigley in Hartoonian, 2002: 93)

For Wigley (1995), deconstructivist architecture is a *'performative act'* of *'desire, displacement, dislocation, subversion'* etc. of forms (Soltan, 1996: 269). Architecture, *'free from the influence of any language or philosophy'* works from with itself to deconstruct the *'inherited'* structures and forms (Culler, 2003c; Broadbent, 1991a: 25). For Broadbent, deconstructivist architecture and Wigley's interpretation present a formalist approach that rejects the modern tradition of pure forms as well as the transcendence of philosophy to architecture practice.

> *'...architecture as **metaphor for deconstruction**...'*
> (Naegele, 1995: 153)
>
> **Deconstructivist Architecture**
> Wigley's reading
>
> *'...cylinders have skewed tops; they are **pure forms deconstructed**...'*
> (Broadbent, 1991c:92)

Fig 3.2 Deconstructivist architecture: a metaphor

Furthermore, Wigley's (1995) perspective of Derrida's work on architecture, draws on Derrida's reading of Heidegger (Naegele, 1995). Heidegger's work on architecture is associated with phenomenology of place as discussed in the previous chapter. Finally, Wigley emphasises 'the violence done to Derrida's work' in his book, detaching it from

---

[2] *'Russian Constructivism was a movement that was active from 1913 to the 1940s... created by the Russian avant-garde, but quickly spread to the rest of the continent. Constructivist art is committed to complete abstraction with a devotion to modernity, where themes are often geometric, experimental and rarely emotional... Famous artists of the Constructivist movement include Vladimir Tatlin, Kasimir Malevich, Alexandra Exter, Robert Adams, and El Lissitzky'* http://www.lilithgallery.com/arthistory/constructivism/

its context, particularly architecture and thus providing a narrow scope reading (Naegele, 1995).

Deconstructivist architecture, entitled by Johnson and Wigley (1988), is a well-established theory and practice, an architecture style that existed without any association with Derrida and his deconstruction project. Broadbent (1991a: 11) thus highlights a parallel perspective, **'architecture deconstruction',** which relates architecture and Derrida's deconstruction. And he emphasises the authenticity and legitimacy this perspective that *'...neither blind acceptance nor blind rejections seems to be a very healthy view'.*

> *'... Deconstruction is **not an architecture metaphor...'***
> (Glusberg, 1991:8)
>
> **Architecture Deconstruction**
> Derrida's's reading
>
> *'... The crucial point is architecture thinking.'*
> (Broadbent, 1991c: 93)

Fig 3.3 Architecture Deconstruction is not a metaphor

'Architecture deconstruction' differs from *'deconstructivist architecture'*, not only through the in/ exclusion of the work of Derrida, but also the approach to architecture. Deconstructivist architecture on the one hand, is concerned with the architecture physical form and style. Architecture deconstruction on the other hand, is concerned with architecture thought, the *'theory...and programme'* beyond the produced physical form and image (Broadbent, 1991c: 92). Deconstruction is interested in the architecture discourse, the traditional text, the relation between architecture and philosophy; for example *'... the deconstruction of writings on architecture... from say Vitruvius... onwards'* (Broadbent, 1991c: 63; Glusberg, 1991). Interestingly, we have discussed in chapter two, how architecture theoreticians, like Markus and Tschumi, have emphasised the necessity to re-approach traditional architecture texts, like Vitruvius's.

But what is there to deconstruct in architecture anyway? And why would anyone want to do it?
(Broadbent, 1991c: 63)

Controversially, Derrida is sceptical *'about the possibility of any connection between ...reality of architecture and the free play of deconstruction'*. And post-structuralist architects in general, aimed to *'do violence'* to architecture traditions, displacing meaning, aesthetic, social values, structure, etc. (Soltan, 1991: 407-8) . Wigley (2002) argues against the application of Derrida's text to architecture as a transcendent philosophy. And Glusberg (1991: 9) argues that the architecture relation to deconstruction should shift from an interest in the creation of new images to *'creating a new concept of architecture space'*. Interestingly, several poststructuralist architects are investigating the development of new concepts of space; for example refer to Tschumi's work in chapter eight. Furthermore, the study of deconstruction strategies in this chapter will highlight that deconstruction operates from within the text rather than applying from outside.

Following this discussion, this research is interested in the study of deconstruction in relation to architecture as a way of thinking, particularly the concepts of space/ place. This project is defined as operating from within the discipline rather than externally applied methods; this shall be discussed further in this chapter. The interest in this approach in architecture is evident in the growing literature that attempts to follow the same path, investigating the established traditions of architecture theory and practice. The previous chapter reviewed the concepts of space/ place in architecture, philosophy and social studies, investigating the development of the reading of 'chōra' since Plato, which has influenced and resurfaced through Derrida's reading of 'Khōra'. The first part thus explores 'Khōra' and the second the deconstruction reading strategies.

> *'Consequently, deconstruction does not simply survive*
> *architecture'*
> (Wigley, 1989:)

3.2. Who is Khōra?

'What is place? To what and to whom does it [khōra] give place?
What takes place under these names? Who are you, khōra?'
(Derrida, 1995b:111)

Khōra, the word itself refers to *'place, location, region, county'*, as well as reflecting metaphors proposed by Plato in Timaeus, *'mother, nurse, receptacle, and imprint-bearer'* (Derrida, 1995b:93). Two different readings of khōra related to architecture are presented in this section. The first explores Jacques Derrida's deconstructionist reading of Plato's *'chōra'*, presented through his unfinished essay *'Chōra'* in *'Choral works'*, and later *'Khōra'* in *'On the name'* (Derrida, 1997a; Derrida, 1995b), and *'Plato's Pharmacy'* in *'Dissemination'* where Derrida explored *'chōra'* for the first time (Bennington and Derrida, 1993; Derrida, 1981). Another reading is represented through *'Chōra: The space of Architectural Representation'* in (Pérez-Gómez and Parcell, 1994). This reading was developed through an architectural interpretative background, *'We are now in a better position to understand the nature of chōra as paradigmatic architectural work...'* (Pérez-Gómez, 1994:15). Derrida's reading on the other hand, *'... is neither architectural in itself nor is it devoid of architectural relevance'* (Grosz, 1995:117); *'... yet I have always had the feeling of being an architect, in a way, when I am writing'* (Derrida, 1997a:8). One main difference between the two readings is that Derrida's reading of Plato's Khōra remains distinct from Aristotle's place, topos (Rickert, 2007) , whereas Pérez-Gómez' reading of khōra reflects Aristotle's reading of Plato. Pérez-Gómez considers that *'the work of architectural as chōra is indeed'* related to/ reflected in Aristotle's place, topos, space-matter, contained space and material container (Pérez-Gómez, 1994). Aristotle's concept of place *'subsumed chōra under 'topos' and theorized it as material space'* (Rickert, 2007), as will be explored further. Another difference lies in the names khōra/ chōra used by Derrida and Pérez-Gómez respectively; while both protect the Greek word from translation –*'remains caught in networks of interpretation'* (Derrida, 1995b) Khōra represents a feminine given name/ noun (Dutoit, 1995).

'Chōra and topos were often used synonymously to refer to
space and place'.
(Rickert, 2007:254)

Derrida's reading of Plato's 'Timaeus' reflects the writings of Socrates, Hegel, and Heidegger. He emphasised that there is no single definition of khōra, who should not be considered as homogenous unit, although she is in fact a unit; '*... there is only one khōra, and that is indeed how we understand it; there is only one, however, divisible it be*' (Derrida, 1995b:97). His sincere exploration of Plato's text '*offers a countersignature to that text*' (Wolfreys, 2007:71). However, post-readings of Derrida's khōra have tended to emphasise a partial translation of the word; for example, the feminine, the place in-between etc. is referred to in Grosz (2001; 1995) and Bennington and Derrida (1993). Pérez-Gómez' reading, on the other hand, considered the Greek myth, both in Aristotle's contribution as well as those of Descartes and Galileo, to be a reflection of the development of architectural 'chōra' –in the west – since the time of the renaissance and the baroque.

Hence, I share Derrida's quest to understand 'khōra', who '*seems never to let itself be reached or touched...*' (Derrida, 1995b:95). Khōra's names and metaphors are identified and studied as introduced through Derrida's reading of place, and complemented by that of Pérez-Gómez, as an oscillation, a feminine figure, a space, an impossible place and a new paradigm. However, the interrelations and dependence of these names and metaphors is also taken into consideration, where each folds on to and helps to explain the others. However, each part would be a reflection on a partition or a characteristic of 'khōra'. The word has two spellings: '*chōra*' is the general use and employed by Pérez-Gómez in particular; '*khōra*' on the other hand, is used by Derrida to express her feminine identity, as previously explained, and will therefore be used to refer to this entity.

3.2.1. An Oscillation

*'[Khōra] oscillates between two types of oscillation: the double
exclusion (neither/nor) and the participation (both this & that)'*
(Derrida, 1997a:15)

This oscillation exists between two oscillating types rather than between oscillating figures. These two types are double exclusion (neither/ nor) and participation (both/ and). This oscillation denies polarity and Binary Opposition[3], which is arguably the basis of western thought and philosophy (Wolfreys, 2007; Grosz, 2001; Derrida, 1995b). These binaries were set by Plato in *'Timaeus'*, and represented ordered hierarchal opposition between being/ becoming, intelligible/ sensible, ideal/ material, divine/ mortal, perfect/ imperfect, homogenous/ heterogeneous, etc (Derrida, 1995b; Grosz, 1995). These binaries are problematised through 'chōra', *'the passage* [involves space and movement, an oscillation] *from the perfect to the imperfect'* (Grosz, 1995:114). Accordingly, we shall explore the nature as well as the figures of this oscillation.

a. Nature of oscillation

The either /or relation considers a pre-determined inclusion and choice between the two binaries; it has to be either this or that (Casey, 1997). The oscillation between the two oscillating types refuses determination, the well-defined black and white. While the double exclusion alienates khōra from the binary couples, she does not belong to either; the participation problematically relates her back to each of the oppositions (Derrida, 1995b). Khōra is therefore neither intelligible, an object of thought, nor visible to the sensible world (Derrida, 1995b:90). These definitions are also temporal, *'at times the khōra appears to be neither this nor that, at times both this and that'* (Derrida, 1995b:89). Accordingly the passage is *'at once of place and from place'* (Casey, 1997:45), i.e. chōra *'is the space in which place is made possible'* (Grosz, 1995:116) *'but it takes place only in place'* (Casey, 1997:45).

---

[3] Binary oppositions will be discussed further in the next section (deconstruction)

b. Figures of oscillation

As discussed, khōra oscillates in *'Timaeus'* between the intelligible and the sensible, mind and body (Grosz, 1995). The intelligible, the object of thought, which is understood by the intellect (mind), is an eternal model (being), ideal, divine, and not apprehended by sight or senses. The sensible, on the other hand, is apprehended by the senses (body), is in the process of (becoming), constantly in motion, material, mortal and imperfect, the being/ thought that *'has come into existence'* (Casey, 1997:35; Derrida, 1995b; Grosz, 1995; Pérez-Gómez, 1994:8; Broadbent, 1991b). And, the *'everlasting'* khōra questions the distinction between the sensible and the intelligible (Rickert, 2007; Derrida, 1995b). Plato also, percieves khōra as *'space and the condition for existence of material objects',and* yet *'is apprehended without senses'* (Grosz, 1995; Pérez-Gómez, 1994). Simultaneously, khōra participates in *'a very troublesome'* way in the intelligible world (Derrida, 1995b).
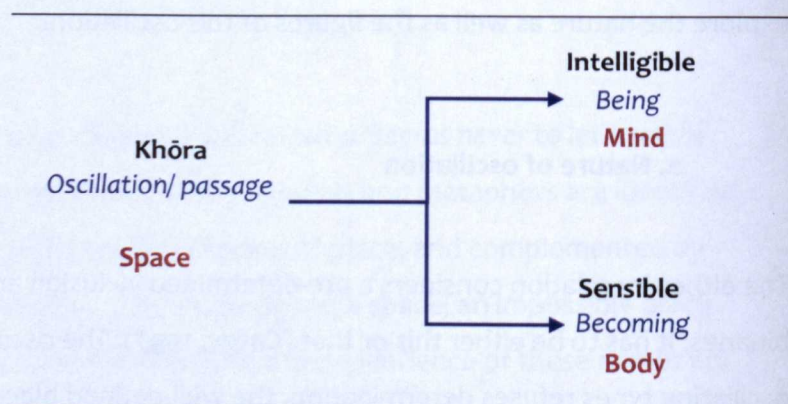
Fig 3.4 khōra, figures of oscillation

3.2.2. A genre: *is she feminine?*

[Khōra], which is neither 'sensible' nor 'intelligible', belongs to a 'third genus'', (Derrida, 1997a:15)

'The discourse on khôra is also a discourse on genre/ type' (Derrida, 1995b:91). Simultaneously, Derrida problematises the definition of 'the passage', explored in the previous section, between all these binaries (both/ and) and a third genre 'another which would not even be their other' (neither/ nor) (Derrida, 1995b:104). This double oscillation and this third genre deny any distinction; 'khôra... names the deconstruction of, and taking place between genders... genres and the idea of genus also' (Wolfreys, 2007:73). This third genre is associated with the mother, nurse, receptacle, imprint, etc. (Derrida, 1995b; Bennington and Derrida, 1993). It also relates problematically to the feminine gender. Khôra is a 'feminine noun', which Derrida replaces with a feminine pronoun 'elle', or 'she' (Dutoit, 1995:xii).

Father/ mother
Mother/ father

Khôra is a mother
BUT
'she' does not belong to the binary

Masculine/ Feminine
Feminine/ Masculine

Khôra is feminine
BUT
'she' does not belong to the binary

Khôra: a third genre

What is a mother?
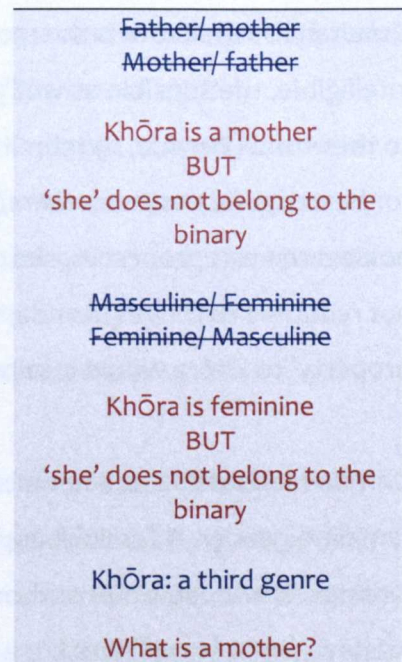
Fig 3.5 Khôra a third genre

'Khôra is not more of a mother than a nurse, is no more than a woman... She does not belong to the race of women'
(Derrida, 1995b:124)

Derrida hence problematises khóra's association with a mother, a nurse, a feminine character. 'Taking the risk of saying that it 's called 'mother' is also to recognize that one no longer has a very clear idea of what a mother is' (Bennington and Derrida, 1993:205). A mother is not the binary opposite of the father but a third genre in between (Derrida, 1995b; Bennington and Derrida, 1993). In similar projection, Khôra is not a feminine, as opposed a masculine figure, but a third genre. '... She engenders nothing and besides, possesses no property at all... nor ownership of children' (Derrida, 1995b:105).

'Khôra is not... anything but a support or a subject which would give place by receiving or by conceiving, or indeed by letting itself be conceived'
(Derrida, 1995b:95)

Simultaneously, khōra is the reciprocal, which designates her function towards the intelligible, the sensible as well as towards all the binaries, to receive, conceive and give to the world (Derrida, 1995b; Grosz, 1995), (Fig 3.6). However, khōra inherits no qualities for herself; *'she possesses them, she has them, since she receives them, but she does not possess them as properties, she does not possess anything as her own... nevertheless, she is not reducible to them'* (Derrida, 1995b:99). Accordingly, to assign any 'particular property' to khōra would lose her status as a reciprocal (Grosz, 1995:114).

Derrida reads khōra as a feminist figure but she does not possess the properties of the feminine gender. A feminist approach could be pursued therefore through Derrida's writings. However, other authors also read and correlate khōra to feminism; Julia Kristeva (1984 [1974]) and Luce Irigaray (1985) are key figures in the feminist reading of khōra (Rickert, 2007; Casey, 1997; Grosz, 1995). Grosz *'reading Plato and Derrida on chōra'*, argues that *'the notion of chōra serves to produce a founding concept of femininity'* (1995:113).

Passage

Receives → **Khōra** — **Conceives**

A mother
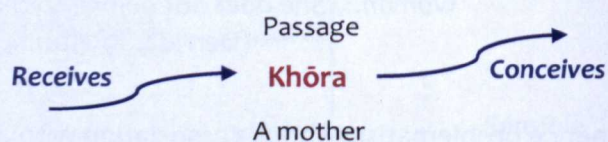
Fig 3.6 khōra receives, passes and conceives without inheriting any properties

3.2.3. An Architectural Space – *an impossible place*

> *'[Platonic] chōra is both cosmic place, and abstract space, and it*
> *is also the substance of the human crafts'*
> (Pérez-Gómez, 1994:9)

This quotation helps a reflection on three readings of architecture space through chōra. Derrida (1995b) approached architecture space as a realisation, the practice of khōra, as in Plato's chōra. Accordingly, he asked the architect to build khōra, the impossible place.

For Pérez-Gómez (1994), on the other hand, architecture space is a reading of Aristotle's topos which subverted chōra to matter, *'the substance of the human crafts'*. Interestingly, Derrida rejects the association of khōra with matter, *'a word Plato never used to qualify khōra'* (Derrida, 1995b:127). Berque (2005) rejects both readings; he combines both chōra and topos in a concept of architecture space, which he approaches as a relationship between people and place. Thus, he takes the idea of chōra even further, into the *'milieu'*, the landscape, the context (Berque, 2000).

Simultaneously, according to Plato, khōra which is almost always associated with a trilogy, is combined with the intelligible and sensible to represent reality (Casey, 1997; Pérez-Gómez, 1994). Khōra *'is the place always on the move...'* in-between the sensible, and the intelligible (Lucy, 2004:68); in-between space and place, in-between place and landscape (context). Accordingly, *'chōra is granted a strangely displaced place'*, which is hence, associated with the beginning, the cosmos (Rickert, 2007; Lucy, 2004; Derrida, 1995b); and whose association with architecture is simultaneously complicated (Rickert, 2007; Grosz, 2001).

Accordingly, the next section will consider the formal analogy of khōra as a spatial figure, her extension to the cosmos and the context, and finally, her displacement as an intermediate space, an impossible architectural space.

a. An analogy: a spatial figure – thinking relations

> *'In order to think khōra, it is necessary to go back to a beginning*
> *that is older than the beginning, namely, the birth of the*
> *cosmos*
> ...
> *In that which is formal about it, precisely, the analogy is*
> *declared: a concern for architectural, textual (histological) and*
> *even organic composition is presented as such...'*
> (Derrida, 1995b:126)

Khōra *'seems never to let itself be reached or touched'* (Derrida, 1995b:95). In between the etymology of the word as space/ place, location, region, etc. and such figures of speech as nurse, receptacle, architect, etc, khōra is *'caught in networks of interpretation'*

(Bennington and Derrida, 1993:93), networks of complex structures, *'radically different types of structures'*, inscribed within *'a chain of relations where there is no relation'*, but non-similar analogies that go beyond formal identities (Wolfreys, 2007:72-3). Thus, the formal analogy of khōra as architecture is complemented in Derrida's former quotation by histology[4] and organic composition. As previously discussed, khōra is on the move; as soon as her definition is read, her definition shifts.

b. The cosmic: the milieu – architecture landscape

The motion of khōra leads to the arché, *'as generally in architecture, architectonics, arche-écriture or archi-writing'* (Derrida, 1995b:126); the arché, the beginning, the cosmos. Pérez-Gomez (1994:16) takes the analogy further, to find *'... the ever-present origin of ... architecture'* in space, in place, in chōra and in Khōra, a spatial figure, *'... in which becoming happens... is indeed milieu'*, a spatial milieu (Berque, 2000:7). This analogy leads to the context *'... with all its geographical and social particularity'* (Miller, 2001:165), inhabited, political,... landscape. But again khōra is *'the secret place-without-place hidden in every topography'* (Miller, 2001:93-4).

> *[khōra] ... includes the sense of political place, or more generally, of invested place, **by opposition to abstract space.** Khōra 'means': place occupied by someone, country, inhabited place, marked place, rank, post, assigned position, territory, or region. And in fact, khōra will always already be occupied, invested, even as a general place, and even when it is distinguished from everything that takes place in it.*
> *(Derrida, 1995b:109)*

c. In-Between: an intermediate space

> *The in-between is ... inimical [hostile] to the project of architecture as a whole'*
> *(Grosz, 2001:94)*

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[4] A branch of anatomy concerned with the study of the microscopic structures of animal and plant tissue (Encarta Dictionary)

Grosz (2001:91) argues that khōra's lack of *'a fundamental identity ...a form'*, through her *'position of the in between'*, is hostile to architecture space, which is intrinsically concerned with form and place identity. Khōra, the reciprocal, the passage, and the conceiver, inhabits an in-between space, through a double oscillation in-between two genres. Thus Khōra is a third genre that goes other beyond genres and types. She loses her distinction, determination and definition, as she deconstructs the *'polarity'* of western metaphysics (Derrida, 1995b:92). However, the space in-between does not actually exist, as it continually oscillates in between other spaces. *'... There is khōra but khōra does not exist'* (Derrida, 1995b:97). Khōra is beyond category, and categorisation. She receives her identity from other spaces, to pass on and conceive other spaces but not to keep them.

> *'The space of the in-between is that which is not a space, a space*
> *without boundaries of its own, which takes on and receives*
> *itself, its form, from the outside, which is not its outside... but*
> *whose form is the outside of the identity, not just of an other...*
> *but of others...'*
> (Grosz, 2001:91)

3.2.4. Chōra to Khōra: *a paradigm shift*

Finally, we shall review how the recent reversion to Plato's chōra has produced a paradigm shift in the reading of place. The development of *'space/ place'* in the history of philosophy since Plato's chōra, was reviewed in the previous chapter, together with its resurfacing in contemporary philosophical considerations of place through the works of Julia Kristeva (1984 [1974]), Jacques Derrida, and Gregory Ulmer (1994) (Rickert, 2007:252). This emerging interest in place – chōra – does not entitle it to a fixed definition of place but is rather an attempt to find the dynamics of place *'at work'*. Again it was Derrida, Eisenman, and Tschumi who addressed the concept of contemporary place in architecture (Casey, 1997:286). As previously discussed, this research draws on a special interest in Derrida's architectural experience *'Khōra'* (Rickert, 2007). Thus, interest in neo-Platonic chōra is augmented through this collaboration with architecture.

Rickert (2007) goes on to discuss how this interest in *'Platonic chōra'* produced a new paradigm shift towards the concept of place, changing the previous understanding about the relations and interactions of the body with the spatial environment. Place constitutes mind, body and space-matter[5]. The traditional *'separatist'* paradigm held these as autonomous independent spheres. The mind is seen as rational, an intelligible logic. The interrelations between these spheres follow a direct and linear method, an organised internal structure.
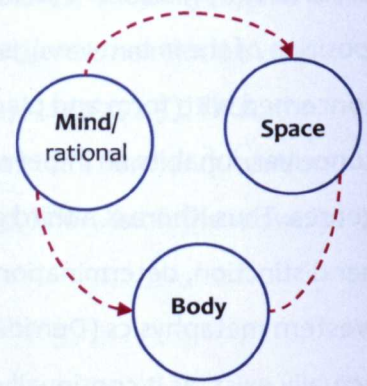
Fig 3.7 Traditional Paradigm of PLACE

There is a plan, a method to achieve this plan, a spatial arrangement. Accordingly, the traditional paradigm is represented in Fig 3.7, through three independent spheres; the mind interrelates with body and space through a linear and direct path.

Rickert (2007) traces a new paradigm of place which challenges the traditional understanding of body and space relation and interaction. Mind, body, and space are no longer autonomous. Also, the modern separatist notion of place has initiated the desire to revert back to the ancient holistic approach through the emphasis on mind and body. The mind is both *'emotional and rational'* questioning the relations between the self and the world. It is *'embodied and dispersed in'* body and space (Rickert, 2007:251).
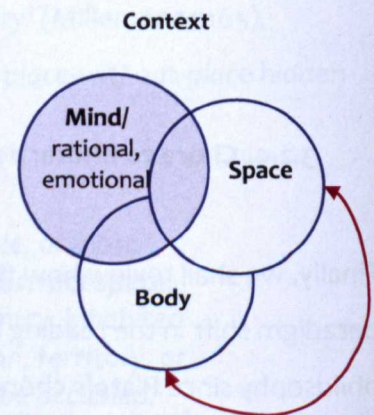
Fig 3.8 New Paradigm of PLACE

At the same time, it is also immersed in its social and technological contexts, as demonstrated through the review of Tschumi's reading of place. The interrelation between these spheres no longer follows a linear method but consists of a multiple and complex negotiating systems (Rickert, 2007). It was also shown that the new paradigm shows a particular affinity towards architecture. Place is an architectural component, a

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[5] Refer to chapter two

medium for thoughts and actions, activities, the interaction between the self and the other, as well as between bodies/ people and the spatial environment. The new paradigm is outlined in Fig 3.8. Finally, Rickert also reflects on the diminishing boundaries between inside/ outside place through this complex, dynamic notion:

> 'Contemporary work on the chōra suggests that there is no
> clear demarcation of 'in here' and 'out there', and that the
> notion of system is not one of directly following a method, in
> some linear fashion, but being immersed in, negotiating, and
> harnessing complex ecologies of systems and information'
> (Rickert, 2007:253)

The following section goes on to explore the project of deconstruction which is associated with both architecture and khōra.

3.3. What is Deconstruction?

> 'What deconstruction is not? Everything of course!
> What is deconstruction? Nothing of course'
> (Derrida, 1991a:275)

Many authors, including Derrida, have attempted to provide a definition of deconstruction. These attempts have mused on the impossibility of developing a clear definition of the word, of identifying what is deconstruction and what is not. This research is not interested in investigating the meaning of deconstruction. It is more interested in exploring the potentials that exist within this project in order to approach the research problem. A main assumption of this research is the misrepresentation of Cairo space through a rigid monolithic dominant perspective. The potentials for addressing this rigidity can be traced within Derrida's description of deconstruction as *'the opening of the future itself, a future which does not allow itself to be modalised or modified into the form of the present...'* (Derrida, 1992:200). In this sense, deconstruction could help to develop a new reading of place in general and in Cairo in particular, one which does not repeat a present or past reading and representation of place. Deconstruction is concerned *'... with what remains to be thought. With what cannot be*

thought within the present' (Royle, 2000:7). Rolye introduced a comprehensive

definition of deconstruction, if such a thing exists, where an expected comment from

Derrida might be that, *'deconstruction is all that and yet none of those'*. Deconstruction

is:-

> *'... Not what you think: the experience of the impossible: what*
> *remains to be thought: a logic of destabilization always already*
> *on the move in 'things themselves': what makes every identity*
> *at once itself and different of itself: a logic of spectrality: a*
> *theoretical and practical parasitism or virology: what is*
> *happening today in what is called society, politics, diplomacy,*
> *economics, historical reality, and so on: the opening of the*
> *future itself.'*
> (Royle, 2000:11)

3.3.1. Pas de méthode

> *'... Deconstruction is neither an analysis nor a critique... is not a*
> *method and cannot be transformed into one.'*
> (Derrida, 1991a:273)

> *'Deconstruction, an impossible method... is not a method if we*
> *take 'method' to mean a general set of rules, practices,*
> *prescribed formulae and so on which will operate consistently*
> *every time (systematic, programmatic, hermeneutic).*
> (McQuillan, 2001:3)

Deconstruction is not a method, a critique, an analysis or a reading; there are no steps,

rules or criteria to be applied (Lucy, 2004; Culler, 2003b; Bennington, 2001; McQuillan,

2001; Royle, 2000; Derrida, 1991a). McQuillan (2001:5) emphasised the mistranslation of

the word. *'Pas de méthode'* implies that deconstruction is not a method and

simultaneously *'a step in, or towards, a methodology'*; i.e. *'an impossible method'*[6].

Deconstruction is not a method of 'reading or interpretation' that is applied from

outside the discourse, deconstruction takes place within (Lucy, 2004). It is not a method

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[6] We will consider in this section the re-occurrence of the term 'impossible' in the discourse of
deconstruction, and the understanding of the 'impossible' as the opposite to the 'potential' and not the
'possible'

that searches for a unity in meaning but appreciates the singularity of each reading (Bennington, 2003). In other words, deconstruction does not present a 'systematic and closed' procedure for reaching the meaning (Royle, 2000). Culler (2003b:52) describes deconstruction as a strategy rather than a method, *'a philosophical strategy... a strategy within philosophy, a strategy for dealing with strategy'*. This research adopts Culler's approach, which takes the art of planning rather than the systematic application of specified techniques (Pearsall, 2001). Accordingly, deconstruction is considered as a set of strategies that are developed and approached from within the discourse of place presented through this thesis, without hierarchy or precedent arrangement. These strategies acknowledge the power of the author and the associated reading of place. They do not aim to develop a coherent piece of writing which reflects one truth and one meaning. These strategies will be explored through the following points as well as through the development of the thesis itself. Five strategies of McQuillan (2001) are introduced, adopted and developed here *'pas de method, deconstruction in context, a history without history, deconstructing binary oppositions, and embracing the margin'*, and I shall add two more, induced from these categories and highlighted owing to their strong relevance to the context of this study: the event and the meaning.

> *'There is no set of rules, no criteria, no procedure, no programme, no sequence of steps, no theory to be followed in deconstruction... Once we have overcome this naïve desire for a formula to academic socio-economic success, and opened ourselves up to the possibility of another way of thinking about the act of reading, then we can begin to orient ourselves towards the questions raised by deconstruction.*
> *(McQuillan, 2001:4)*

3.3.2. In context: il n'ya pas de hors-texte

'There is nothing outside of the text' (Derrida, 1997b). This statement is considered by McQuillan (2001) to be the most misunderstood piece of Derrida's work. The common interpretation implies the alienation of the deconstruction discourse from the wider social, political, historical context, *'and reality all together'* (McQuillan, 2001:36). Bennington and Derrida (1993:85) illustrate how this understanding has developed the

'*historian's objection to Derrida*' through the claim to return to the context in order to understand the text. They question the validity of any reading outside the context, such as a quotation, which is in reality inserted into a new context. According to McQuillan (2001), '*il n'ya pas de hors-textes*' rejects a signified transcendental which is outside the text, i.e. separated, '*a reality that is metaphysical, historical, psycho-biographical etc.*' (Derrida, 1997b:158). This rejection holds two implications for the text content/ context relationship and the text/ author relationship.

The content/ context relationship may reflect on what Lucy (2004) describes as '*inside/ outside transcendental difference*' ; where the text is the inside, and the context is the outside, e.g. politics, social, etc. (Bennington and Derrida, 1993). However, an intrinsic position of Derrida and deconstruction is the refusal of distinct separation between a binary opposition in favour of a blurry boundary and de-limitation; '*drawing a line in order to say this is the text* [content] *and this is the real world* [context] *to which it refers to is a false distinction*' (McQuillan, 2001:37). This statement therefore, works on blurring the separation between the text and context through:-

- The recognition of the inscription of the social, historical, etc. context inside the text content, '*we can access them* [in the text]' (McQuillan, 2001:38);

- Accordingly, the text, which is defined beyond written words and characteristics, represents a trace of contextual reality, '*which gives the text its meaning*' (McQuillan, 2001:38). The '*trace*' is the factor of blurriness in between content/ context, through its continuous oscillation – non-decidability – between presence and absence (Collins et al., 2005), i.e. context/ text relation and non-relation.

Finally, Bennington and Derrida (1993) question the historian's notion of putting the text back into context, when no one can actually re-build 'a context'. The text is not context free; accordingly a new context and a new textual trace are built '*to the extent that every trace is a trace of a trace*'. In the same sequence, the distinction between text/ author, which is traditionally separated through a false transcendental outsideness, is blurred

(McQuillan, 2001). Derrida considers the text/ author relationship as supplementary[7]; the author's life is inscribed in the text which becomes a part of the author's life, consequently shaping and re-arranging the author's life after the text (McQuillan, 2001).

It is worth noting that the blurriness in the text between content/ context and text/ author does not imply a homogenous production of truth; but rather helps to embed and recognise the multiplicities within the text that are inscribed in the context (McQuillan, 2001; Bennington and Derrida, 1993). This also helps in understanding the *'temporality and singularity'* of text which is simultaneously a referent of an outside context. Accordingly, the content is caught in another context of reading *'non-identical with authorial intentions'*, and hence, the text is subjected to *'misinterpretations and misappropriation'* and is continuously changing meaning and intention through time and context (Norris, 2004; McQuillan, 2001:36).

3.3.3. A history: without history

> *If deconstruction historicises, it does so by means of a **'history without history'** That is to say an idea of the historical which has to be though outside the logocentric conceptual schema which surround the traditional use of the term 'history'. In this way deconstruction is both historical and cannot be assimilated to an easy historicism'*
> (McQuillan, 2001:35)

In this section McQuillan (2001:35) exposes another *'myth about deconstruction that it is ahistorical'*. He reflects on how *'historicism'* has dominated *'material criticism'* through Marxism, cultural materialism or neo-historicism for example. This brings about the case of Cairo's representation discussed in chapter one as an example of this dominance. It was demonstrated that the representation of Cairo was dominated by a singular historicist socio-religious reading. McQuillan (2001) considers the deficiency of this type of reading which calls attention to history through both the production and explanation of the text/ discourse. This brings history to a state of *'history beyond history'*, a state

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[7] Supplement is the deconstruction of the Inside/ outside binary opposition, This will be discussed later

that entails an approach to history without understanding the concept of history. Accordingly, McQuillan (2001) discusses the historicity of deconstruction through its reading of the *'non-identity'* of the *'present'*; a present which is always in relation, tracing, the past or the future *'which is non-recoverable, not even potentially so'*. Accordingly, he explains the formulation of the meaning of text/ term through history.

> *'The moment we use the term ... we enter into a discourse*
> *which is already established and which has created a certain*
> *meaning for the term... which we cannot help but to be*
> *implicated in even if we wish to reject this use of the word'*
> (McQuillan, 2001:32)

This discussion of the historicity of deconstruction reflects on Derrida's famous quotation *'the text is never innocent'*. Each text/ term has a history, a long process, where the term continued to change. However, the singularity of each term is expressed in relation to *'a specific context'*. Accordingly, the variety of *'specific context(s)'* through time and location expresses the plurality of each term. A significant notion of this process is that it hides *'the tracks of this historical formation, not allowing the concept to be read as historically'* (McQuillan, 2001:30). Accordingly, the origin, the logocentric, of the term could not be identified. This discussion of the historicity of deconstruction helps to bring up a discussion on the event as a temporal historical instance, which will be further explored in the following section.

3.3.4. The event

> *'Deconstruction takes place, it is an **event** that does not await*
> *the deliberation, consciousness, or organization of a subject, or*
> *even of modernity. It deconstructs itself. It can be*
> *deconstructed.'*
> (Derrida, 1991a:274)

Through Derrida's persistent questioning of the concepts and categories of metaphysics, he questions the concept of the event outside the binary oppositions of presence and absence, reality and actuality (Lucy, 2004). Lucy demonstrated that Derrida's interest in

the event, among other metaphysical categories, is a manifestation of his resistance to a future dominated by traditionalism/ historicism; *'the tendency to circumscribe and confine and limit, to determine the limit the range of what may be asked and what may not, to what may be believed and what may not'* through models from history/ tradition' (Berlin, 1969 in Lucy, 2004:37). This is a phenomena that has dominated the 20th century (Lucy, 2004), as well as the contemporary representation of the city of Cairo. Thus we shall try to understand Derrida's event in association with the metaphysics of event:

> *An event cannot be reduced to the fact of something happening...*
> *If I am sure that something will happen, then it will not be an event... It is what may fail to come to pass...*
> *...: So there is no event without surprise'*
> (Derrida, 1994a:254-5)

' Event:-

- Important incident [the event-ness]
- Organised occasion
- Something that happens (philosophy)
- Single point in space and time (physics) '
(Encarta-Online-Dictionary)
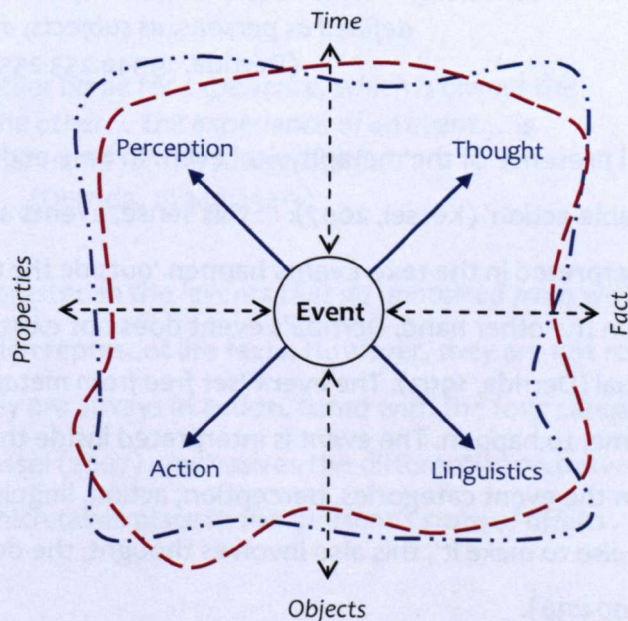
--- Presence in space and time

—··— Event-ness, significance, important occurrence

Fig 3.9 The event in metaphysics, constructed from Casati and Varzi (2008)

In metaphysics, the 'event' is regarded as a controversial category; its apparent simple definition in philosophy as 'something that happens' is not that simple, for example it re-questions the definition of the term 'happen' (Casati and Varzi, 2008). The metaphysical event was considered in close relation to perception, action, language and thought. However, the integration and/or separation of these four categories is not well-defined. Simultaneously, the definition of the event is also considered in a comparative/complementary relationship to other metaphysical categories of objects, time, facts and properties (Casati and Varzi, 2008). Furthermore the event is defined through 'spatio-temporal specificity'; 'the metaphysics of presence' (Lucy, 2004:33). This presence is complemented by the 'significance of the event', the 'event-ness', which is not simply present in the boundaries of space and time (Lucy, 2004:33). Fig 3.9 represents a construction of this representation of the event in metaphysics.

'The event must be considered in terms of the 'come hither', not conversely. 'Come' is said to another, to others who are not yet defined as persons, as subjects, as equals...
(Derrida, 1994a:253-255)

The dual presence of the metaphysical event in time and space implies a fusion of 'observable action' (Kessel, 2007). In this sense, events are described as things rather than interpreted in the text. Events happen 'outside the text', they are not made (Lucy, 2004). On the other hand, Derrida's event does not exist (Kessel, 2007), but equally, it is not virtual (Derrida, 1993). The event 'set free from metaphysical' constraints is set free to become, to happen. The event is interpreted inside the text and implies a fusion between the event categories, perception, action, linguistics and thought. 'To see an event is also to make it', this also involves thought, the decision to see, to make the event (Lucy, 2004:36).

A metaphysical event is also an isolated moment in time which belongs to 'historical temporality' and forms 'successive instances' of presence (Lucy, 2004:35). Derrida's event, on the other hand, 'exists outside any temporal order' (Kessel, 2007). Events are to come about, unexpectedly like a surprise, from the future. Kessel (2007) defines this future as the 'impossible' future which is not the future of this present. Accordingly, he

defines 'impossible' in contrast to the 'potential'. It would be interesting to apply this definition to all the impossible clauses in deconstruction, impossible method, impossible place, etc.

> *'The event and the singularity of the event –this is what*
> *difference is all about... So différance is a thought which wishes*
> *to yield to the imminence of what is coming or about to come:*
> *to the event'*
> (Derrida, 1994a:252)

Simultaneously, the event which comes about, sets off an interruption of *'conventionally dominated'* acts and contexts (Derrida, 1993). The event happens unexpectedly and is *'absolutely different'* from what is expected (Derrida, 1994a). This 'différance' is produced through the difference between the event presence/being in time and space and the other presence in time and space, which helps to identify the singularity of the identity and meaning (Lucy, 2004).

> *'[The Event] is another name for experience, which is always the*
> *experience of the other... the experience of an event... is*
> *another name for the future itself....'*
> (Derrida, 1994a:252-3)

Finally, Derrida is particularly interested in the *'events that go unnoticed from within the metaphysics of presence'*, yet which represent life facts. However, they are not reducible to space-time presence/ fact; they are always in action, fused with the four categories (Lucy, 2004). Simultaneously, Kessel (2007) emphasises the differentiation between Derrida's event and the event which takes place in the *'present's state of affairs'*.

3.3.5. Deconstructing Binary Oppositions

When I started writing about the role of deconstruction, I ran the risk of oversimplifying and/or overcomplicating the representation of deconstruction in this context. This risk is increased in this section –the deconstruction of binary opposition– which involves a discussion about binary opposition, logocentrism, difference and différance, the

supplement, and the triangle of signification. In an attempt therefore to develop a clear presentation, this part is presented through the categories of binary oppositions: definition, logocentrism, and différance. And the supplement category will examine the development of the concept of the model/ framework of place into reading strategies through deconstruction and différance. Finally, the deconstruction of the triangle of signification/ meaning through différance is studied in order to echo the meaning/ conception presented earlier through the primary framework of place.

> '... when we say we are deconstructing a binary opposition what
> we mean is we are attempting to think through the
> complexities of this thing called the difference'
> (McQuillan, 2001:19)

In 'Of Grammatology', Derrida (1997b) considers the construction of western philosophy since Plato through binary oppositions (McQuillan, 2001). As part of deconstruction's continuous effort to deconstruct western metaphysics, it approaches binary oppositions in order to 'identify and undo'. This involves two steps; reversing the binary and displacing the binary oppositions so as not to 'involve binary logic at all' (McQuillan, 2001:13). These steps are referred to by many authors as the stages of deconstruction in general, see (Collins et al., 2005; Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000). However, it must be taken into consideration that the deconstruction of binary opposition does not involve the elimination of all binary oppositions. The deconstruction approach thus helps to define the limits within the binary opposition system to ensure that their representation of reality does not decieve (McQuillan, 2001).

a. Binary opposition

Binary opposition divides 'conceptual material' into a pair of binary terms. These binary pairs are dependent on each other for meaning through 'difference', 'either/ or' (Collins et al., 2005; McQuillan, 2001). However, these binary pairs are **NOT** opposites in reality; they are not equal; the first term is usually 'privileged', which is traditionally associated with masculinity (McQuillan, 2001).

West/ East	
Masculine/ Feminine	
White/ Black	
Time/ Space	

Fig 3.10 Binary opposition in Western metaphysics

Through a stable differential relation between these pairs, binary oppositions are involved in philosophy and science as well as decision-making and thinking as they help to categorise *'objects, events, and relations'* (Collins et al., 2005). However, McQuillan (2001) emphasises that binary oppositions are representations of 'western thought' rather than of reality, although they appear as part of this reality: a term is defined in opposition to what it is not.

Thus deconstruction disturbs the logic of binary opposition (Collins et al., 2005). As discussed, this does not involve the elimination of binary oppositions but rather approaches the differential relation between the binary pair, i.e. the différence. Accordingly, *'only a displacement of a binary opposition can be said actually to undo that binary'* (McQuillan, 2001:18). To understand this, it is necessary to consider *'logocentrism'* which constructs the binary logic of binary opposition. This leads to an exploration of *'différance'* which considers the deconstruction of difference; the differential relation in-between the binary pair.

b. Logo-centrism

'... logocentrism constructs or centres, sense and meaning,
around the identity of these terms [binary oppositions] while
disguising un-resolvable tension between them'
(McQuillan, 2001:12)

Logocentrism is the logic of binary opposition; the inequality in-between the binary pair and the privileging of the first term as *'positive'*; the search for an ultimate and absolute truth, an origin (Collins et al., 2005; McQuillan, 2001). Accordingly, logocentrism considers the binary opposition pair; it privileges the first term and marginalises the second; and hence, considers the differential relation in-between them as a process that starts from the first privileged term and moves towards the second (Collins et al., 2005:46). The deconstruction of logocentrism is *'at pains to point out that it is impossible*

in principle to escape from logocentric thinking' (McQuillan, 2001:13). We will discuss within 'différance' that both logocentrism and différance obscure each other as well as obscuring deconstruction.

c. Différance

[Différance is] *'... the systematic play of differences, of traces*
of differences, of spacing by means of which elements are
related to each other'
(Derrida, 2004 [1979]:27)

Différance deconstructs 'difference'. This raises two questions what is 'difference'? how does 'différance' and 'deconstruction' approach this 'difference'? Difference sets up the logic of binary opposition in metaphysics. It considers the fixed differentiation between *'being this and being that'* (Lucy, 2004:7). The binary logic considers the dependency between the binary opposition pair through this fixed difference. For example, a binary term is either white or black. The identity of each, for instance the white, is dependent on its difference from the other, the black (Collins et al., 2005; McQuillan, 2001). Différance disturbs this notion of a fixed difference. It considers the production of difference between being this or that (Lucy, 2004; Bennington and Derrida, 1993). Accordingly, the deconstruction of binary opposition approaches the logic of binary opposition 'difference' through 'différance' rather than breaking up the terms of the binary (McQuillan, 2001).

'for every element of the system only gets its identity in its
difference from other elements, every element is in this way
marked by all those it's not: it thus bears the trace of those
other elements'
(Bennington and Derrida, 1993:74-5)

The definition of the French word *'différance'* places it in-between time and space and breaks down the pair. Différance is to *'defer'* as *'an action of time'*, and to *'differ'* as *'an action of space'* (McQuillan, 2001:17). This definition also, recalls the event, in which Derrida deconstructed its presence in space and time. The event does not exist; it is yet

to come in the future, which is not the potential future of this present. And différance is *'the becoming-time of space and the becoming-space of time'* (Derrida, 1982b:8). Différance thus involves a delay in time and space, a delay which implies *'that meaning is always anticipated or else re-established after the event'* (Bennington and Derrida, 1993:71-2). Accordingly, a binary term does not exist in the present; it extends between the *'past and future'*, which at the same time do not exist in the *'past and future'* in reality (Bennington and Derrida, 1993). *'Différance is actively disruptive'* (Collins et al., 2005). You cannot pin it down, for the moment you do so, it is no longer différance but logocentrism (McQuillan, 2001). Différance, hence, produces binary difference. However, it is not fixed but instantly and continuously defers from this momentary *'presentation of difference'* (McQuillan, 2001:17). Différance is *'always in-between or in-the process-of'* providing presence that is changeable and without *'being present itself'* (McQuillan, 2001:17; Bennington and Derrida, 1993:80). In summary, deconstruction does not break down the opposition between the binary terms but considers the différance of each term from the other as it appears to defer and differ (McQuillan, 2001). It deconstructs the *'possibility of any conceptual distinction'* between the binary pair, *'can neither be a word nor a concept'* (Bennington and Derrida, 1993:70). This exclusion helps to define a binary term through a simultaneous definition of what a term is not; i.e. each term holds a trace of all the other terms which it is not (McQuillan, 2001; Bennington and Derrida, 1993). This displacement of the difference 'either/ or' with double exclusion 'neither/ nor' recalls the representation of Khōra in chapter two. Khōra oscillates between two types of oscillation, double exclusion 'neither/ nor' and participation 'both/ and'. This double oscillation helped to alienate khōra from the binary opposition logic.

d. Supplementary

> *[Deconstruction] is most commonly associated with post-structuralism but has its contextual roots in the historical conjunction surrounding structuralism. Like structuralism it is concerned with a certain idea of structure but it also, wishes to undo or desediment structures of all kinds, including structure of structuralism as well as structures older than structuralism '*
> (McQuillan, 2001:2)

As already discussed, binary oppositions help to organise and structure 'objects, events, and relations' as well as thought and decision-making. And différance is concerned with the production of the system of differences between pairs of binary opposition. Différance initiates differential relations and simultaneously disturbs their stability. Thus, différance makes these structures, system of differences, possible; however, it also 'makes the ides of structure impossible' (McQuillan, 2001:18). We shall now attempt to explore the 'structure/ system' and the différance/ deconstruction approach.

A systematic structure constitutes a fixed centre or origin 'referring to a point of presence' (Derrida, 2001 [1978]:352; McQuillan, 2001). This idea of a structure built around a fixed centre is associated with Plato. This gave way to a 'de-centred' structure through structuralism (Lucy, 2004). Derrida differed from the structuralist de-centred approach which remained associated with the metaphysics of difference; centre/ de-centre is another binary opposition (Lucy, 2004). The centre helps to close up the structure; this closure allows systematic relations between defined elements. It limits and set the boundaries of a structure which provides a clear definition of what is inside the structure and what is outside (McQuillan, 2001). Accordingly, the role of the centre is to manage the structure; it limits 'the play of its elements' inside the structure as well as 'orient, balance, and organise' this structure (Derrida, 2001 [1978]:352). However, as the centre closes up play within the structure, it 'opens up' and breaks outside the structure (Derrida, 2001 [1978]). This locates the 'traditional' centre both inside and outside the structure. The centre becomes the supplement which 'escapes the system and at the same time installs itself within the system to demonstrate the impossibility of the system' (McQuillan, 2001:20).

Derrida continues to expose the determination of the centre in the history of 'structure', which through a system of difference developed a 'a series of substitutions of centre for centre'. Accordingly, the presence of the centre is entitled to instant différance, to differ and defer, 'from itself into its own substitute' which questions the presence of the centre (Derrida, 2001 [1978]:353, 354); and hence, the structure. Derrida deconstructed the 'centre' – the supplement–, which is located both inside and outside the structure,

breaking the boundaries and limits of the structure and thus deconstructing the structure in post-structuralism.

3.3.6. Meaning: triangle of signification

> [Traditionally] 'A sign ... is ... a sign-of a signifier referring to a signified, a signifier different from its signified,
> if one erases the radical difference between signifier and signified, it is the word 'signifier'... which must be abandoned as a metaphysical concept'
> (Derrida, 2001 [1978]:355)

This section continues the discussion on the deconstruction of binary oppositions through différance, which Derrida inserted 'between signifier/ signified. sensible/ intelligible, word/ concept' (Collins et al., 2005:75). For Saussure (1983), meaning is the product of the sign, as a 'permanent relationship' between the signifier and the signified as well as a play of difference between them (Collins et al., 2005:62-3). The signifier is the physical image, sense, sensible, material, the body... And the signified is the mental image, thought, intelligible, concept, the soul...

For Saussure, the meaning and identity of each sign is produced through a differential relation between the signs. This play of difference involves only the positive term, the signifier (McQuillan, 2001). Conversely, the relation between the signifier and the signified is stable; they cannot exist without each other (Collins et al., 2005; McQuillan, 2001). However, this relation is arbitrary. Accordingly, 'the concept is fixed as the signified and has priority over its arbitrary and conventional mode of expression as a signifier' (McQuillan, 2001:18). For Derrida, on the other hand, as discussed in the previous section, différance does not consider the difference between the signs but the system of differences. The sign refers to a concept which itself refers to reality (Bennington and Derrida, 1993). The sign refers to an absent signifier, which refers to another signified through différance (McQuillan, 2001); i.e. the signifier/ signified relation is no longer stable, and the signified is caught in differential relations to other concepts, through it signifier expression.

[Différance] '... holds that an element functions and signifies,
takes or conveys meaning, only by referring to another past or
future element in an economy of traces'
(Derrida, 2004 [1979]:29)

3.3.7. Embracing the margin

'In every binary opposition one of the terms will be figured as
central to discourse, and one marginal; one will be 'included'
within the concerns of the discourse, one 'excluded' from
them.'
(McQuillan, 2001:23)

McQuillan introduced *'embracing the margin'* as a *'deconstructive method'*, if such a thing
exists, as previously discussed in the 'Pas de méthode' section. The deconstruction of a
text/ discourse lies in the margin of this discourse. The margin is subservient, dominated,
excluded by the dominant and more important binary at the centre of the discourse.
Accordingly, this domination of the margin opens up the discourse for deconstruction;
the *'position of the margin... is responsible for the entire structure'* (McQuillan, 2001:30).
However, in continuation of discussion on the différance, we should be careful not to
reverse the binary; i.e. not to include the dominated and exclude the dominant, which
would continue the binary logic in different terms.

'The very condition of a deconstruction may be at work, within
the system to be deconstructed; it may be already located
there, already at work, not at the centre but in an excentre, in a
corner whose eccentricity assures the solid concentration of the
system, participating in the construction of what at the same
time threatens to deconstruct'
(Derrida and De Man, 1989:73)

a. The cornerstone

> '*As a cornerstone, it supports it [the structure of the discourse], however rickety it may be, and brings together at a single point all its forces and tensions. It does not do this from a central commanding point, like a key stone; but it also does it laterally, in its corner*'
> (Derrida and De Man, 1989:73-4)

The cornerstone represents a set of binary oppositions which is marginalised from the discourse. Fig 3.11 represents a visual metaphor of Derrida's and McQuillan's (2001) reading of the cornerstone, which is outside the centre of the discourse/ arch. The cornerstone is like the 'keystone' which holds the structure of the arch and hence, responsible for its stability. A defective keystone entails the failure of the arch structure. However the cornerstone is ex-centric. It both holds the arch structure from its location at the corner, and is simultaneously defective and responsible for the arch collapse.

Traditional reading
Keystone:
At the centre

Deconstruction
Cornerstone:
At the margin

Fig 3.11 Deconstruction is interested in the cornerstone at the margin of the discourse rather than the keystone at the centre

This interest in the margin reflects deconstruction's interest in the instability of the whole text. The margin attribute to both the construction and deconstruction of the text is readily described as '*defective cornerstone*'. The cornerstone stands for the whole structure, while pushed to the margin of the text/ space. It is considered the first stone, upon which the whole structure is built. However it is defective and that makes it unstable. The reader's task is to find the cornerstone which will readily deconstruct the whole structure (McQuillan, 2001).

b. The margin: a reading strategy

*'Deconstruction is interested in this so-called marginal term.
Giving that this exclusion does not reflect lived reality but is an
operation of power enacted on behalf of a certain politically
constituted groups, then the recuperation of the margins is a
necessary step in demonstrating the injustices which are
disguised by the work of logocentrism'*
(McQuillan, 2001:23)

McQuillan (2001:28) demonstrated reading strategies to embrace the margin and deconstruct the text through a *'singular path of a moment reading'*; a *'specific and situational'* reading which is approached from inside the text, rather than applying an external methodology. Consequently, he emphasised that this is not a subjective reading that puts meaning into the text through *'picking on an obscure detail'*. It is a reading of the text, which has already privileged the discourse in the centre and excluded the other in the margin; a reading which sets a play of différance inside the text, against its inherent structure. However, this is an essential step towards deconstruction that is continued through a personal reading; a reading which puts the reader inside the text, for the singular moment of reading and leaves a trace of the reader in the text. Accordingly, we recognise the uniqueness of the event of reading, which differs every time the text is read. Accordingly, this is followed by a *'movement from specific to general... along a singular path of reading'* (McQuillan, 2001:26). This reading considers the wider context of the text; the production and functioning of the text binary oppositions within their culture; and demonstrates the instability of their production and hence puts the cultural context at risk. The reader is hence, enabled to deconstruct *'the network of power relations'* that is based on and simultaneously constructed from these oppositions.

3.4. Or PLACE

*'Place would indeed be a less misleading translation of chora
than space, because place does not suggest an infinite extent of
vacancy lying beyond the finite sphere of the universe'*
(Casey, 1997:353)

Derrida protected Khōra from translation and interpretation through language, keeping
her proper name and feminine figure, without pursuing a feminist position. However, in
his quest to build khōra, he subjected her to a different kind of interpretation, an
architectural one. Khōra, which is as ambiguous and abstract as an architecture space of
knowledge is forced into the physical space and form. This approach to reading khōra is
an attempt to displace her again in between idea and reality, intelligible and sensible.
Simultaneously, deconstruction has problematically been associated with architecture
design, *'deconstructionist architecture is there; there is a lot of it about and there is more
to come'* (Broadbent, 1991a:11). Deconstruction has become an architectural style, one
that Derrida rejects to associate with his deconstruction project, *'deconstruction is not an
architectural metaphor'* (Derrida, 1985 in Broadbent and Glusberg, 1991:8). For Derrida,
*'...architectural thought can only be considered deconstructive ... as an attempt at
visualizing that what establishes the authority linking architecture and philosophy'*
(Broadbent and Glusberg, 1991:8), and it is this reading in which we are interested.
Accordingly, we shall look back on the exploration of both deconstruction and khōra.

3.4.1. Deconstruction-Architecture: *reading strategies*

*'Not taking anything for granted might be a useful rule of
thumb in deconstruction'*
(McQuillan, 2001:40)

We have reviewed deconstruction strategies through McQuillan's (2001) representation
of *'five strategies of deconstruction'*, pas de méthode, deconstruction in context, a
history without history, deconstructing binary opposition, and embracing the margin,
and induced the two other sub-strategies event and meaning. Also, this involved

repeated discussion of the difficulty of approaching deconstruction without the risk of oversimplifying and/ or simultaneously overcomplicating its representation. The reality is that a life time could be spent studying just one strategy associated with deconstruction. Accordingly, an ellipsis of this reading of these strategies is developed. It is necessary to emphasis that this is an ellipsis of deconstruction strategies presented in this chapter rather than an ellipsis of deconstruction.

In an attempt to oversimplify the role of deconstruction:
Deconstruction reading strategies are totally dependent on the discourse being approaches. They identify the structure, the inconsistencies, and the weak and missing points within the discourse. Simultaneously, they break, turn over and change the hierarchy between centre and peripheries, and blur the edges and boundaries of the discourse. Hence, the discourse is exposed and deconstructed from inside. I.e. deconstruction follows 'a logic of destabilization' that works from inside the discourse. Finally, the reading of deconstruction strategies has shown that they are related and interdependent through a singular temporal reading of the discourse.

By reflecting on the deconstruction strategies as a reading event, a number of themes can be identified, which are working in the background of these strategies and which help to relate them together. These themes are represented in three sets.

The first set constitutes:-
   −   A rejection of a transcendental truth which exists outside the discourse
   −   Reading the discourse as a reality, a representation of reality, and beyond this reality
   −   A rejection of the obvious or the expected reading (the traditional) which denies the potential differential reading, the unexpected
   −   Deconstruction is already inscribed inside the discourse
   −   Deconstruction is ascribed to 'the experience of the impossible'; the impossible is that which opposes the expected potential, rather than the possible. Deconstruction is impossible in a sense; it is yet to happen unexpectedly, differing from the tradition.

The second set considers the (construction) of the discourse:-

- The discourse is inscribed in the context, and vice versa through the concept of 'trace', every term holds a trace of the reality, its representation and what is beyond
- The discourse is constructed through sets of binary oppositions,
- Centre/ margin of the discourse which highlights the centre and excludes the margin
- Binary representations included in the discourse
- The discourse revolves around centre/ margin; while metaphysics considers the centre and its de-centring; deconstruction is more interested in the margin
- Binary opposition representations follow the discourse, reality, representation and beyond reality; metaphysics is concerned with the representation of the reality, *'facts of life'*; deconstruction is concerned with binary opposition which metaphysics missed, beyond the reality representation and which is disguised through binary opposition

The third set considers the de.construction of the discourse, embracing the margin, the cornerstone, différance and the trace:-

- The centre/ margin hierarchy is deconstructed
- The centre is displaced through the supplement; it escapes the discourse and simultaneously is inscribed inside the discourse to demonstrate the impossibility of its construction
- The margin is displaced through the cornerstone; the defective stone on the margin of the discourse which is responsible for the construction and deconstruction of the discourse
- Deconstructing the discourse binary oppositions through différance and trace
- Différance promotes ambiguity over the well-defined; it implies a continuous change of the binary terms through time and space; once you define a term it changes;
- The trace blurs the boundaries between the binary opposition sets; each a term holds a trace of the other, as well as all the other terms it is not

*'... My deconstruction can only happen once because it is
unique to the singular moment of affirmation, which is the
event of my reading... So, my reading (or deconstruction) is
nothing more than a matter of placing myself within the
operation of the text and being part of that operation (the
text's own self-deconstruction) for the singular duration of my
reading '*
(McQuillan, 2001:26-7)

3.4.2. Khōra-Architecture: *dreaming place*

Space of Knowledge
Transcendent/ Intelligible

Concept

Khōra

Space-in-between

Concept-form

Context

Body ← Form → Space

Content

Immanent/ sensible
Physical space
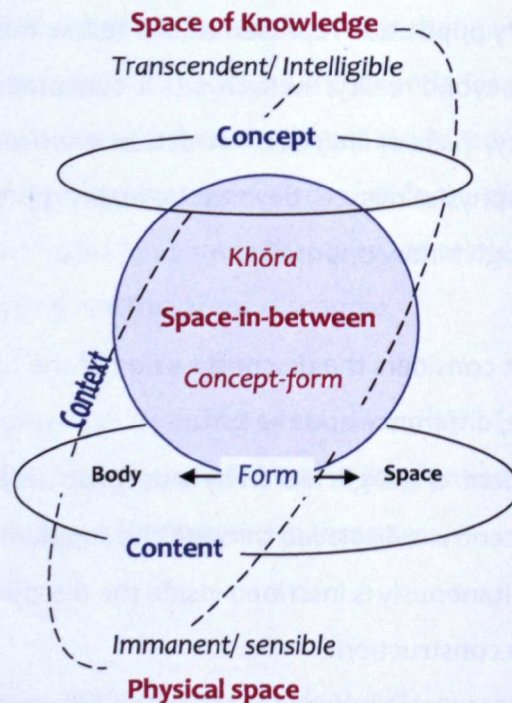
Fig 3.12 Khōra, a space in between architecture space

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, architecture space is a space of knowledge
(intelligible concept) of the physical space (sensible form), immersed in context (Fig
3.12). Accordingly, we reflected on traditional thinking about the transcendence of the
outside space of knowledge to the immanent architecture practice and hence, physical
space. This discussion brings about three simultaneous in-between spaces. Khōra is the
space in-between the intelligible and the sensible. She oscillates between these space, as

she receives from a transcendent intelligible to conceive the sensible. Tschumi, on the other hand, displaced the modern dichotomy, 'form follows function' through the introduction of an intermediate space, *'concept-form'*. This 'concept-form' space thus reflects the neutrality of the architecture space container that does not follow a function but accommodates any function. However, khōra is also the deconstruction of the container space; as it blurs the boundaries between the binary 'contained space and material container' (Pérez-Gómez, 1994:9).

Simultaneously, this reading –the oscillation of khōra–, is turned over through architecture space. In architecture, '*...content and context are given elsewhere outside architecture*', while the concept is immanent in the practice, '*it is what I, as an architect, have to generate*' (Tschumi in Walker, 2006:166). '*Nevertheless it is somehow contaminated ... by context and content*' (166). This contamination brings about the third space in-between, which was also discussed in the previous chapter, in-between transcendence and immanence. The transcendent intelligible outside knowledge which is only approachable through an immanence, appears to be inside the boundaries of the container space, transcending from inside the practice i.e. a space in-between which contaminates architecture space, concept, content and context.

Transcendence/ Immanence
Outside/ inside
Intelligible/ sensible
Knowledge/ place
Concept/ form
Khōra
Arch. Space
Concept/ content-context
Inside/ Outside
Immanent/ transcendent
Concept-form
Immanent-transcendent
A temporary whole
Space-in-between
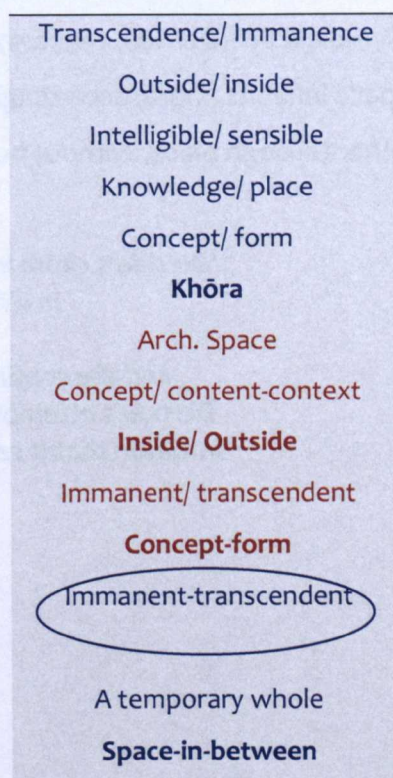
Figure 3.13 Khōra: a space-in-between immanence and transcendence

Simultaneously, chapter two presented a view in-between the intelligible and the sensible, a world of subverted realities, namely pragmatics, inspiration and creativity, and also reflected on the association of these realities with architecture space. Again, both architecture space that which is not limited to the knowledge of form, and khōra resonate as if they co-exist in parallel worlds. However, architecture is the art of place-making; and khōra is the space without space that could only be approached '*as if in a dream*' (Derrida, 1995b:99).

Consequently, my argument is that khôra, the impossible place, is not hostile to architecture space as argued by Grosz (2001), nor can architecture build khôra as requested by Derrida. Grosz's (1995:116) argument is based on reading chóra as a *'the space in which place is made possible'*. Khôra inhabits architecture space, as she receives from the architectural space of knowledge embedded in the content and context of place, to conceive the place in content and context. A logic that could only be apprehended as khôra oscillates between oscillations in the impossible place. Again, *'... there is only one khóra, and that is indeed how we stand it, there is only one, however divisible it be'* (Derrida, 1995b:97). Khôra inhabits architecture space as architecture space inhabits khôra; accordingly they are both the abstraction and realisation of each other through place, without building that place.

> *'Derrida's chôra inhabits an impossible place, one that governs,*
> *in a manner nearly meta-metaphysical*
> *...*
> *and the conflicts that emerge with Eisenman stem from*
> *Derrida's attempt to realize this impossibility leavened with an*
> *intuition that it cannot be realized – that it remains impossible.'*
> (Rickert, 2007:266)

West/ East

Private/ public

Cairo-space

Cairene

Place/

people

Tourist/ Cairene

East/ West
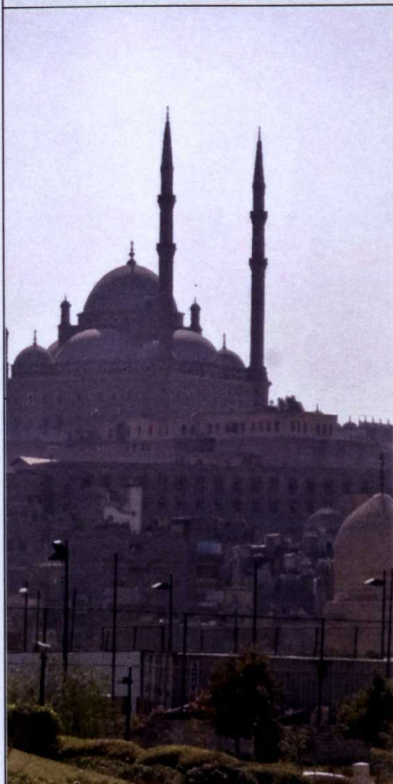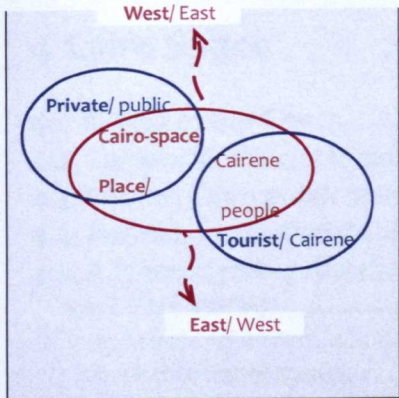
Chapter Four: Cairo Space

Cairo, khôra and deconstruction: **Towards a reflexive reading of place**

4 Cairo Space

4.1. A walk in the City

The misrepresentation of Cairo-space through a monolithic representation of the Islamic city founded in 969 AD was introduced in chapter one. Derrida together with other interested researchers has reflected on this misrepresentation, which is manifested through the dynamics of her public space that led to a growing tension in between people and place. This review, complemented by the researcher's observations, helped the development of the main question and goal of the research; *'How to approach, read and understand the paradox of Cairo in between Cairene and Cairo space, people and place?'*, or what was described in chapter one as the 'mess' of Cairo space. Simultaneously, the research questions the role of *architects and urban designers: 'what can they contribute to this paradox?'* The review presented in this chapter is mainly concerned with the first question, the exploration of Cairo space by means of a walk through the temporal, spatial, and institutional spaces of the city. This reading aspires to explore and guide the projection of theories of place reviewed in chapters two and three through the case of Cairo.

This exploratory walk through the city space is developed through my personal experience as a researcher in 'Cairo, my city'. In addition I extract a primary reading of Cairo space from newspapers, internet blogs, and ethnographic reports of the city, as well as from unstructured conversations with various government officials. The main aim of these conversations/ interviews is to explore and attempt to develop a general idea about Cairo public space; consequently the main question is: *'what is happening from your perspective?'*

The walk through Cairo space is compromised of four parts. The first is a virtual walk in time since the city's foundation in 969 AD, continued through the Islamic city, the modern city, and contemporary presidential Cairo. This is complemented by a spatial walk through the city's public space, where phases in time are reflected in this space. Thirdly, a formal walk considers the institutional organisations and how these are reflected in the public space. This walk is complemented by a visit to Al-Azhar Park in

Cairo, which is considered to be one of the largest and most important contemporary interventions into the urban space. The final section hence, reflects on this exploratory walk by questioning the presence and role of architects and urban designers in matters concerning Cairo space. At the same time, it investigates the embracing of the monolithic Islamic image, which is considered to be a representation of the city's whole hearted acceptance of the western binary opposition between east and west. The literature of 'Orientalism', and 'Post-colonialism' associated with the region is also highlighted.

4.2. Temporal: *the city in time*

> '*The history of Cairo and its discontinuities have thus brought together urban areas that differ widely in their concepts, their economic role, and the social and cultural level of their residents. Such contrasts... are also present in all great modern metropolises, but they are particularly distinct here.*'
> (Raymond, 2007 p.364-5)

This section reviews the history of the city since its foundation by the Fatimid. However, it is necessary to highlight the fact that Cairo's history is built on the old Egyptian heritage of Pharaohs, and in the Roman, the Coptic and the Byzantine. Since its foundation three main periods can be identified, which define the city's characteristics and evolution; the Islamic city, the modern city, and the current presidential city. These three periods were disrupted by two main events, which stopped the continuity of the development of the city. These were the French expedition of 1798 and the military revolution of 1952, as elaborated in Fig 4.1 and Fig 4.2.

Originally Cairo was called Al-Mansurriya after the North African Fatimid Capital. It was Al-Muez Ledin Allah Al-Fatimy who called the city, Cairo, Al-Qahira, the city victorious, and this became well known as Fatimid Cairo. Today this part of the city is seen as the historic core or sometimes as the Islamic city, which developed through four dynasties: the Fatimid, Ayyubid, Mamluk, and Ottoman 969 ~1798.

Islamic City 969~1798 AD
- Fatimid
- Ayyubid
- Mammluk
- Ottoman

French Expedition 1798-1801

Modern Cairo 1805~1952
- British Presence 1882
- British protection 1914
- Independency 1936

July Revolution 1952

Presidential Cairo
- Naguib/ AbdelNasser ~1970
- Al-saddat ~1981
- Mubarek ~now
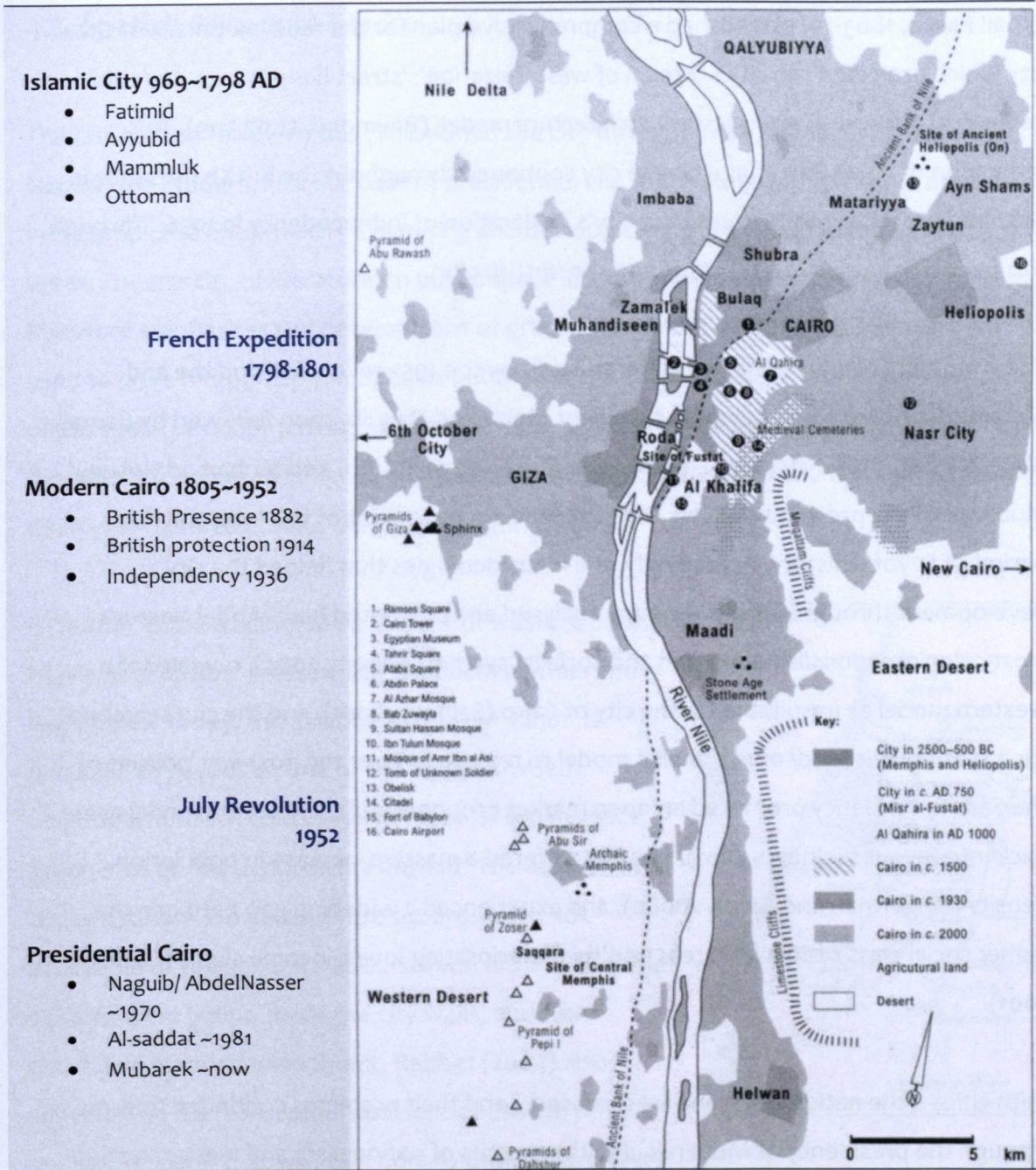
Fig 4.1 Continuities and discontinuities in the city history

Fig 4.2 Historic Development of Cairo (Rodenbeck, 2005 p.iix)

The continuity of the history of the city was first interrupted by the French Expedition of 1798-1801, which led to the development of modern Cairo by the Mohamed Ali family from 1805 to 1952. It could be said that the history of the development of modern Cairo was chiefly influenced by two main characters. Mohamed Ali Pasha (1805) established the modern city and introduced new institutional, social and economic systems. And

Ismail Pasha, 1863-79, established a comprehensive plan for the redevelopment of the city which projected the city's *'dream of westernization'*; *'street has primacy, grid urban geometry... as well as new western architecture model'* (Raymond, 2007:309). This projection of a western image on the city continued throughout the British presence in 1882 and protection in 1914 until the city's declaration of independency in 1936. Through this period Raymond (2007) calls Cairo the *'British city'*.

The continuity of city history was altered again by the 1952 revolution and the and appointment of the first Egyptian president Mohamed Naguib, soon followed by Gamal Abdel Nasser, 1956-1970, Mohamed Anwar EL-Sadat, 1970-1981, and Mohamed Hosney Mubarak to the present time. It is hard to give a short account of this long and rich period of Egypt's history. Accordingly, the main ideologies that helped the city development through out this time are analysed and presented here. Abdel Nasser's *'post-colonial nationalist'* approach and socialist system (Adham, 2004), revealed the western model as unsuitable for the city of Cairo (Salheen, 2001), and the city searched for a traditionalist and/ or regionalist model to replace it. Then the post-war policies of the Sadat presidency promoted an open market economy and the western model came back into favour (Salheen, 2001). The city suffered a massive increase in population density (Singerman and Amar, 2006a), and experienced a widening gap between the higher social class residential areas and the deteriorating lower-income slums (Salheen, 2001).

Both cities – the nationalised and westernised – and their problems continued to grow through the presidency of Mubarak, and the dreams of nationalism and westernisation continued to co-exist within Cairo space. The city grew into a massive metropolis comprising historic Cairo and the modern Cairo. Recently, the return of Cairene immigrants from the western and the Gulf countries has encouraged the emergence of New Cairo, a place that includes new (gated) communities which reflect a different/ contemporary life style from that of the city of Cairo itself. Overall, the layers of the city history developed over time, not replacing each other but rather changing and developing to co-exist in the contemporary city.

4.3. Spatial: *Cairo public space*

The last section reviewed the evolution of the city through three historical periods, the Islamic, the Modern, and the current presidential era. Interestingly, these three periods were projected onto the city's planning and development of public space and green areas. The scarcity of literature on public space in Cairo must be noted, but most literature emphasises the development of green areas and therefore this literature is used to drive this perception of Cairo public space. Rabbat (2004) presents a review of urban space development in the three periods, and demonstrates the contradiction between the common image of a city developed in the desert, and the fact that Fatimid Cairo was founded around the 'Bustan Kafur' (Fig 4.3).

A 'bustan' is the traditional equivalent of western parks; however a 'bustan' is essentially productive, fruits and vegetables. Today, the location of 'Bustan Kafur' is occupied by Al-Musky, one of the most crowded neighbourhoods in Cairo. Another type of urban space/ green area of this period is the 'mydan', the equivalent of today's square. However, these squares were not accessible to the general public. Several urban parks and squares were built outside the city walls, and were overtaken by city development. Rabbat (2004) also reflected on the 'conceptual distinction between private and public space' that was functionally projected; private spaces involve leisure and entertainment and public spaces involved commerce and worship. Furthermore, the city continued to produce private gardens inside the walls of palaces, which helped to create the image of the 'overbuilt city' in the desert with few green open spaces.
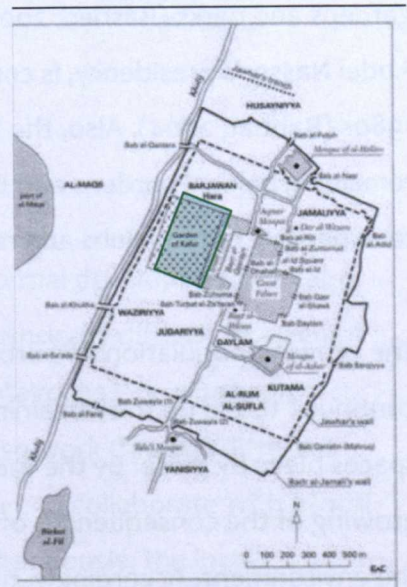
Fig 4.3 Fatimid Cairo built around the 'Bustan Kafur', (after Ravaisse, Raymond, 2007 p.32)

Modern Cairo, the second historical period of the city, witnessed the development of most of her gardens, squares and parks especially in the time of Ismail Pasha, e.g. Azbakiya garden, Horreya garden, etc. (El-Messiri, 2004; Rabbat, 2004). These parks and squares projected a western image, and were built for the royal family, westerners and elite Egyptians who could afford the entrance fees (El-Messiri, 2004). Although many of these places still exist with the city urban fabric today, many were taken over by urban development especially after the state bankruptcy caused by the extravagant spending of both Said (1854-1863) and Ismail (1863-1879) (Rabbat, 2004).

Following the revolution, these parks and squares were opened for the public for free. However, 'attention was directed to the internal affairs'; and the development of the city infrastructure, transportation, bridges and tunnels, housing, etc were given priority over gardens and parks (Rashed, 2005; El-Messiri, 2004). The 'Obelisk Garden', built during Abdel Nasser's presidency, is considered to be the only significant park built up until the 1980s (Rabbat, 2004). Also, the 'open economy policy' promoted the privatisation of the remaining palatial gardens and the Nile promenade, and their ownership was transferred to expensive hotels, clubs and restaurants (Rabbat, 2004).

The growing population and urban development continued to eat up the remaining green areas and public spaces piece by piece. By the 1980s, awareness was growing of the consequences of these developments on the environment. Accordingly, the Cairo Government established new plans to address the scarcity of green areas and public spaces in order to enhance the quality of urban life within the city (El-Messiri, 2004). These projects were initiated in 1987, with the establishment of 'The International Garden' in Madinet Nasr through donations from several countries (El-Messiri, 2004) (Fig 4.4). Each of these countries chose a location to bear its name in the garden and was responsible for the design and making of

Fig 4.4 International garden, 2007

Fig 4.5 Al-Fustat Garden, (E. Hassan 2007)

this area. Two new parks, 'Al-Fustat Garden' (Fig 4.5) and 'The Cultural Park for Children' (Fig 4.6), were also developed in 1987 in the historic districts of Al-Fustat and Al-Sayyida Zeinab respectively. Simultaneously, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture donated to the Cairenes the largest project in its Historic Cities Programme, and the largest park in Cairo, 'The Azhar Park' on the Darrassa Hill in 1984, completed in May 2005 (Fig 4.7). These projects also involved the upgrade of a number of existing public-spaces considered to be of significant value e.g. historic, as well as the cleaning and beautification of other public spaces present in the public's everyday life, such as squares and pavements (El-Messiri, 2004).

Fig 4.6 The Cultural Park, 2007

Fig 4.7 Al-Azhar Park (M. Stino)

4.4. Formal: *institutional Cairo-space*

This walk in the city continues with an exploration of the formal development of Cairo space through local and international perspectives. It is intrinsically difficult to attempt to understand the pattern of international involvement in Cairo, as it is usually project-based rather than locally planned; international projects also work through different backgrounds and approaches. However, these projects have to collaborate with a local partner and work according to Egyptian regulations. Simultaneously, the local governmental approach to public spaces is examined, based on exploratory interviews with different administrative officers as well as governmental documents. Similarly, the influence of the institutional working patterns and systems on Cairo's urban space is explored.

To adequately comprehend the institutional perspective within Cairo towards public space, the main institutional actors need to be identified, together with their roles and strategies, and the hierarchy and relationships between them in the decision-making process. With reference to public space development involving parks, garden, squares,

pavements, etc., the following actors can be identified: the Cairo government; the different district offices (28 districts distributed over four regions) the Administration of Cairo Transportation (ACT); Cairo Cleaning and Beautification Agency (CCBA) founded in 1983; and the Specialised Gardens Administration Project (SGAP) founded in 1987 (Cairo-Government)[1].

First, the top-down institutional hierarchy within the Cairo government is recognised, with the Governor representing the highest rank. However, the pattern(s) of decision making are rather random and non-hierarchal, as well as actor-based i.e. based on personal interests of the actors involved, as will be elaborated further. The government office appears to play three main roles. The first emphasises the top-down approach within the government decision-making process and involves a direct impact on the development of public spaces in the city. These decisions vary from the establishment of new specialised departments to the initiation of area based projects. El-Messiri (2004) illustrates how the 'appointment of a Governor who is an agriculture engineer' in this context of growing interest and attention towards the scarcity of green areas in the city helped to establish the SGAP, and accordingly, the Governor is responsible for the allocation of new gardens/ projects to the SGAP. The governor also, plays a secondary role in the decision making process, through the processing and evaluation of suggestions and projects presented by other actors, the SGAP, CCBA etc.[2] Finally, the government office assesses and appraises the other involved actors; they design the guidelines for the roles and strategies of these actors using assessment criteria. For example, a competition was held in 2006 between the districts to choose the best district in each of the four regions. The assessment criteria covered five themes[3]:-

- Environmental sanitation
- Quality of services
- Public participation

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[1] Although we recognise the role of the Ministry of Agriculture within the local institutions in Cairo, it is not included in this presentation since its role is oriented more towards ongoing cultivation and maintenance of public space rather than the creation of public spaces.

[2] Interview with the head of SGAP, Dr Adel Taha

[3] Based on an interview with the General Secretary of the Cairo government

- Local development
- Urban development

This study is interested mainly in two of these criteria; environmental sanitation which includes the development of the Nile waterfront and the provision of public promenade along the river; and urban development which includes the development and enhancement of parks, gardens, squares and pavements.

Interestingly, one evaluation criterion of urban development efficiency in the districts is the construction of fences around empty spaces, public gardens, etc., to limit people's accessibility (Fig 4.8). The ACT also uses fences to separate pedestrians from cars in several places, which is unhelpfully restrictive to the pedestrian movement.

Fig 4.8 Fences around public gardens, Cairo West Region

Thus SGAP and CCBA represent the two main actors directly involved in the development of Cairo public space and green areas. SGAP was founded in 1987 as part of the CCBA, and became an independent project in 2000. The project comprises 27 special gardens i.e. gardens with historic, botanic, artistic etc. value and significance[4]. Today, SGAP *'ranks at the top of the administrative hierarchy'* (El-Messiri, 2004). It helps to service the middle class sector, who despite being unable to afford membership in private clubs and communities, refused to use popular public spaces, for example the national Zoo[5]. Financially, it is a self-sufficient project receiving no government funds; income is based on entrance fees, renting spaces to cafés, theatres, etc. as well as other entertainment activities within the gardens (El-Messiri, 2004).

The other, non-specialised gardens and public spaces, such as squares and pavements, are the responsibility of CCBA, a government funded agency whose responsibilities

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[4] Interview with the head of SGAP

[5] Interview with head of SGAP, Dr. Adel Taha

involve cleaning and waste disposable, the planting, basic landscape and management of green areas, as well as lighting and maintenance (CCBA). However, ACT is often involved in the CCBA decision making process. Projects are allocated to ACT to plan and design, and hence a place, a certain square or a side walk for example is ascribed to the authority of CCBA in order to clean, plant and add lights[6]. This decision making hierarchy results in the preference for and dominance of vehicle design requirements over the needs of pedestrians and public life. Accordingly, the involvement of NOUH in the decision-making process between ACT and CCBA needs to be considered, but NOUH's role is limited to consultancy and neither main actor is obliged to adopt NOUH recommendations[7].
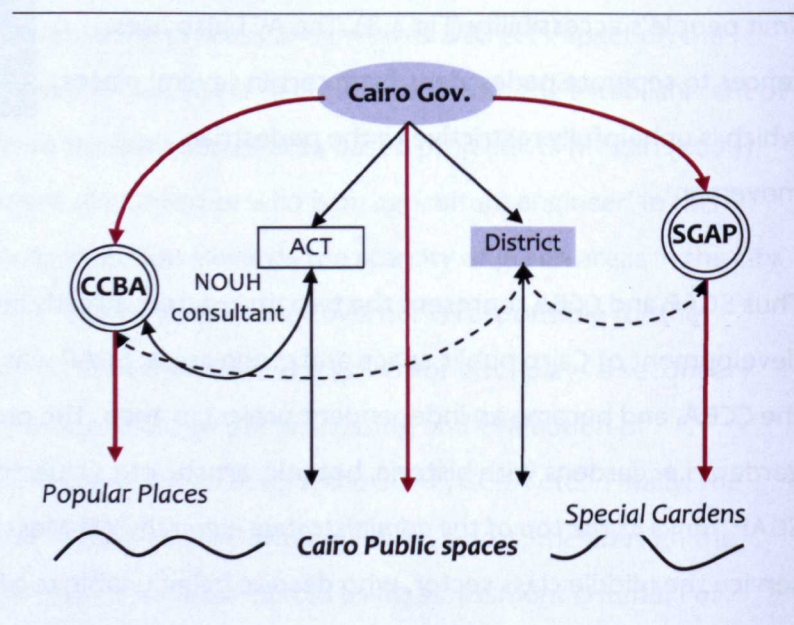
Fig 4.9 Patterns of institutional decision making towards public spaces in Cairo

As discussed, Cairo's formal space involves the Cairo government, the district offices, and the division of responsibilities between SGAP and CCBA (Fig 4.9). SGAP has an independent role towards special gardens, while the CCBA role is circumscribed by its relationship to ACT. The division of responsibilities between SGAP and CCBA as regards public space creates two (social) classes of public space; a higher class requiring entry

[6] Interview with the head of ACT, and the head of CCBA

[7] Interview with the head of ACT

fees, and a popular class providing free entry respectively. This separation is obviously reflected in the urban space in Cairo; Al-Fustat Park, which is built in an old and relatively poor district lies within the responsibilities of CCBA; whereas parks like the international garden in Madinet Nasr, a relatively modern district, come under the auspices of SGAP. Although the decision making process follows a top-down approach, it does not reflect a rigid hierarchal process, but the coordination between the actors involved needs to be revised. It must also be noted that the people involved in this decision making process come from different backgrounds –agriculture, business, military and police– but there was limited involvement of architects and urban designers. However, there are attempts to involve NOUH in the consultation process and to empower its role in the decision making process. Finally, it is worth noting that these actors are more concerned with the development and increase in numbers of green areas rather than the design of public spaces.

4.5. A Place in Cairo: *Al-Azhar Park*[8]

The spatial walk covered four parks: the Al-Fustat garden, Al-Azhar Park, the International garden, and the Cultural Park for Children. The SGAP is responsible for the latter three parks, and CCBA for the Al-Fustat Garden, which was developed through an unplanned intervention in the city space i.e. no architect or designer was involved in producing a master plan of the park. The International Garden was designed and built in separate parts, through donation from contributing countries. It is necessary to re-emphasise that this research is interested in the study of the place in between the abstract architectural concept, and the context of social realities. Accordingly, it was convenient to examine Al-Azhar Park and the Cultural Park for Children, in which an architect was officially involved in both the design from the start of each project. Simultaneously, Al-Azhar Park was approached in an early stage of to explore a 'public space' in the context of Cairo space, temporal, spatial and formal as approached in this chapter.

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[8] This section was partially presented and published in 'Place-making: the ideal and the real' in the proceedings of ArchCairo 3rd conference – Cairo, Egypt February 2006

Variant Name(s): Al-Azhar Park

Project: A donation from the Aga Khan to the citizens of Cairo, during the 1984 conference 'The Expanding Metropolis: Coping with Cairo's Urban Growth'
Landscape Designer: Maher Stino
Funder: International project; Historic Cities Support Programme (HCSP) of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC), an entity of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN).
The successor of the Fatimid founder of Cairo
Owner: AKTC, for first 10 years to be handed over to the Cairo Government
Location: Al Darassa hill, bounded by Al-Darb Al-Ahmar neighbourhood, and Salah Salem Street, Wast district, West region
Area: 30 hectares
Opening Date: May 2005

Programme:

    The Park Facilities:
    Ayyubid wall restoration
    Al-Darb Al-Ahmar:
    Physical intervention projects
    Social programme

Award(s):
Al-Azhar Park is listed among the 60 of the World's Great Places by Project for Public Spaces; 2005 Travel and Leisure magazine Global Vision Innovation Award

Fig 4.10 Al-Azhar Park layout (M.Stino office)

Fig 4.11 Key record of 'Al-Azhar Park'

Al-Azhar Park is an international park; however a local landscape architect was involved in the project design, and the park facilities were designed by various local and international architects. The controversy in this international approach is based on the fact that the park is supported by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, a USA based organisation. However, the Aga Khan, the head and founder of the trust, is the

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descendant of the Fatimids, the founders of historic Islamic Cairo. The development of Al-Azhar Park was a mega-project which involved development on a former debris area, conservation and restoration of the adjacent historic site and a socio-economic development programme for the surrounding community. Accordingly, I approached both the Egyptian landscape architect – Maher Stino –, and the manager of the park as well as different personnel in the Aga Khan's office in the park. This review of Al-Azhar also draws on the technical reports and drawings developed by the Aga Khan.

4.5.1. Park setting

Al-Azhar Park is a 300,000 m^2 urban park built on Al-Darasa hilltop in Cairo, Egypt. It was built by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture's Historic Cities Programme to become Cairo's largest designed green space (http://www.pps.org). Built on a 500 years old municipal rubbish dump, Al-Azhar Park became a catalyst for urban renewal in one of the most overcrowded cities in the world. The project involved the restoration of the Ayyubid wall as well as a number of important monuments and landmark buildings in historic Cairo; the extensive socio-economic development programme of Al-Darb Al-Ahmar, the adjacent historic district, health, education and sanitation issues, housing rehabilitation, skills-training programs and employment in the restoration project of the Ayyubid wall and other interventions in the area; and sustainability (AKTC, 2005). The Park's conceptual design sought to maximise use of the historic site, location and elevated topography. The park was designed, in relation to its context, as a catalyst for socio-economic development and an overall development of the quality of life in the area and offer
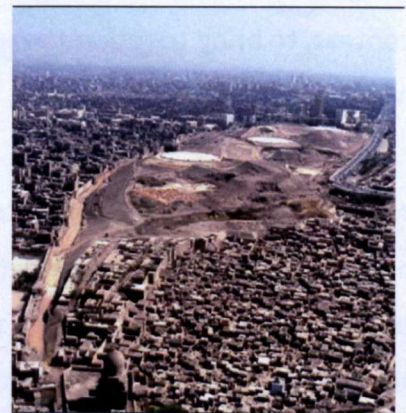
Fig 4.12 Al-Azhar Park setting before completion (M. Stino office)
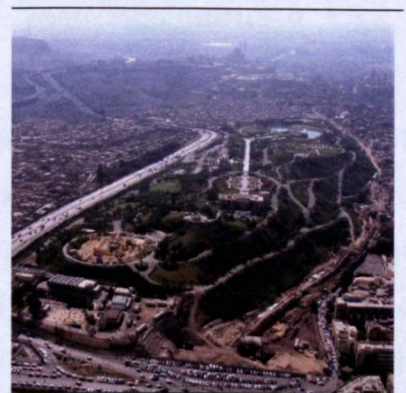
Fig 4.13 Al-Azhar Park as an urban catalyst of the surrounding area (AKTC office in Cairo, 2004)

spectacular views of historic Cairo.

a. Temporal space

Al-Azhar Park is located in a significant important district of old Islamic Cairo, including the Fatimid city and its extension, Al-darb Al-Ahmar on the west side, the Sultan Hassan Mosque and Ayyubid Citadel to the south, and the Mamluk 'city of death' to the east (Bianca, 2002:8-9). The design theme aimed to integrate the park into the context, to bring together the new development and the historic fabric of the district[9].

Fig 4.14 Al-Azhar Park (new), and the Citadel (historic) 2007

Accordingly, the development of the park involved the restoration of several key monuments on the periphery of the park and the reconstruction of the missing minaret tops of these monuments. The aim was to change the perception of the historic Cairo skyline from the park and provide attractive transition spaces from the park, through the wall and into the historic city (Bianca, 2002:13).

b. Institutional space

The walk through the city of Cairo exposes the separation between social classes in Cairo, also projected through her institutional space. The responsibility for city public space is divided between SGAP, significant and special value places, and CCBA, the more popular places. This separation is partially made evident by the entrance fees, which are naturally higher for the 'special value places'. Al-Azhar Park is currently managed by the Aga Khan Office representative in Cairo to enable ongoing supervision of the developments but will eventually be handed over to SGAP. Accordingly, park entry carries a relatively high entrance fee.

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[9] Interview with landscape architect Maher Stino representing the Egyptian side, February 2008

The park design aims to bring together these separated groups, as well as foreign tourists and inhabitants of Cairo in an environment that allows a healthy interaction[10] (AKTC, 2005; El-Messiri, 2004). Thus particular attention is given to the people of the adjacent district of Al-Darb Al-Ahmar. The park design provides an access route from the old district together with a lower entrance fee.
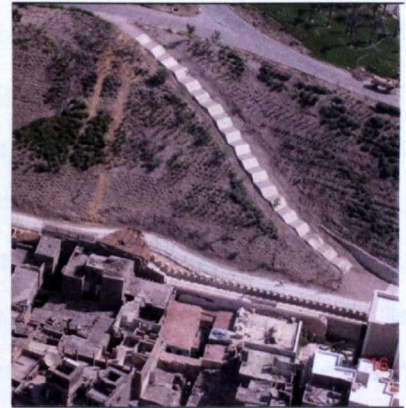
Fig 4.15 Accessibility through Al-Darb Al-Ahmar
(AKTC office in Cairo, 2004)

c. International Nomination: One of the world's 60 Great Places

A l-Azhar Park was nominated in the Project for Public Spaces (PPS) list of the world's 60 Great Places (PPS, d); hence the park was considered a successful example of a contemporary urban park. PPS is a non-profit organisation founded in the U.S.A. in 1975 (www.pps.org) and is dedicated to creating and sustaining public places through building communities. It recognised that the success of urban parks depend on people. It established four key evaluation criteria based on the realities of social practice in public spaces to assess the success of place. These criteria were applied in evaluating thousands of public places and urban parks around the world.
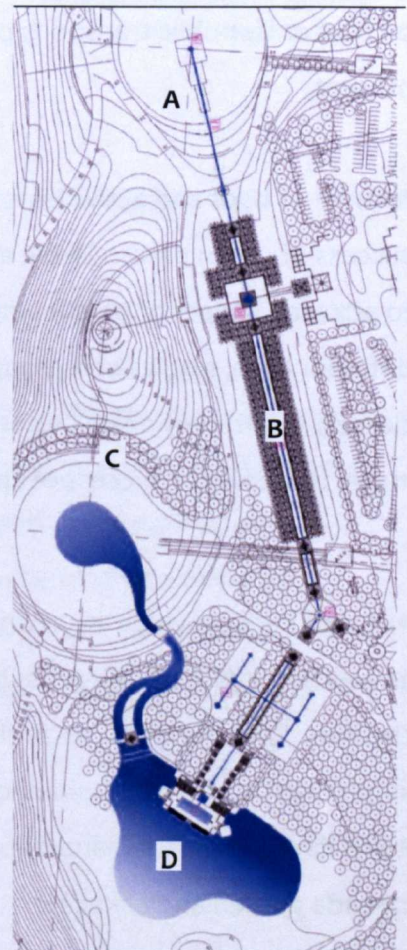
Fig 4.16 Activities and movement along the main spine

(A) Formal Garden - **(B)** Main Spine - **(C)** Sunken Garden - **(D)** Lake

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[10] Interview with Maher Stino

The four key criteria are: accessibility and linkages, uses and activities, comfort and image, and sociability (PPS, 2005). **Accessibility and linkages** is measured through the park's connection to the surroundings, both visual and physical. Parks should be readable, easy to get to, easy to enter, and easy to go through i.e. if a place is really good, people will walk through it even if they were headed somewhere else.

Fig 4.17 An urban catalyst in one of the most overcrowded cities (AKTC office in Cairo, 2004)

The topography and location of Al-Azhar park in the heart of Cairo provided it with many advantages: a spectacular view of historic Cairo, well connected to its surroundings and enhancing her visual connectivity with the surroundings. Furthermore, pedestrian paths facilitate movement throughout the entire Park. However, the park is not easily reached on foot or by public transport; private cars is the preferred mode of transportation at present.

A range of **Uses and activities** is fundamental for the success of urban parks. These activities should be chosen to attract a variety of people, men and women, children of different ages, singles and groups, and different social classes; in different times and seasons. Comfort and image is the key to success of space.

Fig 4.18 Children's activities are provided in the Park

Al-Azhar Park provides an urban recreational space for tourists, Greater Cairo residents, as well as for Al-Darb Al-Ahmar residents. The park also attracts the elderly, youth and children. The main features in the park include: a children's play area with an amphitheatre and stage; shaded walkways and a variety of open spaces such as the Royal Palm Promenade and the Geometric Garden; natural themes such as the water cascade garden and Lake, etc.

A sense of **comfort** in parks is associated with safety, climatic comfort, cleanliness and availability of places to sit. Although the latter is an underestimated factor in park design, the availability and arrangement of seating greatly influences people's gathering and use. Urban parks should represent a **strong image** within the local context.
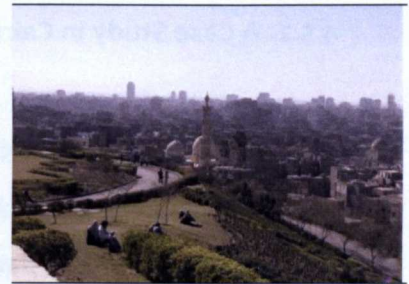
Fig 4.19 A green lung in the heart of Cairo

The park delivers the long absent 'green lung' to the overcrowded city of Cairo, which clearly needed more green space. Simultaneously, the park provides the required facilities and amenities for comfort use such as marble benches and lateral niches that provide a variety of seating experiences. The urban features of Islamic gardens are obvious in the design of the park, mainly represented in water fountains, pools and channels and provide a traditional (Islamic Architecture style) image that integrates both the image and essence of the old city.

Fig 4.20 Modernised traditional Islamic image

Finally, **sociability** makes the place friendly, interactive and welcoming. A sociable place encourages people to visit to observe others, meet friends and interact with different people (PPS, c; PPS, b; PPS, a). This is considered the main aim of the park design; the socio-economic programmes introduced within AL-Darb Al-Ahmar and offered to hundreds of inhabitants of the surrounding area, helped the community interact and interrelate with the park because the design of the park offers a sociable space with several gathering points for people interaction.

4.5.2. A Case Study in Cairo

The walk in Cairo continued with a visit to Al-Azhar Park, a significant public space in the city. The review of the park in this chapter has highlighted the spatiality of the park within the context of Cairo space, both temporal and institutional. Simultaneously, the park was nominated by PPS as one of the world's greatest public spaces. Its reading and evaluation criteria are both interested in and developed through the social study of human experience of place rather than the abstract architectural idea. Kamel and Abdelwahab (2006) attempted an analysis of the concept and design of the park architecture through a poststructuralist approach. This reading considered the study of the park as 'body-based', i.e. the body-in-space; the architecture programme through body movement and dislocation; and finally the event. However, the analysis struggled with the study of Al-Azhar Park. The Park is a large urban project difficult to explore either through a general or more particular, projection of theory. In any case, the representation of Cairo public space through Al-Azhar is debatable; although a local architect was involved, the project was funded and supervised by international resources which continue to manage the park today.

On the other hand, the reading highlighted the need to involve a case study in the context of this research as well as the criteria used to choose the case concerned. An essential criterion is the involvement of an architect or urban designer in the development of the project. At the same time, the size and location of the project is important. These criteria, along with the review of Al-Azhar Park in this chapter, suggest the inclusion of 'The Cultural Park for Children' built in the Al-Sayyida Zeinab historic district. This park designed by the Egyptian architect, Abdelhalim Ibrahim, is rather a small project – in size –, but, it won both a national and international architectural award. Accordingly, this chapter proposes to examine it as another case study of Cairo public space.

4.6. Cairo beyond boundaries and binaries

This was a long but necessary tour through Cairo space. It is also necessary, before reflecting on this tour, to highlight that 'Cairo', like 'Khōra', is a feminine pronoun, in the Arabic language. And like Khōra[11], Cairo will be presented as a feminine figure in this research. However, both feminine figures are perceived as beyond gender classification and feminist theories i.e. I am acknowledging a part of their identity rather than looking into a particular aspect.
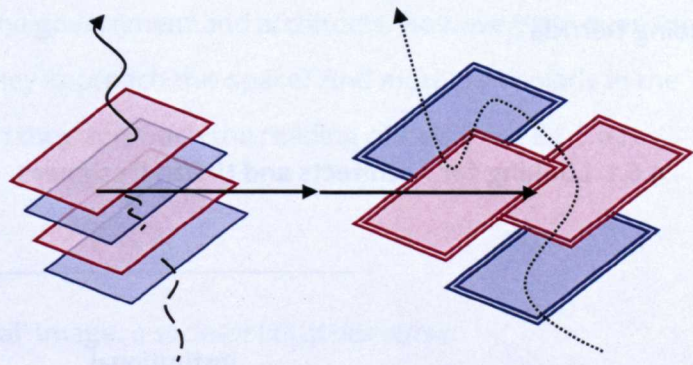
Fig 4.21 Accumulation of layers of history in time

Fig 4.22 Co-existence of multiple ~~layers~~ chapters of history in time and space

Simultaneously, this review considered the multiple layers of history inherited by Cairo and developed both inside and outside her space. In between the continuity and interruptions of her history, (Fig 4.1), the multiple ~~layers~~ continued to co-exist through both her spatial and socio-cultural space. This reading suggests the accumulation of these layers on top of another, over time (Fig 4.21). Any new layer, although it traces and is traced by the other layers, displaces and replaces them. However, it is evident that Cairo space has continued to embrace these layers over space and time (Fig 4.22). Each layer developed and co-existed alongside other old and new layers throughout Cairo space. These ~~layers~~ chapters appeared to grow independently, within defined boundaries, although they intrinsically overlap and interact. And they were projected not

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[11] See chapter three

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only through her spatial fabric but also through the socio-cultural context, and became manifested in the separation between the different social classes, culturally, institutionally, economically, and spatially. Accordingly, Cairo and Cairenes do not represent a homogenous unit but distinctive heterogeneous identities reflected through the different types of public space and their users.

This section will now examine the role of architects and urban designers towards her space; the embracing of the monolithic image of the Islamic city highlighted in the literature on 'Orientalism' and 'Post-colonialism' in the region; and the possibilities of another perception beyond her boundaries and binary representations suggested by reading Derrida[12].

4.6.1. Looking for Architects and Urban Designers
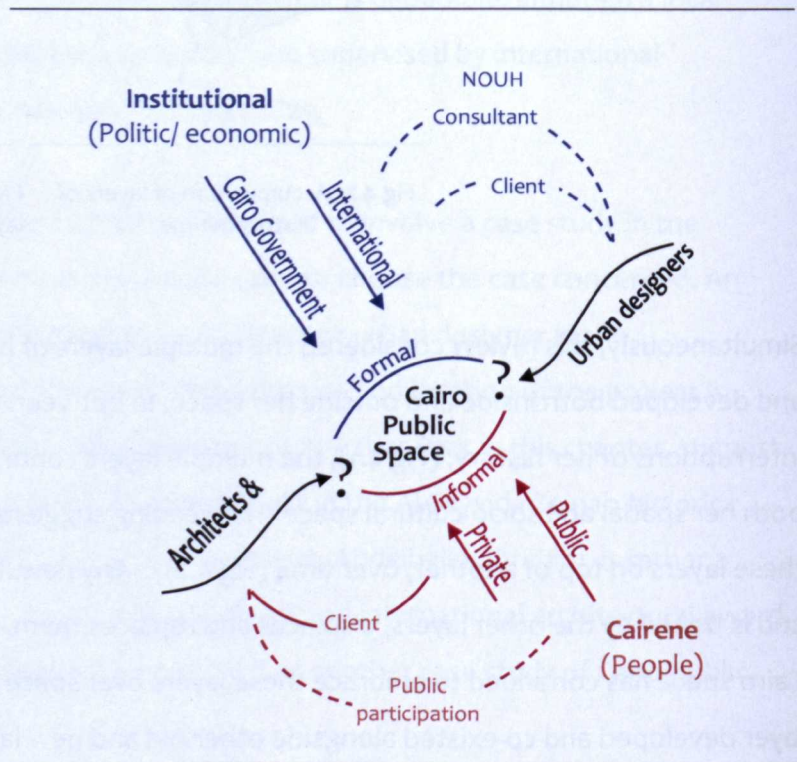
Fig 4.23 Questioning the role of architects and urban designers towards Cairo space

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[12] See chapter one

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It is important to understand the context in which architects and urban designers work before questioning their role (Fig 4.23). It is evident that this is rather minimized and undefined in Cairo. Many public spaces are developed by government employees, with differing backgrounds, unrelated to the study of architecture, urban design or planning. However, this situation is currently being questioned by governmental institutions as well as by architectural professional bodies. This is evident in the involvement of architects in some of these institutions as well as in the development of bodies like NOUH, although currently the role of NOUH is restricted to provisional supervision i.e. government employees are not obliged to take their recommendation into consideration. Accordingly, the role of architects towards the paradox of Cairo is currently under revision by both the government and architects. However, the question remains unanswered: 'how' can they approach this space? And more particularly in the context of this research: 'how' can they approach the reading of Cairo, the Egyptian capital?

4.6.2. Embracing the 'Oriental' Image: *a socio-political discourse*

> '... incommensurability separates **Western** and **other** knowledges'.
> (Verran, 2001:27)

The reading of Cairo space in both this chapter and chapter one associated her identity with many synonymous binaries in between the local and the western. The dominance of these binaries has hence created a chain of inner conflicts within her city space (Elsheshtawy, 2004b). These binaries were approached through themes like orientalism and post-colonialism.

East/ west
Traditional/ modern
Islamic/ western
Local/ Global
National/ International
Inside/ outside
Us/ Others

An orientalist[13] image represents the oriental city as it developed in the past, which is enchanting but handicapped and frozen in time, unable to move on. And a post-colonial reading helps to relate the city to a *'narration of loss'* of the glory of the tradition, the local, etc. through colonisation.

> *'**Post-colonialism**... is not a break with colonialism, not a revolution, a history begun when a particular '**US**', who are not '**THEM**', suddenly coalesces as opposition to colonizer... colonialism is remade in postcolonial enacting. Post-colonialism is the ambiguous struggling through and with colonial pasts in making different futures.'*
> (Verran, 2001:38)

Post-colonial representations are hence considered as parasitic additions to the city space; the local. These two readings, orientalism and post-colonialism, are in reality attempting to understand and go beyond the monolithic representation of the city through the image of the historic Islamic city. They challenge this monolithic image through a demonstration of its dependency on the western binary West/ east. The western binary privilege the west over the east, and hence values the oriental and pre-colonial image that contrasts the western and post-colonial. However, we need to highlight that these readings have only reversed the western binaries in the context of Cairo-space representation; i.e. the eastern is privileged over the western, which is controversially attached to the privileged western binary.

> **Colonialism** ... is oppression and destruction of the indigenous forms of knowledge by powerful **Western** forms of knowledge.

> **Post-colonialism** in this account is the expulsion of invading western forms by a renaissance and resurgence of indigenous forms of knowledge'
>
> (Verran, 2001:26-7)

> *'... any notion of post-colonialism is neo-colonialism...'*
> (Verran, 2001:26)

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[13] Term used here in reference to Edward Said (2003), 'orientalism'.

Simultaneously chapter one has reviewed the growing tension between Cairenes and Cairo-space –Cairo's people and place– and demonstrates a binary representation between place and people in Cairo to the extent of the marginalisation of Cairenes from her space. They are fenced outside many public spaces, physically, economically, politically, or even socially.

Place/ people

Cairo-space/ Cairene
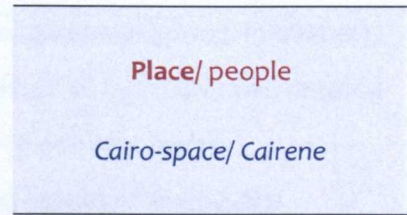
Al-Azhar park design theme of bringing tourists together with Cairenes as well as with the different social classes, embraces the oriental image of old Islamic Cairo. Al-Azhar park, located at the periphery of the historic city, is visualising an oriental image which contrasts its external modern/ contemporary frame of perception.
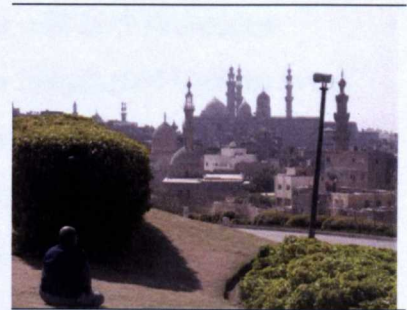
Fig 4.24 Embracing Cairo's oriental image from the periphery

This binary representation is a manifestation of yet another binary between tourists and Cairenes, one that privileges the tourist, the foreigner, the westerner, and that is re-reversed to represent explicitly the western binaries West/ east, which privileges the west over us, the Cairenes.

Tourist/ Cairene

foreigner/ Local

Others/ Us

WEST/ east
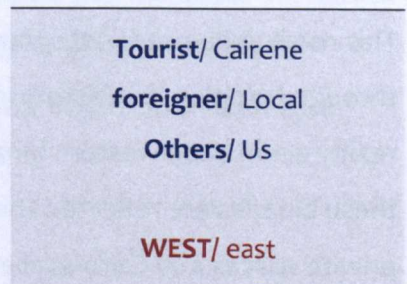
'On the one hand there is almost uniformly a deeply felt social need to continually re-affirm **traditional** values, cultural, and even **national** identities. On the other hand, there a wholesale commitment, even infatuation, with **modern western** technology associated with participating in the geo-political economic order and in reckoning with the very real problems of rapid growth in urban population, largely occasioned by this participation'
(Hakim and Rowe, 1983)

West/ East

Private/ public

Cairo-space/

Place/

Cairene

people

Tourist/ Cairene

East/ West
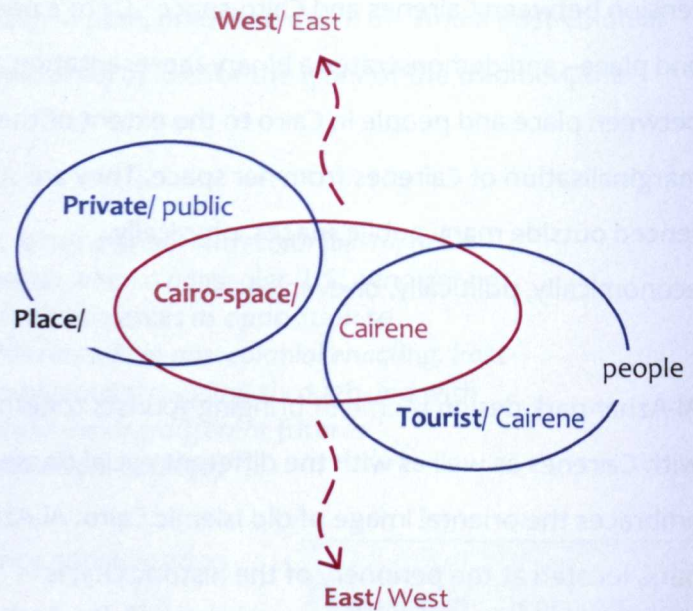
Fig 4.25 A reading instance in the binary representation of Cairo-space

This reading demonstrates that the dominance of the monolithic representation of Cairo through tradition and history in opposition to modern and western representation, in reality echoes the western binaries which privilege the west over the Cairenes. And these binaries are reflected through the urban space of Cairo in between public and private spaces and Cairo-space and Cairenes, as well as between tourists and Cairenes, (Fig 4.25).

4.6.3. And Beyond

'One day I would like to write a book on Egypt and Derrida. The two... are tethered together in suggestive ways'
(McQuillan, 2010:255)

Simultaneously, chapter three demonstrated that deconstruction is interested in the logocentrism of the western binary. However, deconstruction aims to show the limitations of a binary representation of reality rather than its elimination. Thus, deconstruction is not interested in the binaries which are reflected through a living

reality but in the binary representation of unjustified play of power in space. In chapter one we reviewed how Derrida's reading of Cairo-space presented a prospective reading of the multiplicities and dynamics of the city in opposition to her monolithic representation. Although we presented a possible deconstruction of the binary representation in Cairo-space through the continuous and instantaneous displacement between a West/ East and an East/ West binary, Derrida's reflections on Cairo's multiple identities both support yet go far beyond this (Fig 4.25). He considers the representative complexities in her urban space, and among her people, as well as the relations between; this implies the continuing deconstruction of the manifested binaries in her space, public/ private, people, tourist/ Cairene, as well as place/ people. It is also, worth noting that the deconstruction of the binary tourist/ Cairene could be sought in the concept of 'unconditional hospitality'[14], which Derrida also associated with Cairo.

The question raised by or continuing through this reading is: 'could 'deconstruction' help the perception of the city to go beyond the inherited binaries, and the 'monolithic' representation?' Or more appropriately 'could 'deconstruction' help to reveal the hidden and inherited cornerstone to deconstruct these binary reading and representation through her space and routes? And could this, therefore help to project a reading of Cairo public space through a reading of theories of place?

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[14] Derrida presented two ideas in reflection to Cairo space, the reading of Cairo space through people, place and their relation, and the reading of the *unconditional hospitality* of the people of Cairo, refer to chapter one. In this research we are exploring the first line.

Section B

Turning point re-approaching research questions

The literature review in chapters two, three and four considers the formulation and development of the research topic through a review of Cairo public space and theories of place. The main research questions, represented in chapter one, consider *'how architects and urban designers could read the dynamics and complexities of Cairo space?'* and examine the lack of tools and methods available in the theoretical approaches to the represented paradoxes of place, with particular reference to the case-study of Cairo space. The preliminary research questions help to develop and guide the literature review which both draws on and questions place in architecture theory, philosophy, and social studies, from a poststructuralist background and particularly from within the project of deconstruction. This review explores the *'multi-trans-disciplinary'* nature of studies of place, and highlights the similarities and differences between these approaches to place, how they are integrated and how they interact so that it was particularly hard to define distinct paths in each approach. Therefore, I developed a primary framework of place, which is expected to work on two separate levels: place – in between idea and reality–, and context –social, economic, political, etc. space. However, this review emphasises the difficulty in approaching place on these separate levels of place and context.

This section represents a turning point; it revisits the research aim, problem definition, questions and objectives in response to the reflections developed in the literature review. The development of the research methodology and design is approached, simultaneously. This involves an introductory study of the implications and potentialities of conducting this study through a post-structuralist/ postmodernist context. It also considers the complexities of the multi- disciplinary approaches to place in both empirical – the case study of Cairo –, and theoretical material –philosophy, architecture, and social studies. This multi-trans-disciplinary concept requires a careful, continuously reflective, study to manage the rich complex data construction in such a way as to avoid the dominance of a specific theory or approach.

A Re-approach

'The main aim is to develop a ~~multidisciplinary~~ [integral/ reflexive] ~~framework~~ [reading] of place, with reference to Cairo-space, that operates ~~on~~ [between] ~~two~~ [multiple] ~~levels~~ [projections] of place: ~~place and context~~ concept, experience and context'.
(Chapter one: 17)

This re-approach to the research aim, questions and objectives is developed in response to the findings of the literature review. Thus it questions the multi-disciplinary nature of the research and the development of a level framework of place.

~~Multi-disciplinarity~~

A primary consideration of this multi-disciplinary literature is the need to develop it into an integrated report, rather than three or two parallel approaches; i.e. into an architectural theory of place in relation to poststructuralist philosophy and deconstruction on the one hand, and to social studies of place on the other, as well as including the interrelation between poststructuralist and social studies. The literature review reflected on the similarities and differences between these disciplines, and a primary step towards dissolving the boundaries between these disciplines was presented through the development of a primary framework of place. The next step requires a reflective study of these disciplines in which each highlights elements of the others, and this will be explored further through the development of the research methodology.

~~Framework /on two Levels~~

Chapter one introduces the use of a 'framework', which implies a consistent analysis of a well-defined place, and demonstrates that place is not 'well-defined', either in the complex literature and theories or in the everyday realities of place. Simultaneously, the literature review elaborates the changing paradigm of place. The old paradigm considered constituents of place as separate elements with linear and direct relationships, which could be approached through a structured framework. The new

paradigm, on the other hand, describes place constituents and internal relationships as disperse, complex and negotiable, thereby emphasising the inappropriateness of the term 'framework'. At the same time, place dynamics and multiplicities cannot be approached through the two levels of place and context, which imply hierarchal framework of analytical steps. Therefore the new paradigm is rather a projection of the dynamics and complexities of place, developed within place without hierarchy or guidelines, and accordingly it allows an approach to the not well-defined place constituents and relationships.

a. Questions and Objectives Revisited

The research questions and objectives are thus re-approached in order to explore the implications of the multidisciplinary approach and poststructuralist background. Three sets of questions are presented in chapter one. The first set explored the concept of place in architecture theory in close relation to philosophy and social studies of place, as discussed in chapter two. The second set considered the analysis of this literature. It questioned the similarities and inconsistencies and helped to develop a primary framework of place. The last set considered the case study of Cairo; *'How can the case of Cairo be projected through a theory of place?* These questions are now re-approached simultaneously in order to develop and fine-tune the research question and objectives, and consequently the methodology and strategies.

Revisiting the Questions

It is important to emphasise from the start that the main question of this research is **'how'** to develop **'reading strategies'** of place rather than the development of a reading of place. To this end, three sets of data are employed: an empirical case study of Cairo, theories of place, and the primary framework of place, introduced in chapter three (Fig 1).
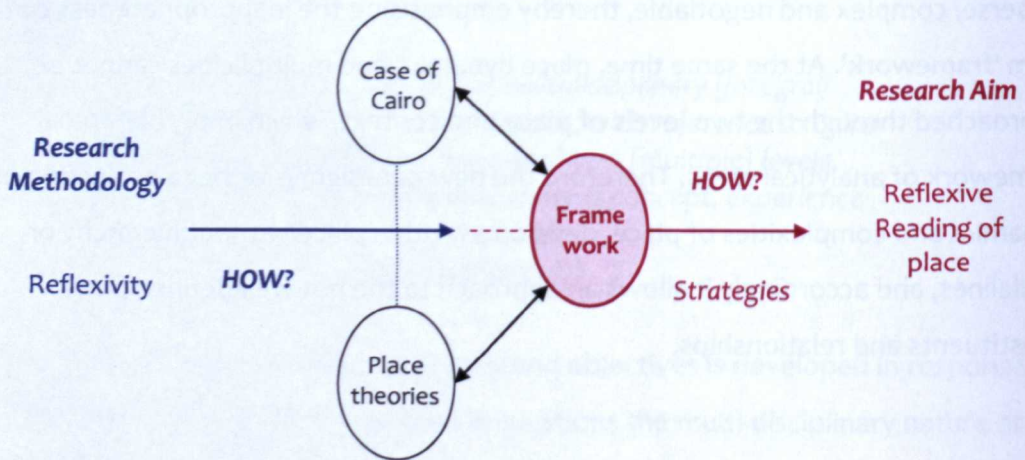
Fig 1 The research question, and methodological approach

It is the third set, involving the primary framework, which develops into reading strategies of place through the medium of the other two data sets i.e. the first question would be:

1. (How) to develop the primary framework into reading strategies that could approach the multiplicities and dynamics of place as reflected in the new paradigm of place, and particularly Khōra?

This question leads to two others, which would investigate the development of this reading of place through theories of place, and the empirical case-study of Cairo, simultaneously. The literature review of theories of place introduced two main streams of thought. The first considers the changing paradigm of place, which reflects the re-emergence of the concept of 'Platonic chōra'. The second considers theories of place that seek to analyse/ interpret place constituents, so helping the formulation of the primary framework of place.

2. (How) to re-approach the theories of place in order to develop the primary framework into reading strategies of place?

The study of Cairo space reflected on the misrepresentation of the city image and its manifestation through public space and discussed the growing tension between her

people and place i.e. between people and institutional, spatial, and historical space, and the dominance of traditional social and historic studies in the literature of the city. This reading highlighted the critique of the monolithic perspective and recognised the multiplicity of the city identity.

3. (How) could a case study of Cairo help the development of reading strategies?

The primary framework, as discussed in chapter two, is compromised of elements of PLACE: place, people, people-place relation(s), event, and meaning, and questions the underlying structure/ relations between these elements. Accordingly, a second set of questions is developed to study the development of this framework into reading strategies of place:

1. What are the constituents of place?
- What is the nature of these elements lying in-between the separatist traditional elements and the autonomous, not well-defined elements in the new paradigm?

2. What are the relation(s) between these elements?
- What is the nature of these relation(s)? In between direct linear relations, and a multiple complex matrix of relations

3. What is the internal-structure of this framework?
- Is this 'internal-structure' applicable to the concept of reading strategies?

And finally

4. (How) could this abstract framework approach the wider context of place, social, political, etc. in between meaning and event?
- Could the reading strategies manage the increasing complexity of place through dissolving the boundaries between abstract/ contextual? How?

Accordingly the research objectives are summarised in three sets:

1. The main objective is to re-explore and develop the primary framework of place, introduced in chapter two, into reading strategies of place that could approach the multiple dynamics and complex relations within place. This involves a set of sub-objectives:-

    -   explore the various constituents of place
    -   explore the relations between these constituents
    -   explore the non-/internal structure of this reading

2. To re-approach the development of the primary framework through a second reading of the theories of place introduced in chapter two. This involves early models of place developed by Canter (1977), and Relph (1976), the facet theory of place (Canter, 1997), and architectural theories of place put forward by Markus and Tschumi in the mid 1980's.

    -   To study the development reading strategies of place with response to the changing paradigm of place induced by the concept of khōra

3. To explore the case of Cairo, and the dynamics within her public space, the growing tension between the people and the city, her history, institutions, and spatial configuration through a case study of her public space.

b. A poststructuralist frame of reference

> '... poststructuralist researchers draw attention to the problem surrounding the way theories are constructed. Instead of an integrated theoretical frame of reference which guides an analysis towards unequivocal, logical results and interpretations, the idea is to strive for multiplicity, variation, the demonstration of inconsistencies and fragmentations, and the possibility of multiple interpretations'
> (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000:152)

It must be understood that this research is carried out within a poststructuralist context, with a special focus on the deconstruction project. In this context, the main aim of the research is questioned, particularly the aim of developing a structured framework to approach place on two levels. A framework implies structure and a consistent system of approaching place whereas place here is presented as complex, not well-defined, reflecting many inconsistencies and contradictions, and operating on multi, non structured levels. I proposed therefore the development of a not well-defined framework, which at the same time is not a framework, but rather a set of strategies which neither offers nor limits a structured system to an approach to place.

A poststructuralist frame of reference appears to echo this approach. Accordingly, this section discusses the particularities and implications of working within a poststructuralist frame of reference to the philosophy and methodology of the research. In general, post-structuralism negates structuralism and inherited western metaphysical ideas (Groat and Wang, 2002; Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000). A traditional/ structural research approach attempts to *'isolate elements, specify relations and formulate synthesis'* to reach a universal meaning/ truth (Rosenau, 1992:8). A poststructuralist approach attempts to do the opposite, *'... indeterminacy rather than determinism, diversity rather unity, difference rather synthesis, complexity rather than simplification'* (Rosenau, 1992:8), to demonstrate that there is no best interpretation and no singular meaning/ truth (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000).

A poststructuralist frame of reference attempts to destabilise the discourse, *'subject and text'* (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000). It questions the ontological reference, which is considered a *'by-product'* of the *'discourse'* and not the subject (Groat and Wang, 2002). This raises the question: what is 'discourse' for a poststructuralist approach? A poststructuralist discourse is *'central to the production of subjectivity and identity'*, and this categorisation applies to deconstruction as well (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000:149). It is a *'cultural manifestation'* of thought distributed in topics (Groat and Wang, 2002). Accordingly, the research of a micro-part of a discourse reflects on the social and cultural context of the discourse itself i.e. the whole is explained through the part and vice versa (Groat and Wang, 2002; Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000). Post-

structuralism accordingly, approaches the discourse in order to problematise its construction, assumption, rhetoric strategies and authority. It questions *'truth interpretation and representation'*, the demonstrated data and draws attention to the inconsistencies and contradictions within the discourse (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000).

However, Alvesson and Skoldberg (2000) present a critique of poststructuralist approach to research methodology. A poststructuralist approach works from within another approach/ discourse to problematise and expose the weak points within, i.e. to deconstruct. Accordingly, poststructuralist, and simultaneously deconstruction, lacks the ability to construct/ re-construct another discourse. It risks an over-simplification of the (other) perspective through the continuous attack. It also risks *'a linguistic and textual reduction'* of the subject, which then detaches it from socio-cultural realities. Finally, Alvesson and Skoldberg (2000) consider the problematic possibility of the overemphasis on these linguistic and textual strategies, which strive for multiplicity and variations in both interpretation and representation in such a way as to jeopardise the content of the research. They called this *'the Sokal affair''*.

This review of a poststructuralist approach to research methodology demonstrates the potential of this approach in tackling the research problem and questions. As previously discussed post-structuralism, Cairo space, and place in general appear to strive for multiplicities, dynamism, complexity and a new different reading. However, the difficulty of working within a poststructuralist context has been shown, and this could be reflected in the research approach in three ways. The first considers the affinity of poststructuralist research to continuous exploration. However, there is a potential risk that the research will be trapped in the data collection phase and turn into merely a substantial literature review. The second considers the research subject, place as intrinsically embedding a social phenomenon, which cannot and should not be confined

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[1] 'An American physicist, Alan Sokal, managed to publish an article in a postmodern journal, Social Texts, with the impressive title 'Transgressing the boundaries: towards a transformative hermeneutics of quantum gravity' (Sokal, 1996). After publication, Sokal disclosed that the whole article was full of nonsensical but serious-sounding jargon which anyone familiar with physics would have dismissed at a glance as a joke' (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000:182). Although this incident questions the difference between scientific approaches (physics) and social science research, it is still a valid critique of PS linguistic and textual strategies.

to textual and a linguistic analysis. Finally, the process of questioning, destabilising and/ or deconstructing a discourse should be taken into consideration.

c. Multi-trans-disciplinarily: Understanding the complexities

This study is carried within a multi-disciplinary context which deals with both empirical materials, through the case study of Cairo, and with the theoretical literature of place. The latter works through another level of multi-disciplinary context it approaches different theories and disciplines of place, specifically poststructuralist philosophy, social studies, and architecture theories with a perspective on place. These three disciplines are not isolated but interact through their approaches to place, and accordingly produce many similarities and differences, agreements and conflicts. These levels of multiplicity are explored in this section, and consideration is given to the need for a reflective/ reflexive approach to managing the interplay between the various entries.

Multiple theories: post-structuralism, social studies and architecture

The literature review of theories of place, presented in chapter two, involved poststructuralist philosophy of place, particularly deconstruction, and a social studies conception of place, particularly environmental psychology. This literature was developed in close relation to architectural theory of place, and through a postmodernist/ poststructuralist context. The review reflected on the '*multi-trans-disciplinary*' nature of this literature and examined the similarities and differences, consistencies and conflicts revealed within it. This section will now discuss further the '*multi-trans-disciplinary*' nature of these approaches and its implications and complications for the research methodology. The particularities of working within a poststructuralist frame of reference were discussed in the previous section; accordingly, it is the role of social studies that is emphasised here, with its different set of ontological, epistemological and accordingly methodological approaches.

This discussion is illustrated in Fig 2, which represents a theoretical reading of my multi-disciplinary review of place. Initially, architecture theory intrinsically questions place

making. On the one hand, philosophy (poststructuralist) questions the nature of place, the meta-physical, and the (architectural) conception of place as presented in the problem definition in chapter one. On the other hand, social studies theory explores the social/ people experience of place, the non-physical place, and the everyday realities of place. These multi-disciplines require a constant reflective methodology in order to avoid the dominance of a specific theory, as will be elaborated further here. It should be taken into consideration that social studies of place are intrinsically multidisciplinary, involving sociology, psychology, physiology, environmental studies, behaviour studies, and architecture (social) theory among others.

Interestingly, post-structuralism is pre-occupied with the disjunction between the idealist philosophy of place and the realities of the social place (Peter Eisenman interview in Solzhenitsyn, 1998). However, the epistemological and ontological differences between these two approaches are worth noting. Post-structuralism explores the phenomena of place through theory and conceptions, while the social studies approach aims to understand the phenomena of place through the construction of social theory. Traditionally, social studies of place, particularly environmental psychology, are associated with positivist methodology and follow an empiricist research approach (Groat and Després, 1991; Broadbent, 1988; Lang, 1987). This traditional approach helped to separate social studies from architecture theories and practice, which developed through postmodernist/ poststructuralist philosophy (Groat and Després, 1991). However, social studies drifted into naturalistic[2] research which associated itself with explanatory theory and accordingly, developed a closer relation to architecture theory (Bell, 2001; Lang, 1987).

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[2] Positivist, naturalist and emancipatory research approaches are introduced in the next section

Meta-theory

PS phil.

Meta-physical

Conception

Architecture ←——————→ Place

Social construction

Non-physical

Social studies

Everyday reality
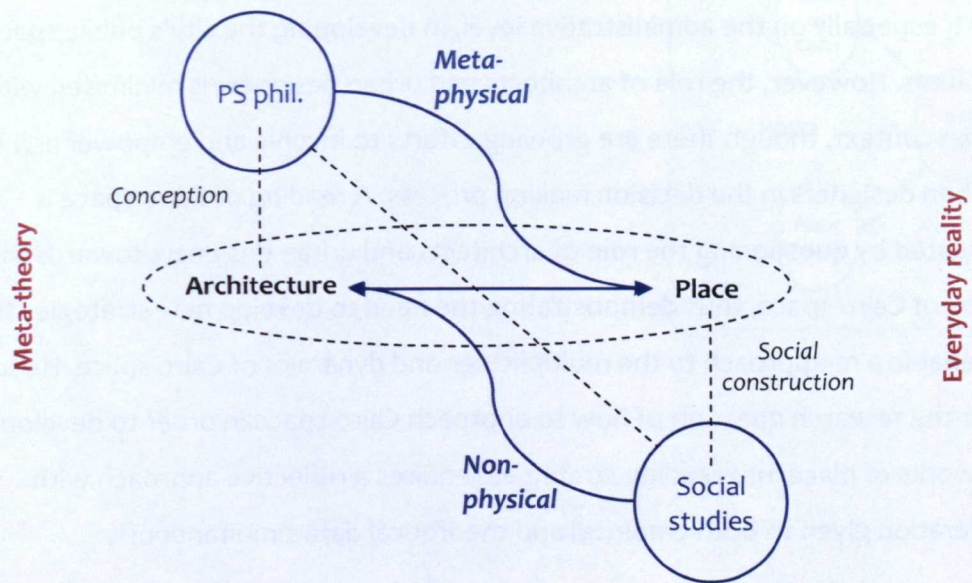
Fig 2 Understanding the complexities of the multiple theories in the research

Finally, social studies of place developed within a postmodern context and considered the experience of place through *'epistemological uncertainty and ontological plurality'* (Best, 2003:270); it shifted towards post-humanism and post-foundationalism as discussed in chapter two. In addition, models/theories of place were developed within social studies (see chapter two) through various pathways through a positivist empiricist approach, Canter 1977, phenomenology, Relph 1976, and structuralism, and Canter's 1997 Facet theory of place which integrated with architecture theory of place.

In-between empirical /theoretical data

*'Interplay between philosophical ideas and empirical works
marks high quality social research'
(Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000:7)*

This research was developed through an exploration of Cairo space, which demonstrated complexity and a rich urban fabric. It also showed amongst others a misrepresentation of the city through a monolithic reading of place in a singular time, which then manifested itself in the city public space. This manifestation caught the city in

a time of growing tension between place and people. Consequently, there is increasing interest, especially on the administrative level, in developing the city's public space and green areas. However, the role of architects and urban designers is minimised within the Egyptian context, though there are growing efforts to involve and empower architects and urban designers in the decision making process. A reading of Cairo space is investigated by questioning the role of architects and urban designers towards the paradox of Cairo space, thus demonstrating the need to develop new strategies that could enable a re-approach to the multiplicities and dynamics of Cairo space. Hence, to answer the research question of how to approach Cairo space in order to develop frameworks of place into reading strategies requires a reflective approach with consideration given to both empirical and theoretical data simultaneously.

Consecutively, a reflexive methodology is explored in the following and adopted to analyse and interpret this post-structuralist multi-trans-disciplinary study of place. The methodology comprises four parts: data construction, primary interpretation, critical interpretation, and self reflection.
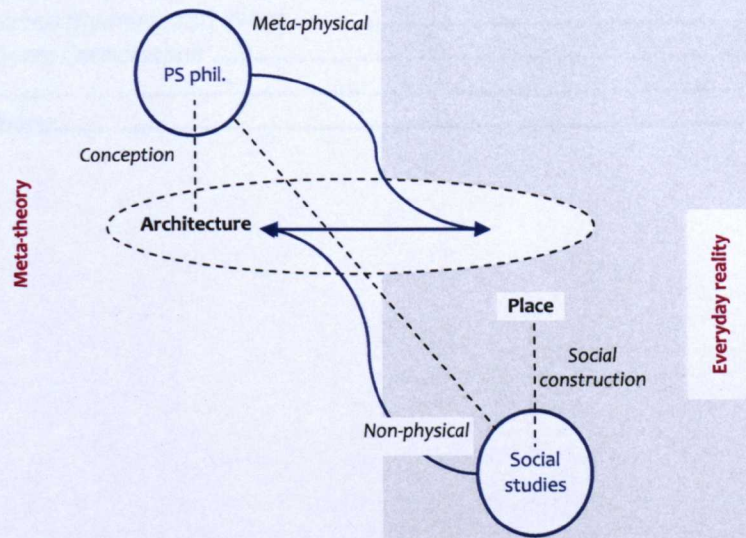
Chapter Five: Reflexivity

Cairo, khôra and deconstruction: **Towards a reflexive reading of place**

5 Reflexive Methodology

5.1. Research methodology

The development of the problem definition and research objectives has helped to fashion the case study of Cairo. This research investigates 'how' to explore an abstract social phenomenon, or place, rather than examining a particular social phenomenon, Cairo public space. This has developed two sets of data simultaneously: theoretical data in theories of place, and empirical data, in the case study of Cairo. Accordingly, the research explored the particularities and implications of this multi-disciplinary approach as well as working through a poststructuralist frame of reference on the methodological approach. This highlighted the need to work through an emancipatory inquiry system in order to approach a poststructuralist and reflexive methodology which could manage the multi-disciplinary elements. The research system of inquiry and the adoption of reflexive methodology are explored in the next section.

5.1.1. System of Inquiry

> *'It is not method, but ontology and epistemology which are the determinants of good social science'*
> (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000:4)

A common approach to the classification of research strategies/ systems of inquires defines these as independent spheres of positivist/ post-positivist, naturalistic, and emancipatory, depending on which ontological and epistemological assumptions are referenced, as well as the measures of research quality used. The three paradigmatic clusters were introduced and adopted by Groat and Wang (2002) (see Fig 5.1).

Emancipatory   Naturalistic

Positivist/ post-positivist
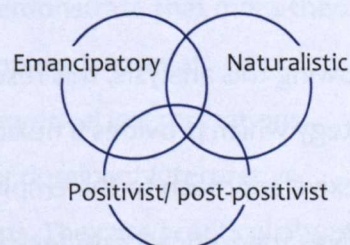
Fig 5.1 Clusters of systems of inquiry, (Fernardo L. Lara Groat and Wang, 2002:31)

These three clusters have potential to approach the multiplicities and complexities reviewed within the research methodological background. However, this classification includes basically contradicting ontological and epistemological assumptions that vary from an objective perspective of a single truth of one reality, to an identifiable subjective perspective of multiple truths and realities situated in its local context. This contradiction makes their clustering rather problematic.

Alvesson and Skoldberg introduced a complementary classification in *'Reflexive Methodology'*, which defines these systems of inquiry as data-driven, insight-driven and emancipation-driven strategies. A data-driven study considers the careful interpretation and construction of empirical material. An insight-driven study emphasises a hermeneutic process that implies an in-depth understanding of the text – the empirical material. A critical emancipation-driven study on the other hand, goes beyond the empirical data construction, in favour of *'reflective critical observations'* of the subject. This latter approach is embedded within postmodern/ poststructuralist schools of thought, such as feminism, critical theory, deconstruction, etc. This classification helps the interplay between the three strategies, according to the approach and nature of the research. Thus, the research could be considered through a number of consecutive instances, and is designed accordingly. A desirable situation would be the *'combination of extensive empirical work and advanced critical interpretation'* (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000:257-8).

Following this analysis, this research works mainly through an emancipation-driven strategy which provides a flexible and dynamic frame of reference and helps the reflexive approach to the empirical material. It should be noted that empirical material involves theoretical considerations as well as other case study (field work) data. Accordingly, the strategies adopted vary according to situation, as will be developed further in the research design.

5.1.2. The role of philosophy

The role of philosophy is studied as part of the research methodology through the approaches of Groat and Wang (2002) and Alvesson and Skolberg (2000), and not as part of the empirical material. In their book 'Architectural Research Methods', Groat and Wang (2002) consider philosophy as a background for the legitimacy and coherence of theory, and necessary in order to explain the nature or socio-cultural setting of the research subject. They introduced a linear chart of research methodology, initiated by philosophy and embedded in this thesis.
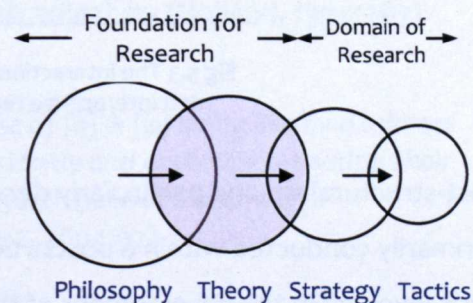
Fig 5.2 philosophy-theory research method (Groat and Wang, 2002:87)

On the other hand, Alvesson and Skoldberg consider the role of philosophy -namely poststructuralist and critical theory- as meta-theory. They demonstrate that meta-theory is non-static and relational and not directly involved with empirical material interpretation but rather with the 'guides and frames' of theoretical interpretations. Meta-theory has two roles: 'to problematize the legitimacy of dominant interpretive pattern', and to provide potentialities for new interpretations. They are sceptical about the use of a particular philosophy as both a theory and a meta-theory, because it raises the fear of 'theory-reductionism' and biased interpretation as well as the need to use a different insight in order to reflection on one another (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000:253-4, 291).

Level of Interpretation	Function
Empirical material	
↕	→ Multiplicities in Interpretation
Theory (A), (B)... Interpretive repertoire	
↕	→ Meta-insights regarding ambiguity, problematization of dominant theory, simulation of alternative views and theories
Meta-theory [Deconstruction]	
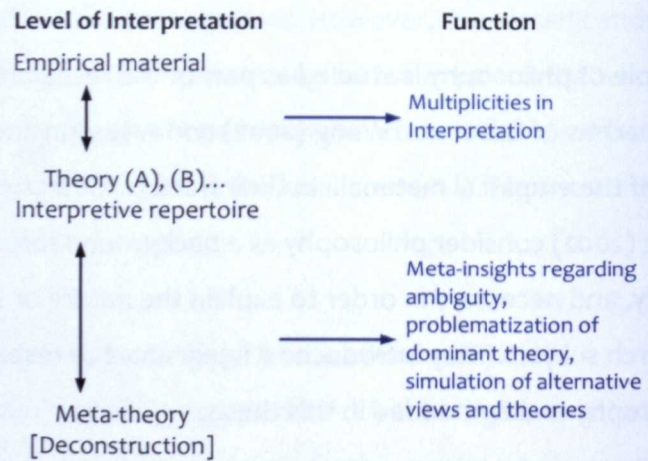
Fig 5.3 The interaction between post-structuralism and empirical data and interpretive repertoire (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000:253)

However, post-structuralism and particularly deconstruction, plays both roles. This research is primarily conducted within a poststructuralist context. Accordingly, post-structuralism is involved in the development of the theoretical approach of place presented in chapter two. This is manifested through the concept of khōra – deconstruction– in particular and Tschumi's approach to place, among others. In this sense, the role of poststructuralism / deconstruction in relation to the research structure could be seen as both immanent and transcendental. Post-structuralism is immanent, in the sense that it works from within the research structure and the empirical data to formulate the interpretations. And deconstruction is transcendental, in the sense that it provides a guideline to reflection on the methodology and framework used in the interpretation without being part of the research empirical material and interpretation. Accordingly, to avoid 'theory-reductionism', and manage this paradoxical role of post-structuralism, the research is structured and developed in consecutive reflexive instances. These instances help to isolate the two roles of post-structuralism, as part of the empirical material and as a meta-theory.

5.1.3. Reflexivity

This chapter has reviewed, demonstrated and emphasised the multiplicity, complexity, obscurity, ambiguity, and the not well-defined research subject, problem definition, multidisciplinary theories and the case study of Cairo. The research main aim was established as 'reading strategies', a non-structured and not well-defined approach to place. Accordingly, the research methodology adopted an emancipation-driven system of inquiry, and involved post-structuralism/ deconstruction as meta-theory. The need to adopt a reflective/ reflexive methodology to approach these research paradoxes has been demonstrated; '... [This] new sense of flexibility and uncertainty concerning knowledge and learning' is associated with reflexivity (Holland, 1999:463).

> '[Reflexivity] ... in the sense of [a] & [b] being like two mirrors
> facing each other and constantly and endlessly reflecting their
> images back and forth between each other'
> (Gee, 2004:97)

But, what is reflexivity? According to Alvesson and Skoldberg, reflexivity entails continuous reflection between different levels of interpretation, interaction with empirical data, interpretations of underlying meaning, critical interpretations of ideology, power and social discussion, and self-reflections on text and authority (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000:250). Reflexivity works through the belief that every piece of empirical material mirrors a piece of reality. Accordingly, it considers two processes, interpretation and reflection. The act of interpretation involves deep considerations of all 'trivial and non-trivial' data, and primary and secondary empirical data as equally important. And reflection is an act of 'interpretation of interpretation' through the embedding of these interpretations in the research context, in the socio-cultural back ground of the researcher as well as in the linguistic, ideological and political considerations of the research. Accordingly, reflexivity promotes a conscious research process or mechanism which could help the researcher develop critical self-reflection and awareness, and possibly lead to change. 'An important function of reflexive analysis is to expose the underlying assumptions on which arguments and stances are built' (Holland, 1999:467). Thus, the main aim of reflexivity is to 'generate knowledge that opens up

rather than closes' i.e. open ended research which does not establish the truth of reality (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000:5). Accordingly, it aims to understand this truth through the continuous acts of exploration rather than establishing a particular truth.

Reflexivity presents a specific type of reflection. However, while reflection gives a 'focus' on a specific level of interpretation or research method, reflexivity involves a continuous interplay between the various levels without any of them becoming dominant, but it also involves the capacity to change themselves as well as each other. Accordingly, it entitles *'breadth and variety'* rather than determinant interpretation (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000).

5.2. Reflexive Analysis and interpretation

The research approach and methodology have demonstrated the use of an emancipation-driven inquiry system that adopts post-structuralism as a meta-theory, and of a reflexive methodology. Accordingly, the research adopts the Alvesson and Skoldberg (2000) quadri-hermeneutics example of reflexive interpretation, comprising four levels of interplaying interpretation, data construction, Primary interpretation, critical interpretation and self-reflection. Data construction considers the empirical material from both theory and fieldwork. Primary interpretation represents the basic level of interpretation that questions the underlying meaning of the empirical material, and strives for multiplicity and plurality. Critical interpretation principally questions and challenges the prime interpretations. And finally self-reflection questions the interpretation process through reflection on interpretation authority and selectivity (Fig 5.4).

Simultaneously, the research is reviewed through the case study of Cairo, khōra – the new paradigm of place in philosophy –, the different models of place introduced in chapter two, and the developed abstract framework of place. The research is held within a poststructuralist context, with particular emphasis on deconstruction, and perceived through an architectural background, and the main aim is to develop reading strategies

of place. In this sense, the empirical data constitutes both the case study of Cairo public space and the models of place, as discussed in chapter two. To process this data, two levels of interpretation are needed. The first is a primary structured approach in order to understand the 'underlying meaning' of the data. The 'primary framework' of place is used to approach the construction data. Accordingly, 'strategies of deconstruction' represent the critical interpretative level of questioning and problematising the primary interpretations. A self-reflection on the process of the research and reading strategies is conducted through the reading of Khôra, theoretical, and Cairo space, empirical (Fig 5.4).

Level of Interpretation	Focus	(Possible) Reflective Themes
Data Construction		
Models of place Case study	Theoretical/ Empirical	• Multiplicities in Interpretation • Pluralism • Surprise potential in empirical data • Favoring certain interpretations • Interpretive repertoire
Primary Interpretation	Underlying meaning	
Primary Framework of place		• Negation of proposed interpretation • Considering Interpretation domination • Presenting counter image??? • Discussion of success and failure of certain interpretations
Critical Interpretation:	Ideology, power, social reproduction	
Deconstruction		• Self-reflection on dominant line of interpretation (poststructuralist / deconstruction) • Identification of potential problematic authority selectivity • Openness to other representations and interpretations
Self-critical and reflection Khôra	Reflections on text, authority, and selectivity	

Fig 5.4 Research levels of interpretation,(Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000:255)
Projections added by author , 2010

In summary, the reflexive approach comprises four parts, data construction – both empirical and theoretical –, primary interpretation – the abstract framework of place –, critical interpretation –deconstruction strategies –, and self reflection – khóra –. The next section explores the data construction, interpretation and self reflections, whereas critical interpretation is discussed in section C. This process is further explored and developed in the following chapters according to the nature of the empirical material; i.e. case study or theoretical considerations.

5.2.1. Data Construction: building place discourse(s)

Data construction represents the first level of approach to theoretical and empirical studies of place; these will then be further analysed and interpreted to lead to the development of reading strategies of place. Accordingly, this next section explores the definition of discourse and the construction of place discourse in the research and consists of two parts, the theoretical and the empirical discourse of place.

a. What is discourse?

Discourse is part of everyday communication. It is mostly used to refer to comprehensible *'talk, writing, and signage'* (Johnstone, 2008). Discourse is...

> *'... written or spoken communication or debate; a formal written or spoken discussion of a topic ...'*
> *(Pearsall, 2001 - Oxford English Dictionary)*

> *'Any coherent succession of sentences, spoken or (in most usage) written.'*
> *(Matthews, 1997 - Oxford Dictionary of Linguistics)*

> *'A continuous stretch of language containing more than one sentence: conversations, narratives, arguments, speeches.'*
> *(Blackburn, 1996 - Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy)*

The last definition echoes the research interest in philosophy. Discourse is addressed through different areas of philosophy, analytic, rhetoric, language, linguistic, semantic, etc. (Routledge, 2000). The former definition was developed through 'Discourse Analysis', which considers discourse within its social context and is hence, concerned with 'talk and texts as parts of social practices' (Potter, 1996:105). Another definition related to philosophy is introduced by Foucault, although this definition considers discourse in a 'different sense than in discourse analysis' (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000:224). Discourse analysts differentiate the two definitions as, 'Discourse' – with capital D – for Foucault's definitions, and this is a count noun i.e. the plural is Discourses; and 'discourse' – with a lower-case d for DA's definition, which has no plural. In this context, 'analyst' discourse considers 'text' rather than linguistic units. Analyst discourse both influences and is influenced by its socio-cultural context, knowledge (Georgakopoulou and Goutsos, 2004; Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000). Foucault on the other hand, is more concerned with technical and theoretical definitions of discourses; discourses are systems of production of knowledge as well as operative processes of power within the socio-cultural context (Wooffitt, 2005; Mills, 2003).

Actually, Discourse is 'one of the most contradictory terms' in Foucault's works (Mills, 2003:53). Foucault uses a different definition for discourse as 'the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualisable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a certain number of statements' (Foucault, 1974:80).

> 'To discourse analysts, 'discourse'
> usually means actual instances of
> communicative action in the
> medium of language... Discourse is
> both the source of ... knowledge...
> and the result of it'
> (Johnstone, 2008:3)

> [For Foucault], Discourses are
> conventional ways of talking that
> create... systems of ideology, sets
> of belief about how the world
> works...
> (Johnstone, 2008:3)

- Discourse as the general domain of all statements vaguely refers to talk and text that have meaning and effect;
- Discourse as a group of statements that refers to a particular context or subject such as discourse of femininity, religious discourse...;
- Discourse as regulated practices refers to 'unwritten rules and structures' of a particular talk or text (Mills, 2003:53).

Foucault's interest lies in the third definition of discourse which considers the rules and structures behind discourse production, rather than the discourse produced and the details of language use (Mills, 2003:53; Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000:224). Discourse is therefore seen as a system that produces the objects and subjects of the discourse within its social and language context (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000). Furthermore, Foucault's discourse is built in close relation to power relations.

'Discourses are tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of force relations ... Force relations are characterised by dynamic and contingent, complex, power-full, strategic situations of heterogeneity, instability and tension, where systems of relations (such as economic, gender, knowledge etc) confer. What counts as the 'truth' is thus a product of practices of relational power'
(Foucault, 1981:102)

Following on from this short review of discourse(s) definitions, the definition and use of discourse 'within' this research context is now discussed. Primarily both DA and Foucault's discourse involve all kinds of texts (Wooffitt, 2005), ordinary conversations, interview, official government reports, academic writing, newspapers... etc. Further, the definition of discourse purposefully varies through the different research sections. Initially, discourse is used in this chapter to refer to a group of statements about place; Discourse(s) of place. These discourses of place are then reviewed to provide a literature background to help develop the thesis. Accordingly, the approach to these discourses attempts to avoid theoretical and methodological preferences, for instance discourse analysis. The main aim is to explore data in advance of interpretation. Discourse definition develops by considering the structure and systems that produce place

discourse through the interpretation of theories and case studies in the following chapter. This definition will then be explored further through the methodology.

b. Place theoretical-discourse

[Architecture and discourse are]... 'two fields of study that are rarely combined in a systematic way...'
(Markus and Cameron, 2002:vii)

The literature and text of theories of place both prescribe and describe architecture and place (Markus, 1987). In the review of theories of place in chapter two, I discussed the changing paradigm of place discourse which approaches place as space, body and mind. A traditional perspective of place would consider these as well-defined elements which are directly related in a linear mode; whereas, the new paradigm considers them as not-well defined constituents of place, oscillating between each other and so developing a network of complex patterns of relationships. Theories of place are explored, working through different disciplines, and these approaches to place have shown many similarities and consistencies, as well as many inconsistencies. Simultaneously, these theoretical approaches are initially prescribed as models of place in order to assist in the development of a structured primary definition of place, composed of elements and relationships. This would then be developed into a primary framework of place. However, the new paradigm of place does not reflect place through well-defined elements and relations. It should also be taken into consideration that this discourse of place involves the visual representation of these models through means of graphics and diagrams, either developed by the authors of the theories or by the researcher in order to illustrate them.

c. Place empirical-discourse

Empirical discourse on the other hand considers data-construction through a case study of Cairo space, which is explored and discussed in chapter four. This study considers the

spatial, formal and temporal aspects of Cairo space in general and examines in particular the 'Cultural Park for Children' built in the historic district of Al-Sayyida Zeinab. The latter will be approached in detail in chapter six. The park was designed by a local Egyptian architect, for an Egyptian client, the Ministry of culture and is under the administration of the Cairo Government. The park won both an international and local architectural competitions. Accordingly, a sort of a conversation developed between the bodies involved in the making and management of the park.

5.2.2. Framework of Interpretation[1]

Primary interpretation is considered as the first layer of interaction with the research empirical material, the constructed place discourse, in both the theory and case study. However, it should be noted that data construction is itself a layer of interpretation. The primary interpretation process is based on the developed abstract framework of place which includes place, people, people-place, meaning, and event, and the relations between them. This abstract framework is used to approach the underlying meaning using both the case study and place models. This primary act of interpretation represents a reflexive instance; where this framework is both the framework of interpretation and the main research subject to be developed into reading strategies of place through this interpretation process. Accordingly, it is necessary to explore the primary interpretative framework of place as well as the incorporation of visual thinking and analysis in the interpretation process.

a. Primary Framework of Interpretation

The primary interpretative framework of place was developed in chapter two to involve people, place, and people-place relations and questions meaning, event and place interrelation (R), as well as explore place context in relation to this abstract reading.

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[1] It is important to note that the use of a 'framework of interpretation' in this research differs from (Yanow et. Al., 2006) approach to interpretative method.

However, meaning and event, as will be demonstrated, are rather controversial, especially when considering the difference in approach to architectural place between Markus and Tschumi's approach to architectural place.

Accordingly, meaning and event, which help to question the elements, are placed at the peripheries of the primary framework. Do people-place, meaning and event signify one element, or several elements not included in the primary framework? Ultimately, this questions the inter-structure of the framework, the relations between the elements of place. Are these relations represented through conjunction and/or disjunction?
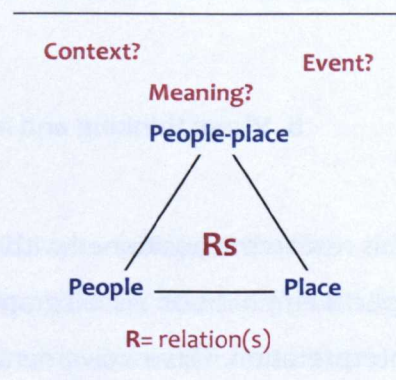
Fig 5.5 Abstract framework of PLACE

This primary framework evidently, reflects the traditional paradigm of place which includes well-defined elements and relations. The main aim of this research is to develop this primary abstract framework of place into reading strategies of place that encompass the new paradigm of place, with its network of complex relations between not-well-defined elements, the place constituents. Accordingly, this framework approaches the constructed discourse of place in order to explore and reflect on itself. Elements and relations are questioned and examined in the various models of place in order to develop a better understanding of their proposed definition and nature. This framework is also used to approach the empirical –discourse of place, the case study; however, this approach reflects on and examines both the framework and the case study.

> '... discourses are not one and for all subservient to power or
> raised up against it, any more than silences are... a point of
> resistant and a starting point for an opposing strategy'
> (Foucault, 1981:100-101)

Simultaneously, this framework was developed through the generalisation of the similarities between the various models of place. This helps to provide a basic structure with which to investigate the 'silent points' in the constructed discourse of place. These

silent points aid recognition of the missing parts in the discourse, the blind spot, as well as identification of any *'inconsistencies and variations'* between the different constructed discourses (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000). Overall, this helps to enrich the interpretation with multiple theories and approaches.

b. Visual thinking and interpretation

This research is positioned within an architecture background, which thus requires a special emphasis on visual/ graphic involvement in data construction, analysis and interpretation. This involvement varies from the use of photos and architectural drawings to thinking diagrams that manifest and describe the relationship in-between architecture and philosophy. At the same time, diagrams are essential attributes of architectural thinking. In architecture, diagrams are representational relational tools in between theory and practice, idea and reality. They involve an extensive vocabulary of symbols, elements and relations, both graphic and verbal with which to present different sets of information (Do and Gross, 2001). Fraser and Henmi (1994:110) describe how architects 'symbolize... intangible factors such as movement, access, sound, view...' in a self-conscious design process. Interestingly, diagrams are essentially philosophical attributes as well. Diagrams present a *'temporary moment in between'* inside and outside philosophy. They *'outline a process'* rather than *'shape a form'* (Mullarkey, 2006:257). Diagrams are presented as problem solvers in philosophy due to their perceptual quality. They are used as representational relation between text and image, word and graph (Mullarkey, 2006:161).

Since this research is positioned within an architectural and poststructuralist philosophy, diagrams are used as an interpretative tool in the thesis development. These diagrams accentuate the interplay between verbal and visual elements of text, in both theory and empirical material. This helps the reflection on the development of reading strategies. The research involves three types of thinking diagrams. The first is a re-representation (re-drawing) of the original diagrams provided by the model authors to explain their theory. The second is developed by the researcher to illustrate the verbal/ textual theory

of place of the model authors when no visual illustration is provided. The third type consists of constructed diagrams which are based on the researcher's readings and interpretations of verbal theories as well as presentations of the researcher's analytic approach.

5.2.3. Self-reflection: *Cairo-Khōra*

As previously discussed, the role of the level of self reflection is to self-question the research process, the selectivity of theories and case studies, and the dominance of the poststructuralist/ deconstruction interpretation. The aim is to question the researcher's selective authority and hence, consider other *'representations and interpretations'*. In the context of this research, this self reflection is conducted on two levels, both internal and external.

On the internal level, the research approaches two main events. The first considers the study of the empirical material through a case study of Cairo. The second considers the study of theories of place. Both events are approached through the primary framework of interpretation and deconstruction critical reading strategies. An internal self reflection on the development of the reading strategies of place through both these events is conducted through a reflection on khōra, a place in-between architecture and post-structuralism/ deconstruction, and the main background study of this thesis. A simultaneous level of self reflection reflects on Cairo space, the research referential case study.

On the external level, these two events are interrupted and re-questioned. This level also re-questions the research problem definition, questions and objectives, the research methodology and process. This interruption questions the research context, both the socio-culture in between eastern and western binaries, and the academic approach through post-structuralism and social studies of place, and the empirical study of Cairo.

Cairo, khôra and deconstruction: **Towards a reflexive reading of place**

A reflexive repertoire

Section B reviewed the background and development of the research approach. Accordingly, the use of poststructuralist frame of reference and reflexive methodology is demonstrated in chapter five. This reflexive methodology involves the continuous movement between four levels of interpretation; data construction, primary interpretation, critical interpretation and self-reflection. The design of the research as a reflexive repertoire is presented in Fig 1.

The first level of interpretation is data construction, building up the discourse(s) of place. This level began in the background of the research by developing the research problem in chapter one and the literature review in chapters two, three and four. This level continued on two parallel paths; the empirical-discourse of place through the case study of Cairo; and the theoretical discourse of place elaborated in chapter five. This level of interpretation helped to develop an abstract framework of place which is then used as a primary interpretative framework to re-approach the data. And simultaneously, it is used to reflect on itself to develop the reading strategies of place, and form the first reflexive instances in this research. Consequently, strategies of deconstruction are used as the critical level of interpretation to problematise the primary interpretation. Once again this follows two different paths; it acts as an external level of interpretation when approaching the constructed empirical discourse whereas it acts internally in-between the models of place on the margin of the theoretical discourse. Finally, a synthesis between Cairo space, khōra and deconstruction is used to self-reflect internally on the interpretations of place discourse, and externally on the research context and process.

Data Construction

Ch 1: Four Instants
Ch 2: Approaching Place
Ch3: Khôra-deconstruction
Ch4: Cairo Space

Empirical material

Ch 6: Cairo Space

Theories of place

Ch7: Social Space
Ch8: Arch Space

Cairo public space

Khôra

Architecture, Philosophy
poststructuralist & Social
studies

Cultural Park for
Children – Al Sayyida
Zeinab

**Primary Framework of
Interpretation**

Theories of Place
- Canter & Relph;
- Markus & Tschumi;
- Facet model of place

People, place, people-place,
meaning, event, interrelations

External Reflection

Critical Interpretation
Deconstruction

**Internal Reflexive
instants**

Reading Singularity
Meaning: bBinary
opposition- cornerstone
Event: In context - ahistory

Manager *Primary
ramework*

Architect

Canter &
Relph

Markus &
Tschumi

*Primary
Framework*

Facet model
of place

Internal reflection

Self-Reflection
Cairo-Khôra

Internal reflection

External Self-reflection

Ch 9: To be continued

Fig 6 A reflexive repertoire: research methodology and design

Data Construction: building the discourse

According to Foucault[52] (1974) discourse is constructed through a social and cultural context, is associated with institutions of *'knowledge and authority'* and requires a functional framework in order to construct the relations between the different discourse statements (Mills, 2003; Horrocks and Jevtic, 1997).

Simultaneously, Nussbaum (2001) identifies the actors involved in the discourse, referencing literary work and music, as authors, narrators, readers, plus various other characters . She also emphasises the closely related roles of author and reader over the narrator and other characters. These actors are projected through architecture space; they can be identified as architect/ urban designer/ planner as (text) authors/ (place) designers; the people using the place are the reader(s); whereas the press plays the role of the narrator in this discourse. Other characters are involved such as place administrators and managers as well as those from other technical areas. The projection of discourse actors on place identified by Nussbaum (2001) is represented through the illustration in Fig 2.
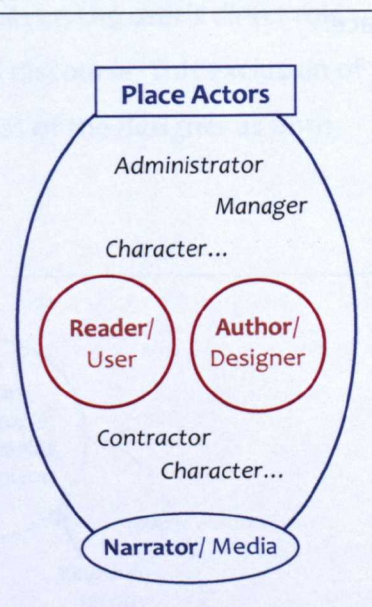
Fig 7 Place Actors, a projection through a Nussbaum's reading (2001)

The designer/ author and the user/ reader are identified as major actors in the development of place discourse. The media plays the role of narrator commenting on the margins of the discourse. Other characters, who are involved with political, economic and technical issues, play a minimal role in this discourse. Vining and Stevens (1986) developed a user-based model to read/ evaluate quality of place (Fig 2), which 'explicitly' involves the user in the evaluation of place. It considers the relations between the physical place, designer (author) and the user. These relations are represented by

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[52] Foucault's approach to Discourse Analysis is discussed in chapter five

two groups of arrows rotating in opposite directions. The user relation starts with actions which affect the physical environment and this change the designer and manager perception of place capacities and constraints. Accordingly, the designer plays the role of educator, informing the user about the consequences of their behaviour and thus affecting their future behaviour. The designer relation starts by altering place. These changes are perceived and judged by the users, whose feedback is presented as demands and needs of place. In this way, they change the designers' perspectives of place.
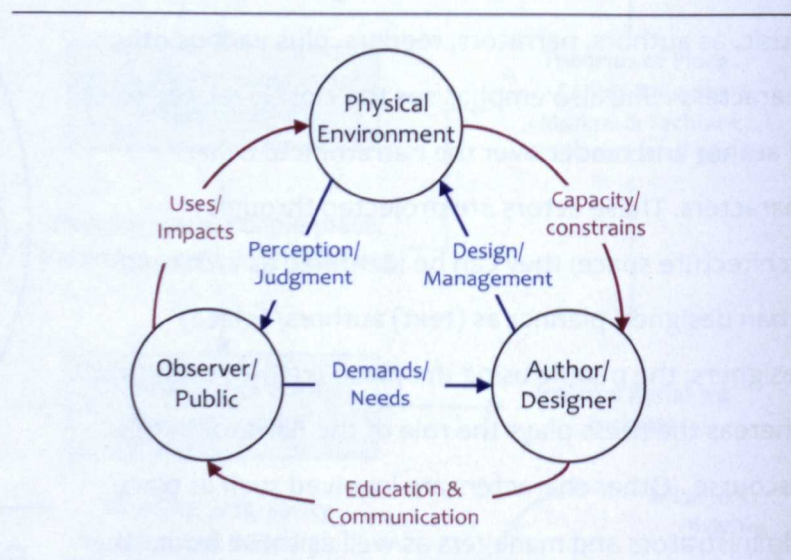
Fig 8 User-based model of place assessment (Vining and Stevens, 1986:169)

'...it is... necessary to recall the paradoxical relationship
between architecture as a product of mind, as a conceptual and
dematerialized discipline, and architecture as the sensual
experience of space and as a spatial praxis'
(Tschumi, 1976:66)

The approach of both Nussbaum (2001) and Vining and Stevens (1986) are adopted to identify authors and actors involved in the place discourse, see Fig 3. This discourse is concerned with the relation between the idea and reality, the architectural concept and the product. It explores the relation between reading and interpretation of place on the one hand, and construction of place on the other. However, it is not concerned with the production process. It is only concerned with the development of the idea and the end

product. In this context, it is appropriate to adopt Nussbaum's emphasis on the author/ reader role in the construction of discourse, and the commentator on the periphery of the discourse, i.e. not directly involved in place production. The projection of these actors in Vining and Stevens' model helps to identify the author and reader/ observer roles with the place, the designer whose reading of the place helped their intervention. These two roles are not contradictory, for the author is intrinsically the first reader of his/ her writings. The narrator's indirect role is added and relations are built up in-between the narrator and both the author and reader/ observer. However, the user's direct role as reader/ observer of place is excluded from the developed discourse. This exclusion of the user from the discourse setting helps to build up the roles of the designer as both author and reader of place.
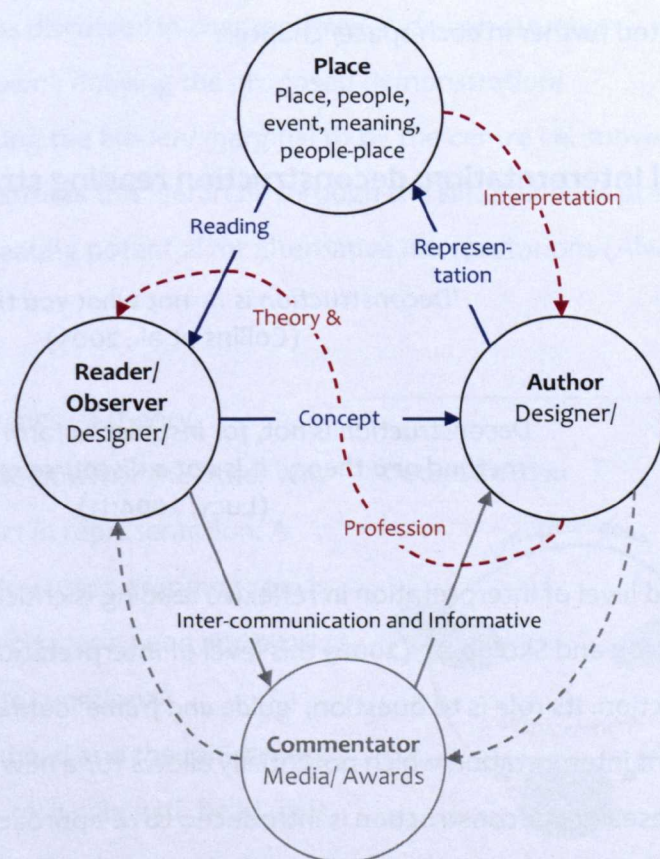
Fig 9 Building up the institutional discourse based on a reading of (Nussbaum, 2001; and Vining and Stevens, 1986)

Following this projection, the main authors are recognised in Cairo space, chapter six, between the designer and the manager of the cultural park for children. The secondary authors were identified through the press commentators and award committee. Furthermore, theories of place reviewed in chapters two and three are included on the margin of the discourse. In chapter seven, social space, these authors were identified through the apparent similarities between Edward Relph's (1976) and David canter's (1977) models of space, and the structuralist and poststructuralist meta-theoretical approach to place through facet theory and deconstruction respectively. Finally, the discourse on architecture space, in chapter eight, was constructed through the approaches of Thomas Markus (1980s) and Bernard Tschumi (1980s~). In both chapters, multiple secondary actors are identified as all these theories develop to reflect on each other, on the margin. For example, both Relph and Canter are secondary actors in the discourse constructed on architecture space. The design of these multiple voices will be elaborated further in each space/ chapter.

Critical Interpretation: deconstruction reading strategies

'Deconstruction is ... not what you think it is',
(Collins et al., 2005)

Deconstruction is not, for instance, a form of critique... a
method or a theory; it is not a discourse or an operation'
(Lucy, 2004:11)

The third level of interpretation in reflexive reading is critical interpretation. According to Alvesson and Skoldberg (2000) this level of interpretation is not part of data construction. Its role is to question, 'guide and frame' data construction and the dominant interpretation which potentially allows for a new and different interpretation. In this research, deconstruction is introduced to re-approach the primary interpretations. Deconstruction is therefore, introduced as a reflexive meta-theory that forms a critical interpretation of discourse(s) of place. In this sense, the role of deconstruction is to question the dominant patterns of place interpretation, exposing unquestioned assumptions, inconsistencies and internal conflicts within the developed

discourse(s) of place and hence developing alternative interpretations (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000; Royle, 2000). Simultaneously, deconstruction is indirectly involved in empirical data through Khóra, and through Tschumi's model of place, etc. It should be noted that some of these themes are approached reflexively in order to develop the model of place, as will be elaborated in the following chapters. This section mainly discusses the role of deconstruction as a meta-theory at the critical interpretation level.

> 'Deconstruction ... In French, it has both a grammatical and mechanical meaning. It means both to disarrange the construction of words in a sentence and to disassemble a machine and transport it elsewhere. It also, forms a reflexive verb [se deconstuire] meaning to lose one's own construction'
> (McQuillan, 2001:1)

Thus, deconstruction is adopted as a strategic interpretive tool to question and problematise text and subject, as discussed in chapter three. A de-con-struction approach turns 'things upside down', denying the proposed demonstration/ interpretation of data and bringing the hidden/ marginal to be the centre i.e. subverting hierarchy. Accordingly, it deconstructs this hierarchy through the simultaneous presence of two conflicting ideas, thus creating potential for alternative interpretations (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000).

Deconstruction literally, turns things –a theory, interpretation, an object–, upside-down or the other way around by searching for a conflict in representation. A visual metaphor of deconstruction using a flipping coin is presented in Fig 5. A coin has two faces a head and a tail. The head usually carries an image, a national representation e.g. the queen's head and the tail carries the coin value e.g. £1. In this figure, a coin with head up is turned over, so the tail is face-up. Simultaneously, head and tail are displaced in a search for a conflict and potential new representation of a coin.

Deconstruction

turn upside-down

Head   Tail

Displacement

Head
Tail

Searching for conflict
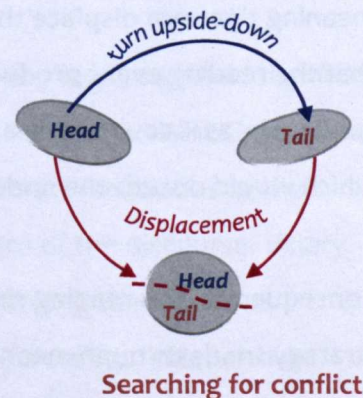
Fig 5 Deconstruction Metaphor

This level of critical interpretation is applied at two different sections of the research process; the development of the theoretical frame of reference of place and in reflection to the case studies through these theories. However, deconstruction is not a method, or a set of rules, applied to interpretation. Deconstruction strategies should not be understood as a set of rules to be applied to discourse. These strategies essentially work from inside the discourse, i.e. they are dependent on the nature and content of the discourse. They are dependent on the author/ reader as they acknowledge the multiplicities of meaning and truth. This in turn is consecutively dependent on the singularity of each and every reading. The unity of meaning is displaced by the singularity of reading, and hence these strategies are dependent on the reading context, which is never the same. Accordingly, it could be said that reading the discourse through these deconstruction strategies is a reading event, which was not pre-planned and is therefore unexpected and yet to happen through a singular reading context.

a. Reading Singularity: between meaning and event

As discussed, strategies of deconstruction represent a singular reading through time and space; a reading which is influenced by the discourse, the context and the author. This singular reading displaces the traditional unity of meaning. Simultaneously, this singular reading of the discourse in time and space is a reading event that is yet to come unexpectedly, and the meaning is yet to be established after the event. However, meaning does not displace the event nor is displaced by it. Controversially, it appears that the reading event produces the discourse meaning. This sentence should be taken cautiously, as it could imply a cause-and-effect relation between event and meaning, which would disturb the understanding of both.

Consequently, this reading singularity helps the development of two simultaneous strategy triads through meaning and event. Importantly these should not be taken as strategies for application but as approaches to help the critical interpretation of discourse. Meaning, in relation to strategies involving the deconstruction of binary oppositions and the discourse cornerstone, emphasises the deconstruction of the

boundaries of the discourse and space. And the event, in relation to a-history and context reading strategies, emphasises the deconstruction of boundaries of time i.e. the reading singularity of the discourse approaches the deconstruction of the discourse boundaries through différance in time and space.

b. Meaning: binary oppositions: Cornerstone

Meaning is traditionally fixed through the metaphysics of difference. Meaning is produced through the fixed difference between the signs/ the signifiers in Saussure's triangle of signification, sign→ signifier → signified. Deconstruction *'makes every identity [meaning] at once itself and different of itself'* (Royle, 2000:11). Meaning is no longer fixed; it is continuously changing through différance. Meaning is produced through a system of différance as signified in Derrida's reading of the triangle of signification, sign → signified → reality (through its signifier). Meaning is thus caught in a continuous differential relation between the signified, which traces other signs. Accordingly, meaning is displaced through a system of différance between the signs, giving way to a reading singularity. Subsequently, deconstruction is already at work inside the discourse through the 'defective cornerstone'. It acts as *'a theoretical and practical parasitism or virology'* (Royle, 2000:11). However, the cornerstone works at the margin of the discourse and not at the centre. A deconstruction reading would reach out for the cornerstone which differs from one singular reading to another.

Both meaning and cornerstone are the by-product of the binary logic; signifier/ signified, centre/ margin, keystone/ cornerstone. Simultaneously, deconstruction is not interested in the destruction of these binaries; deconstruction considers the limitations of their representation through a fixed singular meaning at the centre of the discourse. Binary logic considers the inequality between the two binaries privileging the first term. Difference considers the relation between them through an 'either/ or' relationship which moves from the first term towards the second. Différance, hence helps the displacement of this fixed relation through the oscillation between neither/ nor and both/and, which obscures determinacy, fixed meaning and relations. Consequently, the

deconstruction of the inside/ outside binary through the displacement of the centres of the discourse into the supplement escapes and blurs the boundaries of space and discourse, and meaning is caught through the reading singularity of the cornerstone.

c. Event: context: history

The event is intrinsically an instance of presence in space and time, which is yet to come in the future, isolated from other successive events. Simultaneously, the event is both traced by and a trace of the discourse context and author. Accordingly, the temporal and singular reading event of the discourse of place both traces and is traced by what is happening outside the discourse; the context, society, politics, economics, history of place, etc.; and the author, a reader in architecture and Cairo space. This reading event reflects back on the primary aim of the research to develop a reading that operates on two levels, the abstract and the contextual. This chapter has reviewed the development of this levelling approach to a reflexive reading between multiple projections of place, one which recognises the multiplicities and dynamics of place beyond dualities and levels. Simultaneously, this reading event echoes the reflexive approach. Accordingly, the event rejects the transcendence of the context and author outside the discourse; both are inscribed inside the discourse breaking the boundaries between inside/ outside, as well as between each other. Consequently, deconstruction rejects the idea of the 'history' of discourse which constitutes both the production and explanation of this discourse. The presence of the discourse traces the past and non-potential future context of the discourse. The reading event is contextual although it recognises the impossibility of building a past context; the event is yet to come in a future that traces both the present and the past without following their traditional path. Hence, it emphasises the blurring process between the boundaries of time, past, future and present.
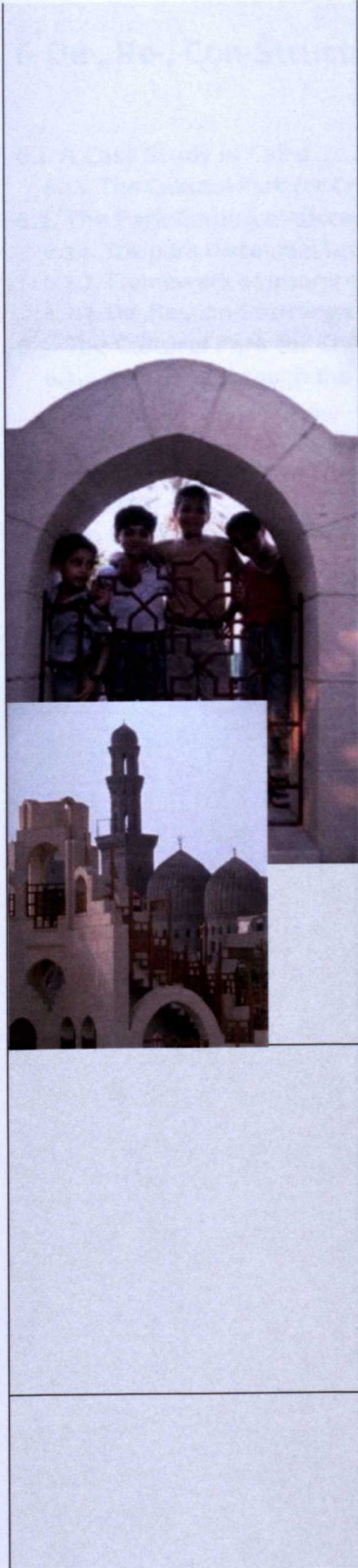
Chapter Six:

De-, Re-, Con-structing Cairo Space

Cairo, khōra and deconstruction: **Towards a reflexive reading of place**

6 De-, Re-, Con-Structuring Cairo Space

6.1. A Case Study in Cairo

The paradox of Cairo space was explored in chapter one, where it helped to raise the question, 'how to approach, read and understand the paradox of Cairo in between Cairene and Cairo space; people and place?' Chapter four reviewed the city's history, spatial configuration and institutional formation, as well as the role of architects and urban designers towards her space. This helped to develop the argument for questioning how the study of the case of Cairo could help the development of the primary framework of place introduced in chapter two. This case study therefore is expected to play the role of both the subject of the study – the case of Cairo space – and the object of the study – the development of the framework of place. Controversially, it is hard, or rather an impossible task, to approach the case study of Cairo without being overwhelmed by the empirical study of her space. Accordingly, the reflexive reading of the empirical data is approached in such a way as to reflect on both the framework of interpretation and Cairo space itself.

The criteria for and the choice of the 'Cultural Park for Children' as a case study were discussed in chapter four. The park design is a relatively small project that helps in the reflexive study of place, reflecting between theoretical and empirical data. As discussed in chapter four, the park is one of the four main projects that have contributed to the development scheme of Cairo urban space. An Egyptian architect was involved in the design of the park, which was built in the old historic district of the Sayyida Zeinab (Fig 6.1). This chapter analyses a context which both traces and is traced by the text content, or place – the 'cultural park for children' in relation to deconstruction reading strategies as discussed in chapters three and five.

6.1.1. The Cultural Park for Children, Al-Sayyida Zeinab[1]

Source: M. Abdelwahab

Ibn Tulun Mosque

The Cultural Park for Children 1990

Abu Al-Dahab Street
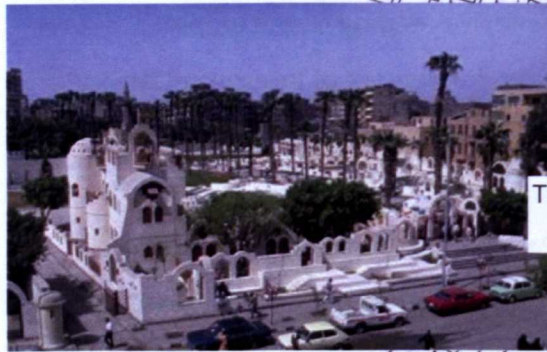
Al-Houd Al-Marsoud
Neighborhood
Al-Sayyida Zeinab
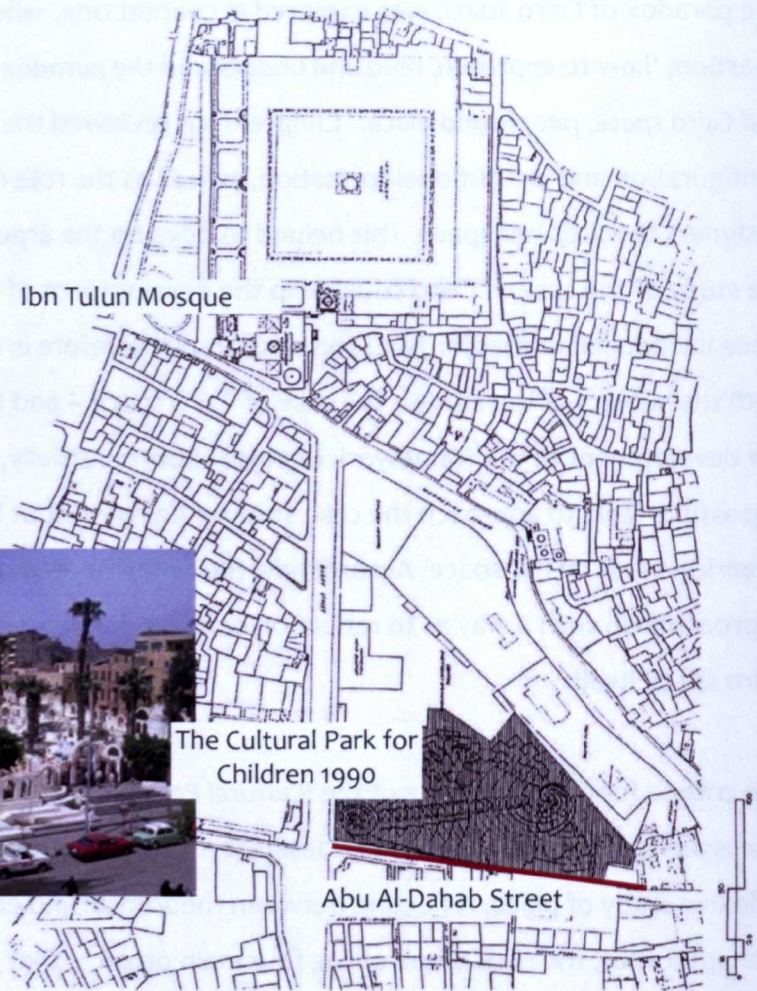
Fig 6.1 The Culture Park for Children - Ibn Tulun Mosque - Al-Sayyida Zeinab
Source: http://archnet.org/library/files/

Variant Name(s):
Cultural Park for Children – Formal name
Cultural Garden in Sayyida Zeinab – The press
A Community Park in Cairo – The designer
The Child's Park – The park manager
Al-Houd Al-Marsoud park – variant

Project: A competition to regenerate Al-Houd Al-Marsoud slum area as part of the regeneration project of Al-Sayyida Zeinab district initiated by the government
Designer: Abdelhalim Ibrahim Abdelhalim
Funder: The Ministry of Culture – National Project
Client: Cairo Government
Location: Al-Houd Al-Marsoud, bounded by Qadry Street, Abou El Dahab Street
Al-Sayyida Zeinab district, South region Cairo;
Area: 12500 square meters including Abou El-Dahab Street
Date: 1983-1990

▲ **Fig 6.2** The Park: main building

Fig 6.3 The Park ▼

Programme:
Entrance Plazas
Open Exhibition and Festival Plazas
The Library and the Media Centre
Palm-tree Boulevard
Green Terraces and Platforms
The Museum (not built)
The Theatre (not built as designed)
Nursery and the Child-care Centre: un-built and replaced by the library
Multi-purpose unit (added on manager request, not-opened)
Abu Al-Dahab Street (Harah):
includes a café, fountain, community room, prayer space, five book and craft shops,
festival and community plazas,
trees and steps

Award: The Aga Khan Award for Architecture in 1992

Fig 6.4 Haret Abu Al-Dahab

Fig 6.5 Key record of 'The Cultural Park for Children'
Photos source: http://archnet.org/library/files/

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In response to the rehabilitation project of the old district of Al-Sayyida Zeinab initiated by Cairo Government, the ministry of Culture held a competition to develop the slum area of Al-Houd Al-Marsoud, a degenerated park into a Cultural Park for children. Abdelhalim Ibrahim Abdelhalim won the competition in 1983. The park construction started in 1987 and was opened to the public by 1990. Two years later the park was granted an international Award for Architecture by the Aga Khan, which emphasised the design process involving community participation. The cultural park for children involved the design and development of Al-Houd Al-Marsoud Park and the Abu Al-Dahab Street, the northern boundary of the park (Fig 6.1). Significantly, the park won both a national award for the schematic design as well as an international award for the design process. This reflects a likely agreement between the national and international perspective of Cairo's space and her architectural image. It is also, interesting to reflect on the variant names of the park as they reveal different the readings and understanding of the park. The official name of the project is 'the cultural park for children'; the park designer mostly refers to 'community park'; while the manager simply describes it as 'the child's park'.

In between the 'community' and 'child' lies a conflict between the architect and the manager about the role of the park and the appropriateness of the park for its function. Today, a significant change in the park is evident. The realities of the park's everyday life, and Abu Al-Dahab Street in particular, shows indifference to the
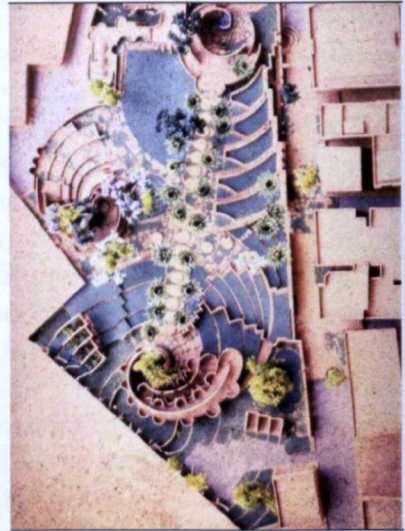
Fig 6.6 The park schematic design - national award 1987
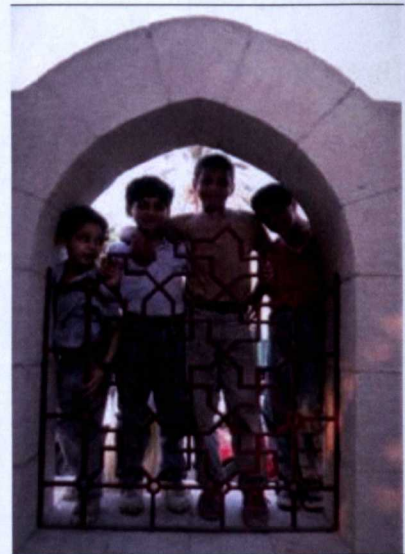
Fig 6.7 The opening of the park
Photos Source:
http://archnet.org/library/files/

Fig 6.8 the Cultural Park for Children 2008 – changes to accommodate children

original design scheme, creating conflicting community activity and isolating the park from its context, Al-Sayyida Zeinab. This sparks interest in the park discourse, what the park is trying to tell about the place through her story (Fig 6.9). Both architect and manager are directly involved in the discourse, the making of the park, while the press and awarding committees (AKTC) are indirectly involved through their comments and recommendations. As the researcher, I am involved in the discourse through the visits, photos, reading and analysis presented in this chapter.
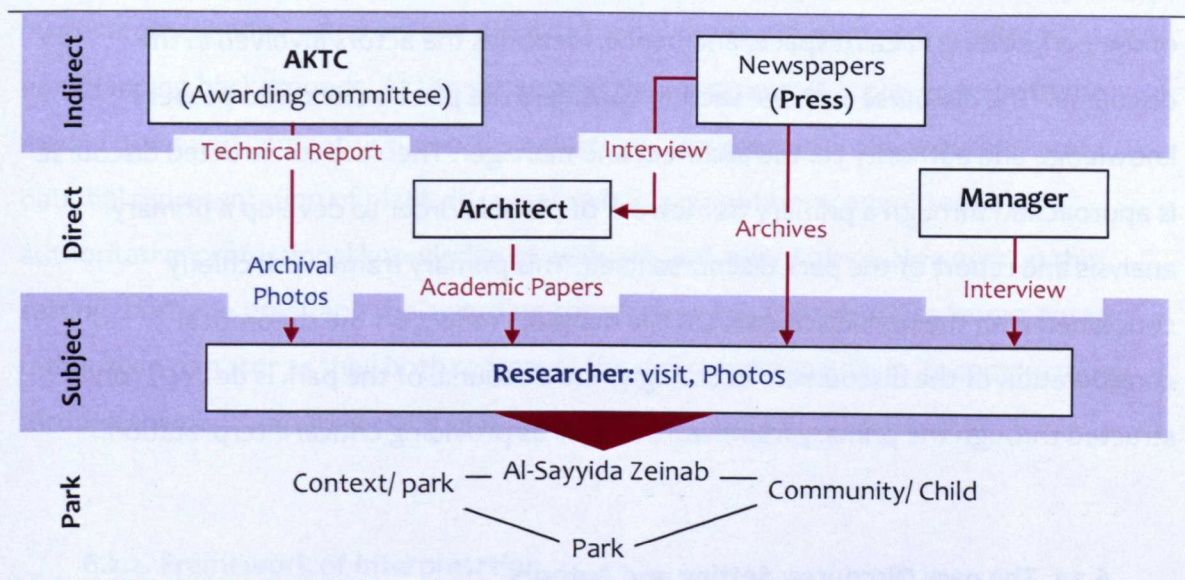
Fig 6.9 Data collection and building the discourse for the Cultural Park for Children

6.2. The Park Empirical-discourse: *methodology and approach*

This section is concerned with the development of the discourse of place through the empirical study of 'The Cultural Park for Children'. The production of the park involved a conversation between the architect and the community, as well as an argument between the architect and the park manager. As elaborated in the previous chapter the approach to the park discourse adopts a reflexive methodology, which follows four levels of interpretation: the construction of the empirical discourse of place, the primary interpretation of this discourse through the primary framework of interpretation, critical interpretations through deconstruction reading strategies, and finally self reflections

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through 'khōra'. This is followed by a discussion on the implications and development of this reflexive methodology and management empirical data for the discourse.

In this section we identify the main authors, who claim authority and knowledge of the discourse and are thus involved in a conversation and/ or conflict about the representation of place. These three points are elaborated in this section through the study of the discourse setting and the discourse authors, together with the adoption of a primary framework of interpretation. *'The park discourse'* considers the development of the park setting in Cairo space, and hence, identifies the actors involved in the discourse. *'The discourse authors'* section considers the place actors who possess knowledge and authority i.e. the architect and manager. Then the constructed discourse is approached through a primary framework of place in order to develop a primary analysis and report of the park discourse itself. This primary framework chiefly concerned with the park discourse. On the margin, I reflect on the theoretical consideration of the discourse. Accordingly, the discourse of the park is de-, re-, con-structed through the primary framework as well as providing critical interpretation.

6.2.1. The park Discourse: Setting and Authors

The discourse of the *'Cultural Park for Children'* is built up between a national and international consensus on its representation as the park won both national and international awards, and a conflict between the park architect and designer. The consensus between the two awards considers the park design and physical image as well as the involvement of the community in the design process. However the disagreement between the architect and the manager reflected conflicting ideas on the park design in relation to its role towards the community.

According to Foucault, *'authoritative discourse authors'* claim authority or knowledge through law or profession (Horrocks and Jevtic, 1997). In this context, the architect, urban designer, or planner should, naturally, claim professional knowledge to place; whereas the manager or administrator claims lawful/ political authoritative knowledge

of place. It should be taken into consideration that the differentiation between the architect, urban designer and planner is not explicit. In fact, they are all part of the architecture syndicate, despite the presence of a planning school (Faculty of Urban and Regional Planning – Cairo University). Also, the designer's claim to authoritative professional knowledge is questioned, particularly when considering public space. This role is overridden by other government administrators; for example the role of the traffic and transportation department precedes that of the architect when approaching square design, as discussed in chapter four. Sometimes the architect's role is taken over by government administrators and district chiefs, who come from non-architectural and non-planning backgrounds. At the same time, the narrator role is played by both the media/ press and competition award committees. The press claims the authority of national representation of place discourse; while, competition committees claim authoritative professional knowledge to evaluate and award place. However, in this setting, both the press and the awarding committees are considered as 'commentator' rather than narrator as they both represent the discourse and help in its construction, through their authoritative claim of knowledge.

6.2.2. Framework of Interpretation

The primary framework of interpretation of place was developed in chapter two to involve people, place, and people-place relations and questions meaning, event and place interrelation (R), as well as to explore place context in relation to this abstract reading. As discussed earlier, this framework is adopted in order to construct the primary discourse relations between the involved authors and actors. The aim here is to understand the reading and interpretation of the actors involved in the park and their consequent interventions.

However, it should be noted that these questions were not used either to approach or guide the contribution of these actors. I was more interested in unstructured approaches to these actors. The data collection was therefore based on unstructured interviews and reports. Data analysis was based on the framework (see Fig 6.10). Finally, the development of the park representation is discussed through the readings (perception and conception) of the various involved actors of place.

Context?   Event?

Meaning?

People-place

Rs

People —————— Place
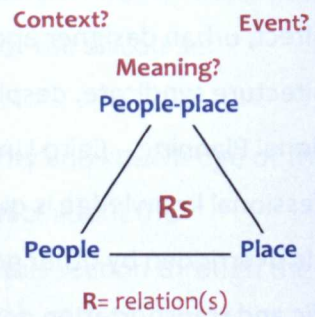
R= relation(s)

Fig 6.10 Abstract framework of PLACE

Accordingly, the main question should explore the different readings of place as place, people, people-place, meaning and event as well as the relations between. How are these readings represented through the park design? These questions are detailed as follows:-

Place

What is the perception of place on both levels; context and project?

What is the interpretation of place?

People

What is the perception of people on both levels; society and user?

What is the interpretation of people?

On the margin of these questions and interpretative report, the discourse of the park is used to reflect the framework of interpretation, place constituents and relations, as well as attempting to reconsider the internal-structure of these constituents and relations.

Event/ Meaning

If approached, what is the event/meaning?

Relation

What is the perception and interpretation of the people, place, event/ meaning relations?

Representation

How are these readings and conceptions represented in the architecture of the park? This last question considers the project title used by architect and manager, re-setting (boundaries and edges), design (aesthetics, function and structure)

6.2.3. De-,Re-,Con-Structing the Park Discourse

The background of the park setting, discourse and involved actors has been discussed in this chapter, together with the development of a framework of interpretation to question and help the construction of the discourse relations between this setting and the actors. Two main author/ reader roles are identified the architect and manager, who claim professional and lawful knowledge authority respectively. However, the manager role overlaps with designer through her interventions and contribution to the addition of a multipurpose building to the park. Fig 6.11 is an attempt to represent the de-, re-, construction of the park discourse through the identified actors. At the same time, it is necessary to re-emphasise that the framework of interpretation helped the data analysis and interpretation rather than the construction of the discourse.

The park discourse is particularly interested in the dialogue, or rather the conflict that was developed between the two authors around the park design, reading and interpretation in relation to Al-Sayyida Zeinab, the community and the child. However, this is not an attempt to criticise or defend either the architect or the manager; or to explore the success and failure of place. However, the argument between architect and manager was crucial in building up the park discourse in order to explore the relation between the different readings, and the approach to the park interventions. It should also be noted that the user is not directly involved in this discourse. The actors' reading and representation of the user is considered more important in this context.

Press: Initially, everything worked very well in your plan. By the end of 1990, the garden was finished...

designer: I had great hopes for this project. I wanted the garden to make a difference in the lives of the children of this community

manager: This Park is inappropriate for children...

Aga Khan: The Cultural Park for Children is a complex project if it is viewed as a product, and a significant project if it is understood as a process

Press: Now, however, visitors to the garden are told by the care takers that within the walls lies only tombs.

designer: The garden became famous as a showcase of modern Islamic architecture to be shown to important visitors

manager: The proportions of the elements of Islamic architecture used, resulted in a distorted image

Press: The garden designed originally for the children, remains void of life. Why was the garden created and simply closed?

designer: The cultural garden was built for children, but they are not allowed to use it. It is like an expensive toy parents buy for the children but then do not allow them to play with the toy because it might break. The official reason is that there are not enough people to run the place properly.

manager: The architect wanted to build a new monument.

Aga Khan: The significance of this project lies in the evolution of the design process and the interaction with local communities as well as the architecture of the structures

designer: In retrospect, I think it is also because we were trying to wrestle from the people their authentic culture and adapt it to the expectations of the educated...

Fig 6.11 A conversation construction between the press, designer and manager based on an interview between A. I. Abdelhalim the designer and F. Hassan, the press (Hassan, 1996); an interview with the manager held by the researcher, and the Aga Khan Technical Review Summary of project (Akbar, 1992)

At the same time, the press and the Aga Khan play the commentator role. The discourse is therefore built up through the architects, published interviews, with the press, and academic writings; telephone non-structured interviews with the manager; journal and magazine articles and interviews; and the Aga Khan 'Technical Review Summary' of the project. This is complemented by archival photos of the park on its opening in 1990 by the architect and the Aga Khan; and recent photos, eighteen years later in 2008, taken by the researcher. The researcher also plays a role in this conversation through the interviews, content analysis, and place observation.
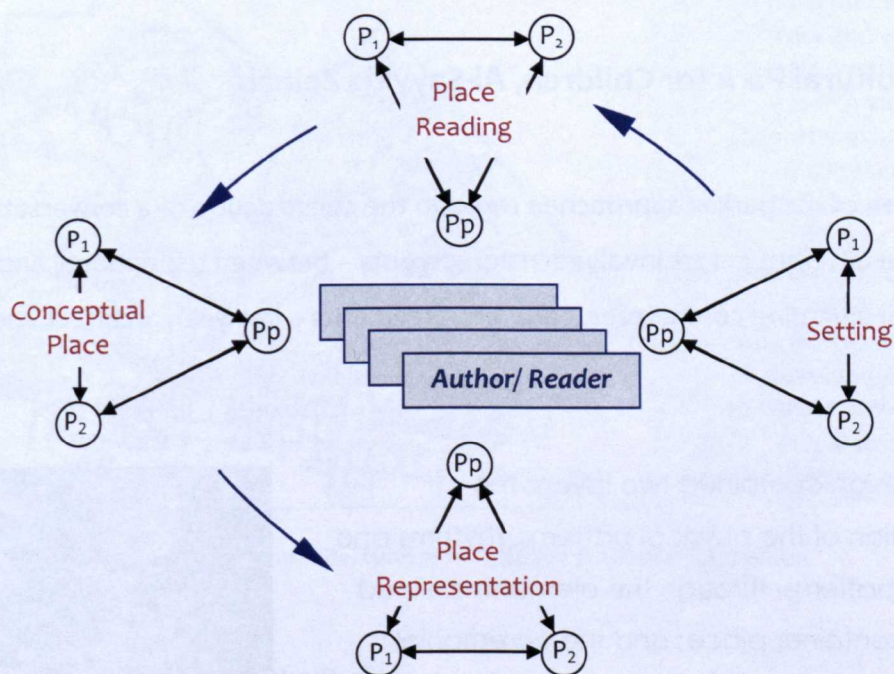
Fig 6.12 Primary Interpretative report of the park
P1= Place, P2= People, Pp= People-place

In order to understand the story that the park is telling through these changes and conflicts, I will attempt to reconstruct the conversation between the actors involved in the park, and explore the relation between the different readings of place, through design, management, writing and prize awarding. Finally, the reporting of this interpretative repertoire involves a four part-cycle; place setting, reading, conception and representation (Fig 6.12). The first part attempts to describe the place setting. It

starts with a basic record of place and a general introduction to the project; this is complemented by observations about place specialty. The second and third parts are developed through the construction of a conversation between the involved actors, the architect, the manager, as well as the Aga Khan international award committee and national press. As discussed this part considers the development of the park through the different readings of these actors as viewed through the primary framework of place. The last part considers the representation of place by the different actors. However, the cycle is not closed, as the place setting is developed through the multiple readings of all the involved actors, including the user for example who are not included in this study.

6.3. The Cultural Park for Children, Al-Sayyida Zeinab

The discourse of the park is approached through the construction of a conversation between the different actors involved in agreements – between the national and international awarding committees – and disagreements – between architect and manager.

The park design contained two layers; the transformation of the physical patterns, rhythms and geometric patterns, through the elements defined within the container place; and the ceremonial building process that helped to re-approach the space.

'This theme was developed architecturally in varying degrees of complexities, from the simple spiral walls of the entrance, to the complex cascades of vaults and domes forming the spiral museum'.
(Abdelhalim, 1986:68)
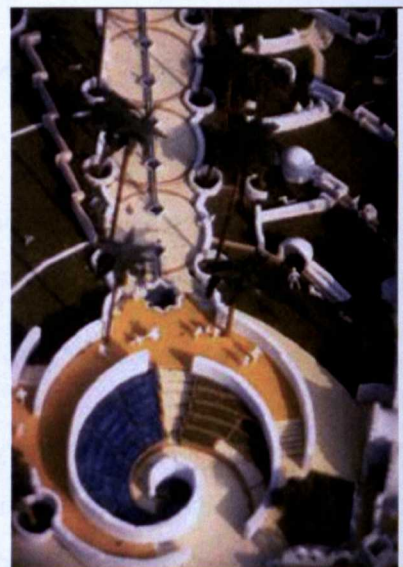
Fig 6.13 Main building showing design rhythms and pattern use

Thus, the architect develops the park design through approaching the following objectives.

- The park plan and organisation draws on the Ibn Tulun spiral minaret
- The palm trees formed the co-ordinates of the geometric patterns
- The park rhythms and stylistic feature draws on the remains of the Islamic architecture style in the neighbourhood.

Fig 6.14 The style draws on the Islamic architecture in the neighbourhood
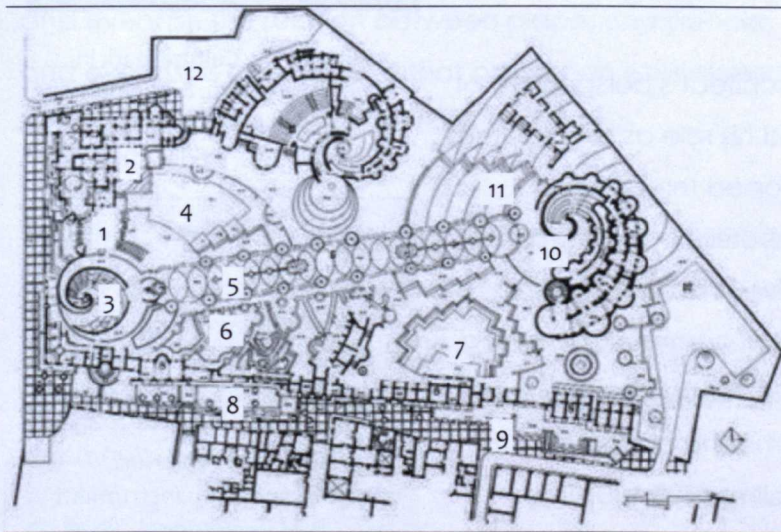
1 main entrance
2 library and atelier
3 main fountains
4 green yard
5 palm tree promenade
6 terraces
7 Abu Al-Dahab entrance yard, theatre
8 Abu Al-Dahab community wall
9 Abu Al-Dahab street development
10 children museum
11 Theatres
12 service entrance and yards

Fig 6.15 The park architectural plan - http://archnet.org/library/files/

6.3.1. A Reading through the Park

'...I really never thought of [the Cultural Park] as Islamic nor of paradise [Islamic garden image of heaven] as I was designing... I began to realise that, they are not apart from the concept of paradise'
(Abdelhalim, 1986:68)

The park designer summarises his philosophical orientation as:

- the rhythms, ruling the symbolic relations of place;
- the formal geometric patterns;
- the co-ordinates of these patterns; and
- the community rituals, the building ceremonies which is an important aspect to the designer

  (Akbar, 1992; Abdelhalim, 1983).
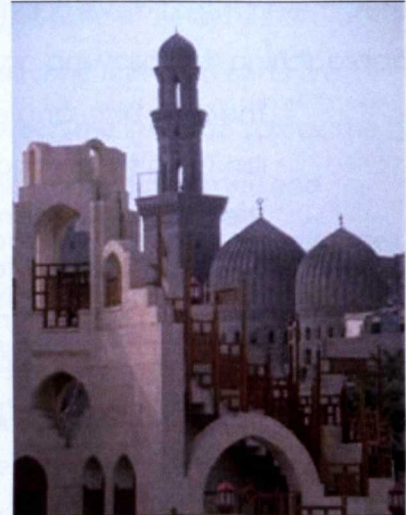
Fig 6.16 The Cultural park in context, rhythm, & geometry pattern
http://archnet.org/library/files/

These themes arise from the architect's perspective of both the project in context and his role as an architect. The park is considerably developed through a projection of the architect's theoretical background rather than through an objective reading of place, which he describes as *'an actual community building project in Egypt – a cultural park for children near Ibn Tulun Mosque in Cairo – gave me the opportunity to test out my theories'*[2] (Abdelhalim, 1988:140) This reading is braced by Abdelhalim's belief in the park as **'an educational instrument'** (Abdelhalim in Saleh, 1989)and the ability to *'change society through architecture'* (Abdelhalim, 1996; Abdelhalim, 1989).

'Kant described space as neither matter nor the set of objective relations between things but an ideal internal structure, an priori consciousness, an instrument of knowledge'

(Tschumi, 1975a:29)

The research thus explores the architect's reading and interpretation of place. The developed argument is that it is his potential reading of the community, rather than of the child, and the place as old and historic rather than a new conception, has influenced the architect's representation of place.

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[2] The designer theory of community event is explained in his doctoral thesis: Abdelhalim, A. I. **'The Building Ceremony'**, Unpublished Doctoral thesis, Berkeley: University of California, 1978.

It is important to highlight the architect's approach to place as a container space. *'The configuration of a procession and the structure of poetic rhythm reflect belief and ideology in their relationships in space. The task of the designer is to disentangle these containers of order and discover their underlying geometry'* (Abdelhalim, 1988:143). A container space, as discussed in chapter two, *'dominated senses and bodies by containing them'* (Tschumi, 1975a:29). In this sense, though place is the container of both people and event(s), the relation between place, and people, and event(s) is minimised so that place can exist alone; like the monuments frozen in time and space.

Container Space:

Space is the background against which objects rest and move, with the implication that it can continue to exist in the absence of matter [void]

Relational Space:

Space is composed of relations between objects, with the implication that it cannot exist in the absence of matter.

(http://www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia)

Therefore Abdelhalim's reading of Al-Sayyida Zeinab and conceptualisation of the park as well as the relation between the architect –himself– and the community developed his philosophical perspective and approach to the project. The park design contains two layers, the physical and the social; the transformation of the physical patterns; and the ceremonial building process.

Fig 6.17 The deterioration in Abu EL-Dahab street
The manager refers this to the architects miss-reading of place

On the other hand, the manager holds a different approach to the park and al-Sayyida Zeinab district. Fatma Al-Ma'doul is an ex-resident of Al-Houd Al-Marsoud neighbourhood. Her old house, where she spent her childhood, lies behind the park. She remembers the old park of Al-Houd Al-Marsoud, built in the late 19th century; *'a large beautiful garden that contained a collection of rare plants'*. She also recites the deterioration of the park through the years, since the war in 1967 when air-raid shelters were built in the park. The deterioration process of the old park continued over the following years as several plants were destroyed, administrative buildings added and many workshops occupied the place.

However, Fatma still remembers the beautiful image of old park of Al-Houd Al-Marsoud. She also, has an educational background in applied arts; she is especially interested in Islamic Art and Architecture which reflects the traditional image of Al-Sayyida Zeinab. The manager hence, holds a romantic and nostalgic perspective towards the park and community, which she projects on from the wonderful past. She considers the physical setting of place as part of her identity and childhood experience as an ex-resident. Accordingly, she appreciated the contribution made by the park in turning a slum area into a beautiful garden, and removing many illegal activities. However, she accuses the architect of misunderstanding both the true nature of the district and the child.

Fig 6.18 The park turned a slum deteriorated area to a beautiful garden
The manager's comment

It is also, important to explore the background of the Aga Khan Institute which awarded the park an international Award for Architecture in 1992. The Award for Architecture was established in 1977,(AKAA). It is a part of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, whose objectives 'focuses on the physical, social, cultural and economic revitalisation of communities in the Muslim world', (AKTC). The Aga Khan is the Imam (spiritual leader) of the Shiaa Ismaili Muslims, descendant of Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet. Also, the Fatimid Empire, the founders of Fatimid Cairo 969 AD, (Beeson, 1969), is called after Fatima. The Aga Khan interest in Cairo is evident through the University of Al-Azhar, The Academy of Science, Al-Azhar Park, (see chapter four), and 'indeed the city of Cairo' herself, (Ismaili-Studies, 2007). The Aga Khan approach to Cairo is hence, deeply embedded in the image of the old Islamic city founded by the Fatimids, their heritage.

a. Place

As the architect walks through place, he sees the minaret of Ibn Tulun mosque, 879 AD standing in between the old, dense, and poorly maintained district of Al-Sayyida Zeinab. '...*one of the oldest, most densely populated and poorly maintained quarters in Cairo*' (Abdelhalim, 1988:140).

He perceives the city as poor and decaying, and the monuments standing frozen in time; i.e. the past is creative whereas the present is a remnant of that past (Abdelhalim, 1989; Abdelhalim, 1988). Simultaneously, the cultural park is built on the remnants of Al-Houd Al-Marsoud park. Abdelhalim explores the existent rhythms, geometric patterns and their co-ordinates within the old neighbourhood; and identifies the objects within the place, as the landmarks, the minaret Ibn Tulun, the domes of mausoleums, the land patterns, existing palm trees from the old Park, etc...

Fig 6.19 'Cairo is a complex city is a state of decay' (Abdelhalim, 1989)

These **objects within the container** are hence, analysed and synthesised to develop the park theme and design. The architect's place is conceived as a spatial container of Islamic historic references that reads and interprets the spatial patterns within both the park setting and Al-Sayyida Zeinab district. Thus the architect's role is hence, an interpretative synthesis of these spatial features within the new place; which in turn forms a new layer juxtaposed to the old one.

Fig 6.20 Ibn Tulun Mosque 'Monuments stand as a witness embodying a moment of creativity.'(Abdelhalim, 1989)

Interestingly, the Aga Khan holds a different reading and interpretation of the same old district of Al-Sayyida Zeinab. The historic district is perceived as a rich place 'composed of different urban configurations and offers several layers of architectural expression, ... a rich variety of monuments ... residential buildings from the ottoman and late Mamluk period... side by side modern and more recent buildings', (Akbar, 1992). In other words, the Aga Khan, as an international institute, holds a different perspective of Al-Sayyida Zeinab, and Cairo in general, from the architect. The Aga khan considered the old city to be a rich place with considerable potential and reflecting several layers of history as against the architect's monolithic reading of the old Islamic city as standing and struggling within a contemporary poor and decaying context. Controversially, the Aga Khan background shaped the emphasised interest in the image of the Islamic period.
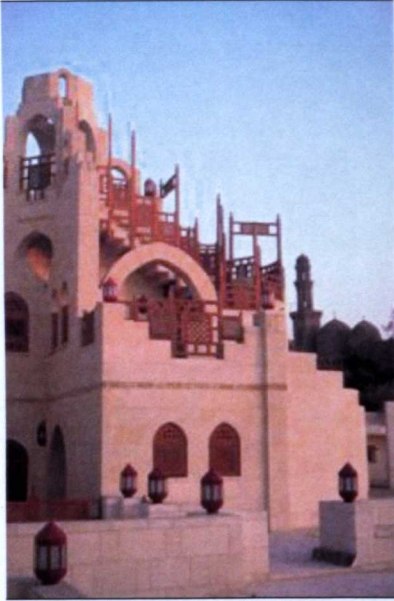
The manager's place is manifested through her intervention and place adaptation, as well as her criticism of the architect's approach. Her interventions into the park are primarily related to the place function and will be discussed in the following section. Fatma reflects on the park architectural expression and aesthetics. On the one hand, she questions the use of the monolithic image of Islamic architecture to represent a multi-cultural place like Al-Sayyida Zeinab. On the other, she disapproves of the use of a distorted image of features of Islamic architecture; the architect's synthesis involved the proportions and geometry of these features.

Fig 6.21 The synthesis of the elements and features of Islamic architecture
which is criticised by manager for the distortion of image of this style
http://archnet.org/library/files/

It is necessary here to reflect on the Aga Khan report of the park design as one which *'respects and integrates with the site'* through the synthesis of *'traditional forms with modern needs'* (Akbar, 1992).

b. People

People are a crucial element in the discourse of the park. The 'people' relation to the park gained the attention of the Aga Khan Award; it is also, deeply embedded in the conflict between the architect and the manager. It has been exceptionally hard to draw on the people discourse unrelated to the other elements, place, people-place and event. The people discourse was developed through the exploration of the architectural programme, which is considered as the architectural manifestation of people, as well as people's accounts by the architect and the manager.

People/ park Reading

User Exp.
Child
Inside

Socio-culture context
Al-Houd Al-Marsoud
community

Outside
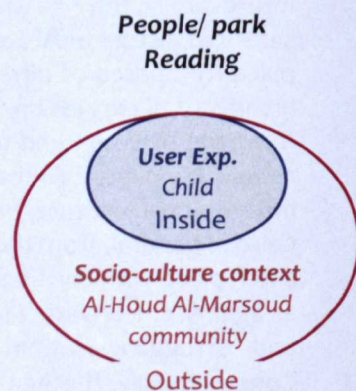
Fig 6.22 Reading people in the park

'... the insertion of the park into this congested urban fabric has gone far beyond the original brief. It has generated a renewed sense of community by extending its presence into the surrounding streets. The residents take pride in their neighbourhood as well as their park.'
(Aga-Khan-Award-for-Architecture)

The park programme was developed through a dialogue between the architect and the community and continued through the manager interventions in the park. This reading of the people involved the child, the expected user of the park (inside) as well as Al-Houd Al-Marsoud residents, and the neighbourhood community (outside the park). The different readings of the park considered the child or the community at the centre of the discourse or else at the periphery, (Fig 6.22).

'All users, neighbours and officials love the project and are proud of it',

(Akbar, 1992)

Fig 6.23 & 6.24 'People' discourse oscillates between the children and the community.
http://archnet.org/library/files/

The Aga Khan Institute recognises the users of the park as children in elementary and intermediate school; i.e. their ages range between 6-15 years. However, it also recognises and emphasises the relation between the park and the residents of Al-Houd Al-Marsoud neighbourhood, the community. Accordingly, it highlights the community participation that started through the Corner-Stone Ceremony, the event described by the architect as the building ceremony; and manifested through the development of Abu Al-Dahab Street.

The 'building ceremony' and 'Abu Al-Dahab Street' will be both discussed in the following sections. As already explained this section is more interested in the architectural programme development.

The architect's reading reveals his interest in the design process and its manipulation but takes little account of the child playful experience in place. He considers the community within the wider socio-cultural context of the park rather than the child's experience inside the park i.e. the child was marginalised in the architect's approach.

Fig 6.25 Children playing on the roof

> *'Walls are not high and thus any [child] fall from the [high] wall will not cause injuries. Thus far, we have had no such incident'*
> *(Abdelhalim in Akbar, 1992)*

The architect described the park as a 'toy', (Fig 6.11) and one that was too expensive for the socio-cultural background of the child. Interestingly, it seems like the architect was actually attempting to build a toy, or rather an *'educational'* toy; where *'teachers use the variety of forms to demonstrate the principles of geometry...'*, (Akbar, 1992). The park was designed to educate the child about geometry, history, and nature through a guided exploration of the park elements. However, the space provided for the child's free activities and playing was confined to a minimum, and represented by a single slide beside the rear wall of the park, as is evident in the archival photos of the park opening day.

Fig 6.26 The children's designed playground confided to a small area by the rear wall

Photos Source:
http://archnet.org/library/files/

The Aga Khan considered the community children as poor and the park as an opportunity for them, *'a chance to play in a beautifully arranged space'* , (Akbar, 1992).

Fig 6.27 Sharp edges and finishing material unsuitable for children

Fig 6.28 A multipurpose building added to accommodate children in the park

Fig 6.29 The park spaces are adapted to the children's activity

The manager, on the other hand, asserted firmly that the park was inappropriate for child use. She criticised the architect for not including the child in his design approach. The architectural programme did not provide outdoor shaded areas for child activity. The indoor spaces were also too small to accommodate different activities. The architect chose traditional stone construction for the main building; the wall bearing system helped to produce small spaces. The stairs, fountains and other finishing materials are hard, and have sharp edges and accordingly were unsuitable for children playing and running about.

The manager's reading of the park reveals her administrative concerns, and her special interest in the child's experience in the park in comfort and safety. Accordingly, she asked for a multi-purpose indoor space to accommodate the various children's activities, especially on hot and/ or rainy days. The original park architect, A. I. Abdelhalim, refused to design the new building. This precipitated an argument between the architect and the manager. Finally, a multi-purpose building was designed and built with the help of another architect (Fig 6.28).

She continued to intervene in the park to accommodate children's need, providing shaded areas for their activities, removing most of the wooden artefacts and other finishing material that was inappropriate for child use. Accordingly, the child's place in her park is everywhere, on the flooring, along the walls. Fig 6.32 to Fig 6.35 introduce a visual representation of the manger's interventions in the park based on photos of the park in 2008 and Aga Khan archival photos of the park from the opening 1992.

◀ **Fig 6.30** Re-adapting shaded areas for children activities, 2008

Fig 6.31 The landscape finishing material, 1992 ▶

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Fig 6.32 Removing the wooden structures to facilitate the child's movement, 2008

Fig 6.33 The use of the tradition wood crafts in the park , 1992

Fig 6.34 Re-adapting shaded areas for children activities, 2008

Fig 6.35 The park landscape isolated shaded areas from the park, 1992

As discussed the architect's reading of 'people', extended beyond the user of the park, to the community. However, his reading of the community appears to have changed over time and through interaction with the community. The architect approached the community through a belief held by his profession; *'the role of the architect and his responsibility to interpret, and understand the culture and **change the society** through his architecture'* (Abdelhalim, 1996; Abdelhalim, 1989:236).

Accordingly, he considered the community as poor and needy. However, he acknowledged that the changing dynamics of the community are never stable and are strongly related to the culture and identity of each community (Abdelhalim, 1996). And the architect's role is to re-establish the connections between this culture and the built environment.

> Around 1968, together with many in my generation of young architects, I was concerned with need for an architecture that might change society – that could have a political or social effect.
>
> ...
>
> However, both through facts and through serious critical analysis [demonstrated], the difficulty of the imperative... all shared the skeptical view of the power of architecture to alter social and political structures.
>
> ...
>
> (Tschumi, 2001a:5-15)

Accordingly, the architect must understand the culture of the community and learn from this rather than simply applying outside rules which he identifies as 'neat tidy plots' (Abdelhalim, 1996:53).

Interestingly, during the building process, people got the chance to play an active role together with other commentators on the development of the project. This is quite evident through their influence on the development of the park's architectural programme. A nursery and child care centre were introduced as key elements in the programme; a service that reaches into the community to help working mothers, etc. However, the community argued for a change in the programme to include a library which it felt would be more appreciated by the children of the community. Nurseries and child care are already sustained within the community 'on a co-operative basis' (Akbar, 1992). The community also influenced the programme for Abu-Al-Dahab Street, 'to include a café, fountain. Community room, prayer space, five books and craft shops, festival and community plaza, trees and steps' (Akbar, 1992). We will explore further the development of Abu Al-Dahab Street in the park re-setting section.

This role also, involved attracting the community into participating in the park production rather than playing a passive role. By the end of the project, the architect's approach to the community changed radically;

'...we were trying to wrestle from the people their authentic culture and adapt it to the expectations of the educated. We wanted to intellectualize it to the expectations of the educated' (Abdelhalim in Hassan, 1997:13)

> ...
>
> Architecture and its spaces **do not change society,** but through architecture and the understanding of its effect, we can accelerate processes of change underway... [or] slow down'
>
> (Tschumi, 2001a:5-15)

Accordingly, three approaches could be read through the architect's reading of people; educational/ professional, (the architect can and will teach and change the community); educational/ interpretative, (the architect learns from the community); and finally

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the opponent, (the architect struggling with the community to change and the community fighting back against change).

The architect's reading of people emphasises the value of the history of Al-Sayyida Zeinab, *'the community draws strength and pride from its reservoir of history'* (Abdelhalim, 1996:54), which extended to the *'event'* through the *'building ceremony'*, a reading through the community rituals and festivals, which will be discussed further through the event. And, this would need to be reflected back into the architect's reading of people through the event. The discourse of the event is therefore constructed through a reading of the architect's event, and the park as an event.

c. People-place: *meaning*

As discussed, the architect's reading of people has emphasised the reading of the community rather than the child. Interestingly, the architect's reading of the people-place relation emphasised the child's relationship to the park as the prime generator of the formal pattern of the park. The park design *'was drawn from the interpretation of the Ibn Tulun minaret. The spiral of the minaret, clearly visible from the site symbolises the idea of growth, which was taken as the main theme for the Park, to give form to what was common between children and the Park... life.'* (Abdelhalim, 1986:68).
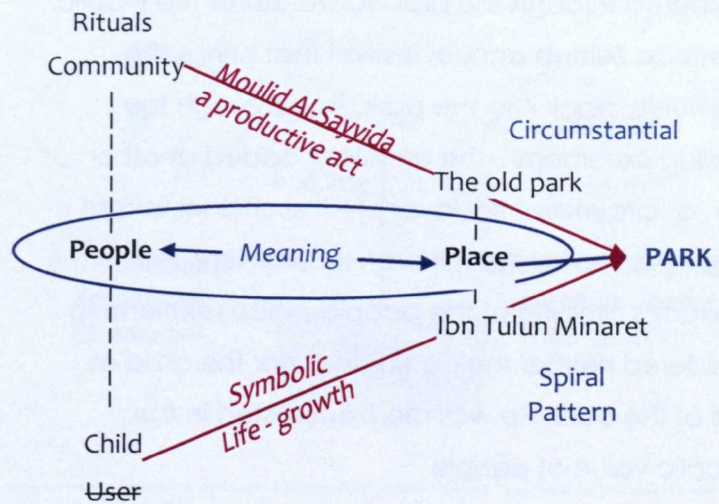
Fig 6.36 The Architect's reading of people-place relations (meaning) in between the child and the community

This was complemented by another layer of reading of the community rituals through the Sayyida Zeinab Festival, *'more important than these monuments, however, is the lively festival of Sayyida Zeinab held every year, during which the identity and the culture of the community is re-enacted and regenerated'* (Abdelhalim, 1988:142). The latter reading was developed through the 'building ceremony', which is discussed through the event. Accordingly, Fig 6.36 presents a reading of the architect's approach to people-place relations.

The architect appears to approach this relationship through his reading of the meaning of place rather than the meaning people attach to that place. The child-park relationship is symbolic of life and growth and found representation through the spiral of the Ibn Tulun minaret.

[An Architecture] where 'Forms do not follow functions, but refer to other forms, & functions relate to symbols ... becomes a syntax of empty signs ... derived from a selective historicism that concentrates on moments of history ... Ultimately architecture free itself from reality altogether ... [where] the excesses of style has emptied the language of architecture from meaning. How can meaning be produced when signs only refer to other signs when they do not signify but only substitutes'

(Tschumi, 2001a)

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Consequently, the community-park relationship is considered through the productive act of the Moulid, Al-Sayyida Zeinab annual festival that brings the community back into the park. And through the 'building ceremony', the architect added another layer, a 'circumstantial layer', to the original formal design inspired by the minaret. In summary, the architect's reading of the people-place relationship considered neither the community nor the child as users of the park. He was more interested in the symbolic value of people.

The manager, on the other hand, emphasised the functional meaning of the park. She approached the child as a user. Accordingly, her interventions in the park involved adapting it for children's needs, providing shaded areas and indoor activity spaces, which were not included in the architectural programme and removing sharp and hard finishing materials, provided by the architect and deemed unsuitable for a children's play area.

d. Event

The reading of the event in this section differs from the reading of the event in chapters three and five, which considered the concept of event in metaphysics and in deconstruction. The event, in this section, takes a step away from theory to approach the concept of event through the readings of the authors of the park, the architect and the manager. However these readings reflect on the presence of the event in space and time.

> 'A garden, park, or a small landscape project can be a valuable
> instrument to trigger and set into motion a community-wide
> process which can uncover, re-establish, and perhaps reseal the
> gulf or the rupture caused by modernity and industrialization,
> and reaffirm the culture of that community and the production
> and sustenance of its environment.'
> (Abdelhalim, 1996:54)

Reconciles the gap between past and present

PAST ← EVENT → PRESENT

building tradition

Old Monuments
Traditional
Ceremonies

Modern Architecture,
education, theory
and practice

Building
Ceremony
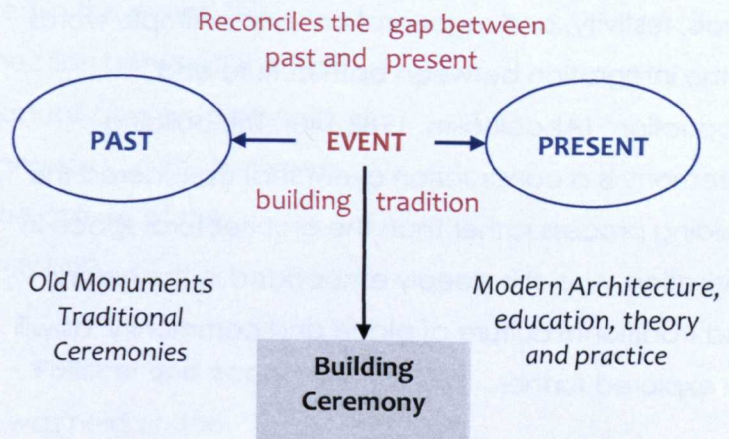
Fig 6.37 The architect's planned event

The architect's reading of the park revolved around two main lines of thought. The first expressed a continuous nostalgia for the past and tradition; place is a decaying remnant of the glory of the past; and more importantly, it is scene of the continuing tradition of Al-Sayyida Zeinab festival, ceremony and rituals. The second line of thought expressed the authoritative position of the architect towards the park through his professional knowledge; the role of the 'educated' architect in understanding and interpreting people and place in order to 'change the society' and 're-establish' new relations. The architect's reading thus reflects two images, the glory of the past through the standing monuments and continuing festival of Al-Sayyida Zeinab, and the architect's modern western education, modern theories and practice.

Building Ceremony

The architect thus introduced the event of the 'building ceremonial', which in his words 'suggests some kind of contradiction since building involves construction,

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finance, and law, while ceremony is associated with rituals, festivity, and regeneration' and in simple words is 'the integration between both culture and production' (Abdelhalim, 1988:140). This building ceremony is a construction event that considered the building process rather than the architectural space in operation. Also, it is deeply embedded in the history and traditional culture of place and community, as will be explored further.

Spatial

One intention of the event of the building ceremonial was to show the construction process of the park to the community of Al-Sayyida Zeinab. This is not a part of Egyptian culture, where buildings under construction are covered in tents until opening day to hide them from the onlookers. Accordingly, a full-scale model of design, fashioned from wooden poles and canvas was hence on the event, with platforms and terraces marked on the ground. At the same time, dancers, musicians and artists were invited to participate as well as the community of Al-Houd Al-Marsoud. (Abdelhalim, 1988).

Historic

Simultaneously, the building ceremonial involved the laying of the cornerstone of the park, reflecting building rituals from the time of the pharaohs, and Islamic building traditions up to the present day in order to celebrate the foundation sacrifice.

Socio-cultural

Also, the ceremony reflected the interest in Al-Sayyida Zeinab Festival (Al-Moulid); the ceremonial

processions together with the rhythm of the folklore dance and music were involved in the event. This helped the initiation of a connection between the Park and the community, which gradually involved them in the design process and programme; '...*a link between the activities of building and the culture of the community...*' (Abdelhalim, 1988:148).

Political and economic

Finally, the building ceremony was held on the occasion of the Child's festival in Egypt, which occurs annually in November. The President and his wife, and the minister of culture attended the event which also, included the laying of the project cornerstone. (Abdelhalim, 1988). The involvement of this political party in the building ceremony, the image of hundreds of children playing and dancing around the full-scale model of the park... with thousands of citizens, attracted the presidential attendance as will as helped to re-initiate political interest in and funding for the project, which had stopped some time ago (Abdelhalim, 1988).

The difference between the architect's approach and deconstruction to the event is evident. Derrida, on the one hand, is interested in the event yet to come, unexpected and unplanned, and a part of successive events in the future. Abdelhalim, on the other hand, is planning an event which is both embedded in the historic culture of place as well as becoming a new instance in the history and culture of the park, to be completed and finished before the production of the space into the everyday life of the community, as a memory and a past recollection of place.

'After the event, things settle down, intensities dissipate. The memory of the event remains: not as image or recollection, but as kind of field of virtual potential never quite exhausts itself in the process of becoming more than it never (actually) was...'

(McCormack, 2008:8)
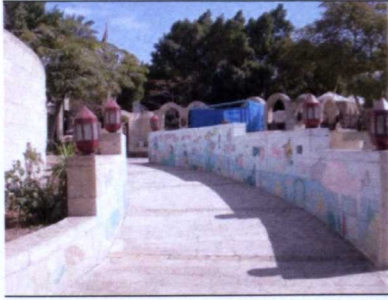
Fig 6.38 The Child's park represented along the walls of the park

'[The architect]: We set up a life-sized model of the garden on the grounds and watched the children move from one area to the other'
(Hassan, 1997)

The manager on the other hand was interested in the production of the event through the interaction of the child with the park through everyday spontaneous activities.

The controversy in reading the event lies in its definition as an attribute of the dynamic relations of place within its wider context, which implies the existence of multiple events and/ or multiple existence of the event. This is evident in the reflection on the perception of place as event of both the architect and the manager. Both acknowledged the past of the place and the intrinsic value of its heritage. The architect embedded the event into this past, perceiving place as a container of monument and heritage elements, community rituals, and traditional building ceremonies. This heritage was defined in relation to the Islamic foundations of the city. However, the relations between place, people, and event(s) in everyday life is minimised such that place can exist alone like a frozen monument in place and time. On the other hand, the manager embedded the event in a place identity that considered the potential of its future development. Place was not decaying but attached to the past image of a better quality urban space that could be achieved again.

6.4. On the Margin: *the park re-setting*

This chapter explored the readings of the 'Cultural Park for Children' by the architect and manger as well as other involved commentators, through place, people, people-place, meaning and event. This reading has simultaneously, emphasised the exclusion of a user's reading. On the margin, the deconstruction reading event is reflected through the two interrelated triads of reading strategies introduced in chapter five; meaning:

cornerstone: binaries, and event: context: history. This deconstruction reading thus reflects on the park name, boundaries and edges and design.

This is a reading of the binaries involved in the discourse of the park, which is mainly presented through the architect/ manager binary as reader and author of the park. The first binary is read through the architect's **container** space of past monuments, rhythms, etc. whereas the manager considers a **relational** reading of the park: in relation to her old house, to the neighbourhood, to the community, etc. Another binary is represented as **past/ present**, the past history and traditions of building and the present every day activity of the child in the park. Consequently, the architect's reading has subverted the **child** in favour of the **community** as users, whereas the manager emphasised the role of the park towards the child. The architect's reading extended to highlight the **symbolic** relation between community rituals as well as child growth and the park design in the

Architect/ manager

Place

Container/ Relational

People

Community/ Child

People-place: meaning

Symbolic/ identity

Event

Past/ present (child)

~~Architect/~~ ~~manager~~

Architect/ User

Beyond these representational binaries, though on the margin of this reading, the manager is a community member, an ex-resident of Al-Houd Al-Marsoud neighbourhood, **a user**. Reading the park through a struggle in between architect and manager (Hassan, 1996), hides a further struggle between the architect and a community member; in this case a community member who possessed the power to approach the park as an active author holding professional authority, the manager. The manager intervened in the park design, making several changes to adapt the place for children's use, according to her perspective and reading of place. Consequently, the binary was reversed to subvert the architect in favour of the user, **user/ architect**, in her reading.

Simultaneously, the reading of the park is embedded in the event of this subversion, the empowering of the user. The binary representations reflect on the context of this event; first, the architect, claiming professional knowledge and attempting to educate the child and change society through **his** park, his theory, and his practice; and second, the manager, having an administrative authoritative knowledge, attempts to imprint this authority on the park, to emphasis the child and society relationship. Author/ reader binary are deconstructed; not only is the author the first reader of his/ her work, but simultaneously the reader is also, the author of the park. This subverted reading is thus projected through the name, boundaries and design of the park.

User/ Architect

Name
Child & community
People
~~Community/ Child~~

Edges & Boundaries
Container & Relational
Place
~~Relational/ container~~

Design
Minimalist/ maximalist
People-place: meaning
Identity/ ~~symbolic~~
Space/ program

The name

The park name was presented as a binary between the child's and the community park, in between the manager (user) and the architect respectively. The binary representation of the park name is also projected through the architectural programme (Fig 6.5). The architect, on the one hand, proposed the inclusion of a nursery and a child care centre in his primary programme to support working mothers in the community. The community, on the other hand, asked for the inclusion of a library to serve the children of the community in place of this centre, and this was eventually built. This incident reflects the importance of the inclusion of the community in the development of the programme. It is worth noting that the intended user –the child as indentified by the community– however was not included. It also, emphasises the architect's reading/ or miss-reading of the park through the wider social community – a maximalist approach[3], rather than the actions and activities of the user (child) in the park. Consequently, the community

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[3] Refer to chapter two

approach deconstructs this binary representation, since the community acts as spokesman for the child.

<div align="right">**Boundaries and edges**</div>

Another binary was presented that read the park space as between a container and a relational space[4]. The architect's reading of the container space of the park, which holds time: history, monuments, and traditions, and socio-cultural values inside this container. However, the architect's maximalist approach to the park design aimed to extend the park space outward, to reach the community, the context, identified as inside the neighbourhood community. Accordingly, he rejected the development of well defined boundaries to the park within the neighbourhood. The park edges are designed as permeable walls that allow access between park and surroundings. Abu Al-Dahab Street (Fig 6.4) was designed to facilitate and encourage this movement. The architect's emphasis on the container space simultaneously highlights the relational spaces – between park and neighbourhood– inside the container – the neighbourhood. The manager's relational space, on the other hand, is contained within the park's solid boundaries, which is again supported by the social realities of the community. The park needs to provide a safe enclosed space for children, in the absence of parental supervision. Beyond the design scheme, Abu Al-Dahab Street continued to deteriorate, building an unhealthy barrier between the park and her surroundings (Fig 6.17). The materialisation of the concepts of permeable boundaries and edges between the inside and outside physical space turned to problematic.

In this reading, the primary framework of interpretation of place has helped the de-, re-, con-struction of Cairo space through the case of the 'Cultural Park fro Children'. In the following chapters, seven and eight, the reading of social and architecture space thus aims to re-approach the development of this framework.

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[4] Discussed in chapter two

Chapter Seven:

De-, Re-, Con-structing Social Space

Cairo, khōra and deconstruction: **Towards a reflexive reading of place**

7 De-, Re-, Con-structing Social Space

7.1. A Social Space

As elaborated in chapter two, a conversation developed between architecture and social studies, highlighting the two three-fold models developed by Canter and Relph in the 1970s. From this emerged discussions about similarities and potential for integration into architecture theory. However, both models were criticised for their neglect of the physical setting. Simultaneously, Canter developed another model, which integrated with architecture space through the facet theory of place. This theory worked through a structuralist background integrating Markus' discourse on architecture space. The primary reading of these three models together with the Markus and Tschumi approaches to architecture space helped in the development of the primary framework of interpretation of PLACE outlined in chapter two.

The current chapter approaches social space through the reflexive reading of these three models of place, while chapter eight approaches architecture space through the reflexive reading of Markus's and Tschumi's discourse on place. This reflexive reading of social space consists of two parts. The first examines the Canter and Relph early models of place and the second looks at the facet theory of place. The following section therefore approaches the de-, re-, construction of the social space discourse. It explores a methodological approach to a reflexive reading through the primary framework of interpretation developed in chapter two, using deconstruction as critical interpretation, and self-reflection through the perspective of Cairo-Khōra. The case studies of Cairo space and the Cultural Park for Children, in chapter four and six respectively, reflect on the margin of this reading of the models.

7.2. The Social Space Discourse Setting: *methodology and approach*

The discourse on social space is constructed through the models of place developed in the late 1970s by Canter in environmental psychology and Relph in human geography; together with Canter's development of the facet theory of place in the 1980s and 1990s

through the integration of structuralism, architecture and environmental psychology. However, the facet theory of place differs from Canter's early approach to place; to put it simply the facet theory, like deconstruction, is a meta-theory rather than a theory of place. This brings about the inclusion of deconstruction into the built discourse of social space in order to reflect on the facet theory rather than just to explore deconstruction itself as already covered in chapters three and five. At the same time, the social space discourse is theoretical, concerned with the development of theoretical approaches to place. However, these theories are intrinsically developed through empirical approaches as well as aiming at the development of empirical studies of place.

The authors of the discourse are identified as Canter and Relph on the one hand, and facet theory and deconstruction on the other, and reflections through Cairo space and Khōra's on the margin of the discourse. Simultaneously, the reflexive reading of the discourse involves the primary interpretation through the framework of place developed in chapter two, as well as the de-, re-, construction of the discourse through critical interpretations and self reflections.

7.2.1. Framework of Interpretation

The primary framework of interpretation of place was developed in chapter two through a reading of both social and architecture space (Fig 7.1). It is used here to approach the primary interpretation of the social space discourse as well as self reflection of the framework through Khōra. Accordingly, **the aim here is to** re-approach the **development of the framework** rather than the exploration of an external discourse as already discussed in chapter six.

Context?   Event?

Meaning?

People-place

Rs

People ———— Place

R= relation(s)
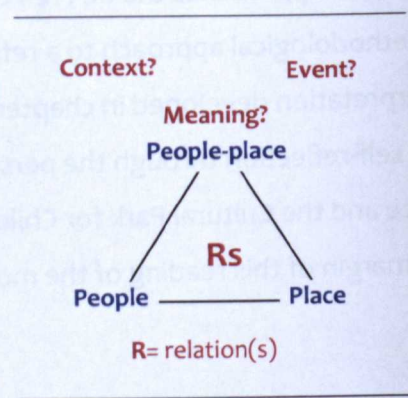
Fig 7.1 Abstract framework of PLACE

Accordingly, the questions developed in this section approach the understanding of the different models or approaches to place: the model statement, the constituents of

PLACE –involved elements or facets– and the relations between them as well as the internal structure of the model/ reading.

Model statement:

What is the general background and perspective of place?

Who is the assumed model reader(s)/ place author(s)?

The model statement and diagram as stated by author or induced

PLACE constituents: *Elements/ Facets*

Identify and define the proposed elements of the model

Relations

What is the internal-structure of the model?

What are the relations between PLACE constituents?

> **On the margin,**
>
> this reading is complemented by two reflexive reading instances,
>
> an internal reflection: the Cultural Park for Children case study
>
> and
>
> an external reflection through Khôra and Cairo-space, re-questioning the reading of PLACE

7.2.2. De-, Re-, Con-Structing the Discourse

> '...Badiou: when everything appears similar, nothing really is
>
> ...Deleuze: when nothing appears similar, everything really is'
> (Mullarkey, 2006:187)

The different readings of place were approached in chapter two in order to identify the similarities and develop a general reading of a primary framework of place. However, the re-reading of the social and architecture space both in this chapter and the one following, approaches both the **destabilisation of the previous reading** as well as the attempt to **approach a new reading of place**. Accordingly, the re-approach tends to oscillate between Badiou's and Deleuze's readings of similarities and differences, to identify the similarities of the differences, and destabilise the similarities through difference i.e. a thorough reading of these approaches to place through reflexive instances, which helps to develop a new approach.

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Canter 1977: Place Cognition

What is Facet Theory?

On the margin,

Cairo space, theories of place

Relph 1976: Sense of place

What is not Facet Theory? Deconstruction

Groat (1981) has demonstrated how Canter's approach and social studies of place in general have emphasised meaning, the signified, over the physical form, the signifier. On the other hand, 'architectural theorists' have tended to focus on the physical place rather than the meaning (Groat and Després, 1991).

Fig 7.2 Social Space discourse setting through reflexive reading between the discourse actors

In a similar construction to the empirical discourse on the Cultural Park for Children presented in the previous chapter, this reading attempts the construction of the social space discourse. Accordingly, the discourse involves a conversation between the Canter and Relph theories in the first part, and facet theory and deconstruction meta-theories in the second. The different theoretical perspectives involved are used as commentators to reflect on the development of the conversation, and are presented in red, in horizontal boxes, (Fig 7.2). Finally, a reflexive reading instance of Khôra and Cairo space is presented on the margin in blue boxes, as previously highlighted.

7.3. Early Models of PLACE

'Relph and Canter represent different disciplines and different scientific traditions.
...
However, both of them attempt to identify the 'basic elements' or constituents of place, and doing so, they arrive at theoretical models of place that have in fact important similarities...'
(Gustafson, 2001:6)

The review in chapter two demonstrated how both Relph in 1976 and Canter in 1977 proposed two similar three-fold models of place, although they worked within different disciplines and epistemological backgrounds. Consequently, several studies of place have either directly or indirectly referenced both models, though especially Canter's (Groat, 1995a; Groat and Després, 1991; Sime, 1985). Sime (1985) therefore recommended '....a combination of the two and incorporating more architecturally based arguments' (Sime, 1985:34). This recommendation is adopted through this reflexive reading of both models within an architectural background. The similarities between the models are evident. Groat (1995b) accordingly, considers the opportunities for integrating the phenomenological and empirical approaches in social studies through the study of these 'similar' models of place. However, these apparent similarities discussed by many authors, are considered as contradictions and oppositions by the authors of both models (Relph, 1978; Canter, 1977b). Accordingly, these similarities and oppositions are explored in the following sections.

> 'My Understanding of place is almost opposite to that of David
> Canter.'
> (Relph, 1978:237-8)

7.3.1. Projection of PLACE

Canter's model was developed through a 'psychologist approach based on empirically-based research' (Groat, 1995b:3). He approached place through cognitive theory, 'which focus[es] upon the links between mental processes (such as perception, memory, attitudes, or decision-making), and social behaviour' (Scott and Marshall, 2005), and on place experience, 'hierarchy and differentiation' as well as their implications for the 'content and structure of the conceptual' place.

Cognitive theory
emphasises the **Mind** – rational–
the conceptual space relationship to the
Body (social behaviour) & **Space** (experience)

Canter, a psychologist, sees place as a *'technical term'* and considers Relph's notion of place to be *'romantic'*. Relph, a phenomenologically oriented humanistic geographer, values authenticity and the particularity of specific places. (Gustafson, 2001:6)

Phenomenology

emphasises

the **Body**

sensory **experience,** & **emotional** relationships

'Places are not abstractions or concepts, but are directly experienced phenomena of the lived-world and hence are full with meanings, with real objects, and with ongoing activities' (Relph, 1976:141)

Relph's model, on the other hand, was developed through *'phenomenological perspective in human geography'* (Groat, 1995b:3). His approach to place was developed through a phenomenologist perspective that considered the experience/ phenomenon of the lived world rather than *'theories and abstract models of place'* (Relph, 1976). The model and its diagram were, thus deduced from the literature by the researcher. He considered place identity – developed from Kevin Lynch (1960) – as the *'basic feature of place experience'* of both place and people. Place identity for Relph involves *'the recognition of differences and of samenesses ... [and] sameness in difference'* (Relph, 1976:45).

...For David Canter place is a unit of environment and a consensus of cognitive maps, apparently without history; he believes that through our conceptual systems places can be measured and this information then used to make better places' (Relph, 1978)

'[Relph] ...For me places are particular settings with their own history and aesthetic properties, that have personal and communal significances, and which elude measurement... (Relph, 1978)

Sime (1985) introduces the opposition between the two models through the people-place relationship, which is subject to empirical scientific measurement in Canter's model and hence, differs intrinsically from the phenomenological/ emotional sense of place experience. Canter (1977b:119) views Relph's model through his own perspective to place, *'Relph chooses to call it a phenomenological perspective, but it could be just as justifiable be referred to as a cognitive approach to human location activity'*. He considers the main contradiction between the two models in the definition of the designer/ user role towards place i.e. the author/ reader role as elaborated in chapter six. Canter emphasises the role and perspective of the user in his model as will be further explored, whereas Relph considers the designer's perspective (Canter, 1977b). Relph's emphasis on the designer's view was criticised because it was difficult *'to know whether the views of an author are a true reflection of the people whom he or she is referring to'* (Sime, 1985:32). Relph, like Sime, emphasises the differences between place as a measurable unit in Canter's model and lived experience in his model.

a. Model Statement and Diagram

Canter's model 1977

'... Place is the result of relationships between actions, conceptions and physical attributes. It follows that we have not fully identified... place until we know:
[a] what behaviour is associated with, or it is anticipated will be housed in, a given locus,
[b] what the physical parameters of the settings are, and
[c] the description, or conception, which people hold of that behaviour in that physical environment.'
(Canter, 1977a:158-159)

Hence place is represented through the intersection in the Venn diagram (Fig 7.3). Canter's (1977a:159) representation challenges the notion of a pre-determined starting point, *'we can proceed with the*

identification of places starting with any of the major constituents'.

Canter also considers the possibility of approaching place through either physical attributes or activities and the related conceptions which would help define the other elements, activities or physical attributes. In other words, place definition is approached through two elements, taking into consideration that conceptions are involved. However Canter's emphasis on the user perspective (people), and thus the meaning and conceptions they give to place, *'...actions, or behaviour are an essential component of place and therefore meaning'* (Groat, 1995b:4), implies a hierarchical approach to place. People, as represented through their activities in place are considered first and the physical setting of place is approached last. This hierarchy and its implications are discussed further in the study of the model elements and inter-relations.
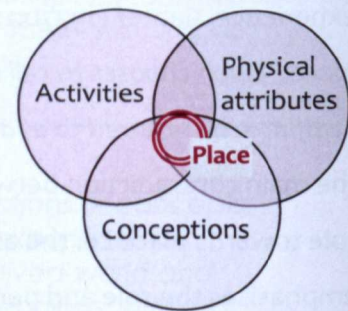
Fig 7.3 Canter's model of PLACE (Canter, 1977a:158)

Relph's model 1976:

> *'The identity of place is compromised of three interrelated components, each irreducible to the other-*
> *[a] physical features or appearance*
> *[b] observable activities and functions*
> *[c] meanings or symbols'*
> (Relph, 1976:61)

Relph considered the three elements as *'distinctive poles'* which are *'interconnected'* within place experience and constitute other internal-divisions. As Relph himself was not concerned with theories and abstract models of place, in this thesis an abstract model is constructed to represent and illustrate his approach to place (Fig 7.4). The three elements are represented through three interlocking elements.

He considers the inter-relations (Rs) between the place components and presented a short account of these

interrelations which will be explored further in the model elements and inter-relations.
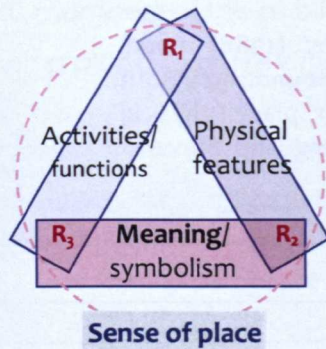
Fig 7.4 Relph's model of PLACE

However, Relph's model involves a fourth, less tangible element which he calls *'sense of place'*. The latter helps to interconnect the other elements. However it exists independently from the other three elements and any changes that occur in them.

Finally, it should be taken into consideration that Relph's model o f place only represents a part of his approach to place and place identity, which involves three other aspects as well. The model of place represents the components of 'the identity of place'. The second considers 'the identity with place', 'forms and levels of insideness and outsideness'. The third considers the relation between people (individuals/groups) and place identity. The last considers the development and change of these identities (Relph, 1976).

In between the models' similarities and oppositions, Canter's model is considered to be a reflection on place experience in the intersection between the three elements inside the model. Relph's model on the other hand, approaches place through a multi-levelled framework. The fact that the model represents only a single layer, questions the criticism that Relph's phenomenological approach isolates place from the wider socio-culture context (Sime, 1985; Canter, 1977b); this is debated on a different level, outside the model as presented here.

b. Author/ Reader

'... *Designers are, officially, the modifiers and creators of physical forms... for specific activities and conceptions'.*
(Canter, 1977a:161-3)

Through his approach to place, Canter developed a user-based model to evaluate place (Fig 7.5). Canter considers the evaluation of place as a relationship within the *'conceptual system'* between the client, user and designer i.e. the third component is

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represented as client intentions, or organisational objectives.
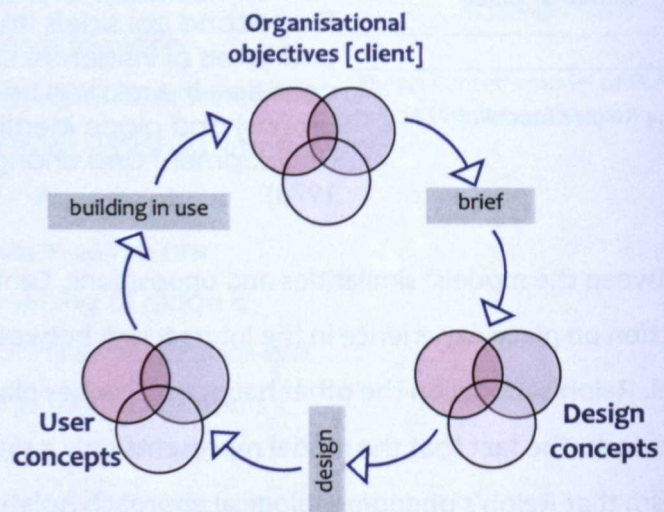
Fig 7.5 User-based model of place assessment, (Canter, 1977a:165)

On the other hand, the relations in Canter's model are represented by a circle rotating in one direction. This implies a sequential relation between the components, where every component client, designer, user influences the following one. Canter considered the client's intentions as the starting point, the

organisational objectives. He also questions the identity

of users, identified as the public by Vining and Stevens,

as members of the public or other professional bodies

using place 'e.g. *fire officers*'.

Finally, designer/ user is represented by Vining and Stevens as author and reader –observer– respectively, whereas Canter emphasises the role of the user as part of the conception system of place i.e. both author and reader.

The designer's role is to understand the '*ambiguity of place*' through the user's (individual(s), group(s), professional bodies) reading of place. Accordingly, he defines the component of place '*to convert this conceptual system into a product*' through the reading of the user's reading (Canter, 1977a:164). An illustration of Canter's approach to place discourse is represented in (Fig 7.6). Canter's emphasis on the user's perspective has helped to distance place, the physical attributes, from the discourse. Furthermore, the designer role is confined to a second reader of place and people-place relation through people, the users.

'the role of the architect and his responsibility to interpret, and understand the culture and change the society through his architecture'

(Abdelhalim, 1996; Abdelhalim, 1989:236).
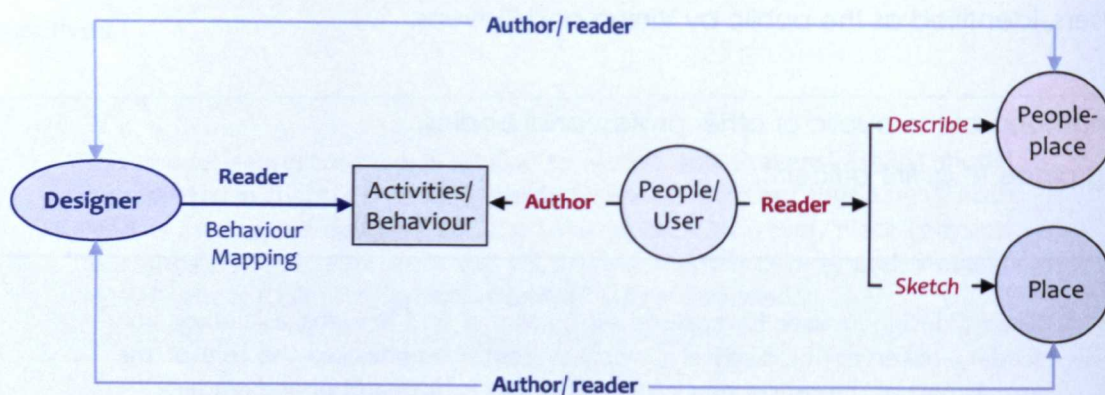
Fig 7.6 An illustration of Canter's Author/ Reader role

Relph, on the other hand emphasises the role of the designer towards place. However, he refuses the confinement of the designer's role to management and manipulation of the physical attributes of place, as well as *'the possibilities of place-making on behalf of people'* (Sime, 1985). Accordingly, he denies the people's role as author/ reader in the discourse of place.

As previously discussed, this research is concerned with the approach to place of the architect and urban designer's. In contrast to Canter's approach, in the discourse of place presented in this thesis the user is set aside, whereas the designer's role is emphasised as both a reader and author of place (see chapter six). However, the same understanding of the designer's role in reading the people, and the people-place relationship is maintained. Accordingly, the emphasis on the designer's role differs from Relph's, who considers the designer as an expert and excludes the user from his model. And the reading in this thesis is interested in the designer's reading, interpretation and making of place without excluding the user's role from place i.e. in highlighting the designer's role towards place rather than eliminating the user's role.

7.3.2. Elements and Interrelations

As previously discussed both Relph's and Canter's models are made up of three elements which are abstracted through the primary framework of interpretation: place (physical attributes and feature), people (activities and function), and people-place relation (conceptions, meaning and symbolism). In addition, Relph's model involved a fourth element, the *'sense of place'* which represents a relational link between the elements. However, *'the concept of place'* differed with Canter's 'objective measurement' of the relation between people and place, and Relph's 'humanistic' approach to place experience. This section explores the definition of the elements as well as the internal-structure that builds up the relations in each model.

Canter's model is criticised for the lack of adequate definition of the elements, especially the physical attributes and actions. The definition given by Canter of physical attribute is rather a definition of the relation between physical attributes and *'other components of the place in question, those which facilitate the identification of places'* (Canter, 1977a).

> Relph, on the other hand, defines the model elements as *'distinctive poles'*, considers the interrelation between these elements and introduces a definition of these relations (Relph, 1976).

a. Place

Although Canter identifies the element of place as the physical attributes associated with the concept of place, he is criticised for not providing details of the physical form (Groat, 1995b; Sime, 1985; Relph, 1978).He **considers the construction this physical space as the task of the architect/ designer**. In reality Canter

considers the definition of physical attributes in relation to '...*psychological and behavioural process*' (Canter, 1977a), i.e. in relation to people.

> Groat and Després (1991) introduced *'five major properties'* of place, which are central to the architecture discourse and could be integrated through the social studies of place. These are:
>
> - the architectural style,
> - composition (geometry, hierarchy and proportions),
> - type (formal and functional structure),
> - urban morphology (spatial relations)
> - and place

> Relph, on the other hand, considers the architectural place to be, the professional perspective of place. Accordingly, he is criticised for this subjective approach which does not consider the people's experience in place (Groat, 1995b; Sime, 1985; Canter, 1977b).

> Place represents an inclusive phenomenon that could not be reduced to any of the other properties. Furthermore, Groat and Després (1991) reflects on the tendency of social studies to involve architectural style and type and exclude composition, place and especially urban morphology.

Canter's and Relph's approaches to place are thus considered a main difference between them. Relph also does not draw enough attention to the physical form. His approach to place considers the 'appearances' of the built environment and nature, i.e. the architectural image and styles. Sime (1985) points out that both these models, as with other social studies of place have generally lacked an adequate description of the physical attributes of place. Groat (1995b) reflects on the importance of including a well developed account of the physical attributes into the model of place.

b. People

As previously discussed both models consider people's activities and behaviour as associated with place:

Canter emphasises the user's perspective. However, as in the case of physical attributes, he does not provide a detailed account of the possible patterns of people's actions (Groat, 1995b; Sime, 1985).

> In between the 'community' and 'child' lies a conflict... about the role of the park
>
> (Chapter Six:188)

Simultaneously, Canter criticises Relph's emphasis on the architect/ designer perspective, *'activities and meanings cannot be driven directly from the lines on a master plan or details of building specifications'* (Canter, 1977b:120). Relph considers people's activities through two levels of interpretation.

The first level considers **the characteristics of these activities** in relation to place, creative, destructive, passive. The second considers the people who produce these **activities as individuals, and groups** (Relph, 1976).

c. People-place: meaning/ conception

In between people and place lies the meaning and conception given by people to place through the models of both Relph and Canter.

> Khōra constitutes the mind in relation to body and space.

> *'In architecture*
>
> *... the building or its formal details (as the signifier) stand for certain meanings or concepts which are the signified'*
>
> (Groat, 1981:75)

The people-place relation in Canter's model is scientifically measured; it represents a rational relation following the traditional paradigm.

In the traditional paradigm of place the mind is defined as logic and rational,...

...whereas it is considered as both rational and emotional in the new paradigm.

Relph's phenomenological approach represents an emotional relation, a stage between the traditional and the new paradigms of place.

' The meaning of places may be rooted in the physical setting and objects and activities, but they are not a property of them – rather they are the property of human intentions and experiences.'
(Relph, 1976:47)

Groat (1981) has demonstrated how both Canter's approach and social studies of place in general have emphasised meaning, the signified, over the physical form, the signifier. On the other hand, 'architectural theorists' have tended to focus on the physical place rather than the meaning (Groat and Després, 1991).

d. Sense of Place: *a fourth element*

'There is another important aspect or dimension of identity that is less tangible than these components ... yet serves to link and embrace them: This is the attribute of identity that has been variously termed 'spirit of place', 'sense of place', or 'genius of place (genius loci)', all terms which refer to character or personality'
(Relph, 1976:48)

'The sense of place' is the fourth element included in Relph's model, but not considered essential in Canter's model (Sime, 1985). A basic definition of this term is 'the ability to recognise the different places and different identities of a place' (Relph, 1976:63).

Sense of place involves but is not confined to:
'topography and appearance,
economic functions and social activities,

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*and particular significance deriving from
past events and present situations'*
(Relph, 1976:48)

*'The architect ...emphasises the
value of the history of Al-
Sayyida Zeinab, 'the
community draws strength and
pride from its reservoir of
history' (Abdelhalim, 1996:54),
which extended to the 'event'
through the 'building
ceremony', a reading through
the community rituals and
festivals'*

(Chapter six: 211)

Accordingly, the sense of place acts as a relational link that helps the interrelation between the elements of the abstract model of place. It also helps to relate this abstract model to the wider socio-cultural and economic context. However, the phenomenological perspective is criticised for its separation from this socio-cultural and economic context (Groat, 1995b).

It might be interesting to consider the development and integration of the concept of the sense of place as a relational element within the primary framework of place to help locate it within its wider context.

e. Model Interrelations: In-between intersection and Union

Canter's place is represented at the intersection of the Venn diagram (Groat, 1995b) (see Fig 7.3). Relph (1978) criticises this intersecting interrelation for blurring the definition of these elements, and accordingly their relations.; *'environment, building and even people could be substituted for places'* (Sime, 1985:34).

In the new paradigm:

*'the interrelations... 'embodied
and dispersed' ...*

*between [non-autonomous]
spheres'*

(Chapter three:87)

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Relph, on the other hand, considers the elements of place as well defined 'poles' that are interlocked with each other and 'interwoven' through the place experience. Relph thus presents a short account of these relations which are well-defined as R1, R2, and R3 (see Fig 7.4).

The first relation (R1) between the physical attributes of place and activities draws functional territories and relations similar to the 'functional circles of animals'. The second relation (R2) considers 'the landscape/ townscape experience' that develops between the meaning and the physical setting. Finally, the relation R3 between the people's activities and meaning involves the history, culture, and social aspect of place.

7.4. Facet Theory of Place

Canter's early model of place discussed in the last section, was continuously criticised for overlooking the physical environment, and was urged to integrate with architecture theory (Groat and Després, 1991; Sime, 1985). Accordingly, Canter (1997) attempted to respond to this criticism through the integration with architecture theory, by involving Markus' trilogy to 'Facet Theory', a structural meta-theory and introduced the *'Facet Theory of Place'* (Fig 7.7). The significance of this theory, besides its richness as it draws on three different disciplines, lies in its integration into architecture space and the use of the facet theory. However, its main disadvantage as expressed by Canter himself, is the need for professional knowledge or expertise in order to understand and work with it (Canter, 1985a). In addition, this theory was tested through a number of empirical studies which, while helping to emphasise some positive aspects of the theory highlighted other conflictual aspects that require further exploration.

Architecture	Philosophy	Social Studies
Place (Markus 1980s)	**Structuralism** (Facet Theory)	**Env. Psychology** (Canter 1977)

Facet Theory of Place
David Canter 1997
(Social Researcher & Psychologist)
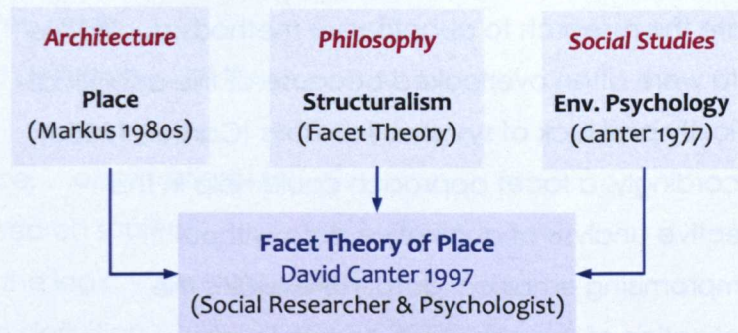
Fig 7.7 The setting of the Facet Theory of Place

The facet theory is a meta-theory like deconstruction. Accordingly, the projection of this theory through the framework interpretation of PLACE is expected to be difficult. A facet is not an element, but a set of elements. The reading of the facet theory of place thus involves a reverse approach to that of the Canter and Relph models in the last section as it explores the facets of place and their interrelation and then maps the theory. Consequently, deconstruction is included in conversation with the facet theory in order to further explore and reflect on facet theory rather than deconstruction. The latter was thoroughly discussed in chapters three and five. At the same time, the reading of Markus' architecture space is included in chapter eight.

7.4.1. What is facet Theory?

'The facet approach was developed by Guttman (1965), described in detail by Borg (1978) and Shye (1978) [behavioural sciences], and reviewed in relation to applied psychology by Canter (1982)...'
(Canter, 1983a:672)

The Facet theory helps to address the multivariate nature of social space through **a systematic approach** (Canter, 1997; Brown, 1985; Facet-Theory-Association). Canter's argument is that the empirical approach in

psychology, and social studies in general, helps to relate the research to quantitative methods;qualitative data were often overlooked because of the analytical difficulty and lack of systematic results (Canter, 1985a). Accordingly, a facet approach could help in the effective analysis of qualitative data without compromising empirical data. He explains the application of this approach on two levels:

- Data Construction: the definition of the research facets: the **categorisation of qualitative data** in a way that helps to embrace the complexities and dynamics of social research.

- Framework of interpretation: The provision of appropriate analytic process: *'a content analysis framework'* that does not require *'high levels of measurement'*
(Canter, 1997:xi)

What facet theory is not?: deconstruction
'There is no set of rules, no criteria, no procedure, no programme, no sequence of steps, no theory to be followed in deconstruction

...

*Once we have overcome this naïve desire for a formula to academic socio-economic success, and opened ourselves up to the possibility of **another way of thinking** about the act of reading, then we can begin to orient ourselves towards the questions raised by deconstruction'*
(McQuillan, 2001:4)

*'Choosing the facet approach requires **a shift in thinking**, an imaginative leap even, not only in the conception of the research problem but also in the design and execution of the inquiry'*
(Brown, 1985:17)

The facet theory hence, according to Canter (1983a:672) is made up of three parts:

- 'A *formal, detailed definition...*' of the research subject
- ' *Empirical evidence, ...observations*', concerning the research subject
- And a '*rationale*', the logic that relates these observations to the definition

a. Author/ Reader

'*The value of the facet approach derives from the fact that it provides metatheoretical framework for empirical research*'
(Canter, 1983b:35)

Canter emphasises that the facet theory is not an explanatory theory but a meta-theory, which only provides a structural framework to help formulate and evaluate theories . Accordingly, the facet approach does not favour a theory or an academic position but **works from within the defined facets, or data categories**, '*to generate their own theoretical frameworks*' (1983a:vi). At the same time, Canter (1997) developed the 'facet theory of place' which addresses the role of architects and urban designers, and is interested in place evaluation, particularly '*Post Occupancy Evaluation*' (Donald, 1985:173). However, as was discussed earlier, the facet theory of place remains ambiguous to many readers; it requires professional knowledge of facet theory.

*'Deconstruction is not a method ... that is applied from outside the discourse, **deconstruction takes place within** (Lucy, 2004)*
...
In other words, deconstruction does not present a 'systematic and closed' procedure to reach the meaning (Royle, 2000)'
(Chapter three:89)

Meta-theory is *'a theory the subject matter of which is another theory'*

(http://www.britannica.com)

Both facet theory and deconstruction are meta-theories that approach the development of other theories e.g. place, Khōra. However, facet theory involves a structural approach to categorising the order and hierarchy of an expected well-defined subject. Deconstruction on the other hand, *'wishes to undo ... structures of all kinds'* (McQuillan, 2001:12). It works as a viral form inside the not well-defined to destabilise the structure through différance, *'the systematic play of differences'* (Derrida, 2004 [1979]:27), which entitles the structure to continuously defer in space and time as soon as it is established.

b. What is a 'facet'? ~~Element~~

'A facet is any conceptually distinct way of classifying the universe of observations'
(Canter, 1983a:673)

One main difference in the facet theory of place is the use of the facet instead of the element to describe place components. **A facet is not an element**. On the contrary, it constitutes a set of elements, which are related and grouped according to the same rule (Levy, 2005). *'A facet is any conceptually **distinct way***

of classifying...' the different variables of the research object (Canter, 1983a:673). The facet is also different from an element because it is a method of categorisation (Canter, 1983b). A facet helps to group similar elements and their definitions and accordingly, to understand their internal structure and relations. According to Canter (1997), each facet:

should include all sub-elements of the object studied;

- these sub-elements should be exclusive to their facet set;

- involves multi-faceted categorisation, i.e. facet groups and elements are well-defined by the researcher.

What is a 'supplement'? ~~facet~~

The supplement would be a sub-element at the centre of a set, which instantly defers to something outside the set. Accordingly, it is substituted by a trace of other elements as it breaks outside the structure, the exclusivity, of the facet.

7.4.2. ~~Elements~~ Facets of PLACE

Canter's facets of place are a development of his earlier model in 1977 (see Fig 7.3 and Fig 7.8). As discussed earlier, the 1977 model of place constitutes the intersection between the physical environment, people's activities and the conception they hold for place. The Facet theory of place involved Facet D: aspects of design; Facet A: functional differentiation and Facet B: place objectives, which respectively, reflect on and develop the elements of the earlier model (Gustafson, 2001). The Facet C: scale of interaction is a new addition that recognises the relation to the context of place. Accordingly, this

reading will now explore the role of each facet, constituents, as well as structure. Simultaneously, a reflexive reading of these facets is considered through the perspective of deconstruction, which attempts to read the inherent disability in the facet reading of place.
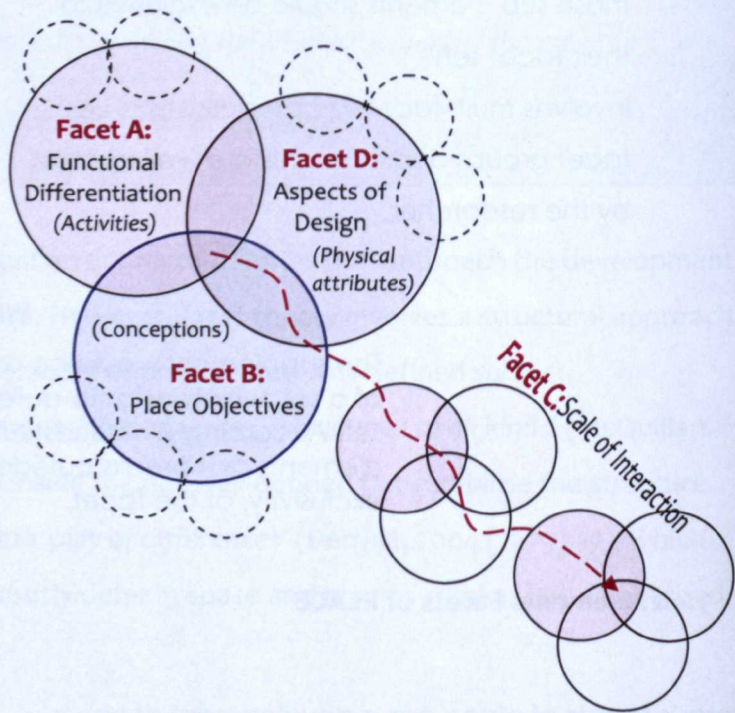
Fig 7.8 The development of Canter's model of PLACE (1977) to Facet Theory of Place (1997)

a. Facet D: Aspects of Design: Architecture Space – 'place'

'...the aspects of design focus on physical characteristics of place...'
(Gustafson, 2001:6)

This facet includes **Markus's** architecture space: **space, form,** and **function.**

In the facet theory, Canter responds to the criticism of his earlier model of place, which gave insufficient attention given to the components of the physical environment, and to the difficulty of integrating his approach with architecture theory. Canter's response involved the integration of Markus discourse on architecture space with its concepts of space, form and function.

> Canter's definition of place hence, adopts the container space, well-defined boundaries between the outside and the inside place

Canter's approach to involving architecture space continues to acknowledge the professional authority of architects and designers on place. However, he confines architecture space to physical space as well as a subset of his approach to social space. And the architect's role is to tackle and construct this physical space (Canter, 1977a).

> Canter approaches the architecture space as space-matter *'physical phenomena'*, i.e. Aristotle's topos.

b. Facet A: A Functional Differentiation: ~~'people'~~

> *'Functional differentiation points at activities*
> (Gustafson, 2001:6)

Facet A: functional differentiation, does not point at activities, function or people as emphasised by Gustafson. Functional differentiation points at the differentiation between spaces of function, **through typology of place**.

*'...the hypothesis...that has been
accepted by many architectural
theorists...that particular patterns of
activity are associated with particular
places'*
(Canter, 1997:131-132)

According to Canter (1997), facet A consists of two subsets, central and peripheral. The *'structural hypothesis'* of this facet is that *'a particular type of place'* holds similar/ typical functional spaces, which reflects the central features of a place type as well as non-similar/ atypical spaces, the peripheral. For example, operation rooms are central to hospital typology, and waiting areas are peripheral. The later subset is either random or structured. Again, Canter prefers the second type, the structured subset *'that implies a structure for the whole pattern of activities'* in place (1997:125).

Utilitas (Vitruvius): Space of Function ↓ **Facet A** (Canter): Function in space ↓ **(Tschumi):** - Space of ~~function~~ body (space-of-**movement**) - ~~Function~~ in Space (body-in-**space**) - and between space of body & space of society **(event)** (See Table 2.1:55)
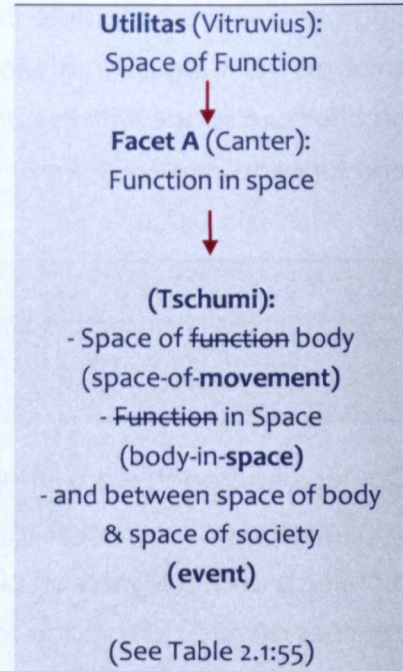
The functional differentiation follows the modern cause-and-effect: form follows function.

The attempt to define people's activities as independent entities within place has developed three readings of the people-place relation. Vitruvius' definition of 'Utilitas' as the appropriation of space in order to accommodate its function, approached the space of function rather than the function of space. Canter (1997), on the other hand, considered the definition, in terms of differentiation of function in relation to space, central/ peripheral. Finally, Tschumi's reading went beyond the function to embody the body-in-space, and the body's spaces-of-movement. He also added another layer through the articulation between space of body senses and space of social context, the event.

Deconstruction intrinsically embraces the margin, the peripheral space, which is hence responsible for the structure of place. An architecture metaphor that embraces the peripheral space of function helps to bring about architecture deconstruction beyond stylistic considerations.

Finally, the hypothesis structure of this facet defines and is defined through the other facets of place, i.e. what is central and what is peripheral in relation to place objectives or aspects of design. The structural relationships between place constituents, physical and social space: **people-place relation**. Simultaneously, this relation constitutes a *'gradation between central and peripheral'*, which by definition blurs the distinction between the two sets. However, *'...the very logic of differentiation facet leads to hypothesis of it being simply ordered'* (Canter, 1997:127).

The cornerstone

Deconstruction does not reverse the binary: centre/ peripheral, which would only develop another binary. The peripheral is displaced through the cornerstone that is responsible for the construction/ deconstruction of the entire structure on the margin of place rather than the centre.

c. Facet B: Place Objectives: ~~'people-place'~~ 'people'?

'The facet of place objectives has some similarities with the 'conceptions' [people-place] component of this model, but clarifies and extends it substantially by explicitly considering individual, social, and cultural aspects of place experiences'
(Gustafson, 2001:6)

Facet A, functional differentiation of place, does not reflect on people's activities, nor their abstraction as 'people' in the primary framework of place. Controversially, facet A reflects on the nature of people-place relation as central/ peripheral through a cause and effect relation. Consequently, facet B, place objectives, is expected to explore the people-place relation through place experience. However facet B reflects on the categorisation of people's experience in place, and particularly the categorisation of people through the individual, social, and cultural. Canter (1997:126) identifies this facet through Saegert and Winkel's (1990) review of perspectives of research on place effectiveness, through the '... *different types of objectives*' of individuals, social and cultural. Canter (1997) also identifies the range of relations between these elements as psycho-social, socio-cultural, and psycho-cultural respectively (Fig 7.9).

The Cultural Park for Children

The manager's emphasis on the child is a reflection of the **individual objectives** of place

The Architect 's emphasis on the community and the cultural significance of the history of the neighbourhood on the one hand and marginalisation of the child as symbolic on the other, is a reflection on **socio-cultural objectives** of the park and subversion of the ~~individual~~ objectives including ~~psycho-social~~ and ~~psycho-cultural~~ objectives as symbolic.

Individual: **Child**
Social: **Community**
Culture: **history & heritage**
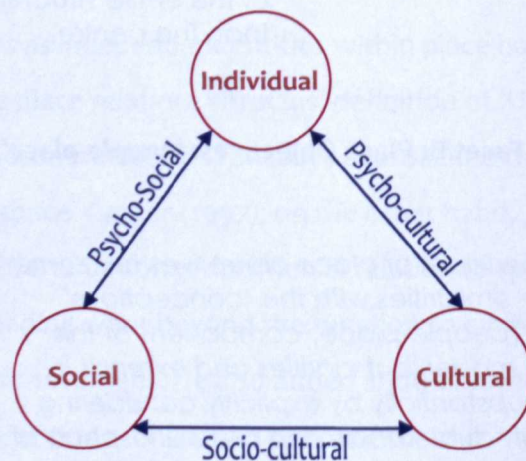
Fig 7.9 Facet B, set of 'people': individual, social and cultural and relationships

Both Sixsmith (1986) and Gustafson (2001) introduced similar three categories of people relationship to place through empirical research. They considered these categories as personal, the self, social, the others and the physical, the environment (Fig 7.10).

At the same time, Markus defines 'three levels of relationship' to identify the social structure, the self, the others and the cosmic (Markus, 1982a).
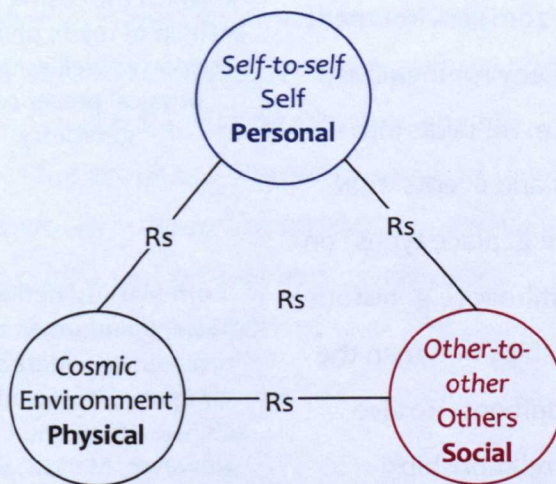
Fig 7.10 levels of meaning according to Gustafson (2001), Sixsmith (1986), and Markus (1982a); diagram developed fro Gustafson

Sixsmith (1986) considers the personal as both the self which is grounded in the person's emotions, desires and activities, and the being which considers the person's identity through place attachment, belonging... etc. Gustafson (2001) also considers the self as grounded in personal meanings; emotions, activities and self identity, as well as life experience and memories.

For Markus (1982a) the first level constitutes a relation of 'self-to-self' that holds three basic questions, 'who am I?, where am I going?, what am I becoming?'.

The social for Sixsmith (1986) resembles Markus' idea i.e. the social constitutes the relations of 'self-to-other' and 'other-to-other' and represents the social function of place. Gustafson (2001) further explains 'self-to-other' relations as a 'sense of community' which considers the recognition and anonymity of the self to the other(s). However, he defines the other through the difference between 'us/ here' and 'them/ there'.

Sixsmith (1986), on the other hand explores the physical place as involving space *structure and architecture style* in addition to people's space; it also involves place *services and facilities*. For Gustafson (2001) environment involves both the physical and natural environment, as well as the institutional (political) place. He takes into consideration the 'distinctive features and events' that help to develop the identity of place (e.g. place types) on the physical level, as well as on the symbolic (e.g. historic). Accordingly, he examines the relationships between the self-environment and the other-environment. He also considers the self-other-environment relationships through citisenship and similar memberships to institutions and distinctive places. Finally, it should be taken into consideration that the social perspective towards place meaning is variable dependent on different individuals, and groups as well as the place; i.e. not all meaning categories, and sub-categories are relevant in every situation (Gustafson, 2001).

Markus' second level constitutes the relations of *'self-to-others'* as well as *'other-to-others'*, where this other oscillates between divine and reason, science or society.

Markus' third level considers the relations of 'self-to-cosmic' and 'others-to-cosmic' in which the cosmic order is built up of myth, philosophy, religion as well as the city's physical presence and geometry.

Both Markus' definition of meaning and other empirical research considered similar categories of meaning, the self, the other, and the place. However, Markus, working within an architectural background, viewed meaning from a more abstract/ theoretical perspective, questioning the self/ being, the divine/ logic other, the myth and philosophy of place; the latter however, was seen as embedded within the physical presence of the city but without details.

'**A simple order** of relationships from psychological through social to cultural **would not be found** ...'
(Canter, 1997:127)

Saegert and Winkel (1990) proposed a distinctiveness between individual, social, and cultural objectives of place. This distinction reflects '...*different aspect of a coherent system of place*' (Canter, 1997:126). However, Canter also considers their simultaneous occurrence. The distinction between these categories hence refers to the '*emphases*' of the different place to these objectives and thus '*gradation may be identified between the three elements*'.

Fig 7.11 Gradational relation between the elements of people's set, facet B

Canter reflects on the sequential order of this set, individual, psycho-social, social, socio-cultural, cultural, and psycho-cultural. This latter relation, psycho-cultural, destabilises the proposed hierarchal order as '...*the sequence would have to double back on itself to provide a position for an element between the supposed two extremes*' (Canter, 1997:126).

Cairo Space

Individual: **Cairene/ Tourist**

Social: **....**

Culture: **history & heritage**

A **sequence** is '*a number of things, actions, or events arranged or happening in a specific order or having a specific connection*' (Encarta Dictionary). This definition implies a linear hierarchal order that has a start and leads to a particular point.

d. Facet C: Scale of Interaction: 'context'

> '...the facet of scale of interaction also
> adds to Canter's earlier framework by
> pointing out the importance of
> environmental scale'
> (Gustafson, 2001:6)

Canter brings the categorisation of the setting, the context, to the discourse of place which *'is often ignored in theory building'*. Facet C, the scale of interaction, is a quantitative set that considers the *'difference between uses of space'* at different context levels: immediate, local, and distant rather than studying the context itself (Canter, 1997:127-128). Canter also discusses the relation between facet C and facets A&B; i.e. context and place. He considers two alternative hypotheses: the interdependency between place and context on the one hand, and the independency of context on the other.

The manifestation of place-context relation as 'interdependent' makes it possible to understand the context *'from analysis of... sub-places'* (Canter, 1997:128). The independence of the context however complicates this analysis. Each level should be addressed as a holistic experience. However, Canter states that the independence of the context also denies the differences between the different levels; no matter what the scale of the place, the personal, social, and cultural elements would be identifiable in much the same way' (Canter, 1997:128).

'...concept, content, context

...

for Tschumi context ... includes the 'historical, geographical, cultural, political or economic' urban context'

(Chapter Two: 53)

Cairo space

Immediate: **Local**
Local: **Regional**
Distant: **Global**

The Cultural Park for Children

Immediate: **the park**
Local: **Al-Sayyida Zeinab**
Neighbourhood
Distant: **Cairo**

> *... 'Il n'y a pas de hors-textes' ...*
>
> *'It is worth noting that the blurriness in the text between content/ context and text/ author does not imply a homogenous production of truth but rather helps to embed and recognise the multiplicities within the text that are inscribed in the context'*
>
> (Chapter three: 91)

The trace:

For deconstruction, the context-place relation(s) are both interdependent and independent. The distinction between the content (place/ text) and the outside context (metaphysical, historical, social etc) is denied. The content holds a trace of the context, which is hence inscribed inside the place. At the same time, the context traces place. The blurriness of the content of place, inside/ outside holds another implication for place which also traces and is traced by the author – designer– together with the context

The Facet Theory of place brings in another perspective of context: the nature or type. This approach goes beyond the binary representation of place e.g. a local/ global reading of Cairo space, as it explores various levels of reading: local, regional and global. This perspective both questions and helps the co-existence of these levels, these readings of place.

7.4.3. Mapping Sentence

Facet D

The extent to which aspects of design of place (p) achieves

[1.Function]

[2.Space]

[3.Form]

Facet A	**Facet B**	**Facet C**
Differentiated	*Place Objectives at*	*Scale of Interaction*
[1.Central]	[1.Personal]	[1.Intermediate]
[2.Peripheral]	[2.Social]	[2.Local]
	[3.Cultural]	[3.Distant]

Common range

Will be → [.Effective] To [.Ineffective]

Achievement of objectives through design aspects

Where place (p) is one of a population (P) of places that are experienced by people and open to empirical study

Fig 7.12 Facet Theory Mapping Sentence (Canter, 1997:130)

'The mapping sentence… coordinates formal concepts (facets) and informal verbal connectives'
(Levy, 2005:179)

As part of the facet approach, Canter presented his theory of place both verbally through a *'mapping sentence'* (Fig 7.12), and graphically through a *'3D cylindrex model of place'* (Fig 7.13). The mapping sentence is a basic device of facet theory. It provides a *'formal definition'* to explain the main elements of the research objects, grouped together into facets as well as explaining internal relations within the facets and between them (Canter, 1997;1983a; Brown, 1985).

Facet B: Place Objectives
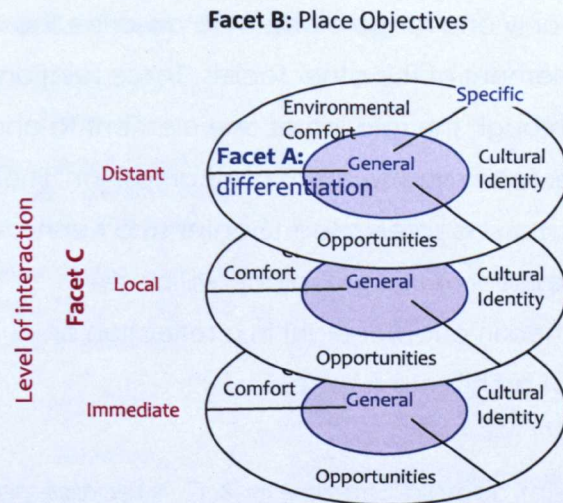
Fig 7.13 Cylindrex model of place (evaluation) (Canter, 1997:139)

The mapping sentence of the facet theory of place includes:

- A study population which considers the architectural design aspects: Facet D
- A domain-content that includes functional differentiation, objectives and scale of interaction of place: Facets A, B, & C
- And the common range of evaluation of place effectiveness
  (Canter, 1997)

The relations between these elements and facets are shown though connecting words but without the provision of details (Canter, 1997). A relation is built through *one and only one* from the range facet for each generated domain sentence (Levy, 2005). The aim is to provide a number of hypotheses to be tested empirically (Canter, 1997). Though the mapping sentence explained previously implies a network of complex relations, the working relation between the

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elements carries a linear potential through choosing one and only one range element to describe the chosen element of the other facets. These relations are built up through the relation of one element to another in another facet and so on in a linear fashion; linear equation can be safely used (Canter and Kenny, 1981). This linear reading of place will be re-approached in chapter eight in a reflection on a reading of architecture space.

The content-domain, facets A,B, & C, is represented through a cylindrex model (Canter, 1997). The cylindrex structure has shown a 'remarkably consistent occurrence' in the repetitive experiments through other theories, methods and observations (Canter el al., 1980 cited in Canter, 1983b:58). A cylindrex model of place is a hypothesised three-dimensional representation of the facets, the sets of elements, and the structure of the facets. It is composed of a place recurring along the axis of the cylindrex. It is built up through the relation between facets A &B, people and people-place. The model is derived from the fact that 'the facet... does have the interesting property of being ordered' i.e. structured (Canter, 1983b:56). Different types of facet order are formed through different facet studies, while order is produced through one facet modifying another. This order implies dependency between the facets. The axis of the cylindrex, on the other hand, represents the levels of interaction, categories of context, facet C, which being independent from, and non-planar to facets A and B, forms the axis of the cylinder.

Facet D

The extent to which aspects of design of place (p) achieves

[1.Function: Architecture
Program]

[2.Space: morphology and
organisation: Ibn Tulun Spiral
Minaret – and festival rituals]

[3.Form: geometry and Style –
Nature (Palm trees) and
Islamic features]

	Facet B	
Facet A	*Place Objectives at*	**Facet C**
Differentiated	[1.Individual Psychology: Child]	*Scale of Interaction*
[1.Central: Child/ Community]	[2.Social: Community]	[1.Intermediate: Park]
[2.Peripheral: Community/ Child]	[3.Cultural: History and Culture	[2.Local: Al-Sayyida Zeinab]
	Monuments and festivals]	[3.Distant: Cairo]

	Common range	
Will be →	[.Effective]	*Achievement of objectives*
	To	*through design aspects*
	[.Ineffective]	

Where place (p) is one of a population (P) of places that are experienced by people and open to empirical study

Fig 7.14 Facet Theory Mapping the Cultural park for Children

A reading of the 'Cultural Park for Children' using the facet theory of place is demonstrated in Fig 7.14. A reading hypothesis would involve the study of effectiveness of the 'form' of the park to in terms of the child's central activities and psychology and in relation to the Sayyida Zeinab community, which itself is a reflection of the manager's reading. Another hypothesis would involve the study of the effectiveness of the park morphology and organisation as central to child activities and as satisfying the social and cultural objectives of the park.

7.5. Social Space

This chapter re-approached social space, through two reflexives instances: the reading of Canter's and Relph's models of place, and the facet theory and deconstruction meta-theoretical approach to place. In the first instance, Canter on the one hand, adopted a cognitive approach to place that emphasised the rational 'mind' relation to experience of place and social behaviour and psychology, and Relph on the other assumed a phenomenological approach that drew attention to the 'body', and its emotional experience in space. However, both models could not present an adequate definition of physical space. At the same time, their approach to place reflected a positivist, well defined reading through linear and direct relations that overlooked the dynamics and complexities within.

In the second instance, both facet theory and deconstruction recognised the dynamics and complexities of place and the difficulties to approach the qualitative date in particular, which required a shift in the way of thinking and understanding of place as well as 'how' to approach place. Therefore, both approaches attempted to work from within place to explore it. However, facet theory of place works through a pre-defined framework and system of categorisation to structure the reading of place – the facet–, whereas deconstruction attempts to destabilise the inherited structural representation through the supplement that escapes these categories and facets.

At the same time, the facet theory of place attempted to respond to the criticism to Canter's earlier model that excluded architecture space, particularly the physical space, through the inclusion of Markus' discourse on architecture space. However, this inclusion subverted architecture space as a subset of social space, Facet D: the aspects of design. This subversion implicated both the social and the architectural space. It primarily confined architecture space to the physical, and misread Markus' approach which, as demonstrated in this chapter and the following, extends to include the social space. In addition, Facet A: functional differentiation, echoed Vitruvius' Utilitas, Markus' 'function', and Tschumi's sequential triad, space, movement and event. Facet B: place

objectives, which categorises the 'people', copied Markus' reading of 'people' in relation to place through the self, the other, and the context. Finally, Facet D; the scale of interaction, endorsed Tschumi's reading of the context as well as the milieu, the figure of architecture landscape in Khōra.

Eventually, the facet theory identified and represented the complexities of place through the sophisticated mapping sentence and the figure of the cylindrex. However, it approached the reading of place through a linear and direct relation built through 'one and only one' element of a facet in relation to another only one element in another facet i.e. the facet theory of place represents multiple readings of place, where each could be read through a linear equation in order to study the range of its effectiveness and infectiveness.

This reflexive reading of social space thus extends us to re-approach architecture space in the following chapter.

Chapter Eight:

De-, Re-, Con-structing Architecture Space

Cairo, khôra and deconstruction: **Towards a reflexive reading of place**

8 De-, Re-, Con-structing Architecture Space

8.1. Architecture Space

A reading of architecture space from *'Vitruvius to Derrida'* was reviewed in chapter two. The review reflected on the changing boundaries of architecture space. Along with many other architects, Thomas Markus continued the Vitruvius tradition through his triad form –Venustas–, space – Fermitas–, and function –Utilitas–. Tschumi, on the other hand, recognised a hidden displacement of these boundaries. He examined the displacement of the third category in Vitruvius' trilogy, Utilitas, the space-of-function, through his two parallel triads: the conceived, perceived, and experienced space, and space, movement and event. Tschumi also recognised the dichotomy of architecture space between minimalist and maximalist readings, body and context. Accordingly, he complemented his reading of the displaced boundaries through another triad, which involved concept, content and context. In addition, the reading of the facet theory developed in the previous chapter highlighted both the readings of Markus and Tschumi through physical and functional space respectively.

In this chapter, we re-approach the reading of architecture space in between Markus and Tschumi. The previous readings of Markus and Tschumi in chapter two examined and identified the categories of architecture space. This re-approach therefore is interested in a reading perceived through these categories: their definition, interrelations, and an anticipated structure/ conception. Finally, the previous chapter also explored facet theory and deconstruction as the meta-theories beyond the Markus and Tschumi readings respectively.

8.1.1. Re-, De-, Con-structing Architecture Space

The reading of architecture space discussed in this chapter builds on the reading of social space in the previous chapter (Fig 8.1). We identify the first reflexive instant through the authors of architecture space, Markus and Tschumi, and present this in in black. The second reflexive instant examines the commentators on this discourse, and

involves two groups, presented in red in a horizontal box. The first group involves the facet theory and deconstruction –the meta-theories beyond the readings of Markus and Tschumi – as discussed in the previous chapter. The second group hence involves the discourse on social space. Finally, the reflexive reading of architecture space in relation to the reading of Khōra-Cairo is presented on the margin, and in a blue and vertical box.

Author 1: Thomas Markus

On the margin,

Khōra-Cairo

On the margin,

Author 2: Bernard Tschumi

Khōra-Cairo

Reflections from facet theory, deconstruction meta theories; Canter and Relph; from general social studies and theories of place

Fig 8.1 Social Space discourse setting through a reflexive reading between the discourse actors

The reading of architecture space thus constitutes three parts: a reading in between Markus and Tschumi which considers the backgrounds of their approaches, the constituents, relations and interrelations between their readings of place, and reflections on place, Khōra and Cairo.

8.2. In-between Markus and Tschumi

In-between Markus and Tschumi, as discussed in chapter two, architecture space reflects the development of the paradigm of place from a traditional notion of independent place constituents, which held linear and direct relations in between them, to a new paradigm where these constituents are not autonomous but oscillate between each other as well as being embodied and dispersed in multiple and complex relations

between them. The readings of Markus and Tschumi in-between the meta-theories of facet theory and deconstruction have been discussed in the previous chapter. This section will explore further the background of the Markus and Tschumi approaches to architecture space. On the one hand, Markus approached it in close proximity to language and discourse analysis[57] (Markus, 1987). On the other hand, Tschumi worked through a post-structuralist approach which *'echoes Derrida'* but also references other authors from philosophy and literature criticism, such as Barthes and Sollers (Martin, 1990:33). This reading will discuss the development of both approaches to architecture space in-between these backgrounds.

8.2.1. Thomas Markus

*'**Discourse**' as used here includes everything said, written or done in the field*
…
*'**Doing**' in Architecture includes all that is designed and built.*
(Markus, 1982a:4)

Markus' account of architecture space is developed through his approach to **discourse** analysis with a special emphasis on building analysis. Markus **defines the boundaries** of this discourse through form, function and space.

Conjunction
Underlying Meaning
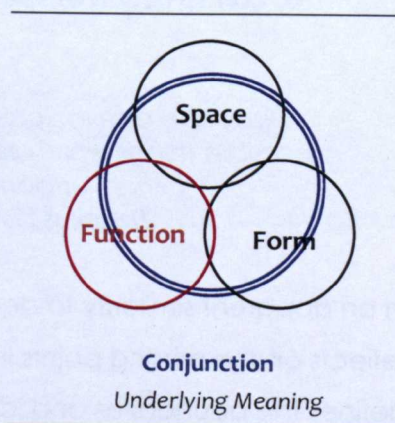
Fig 8.2 Markus discourse on architecture space

a. Architecture space: *a human language*

*'… The distinction between each discourse is **not** always **sharply made** – in part because of technical difficulties and in part because the blurring often helps to maintain the connections.'*
(Markus, 1982a:6)

---

[57] A review of Discourse Analysis was previously presented in chapter five.

Markus' approach to discourse analysis considers both the idea development and end-product, where the production of the discourse is a social practice, as defined in chapter five. Markus considers form, space and function as discourses of '**human language**', which consists of vocabulary, length and organisation of text, points that elaborate on the text and points that are silent. This language signifies the values and intention of **author/ designer**. However, these discourse are **sharply identified** (Markus, 1987).

Discourse analysis, in this sense,

'... both influences and is influenced by it socio-cultural context',

(Chapter five: 166)

b. Con.struction of space: *silent point(s)*

Discourse also includes silence – those possible things which are not said, written or done.
(Markus, 1982a:4)

In an apparent similarity to deconstruction, Markus reflects on the missing points in the discourse. He defines the boundaries and identifies the missing – silent– points that were not included and then attempts to identify the reason(s) for this exclusion. However, Markus and deconstruction adopt different approaches to these silent points on the margin of the discourse.
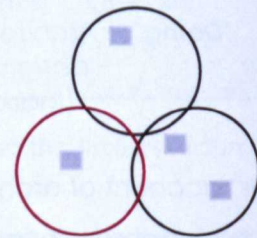
■ Silent points: Empty slots inside the boundaries

Fig 8.3 Markus silent points: empty slots inside well defined boundaries (inside/ outside)

'... one of the terms will be figured within the concerns of the discourse, one as central to discourse, and one marginal; one will be 'included' within the concerns of discourse, one 'excluded' from them. Deconstruction is interested in this so-called marginal term'.

(McQuillan, 2001:23)

In order to identify the silent parts of
discourse, boundaries have to be
defined – otherwise silence is infinite.
(Markus, 1982a:4)

Markus considers space, form and function as a tool for providing a clear analysis of place, especially in relation to the values and relations of the social context. However, he also emphasises the missing relation in-between this abstract discourse and the context, *'the way in which[place]is incorporated into the city'* (Markus, 1982a:5-6).

■ Silent points: marginalised

□ Centre of discourse/ supplement
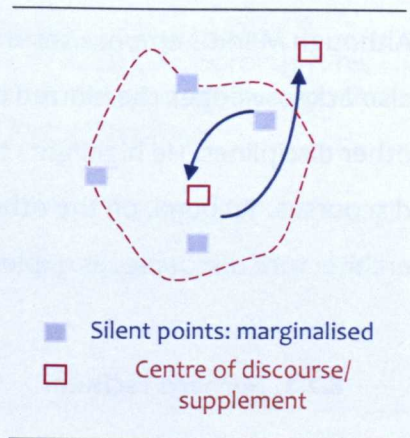
Fig 8.4 Deconstruction silent point: as the margin/ centre is reversed, supplement escapes the discourse (~~inside/ outside~~)

Deconstruction, questions the boundaries and edges, studies the discourse within its context in order to identify the marginalised – the silent points–, which exist on the peripheries. The deconstruction hence, starts by turning things upside down; the marginalised becomes the centre of the discourse and the centre becomes the supplement which escapes the discourse.

The process of place production, *'technology and resources'*, is not directly included in this discourse though Markus emphasizes its relation to the wider socio-economic context of place (Markus, 1982a:5-6). He also, emphasizes importance of *'find[ing] reasons for silent discourse'*, which he then relates to architectural design and analysis. *'Why in a specific context of place and time, were certain possible things not said, designed or built?'* (Markus, 1987:475).

' [architecture space] ... may be found in, for instance,
philosophy (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]), new spatial theories (Hillier,
1996; Hillier and Hanson, 1988), politics (Castells, 1977; Harvey,
1973), or in recent explosion of literature in environmental
science, ecology, computing and engineering technology'
(Markus and Cameron, 2002:32)

Although Markus emphasises the well-defined boundaries of architecture discourse, he also acknowledges the blurred boundaries between the discourse on architecture and other disciplines. He highlights the inclusion of architecture space in other disciplinary discourses. Tschumi, on the other hand, involves other disciplines in the construction of architecture discourse, as explored in the following section.

8.2.2. Bernard Tschumi

'...we were trying to wrestle from the people their authentic culture and adapt it to the expectations of the educated. We wanted to intellectualize it to the expectations of the educated'

(Abdelhalim in Hassan, 1997:13)

(Chapter six:210)

'...I was concerned with the need for an architecture that might change society'
(Tschumi, 2001a:5)

Tschumi's early reading of architecture space sought to develop a *'revolutionary'* theory(Martin, 1990:24). However, by the late 60s, early 70's, he, together with many architects of his generation, had developed *'a sceptical view of the power of architecture to alter social or political structures'* (Tschumi, 2001a:5), a failing that pushed Tschumi to **'put architecture into crisis'** (Martin, 1990:24). Tschumi's readings wandered from Marxism to Lefebvre to a preoccupation with poststructuralists: Derrida, Foucault, Kristeva, etc.

'following mainly Sollers (limits), Hollier (Bataille), Barthes (pleasure), Kristeva (intertext), Genette (palimpsest), and Derrida (deconstruction), Tschumi introduced into his work the major themes developed by the most visible French literary critics of the 1960s and 1970s'
(Martin, 1990:33)

The discourse of architecture 'As **practice and as theory**, ...must import and export'[58] beyond its disciplinary boundaries (Tschumi, 2001a:17). He approached the reading of architecture by drawing on multiple disciplines: philosophy, science, literature,

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[58] Tschumi (2001a:17), acknowledges in the introduction to his book *'Architecture and disjunction'*, the integrative relations between architecture and other disciplines: *'...art, literary criticism, and film theory'*. However, his borrowed quotations remain integrated in his text, without quotation marks or author reference.

etc. and through the '*practice of Intertextuality*'[59] between disciplines (Martin, 1990:26). Accordingly, his account of architecture space developed through the integration of fragments of these readings.

'Architecture space: space of knowledge of physical space in context'

(Chapter two:31)

To understand Tschumi's practice of intertexuality, it is necessary to understand his approach to architecture space. Tschumi echoes and simultaneously negates the definition of architecture space highlighted in chapter two, which presents architecture space in between mind –knowledge– and the material space, embedded within context. Tschumi's architecture space is concerned with both the mind and material space. However, both spaces exist simultaneously, and are projected through writing and practising architecture (Fig 8.5). Tschumi's practice of writing on architecture space is simultaneously a practice of writing: knowledge, writing composition, language and style, embedded in between multi-disciplines, and a practice of design: concept, physical space, embedded in multi-dimensional context.

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knowledge	text	intra-disciplinary
	Writing (theory)	
	↕	
	Architecture space in-between	
	↕	
	Making (practice)	
Concept	physical space	context
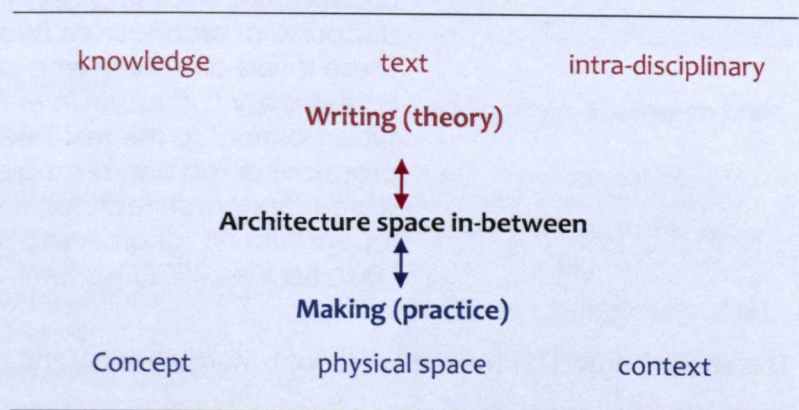
Fig 8.5 Tschumi's intertextuality: architecture space in-between theory and practice

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[59] Intertextuality was first introduced '... *by Julia Kristeva... in her essay of 1969...* 'Word, Dialogue and Novel', (reprinted in Toril Moi, ed. (1986): The Kristeva Reader)... *The fundamental concept of intertextuality is that no text, much as it might like to appear so, is original and unique-in-itself; rather it is a tissue of inevitable, and to an extent unwitting, references to and quotations from other texts. These in turn condition its meaning; the text is an intervention in a cultural system*' (Allen, 2005)

Thus his approach, strategies and tools, and terminologies are projected through his writings –as an approach to writing–, his writings on architecture space – as an approach to architecture, his practice –as an approach to making architecture– and his theories –as an approach to reading architecture space.
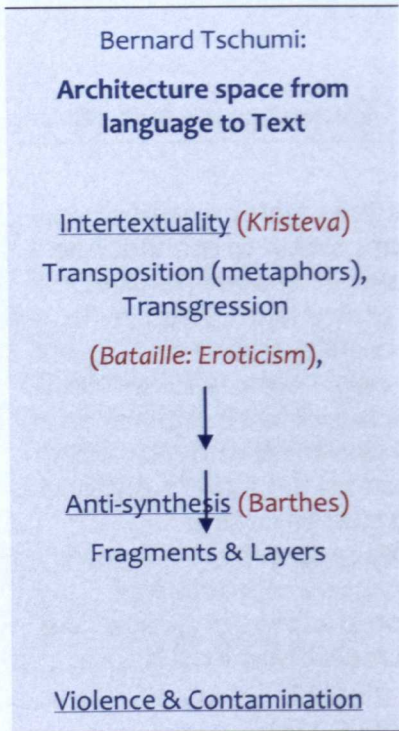
Tschumi's strategies are hence identified through his practice of intertextuality, transgression and transposition as well as through the anti-synthetic juxtaposition of different layers and fragments. As explained previously, the practice of intertextuality concerns reading between multiple disciplines. Transgression is going beyond the limits of one discipline: theory and practice. However, transgression does not 'destroy' these limits (Bataille, 2001 [1962]; Tschumi, 1976); it provides a 'critique' of '*the boundaries and limits that we construct for ourselves, or that are constructed for us by the dominant power structure...*' (Hejduk, 2007:395). Transposition is '*the act of recasting... placing in a different setting*' (Encarta-Online-Dictionary). He simply places concepts, terminologies and metaphors from other disciplines in architecture[60], for example: Barthes' '*The Pleasure of the Text*' (1976) and Tschumi's '*The pleasure of Architecture*' (1977), and Artaud's '*The Theatre and its double*' (1958), and '*Architecture and its double*' (1978), (Wong, 2003; Martin, 1990). Accordingly, Tschumi borrows fragments of text from outside architecture and integrates them 'violently' into the discourse of architecture (Wong, 2003; Martin, 1990). These layers and fragments are added anti-synthetically '*...through intentional juxtaposition and superposition*' to the text (Martin, 1990:30). These practices or reading strategies help the production of space (text/ architecture) through the '*deconstruction-reconstruction*' of other spaces (disciplines) (Hejduk, 2007; Barthes, 1976; Tschumi, 1976).

Bernard Tschumi:

Architecture space from language to Text

Intertextuality (*Kristeva*)

Transposition (metaphors), Transgression

(*Bataille: Eroticism*),

Anti-synthesis (*Barthes*)

Fragments & Layers

Violence & Contamination

This section draws on the Hejduk (2007), Martin (1990), and Wong (2003) approach to reading Tschumi's theory through the analysis of these fragments and their involvement in his work. However, I am not interested in the development of a literature review of Tschumi's work, but in developing an understanding of his account of architecture space.

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[60] This was first brought up as '*... a reader complained that Tschumi had failed to cite Thomas Kuhn's (1970) book 'The structure of scientific revolutions', although he had... almost integrally copied a passage from it... simply replaced the word 'science' ... with the word 'architecture*' (Martin, 1990:29)

Saussure (1955) Sign= Signifier →signified		Lefebvre (1969) Production of space		
Barthes (1976) Literature	**Derrida (1997b)** Philosophy	**Hollier (1992)** literature	**Bataille (2001 [1962])** Philosophy	**Sollers (1968)** Lit. Critique
Urban Semiology **The pleasure of text** Split between - text & reading - author & reader Insert a 3rd term in-between: pleasure/ eroticism	Deconstruction -**writing/ speech** -deconstruction of presence -& **Binary oppositions** -western metaphysics	Metaphor(s) **Pyramid/ Labyrinth** (No-transcendence)	architecture **Eroticism** reason/ experience	Experience of Limits: **Boundaries** - architecture space

Tschumi

Putting arch. into crisis

From language to text

Intertexuality: transposition, transgression,

Anti-synthesis: layers and fragments

Violence and Contamination

1.resistance of modernity (pleasure)

2.The crisis of the sign   3.practice of intertexuality   4.research limits

Pleasure of Architecture (1977): subverts the transcendence of Binary Opposition	Architecture and limits (1981b; 1981a; 1980)
Architecture paradox(1975a): From language to Text ~~Writing~~ Architecture	Architecture and Transgression (1976) Violence of Architecture (1981c)

Table 8.1 Reading Tschumi: intertextual fragments violently integrated into architecture space, based on reading Martin (1990), Hejduk (2007), and Wong (2003)

Accordingly, this reading in this section will trace the development of Tschumi's account on architecture space through these fragments rather than studying these fragments in

themselves. Tschumi's account is reflected through: the architecture paradox – a binary reading –, the insertion of a third term – the pleasure of architecture –, the deconstruction of architecture space, and questioning the space limits and boundaries[61] (Table 8.1).

a. Architecture space: 'from language to text'[62]

> *'By focusing on itself, architecture has entered an avoidable paradox that is more present in space than anywhere else: the impossibility of questioning the nature of space and at the same time experiencing a spatial praxis'*
> *(Tschumi, 1975a:28)*

Khōra:
a space:
a passage/ oscillation in-between

Intelligible/ Sensible
Mind/ Body
Being/ Becoming

Tschumi presented architecture space in between (mind), the conceptual *'production of space'*[63], and (body), the sensory experience of place (Tschumi, 1975a). The contradiction between these two *'interdependent but mutually exclusive'* terms emphasized the paradox of architecture space (1975a:48). Accordingly he described the two terms as *'parallel'* folds detached from the social and economic forces of production (Fig 8.6).

MIND

Conceptual Space

BODY

Sensory space

Arch space
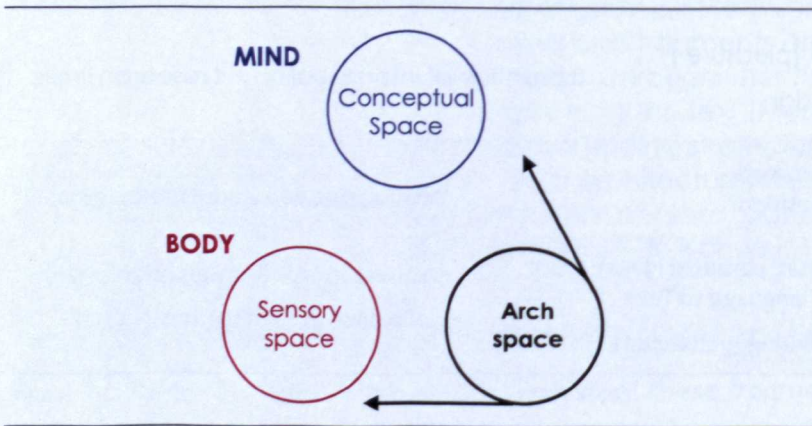
Fig 8.6 Tschumi's space in between mind and body

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[61] A full account of Tschumi's displacement of the boundaries of the architecture discourse in the 20th century is presented in chapter two.

[62] Term used by Martin (1990)

[63] A transposition from (Lefebvre, 1991) 'Production of space'

'...the concept of space is not space'
(Tschumi, 1975a:48)

To explain the paradox of space further, Tschumi drew on an architecture metaphor used by Hollier (1992) to analyse the work of Bataille (2001 [1962]), i.e. the pyramid and labyrinth (Wong, 2003; Martin, 1990).

Plato - Aristotle

Chôra -Topos
Space -Place
Transcendent -Immanent
Intelligible - Sensible
Rational - empirical

(Chapter two:Fig 2.3:36)

The pyramid is the symbol of *'reason'* the concept of space that *'overlooks'* the labyrinth, the symbol of 'perception' the experience of space (Martin, 1990:27). The paradox of this metaphor is that the concept, the pyramid could not be built to 'overlook' the labyrinth of space. Furthermore, Tschumi (1975a:49) considers that the sensory experience of space takes precedence over the conceptual. However, there is *'... no point of transcendence...'* in the experience of the labyrinth. *'Bataille was obsessed with architecture'* and Hollier's (1992) analysis of his work, the paradox of space, *'established a solid link between **text and architecture**'* (Martin, 1990:27).

On the margin of the paradox of architecture space, the reading of space developed from a structuralist to a post-structuralist view, *'from language to text'* (Martin, 1990:24). The structuralist concern for language derived from Saussure's binary reading, signifier/ signified and read architecture space as a metaphor of language (Saussure et al., 1955). Barthes (1976) was concerned with architecture *' resistance'* to this binary reading (Martin, 1990:27,24). He developed a link between text and body, and introduced a split between text and reading, author and reader through the insertion of a third term *'pleasure'* (Table 8.1). His theory asserted the subversion of the binary reading through 'textual practices' (Martin, 1990:25). These practices are borrowed in Tschumi's text as elaborated here.

*'... the rational play of **language** as*
***opposed** to the **experience** of the senses,*
would be a tedious game if it were to
*lead to a **naive** confrontation between*
the mind and the body'
(Tschumi, 1975a:43)

b. De.con.struction of space: *beyond silence*

Martin (1990:31)also highlights another two layers to Tschumi's reading of Sollers (1968) and Derrida(1991b). Derrida, as discussed in chapter two, was concerned with the deconstruction of the western metaphysics of binary oppositions. He subverted the binary, speech/ writing as writing/ speech. And Tschumi displaced *'writing with architecture'*. Simultaneously, Sollers work was interested in and entitled *'Writing and the experience of limits'*, and this became a 'central aspect' of Tschumi's theory. Thus Tschumi continued to experience the limit of architecture space by extending it to other disciplinary spaces. This new experience helped him to displace his early reading of architecture space as conception, perception and experience with space, movement and event[64]. Consequently, through his reading practices of intertextuality, transposition, etc. Tschumi developed multiple accounts of architecture space, (Table 8.2). Architecture space is therefore placed in between binary *'alternatives'*, idea and reality, mind and body, intelligible and sensory spaces (Hejduk, 2007; Wong, 2003; Martin, 1990; Tschumi, 1975a).

Sensible (Body)	In-between (Third term)	Intelligible (mind)
labyrinth	Pleasure	Pyramid
Program	Disjunction	Space
Perception	Experience	Conception
Movement	Event	Space
Content	~~Context~~	Concept

Table 8.2 Tschumi's multiple reading of the paradox of architecture space

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[64] This displacement is discussed in detail in chapter two

*'Tschumi's plan is clear. He read architecture through a dualist
model and introduced a third term to subvert the duality'*
(Martin, 1990:27)

Martin (1990) reflected on Tschumi's reading of architecture space as a binary subverted through the introduction of a third term. This simplified reading could hold the 'cornerstone' that deconstructs Tschumi's architecture space. Tschumi, on the one hand, reads the architecture paradox between two exclusive constituents, and the relation between the triad of architecture space through disjunction. On the other hand, Martin reads the 'third term' as a link that connects the two terms; a relation that explicitly rejects the 'disjunction'. Tschumi's reading of the architecture paradox and the relation between them is hence explored in relation to Martin's reading – potential deconstruction of Tschumi's space.

*'[Khōra oscillates] between two oscillating types rather than between oscillating figures. These two types are double exclusion (**neither/ nor**) and participation (**both/ and**). This oscillation denies polarity and Binary Opposition'*

(chapter three:79)

*'[The paradox] ...always **misses** something **either** reality **or** concept. Architecture is **both** being **and** nonbeing. The only alternative is **silence**...'*
(Tschumi, 1975a:48)

Tschumi (1975a:44), reads the **contradictory** constituents of the architecture paradox as *'in fact **complementary**'*. This reading brings architecture space into silence; or the author, in Barthes text, *'to stop writing,* an act that means the destruction of the text'* (Martin, 1990:25).

Barthes considers the alternative of introducing 'pleasure', a third term to subvert this binary reading. And Tschumi simultaneously questions the possibilities of *'go*[ing] *beyond'* the paradox: the silence of architecture space (Tschumi, 1975a:44). Tschumi's approach to this question differs from Martin's simplistic reading in that it involves, but is not restricted to, the insertion of 'pleasure' as a third term. This influences both his reading of the constituents of place as well as their relations and interrelations.

Place Constituents: *contamination*

*Architecture was seen as a the
combination of spaces, events and
movements without any hierarchy or
precedence among these concepts'*
(Tschumi, 1989:255)

Tschumi hence approaches the paradox of architecture space through *'the imaginary blending of'* the two terms, a blending that brings about the contamination of the constituents of place as '*... It introduces new articulations between the inside and the outside...'* The boundaries between these exclusive terms are blurred as the definition of one term involves the inclusion of the other. On the one hand, the experience of space, '*...the labyrinth ... includes the dream of the pyramid'*. On the other hand, only through the recognition of the reason, the architectural concept '*...that the subject of space will reach the depth of experience and its sensuality...'* (Tschumi, 1975a:51, 50, 49).

At the same time, the third term, the pleasure of architecture, is also contaminated. Tschumi (1977) introduces two types of pleasure, that of experience of space and that of reason. Neither of these *'on its own'* is the pleasure of architecture which is intrinsically in between concept and experience '*...where the culture of architecture is endlessly deconstructed and all rules are transgressed'* (Tschumi, 1977:85, 92).

'Leibniz (1898)

... introduces a third entity, 'a middle region'

[mind-matter]

...

This middle region 'inextricably' connects mind and matter and hence, appreciates the dynamics of place'

(Chapter Two:40)

Relation(s)& Interrelations

Consequently, the paradox of architecture space and the insertion of a third term helps to break the pre-established relations in the reading and representation of space as *'it suggested new oppositions between dissociated and new relations between homogenous spaces'* (Tschumi, 1975a:50).

*'But these texts refuse the simplistic
relation by which form follows function, or
use, or socioeconomic... any cause-and-
effect relationship between form, use,
function, and socioeconomic structure
has become both impossible and
obsolete'*
(Tschumi, 2001a:4)

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8.3. PLACE: a reading in architecture space

*'Each of these **three experiences** of form,*
function and space ... tells us something
*about **relationship**s – human*
relationships.
And they do so in three different ways.
*They **tell us** something about ourselves*
...other people ...universal principle'
(Markus, 1988:345)

If architecture is both concept and
experience, space and use, structure
and superficial image –nonhierarchally –
then architecture should cease to
*separate these **categories** and instead*
merge** them **into unprecedented
***combinations** of program and spaces'*
(Tschumi, 1989:254)

Markus' and Tschumi's approaches to reading PLACE are a projection of the continuity
and disruption, respectively, of the traditions of architecture space between post-
Vitruvian and a new paradigm of place. However, both readings reveal the dynamics and
complexities of PLACE. Markus, on the one hand, attempts to develop a **peaceful
reading**, well-defined and well-structured, of the inherited complexities in space.
Accordingly, he emphasises the distinction between the constituents of PLACE and
simultaneously reflects on the connections between them that blur this distinction.
Tschumi, on the other hand, attempts to produce a **chaotic reading** of the well-defined
and structured misrepresentation of space. Accordingly, Markus aims to develop a
singular reading that recognizes and understands the multiplicities and complexities of
place through a traditional linear representation, well-defined hierarchal boundaries,
categories and relations. His reading is developed outside architecture space through a
transcendent social production. Conversely, Tschumi aims to develop multiple readings
of the different instances within the dynamic complexities of architecture space. His
reading thus constitutes multiple layers and fragments, which are repetitive, interlocked
incomplete, non-hierarchical, and in particular an immanent product of architecture
space.

Markus

Conjunction	Cause-and-effect relation	Reading/ Transcendent⇨	Function Form & space	Experience
Interrelations ⇨	People-place ⇨	Meaning ⇨	Arch. Space ⇨	Event
Disjunction	Paradox Double oscillation	No sense/ No meaning	Transformation process & cross-programming	Meaning ⇨ Production/ Immanent

Tschumi

Fig 8.7 Architecture space in between Markus and Tschumi

Thus both Markus's and Tschumi's readings of architecture project an argument about space which considers PLACE interrelations, people-place, meaning and event, and the constituents of architecture space between people and place (Fig 8.7). Markus' reading projects the immanent social meaning and relations in space and Tscumi's projects the paradox between people and space immanent in architecture space. However, this argument also reflects many consistencies and unexpected similarities as will be explored in the following section.

8.3.1. In between Conjunction and Disjunction

Markus' and Tschumi's PLACE inter-relations lie in between conjunction and disjunction respectively. However, these conjunctions and disjunctions should not be taken as in opposition. They both imply the independency of PLACE categories; however they also imply a different set of relations between them. These relations also work on two different levels.

Connection Both/ and	Hierarchal Structure	Form Spatial structure Function
Conjunction ⇨	**Order & classification** ⇨	**Building types & design guidelines (rules)**
Cause-and-effect Outside/ social	Well-defined Similarities/ differences	Boundaries and clusters Power relations

Fig 8.8 Reading Markus's architecture space through conjunction

Conjunction, as defined by Markus is a social product that considers classification and order of place categories through a cause-and-effect, hierarchal, linear and structural relationship, represented through typologies and design guidelines.

On the other hand, disjunction as defined by Tschumi, is an architectural process which considers the **transformational sequence** of PLACE, which rejects a cause-and-effect, hierarchal, linear and structural relation, hence, it considers a combination and permutation process of design.

Dis-connection Either/ or	Spatial, temporal, sensory, programmatic...	Breaks the binary of people/ place into (space, movement, etc.)
Disjunction ⇨	**Sequences and Transformations** ⇨	**Combinations and permutations**
Anti-synthesis Dislocation & juxtaposition Transgression	Reciprocal, indifferent, &conflict	Changes the pre-order of place relations

Fig 8.9 Reading Tschumi's space through disjunction

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Accordingly, we follow Markus and Tschumi by using a constructed conversation in order to explore their readings of PLACE interrelation in between conjunction vs. disjunction, order &classification vs. sequences and transformations, urban typologies & guidelines vs. combinations and permutations.

a. Conjunction vs. Disjunction

Conjunction is an act of joining, a connection, combination, **juxtaposition** and union of categories (Encarta Dictionary). It entails simultaneous occurrence through the connective logic of '**both/ and**', 'it is true if, and only if', all categories are true; i.e. it works through a **cause-and-effect** relation: when one category occurs the other follows (Blackburn, 1996).

Disjunction, on the other hand, is the act of disjoining, a **dislocation**, disconnection and incoherence (Encarta Dictionary). It follows the dissociative logic of '**either/ or**' which does not necessitate a 'both/ and' relation (Blackburn, 1996). Accordingly, disjunction does not refuse the both/ and logic of conjunction. However, it rejects the ~~cause-and-effect~~ relation between categories of PLACE.

For Markus, conjunction entails the interdependency of place categories, *'not at the level of the phenomena themselves'* but at a deeper level that considers the social production of meaning (Markus, 1982a:6). '[Conjunction] *is not an internal relationship within the discourse 'architecture' but an external link in society'*. It provides a typical interdependency of PLACE, which is *'powerful, more appropriate..., and more dominant'*

'*peaceful* juxtaposition'
(Markus, 1982a:8)

(Markus, 1987:484).

> '*Such* **conjunctions** *could arguably, be*
> *called building types and, further,*
> **classification** *could, arguably, be the*
> *device which is the basis for the origin*
> *and development of* **building types**'
> (Markus, 1987:484)

For Tschumi, disjunction is '*...a systematic and theoretical tool for the making of architecture*' (Tschumi, 1987b :213). It represents the relations between the mutually exclusive categories of PLACE. Through disjunction, these categories are '*ultimately independent*' (Tschumi, 1994b:xxi), they do not intersect, they affect each other when, and only when they interact (Tschumi, 1987b), '*... an architectural element* **only** *functions by colliding with a programmatic element, with the movement of bodies, or whatever*' *(Tschumi, 2001a:213)*. The cause-and-effect relation between them is displaced through the disjunctive dissociative logic, to propose a new set of ~~relations~~, dynamic <u>process</u> that embraces the inherit contradictions in their relation. Accordingly, Tschumi rejects the 'transparent' production of meaning through a cause-and-effect relation.

> '*The concept of disjunction is*
> *incompatible with a static, autonomous,*
> *structural view of architecture. But it is not*
> *anti-autonomy or anti-structure...*'
> (Tschumi, 1987b:212-213)

Consequently, disjunction pushes architecture to 'interrupt its limits'/ boundaries; the dynamic process of disjunction, deconstructs architecture presence through dissociation between space and time (Tschumi, 1994b; Tschumi, 1987b). Disjunction '*... implies constant mechanical operations that systematically produce dissociation in space and time...*' (Tschumi, 1987b:213).

Strategies of Deconstruction as introduced in chapter three consists of not being a method, contextual tracing, a-history, **deconstructing binary opposition,** embracing the margin, meaning and event.

Accordingly, introduced disjunctions strategies through:-
- dissociation that replaces synthesis;
- superposition or juxtaposition that replaces 'the traditional opposition' between space and function;
- and finally, emphasises the dynamic process of dissociation, superposition and combination that extends the architecture limits (Tschumi, 1987b)

b. Order and classification vs. Sequences and transformations

In between conjunction and disjunctions, Markus and Tschumi read architecture space through order and classification on the one hand, and articulation (sequences) and transformations on the other. And they approach architecture space and design through typologies and design guidelines, and combinations and permutations.

Order and classification considers the arrangement of entities and categories through a **hierarchal** relation that considers their value and importance, accordingly they are classified into groups according to their **types** (Encarta dictionary).

While **articulation** and/ or **sequence** considers the connection and arrangement of these entities and categories (Encarta dictionary); i.e. an articulation does **not** entitle **hierarchal** relations like an order, it only implies the connection that is yet to be described. And **transformation** considers the process of change of these entities (Encarta Dictionary). Accordingly, this implies a dynamic process that involves the non-hierarchal arrangement of PLACE categories which simultaneously articulates and transforms between them.

Classification

*'Using categories and then arranging the
categories into a systematic order is
classification'*
(Markus and Cameron, 2002:43)

Markus considers classification as *'a function of
language'* for the study of architectural types and
characters, one which is socially constructed rather
than conceptual (Markus and Cameron, 2002:16;
Markus, 1987). Classification constructs a structural
system that involves the **identification of similarities and
differences** into categories, which are then, distributed
hierarchically, similar classes at the **centre** and dissimilar
scattered at the **margins** (Markus and Cameron, 2002;
Markus, 1993; Markus, 1987). This distribution is
manifested through clusters and boundaries, which are
simultaneously materialized through architecture
design as building types and design guidelines;
*'designing buildings is to subdivide and categorize
spaces, their uses and their users'* (Markus and
Cameron, 2002:16). Accordingly, Markus considers five
step of the classification process:
- a general reading,
- identifying the categories in this reading,
- relating these categories to space,
- designing spaces according to the
  constructed relations,
- and finally identifying rules and patterns that
  helps to control categories of PLACE, people,
  place as well as people-place (Markus and
  Cameron, 2002).

These orders and classifications are demonstrated
through architecture space [clusters and boundaries]

both explicitly –categories of function– or implicitly –
categories of users (Markus, 1987:467-68). It is therefore
necessary to re-emphasise Markus' interest in the silent
points in these orders and classification, what is missing
between clusters and boundaries, as well as the
functional categories themselves.

> 'In any classification there are empty sets
> – that is, elements or classes that could
> exist but about which there is silence.'
> (Markus, 1987:475)

Architectural sequences

> 'Any architectural sequence includes or
> implies at least three relations.
> First an internal relation, which deals with
> the method of work;
> Then two external relations
> One dealing with the juxtaposition of
> actual spaces,
> The other with program (occurrences or
> events)'
> (Tschumi, 1983b:153)

Tschumi introduces two types of architectural
sequences, internal and external. The internal
sequence considers the architectural production
process. However this research is particularly interested
in the external sequences, which considers the reading
of PLACE through sequences of place, people and
people-place, event, etc. These sequential readings of
categories of PLACE blur their definition through the
multiplicity of the sequence rather than the unified
well-defined categories.

These architectural sequences read through spatial
(place), temporal, sensory (people), programmatic
(context) etc. i.e. these sequences are projected
through the primary framework of place. The spatial
sequence is considered 'constant through our
[architecture] history', which addresses space
typology, the geometric transformations of space and
form. The temporal considers these transformations
through time. The sensory addresses sequences of
movement and perception in space, which '... can be
objectively mapped and formalized'. Contextual
sequence considers programmatic 'social and

symbolic' relationships (Tschumi, 1983b:153, 162, 154). Simultaneously, the idea of sequence could be applied to all constituents of architecture space.

These sequences could be categorised as close, as with 'people and people', which implies a closed circuit of transformational process, or open, as with people-place relationships, which implies continuity of transformations in between 'people' and 'place' as a constituent from one sequence is added to a constituent of another, and so on. 'Alternatively, of course, architectural sequences can also be made strategically disjunctive' (Tschumi, 1983b:168). Consequently, these sequences could be 'contracted' –a continuous instant transformation sequence between constituents of place–, 'expanded' – a 'gap' exist between constituents transformations that 'becomes a space of its own'–, or 'combined of both expanded and contracted sequences' (Tschumi, 1983b:165).

Order

Markus (1982a) identifies the classification orders as follows:

- spatial (formal) order, which involves composition, style and geometry; '**place**'
- functional order, which considers user patterns; '**people**'
- structural order, which considers '**place-people**', 'form-function' represented through building types
- nature/ built order, which follows Vitruvius approach to nature, 'the peaceful juxtaposition of the built order and nature' (Markus, 1982a:8)

The deconstruction of Markus text lies within his text. His empirical study of architecture design, classification hierarchy and typology did not 'uniformly mimic a social one' (Markus and Cameron, 2002:74). Furthermore, the expectedly tree-like 'hierarchal structures are not necessarily tree-like' (Markus, 1987:467). The boundaries between the classification orders are not clear and well-defined, 'an element can belong to more than

one class'. Markus also, identifies the *'philosophical debate'* developed about *'arbitrary'* relations of these orders and classification, which could conversely *'represent natural real structures'* identified through *'empirical observations'* (Markus, 1987:467). Accordingly, he recognizes the mess of social reality as represented through order and classification as well as the inability of a well-defined hierarchal structure to approach this mess, the presence of empty sets as well as the replicating presence of some elements in these sets. The approach has to be more flexible and more dynamic and the boundaries less defined; the tree-like structure is replaced by a *'lattice'*[65] (Markus, 1987:467).

Types and design guidelines

'[Design guidelines and regulations]... in recommending what architects should or should not do... intend to constrain current and future building design... and they in turn design society'
(Markus and Cameron, 2002:40)

(Markus, 1987) argues that conjunction relations find representation through types of spaces and buildings. Hence they assist the development of regulations and design guidelines and are considered as a manifestation of the architect's professional authoritative knowledge (Markus and Cameron, 2002).

Conjunction helped the production of two discourses in the order and classification of 'place-people' relationship, namely *'form-function'* through design guidelines and building regulations. These discourses gave a detailed description and prescription for form and space classification in relation to physical setting with particular interest in accommodating and expressing the space (Markus and Cameron, 2002; Markus, 1987).

Cairo-space

NOUH – as an architectural body –

is concerned with:

spatial structure, building types, movement and levels of depth, spatial configuration volume and geometry, control/ power of people-place relation

(chapter four)

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[65] In a reference to the *'lattice'*, consider the *'Rhizome'* introduced by Deleuze and Guattari (1983) in 'On the Line'; see also 'A Thousand Plateaus' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987).

'...a transformation process takes place
within the functional discourse'
(Markus, 1982a)

Tschumi (1984; 1983b) rejects the cause-and-effect relation between people and place sequences. As an alternative he introduces three sets of transformational processes: indifference, reciprocity, and conflict. Indifference entitles the total independence of architecture sequences, reciprocity entitles their total independence, and conflict occurs where they contradict each other and *'constantly transgres the other's internal logic'* (Tschumi, 1983b:160).

Combinations and permutations

'Part of a complex of transformational relations' is combinations. Fragments of the architectural sequences are *'... recombined through a series of permutations'* which implies changing the pre-order of the elements of each sequence (Tschumi, 1984:181, 180). Simultaneously, transformational relations goes beyond place constituents defined as 'people and place', 'function and form' etc. elements of this constituents, like 'movement, space, event' are caught up in a set of combinations and permutations.

*'The **conflict... is deeper** than that between beauty and utility, or form and function. If all buildings involves order-making, articulation, division (between functions, between outside and inside, between the space of strangers and that of inhabitants, between nature and human creation), then all of it is, or risks being, an instrument of **alienation or even imprisonment'***
(Markus and Cameron, 2002:24)

8.3.2. People-place: Meaning ~~vs.~~ To No Meaning

*'The dominant history of architecture, which is the history of the signified, has to be revised, at a time when **there is no** longer normative rule, a **cause-and-effect** relationship between a form and a function, between a signifier and its signified: **only** a **deregulation of meaning'***
(Tschumi, 1989:222)

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*'... **Tschumi and Derrida**... merely
demonstrate their **inability to break** the
bonds of the most restrictive of all
constraints [**cause-and-effect**]on modern
design and criticism
...Deconstruction will not read...
everyday experience as meaningful...'*
(Markus, 1988:343, 348)

A controversy concerning the projection of people-place developed between Markus
and Tschumi. On the one hand, Markus considers the production of meaning through
the traditional architecture cause-and-effect relationship between people and place.
However the production of meaning transcends to the architecture space. Meaning is
developed by 'people', and is perceived through function in a minimalist approach – e.g.
form follows function – or through a social production as in a maximalist approach.
Tschumi, on the other hand considers the paradox between people and place, which
rejects cause-and-effect relationships. As previously discussed, Tschumi approaches the
paradox through the insertion of a third term, the pleasure-of-violence between place
and people experience. Thus, meaning is not a by-product of a cause-and-effect
relationship, but an immanent product of transformational process and programming of
architecture space. It is viewed as an event outside the reading of architecture space;
however, it is presented in this section in relation to Markus' approach. This controversy
of people-place projection is deepened by Tschumi's attack on cause-and-effect
relationships as well as by the transcendence of meaning and Markus's complementary
attack on the deconstruction approach of Tschumi and Derrida *'...its practitioners add
confusion; its theoreticians add amnesia'* (Markus, 1988:348). Accordingly, this section will
approach the controversy of production of meaning through a cause-and-effect
relationship and/ or through the rejection of this relationship.

a. Relation(s) or Paradox

*'The hierarchical **cause-and-effect**
relationship... is one of the **great
certainties of architectural** thinking...
reassuring... that we live in houses
designed to answer our needs*
(Tschumi, 2001a:255)

*The hierarchical cause-and-effect
relationships... go **against** both the real
pleasure of architecture ...and the reality
of contemporary **urban life**...'*
(Tschumi, 2001a:255)

Markus reads architecture space through a cause-
and-effect relationship between people and place,
social context and architecture space, which implies
comfort, harmony and homogeneity between them
and represented through typologies and guidelines. He
also recognises the inherit conflict between them.
However he re-draws on the Vitruvian tradition to
address the conflict, which helps to increase the
conflict rather than resolve.

*'... The conflict between beauty and
utility, or form and function, is deep, and
in design practice, never fully resolved*

...
*The more agonizingly beautiful the
created object, the more acute the
conflict '*
(Markus and Cameron, 2002:23-24)

*'...architecture must be conceived,
erected and burnt in vain'*
(Tschumi, 1974 in Tschumi, 2001a:262)

On the other hand, Tschumi's rejection of the
dominance of 'cause-and-effect' is a rejection of:
- meaning as a by-product of this relation',
  meaning is a future construction through the
  interaction between the different
  constituents,
- Synthesis relations between people and
  place,
- the supremacy of linear direct relations,
- the asymmetry between people and place
  where one constituent dominates the other,
  people and place interact and affect each
  other equivalently. It is *'impossible to
  determine which one initiates and which*

one responds' (Tschumi, 1981c:122, 127)

He reads architecture space as a paradox between people and place, as previously discussed, and inserts a third term 'pleasure' between them to subvert their duality and reject the cause-and-effect relation. Simultaneously, he read the violence between people and place, particularly between material space and body, as the body violates the materiality of space and vice versa (Tschumi, 1981c).

'Why has architecture theory regularly refused to acknowledge such pleasures [violence] and always claimed... that architecture should be pleasing to the eye, as well as comfortable to the body' (Tschumi, 1981c:125)

b. Meaning

'Strictly speaking, semiotics and structuralism propose language not as a metaphor for architecture but rather that **architecture is a language'** (Forty, 2000:80)

Meaning remains a controversy in architecture. The conception of architecture space in relation to language and semiotics lies at the heart of the controversy of reading meaning. A semiotic reading of architecture space emphasises form and physical space as the signifiers that produces meaning –the signified– through cause-and-effect relationship. Interestingly, both Markus and Tschumi read meaning beyond semiotics and signification. **Markus** (2002) on the one hand, reads architecture as a language of analogies and metaphors; **meaning is a social construction,** a reading of meaning embodied in architecture space. **Tschumi** (2001a) on the other hand, rejects the reduction of architecture space to language. Meaning is neither a prior –transcendent– construction nor is it immanent in the physical space; **it is an event,** which takes place in the future through the interaction between people and place. It is worth noting that Tschumi's rejection of the production of meaning through a cause-and-effect relationship is a rejection of the dominance of this relationship rather than its denial. At the same time, as demonstrated in the last section, 'cause-and-effect' is displaced by a

transformational process that involves relations of indifference and conflict besides a reciprocity that echoes 'cause-and-effect'. In this sequence, Markus' and Tschumi's reading of meaning could be approached as **two analogous perspectives** rather than as contradictory.

> 'architecture is a language'
> (Markus and Cameron, 2002:1)

> 'architecture is not a language'
> (Tschumi in Walker, 2006:61)

Markus explores the strong relation between language and 'almost everything they [architects] do' (Markus and Cameron, 2002:1). However, his approach goes beyond semiotics and structuralism.

Semiotics approaches the linguistic meaning of words as an internal process detached from its context. Markus considers a 'pragmatic and socio-linguistic' approach to meaning and language, one which attaches meaning to 'the whole context: social, temporal, and spatial' (Markus and Cameron, 2002:10).

> '... To dismantle meaning showing that it is never transparent, but socially produced...'
>
> (Tschumi, 1987a:201)

> 'Groat (1981) has demonstrated how ... social studies of place ... have emphasised meaning, the signified, over the physical form the signifier. And 'architecture have tended to focus on the physical place rather than the meaning (Groat and Després, 1991)'.
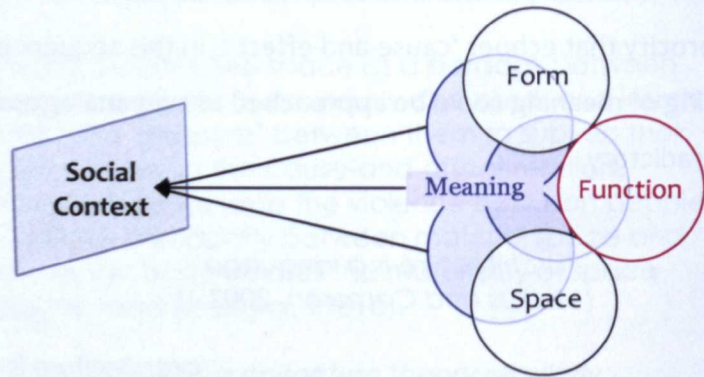>
> (Chapter 7: 228)

Fig 8.10 Markus's meaning

'Buildings [architecture space] are
primarily social objects. They carry
meanings for society in general, and
occupants and users in particular, which
relate to asymmetries of power'
(Markus, 1987:467)

Through his reading of PLACE, Markus (1987) proposes a framework to study how architecture can *'carry meaning'* to people (see Fig 8.10). Form, space and function are the three architectural discourses which primarily *'yield three sets of independent characteristics'* (Markus, 1987:467). Meaning is embedded within each and every set, as a relation between architectural place and people. These relations do not perform on an abstract architectural level, but are incorporated within the wider social context of place (Markus, 1982a). Accordingly, these sets interact on the level of meaning (Markus, 1982a). *'A focus on social relationships and the analysis of social structure appear to provide the links between the analysis and aid the discovery of meaning'* (Markus, 1982a:6).

*'... the relation between **form and meaning** is never one between **signifier and signified**. Architectural relations are never semantic, syntactic, or formal, in the sense of formal logic'*
(Tschumi, 1984:185)

The reading of Tschumi's meaning was developed through a number of mixed manifestations. A rejection of meaning: there is *'no sense/ no meaning'* (Tschumi, 1987a:200). The aim is to achieve an architecture which *' ... is a pure trace or play of language...'*, *'an architecture of the signifier rather than the signified'* (Tschumi, 1987a:203). Interestingly, his reading does not reject meaning in architecture space, but it does refuse the established interpretations and associated conventions i.e. the reading of form and meaning as signifier and signified respectively. Alternatively, meaning is a by-product of the architectural transformational processes. However, Markus (1988) associates Tschumi's rejection of meaning in architecture space to the approach to language of architecture through image and styles of himself and Derrida.

Sign
Signifier → Signified
Form → meaning
Form → function
Space → action

*'**S E M** ...If there was anything that could be seen as 'meaning', it was in the meeting of **S**pace/ **E**vent and **M**ovement... a semantic coincidence'*
(Tschumi in Walker, 2006:42)

For Tschumi, 'SEM' is an *'ironic statement'* that brings about the triangle of *'signification'* and simultaneously rejects the *'embodiment'* of meaning in architecture (Walker, 2006:42). At the same time, meaning is the by-product of this sequential process SEM, as people

interact and use place. Meaning is not an attribute of either people or space. It is not '...*immanent in architectural structures and forms*' (Tschumi, 1987a:200).

Derrida, as discussed in chapter three, discards the signifier –represented by the physical form in architecture. Accordingly, the sign refers to an **absent signifier,** to a signified which refers to reality. Furthermore, a sign refers to another signified –for example classic styles in architecture. Accordingly, meaning is produced '...**only** by referring to another past or future element in an economy of traces' (Derrida, 2004 [1979]:29).

Reality A←Signified A←~~Signifier~~ ←**Sign** → ~~Signifier~~ → Signified B→ Reality B

'*The excess of **meaning lacks meaning**.*
But how can meaning be produced
*when **signs only refer to other signs**; when*
they do not signify, but only substitute?'
(Tschumi, 1984:176)

At the same time, meaning does not transcend architecture space through society, history, culture etc. and thus an architectural sign signifies another sign, historical for example. Tschumi hence seeks '...*an architecture without any prior signification*' (Walker, 2006:60), which implies an architecture that does not draw on an external meaning existing in the social context, history, culture etc. Accordingly, it '*frees*' architecture from traditionally established conventions of meaning so that '...*in future, [it] will be able to receive new meanings*' (Tschumi, 1984:174).

The reading of architecture through a transcendent meaning in history, society, etc imprisoned architecture space in a triangle of signification that subverted the physical space (form) and detached architecture from meaning.

History ←meaning←~~Form~~ ←**Sign**←Architecture→ **Sign** → ~~Form~~ → meaning→ Society

As an **architect**, one can encourage
certain conditions for this use and misuse
that will potentially entail a meaning, but
one **has absolutely no control over
meaning**. ... [for example] if the context is
gone, the meaning is gone'
(Tschumi in Walker, 2006:51)

8.3.3. Place: Form ~~vs.~~ To Concept: concept-form[66]

> '...our forefather only built their hut after they had conceived its
> image. This production of mind, this creation is what
> constitutes architecture.'
> (Boullée, 1968 in Tschumi, 1975a:34)

The discourse of place between Markus and Tschumi as discussed in chapter two, developed from a concern for structured organisation of space and form into a resistance to this stability of structure and image.

Markus' reading emphasises the discourse on physical space. Like Canter (1977) and Relph (1976)[67], he considers the physical settings and attributes of place. However, neither Canter nor Relph provide an illustration of the physical attributes of place. Markus provides a description of the experience of the physical space as form - style and composition - and space -urban morphology and typology (Markus, 1987; 1986; 1982a)

Place (Markus, 1987) → **Space** (morphology & typology) / **Form** (style & composition)

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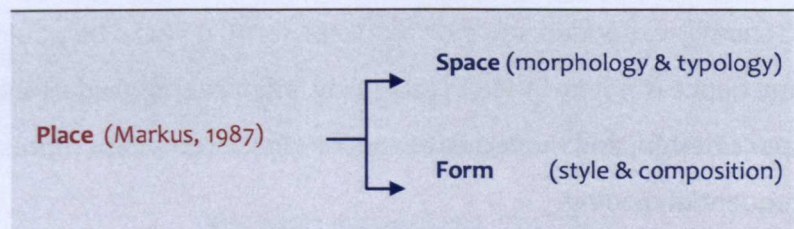
[66] As discussed in chapter two, the term was first introduced by Tschumi in his book 'Event-Cities 3' (2004). He dedicates his forth coming book, 'Event-Cities 4: concept-form' (2010) to an expanded discussion of the subject.

[67] Refer to chapter seven

```
                                    ┌──────→  Space
Space  (Tschumi, 1975a)  ───────────┤
                                    └──────→  Action
```
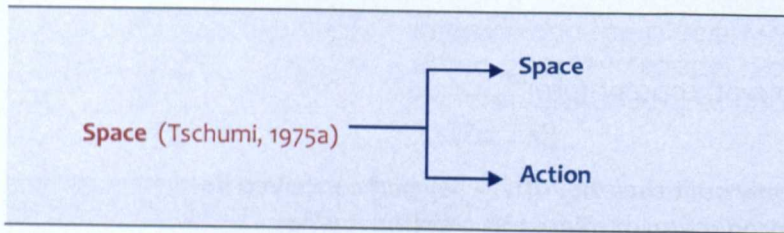
Tschumi on the other hand is not interested in physical space, 'over the past years, there is one word I have almost never used, except in order to attack it: form' (Tschumi, 2010). He reads place through a confrontation between 'spaces and actions' (Tsc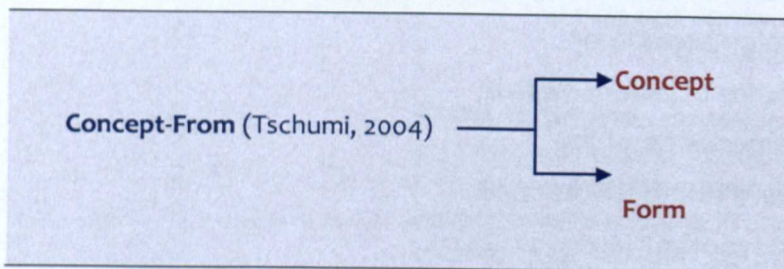humi, 2001a), which blurs the definition of place becoming contaminated by another category, 'people', or 'action'. Moreover, Tschumi introduces the 'concept-form' in between physical and conceptual space, 'a concept generating form, or a form generating concept' (Tschumi, 2010).

```
                                    ┌──────→  Concept
Concept-From (Tschumi, 2004)  ──────┤
                                    └──────→  Form
```

Accordingly, this section will now explore place as form and concept. However, Tschumi's expanded study on 'concept-form' is yet to be published (forthcoming 2010) and hence is not included in this study. This reading studies the boundaries and edges, space design, and movement-in-space, and attempts to represent these through a sequential reading.

a. Boundaries and Movement

Markus does not explicitly approach either the **boundaries** and edges of place or the **movement** within and between, but approaches their architectural manifestation in place and through architectural drawings, plans, sections, elevations as

well as 3D diagrams. Form represents *'the formal properties of place and of the boundaries which define it'* (Markus, 1982a:5) i.e. he considers the architectural style, which involves the *'symbolic, semiotic and abstract content of style'* (Markus, 1982a:5) and the architectural composition which involves formal *'geometric properties, the proportions, articulation, colour, ornamentation, and surface treatment'* (Markus, 1987:468). **Boundaries** are addressed through *'the number and location of entrances from the outside'*. And **movement** is addressed through the architectural paths and routes; *'the number of different routes to a space (that is whether it is on one or more rings or part of branching, tree-structure)'* (Markus, 1987:469).

Social studies of place, on the other hand, approach the architectural style through the people; 'people's recognition or formal categorization of defined architectural styles; people's stylistic preferences for a given building type; and the social meaning associated with housing of particular styles' (Groat and Després, 1991: 33). However, the study of composition is 'relatively rare' in social studies, which consider either the complexity of the architectural composition, or the 'significance' of certain physical attributes in relation to people (Groat and Després, 1991), and similarly in relation to psychology and behavioural process (Canter, 1977a).

'The walls around the city have disappeared and, with them, the rules that have made the distinction between inside and outside...'
(Tschumi, 1989:216)

Architecture space, which is intrinsically related to presence and materiality in physical space, is also an abstract idea, a conceptual space. However, this conceptual space shows a dual contradiction in architecture thinking, which Tschumi considers as an intrinsic attribute within architecture. This conflict or contradiction goes back to a definition of 'space' which relates space settings, place-making and the

setting of its **limits and boundaries** to architecture, and the study of the *'nature'* of space to philosophy and mathematics, as is discussed in chapter two. However, architecture has shown a genuine interest in ideology and philosophy of space rather than simply regarding the construction of physical space *'as the sole and inevitable aim of their activity'*; *'one must conceive in order to make'* (Tschumi, 1975a: 33, 34).

Simultaneously, the transformational process of space involves the development of a sequence of spaces through juxtaposition, addition, repetition, etc. However, the spatial sequence goes beyond the *'formal composition'*, as it interacts with the sensory space (Tschumi, 1987b:208; 1975a). The sequence entails continuity and discontinuity between spaces, which formalises the sequence body of **movement-in-space** as well as establishing stand points (Tschumi, 1983b; 1975a).

b. Typology and Sequence

At the same time, space, the spatial experience of place, consists of morphology and typology. Markus explores the formal properties of space, although architectural style and composition are not addressed on this level (Markus, 1982a). Architectural theory in general examines the 'descriptive analysis' of the morphological properties of place (Groat and Després, 1991).

On the other hand, Groat and Després (1991) consider typology, the formal and functional structure of space as representing a *'significant point of intersection'* between architectural theory and social studies. However, EBS approaches the functional structure, i.e. hospitals, and architectural theory has approached the formal, i.e. L-shaped forms (Groat and Després, 1991).

Markus considers space typology through the depth, sequence and permeability of the different spaces; i.e. the number of spaces and the way people pass

through from the outside to an inside location (Markus, 1987; 1982a).

> EBS studied building types in relation to
>
> - historical development, meaning embedded in the structural properties of the form;
> - socio-cultural meaning linked to certain typologies, as well as;
> - social (people's) cognitive representation of these typologies
>
> (Groat and Després, 1991).

Alternatively, Markus considers the 'abstract morphological systems' (Markus, 1982a:5) , 'the structure of space, sequence and linkage' between the different spaces (Markus, 1987:469).

> Conversely, social studies and EBS in particular rarely approached the descriptive analysis of space morphology; rather they tended to understand through their relation with the wider socio-historical context (Groat and Després, 1991).
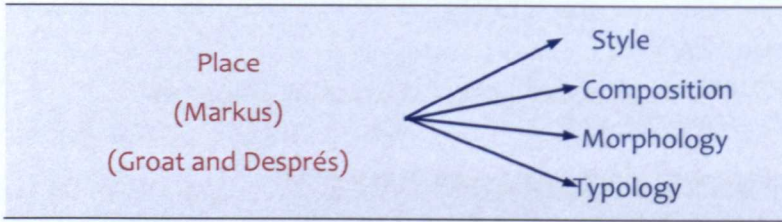
> Tschumi reads space typology and morphology through sequential transformations of 'geometric forms' '...constructed, step-by-step – or deconstructed – according to any rule or device' (1983b:156)

c. A Sequential Reading

Markus, in a similar way to Groat and Després (1991), reads place through style, composition, urban morphology and typology, which is associated to physical space. Simultaneously, Groat (1981), as discussed in the previous chapter, criticises the model of place developed by Canter (1977a) for its exclusion of architecture space, particularly the physical, and she proposed the inclusion of this set of place. Interestingly, Canter (1997), in the discourse of the Facet Theory of Place, includes Markus' reading of place, which

also involves function, as a representation of the physical attributes of architecture space.

```
Place                          Style
(Markus)           ─────────► Composition
(Groat and Després)          ► Morphology
                             ► Typology
```

Tschumi on the other hand, perceives place through a sequence of concept (idea-to-space), physical (space-to-space), social (body-to-space), contextual (context-to-space), virtual (electronic space-to-space), etc. This reading appears to engulf Markus' concept of place through a sequence of physical spaces (space-to-space), which involves the transformational process of space geometry, organisation, form, and boundaries. However, Tschumi's reading also involves the contamination of these sequences through their interaction with other categories. For example, the spatial sequence involves the transformation of spaces, paths and links, and this helps to formalise the body movement-in-space through a sensory sequence.
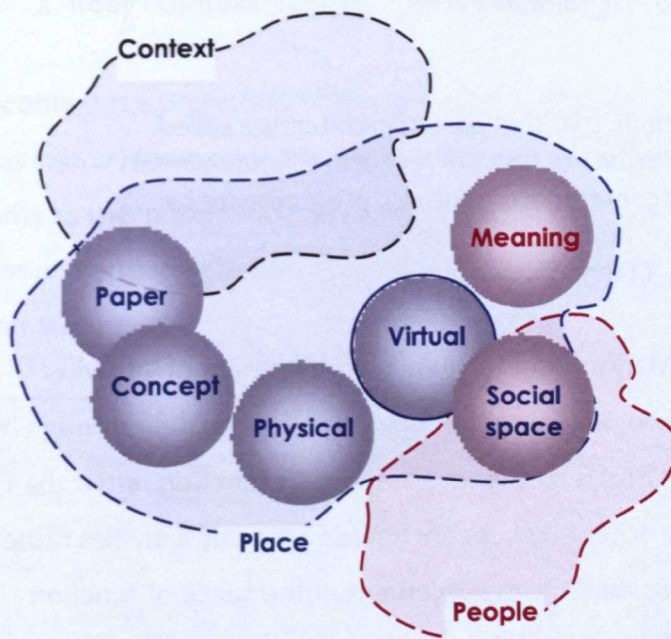
```
                               Conceptual
Place              ─────────► Virtual
(Tschumi)                    ► Contextual
                             ► Physical
                             ► Social
```
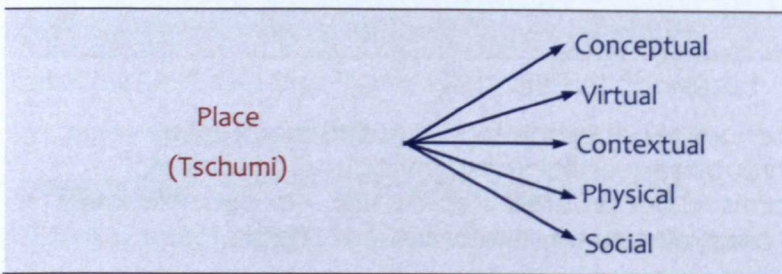
Fig 8.11 Place: a sequential reading

In (Fig 8.11), I represent a sequential reading of place which interacts with both people and context. The reading implies non-hierarchal permutations of categories of place, people and context. Simultaneously, the boundaries of these sets as well as their categories are not well defined despite their mutual exclusiveness. Place involves physical space, conceptual space, paper (architectural drawings, etc.), social space etc. Place is considered an abstraction and/ or generalisation of each of these categories which would be addressed sequentially in context. Place and people interact through social space. However, as previously explained, both sets are repeatedly contaminated through body movement, perception, etc. Finally, it should be noted that meaning is dislocated by the split between author/ reader, designer/ user. While the author/ designer reads a meaning through people-place interaction, meaning escapes the sequence to inhabit architecture space through user interaction without prior planning or control.

8.3.4. People: *Function* ~~vs.~~ *To Programme/ event*

> *'The new questioning of that part of architecture called*
> *'program', or 'function', or 'use', or 'events', is fundamental*
> *today... in our contemporary society, programs are by*
> *definition unstable.'*
> (Tschumi, 2001a:20-21)

This reading of 'people' extends Markus' and Tschumi's development of Vitruvius' 'Utilitas' as discussed in chapter two. Markus continues Vitruvius' tradition through his discourse on function, which like Utilitas considers the **space-of-function** rather than the function-in space. Tschumi on the other hand, is concerned with body activities rather than function. Accordingly, he considers the displacement of the space-of-function brought about by the intrusion of the **event** into architecture space. He also emphasises the **movement** of the body-in-**space** which generates space-of-movement.

> *'Facet A, in Canter's (1997) facet theory of place, considers the differentiation*
> *between **spaces-of-function** through typology of place, [particularly] central and*
> *peripheral [spaces-of-activities].'*
>
> (Chapter seven: 248-9)

The reading of 'people', in this section, is particularly interesting as it highlights many conflicts and contradiction between Markus and Tschumi, but also demonstrates consensus as they appear to echo each other in different aspects. This apparent agreement helps to bring together both readings as well as extend the reading of 'people' from a concern with function to a concern with body movement articulated through program and event. This reading therefore explores people as an extension from body-in-space to context, from function to physical space, from program and event and finally presents a sequential reading of 'people' constituents of place.

a. Body - context (social)

Body-context is a projection of the 20th century reading of architecture space in which Markus (1982a) focuses on the social production of architecture space, in an apparent similarity to the 'maximalist' approach. Tschumi (1980), on the other hand, rejects the separation between the two approaches and considers their integration as discussed in chapter two.

> '... **'minimalist'** ... *concentrates on the details in architecture, style technique, etc. The* **maximalist,** *on the other hand, extends to the urban context, social, political, as well as programme.'*
>
> (Chapter two: 52)

Markus considers the development of the discourse on 'people' through a cause-and-effect relationship to 'place'. '...*formal and spatial solutions... embody the functional statement...*' (Markus, 1982a:5). Function statements are produced through social *'verbal'* discourse and consequently involved in the design process. Markus (1988:343) also considers the development of architecture briefs and design guidelines to accommodate the 'body' needs in space. The 'body' here refers to user needs rather than the materiality of the body as understood by Tschumi.

In the 'Cultural Park for Children', the community (society) was involved in the verbal discourse on the park. Accordingly, at their request the park plan was modified to include a library for children.
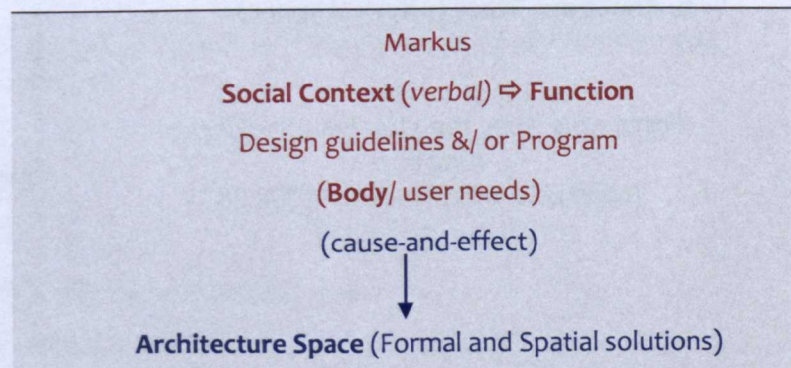
Markus

Social Context (*verbal*) ⇨ **Function**

Design guidelines &/ or Program

(**Body**/ user needs)

(cause-and-effect)

↓

Architecture Space (Formal and Spatial solutions)

Fig 8.12 Markus' reading: context-body-space

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Tschumi

Body (*movement*) ⇨ **Architecture Space**

(pleasure-of-Violence)

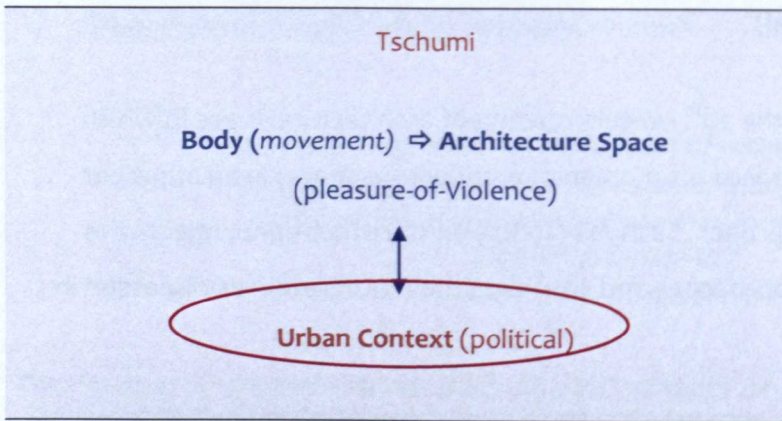↕

⟨ **Urban Context** (political) ⟩

Fig 8.13 Tschumi's insertion of body (movement) in space and context

The reading of

The Cultural Park for Children

In-between

Community/ child

And

Cairo-space

In-between

Tourist/ Cairene

Is a reading between

Social context/ body-in-space

Where the reading of social context is dominant

'...suddenly, the body was there, regardless of what one thinks, whether one likes it or not'
(Tschumi in Walker, 2006:27)

Tschumi (2001a:3) emphasises the inclusion of the physical *'movement of bodies in space'* along with social actions and events within the urban context. This inclusion is a by product of violent relations between the materiality of the body and physical space (Tschumi, 1975a). This helps the 'articulation' between the **body-in-space** and **social context**, as discussed in chapter two. Accordingly the reading of people recognises and extends from inside the physical architectural space to the wider socio-cultural context.

b. Function - Place (physical space)

'Form now rules the day by speaking of function'
(Markus and Cameron, 2002:28)

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For Markus, the relation between space (form) and function '*...is not in question – only ...the interpretation*'(1993:35). The cause-and-effect relation simultaneously blurs the definition between function and meaning. Therefore the product is '*speaking architecture*' that provides '*...a direct understanding of a building's function*' (Markus and Cameron, 2002:28). This relationship operates in either a minimalist – body – or maximalist – context. The first is interested in the '*function experience*' of place which is concerned with the architecture programme and place typology (Markus, 1987:468). This relationship implies that each function has '*predictable formal consequences*' through space morphology and organisation as well as location and furniture (Markus, 1993:37). The maximalist approach, on the other hand, is interested in the **social function** of space, function as implying a symbol of meaning '*...speaking through allegorical and metaphorical forms*' (Markus and Cameron, 2002; Markus, 1993:34). Markus (2002)also highlights the attachment of the latter approach to **classical architecture** styles.

The reading of **Cairo-space** through a **monolithic representation** of the historic architecture style of the old Islamic city, is a another **emphasis on the social context of the city** – a maximalist approach – rather than the ~~minimalist experience of Cairene~~ – the body – in Cairo space.

Tschumi's reading as he himself explains, aims to '*reinstate*' people '*function*' to the architecture discourse, in opposition to the dominance of physical place '*form*'(Tschumi, 2001a:3-4). This is evident in his emphasis on the experience of body-in-space, and program and event as will be discussed in the next section.

c. Programme – Event

For Markus, the programme is the social construction of space-function through '*verbal descriptions*' developed into architectural briefs by architects and

professionals (Markus, 1982a).

Program: *designed and planned*

People (Tschumi)

Event: *unplanned and unexpected*
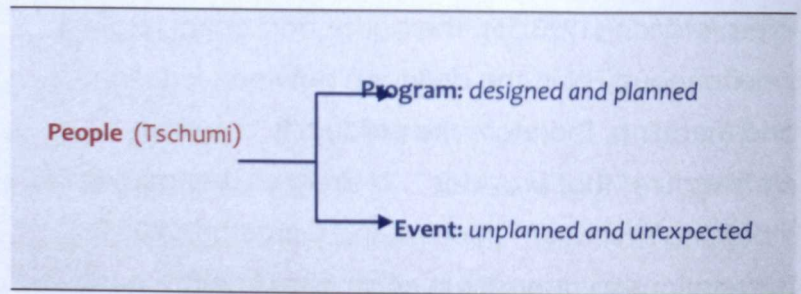
Any predetermined sequence of events
can always be turned into a program'
(Tschumi, 1983b:157)

Tschumi also, reads the architecture programme as a descriptive brief of the different involved spaces-of-function. However, he does not consider the inclusion of people, and/or society in the process. In opposition, the event is '... *a turning point – not an origin or an end'* (Tschumi, 2001a:256). The event happens; it is neither organised nor arranged. Consequently, Tschumi (1981c) introduces the concept of 'programmatic sequence', which encompasses the use of space, events, etc. This is considered to be a particularly violent sequence as it interacts with the physical sequence.

d. A Sequential Reading

"Program' is not the same as 'use', 'use' is not the same as
'function', 'function' is not the same as 'event"
(Tschumi in Walker, 2006:27)

In a similar way to the reading to place, (Fig 8.14) shows people as a sequence of function, use, program, movement, etc. At the same time, the concept of 'people' is considered an abstraction and/ or generalisation of each of these categories, and would be addressed in a sequence in place and context. Boundaries and hierarchy between these categories are not well-defined despite their mutual exclusiveness. People interact with place through the physical space that simultaneously, extends to reach the context. Meaning is again dislocated from the sequence; meaning is a category of both the

sequences of people and place, but meaning does not belong to sequence. Finally, the event acts as the supplement that escapes the boundaries of the sequence.
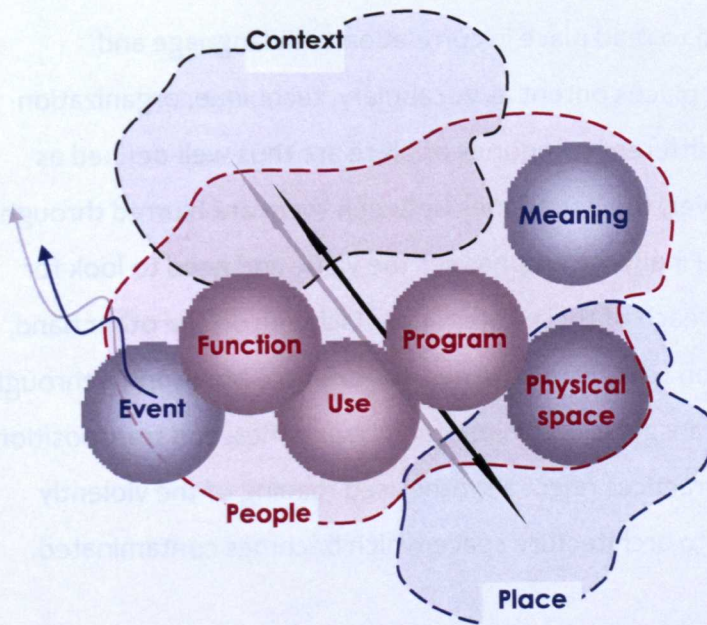

Fig 8.14 People: a sequential reading

8.4. Architecture Space

The review of architecture space in this chapter, between Markus and Tschumi, is a reading between the continuity and discontinuity of the traditions of architecture classicism as discussed in chapter two; and the paradigmatic shift in the reading of Khōra, explored in chapter three, between the traditional reading of the *'well-defined'* categories and linear relations, and the new reading of the *'not well-defined'* categories, which creates a complex network of ~~relations~~ negotiations through their continuous oscillations between each other. At the same time, the review of social space in the previous chapter associated the reading of Markus with the facet theory, and Tschumi with deconstruction. Both readings recognized the dynamics and complexities of place, however facet theory attempted to provide a structured framework to categories and classify this reading whereas deconstruction attempted to further destabilize this

relation, 'to put architecture into crises' as endorsed by Tschumi. Interestingly, the review of the facet theory of place associated Markus' discourse on architecture space to the physical space and Tschumi's to the social.

Consequently, Markus attempted to read place in correlation with language and discourse analysis that perceived place content as vocabulary, technique, organization and composition, style, etc. The different categories of place are thus well-defined as form, space, and function. However, the boundaries between them are blurred through the relationships between them. Finally, he emphasises the value and need to look for and recognise the silent points in each of these categories. Tschumi, on the other hand, reads architecture space in relation to other disciplines, for example philosophy, through the practices of intertextuality, transgression of limits and boundaries, and transposition of metaphors. Moreover, these practices reject a synthesised reading of the violently introduced fragments and layers to architecture space which becomes contaminated.

Interestingly, both Markus and Tschumi recognise the conflicts and multiplicities associated with architecture space. However, Markus attempts to control and regularise them through a 'well-defined' reading, whereas Tschumi attempts to emphasise and exaggerate them. Accordingly, for Markus, architecture space is the by-product of design guidelines and pre-defined place typologies, which are simultaneously fashioned through conjunctive cause-and-effect relationships that bring about the transcendent reading of meaning through the social context. For Tschumi, on the other hand, architecture space is the by-product of unprecedented transformations and cross programming where rejects the transcendence of meaning through cause-and-effect relations in favour of the disjunctive paradox of architecture space and which varies between reciprocity, indifference and conflict. Meaning is thus dislocated into the immanent reading of architecture space, to come through the unplanned event of the interaction between categories of people and place.

Accordingly, the anti-synthesis practice helps the construction of architecture sequences, reading instances of categories of place, for example 'people', which recognise the multiple layers and fragments of each category which both extends to

other constituents, e.g. context, and involves fragments of other sequences, e.g.
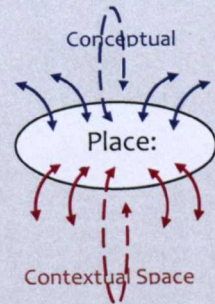
physical space.

Cairo, Khōra,
&
Deconstruction:

What is the place of ~~Egypt~~ **deconstruction** in ~~deconstruction~~ **Egypt**?

Conceptual

Place:

Contextual Space

Towards a reflexive
reading of place

On the way **Back to Chōra:**

Chapter 9: ...To Be Continued

9 ... to be continued

9.1. Cairo, Khōra and Deconstruction: *and place*

Cairo, Khōra, and Deconstruction... This thesis is concerned with the study of place, my place. It is a study of Cairo, the Egyptian capital, my city and my country, carried out through the perspective of an architectural background, my educational background, developed through my personal affiliation to theory and philosophy. Consequently, the research was developed through four instances; the first brought deconstruction and Cairo together through the lens of Derrida's reflections on the city; the second emphasised the Cairene's presence and interaction with the city space; the last two instances reflected on the nature of architecture space and highlighted both the lack of theoretical studies of the region and the need for integration.

This chapter thus looks back on the thesis development and considers both the questions posed and the paths taken to approach them. It is also interested in the un-posed questions and the paths not taken. These reflections become a self critique of the selectivity and dominance of interpretative approaches and representations of the research subject, and question the potentials of taking different paths, continually developing new instances and new research questions.

The discussion works through three main points. The first reflects on the research approach and methodology, working within a post-structuralist background particularly deconstruction. The second point reflects on the proposed marriage between Cairo space and deconstruction as expounded by Derrida and adopted in the research, together with the influence of this study on the representation of the city beyond both 'a monolithic oriental image' and the boundaries of space and time. This section also reflects on the relative role of architects and urban designers, particularly in 'Cairo space'. Finally, these reflections question the reading of 'place' and consider the implications of the use of a reflexive methodology to develop the primary framework of place.

9.2. A Post-structuralist Journey

'However, there is no end to the task of deconstruction'
(McQuillan, 2001:15)

This research presents a post-structuralist journey with a particular interest in the deconstruction project, the implications and potentials of which were studied in chapter five. However, it should be noted that this journey is also embedded and implied within a structuralist notion. My personal experience as a researcher is deeply rooted in a structuralist frame of reference through my previous education and research. This journey helped me to recognise these structuralist tendencies, and to understand and develop a post-structuralist frame of reference. The research subject, place, also developed from a structuralist traditional reading to a post-structuralist one. Furthermore, the reflexive reading of the research oscillated between structuralism and post-structuralism, through data construction, interpretation, re-interpretation and reflections. The selection of theories of place included both approaches; for example, architectural space oscillated between Markus' structuralist and Tschumi's post-structuralist reflections. The primary framework of interpretation involved a structured exploration of well defined elements: people, place, people-place, meaning, event, relationships and internal structure. The critical interpretation involved deconstruction reading strategies.

I examine the development of the research through three main points. The first discusses the reading of a complex, chaotic research subject, the mess of place both empirical and theoretical, between verification and recognition. The second explores the main research aim and question - how to approach a ~~framework~~ reading of place? - And finally, I reflect on the use of reflexivity as a research method and reading tool.

9.2.1. The mess: *verification vs. recognition*

'If this is an awful mess ... then would anything less messy make
a mess of describing it?
... won't help us to understand mess.'
(Law, 2003)

The research goes beyond the anticipation of a single coherent reading of reality. The problem definition, presented in chapter one, recognises the mess of the research subject, both empirical and theoretical. It considers approaching the theoretical mess of place in order to approach the empirical mess of Cairo space. Place is read through a complex network of relations between the architectural abstract concept and people's experience and everyday activities in place, while remaining embedded in the wider urban context: social, economic, historic, political, cultural, etc. At the same time, theories of place are then developed through a multi-trans-disciplinary reading using philosophies of place interested in the exploration of the nature of place, architecture theory interested in the making of place, and social studies with its particular interest in the experience of people in place. The multi-trans-disciplinary practice enables a dissolution of the boundaries between these disciplines where they interact, producing many similarities, differences and inconsistencies. The empirical study of Cairo space is another reflection of the complexity and chaotic nature of the study of place with a particular emphasis on its relation to time, people and context. Cairo space represents a large metropolitan area, densely laid out with few open spaces in between. Built upon multiple chapters of history, the city is caught in a growing tension between past and present, national and global, east and west. The city is overcrowded, with a growing population, which reflects heterogeneous backgrounds, classes and cultures, and contributes to the conflict between people, place, and time. Furthermore, the city space is influenced by national and international institutions, by political and economic benefits. And more interestingly, the city space is now questioning the role, the inclusion and/ or exclusion, of architects and urban designers in this institutional context.

The review of Cairo-space has shown a growing interest in the study of the city public space. However, these studies tend to explore only particular dimensions.

This research presents a step towards remedying the demonstrated lack of a body of theoretical literature in the region. Further studies to enhance and complement it are needed.

At the same time, further studies are also required to address the relational aspects of space rather than just its particular elements, as a step towards the development of a *'comprehensive social examination'* of the contemporary urban space of the city – the currently available literature was developed in the 1960s.

Furthermore, the study of Cairo space urgently requires an examination of the adoption and adaptation of the multiple chapters of the city's history, which goes beyond the polarisation between past and present, in order to recognise and help in their co-existence and evolution.

There is also a need to examine other popular public spaces, such as squares and sidewalks, which would tell us yet another story about Egypt's public space.

As discussed in the previous section, the research approach to the demonstrated mess developed between a **structuralist 'well-defined',** singular reading with a hierarchal classification and categorisation of the research subjects, similarities at the centre and dissimilarities on the margin, and a **post-structuralist 'not well-defined'** reading that accepts ambiguity and plurality, and addresses equally both primary and secondary data, and the 'trivial and non-trivial' though showing a special interest in the marginalised data. A structuralist approach, on the one hand, understands place, the research subject, in terms of separate elements and linear relationships; analysis attempts the isolation and logical interpretation of these through a synthesised formulation of a unified singular reading i.e. the simplest hierarchal framework. A post-structuralist approach, on the other hand, understands place as a network of complex and negotiable categories, sub-categories and relationships, and recognises the multiplicities, diversities and inconsistencies of their interpretations while favouring a singular or best reading. Furthermore, it attempts the continuous destabilisation of these interpretations and their authority. In summary, both approaches recognise the mess of the research subject, both theoretical and empirical. However, the first approach attempts the hierarchal classification of this mess, its similarities and differences, through the structural primary framework of interpretation, whereas the second attempts the

destabilisation of this interpretation through continuous exploration and awareness of the mess itself. Structuralism therefore, risks simplification and misrepresentations, while post-structuralism intrinsically runs the risk of a continuous, never-ending exploration. However, the development of the research approach between the two frames of reference helped to minimise these disadvantages. The following section reflects on the alteration of the research aim in order to develop a structured 'framework' to an approach to place, to non-structured 'reading strategies'.

9.3. Cairo: *my place or Derrida's?*

'Egypt and Derrida...
the god of writing, Thot, who pops up in 'Plato's pharmacy', the pyramids that serve for Derrida as an introduction to Hegel's semiology, the Egyptian stones that resonate at the end of Glas, the desert of Edmond Jabes and the Mount Sinai of Emmanuel Levinas that Derrida visits, and the hieroglyphs from the 'scrible (power writing)'
(McQuillan, 2010:225)

The first instance explored Derrida's visit to Cairo, Egypt and his reflections on her identity and representation through background research. His lectures brought three concepts from his work to the Egyptian context. The first took the study of the city identity through people, place, and people-place relations, and this approach was adopted in the context of this research. The other two concepts reflected on *'un-conditional hospitality'* and *'mondialisation'* in association with the city's socio-cultural context.

Derrida: You know I have only been here for three days!

What if Derrida were Egyptian?

Whose Cairo?

(Chapter one:6-7, 10)

Unconditional hospitality is the '*... notion of hospitality [which] demands a welcoming of whomever, or whatever, may be in need of that hospitality*' (IEP, 2006). Derrida's discourse on hospitality brings about issues, of boundaries, the host, control, acceptance of the other etc.

The study of the socio-culture context of Cairo, in particular and Egypt in general, through the concept of '*hospitality*' holds the potential to a new approach to read the inherent binaries in her urban context and literature, Cairene/ tourists and Cairene/ others.

Derrida's visit and reflection brought about a considerable deviation from an almost consensus on the reading of the city in literature which associated the city with the dominance of the monolithic image of the historic city. However, the traditional mainstream in Egypt questioned Derrida's reading and expressed their attachment to the perception of an Egyptian identity with strong attachment to the region and their fear of connection to Western culture.

Mondialisation, the French word for globalisation though not its equivalent, it is not opposed to nationalism. The study of the concept of mondialisation within the Egyptian context helps to deconstruct the relational binary, inside/ outside, breaking the boundaries of space, or in other words to read the deconstruction of boundary binaries, inside/ outside, us/others, etc. within her urban context.

> '*... Derrida [is] always [concerned], with the place of Egypt (or more accurately the figure of Egypt) as an origin of western philosophy*'
> (McQuillan, 2010:255)

Interestingly, the relationship between Egypt and Derrida is neither new nor initiated by his visit to Egypt in 2002. Derrida's interest goes back to the dialogues between the Egyptian writer in ancient Egypt and Plato. In these dialogues, the Egyptian reflected on the importance of writing, recording incidents and planning a future.

> '[The Egyptian writer:] You Greeks... are like children, for you have no written tradition... Since you have no writing, you need myth'.
>
> (Derrida, 1995b, p.114)

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The lack of theoretical literature today is evident in Egypt as reviewed in chapter one. At the same time, Derrida's reading of Egypt places her at the heart of western metaphysics, namely their deconstruction, which was studied by several authors, for example Bennington (1992), McQuillan (2010), and Sloterdijk (2009).

> 'Even now posing the question of Egypt is only in its infancy'
>
> (McQuillan, 2010:276)

However, my reading is concerned with the possibilities of the deconstruction of the traditional representation of Cairo space and Egypt in general, and the potential for developing a re-reading of her space which goes beyond the oriental representation and associated literature.

9.3.1. ~~Embracing~~ Blurring the Oriental Image

> *'Whenever Egypt appears in the text of philosophy one can detect an uncontrollable undecideability in the epistemology, order, logic and axiomatic of that discourse. In part this is a result of the proximity of Egypt to the origin but it is also a consequence of the indissociability of Egypt and the problem of the material'*
> (McQuillan, 2010:256)

Sloterdijk (2009:x) demonstrates that there are *'essentially only two'* readings, *'singular'* which is more concerned with the content, and *'in context'* which extends to include the context. In a similar way, architecture space is perceived as minimalist and maximalist; and social space as personal and socio-cultural. In this section, I shall consider these readings under the headings 'singular' and 'contextual'.

Singular reading:
Minimalist Arch. space
Personal space

Contextual reading:
Maximalist Arch. space
Socio-cultural space

A singular reading is primarily concerned with the content of the text/ urban space, the internal structure, composition, style and details as well as emphasising the personal space of the reader/ user, psychology and movement. A contextual reading, on the other hand, places the content in relation to its (urban) context, historical, geographical,

cultural, political or economic, in order to understand the meaning allocated in the context. This reading thus emphasises the socio-cultural space through typologies and symbolic relations. However, it risks the marginalisation of content in favour of context (Sloterdijk, 2009).

The review of Cairo space in chapter one highlights the dominance of the historic as well as the socio-religious dimension fn the reading and representation of the city space. Consequently, a set of binaries associated with the literature on 'post-colonialism' and 'orientalism' are presented in chapter four, which considers the inside/ outside relationships of the city; us/ others, Cairene/ foreigners, east/ west, etc.

> Deconstruction ...already at work within...not at the centre... the 'defective corner stone' ...pushed to the margin... holds and ...destabilises... will readily deconstruct the whole structure [text/ space] (Chapter 3: 104)

At the same time, the reading of the 'Cultural Park for Children' in chapter six demonstrates minimalist/ maximalist binaries, child/ community, user/ society etc. The reflections, on the margins of chapter eight, highlight the association of these readings with a maximalist rather than a minimalist approach. The dominance of the contextual reading echoes the emphasis on history, socio-culture context and the community.
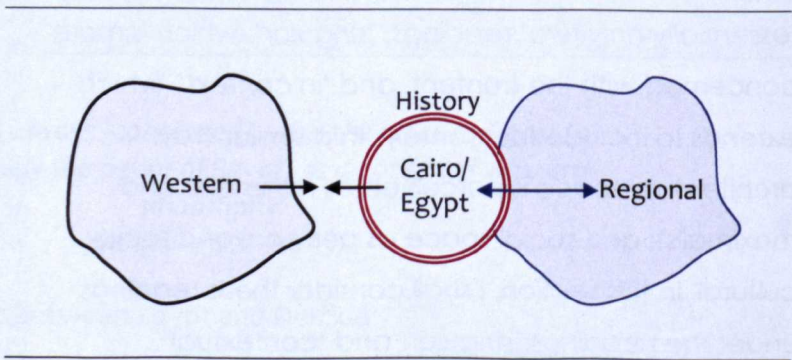

Fig 9.1 'Contextual reading' the defective cornerstone in the story of Cairo space

The binary contextual/ singular reading is the 'defective cornerstone' in the structure of Cairo space, which, when identified, could help to deconstruct the traditionally established readings and representation of her space. The reading of Cairo and Egypt in

general, has always been associated with the context outside her space (Fig 9.1). This led to the dominance of the historic context, and particularly of specific chapters in her history, the Islamic and the Pharaonic. Simultaneously, the inner polarisation of the city between the modern and the traditional is another contextual binary which allocates her identity in relation to either the western world or the regional area. The dominance of the socio-religious dimension helps to shift the city closer to the regional context associated with religion – Islam – and language – Arabic –, and away from the western i.e. the approach to nationalism is paralleled by regionalism. This shifting is augmented by the western emphasis on the definition of their boundaries. Finally, the architecture space presents a manifestation of this reading through an association with the social context, the community and history, which subverts the personal space.

As discussed in chapters three and five, Derrida favours the 'singular reading' rather than the contextual. The latter risks the trivialisation of the content, being both *'too easy to deal with'* and subverted by the context (Sloterdijk, 2009:xii). However, it should be noted that Derrida's singular reading is not perceived as in opposition to the contextual. In a singular reading, he rejects the transcendence of the context, social, historic, etc., to the content, while simultaneously recognising the inscription of this context inside the text.

> **The event...** is a manifestation of resistance to a future dominated by ...models from ~~history/ tradition~~
>
> ...rejects the ~~transcendence~~ of the ~~context and author~~ outside... both are inscribed inside breaking the boundaries between **~~inside/ outside~~**
>
> (chapter three:93, chapter five:176)

The boundaries inside/ outside the content, space and text are blurred through the concepts of the *'trace'*, and the *'différance'*. The either/ or relation between the inside/ outside is displaced through the double oscillation between neither/nor and both/and. Tschumi also negates the separation between the two readings in architecture.

> **Différance** ...displaces [the either/ or relationship] through the oscillation between **neither/ nor** and **both/ and**, [deconstructing] fixed ~~meaning and relations~~
>
> (Chapter five:176)

He introduces his reading trilogy: concept, content, and context, to address this separation. Moreover, Canter's reading of social space as that area between personal and socio-cultural space does not reflect autonomous categories but a reading gradation.

Derrida, problematically, places the reading of Egypt at the origin of 'western metaphysics' to act the supplement that escapes boundaries in order to deconstruct. At the same time, Bernal (2006) highlights the debate on the acceptance and denial of Egypt's controversial relation to Western history, itself brought about by the writings of Plato, Aristotle, Hegel, etc.

A singular reading ...is influenced by the discourse, the context, and the author... [an] **event [in context]** that is yet to come unexpectedly, and the **meaning [cornerstone]** ...established after... deconstructing the boundaries of [context] space and time through **différance**.

(Chapter five: 174-5)
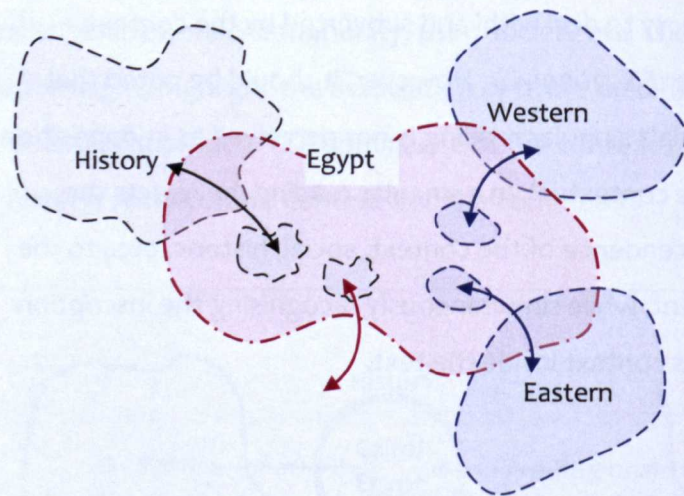
Fig 9.2 Singular Reading – Deconstruction

These discussions highlight the blurriness of the boundaries between place, in the case of this study for example the space of Cairo or Egypt, and the outside context, whether global, western, regional, temporal etc. This context is simultaneously inscribed inside place. Consequently, a singular reading of Egypt acknowledges her relation to both eastern and western cultures beyond any binary opposition that imply the dominance of

one term and subversion of another (Fig.9.2). The deconstruction of the supremacy of this binary in her context allows the development of a new reading that walks through her space to discover the multiplicities and dynamics within. Furthermore, the history of her space is read through that space rather than being dominating by it i.e. it is possible to acknowledge and appreciate the different chapters of history within her space without approaching the reading of this space through a historic or traditional frame of reference. It should be noted that no 'single' reading is anticipated but multiple, changing interpretations on the way to uncovering the meanings, identities of her space.

How can architects and urban designers contribute towards the reading and making of the city?

The second main question of the research remains unanswered. This research has reflected on the exclusion of architects and urban designers from the institutional structure in Egypt, as well as examining the attempts to form professional bodies, like NOUH, as a way to become involved in the decision making process. However, the role of the latter is confined to supervision.

This research highlights the necessity to reconsider and empower their role in decision making andto understand and develop their role beyond regulations and legislative supervision. This requires further study to explore the involvement of a 'reflexive reading of place' in architecture design as well in education.

9.4. A Reflexive Reading: *on the way back to Khōra*

'...there is only one Khōra... however, divisible it be'
(Derrida, 1995b:97)

Towards a reflexive reading of place... the main research question was: '*how to approach the reading of place?*' This question was challenged by the multiplicities, dynamics and complexities of both the phenomenon and the study of 'place'. The latter drew on philosophy – primarily interested in exploring the nature of space/ place –, social studies - involved in the study of people's experience of place –, and architecture theory – concerned with place-making – as well as the empirical case study of Cairo public space.

The approach to this question thus evolved from a concern to develop a multi-disciplinary framework which operates on two levels: place and context, in order to consider a reflexive reading from among the multiple projections of place that extend from the concept of content of place to that of context.

At the same time, this study was itself developed through a reflexive reading. A primary framework was developed at an early stage through an initial reading of the theories of place involved: Canter (empirical based, 1977) and Relph (phenomenological, 1976), Markus and Tschumi (architectural, 1980s~), and Canter (Facet Theory of place, 1997). This framework recognised the general categories and relations in place and was introduced as the primary framework of interpretation. However in order to develop this framework into reflexive reading strategies, the theories were re-approached as the research object, as theoretical case studies of place reading.

9.4.1. Author/ Reader

The multidisciplinary reading of place thus explores the role and perspective of the author/ reader as designer, interpreter and participant. The designer - architect, urban designer and planner - is concerned with place-making, conceiving architecture space through the imaginative experience of the first reader. The reading of architecture space has long been associated with Vitruvius' trilogy: Fermitas, Utilitas and Venustas and has continued through the post-Vitruvian trilogy of space, function and form. Tschumi (2001a) has demonstrated the unperceived displacement of Vitruvius' readings in architecture today, through space, movement and event. Furthermore, he complemented this displacement through another trilogy - concept, content and context. The discourse on architecture space, on place-making, also involves an institutional and administrative contribution whose role is particularly overemphasised in the context of Cairo public space, outweighing the contribution of architects and urban designers. Philosophers and social researchers are considered as interpreters, who are particularly interested in exploration of the experience of people and place. Philosophers, on the one hand, are concerned with the study of the nature of space/

place, container, relational, internal, external, extended, etc. These studies, as introduced in this research, involve three periods: the ancient which approached space/place as a whole, with the complication of subsuming chōra under Aristotle's topos; the modern which helped the division of this whole through a set of dualities and which empowered space and emphasised the phenomenological experience of the body; and finally a return to Khōra which brought place to heterogeneity, indirection, and complexity. Social researchers on the other hand, are more concerned with people's experience in place, their activities, behaviour, etc. as portrayed through empirical studies. Early social studies adopted a positivist perspective which approached the reading of a well-defined place presented as elements and relations. The later structuralist approach recognised the messiness of the dynamics and complexities of place, but also attempted the classification and categorisation of this mess through a well-defined framework of reading.

Finally, there are the participants, that is, the users of space, community, passersby, and so on, whose role is not empirically involved in the reading of place in this research. However, the participants' role is carefully approached as an integral part of this reading: the 'people' presented as a study of relationships, people's relationship to place - body movement, experience, event, etc. - and people's relationship to others - the self, the other and others and to personal, social and cultural space.

Khōra, as introduced by Derrida, is a unit; not a homogenous unit, but a unit nevertheless. Simultaneously, these multiple spaces, of architecture, philosophy and society, do not present different places but different perspectives that co-exist even when in conflict. This reading could thus help bring them together, through their interaction and communication into a relationship which recognises and accepts integration, indifference and conflict.

> **The Cultural Park for Children**
>
> The **conflict** between the architect's perception of the social space of **community** and the manager's perception of the **child**'s user space could be brought into interrelation through the space – the park – that **brings together the conflict**.

9.4.2. By way of Khōra

Another reflexive instance is introduced through the study of Khōra, who is involved in both the reading of place in architecture and philosophy and in the marginal reflections on the development of this reading. Khōra plays a fundamental role in the development of the new paradigm of place. The traditional autonomous elements of place: body, space, and mind, evolved from separatist linear relations into heterogeneous, complex negotiation networks.
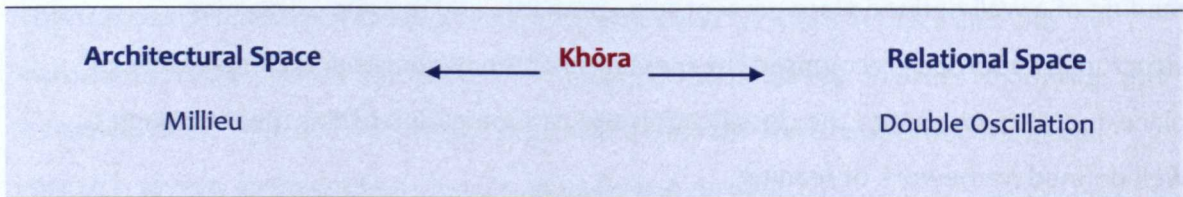
Architectural Space	← Khōra →	Relational Space
Millieu		Double Oscillation

Fig 9.3 Khōra: and architectural and relational space

Khōra is both the abstraction and realisation of architecture space, and vice versa, as concluded in chapter three,. At the same time, Khōra rejects her submission to matter, a subset of topos, as well as the habitation of architecture space in topos. Thus she extends with architecture space into the milieu: context (Fig 9.3). Furthermore, Khōra is a relational space, continuously moving between two types of oscillation: neither/nor and both/and,rejecting the determinism of well-defined boundaries and cause-and-effect relationships.

Khōra, being an intermediate space, is the reciprocal of temporal readings of peaceful, indifferent and conflictual relationships between the double oscillations but without possessing any of their properties. At the same time, she is always on the move; as soon she is defined, she shifts. She presents the space in-between concept/ content, concept/context, and content/context (Fig 9.4). She also oscillates internally between the rational/ emotional concept, the body/ space content, and the context.
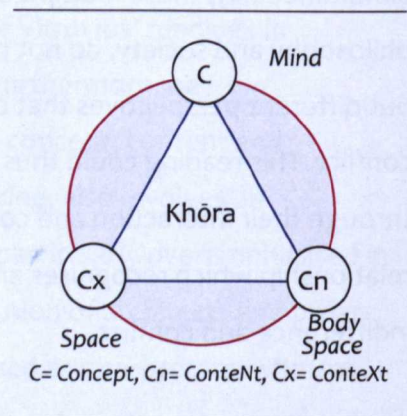

C = Concept, Cn= ConteNt, Cx= ConteXt

Fig 9.4 Khōra: a relational space

350

*'The separation of conception – a mental imaginative process
...from realization which requires materials... to make drawing
concrete, now seems obvious'*
(Markus and Cameron, 2002:26)

The development of the concept of modern space initiated a separation between space and place, space and matter, etc. which problematised their reading and encouraged a return to ancient philosophy. Subsequent readings emphasised the materiality of bodily experience in space, creating another binary: body/ space, which implied the reading of mind as separated from body. Khōra, the contemporary re-readings of Plato's chōra, attempted the deconstruction of these binaries and their consequent separatist relationships. These readings continued to emphasise the context, thus separating context from content; the content – body and space – is located in context, creating the binary reading of place-content/ context, or a trilogy of space, place and context. Tschumi (2004) developed the trilogy: concept (space), content (body & space) and context which he applied to architecture space. My proposition is that while this separation of the context has further implications for the reading of space/ place, at the same time, the potential for going beyond this separation remains doubtful.
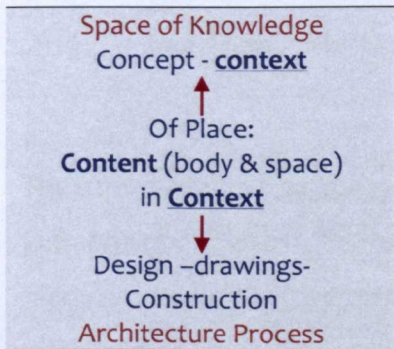
Space of Knowledge
Concept - **context**

↑

Of Place:
Content (body & space)
in **Context**

↓

Design –drawings-
Construction
Architecture Process

Fig 9.5 Architecture Space

Space of Thinking
Intelligible – Sensible

↑

Khōra
Place Content
(in-between)
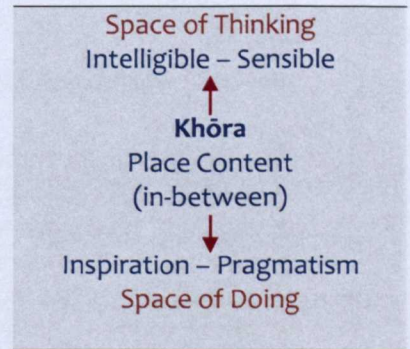
↓

Inspiration – Pragmatism
Space of Doing

Fig 9.6 Khōra: a space in between

Architecture space is a space of knowledge of place in context (Fig 9.5). It is concerned with place-making which extends in-between the concept: the reading of place, the process: design, drawings, modelling, etc., and the construction. Khōra, on the other hand, oscillates in between the space of thinking and the space of doing, each of which oscillates between the abstract idea: intelligible and inspirational, and the material:

sensible and pragmatic (Fig 9.6). However, Khōra is not the content of place; she is the passage to the delivery of place.

At the same time, the context escapes place to become the space of knowledge: the sensible i.e. the context is the sensible space of knowledge of place in context. The context is thus immanent in place, where the transcendent space of knowledge is approached through a temporal frame of immanence (Fig 9.7). Accordingly, the context reads place through multiple spaces: economic, social, architectural, political, etc. which simultaneously and continuously displace each other. This understanding of the relationships in place - rather than between place content, concept and context - both questions and destabilises the reading of place, which is discussed in the following section.
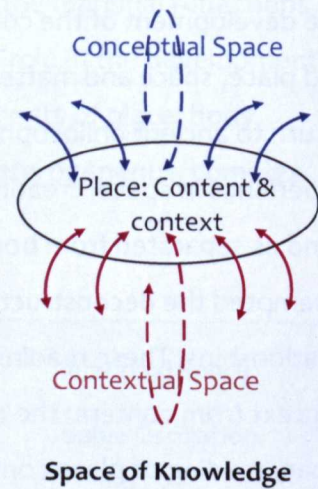
Fig 9.7 Contextual space: sensible space of knowledge immanent in place content

How can architects and urban designers contribute towards the reading and making of ~~Cairo Space~~ Place?

The reading of place through conjunctions, cause-and-effect relationships, etc. helped the production of design guidelines, laws and legislations to control and regulate place-making, and provided 'well-defined' typologies of place in relationship to the function. This helped the production of several books and documents to guide and aid the contribution of architects and urban designers towards place, but which actually controlled rather than aided them.

The reflexive reading of fragments and sequences of place through disjunctions and double oscillations cannot intrinsically provide rules and regulations to control the production of space. However, this reading holds the potential for developing the awareness of architects and urban designers about the multiplicities and dynamics of place and for integrating theory with practice. This potential requires further study and examination, in close relation to both architecture design and education.

9.4.3. Reading Fragments

The readings of Khōra, architecture and social space have demonstrated the awareness and recognition of the dynamics and complexities within place, developing into multiple readings. Accordingly, ~~sets~~ ~~facets~~ **sequences and** ~~elements~~ ~~categories~~ **constituents** of **PLACE** (see Fig 9.8) involve: <u>people</u> – body, movement, use, function, programme etc.; <u>place</u> - concept, drawing, physical, virtual etc.; <u>context</u> - physical, social, economic, political, historic, etc.; and <u>time</u> - past, present, future – planned and unplanned (Fig 9.9).

Khōra:

People   Space/ Place   Context   Time
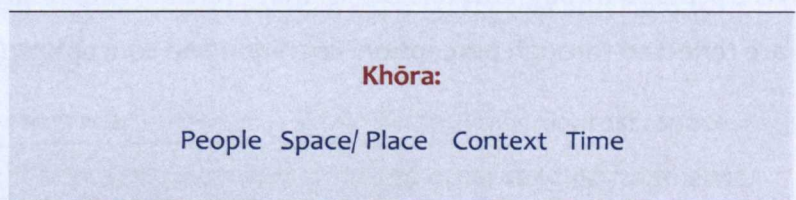
Fig 9.8 Khōra: a reading sequence

Planned   Unplanned   Event

Time:

History   Past   Present   Future
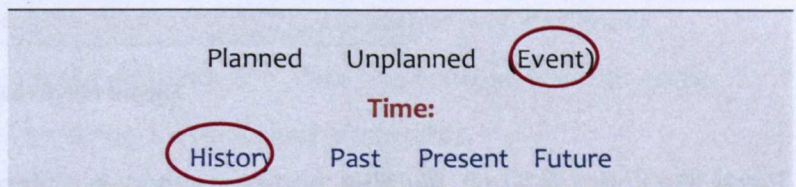
Fig 9.9 A temporal sequence

The **interrelationships** between these sequences vary between <u>intersection</u>, <u>union</u>, <u>juxtaposition</u> (peaceful and violent), <u>conjunction</u>, and <u>disjunction</u>. The temporality of a reading instance and multiplicities of the constituents allow these variations in-between their relationships: for instance, two sequences can intersect through one instance and differ through another. The sequential reading rejects hierarchy, linearity and well-defined structures. The **relationships** between the constituents help the construction of **meaning**, **experience**, and **event** through ~~cause-and-effect~~ <u>double oscillations</u> <u>transformations</u> and <u>cross-programming</u> etc.

Author/ reader space:
Designer – Interpreter – Participant
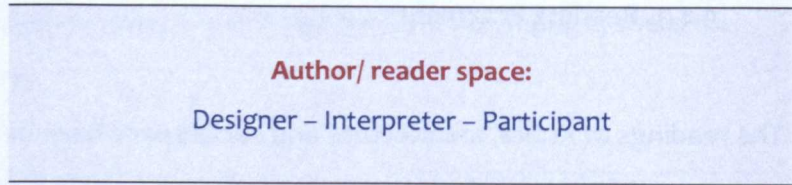
Fig 9.10 Author/ reader sequence

At the same time, the reading of place is an attribute of the perspective of the author/ reader, presented earlier as designer, interpreter and participant (Fig 9.10). The practice of reading place is a sequential relation between the mind and place (body and space). As discussed throughout this thesis, these relations are rational and/ or emotional and are reflected through perception, cognition and conception (Fig 9.11).

Rational   Emotional
Mind
Perception   **Cog**nition   Conception
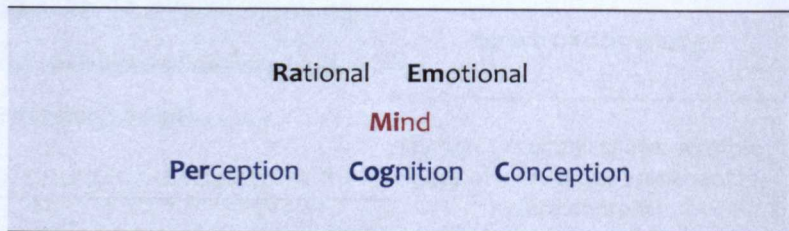
Fig 9.11 Mind: reading sequence

Place, like Khōra, is a unit, divisible, non-homogenous, multiple, complex, and dynamic but, nevertheless, a unit. However, these complexities have shown a persistent resistance to previous readings, which considered either an understanding of the whole phenomenon of place or a particular aspect of it. In general, these readings attempted to introduce frameworks and classifications in order to identify and structure the boundaries, the involved constituents –categorised as central and marginal-, the silent points or gaps within the well-defined boundaries, and ultimately, the internal structure and relationships between these categories. However, these readings have revealed several difficulties and inconsistencies. Primarily, the boundaries of the constituents of place demonstrate a tendency to dissolve in between them, blurring their definitions and, more particularly, implicating the relationships between them. At the same time, the approaches to reading these relationships recognise the dynamics attributed to them even though they continued to be read through a linear framework.

Architecture   Social   Philosophical   Urban
Context/ Space
Economic   Political   Temporal   Institutional   Social

Fig 9.12 Context/ space reading between a disciplinary and a setting sequence

In the view of this thesis, it is not possible to attempt to read place either as a whole phenomenon, or through a predefined structure. Accordingly, I propose to approach place reading through multiple fragments (see Fig 9.12, Fig 9.13, Fig 9.14 and Fig 9.15). Each of these fragments presents:

- **A temporal instance** which reads through a single perspective, context, space, and author. However, it also recognises and relates to other reading fragments.

- **A singular reading**, (see Fig 9.2), which approaches the reading of each fragment [e.g. people] from within, while simultaneously being influenced by the discourse [e.g. place], context [e.g. institutional space] and author [e.g. designer].

- **A reading event**, which while embedded in place and context, is yet-to-come unexpectedly and thus meaning is established afterwards.

- **A paradox,** which considers the deconstruction of binary representations of place through a third term which oscillates between them.

- **A relational reading** which approaches the relationships between the constituents of place rather than reading them as separate constituents and links. For example, people are read in relation to their economic context, rather than being studied separately as people and economic context and then considering the relationship between them.

- **A reading sequence** which approaches the paradoxical relationships as a transformational process without hierarchy or classification of structures and which thus provides multiple combinations and permutations.
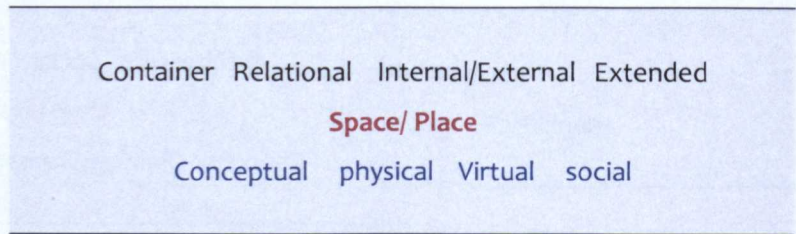
Container   Relational   Internal/External   Extended
Space/ Place
Conceptual   physical   Virtual   social

Fig 9.13 Space/ place reading sequence

Accordingly, these fragments should be approached through a dissociative reading. This dissociation allows their juxtaposition and superimposition without prior order or intended meaning. For example, the reading of place considers two sequences: first, fragments, in which one studies the nature of place: container, relational, etc., and second, which reads the attributed spaces: conceptual, material, social, etc. (Fig 9.13). Another sequence reads people as fragments of uses, activities, functions, etc. and mind, body, society etc. (Fig 9.14), and meaning is read through a sequence in-between experience and event (Fig 9.15).

Mind   Body   Society   Culture   Programme
People
Use   Activities   Function   Behaviour   Movement
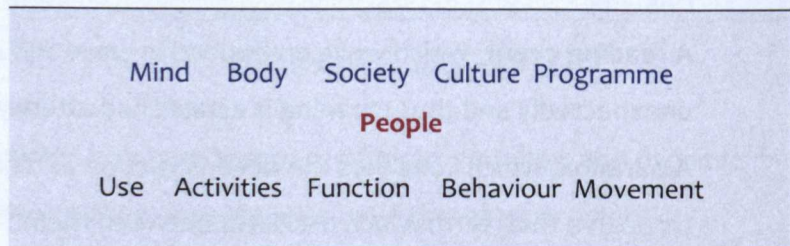
Fig 9.14 People reading sequence

Khōra
Experience   Event   Meaning
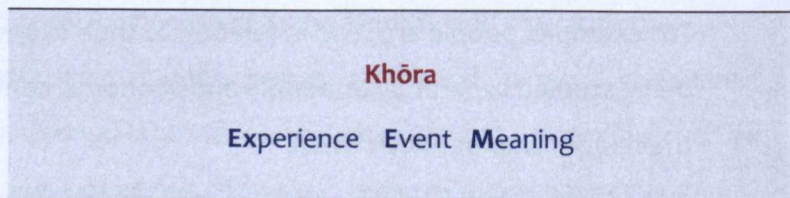
Fig 9.15 Meaning: reading sequence

The proposed fragmentation of the reading of place holds great potential for approaching the inherited complexities and dynamics within. At the same time, this reading recognises the exclusiveness of each fragment whilst allowing for the development of yet more readings... This new reading of place, however, must remain

without a final conclusion in a post-structural thesis. The fragments, outlined above, require further study, both individually, and in relation with each other.

Reading Place: to be continued... or re-read again...

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