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The Architecture of Managerialism: OMA, CCTV, and the post-political

Introduction

Pitching OMA's project for an office tower in Manhattan, in 2012 (YouTube, 2012), Rem Koolhaas directs the attention of the competition panel to his authorship of *Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan* (1978). "What I wanted to do is look at New York as if there had been a plan. Europeans have a lot of manifestos but then don't realize something, but in New York there was a lot of realization but no manifesto" he explains, as the book's cover appears on the screen to his right. "Anyone thinking about New York has to think about the implications of the grid. It was my conviction that the grid, on the one hand, is very rigorous and authoritarian, but that in that rigor it also enables a lot of imagination", he continues, accompanied now by a map of the city's street plan. A further image of the Manhattan grid appears, this time identifying the precise location of the tower, at 425 Park Lane, and illustrating the rationale from which its torqued form is derived: "I think it's a site that's pulled in two directions, both to the north and to the south ... so we then started to look at shapes that were perhaps expressing, articulating, that double pull." After elaborating, among other things, on the ways in which the tower's atypical shape appears to shift in relation to the perspective of the viewer, Koolhaas presents his concluding argument: "In a city which is almost dying of generic shapes, but which also doesn't need needless extravagance, it is a beautiful in-between of something that has not happened before, but is still very polite towards everything which is there."

The architect establishes his credentials. *Delirious New York* underwrites his authority to speak on the subject of Manhattan and to design for its future. For anyone actually familiar with this book, however, there will be something amiss in all of this. The rich theses of *Delirious New York*—the 'culture of congestion', the 'technology of the fantastic', and the 'archipelago of blocks'—are elided as the book is pressed into service only to underline its author's qualification to design this simplistically conceived tower. The 'paranoid critical method' that informs *Delirious New York* is parlayed into the 'polite' formal novelties of 425 Park Lane.

From the various forms of neo-avant gardism lasting from the 70s to the mid-90s, architecture has evidently travelled some distance to accommodate itself to the present day pragmatics of doing business. Strategies of disjunction, sorties into philosophy, film and narrative, and raids on the early twentieth-century avant garde have been set aside as the discipline has sutured itself more securely to the means and methods of the market. Where some, at least, had sought out a radically new conception and practice of architecture (even if not often an explicitly *political* one), the discipline

now largely constrains its purpose to the provision of product innovation for the ‘only game in town’: the ‘real’ of capitalism. Its attentions are turned now to matters of management, of organizational efficiency, research and development, and resource optimization. Not only are its design practices and its relations with its clients carried out according to managerial principles, but so too is its discourse *about* these practices and relations.

A further example. In the essay ‘The Hokusai Wave’, Alejandro Zaera-Polo (2005) recounts the moment at which he realized that the conceptual and technical vocabulary in which his practice, Foreign Office Architects (FOA), had typically traded—one of ‘material organizations’, ‘artificial ecologies’ and ‘circulation diagrams’—was entirely inadequate for communicating with a non-specialist audience. During the presentation of FOA’s Yokohama Port Terminal project at a local press conference, Zaera-Polo recalls, he realized that their ‘message was not coming across’. In a ‘burst of inspiration’, he writes, ‘we terminated the factual process narrative to conclude that what really inspired us was the image of the Hokusai Wave. The room exploded in an exclamation of sincere relief: “Ahh!”’ (79).

Significantly, this moment of realization is itself deemed worthy of being relayed back to a specialist readership in the pages of *Perspecta*. The anecdote is used to identify a ‘crucial matter’ in the management of architectural discourse—‘the relationship between acquisition protocols and architectural output’ (78)—and the Hokusai Wave moment is presented as a lesson in how to handle public relations.

The managerialist turn in architecture, now concerned with making things work and pay within the scope of existing arrangements rather than with testing the limits of these, suggests its proximity to the *post-political*. The first indications of the presence of this phenomenon in architecture can be found in the turn to the thought of Deleuze (suitably stripped of its Marxian aspects) in the early to mid-90s, and in the post-critical/projective discourse that followed soon after. Michael Speaks (2006), more recently, has attempted to drive a wedge between, on the one hand, an unproductive theorizing that he considers to have been, at best, only ‘interesting’, and, on the other, a productive managerialism that will now ‘work’ for architecture (103). Patrik Schumacher (2012), once a proponent of the ‘progressive’ potentials of working with, and through, the possibilities opened by contemporary organizational models, has lately relinquished any such ambitions. He now insists that architecture’s accommodation to the existing social order must be absolute, arguing that ‘it is *not* architecture’s societal function to actively promote or initiate political agendas that are not already thriving in the political arena.’ (447)

The post-political, according to Slavoj Žižek (2002), operates through the apparatus of managerialism. ‘The ultimate sign of “post-politics” in all Western countries’, he argues, is ‘the growth of a managerial approach to government: government is reconceived as a managerial function, deprived of its properly political dimension’ (303). The post-political, he writes in *The Ticklish Subject*, (1999) is concerned with ‘the “administration of social matters” which remains within the framework of existing sociopolitical relations.’ The properly political act, in contrast, ‘is not simply something that works well within the framework of existing relations, but something that *changes the very framework that determines how things work*’ (199).

Architecture, of late, appears similarly unconcerned with, even actively hostile to, changing the ‘framework that determines how things work’ (199). It is focused, instead, on making the existing framework—both of the discipline itself and of the larger social processes in which it is implicated—work more effectively within what Žižek terms ‘the (global capitalist) constellation that determines what works’ (199).

Simply bemoaning architecture’s acquiescence to market forces is not the point. Framing the ‘work’ of architecture as post-politically managerialist is not intended as a lament, but as a means of approaching how the work of architecture, in its discourse and its practice, is involved in the machinations of contemporary power. In this respect, the real matter of concern here isn’t so much the analysis of government but that of *governmentality*.

The concept of governmentality emerges in the work Michel Foucault at the point—usually identified with the publication of *The History of Sexuality* in 1977—at which his concerns turn from questions of how individuals are subjugated by power to ones of how subjectivity is itself constituted: from a more or less exclusive preoccupation of with *technologies of domination* to a perspective inclusive of *technologies of the self*. ‘Governmentality’, as Thomas Lemke (2002) has argued, conceptually unites ‘technologies of the self with technologies of domination’, and, at the same time, forms a semantic link between ‘governing (‘gouverner’) and modes of thought (‘mentalité’)’ (50).

Foucault’s account of a specifically neoliberal form of governmentality, presented in his lectures on biopolitics given at the Collège de France in the late 70s and early 80s, are especially pertinent here. ‘American neo-liberalism’, he argued in these, ‘involves ... the generalization of the economic form of the market. It involves generalizing it throughout the social body and including the whole of the

social system not usually conducted through or sanctioned by monetary exchanges' (2008, 259) In neoliberalism the government no longer acts upon the market, but the market, its form and logic now coextensive with society as whole, becomes itself a mode of governmentality, an environmental apparatus working to produce the mentalities and dispositions conducive to its continued operation.

Thibault Le Texier (2012) has recently argued that Foucault failed to pursue the implications of his understanding of neoliberal governmentality to their full, retreating, instead, to his earlier concerns with disciplinary forms of state and institutional power. 'Though he studies the asylum, the clinic, the prison, and the state in great detail', Le Texier writes, 'he never fully analyses the business enterprise' (3). 'Today', he claims, 'the great subjectivizing forces are management and marketing much more than public administration, law and police. And the normalizing of behaviours is less a religious, juridical or medical matter than a question of production, consumption and management' (11). Supplementing Foucault's account of neoliberal governmentality with his own genealogies of management and enterprise in the twentieth century, Le Texier posits a theory of *managerial governmentality* centred on the purposes and practices of '*efficiency, organization, control, and knowledge*' (12). He notes that organizational practices, in particular, have, since the early twentieth century, consisted of 'the incorporation of preformed schemes into spaces, tools, bodies, rules, processes, behaviours, symbols, institutions and minds in order to produce efficiently and almost automatically expected results' (12). 'Ergonomics and design', Le Texier continues, 'are in this perspective, the direct heirs of managerial governmentality' (13)

Le Texier's account of managerial governmentality (notably encompassing design practices) serves as a useful complement to that of a post-political managerialism. Combined, they might usefully be turned to the analysis of the current *rapprochement* between the most advanced practices in architecture and the most advanced strategies of power.

Implicating its architects and clients in questions of managerialism and governmentality, in issues of subjectification, organization, and image management within post-reform China, OMA's CCTV (China Central Television) headquarters building in Beijing suggests a perspective through which certain of the mechanisms of this *rapprochement* might be plotted.

From Bigness to the hyperbuilding

Designed as a new headquarters for CCTV within Beijing's Central Business District, the building is located on an 180,000 square metre site accommodating a complex comprised, in addition, of a

cultural centre—‘TVCC’—a service building, and a media park. Completed in 2012, CCTV HQ is 234 metres in height, with a total floor area of 465,000 square metres. It is designed to be in continuous occupation by 10,000 workers, and accessible to the public through its internal ‘visitor’s loop’. Combining production, administration and management facilities within its structure, it also serves as the centre from which 250 television and radio channels are broadcast.

Ole Scheeren (2005), Koolhaas’s chief partner in the project, described CCTV as ‘[s]ome kind of new utopia, partly social, partly constructive, [that] reclaims the ground from the seemingly rational territories of the global market economy ... it is a scale beyond the simple addition of its individual components: Bigness’ (5). In its conception and design, however, CCTV parts company with Bigness, and with the theorems of *Delirious New York* from which these were derived.

Challenging the modernist conception of metropolitan ‘efficiency’, Koolhaas turns, in *Delirious New York*, to the surrealism of Salvador Dali and his ‘Paranoid Critical Method’, or ‘PCM’. ‘Dali’, he writes ‘proposes a second-phase Surrealism: the conscious exploitation of the unconscious through the PCM’ (237). The PCM, he continues, ‘is defined by Dali mostly in tantalizing formulas: “the spontaneous method of irrational knowledge based on the critical and systematic objectifications of delirious associations and interpretations”’ (237). Dali’s PCM, Koolhaas suggests, promises that ‘the world can be reshuffled like a pack of cards whose original sequence is a disappointment’ (243). It is through this method that Koolhaas identifies, within the singular history of Manhattan’s urban and architectural development, within the proto-surrealist spatial juxtapositions of its skyscrapers, the project of ‘Manhattanism’: a delirious mode of urban production—a ‘culture of congestion’ and a ‘technology of the fantastic’—that will inform his own ‘metropolitan architecture’.

These ideas are carried forward into Koolhaas’s essay ‘Bigness: The Problem of Large’ (1995). Concerned with the emergence of large-scale architectural and infrastructural projects in Europe in the late 80s, Koolhaas channelled lessons learned from the New World back to the Old: ‘Against the background of Europe, the shock of Bigness forced us to make what was implicit in *Delirious New York* explicit in our work’ (503). Bigness is conceived of as a ‘radical break’, ‘with scale, with architectural composition, with tradition, with transparency, with ethics’ (502). Like Manhattanism, Bigness is opposed to architectural rationalization and normative perceptions of the city: ‘Where architecture reveals, Bigness perplexes; Bigness transforms the city from a summation of certainties into an accumulation of mysteries. What you see is no longer what you get’ (501). The juxtapositions of spaces and programme potentiated at the scale of Bigness enable ‘the assembly of

maximum difference'. 'Only Bigness', writes Koolhaas 'can sustain a promiscuous proliferation of events in a single container' (511). As a kind of refuge from and alternative to the organizational protocols of contemporary urbanism, Bigness stands against and in contradistinction to its urban context: 'Bigness is no longer part of any urban tissue. It exists; at most, it coexists. Its subtext is fuck context' (502).

In the CCTV project the tenets of Bigness are reversed. Coherence and transparency are substituted for perplexity and mystery so that what you see is, after all, what you get. Programmes are productively integrated rather than deliriously juxtaposed. The building is conceived as a complement its urban context—Beijing's Central Business District—rather than as offering refuge from it. In place of the intensification of difference promised by the Paranoid Critical Method, CCTV is designed to produce identity and erase paranoia. Where the shock effects, schisms, and juxtapositions of earlier projects by OMA—the Kunsthal in Rotterdam, or the Deux Bibliothèques Jussieu, in Paris, for instance—originate in the discoveries of *Delirious New York*, the architecture of the CCTV building emerges from the model of the 'hyperbuilding'.

The hyperbuilding makes its first appearance, as a new object of research and possibility for OMA/Koolhaas, in their project for the headquarters of Universal Studios in Los Angeles in 1996. In place of the deep volumetric massing characteristic of Bigness, the architecture of the Universal Studios headquarters is composed of four vertical towers connected by a horizontal slab of office floors. Each tower is designed to serve a specific component of the corporation. Suspended between them is the 'Corporate Beam': 'a glass volume that consolidates corporate activity with special needs and shared support departments' (OMA, 1996). The composite structure of the hyperbuilding is likened to urbanism in its organizational capacities: 'At this scale of organization, architecture approaches urbanism. Universal is not so much an office plan as an urban plan, a map: the building as an organizer of different elements. The organizational diagram resonates more with a subway map than with a building plan' (ibid).

Here architecture is conceived *as* urbanism, and its forms foreground this conception. The bundled towers and intersecting beams of the hyperbuilding—Universal Studios headquarters, the Hyperbuilding in Bangkok, and the Togok Towers in Seoul—imply a compositional logic of infrastructural integration; its task to facilitate systems of circulation and communication, rather than to contest or critically reconfigure these from within its own territory. Subsuming architecture to urbanism's organizational imperatives, OMA's hyperbuilding architecture aligns itself with an essentially governmental and managerial practice that first emerged in the latter half of the 19th

century.

With Ildefonso Cerdá's plan for the extension of Barcelona (1859), and his *Teoría general de la urbanización* (The General Theory of Urbanization), published in 1867, as its founding instruments, urbanism was, and is still, premised on the planning and optimization of circulation. Urbanism *engineers* the movement of goods, services and citizens throughout its territory. Its infrastructural systems choreograph these movements, systematically, and integrate them according to principles of efficiency and productivity. The development of urbanism coincides, historically, with that of large-scale factory production, and with the managerial practices designed to produce forms of subjectivity compliant with the imperatives of urban industrialization. As Pier Vittorio Aureli (2008) has argued, in stark but persuasive terms, urbanism has been concerned, since the time of its modern inception, with the creation of 'the best conditions for the reproduction of the labor force' (98). Ross Adams (2014) has similarly described Cerdá's *urbe* as 'the simultaneous enclosing of all of society in a new 'urban' order which systematizes (and thus *politicizes*) life's natural cycles of production and reproduction' (21). Urbanism, Adams continues, produces a 'new order of life' founded 'on the *normalization and management of human behavior* (ibid)'. These conditions of reproduction now extend, too, to the organization and distribution of knowledge and information—laterally dispersed as well as hierarchically orchestrated—upon whose exchange the modern corporation depends. Mentalities of cooperation, social exchange and interaction are, through the order of the urban, to be elicited and maintained.

These are the managerial demands on the production of subjectivity that the hyperbuilding effectively serves. It offers the 'virtue' of 'an enormous controllable critical mass' with the capacity to 'forge a new entity from disparate parts' (OMA, 1996). In an interview conducted in 2008 (Der Spiegel), Koolhaas remarks: 'When we were planning the Universal Studios headquarters in Hollywood, a problem we had was that the company's individual components are spread across a large area—so we designed the building to bring the components together again. It includes a common space where people who work in distant offices could pass and run into each other.'

This 'common space'—the 'beam' that integrates the company's various departmental components—becomes a '*corporate theatre*', rather than the '*collective*' one affirmed within the theorems of Bigness (OMA, 1996), and the now corporate articulation of common space is framed in the language of managerialism: the 'calculated integration of Universal City's current fragments ... improves its flaws and corrects its flows'; 'No matter how turbulent the composition of the company becomes, the office floors provide the necessary flexibility' (ibid). Business, according to

the Koolhaas of *Delirious New York* is only an 'alibi' (87) for Manhattanism, *one* of its possible worlds. The skyscraper is a 'laboratory'; 'the ultimate vehicle of emotional and intellectual adventure' (91). The hyperbuilding, though, posits an architecture in which business, and its management, *is* the world.

The CCTV headquarters project, with its ambitions to produce interdepartmental integration, and to manage flows of workers and visitors, together with its composite form of inclined towers and horizontal bridging structures, further develops the hyperbuilding typology.

Defining a new consensus

Given the fact that CCTV functions, still, as the mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), OMA have attempted carefully to manage the perception of their involvement in this project. Koolhaas (2005) has sought to represent OMA's decision to compete, in 2002, for the CCTV project over that of the Manhattan World Trade Center competition (following the attacks on its Twin Towers of '9/11'), as being driven by a principled choice to pursue 'integrity' (10), and architecture of 'the people' (12), over that of business and monumentality. Outlining the reasons for his choice of CCTV over the WTC competition, he has stated:

I just felt the conditions for the WTC were not right. Because, it was clear that in the American context you would have to make a monument, which would be dedicated to the WTC ... We were simply not convinced by the integrity of that whole operation.

On the other hand we noticed that in China, there was a sincerity and ambition to run operations like this with more integrity, and with a more straightforward relationship between the intentions—with respect to the people—and the result. It also coincided with the change in leadership in the political party. That was a part of the effort of China itself to become more legitimate, more straightforward. And we wanted to support that (10-12).

Koolhaas's arguments for working in China ought also to be understood within the context of the controversy surrounding his decision to do so. Ian Buruma (2002), for example, wrote that China's 'record on human rights is still appalling. All potential challenges to its monopoly on power have been crushed. And what foreign pressure there ever was has been lifted. It's as though Tiananmen never happened. Referring directly to the CCTV project, he described the decision to build for the 'centre of state propaganda, the organ which tells a billion people what to think' as nothing short of

‘reprehensible’ (ibid).

In their counteroffensive against this kind of criticism, Koolhaas and Scheeren justified the CCTV project as representative of their commitment to the public over the private, to communism over the capitalist free market. Koolhaas (2005) argued against the negative effect of capitalism upon architecture. It produced a situation, he said, in which ‘there’s no more public’ (12). CCTV, should be understood, he continued, as an ‘attempt by us to see whether the more traditional work of the architect—somebody working for the public good—would still be possible in a communist context’ (ibid). Koolhaas then turned, in this same interview, to relate the project to his early interest in the ‘communist architecture’ of Russian Constructivism: ‘It’s a kind of re-visiting the communist history, and moving beyond a classical position of “capitalism good, communism bad”’ (ibid). In the introduction to the issue of *Architecture and Urbanism* in which this interview was published, Scheeren (2005) similarly glossed the ‘public’ and ‘democratic’ qualities of the CCTV headquarters: ‘The declared aim is to become the BBC of China, and the many publicly accessible functions of the new building program point towards a democratization of the institution...becoming the icon for a new contemporary China’ (4).

Koolhaas and Scheeren refuted the kind of argument raised by Buruma against building in China as insubstantial. Whilst Scheeren conceded the role of CCTV in editing and censoring the ‘voice of China’, he argued that it was ‘also driving forward the transformation process and opening up of this country. On its path, it is carefully manoeuvring between (radical) change and (apparent) retention of existing principles’ (ibid). ‘Risks are inherent—central control paired with untamed financial dynamics’, he continued, ‘yet the emerging hybrid also creates new dimensions of visionary scope and quality’ (5). Koolhaas (2005), articulating his position through the binary opposition contrived between a capitalist America and a communist China, remarked:

Particularly the Americans are just simply waiting for the moment when China finally becomes capitalist. I have a different assessment of the situation. I believe that the government is trying to, in a very intelligent way, introduce some of the advantages of liberalization without entirely giving up a kind of ‘safeguard’ for the entire nation. That is something you can either be serious or cynical about (16).

Chinese characteristics

There is, according to the analysis of a number of commentators, at least an element of credibility to Koolhaas’s argument that China should not be seen as having straightforwardly followed a path

towards capitalism, particularly in its current, and globally hegemonic, neoliberal forms.

Giovanni Arrighi (2007), in his *Adam Smith in Beijing: Lineages of the Twenty-First Century*, for example, challenges the notion that the recent global ascent of the People's Republic can be understood simply on the basis of its 'alleged adherence to the neo-liberal creed' (353). '[T]he success of Chinese reforms', he argues, 'can be traced to *not* having given up gradualism in favor of the shock therapies advocated by the Washington Consensus' (355).

Broadly concurring with this analysis, Yuezhi Zhao (2008), in her *Communication in China: Political Economy, Power, and Conflict*, writes: 'To be sure, China is not an openly committed neoliberal capitalist social formation. Nor did the post-Mao leadership launch the economic reforms with an ideological commitment to neoliberalism' (6). Similarly, Lisa Rofel (2007), in her *Desiring China: Experiments in Neoliberalism, Sexuality, and Public Culture*, remarks that 'China did not simply follow a well-established neoliberal plan, fully laid out, based on normative principles' (8).

What ultimately emerges from accounts such as these, does not, however, authorize Koolhaas and Scheeren's narrative of China as a still communist state in pursuit of the kind of reforms that would offer architects the opportunity to work, free from the demands of the market, for the 'public good'. Rather than operating beyond the logic of the market, China's reforms have been understood by some as directed towards a very particular form of market-based economy. Rather than Deng Xiaoping's 'socialism with Chinese characteristics', David Harvey (2005) has described it as *neoliberalism* with 'Chinese characteristics'. Post-reform China, he writes, 'increasingly incorporates neoliberal elements interdigitated with authoritarian centralized control' (120). Rofel, following a similar line of argument, remarks:

Economic reform eventually entailed a rejection of collective enterprise, the gradual promotion of a market economy, and the steady move toward privatization. While the state gradually retreated from a centrally planned economy, it continued to have an intimate involvement in the means and modes of economic reform ... the specificity of neoliberalism in post-Mao China rests in part on the premise of a continuity in the political system of governance, coupled with a discontinuity in the state's promotion of radical marketization and privatization (7-8).

Wang Hui (2000), in his *The End of the Revolution: China and the Limits of Modernity*, writes that: 'China has promoted radical marketization; in addition, under the guidance of state policy, China

has become one of the most enthusiastic participants in the global economy. This continuity and discontinuity has lent a special character to Chinese neoliberalism' (19).

The 'special character' of neoliberalism in China lies, then, in its structurally unique combination of a market-oriented political economy under the strict management of a centralised state authority. That the state should have a role within neoliberalism—principally that of legislating for and legitimating the conditions of the 'free market'—is, of course, by no means unique to China. But it is the *state form*—that of the single party—and the powers of governance it has inherited from the era of Mao, that defines its 'special character'. The apparatus of the party has been retained but this is trained now on managerial rather than political objectives. As Hui observes of the party's depoliticization: 'In contemporary China the space for political debate has largely been eliminated. The party is no longer an organization with specific political values but a mechanism of power' (19). This 'depoliticization process', he continues, 'has had two key characteristics: firstly, the "de-theorization" of the ideological sphere; secondly, making economic reform the sole focus of party work' (7).

China's movement towards a market economy, whatever the supposed gradualism of its transition, has involved the country in massive upheaval. While there is huge investment in urbanization and infrastructural development, arable land has become scarce. This has led to environmental crises and concerns over food security. The *danwei* (labour units), which once functioned as the essential instrument of social and political cohesion, have been progressively dismantled, setting the citizen adrift from an immediate point of access to party ideology, as well as from the basic mechanisms of social welfare.

These radically changed conditions have not been received passively. Protests and 'mass incidents' of social unrest (scrupulously monitored and recorded by the CCP), around environmental and social problems, are frequent and numerous. Stabilizing these volatile conditions, Yuezhi Zhao argues, has become central to the work of the party:

The Hu Jintao leadership, recognizing that social instability had reached the 'red line' after it came to power in late 2002 and assumed full control of the Chinese state in late 2004 (when Hu assumed control of the Chinese military), has intensified its attempts to stabilize such a fluid, and indeed potentially explosive, social field for more sustainable development of the Chinese political economy (7).

The mechanisms of neoliberal governmentality have been key to the work of social stabilization, and an emergent body of critical literature, including Lisa Rofel's *Desiring China*, and Aihwa Ong's (2006) *Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty*, has registered the impact of their introduction to Chinese society. Rofel identifies neoliberal governmentality as a 'project ... to remake national public culture' (20). Ong, theorizing neoliberalism as 'a new relationship between government and knowledge through which governing activities are recast as nonpolitical and nonideological problems that need technical solutions' (3), notes the emergence of the concept of 'reengineering the Chinese soul' within organizational discourse in China:

Reengineering has become a metaphor for converting Chinese employees from particularistic cultural beings into self-disciplining professionals who can remanage themselves according to corporate rules and practice (223).

In the non-political and post-ideological conditions of post-reform China image management has also become a central concern of the CCP. As Zhao writes: 'As part of Deng's 'no debate' decree and perhaps the party leadership's own increasing cynicism over its 'truth,' the party has more or less given up its mission of political indoctrination to simply concentrate on the management of its own publicity' (34).

These, then, are the practices of governmentality—reengineering labour, remaking the public, stabilizing the social and managing the image—in which OMA's CCTV headquarters are implicated.

Productive chains

As with OMA's earlier hyperbuilding projects, the form and structure of the CCTV headquarters is designed to integrate multiple departments within a coherent whole. Each section of CCTV—administration, broadcasting, news, production, new media, service—is assigned a particular location within an architectural loop linking them together in a productive chain. This looped structure, and the seamless continuity between its towers and bridges, suggests a further refinement of the hyperbuilding, so that its management of organizational efficiency is also *signified*, and in such a way as to authorize a certain discourse about its operation.

Describing the significance of the building's looped form, Ole Scheeren (2006) writes that: 'CCTV is a loop folded in space, it creates a circuit of interconnected activities and joins all aspects of television making in one single organism. The loop acts as a non-hierarchical principle, with no beginning and

end, no top and bottom, in which all elements form part of a single whole.’ The ‘non-hierarchical principle’ of the loop is supposed also to integrate CCTV’s employees within an organic whole:

The coexistence of all functions involved in the process of television-making in one single building allows administration and management, production studios and news departments, research and training divisions, technical areas and broadcasting centres to enter into a continuous dialogue—not only reminding all parts of each other’s existence, but clearly illustrating their mutual dependence: a system, in which the ‘heads know what the hands are doing’—and vice versa. There are hierarchies—of managers and workers—but the building is not simply broken down into different sections, but a loop of communal circulation with associated social areas, canteens and meeting rooms exploits the shape of the building and promotes direct exchange and contact between the departments. The organisation is more continual than vertical; the top floors of the skyscraper— normally reserved for the board and leadership—are accessible to all employees in the ‘Staff Forum’ (Scheeren, 2005, 5).

Despite the fact that such strategies of integration can be found within the West, and that these have been developed precisely to facilitate the managerial governmentality of neoliberalism, Koolhaas (2003) claims them as possibilities *only* to be found in the exceptional conditions of China. ‘In the free market’, he writes, ‘architecture = real estate.’ ‘But in China’, he argues: ‘money does not yet have the last word. CCTV is envisioned as a shared conceptual space in which all parts are housed permanently, aware of one another’s presence—a collective. Communication increases; paranoia decreases (124).

With such claims Koolhaas manages the publicity of his practice no less than the leadership of the CCP now manage theirs. If the creation of the shared space of a ‘collective’ were only possible outside of a market economy, then how could OMA have argued for the design of ‘common spaces’ of interaction for their Universal Studios headquarters in Los Angeles? If this type of space were only realizable for architects working in China, then how is it that precisely the same means—the articulation of circulation, proximity and transparency—have been employed for precisely the same ends—the integration of the production process, and the workforce, into a seemingly non-hierarchical and self-aware whole—in projects such as Zaha Hadid Architect’s BMW Central Building in Leipzig, or the BBC’s New Broadcasting House in London? Rather than a possibility unique to a putatively communist China, the ‘collective’ Koolhaas speaks of is a function of a now globalized neoliberal governmentality designed to optimize productivity and minimize antagonism; a ‘collective’ defined by Paulo Virno (2004) as the ‘communism of capital’ (111). It is within the

context of this instrumentalization of the ‘collective’ that the motivations for increasing communication and reducing paranoia appear.

The elimination of paranoia emerges as a governmental concern in post-reform China, in general, and in the specific case of CCTV, as a consequence of the instability already discussed here. Chinese society, writes Zhao, is ‘one of the most inequitable in the world ... characterized by a fractured structure, acute divisions along class, rural/urban, ethnic, and regional cleavages, and heightened conflicts’ (7). Rather than lead by concerns to produce a ‘collective’ which emanate, as Koolhaas implies, from an essentially communist *political* programme, the elimination of paranoia is a *post-political* strategy designed to manage the deterritorializing forces set in motion by China’s turn—however qualified by its special circumstances—to neoliberal marketization. Efforts to stabilize the workforce of CCTV, in particular, respond in fact to changed employment practices, themselves resulting from the withdrawal of state funding for and increasing commercialization of the broadcaster. Zhao, describing conditions of employment at CCTV, around the time at which OMA were awarded the project for its redevelopment, writes:

CCTV, with its five classes of permanent employees and flexible casual workers with staggeringly different job security and welfare entitlements well into the early 2000s, epitomized the hierarchical, highly exploitative, and almost feudal labor structure in the Chinese media industry (84).

The flexibilization and casualization of employment at CCTV, the turn to outsourcing and temporary contracts—under the liberalizing reforms of its presidents Yang Weiguang (1991-1999), and then Zhao Huayong (1999-2009)—are documented at length in Ying Zhu’s (2012) *Two Billion Eyes: The Story of China Central Television*. These practices are also recorded in a report, by Shu Taifeng (2011), on CCTV’s system of ‘remuneration by invoices’ through which it sought, beginning in the early 1990s, to bypass China’s labour regulations. These methods, writes Taifeng, have ‘lead to a series of negative consequences ... caused the existing wage system to collapse, brought about huge income gaps and sowed the seeds for corruption.’ It seems not unreasonable to suggest, then, that it is the paranoia induced by these conditions of labour that OMA’s CCTV is designed to remediate.

Communication, the remedy, is to be increased through the arrangement of departments and facilities within the building, through the ‘non-hierarchical’ principles of the loop. In the skyscrapers of Manhattanism there are no loops to circuit, just the vertical movement articulated by

the elevator and punctuated by the miscellaneous programmes to be found on each floor: an ‘exquisite corpse’ of incommensurable experiences to be stacked up in the mind. CCTV, though, is zoned for organizational efficiency. Each facility is consigned to a designated stack of floor plates and located within the loop according to a logistical syntax of productivity. These floor plates also serve to structure the relations within the workforce according to the model of the ‘typical plan’.

A typical plan

Written in 1993 and published in *S,M,L,XL* (1995), Koolhaas’s essay ‘Typical Plan’ has been described, by Roberto Gargiani (2008), as ‘another chapter of *Delirious New York*’ (223) since its subject matter, the floor plan of the American office, appears to coincide with that of the earlier publication. This assessment neglects a crucial distinction, however; ‘Typical Plan’ affirms an architecture of business rather than one of delirium. ‘From the late 19th century to the early 1970s’, writes Koolhaas:

there is an ‘American century’ in which Typical Plan is developed from the primitive loft type (ruthless creation of floor space through the sheer multiplication of a given site) via early masterpieces of *smooth space* like the RCA Building (1933)—its escalators, its elevators, the Zen-like serenity of its office suites—to provisional culminations such as the Exxon Building (1971) and the World Trade Center (1972-73). Together they represent evidence of the discovery and subsequent mastery of a *new architecture* (336).

‘The ambition of Typical Plan’ argues Koolhaas, ‘is to create new territories for the smooth unfolding of new processes, in this case, ideal accommodation for business’ (336). The typical plan is a neutral ground, a ‘degree-zero’ of architecture, whose open spaces give free reign to the essentially ‘formless’ (337) existence of business: ‘Typical Plan is to the office population what graph paper is to a mathematical curve. Its neutrality records performance, event, flow, change, accumulation, deduction, disappearance, mutation, fluctuation, failure, oscillation, deformation’ (341).

Manhattanism figures the metropolitan subject as the agent of his or her own experience of the city, the architect of a critical paranoia, but the ‘typical plan’ is an exercise in efficiency. It posits the subject as a component of an ‘office population’ whose performance it orders and records. The mode of subjectivation valorized in ‘Typical Plan’ approximates that described by Le Texier: one of managerial governmentality, of ‘*efficiency, organization, control, and knowledge.*’

The appearance of the ‘generic floor plate’, in the hyperbuilding architecture of Koolhaas/OMA, and, specifically, in the ‘Universal Floor’ of the Universal Headquarters building, has been traced to the ideas expressed in the ‘Typical Plan’ essay (Gargiani, 2008). The generic floor plate, as a managerial instrument, appears too in the CCTV headquarters. The vast ‘smooth spaces’ of the administration sections, located in the overhang joining the building’s two towers, for instance, enable ‘staff circulation’ and ‘communal facilities’ (OMA, 2005, 50). The ‘formless’ practice of business is accommodated within the 8,000 m² floor plates ‘allow[ing] for ultimate flexibility in office layout’ (50). Many of the ‘staff facilities’—meeting rooms, canteens, gyms, lobbies—occupy similarly large-scale floor areas. These are designed to ‘allow workers to gather, socialize, and exchange information’ (52); a kind of forced collectivization falling into line with contemporary managerial strategies in the West—knowledge management and the extension of work into the spaces and times of recreation. It appears designed also to minimize, through communication, the paranoia born of workplace divisions and inequalities. Workers will understand their place and significance within a coherent and cooperative whole.

Through the device of the visitor’s loop, relations between CCTV and its public, like those within its workforce, are similarly subject to ‘collective’ refashioning. These relations have been strained both by the continued perception of CCTV as the mouthpiece of state propaganda, and by the implications of its turn to seemingly Westernized commercial values. OMA’s CCTV complex has itself become the focus of animosity towards the institution. Ying Zhu, writing of the impact of the fire that severely damaged TVCC (adjacent to CCTV headquarters) notes: ‘Since its groundbreaking in 2004, the building had been the subject of popular jests—though one could argue that citizens resented less the building itself than what it stood for: CCTV and the Chinese Communist Party—and once the fire broke out, schadenfreude spread throughout the city and online’ (54). Indicative of the risk that CCTV might, on the other hand, appear to have too readily embraced the values (or lack thereof) of marketization, is an incident reported Yuezhi Zhao:

CCTV carried [the] objective of capital accumulation to the extreme during the school hostage crisis in Russia in September 2004. While reporting on the tragedy, CCTV4 concurrently flashed a multiple-choice question at the bottom of the television screen, asking its viewers to guess the correct death toll and to send in their answers as text messages on their mobile phones. Three leading state companies, CCTV, China Mobile, and China Unicorn, shared in the profit collected from mobile phone customers in this business scheme (79).

Induction loop

The visitor's loop admits the public to CCTV headquarters, channeling them through the building along its prescribed circuit. Koolhaas and Scheeren describe it as 'a dedicated path circulating through the building and connecting to all program elements while offering spectacular views across the CBD and the city (86). 'Multiple event spaces', they continue:

allow for diverse programming and direct views into some of the technical areas of the building give the visitors insight in the functioning of a television station. The visitors enter the main lobby in Tower 1 and descend to the first basement level. After passing security control, wardrobe and a cafe, the path moves along a media wall around the central production area while providing views into television studios and actors lounges (ibid).

Opening up a previously closed organ of the state to public inspection, the visitor's loop serves as an instrument through which the image of CCTV, and by extension that of the Party itself, may be remade. Exposing its inner workings to the public CCTV shows it has nothing to hide, that a new rapport, based on openness and transparency, can be established between itself and its public.

As crucial as this image management is to both CCTV and the Party, the visitor's loop is also implicated in a reciprocal transformation of the very idea of the 'public'. Indeed the 'public', and the 'public sphere', are currently subject to processes of refashioning in accord with the radical marketization of China's economy and the depoliticization of the party. The central role of state media in these processes has been to maintain the image of the People's Republic of China as a still communist society, whilst, at the same time, reconstructing and managing its subjects as an 'audience' according to commercialized models of media production and reception. As Zhao argues in *Communication in China*: 'To stay in power, the party must continue to articulate and rearticulate its communistic pretensions, otherwise ... communism threatens to once again become a powerful subversive ideology against party-led capitalistic developments in China' (39).

Without disposing absolutely with its Leninist and Maoist strategies of propaganda, the party has also turned to the public relations and image-making techniques of the West. 'Leadership image design', notes Zhao, 'has become a new topic for applied communication research and everyday media management practices' (ibid). Included amongst its techniques are methods previously castigated by the party as 'bourgeois', such as opinion polls and audience surveys, and the broadcasting of images of the party's leadership interacting with, and coming to the aid of its citizens that are 'designed to project a "pro-people" popular leadership' (ibid).

The perspectives offered from the visitor's loop out onto the activities of workers in the studios, suites and production facilities of CCTV, and those of the organizational integrity of the entire operation, are to perform an image of communicative efficiency. They are to impress upon the visitor a picture of interactive coherence, the productive cooperation of a whole that stands both for the work of CCTV and, analogously, for that of the Party for which it is still the official voice. The visitor's loop articulates communism's core values via the very operations through which these are being refashioned into a neoliberal governmentality—the mobilization of cooperative productivity in the service of accumulation. At the same time, the loop inducts the public into the role of a participatory audience, a 'critical mass' whose opinions are to be solicited as to secure their contribution to a 'pro-people' China.

Conclusion

Indicative of OMA's turn from the avant garde strategies of Bigness to the managerial agendas of the hyperbuilding, CCTV stands at the intersection of a post-political architecture and a managerial governmentality. In *Delirious New York* business is figured as an alibi for the 'emotional and intellectual adventure' of the city. In post-reform China political communism is Koolhaas's alibi for the 'communism of capital'.

Koolhaas has not been the only architect to have forged a passage from the neo-avant garde to the territory upon which architecture now makes common cause with managerial governmentality. More and more, architecture identifies its disciplinary interests with the managerialist ones of its clients: the organization of social interaction as an exercise in productive efficiency, the lateral integration of workers within a coherent and purposeful whole, and the mobilization of image management and marketing to remediate contestation and conflict. The possibility of the *novum*, of breaking from the existing framework of things, is disavowed in order simply to administrate things as they are, as 'nonideological problems that need technical solutions.'

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