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ABSTRACT

ONE HISTORIAN TWO BOOKS: BEATRIZ COLOMINA’S HISTORIOGRAPHICAL APPROACH IN “PRIVACY AND PUBLICITY” AND “DOMESTICITY AT WAR”

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This thesis aims to explore selected works of Beatriz Colomina, a revisionist architectural historian who has made influential studies on visibility, domesticity, media and gender, and their reflections in the architectural world. Colomina is a distinguished architectural historian since she places a new lens on a period when architecture ceased to be only for the elite and media has gradually penetrated into everyone’s life in order to understand how architecture became accessible to the public through media and how this has affected the perception of modern architecture. This new lens entailed not only the inseparability of media and architecture but also how war and domesticity featured in this relationship.

Against this background, this study attempts to investigate the innovative approach of Beatriz Colomina by comparing and contrasting her two prominent books: *Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media* (1994) and *Domesticity at War* (2007). The former introduces us to the relationship between architecture and media, whereas the latter exemplifies this relationship by focusing on the cold war period as a time where media became an integral part of the domestic environment. This study aims to extract Colomina’s

contribution to architectural history by first disentangling and analysing and then merging these two books under common themes. In doing so, it seeks to answer the following questions: What is the role of archives in Colomina's methodology in writing these two books? What is the relationship between *the document* and *the historian* that emerges from this methodology? What common themes can be extracted from these two books as an analytical framework in order to better understand and study Colomina's approach? What differentiates her as a historian from other historians of modern architecture, specifically from Siegfried Giedion and Kenneth Frampton? What messages does Colomina give her reader through the form as well as the content of her books? What is her contribution to architectural historiography?

Key Words: Beatriz Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity*, *Domesticity at War*, Architecture and Mass Media, Architecture and Representation

ÖZ

BİR TARİHCİ İKİ KİTAP: BEATRİZ COLOMİNA’NIN “MAHREMİYET VE KAMUSALLIK” VE “SAVAŞ VAKTİ EV HALİ” KİTAPLARINDA TARİH YAZIMINA YAKLAŞIMI

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Bu tez mimarlık tarihçisi Beatriz Colomina’nın belirli çalışmalarını incelemeyi amaçlar. Colomina görsellik, ev hayatı, kitle iletişim araçları ve toplumsal cinsiyet gibi konular ve bu konuların mimarlık dünyasındaki yansımaları üzerine etkili çalışmalar yapmış yenilikçi bir mimarlık tarihçisidir. Colomina, mimarlığın yalnızca seçkin bir kitleye hitap etmediği, aksine kitle iletişim araçları ile herkesin hayatına girdiği bir dönemde, mimarlığın kamuya iletişim araçları ile nasıl ulaştığını ve bu durumun modern mimarlık algısındaki etkisini yeni bir bakış açısıyla araştırmaktadır. Bu yeni algı, mimarlık ve iletişim araçlarının ayrılmazlığını ele almakla kalmaz, savaş ve ev halinin bu ilişkide nasıl öne çıktığını da gösterir.

Bu çerçevede, bu çalışma Colomina’nın iki önemli kitabı: *Mahremiyet ve Kamusallık: Kitle İletişim Aracı Olarak Modern Mimarlık* (1994) ve *Savaş Vakti Ev Hali*’ (2007) ni karşılaştırmalı olarak irdeleyerek, Colomina’nın yenilikçi yaklaşımını araştırır. İlk kitap, mimarlık ve kitle iletişim araçları arasındaki ilişkiyi tanıtırken, ikincisi bu ilişkiyi savaşın ev ortamının ayrılmaz bir parçası haline geldiği soğuk savaş dönemine odaklanarak örnekler. Çalışma ilk olarak kitapları ayrıştırarak detaylı bir biçimde inceler, sonrasında bu

kitapları ortak temalar etrafında birleřtirerek Colomina'nın mimarlık tarihine olan katkısını ortaya koyar. Bunu yaparken, tezin hedefi řu sorulara yanıt aramaktır: Colomina'nın bu iki kitabı yazma yöntemi düşünöldüğünde arřivlerin rolü nedir? Bu yazma yöntemi çerçevesinde ortaya çıkan *belge* ve *tarihçi* ilişkisi ne ifade eder? Colomina'nın yaklaşımını incelemek ve anlamak amacıyla bir çerçeve oluşturulduğunda, bu iki kitaptan ne tür ortak temalar elde edilebilir? Colomina'nın modern mimarlığı ele alan tarihçiler ile, özellikle Siegfried Giedion ve Kenneth Frampton ile, arasındaki farklar nelerdir? Colomina okuyucuya kitaplarının içerikleri ve biçimleri aracılığıyla ne gibi mesajlar verir? Colomina'nın mimarlık tarihi yazımına katkısı nedir?

Anahtar Kelimeler: Beatriz Colomina, *Mahremiyet ve Kamusalılık*, *Savaş Vakti Ev Hali*, Mimarlık ve İletişim Araçları, Mimarlık ve Temsil Biçimleri

To My Family,

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis aims to explore the work of Beatriz Colomina, a revisionist architectural historian who has made influential studies on visibility, domesticity, media and gender, and their reflections in the architectural world. Her insights into the relationship between architecture and media have made her a leading figure in architectural history. Colomina distinguished herself as a historian by placing a new lens on a period when architecture ceased to be only for the elite and media has gradually penetrated into everyone's life in order to understand how architecture became accessible to the public through media and how this has affected the perception of modern architecture. This new lens entailed not only the inseparability of media and architecture but also how war and domesticity featured in this relationship. Moreover, gender and visibility are embedded as cross-cutting issues in Colomina's investigations on media, war and the approach of the architect, which makes her a distinct historian with an interdisciplinary perspective.

Against this background, this study attempts to investigate the innovative approach of Beatriz Colomina by comparing and contrasting her two prominent books: *Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media* (1994) and *Domesticity at War* (2007). The choice of these two books is due to the fact that the former introduces us to the relationship between architecture and media, whereas the latter exemplifies this relationship by focusing on the cold war period as a time where media became an integral part of the domestic environment. I aim to extract Colomina's contribution to architectural history by first disentangling and analysing and then merging these two books under common themes. In doing so, I seek answers to the following questions: What is the role of archives in Colomina's methodology in writing these two books? What is the relationship between *the document* and *the historian* that emerges from this methodology? What common themes can be

extracted from these two books as an analytical framework in order to better understand and study Colomina's approach? What differentiates her as a historian from other historians of modern architecture, specifically from Siegfried Giedion and Kenneth Frampton? What messages does Colomina give her reader through the content as well as the form of her books? What is her contribution to architectural historiography?

Beatriz Colomina's distinct interdisciplinary approach to architectural history is also evident in her biography. She is an architectural historian and theorist who is currently the Director of the Media and Modernity Program at Princeton University in the USA. She is actually the Founding Director of this Program that "promotes the interdisciplinary study of forms of culture that came to prominence during the last century and looks at the interplay between culture and technology."¹ She was trained as an architect in Valencia, Spain and studied under Ignasi de Solà-Morales Rubió² at Escola Técnica Superior de Arquitectura de Barcelona (Barcelona School of Architecture). Her Ph.D. is titled: 'La Arquitectura moderna y el mass media : Loos y Le Corbusier' (Modern architecture and mass media: Loos and Le Corbusier). Colomina started her teaching career in Barcelona and pursued it further in the USA. Since 1988 she teaches at Princeton University.

Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media was the first book written by Beatriz Colomina. Until this book Colomina wrote in Spanish and then translated the text into English whereas she wrote *Privacy and Publicity* directly in

¹ [Data base online] at http://soa.princeton.edu/02fac/fac_frame.html?colomina.html [Accessed: 25 Nov. 2011].

² "Ignasi de Solà-Morales Rubió (1942 -2001) was a professor of Architectural Composition at the Higher Technical School of Architecture in Barcelona. He also taught at the universities of Princeton, Columbia, Turin, and Cambridge, among others. His double training as an architect and a philosopher allowed him to approach history and architectural criticism from assumptions of great theoretical and aesthetic solidity. ... Among his works the following stand out: the reconstruction of the German Pavilion of the International Barcelona Exhibition of 1929, and the reconstruction and expansion of the Liceo Theatre, also in Barcelona. Ignasi de Solà-Morales died in Amsterdam in 2001." [Data base online] <http://www.tributosurbanos.es/en/terms/terrain-vague/> [Accessed: 29.01.2013].

English. She defined her writing process as "... the book tracks the evolution of my thinking over the twelve years I have been in the United States." She was supported by the following grants and fellowships during the writing process: Caixa de Barcelona, Graham Foundation, Foundation Le Corbusier, SOM Foundation, and Princeton University Committee on Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Colomina has rewritten and expanded several texts for *Privacy and Publicity*, these were published in: "9H no. 6, *Assemblage* no. 4, *Raumplan versus Plan Libe*, *L'Esprit nouveau: Le Corbusier und die Industrie*, *Le Corbusier, une encyclopédie*, *AA Files* no. 20, *Architectureproduction*, *Ottogono*, and *Sexuality and Space*."³ *Privacy and Publicity* was published by MIT Press in the United States.⁴ It should be noted that, this book has been translated into Turkish in 2011 with the title 'Mahremiyet ve Kamusalılık: Kitle İletişim Aracı Olarak Modern Mimari'

Domesticity at War was published in 2007 thirteen years after *Privacy and Publicity*. Between these two books there are several other books Colomina has worked both as a writer and editor.⁵ *Domesticity at War* was set and published in Kievit by The Front Bureau, Inc.⁶ in Spain. The book was designed by Reinhard Steger⁷ with the

³ Colomina: 1994, pp.x-xi.

⁴ For the table of contents of *Privacy and Publicity* see Apendix A.

⁵ Colomina has written widely renowned books, one of the most celebrated is *Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1994). This and her edited volume *Sexuality and Space* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992) were awarded the International Book Award by the American Institute of Architects. *Sexuality and Space*, *Architectureproduction* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1988), and *Cold War Hot Houses: Inventing Postwar Culture from Cockpit to Playboy* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004; *Doble exposición: Arquitectura a través del arte* (Double Exposure: Architecture through Art) (Madrid: Akal, 2006) are the books which she worked on as an editor. *Domesticity at War* (Barcelona: ACTAR and MIT Press, 2007) on the other hand was the second book she wrote. *Clip/Stamp/Fold; The Radical Architecture of Little Magazines 196X to 197X* was a project which is an examination of architectural magazines from the early 1960s to the 1970s that provoked transformation in the culture of architecture throughout those years. This traveling exhibition, which was prepared by Colomina and her students in Princeton University continues to be exhibited around the world. It was first exhibited at the Storefront for Art and Architecture in New York and Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) in Montreal.

⁶ "Font Bureau is a digital type studio and one of the leading foundries for typeface design. Over the past 22 years, Font Bureau has designed custom typefaces for almost every major American publication, and its retail library includes some of the most celebrated fonts on the market." [Data base online] <http://www.fontbureau.com/about/> [Accessed: 30.01.2013].

collaboration of Anna Tetas⁸. The digital production was done by Carmen Galan in Actar Pro, Barcelona.⁹

In *Domesticity at War* “... [the] obsessive, embattled domesticity is the trademark of the immediate postwar years ...”¹⁰ A set of interlocking case studies explores the unique phenomenon from different angles to build up a multifaceted picture of the period. Architectural culture, military culture, and mass culture are tightly woven together in a way that defined a unique history. In *Privacy and Publicity* on the other hand the period discussed is before the Second World War with a focus on the two major figures Adolf Loos and Le Corbusier.

The process of writing this thesis started with a close reading of the two books under consideration. After a careful analysis of the concepts and arguments within the two books, I extracted common themes to draw an analytical framework that merges the ideas in the two books. The combining of the two books under different themes was reinforced through specific references to relevant theoretical literature. After the elaboration of common themes, I compare and contrast Colomina’s work with that of Siegfried Giedion and Kenneth Frampton in order to identify Colomina’s historiographic innovations. Similar to Colomina’s methodology which involved a detailed research of two comprehensive archives, I approached her two books as archives where I examine the relationship between *the document* and *the reader* in much the same way as I address the relationship between *the document* and *the historian*.

The structure of the thesis follows the sequence of the above methodology. After this introductory chapter setting the aim, scope and methodology of the thesis, in Chapter

⁷ Reinhard Steger is a graphic designer working in Salon de Thé, Actar Pro. For further information see the web site <http://www.actar.es/>.

⁸ Anna Tetas is the editor and head of communication at Actar Publishers.

⁹ For the table of contents of *Domesticity at War* see Appendix B.

¹⁰ Colomina: 2007, p.19.

2 the focus is on Colomina's relation to the document, in this case the archives of the architects investigated: Adolf Loos, Le Corbusier, Ray and Charles Eames. Chapter 3 develops four themes merging the two books, namely modernism, mass media, strategies of representation, display and social psyche. Under these sections the books are examined closely to configure intertwined themes. The period Colomina discusses in her two books starts from the 1900s and ends with the 1960s. These approximately sixty years contain important developments that fall under the title *Modernism*. I found it necessary to summarize these developments under three main topics; 'Responses to Modern Life', 'War' and 'Domesticity' which are not only critical as they could be considered as aspects of modernism but also they are the subjects that create a linkage between these two books. Under the topic 'Responses to Modern Life' the effects of new technologies and increasing speed of life on the rural and urban experience are discussed. Under the heading 'War', the transformation of modern architecture into war architecture is elaborated upon. For Colomina, this change emerged not only via war-born techniques and materials but also through post-war psychology. Another aspect is the development of media through war technology and its propagandistic distribution. Finally, the subject of domestication of war is scrutinized under the topic 'Domesticity'. Here, the claim is that domestication of war technology is used as a propagandistic campaign aiming to change the post-war mentality. To do so it is exemplified how war, domesticity and media worked hand in hand.

Under *Mass Media* there are four headings. 'The Transformation of Culture and Technologies' could be accepted as an introduction to the following three headings, as it discusses how architecture is now seen as media itself. In 'Photography' how the sense of space changed through this technology is examined. What is elaborated on here is how the camera works as a mirror and what spatial effect it has. Also under this heading Colomina's analysis of Le Corbusier's and Loos's approaches towards photography and how these differ from each other are discussed. Under 'Film' on the other hand a comparison is made between Le Corbusier and the Eameses, with a

special focus on the Eameses film 'Glimpses of the USA'. Through this film, an analysis of the relation between film and architecture is made. Finally, under 'Television' how the suburban house becomes a TV is discussed.

Under the theme *Strategies of Representation* the aim is to unfold how Colomina investigated the figures Adolf Loos, Le Corbusier and Ray-Charles Eames to understand how their ideas on representation techniques evolved. Starting with Adolf Loos's ideas on identity formation, Colomina analyses how his ideas reflect his architectural understanding, his attitude towards representations of architecture, as well as, how his architecture contains both actors and spectators. Regarding Le Corbusier, Colomina starts with his understanding of movement as an inevitable part of architecture. His attitude towards photography and how he uses media for architecture and vice versa are discussed. The Eames family on the other hand is discussed in terms of their contributions to war technology, architecture and media. The way they used images is analysed in a detailed manner.

Finally the psychology of the era is examined under the theme *Social Psyche*. As this was a period of war, its effect on architecture and on the public is scrutinized with a focus on how these were represented in the media. Another issue under this theme is the psychological effects media and architecture relations had on the architects investigated by Colomina.

Having analysed the books, in Chapter 4 a comparative analysis is made between Beatriz Colomina and two prominent architectural historians; Siegfried Giedion and Kenneth Frampton. This examination draws on three main concepts; media, architect and war. The historians' approaches towards these concepts are compared to situate Colomina's viewpoint in the existing literature. After this historiographical research, Colomina's ideas on visibility and gender are investigated as key concepts in the debate of modern architectural discourse. These concepts are analysed through examples selected from *Privacy and Publicity* and *Domesticity at War*.

Chapter 5 investigates Colomina's books as media. By putting a reader's lens on her books Colomina's deliberate strategies as a writer and historian are unveiled. The forms of her books, her way of using the text and images, her response to the archives she studied are scrutinized. The aim is to comprehend the way she sees and writes architectural history and how these were perceived by the reader. Chapter 6 concludes by presenting a summary of the main findings of the thesis drawn from *Privacy and Publicity to Domesticity at War*.

CHAPTER 2

TWO BOOKS MULTIPLE ARCHIVES

Archives are a fundamental part of Beatriz Colomina's research processes, and for *Privacy and Publicity* (Figure 2.1) and *Domesticity at War* (Figure 2.2) the peak point was reached as she was confronted with two very detailed and impressive architectural archives; the archive of Le Corbusier and that of Charles and Ray Eames. Colomina's archival experiences were not only limited with Le Corbusier and Eameses, she includes the archive of Adolf Loos which is different since it was regenerated by scholars. In her book *Privacy and Publicity* Colomina points out that the restoration of works on Adolf Loos was a gradual process, starting in 1964 with Ludwig Münz and Gustav Künstler's book *Der Architekt Adolf Loos* and ending in 1982 with Burkhardt Rukschcio and Roland Schachel's *Adolf Loos, Leben und Werk*.¹¹

With a closer look to her books, we can trace that her archival experience was well beyond those that she chooses to mention. She has made a detailed investigation of the archives of magazines (the ones mostly referred to in her book *Domesticity at War* are; *Life* and *House Beautiful*). It is worth noting that, by looking at these magazines of popular culture Colomina is able to make a cultural analysis of the era.¹²

¹¹ Colomina states that the book *Adolf Loos, Leben und Werk* could be accepted as the Adolf Loos archive.

¹² Beatriz Colomina's interest in magazines is evident from the exhibition she curated with her students in Princeton University, *Clip/Stamp/Fold; The Radical Architecture of Little Magazines 196X to 197X*, which was an exhibition of little magazines on architecture and urbanism published between 1960 and 1970. Other than magazines and press clippings, documents on Alison and Peter Smithson were used by Colomina. Although not mentioned explicitly, these can be traced from Colomina's works. However, Colomina chooses to inform us mostly on the archives she has personally visited; Le Corbusier's and Ray and Charles Eames'.

Before exploring how Colomina deciphers these archives one should know what the general understanding of an archive is. According to the Oxford Dictionary an archive is, “a collection of historical documents or records providing information about a place, institution, or group of people.”¹³ Although it appears to have such a clear cut definition, an archive can have different meanings as the characters change as we shall see from Colomina’s assertions. In her two books, the archival processes are discussed very differently, therefore one understands what an archive is thoroughly while comparing and contrasting her two books. I would argue that in the case of her book *Domesticity at War*, Colomina wants to explain her reader the meaning of an archive, through the book itself, which to my mind has an archival value itself.¹⁴

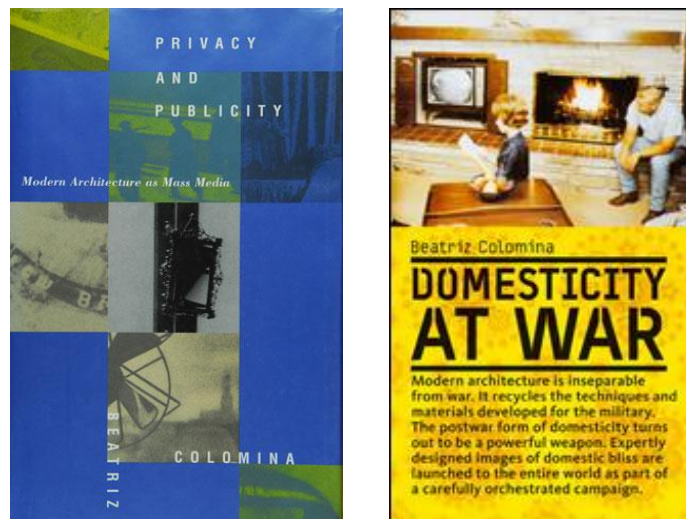


Figure 2.1, Figure 2.2 *Privacy and Publicity*, Front Cover, *Domesticity at War*, Front Cover.
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1994), *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007)

¹³ [Data base online] at <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/archive> [Accessed: 22 Nov 2011].

¹⁴ Here I refer to the book *Domesticity at War*. The form of the book indicates that while reading we turn to the images as if it is a separate book, one which could be accepted as an archive in itself. By separating the image part from the written, she does not force her readers to observe images while reading her words but she presents us with a readymade archive and in a way teaches us to go through it.

Her analysis of the different approaches of architects and their archives was the theme Colomina starts her first book *Privacy and Publicity* with. In this book Colomina starts with Adolf Loos who destroyed his documents which made research on him very difficult almost like a puzzle with missing parts¹⁵ and she continues with Le Corbusier, who filed away almost everything which made him one of the most written about architects.¹⁶ Although there is a difference in approaches, both were thoroughly investigated characters. In fact, as Colomina asserts “If Loos destroys all traces and Le Corbusier accumulates too many, both hide. In so doing they have succeeded in generating an extraordinary amount of critical work.”¹⁷ In this light the following question could be asked, how have both of the architects inspire such an amount of critical work in spite of their differing approaches towards archiving? The answer lies in Colomina’s assertion that for Loos his concept ‘destruction is construction’ was essential. She quotes Loos to clarify the meaning of his concept: “Human works can be summed up in two actions: destruction and construction. And the bigger the destruction, the more human work is nothing other than destruction, the more it is truly human, natural, and noble.”¹⁸ The destructive approach towards his archive triggered an intense process of reconstruction by Loos researchers, it resulted with “an endless campaign for their recovery.”¹⁹ For Le Corbusier on the other hand, the opposite approach resulted with endless amount of information however, this was a process of ‘hiding in full sight’. Hence, when there is an information overload it is a challenge to find the essential points, as Colomina

¹⁵ As aforementioned, Ludwig Münz and Gustav Künstler’s *Der Architekt Adolf Loos* was accepted as one of the most influential sources until Burkhardt Rukschcio and Roland Schachel’s *Adolf Loos, Leben und Werk*, published in 1982.

¹⁶ Examples Colomina gives on studies of Le Corbusier’s archives are: ‘Le Corbusier Archive’, ‘Le Corbusier Carnets’, ‘Le Corbusier, Viaggio in Oriente’.

¹⁷ Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media*. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994) p.15.

¹⁸ Quoted in Colomina: 1994, p.10.

¹⁹ Colomina: 1994, p.10.

asserts, “What in the end makes Le Corbusier’s archive private is its capacity to hide things. Sometimes the best way to hide something is in full sight.”²⁰

Colomina’s experience in Le Corbusier’s archive is an important subject as this reveals her viewpoint on the idea of an archive. Le Corbusier’s archives are now housed in *Maison La Roche-Jeanneret*, which today is used as the building for the *Foundation Le Corbusier* (Figure 2.3-2.4-2.5-2.6). This project consisted of two houses, one for Lotti Raaf and Albert Jeanneret, and one for Raoul La Roche.²¹ Although later turned into an archive, *Maison La Roche-Jeanneret* was housing La Roche’s art collection, which was frequently visited. Colomina points out the dilemma that it was not clear if people came to see the house or the art collection. This dilemma is also evident in Colomina’s description of the house, which she visited to unfold Le Corbusier’s archives.

To *enter* is to *see*. But not to see a static object, a building, a fixed place. Rather, architecture taking place in history, the events of architecture, architecture as an event. It is not so much that you enter architecture as that you see architecture’s entrance. The elements of modern architecture (pilotis, horizontal window, the roof garden, the glass façade) are seen being ‘born’ in front of your eyes. And in so doing they make the eyes ‘modern’.²²

While moving through the house to investigate Le Corbusier’s vast archive of photographs, drawings, paintings, journals etc. the house becomes part of the archive.

²⁰ Ibid., p.11.

²¹ Lotti Raaf and a violinist Albert Jeanneret (Le Corbusier’s brother) were a married couple. Raoul La Roche was an art collector who made acquaintance with Le Corbusier in 1918.

²² Colomina: 1994, p.5.



Figure 2.3-2.4 Maison La Roche exterior. Maison La Roche, interior.
 Source:[data base online] http://en.wikiarquitectura.com/index.php/File:Maison_la_Roche_7.jpg,
http://en.wikiarquitectura.com/index.php/File:Maison_la_Roche_6.jpg . [Accessed: 12.11.2012].



Figure 2.5-2.6 Maison La Roche exterior. Maison La Roche, interior.
 Source:[data base online] at http://en.wikiarquitectura.com/index.php/File:Maison_Roche1.jpg,
http://wikiarquitectura.com/es/images/5/5f/Maison_la_Roche_2.jpg. [Accessed: 12.11.2012].

In *Privacy and Publicity* she discusses how modernity affected the archive and how the private archive becomes publicised through history. In this light, Colomina states the following,

Modernity, then, coincides with the publicity of the private. ... In fact this new reality is first and foremost a question of the archive. The archive has

played an important role in the history of privacy, even in the history of history. The archive is private, history is public ...²³

At this point, it is important to focus on why Colomina mentions her research methods to us. The answer lies in the introduction of her book *Domesticity at War*. Beatriz Colomina states that this was a continuation of her book *Privacy and Publicity*. The important thing is how she explains this continuation process: Colomina refers to two photographs; one is “the image of Ise and Walter Gropius at breakfast on the screened porch of their house in Lincoln, Massachusetts”²⁴ (Figure 2.7) which was published in ‘L’architecture d’aujourd’hui’ in 1950. The other is the photo “of Gropius and Le Corbusier sitting at a small round table at the Café des Magots in Paris,”²⁵ a press photograph taken in 1923 (Figure 2.8). The first picture showing the Gropius family at breakfast was fundamental as the architect we are used to see as a strong masculine character is here only seen from his back. In fact it is through Ise, his wife, that we recognise Walter Gropius. As Colomina points out, the female character previously neglected or blurred by the positioning of the picture, is centre of attention in the domestic environment. Whereas in Le Corbusier’s meeting with the Gropius in a café in Paris the female character is like any other customer who has nothing to do with the two architects making a discussion. The first picture also presents the domestic environment as a character in the photo, whereas the second is a public scene. From these two photographs, we can trace the drastic shift in architectural history from Europe to America and from the public to the domestic. As Colomina states “... the difference between these two photographs marks [such] a radical shift that new forms of research and interpretation are needed even the character of the archives fundamentally changes.”²⁶

²³ Ibid., p.9.

²⁴ Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War*. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2007) p.13.

²⁵ Ibid. on the same page

²⁶ Ibid., p.18.

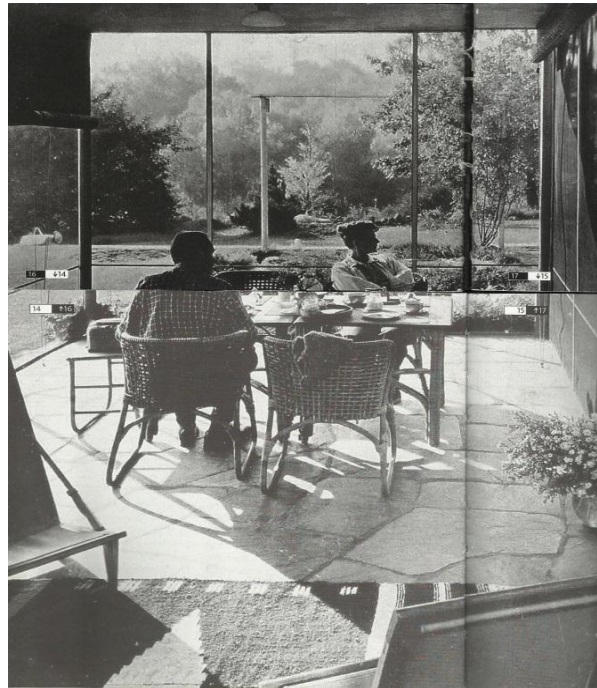


Figure 2.7 ‘The image of Ise and Walter Gropius at breakfast on the screened porch of their house in Lincoln, Massachusetts’

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War*(Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p.14-15.



Figure 2.8 ‘Gropius and Le Corbusier sitting at a small round table at the Café des Magots in Paris’

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p.16-17.

It is her book *Domesticity at War* where the archive of a different character comes into play, that of Charles and Ray Eameses'. This archive, although both are impressive, overpowers Le Corbusier's, as stated by 'The Library of Congress' where the collection is at now,

The catalogued portion of the Prints and Photographs Division holdings include: Contact sheets and contact prints (30,000), representing 220,000 film negatives (192,000 b&w; 28,000 color) Architectural drawings: 1,000 (ADE Units related to Washington, DC area) Furniture select prints: 2,500 (LOT 13073) Drawings, prints, Christmas cards, and other items selected for use in exhibitions... The Prints and Photographs Division's portion of the collection is both an archive of design ideas and a record of the Eameses' work. Charles and Ray Eames photographed their own designs extensively, and also used photography to study natural forms and everyday objects. The collection documents exhibitions, publications, and films for organizations such as IBM, Herman Miller, the U.S. government, Boeing, and Polaroid. It also reflects the Eameses' interest in making scientific and mathematical concepts and history more accessible to a general audience. The photographs include many images depicting the Eameses, their family, friends, and colleagues, including Billy Wilder and Eero Saarinen.²⁷

At this point it would be meaningful to ask how do these photos represent such a change of character of the archives? If the three archives Colomina investigated are to be categorised, the archives of Loos and Le Corbusier would fall into the public scene whereas, the archive of the Eameses belongs to the domestic space. Why is that? In fact all three archives were once or still are housed in private environments. Loos' office before destruction, Le Corbusier's Maison La Roche-Jeanneret²⁸ and Charles and Ray Eameses house. The answer lies within Colomina's investigation. As aforementioned, Loos destroyed his documents so the space of information was not a specific space but from a detailed investigation the space of the archive became eventually a book by *Burkhardt Rukschcio* and *Roland Schachel*; *Adolf Loos, Leben und Werk*. Le Corbusier on the other hand had a domestic scene (however not the one he lived in) and he filled this space with all his documents, in Colomina's words 'he filled the space ahead of him'.

²⁷[data base online] at <http://lccn.loc.gov/2006678412> [Accessed: 4 April 2011].

²⁸ Maison La Roche and Maison Jeanneret built in 1923-24 was Le Corbusier's third commission in Paris. This building now houses 'Foundation Le Corbusier' which was founded in 1968.

The space of Le Corbusier's houses ... are less about enclosure than about entanglement of inside and outside, less about a traditional interior than about following an itinerary, the enclosure resulting from the collage of fleeting images assembled as the reader moves through too much material, too many images, too many stimuli. And isn't this precisely the experience of the modern city? The archive allows the scholar to wander through the material as the flaneur wanders through the arcades of Paris, which are neither interior nor exterior.²⁹

Charles and Ray Eames's archive on the other hand literally consists of their life. Their house (The Eames House) became archival material, in fact Charles and Ray took photographs of the house throughout their lives. Colomina defines this process with the following words: "It is a kind of obsessive domesticity documented in fetishistic detail requiring a new kind of architecture."³⁰ This obsessive domesticity is the subject of Colomina's second book and the abovementioned photograph of Walter and Ise Gropius could be interpreted as an introduction to this domesticity.

²⁹ Colomina: 1994, p.11-12.

³⁰ Colomina: 2007, p.19.

CHAPTER 3

TWO BOOKS FIVE THEMES

3.1 Modernism

3.1.1 Responses to Modern Life:

Beatriz Colomina evaluates modernity in rural and urban life in two different contexts in the two books under consideration, which also correspond to the timeframes that the books are covering. In both books responses to modern life are traceable; in *Privacy and Publicity* it is a look at general urban responses as well as responses by specific architects, whereas in *Domesticity at War* it is the response of the war-traumatized Americans.

Technology stands out as an important component in Colomina's assertions on modern life. In *Privacy and Publicity*, she states that new technologies "define the space of the city."³¹ Those technologies include 'the railroad, newspapers, photography, electricity, advertisements, reinforced concrete, glass, the telephone, film, radio, ... war'. As an extension of these developments, Colomina considers speed as an inevitable part of modern life. She remarks that, "What is 'strange' about the 'big city' to which, as Benjamin argues, people now have to 'adapt' is the speed, the continuous movement, the sense that nothing ever stops, that there are no limits."³² The main reason of this kind of a non-stop and limitless experience is the railway. As Mitchell Schwarzer³³ mentions in *Zoomscape: Architecture in Motion and Media* (Princeton Architectural Press, 2004), "... rail vision was no ordinary

³¹ Colomina: 1994, p.12.

³² Ibid. on the same page.

³³ "Mitchell Schwarzer is an architectural historian who is currently the Chair of the Department of Visual Studies at California College of the Arts. He mainly writes on the 'urban and suburban built environment' with a focus on subjects such as, mobility, perception, media, consumerism and memory". [Data base online] <http://www.cca.edu/academics/faculty/mschwarzer> [Accessed 07.04.2011]

mode of sight. It was a new way of viewing, part human and part machine-*the vision of velocity*.³⁴ In this regard, Colomina asserts that through railway the city changed into a consumable object, and the definition of city by certain limits have changed into the definition of points passed by. Schwarzer supports this idea with the following words, “Gradually, the dispersed buildings and places along the rail routes fused into shared visual identities and heritages. ... People who rode the rails began to recognise a linear, sprawling notion of place”³⁵ Similarly Colomina indicates, “It is often said of railway stations that they are a substitute for the old gates of the city, but what they do in fact is to displace the notion of frontier; not only do they fail to demarcate the edge of urban fabric, but they ignore the city as such, as fabric.”³⁶

With new technologies, in this case railway, adapting to modern life meant adapting to speed. Hence, the quick change of scenes in the modern metropolis created a shock effect which is similar to that felt in film. This is why one is tempted to search for clues about the understanding of the city in *Domesticity at War*, in which film is a subject on its own. In the book, Colomina confronts us with the fact that “images had become the new material”³⁷ of architecture. Now architects are aware that film and metropolis share shock effect as a fixed component. The urban, or rather the sub-urban experience displayed by Colomina in *Domesticity at War* is a response to the trauma of war, in that architecture evolved with war.

As a response to modern life people created film which with its multiple images correlated with the shock effect created by the new conditions. As Colomina points out, ‘architecture is modern when engaged to media’ hence this media not only ‘represents but also reconstructs the world’. This reconstruction results in different

³⁴ Emphasis is mine. Mitchell Schwarzer. *Zoomscape: Architecture in Motion and Media*. (Princeton Architectural Press, 2004) p.32.

³⁵ Ibid., on the same page.

³⁶ Colomina: 1994, p.50.

³⁷ Colomina: 2007, p.8.

responses; while in *Privacy and Publicity* it is the adjustment to danger created through speed of the metropolis, in *Domesticity at War* it is the slippage between domestic and the military.

3.1.2 War:

... mass movements, including war, constitute a form of human behaviour which particularly favours mechanical equipment.³⁸

In the above stated quotation from Walter Benjamin, Colomina questions the interaction of architecture with mechanical equipment and war in *Privacy and Publicity*. Colomina asks the main question, ‘What relationship does architecture have to war?’ and answers,

...architecture becomes ‘modern’ not simply by using glass, steel, or reinforced concrete, as is usually understood, but precisely by engaging with the new mechanical equipment of the mass media: photography, film, advertising, publicity, publications, and so on. And furthermore this engagement cannot be thought outside of war. Indeed, it is a military engagement from the beginning. ... Modern architecture has to be rethought as war architecture.³⁹

Colomina establishes an analogical reasoning between the rise of new communication technologies representing “the weapons” and the marketplace as “the battlefield”⁴⁰. Hence, “modern media are war technology”⁴¹. Newspapers, telephones and radios which were military-driven technologies of World War I, served to eliminate the distance between the battlefield and the homes of people. The idea of gradual domestication of these war technologies was thus hinted at in *Privacy and Publicity* to be further developed and elaborated upon in *Domesticity at War*.

³⁸ Hannah Arendt, “Walter Benjamin: 1892-1940” in Walter Benjamin. *Illuminations*, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968), p.16, note 21.

³⁹ Colomina: 1994, p.73.

⁴⁰ Ibid., on the same page.

⁴¹ Ibid., p.156.

In her book *Domesticity at War* Beatriz Colomina analyses the post-World War II period in the USA regarding the interaction of war and architecture. This analysis shows us both how America became an influential actor in terms of modern architecture and how war and architecture became naturally intertwined. In fact, during this period the involvement of architects with war –both mentally and physically- and war as a component of architecture was traceable. To exemplify this interaction, Colomina’s comments in *Domesticity at War* on Eameses’s design of ‘Plywood Leg Splints’, which replaced the metal ones used previously to secure the injured legs of soldiers, would be appropriate. The plywood leg splints were recycled and transformed into chairs after the war. Colomina makes interesting implications on the photograph of Charles Eames sitting on the plywood chair; “A photograph of the plywood lounge chair of 1946 shows Charles Eames reclined on it, the straightened position of his leg indicating that he has not forgotten where it comes from.”⁴² (Figure 3.1.1, Figure 3.1.2). Here Colomina underlines that “military equipment had become the basis of domestic equipment.”⁴³ Similarly in *Privacy and Publicity* Colomina draws our attention to Le Corbusier’s association of modern architecture with war by his emphasis on how the modern house was constructed by recycled military technologies including the media.⁴⁴

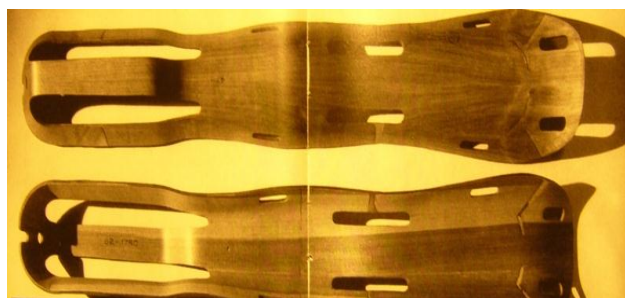


Figure 3.1.1 Plywood Leg Splints Designed by Charles and Ray Eames, 1943.
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 40-41.

⁴² Colomina: 2007, p.29.

⁴³ Ibid, on the same page.

⁴⁴ Colomina: 1994, p. 210.

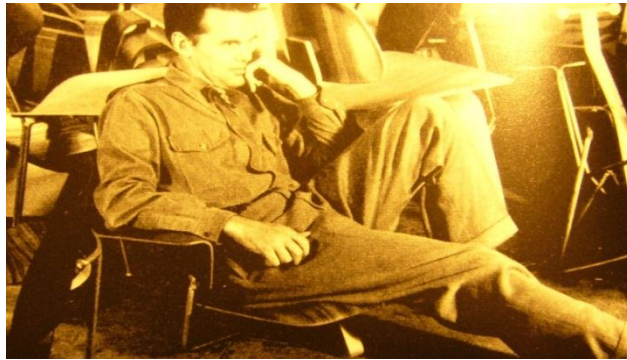


Figure 3.1.2 Charles Eames Sitting in the Plywood Lounge Chair, 1946.
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 44.

The ‘Case Study House Program’⁴⁵ is another focal point of Colomina which also epitomizes how war affected architecture; in this case through housing techniques and materials. As stated by Davis Travers in the *arts & architecture*⁴⁶ magazine website, the program originated with “... a number of relatively young architectural guns [who] would talk about new ideas in residential design and construction that could only be talked about because of wartime service and restrictions”⁴⁷ (Figure 3.1.3 - a,b,c,d). Here, the essential idea that Colomina points out is the post war psychology of the assumed dwellers. I would suggest that it is significant to stress how the *Announcement* draws attention to their psychology. As stated; eight architects “have been commissioned to take a plot of God’s green earth and create ‘good’ living for eight American families.”⁴⁸ In fact, since people in the project are aware how the post war Americans’ are confused, they propose that “We can only

⁴⁵ A program where various well-known architects of the time including Richard Neutra, Charles and Ray Eames, Eero Saarinen...etc. designed low-cost, efficient houses for the post World War II period.

⁴⁶ *The Case Study House Program* was announced and organized by the *arts & architecture* magazine. Eight architects were commissioned to design houses which would focus on ‘a special living problem in the Southern California area’. As stated in the announcement ‘Beginning with the February issue of the magazine and for eight months or longer thereafter, each house will make its appearance with the comments of the architect - his reasons for his solution and his choice of specific materials to be used’ (*The case study house program* announcement: [Data base online] at http://www.artsandarchitecture.com/case.houses/pdf01/csh_announcement.pdf. [Accessed: 12.04.2011].

⁴⁷ [data base online] at <http://www.artsandarchitecture.com/case.houses/> [Accessed: 12.04.2011]

⁴⁸ [data base online] at http://www.artsandarchitecture.com/case.houses/pdf01/csh_announcement.pdf. [Accessed: 12.04.2011]

promise our best efforts in the midst of the confusions and contradictions that confront every man who is now thinking about his post war home.”⁴⁹ To sum up their aim, the *Announcement* explains:

We of course assume that the shape and form of post war living is of primary importance to a great many Americans, and that is our reason for attempting to find at least enough of an answer to give some direction to current thinking on the matter. Whether that answer is to be the “miracle” house remains to be seen, but it is our guess that after all of the witches have stirred up the broth, the house that will come out of the vapors will be conceived within the spirit of our time, using as far as practicable, *many war-born techniques and materials best suited to the expression of man’s life in the modern world.*⁵⁰

To elucidate the relation between ‘Case Study House Program’ and war Colomina’s following lines would be helpful; “The bright experiments of post-war architecture are covertly organized by the trauma of war- the trauma of war that just finished and the trauma of the fact that it had not really finished at all.”⁵¹



Figure 3.1.3a Cover of *Arts & Architecture*, with announcement of the *Case Study House Program*, January 1945.

Figure 3.1.3b Case Study House 8 and 9, in *Arts & Architecture*, December 1945.

⁴⁹ [data base online] at http://www.artsandarchitecture.com/case.houses/pdf01/csh_announcement.pdf. [Accessed: 12.04.2011]

⁵⁰ Emphasis is mine. [data base online] at http://www.artsandarchitecture.com/case.houses/pdf01/csh_announcement.pdf [Accessed: 12.04.2011], *emphasis added*.

⁵¹ Colomina: 2007, p.56. for further investigations on the trauma of war. See the theme ‘Social Psyche’ on pg. 64-70.



Figure 3.1.3c Charles and Ray Eames with the model of their first Case Study House.

Figure 3.1.3d Case Study House 8 and 9 models in *Arts & Architecture*, March 1948.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 37, 12, 50, 144

A concrete example of such a trauma is the American lawn. Americans attributed two meanings to this lawn; it was both a display of the American dream, as well as a camouflage of a shelter, built because of the fear of a nuclear attack (Figure 3.1.4). In Colomina's words,

Postwar America was split. The smiling face of abundance and gadgets barely hid the dark side of depression, tranquilizers, and mental illness. Veterans were plagued with psychological problems, exacerbated by the isolation of the suburbs, and psychologists discovered a new kind of disorder: house wife blues.⁵² The lawn represented this divided psyche. Underneath its contented surface was the threat of nuclear annihilation, a major cause of psychological troubles. On the outside the lawn displayed the goods, the American dream, all the gadgets for which the war had been fought; below it lay the possibility of absolute destruction.⁵³

I would argue that, a remarkable display of the divided psyche of post-war era can be traced from the newspaper headlines that Colomina mentions while analysing Buckminster Fuller's Defence House. Namely, 'War inspired', 'Comfortable though Bombed', 'A shelter in War-A Beach House in Peacetime'⁵⁴ (Figure 3.1.5).

⁵² Quoted in Colomina: 2007, p.138.

⁵³ Ibid., on the same page.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p.75.



Figure 3.1.4 ‘Their Sheltered Honeymoon’ from *Life* August 10, 1959.
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 52-96, 57-97.



Figure 3.1.5 ‘How to Be Comfortable Though Bombed’ from the *New Age Herald*, October 26, 1941.
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 117.

Although elaborated on in *Privacy and Publicity*, war is utterly notable in *Domesticity at War*. I would argue that the reason lies in Colomina’s interest in the architects’ involvement in war. If we specify the period of the first book as ‘before and after the First World War’, and the second as ‘after the Second World War’, it could be seen that there are explicit differences regarding the architect-war relationship. Hence, as Colomina indicates “If European architects during World War

I found themselves either on the front or at home, unemployed or painting, American architects during World War II were working for the military.”⁵⁵

3.1.3 Domesticity:

The concept of domesticity arrives on the scene within Beatriz Colomina's discussions on war and media. *Domesticity at War* is an analysis of how war technology goes through a metamorphosis with the help of media; and through its transformation is 'gradually domesticated.'⁵⁶ I would argue that Colomina attributes a dual meaning to the word 'domestication'. First, it is used as the dictionary meaning of the word: to tame. In fact, Colomina investigates the taming of war itself; implying the aforementioned gradual domestication of war technologies. Second, domestication refers to the domestic environment created by the architect. At this point, the appropriate question is what triggered the transformation of war to domesticity. I believe there is a possible answer in Colomina's introductory chapter of *Domesticity at War*. There she explains:

Postwar architecture was not simply the architecture that came after the darkness of the war. It was the aggressively happy architecture that came out of war, a war that anyway was going on as the cold war. *The new form of domesticity turned out to be a powerful weapon. Expertly designed images of domestic bliss were launched to the entire world as part of a carefully orchestrated propaganda campaign.* Architects and institutions participated in this campaign. The figure of the architect changed from the heroic one of the modern movement ... to the domesticated agent of postwar years ...⁵⁷

The above stated words illustrates that the domestication of war has not only a physical aspect -meaning the application of war technology to the house- but also a gradual mental process. Here, I suggest that the lawn of the American suburbia is a crystallized form of this interaction. A chapter is devoted merely to the lawn entitled 'The Lawn at War' and there Colomina indicates how the lawn became an exhibit for

⁵⁵ Ibid., p.28.

⁵⁶ Ibid., on the same page.

⁵⁷ Emphasis is mine. Colomina: 2007, p.12.

the equipment that represented the ideal American way of life, which “were the by-products of war.”⁵⁸ (Figure 3.1.6).



Figure 3.1.6 ‘Family Utopia.’, From *Life*, November 25, 1946.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 202-142.

At this point I would like to focus on Colomina’s observation on the lawn in a different contextual frame. She writes these in relation to Dan Graham’s⁵⁹ ‘Video Projection Outside Home,’⁶⁰ where he placed a large TV screen on the lawn of a

⁵⁸ Ibid., p.134.

⁵⁹ Dan Graham is an artist working in fields such as, film, video, performance, photography, architectural models, as well as glass and mirror structure since 1964. Still working in New York, Graham is also known for his art critic and theorist qualities. Grahams critical look towards art systems resulted with many of his works being presented outside of galleries. He focused on ‘shifts in individual and group consciousness and the limits of private and public space’ (Pelzer, Brigit. *Dan Graham*, ed, M. Francis, and Beatriz Colomina. (London: New York : Phaidon, 2001)).

⁶⁰ “Graham’s work parallels the evolution of modern architecture. If the architecture of the earlier twentieth century was inseparable from illustrated journals, photography and cinema, post-war architecture is the architecture of video and television. All of Graham’s work is media-architecture – from the very first works for magazines, like *Homes for America*, to the house designs like *Alteration*, to the pavilions that currently dominate his work. It is not simply that he deals with architectural subjects – the tract house, the picture window, the corporate office building, etc. – or that he uses the media traditionally deployed by the architect, but that he understands the building itself as a medium. From journals to models with mirrors of glass facades, to videos in installations, to pavilions without video, we end up with spaces defined only by reflections: mirrors, glass, windows...” (Pelzer, Brigit. *Dan Graham*, ed, M. Francis, and Beatriz Colomina. (London: New York : Phaidon, 2001) p. 88)

house, to display what is being watched inside thus, “... If television in the 1950s brought the public realm into the private, here the private – the choice of TV programme - is publicized”⁶¹ (Figure 3.1.7). As seen in this example and highlighted by Colomina the lawn displays that war and domesticity cannot be thought outside of media. Another notable example that Colomina introduces us is Martha Rosler’s⁶² provocative photomontages called *Bringing the War Home: House Beautiful* (Figure 3.1.8-a,b). Here Rosler places the house on the battlefield by putting pictures from the Vietnam War on its windows, thereby creating the illusion that the house is in the middle of the battlefield. Hence, what the world watches from TV is now at the front yard.

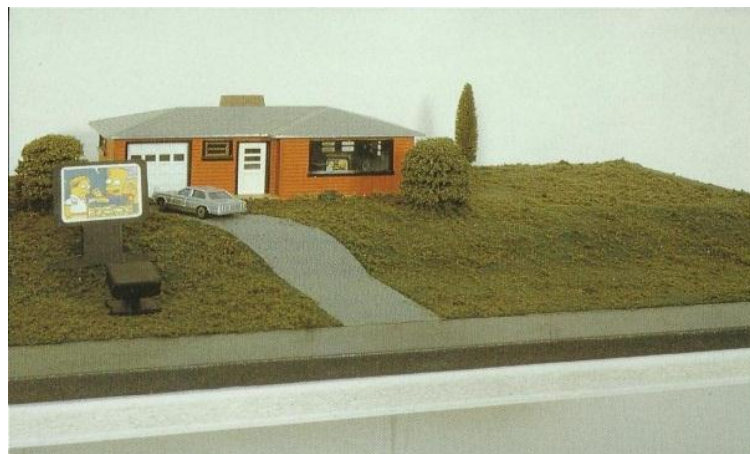


Figure 3.1.7 *Video Projection Outside of Home* by Dan Graham, 1978.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 264.

⁶¹ Colomina: 2007, p.171.

⁶² “Martha Rosler is widely regarded as one of the most influential artists of her generation, one whose artistic practice, teaching, and writing continue to influence succeeding generations. Rosler makes ‘art about the commonplace, art that illuminates social life,’ examining the everyday by means of photography, performance, video, and installation.” [Data base online]
<http://www.moma.org/visit/calendar/exhibitions/1279>. [Accessed: 16.11.2012]

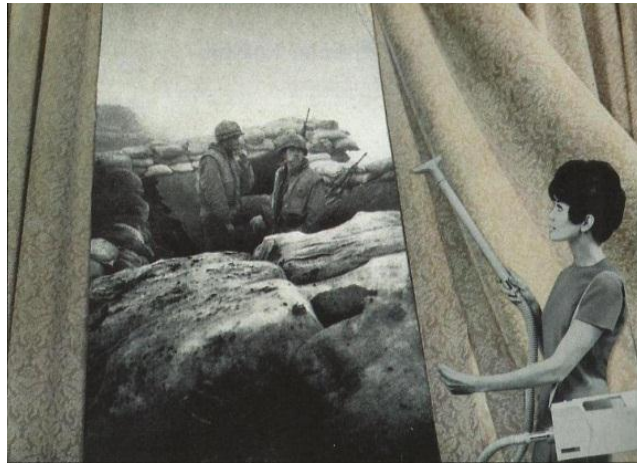


Figure 3.1.8a Martha Rosler, *Cleaning the Drapes*. From *Bringing the War Home: House Beautiful*, 1967-72. Courtesy of the artist.

Figure 3.1.8b Martha Rosler, *Vacation Gateway*. From *Bringing the War Home: House Beautiful*, 1967-72. Courtesy of the artist.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 438, 439.

It would be appropriate to turn to Colomina's first book *Privacy and Publicity* in which she focuses on Lewis Mumford's ⁶³ ideas on the house itself being a media centre to connect this to Le Corbusier's understanding of the modern house. In this light, as mentioned in the previous section, she states that Mumford's idea " ...

⁶³ Lewis Mumford (1895 – 1990), an American historian, philosopher and literary critic, whose work on cities, civilization and technology stand out. His studies include urban planning, environmentalism and American public life. Some of his works are; *The Story of Utopias* (1922), *The City in History* (1961), and a documentary film called *The City* (1939)

resonates with Le Corbusier's own identification of modern architecture with war, the modern house being constructed by recycled military technologies that include those of the media."⁶⁴

The change in the understanding of the house, the domestication of war and the involvement of media, in other words the transformation of the house into a medium of display is reflected most effectively in radical projects such as the *Dymaxion Deployment Unit* by Buckminster Fuller⁶⁵ and the *H.O.F.* by the Smithson's⁶⁶. (Figure 3.1.9-3.1.10). Both were houses as exhibition units; for the *DDU* at MoMA Colomina states that, "Domestic life was reframed as an artwork"⁶⁷ and she continues "slippage between domestic and military was built into the project from the beginning"⁶⁸. The 'hyperinteriorized'⁶⁹ space of the *House of Future* shares this effect; indeed this was "a mechanism for escape, an all interior space that overly happy inhabitants would never need to leave. A bunker."⁷⁰

⁶⁴ Colomina: 1994, p. 210.

⁶⁵ Buckminster Fuller was an inventor, an architect, designer and futurist who focused mainly on shelter and transportation. Hence, The *Dymaxion Deployment Unit* was a project by Buckminster Fuller developed in Kansas in the 1940's. Fuller developed the idea for the project from grain bins he saw during a trip through Missouri. The essential idea was to make a project that could be produced by World War II aircraft technology. Displayed at various exhibitions the DDU is still part of the permanent exhibition at *The Henry Ford* in Michigan.

⁶⁶ Alison and Peter Smithson both studied architecture at Durham University, they married and worked together as partners. Their project *The House of the Future*, was designed for the Ideal Home Exhibition in 1956. The aim was to create a home, which could be easily transportable and mass produced.

⁶⁷ Colomina: 2007, p.71.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p.72.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p.283.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p.227.



Figure 3.1.9 Dymaxion Deployment Unit, permanent exhibition at The Henry Ford.
 Source: [Data base online] <http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-5xSHxJa4z4I/Tv9vaQ5Ys3I/AAAAAAAAADnU/ys1efG-XGbK/s1600/Fuller+DDU.jpg>
 [Accessed: 16.11.2012]

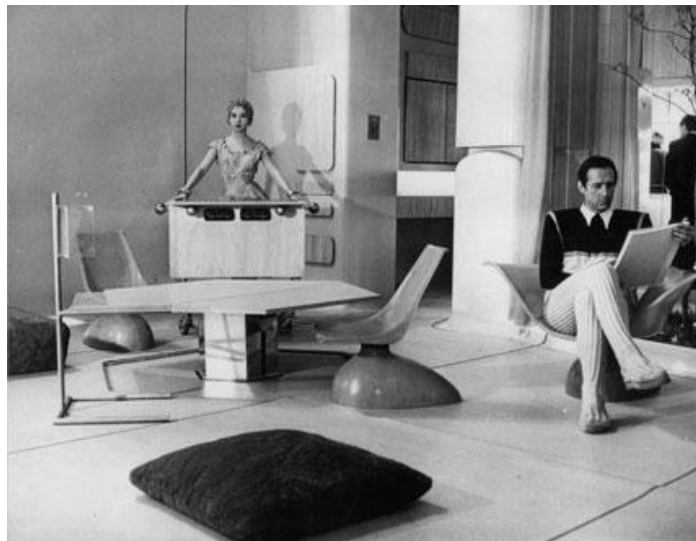


Figure 3.1.10 The House of Future, living room, 1956.
 Source: [Data base online] http://designmuseum.org/_entry/4463?style=design_image_popup.
 [Accessed: 16.11.2012]

3.2. MASS MEDIA

3.2.1 The Cultural Transformation through Technologies:

“*Images* in the 1950s were the new architecture. ... Buildings had become images, and images had become a kind of building, occupied like any other architectural space.”⁷¹ The word ‘image’, which Beatriz Colomina uses while defining the state of the era, is noteworthy. To clarify the change in the understanding of ‘image’ I would like to quote from W.J.T. Mitchell’s⁷² *Iconology*: “... Images are now regarded as the sort of sign that presents a deceptive appearance of naturalness and transparency concealing an opaque, distorting, arbitrary mechanism of representation, a process of ideological mystification.”⁷³ Colomina’s aim is to unfold this mystification and its effect on the reception of architecture. To do so Colomina suggests that it is necessary to think of ‘architecture as media’. In her article ‘The Media House’ published in *Assemblage* 27 she exemplifies how architecture was disseminated and presented to the public through media mainly by focusing on houses designed by famous architects (Figure 3.2.1-3.2.2). She states that,

... most architects of this century have become known through their houses, whether they were built or not. Many of these houses were actually produced for exhibitions, publications, fairs, competitions, and so on, rather than for traditional building sites. Even those houses that were built for actual clients, on traditional sites, derived their main *impact from their publication, before and after construction*. Images of these houses have circulated around in all forms of media, making a series of polemical propositions about the reorganization of domestic space in the twentieth century.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Emphasis is mine. Ibid., p.7.

⁷² W.J.T. Mitchell is an English and Art History Professor at the University of Chicago.

⁷³ W.J.Thomas Mitchell. *Iconology: image, text, ideology*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986) p.8.

⁷⁴ Colomina, Beatriz, *The Media House*, *Assemblage*, No.27, Tulane Papers: The Politics of Contemporary Architectural Discourse (Aug., 1995), pp.55-66. p.56. *emphasis added*.

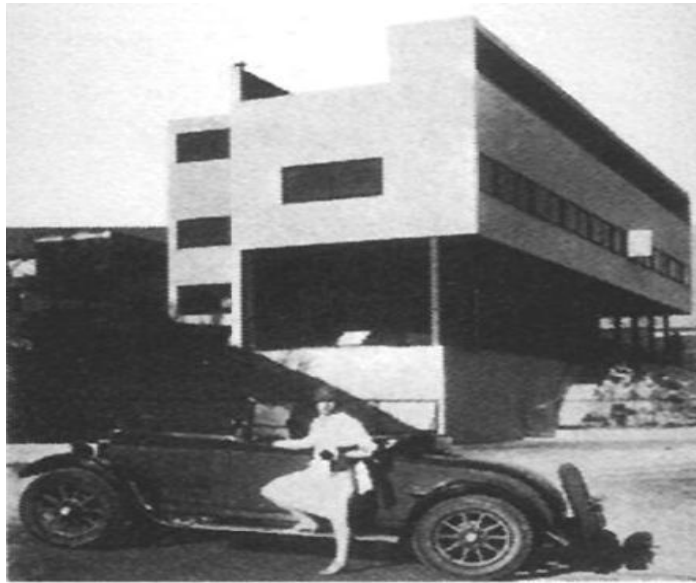


Figure 3.2.1 Architecture as a stage for advertisement. ‘Advertisement for Mercedes Benz, Model 8/38’.

Source: Colomina, Beatriz, *The Media House*, Assemblage, No.27, Tulane Papers: The Politics of Contemporary Architectural Discourse (Aug., 1995), pp.55-66. p.61.



Figure 3.2.2 Modern architecture in magazines. ‘Richard Neutra, Kaufman (Desert) House, Palm Springs, 1946. Photograph by Julius Shulman published in *Life*, April 1949.’

Source: Colomina, Beatriz, *The Media House*, Assemblage, No.27, Tulane Papers: The Politics of Contemporary Architectural Discourse (Aug., 1995), pp.55-66. p.61.

We can understand Colomina's approach better through Mitchell's statement on the evolution of images:

Images are not just a particular kind of sign, but something like an actor on the historical stage, a presence or character endowed with legendary status, a history that parallels and participates in the stories we tell ourselves about our own evolution from creatures 'made in the image' of a creator, to creatures who make themselves and their world in their own image.⁷⁵

Here, agents of mass media as 'creatures who make themselves and their world in their own image' have altered architecture from being represented by media to architecture 'as' media. Indeed if architecture is a media itself, one should ask how it reaches the masses. The following titles: photography, film and television shall be an investigation on these agents of mass media.

3.2.2 Photography:

As a mass media device photography is one of the most analysed subjects in Beatriz Colomina's books. Although shared in both of her books, in *Privacy and Publicity* the evolution and dispersion of photography is one of the foci whereas in *Domesticity at War* we see the outcome of photography and how it affected the society.

In *Privacy and Publicity* Colomina starts with the diffusion of photography and connects the idea of the camera screen working as a mirror to Freud's psychoanalysis. She explains this idea with the following words:

... photography is invested in the system of classical representation. But Vertov⁷⁶ has not placed himself behind the camera lens to use it as an eye, in the way of a realistic epistemology. He has employed the lens as a mirror: approaching the camera, the first thing the eye sees is its own reflected image.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Mitchell: 1986, p.9.

⁷⁶ I should note that, I am aware that Dziga Vertov is a film director and the camera mentioned here is a film camera.

⁷⁷ Colomina: 1996, p.77.

Hence, the lens of the camera as a mirror “reflects the interior and superimposes it onto our vision of the exterior.”⁷⁸ It blurred the distinction between interior and exterior and this coincides with what the unconscious does in Freud’s theory of psychoanalysis. In fact, Colomina points out that the mirror Freud hung over his working table in front of a window (where Freud sees his reflection within the context of the exterior which he sees from the window), represents how the limit between the exterior and the interior dissolves and how “the frontier is no longer a limit that separates ...”⁷⁹ (Figure 3.2.3). The sense of space changed with these ideas, and this resulted with a ‘different architecture’. To better understand the effect photography had on architecture Colomina focuses on Le Corbusier and Loos and their approaches towards photography.



Figure 3.2.3 Sigmund Freud’s study with mirror in front of the window.
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity: Privacy and publicity: modern architecture as mass media*. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994), p.81.

The main idea she introduces us to regarding Le Corbusier, is how he redrew photographic images to “inhabit the photograph;”⁸⁰ to partake the space of the image. She announces this approach as a “resistance to a passive intake of photography.”⁸¹

⁷⁸ Ibid., p.80.

⁷⁹ Ibid., at the same page.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p 91.

⁸¹ Ibid., p 93.

As Colomina asserts this was a process of learning, “the sketch learns from what the photograph excludes.”⁸² Thus, the photograph is not accepted as a mere fact but it goes through a process of interpretation (Figure 3.2.4a-b).

Colomina analyses the messages of Adolf Loos’s interiors through their photographs. According to her with these photographs a scene is created to imply that the space is just about to be occupied by a person. This approach is connected to “the theatricality of Loos interiors;”⁸³ ‘theatrical’ in the sense of waiting for an actor to enter the scene and perform. In Le Corbusier’s photos of interiors the system is reversed. Here, someone was in the room and has left just before the photo was taken. (Figure 3.2.5-3.2.6)

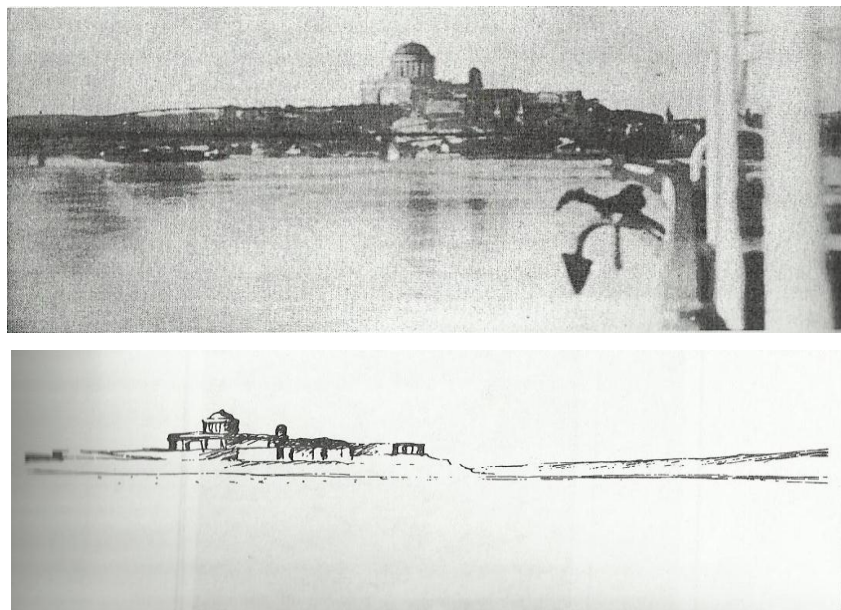


Figure 3.2.4a Le Corbusier’s photo of the cathedral of Esztergom.

Figure 3.2.4b Le Corbusier’s drawing of the cathedral of Esztergom.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity Privacy and publicity: modern architecture as mass media*. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994), p.94,95.

⁸² Ibid., p.100.

⁸³ Ibid., p.250.

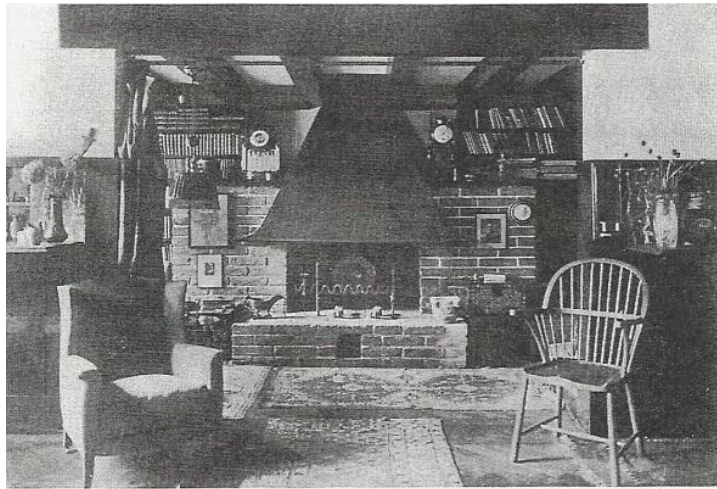


Figure 3.2.5: Living room of Adolf Loos's flat in Vienna, notice how an effect is given as if someone is just about to enter the room.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity Privacy and publicity: modern architecture as mass media*. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994), p.251.

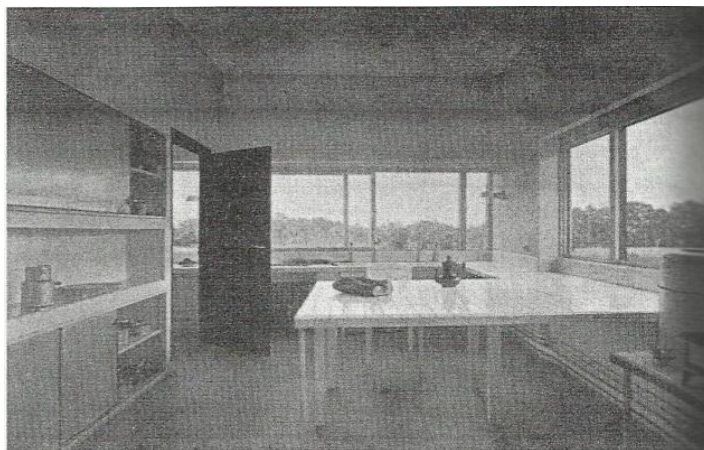


Figure 3.2.6: Le Corbusier's Villa Savoy kitchen, notice how the open door indicates that someone was just in the room.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity Privacy and publicity: modern architecture as mass media*. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994), p.251,286.

Another analysis of architecture and photography is through Le Corbusier's horizontal window. Colomina proposes that Le Corbusier's way of classifying the landscape through horizontal windows is parallel to 'the camera as a system of classification'⁸⁴. The vertical window creates a perspectival view, a view with a

⁸⁴ Ibid., p.323.

centre whereas the horizontal window does not have a central outlook just like the camera. In fact as Colomina observes, "...Le Corbusier's architecture is the result of his positioning himself behind the camera."⁸⁵ In this regard, Le Corbusier's sketches of horizontal windows are explanatory (Figure 3.2.7). Colomina comments on these sketches with the following words;

How important the division of the window into three panels is for Le Corbusier is evident in his sketches of the house: the view outside each panel seems relatively independent of the adjacent view. The grouping of the curtains in the side post ... reinforces the division of this window into four. The panorama 'sticking' to the window glass is superimposed on a rhythmic grid that suggests a series of photographs placed next to each other in a row, or perhaps a series of stills from a movie.⁸⁶

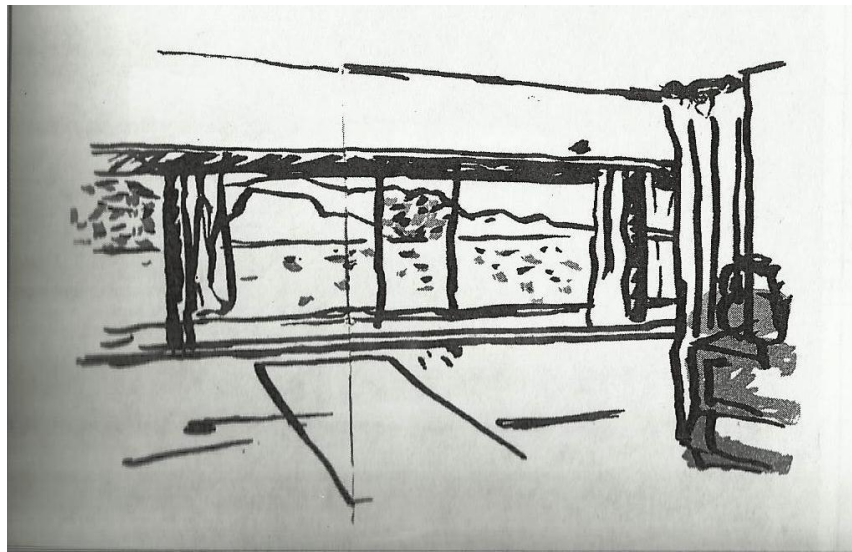


Figure 3.2.7: Le Corbusier's drawing of the horizontal window of his parents villa in Corseaux. Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1996) p.137.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p.134.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p.138-139. At this point, it should be remembered that as a tool of mass media, photography was the first 'screen', which akin to the screen of a window both 'reflects the interior and superimposes it into our vision of the exterior' (*Privacy and Publicity*, 80). Thus, with photography, the outcome was a blurring of the interior-exterior distinction. Under the theme, 'Domesticity' this blurring and its effect on everyday life will be thoroughly investigated.

“Photography does for architecture what the railway did for cities, transforming it into merchandise and conveying it through the magazines for it to be consumed by the masses.”⁸⁷ With this statement, Beatriz Colomina introduces us to the fact that photography and railway share a certain type of perception; as well as Le Corbusier’s horizontal window. I would argue that the horizontal window that separates the view, like shots taken with a camera, is also valid in the train windows. Here the shots relate more with the movie camera as speed is a part of the view.

The new ‘image-worlds’ of modern times in Benjaminian terms is firstly evident through photography. Accordingly, Colomina analyses primarily photography as a mass media medium. The first figure one should look into, as Colomina has done in *Privacy and Publicity* is Le Corbusier. Throughout the book we are constantly confronted with Le Corbusier’s use of images, thus Le Corbusier’s archive answers almost all questions that could be asked. Colomina focuses on Le Corbusier’s photographs of Villa Schwob: “... the published photographs of this house are *trompeuse* indeed, they have been ‘faked’ ... Le Corbusier air-brushed the photographs of Villa Schwob to adapt them to a more ‘purist’ aesthetic.”⁸⁸ He eliminates an important component, the site, from these photographs. Could it be said then that he prevents objectivity? I would argue that Le Corbusier’s approach is not against objectivity but his representations are the consequences of how he would like his projects to be perceived (Figure 3.2.8a-b). Photographs, modified photographs and the actual building are in fact all “layers of representation,”⁸⁹ which should be accepted as products of the architect. I believe Colomina has a similar approach as she states that, “By eliminating the site, he makes architecture into an object relatively independent of place.”⁹⁰ Hence, he modifies the photographs to reach the ‘purity’ of architecture.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p.47.

⁸⁸ Colomina: 1994, p.107.

⁸⁹ I would like to thank my supervisor Prof. Belgin Turan Özkaya for calling my attention to the idea of different layers of representation.

⁹⁰ Colomina: 1994, p.111.

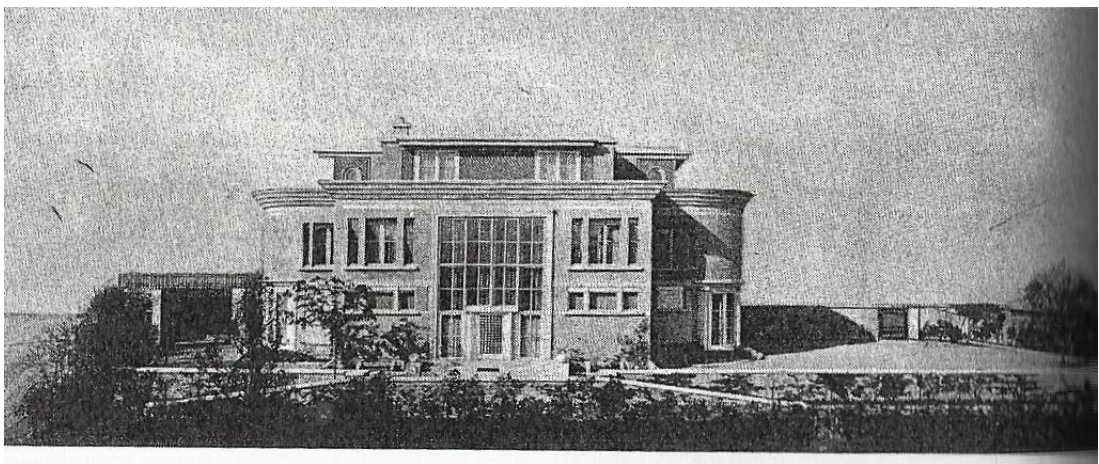


Figure 3.2.8a: Original photograph of *Villa Schwob*, 1920.

Figure 3.2.8b: Air brushed photograph of *Villa Schwob* published in *L'Esprit nouveau*.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1996) p.112, 113.

Beatriz Colomina's emphasis on the lack of information on the subject 'Le Corbusier and photography' is noteworthy. She pursues Benjamin's foundational idea that 'image-worlds are not solely subjective phenomenon'. Hence, Colomina aims to make a work appropriate to the Benjaminian position. She states:

In the rare cases when criticism has addressed the subject of Le Corbusier and photography it has done so from within the position that holds photography as a transparent medium of representation, oscillating constantly between a realistic interpretation of the medium and a formalist interpretation of the object. Significantly enough, the subject is addressed as either Le Corbusier the photographer or the photographs of Le Corbusier's work. The

place of photography in Le Corbusier's process of production is conspicuously missing.⁹¹

I believe that by filling this gap of 'the place of photography in Le Corbusier's production process', Colomina shows us, in a convincing manner, that there is an inevitable process from subjective creation to objective perception of images. Accordingly, she considers that an analysis without focusing on Le Corbusier's non-academic working methods would be incomplete, which are mostly evident in the drawings and sketches he made as well as the postcards he acquired during his travels throughout his life.⁹²

Le Corbusier's main tool to contact with mass media is photography. His acceptance of photography was a *careful process* thus, as aforementioned there is a certain 'resistance to a passive intake of photography'⁹³. The process of redrawing postcards or photographs has led to such an interpretation, be it the redrawing of a postcard of Algerian woman or the photograph of Emperor Khai Dinh (Figure 3.2.9a-b). Through reconstructing the photographic image by drawing he aims 'to overcome the obsessive closure of the object'. According to Colomina, "... he enters the photograph that is itself a stranger's house, occupying and reterritorializing the space, the city, the sexualities of the other ...".⁹⁴ An interesting argument by Reyner Banham whom Colomina quotes in *Privacy and Publicity* is that, "... the modern movement was the first movement in the history of art based exclusively on 'photographic evidence' rather than on personal experience, drawings or controversial books."⁹⁵ Here, I believe that it is necessary to ask, is Le Corbusier then not a figure of the modern movement as he still feels the necessity of drawing as a tool for representation. The answer is no, indeed, Le Corbusier is, an '*artist-surgeon*'.

⁹¹ Ibid., p.82.

⁹² Colomina especially refers to Le Corbusier's trips to Algeria and his sketches of Algerian women.

⁹³ Ibid., p.93.

⁹⁴ Ibid., on the same page.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p.14.

Benjamin in his article ‘The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction’⁹⁶ introduces us to two types of artists the ‘magician’ and the ‘surgeon’. The magician only interprets the new materials of the era whereas the surgeon uses it to produce new ideas of his own. The surgeon is a producer; in fact, ‘*L’Esprit Nouveau*’ is an outcome of Le Corbusier as an ‘*artist-surgeon*’. He collates and extracts different images from different sources and juxtaposes them in such a way that no image is accepted as it is and he is in full control of what he presents. Le Corbusier’s use of photography and his work on *L’Esprit Nouveau* will be thoroughly investigated under the theme ‘Strategies of Representation’.



Figure 3.2.9a: Photograph of Emperor Khai Dinh.

Figure 3.2.9b: Sketch of the photograph of the Emperor Khai Dinh.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1996) p.98, 99.

⁹⁶ [Data base online]. <http://itp.nyu.edu/~mp51/commlab/walterbenjamin.pdf>. [Accessed: 21.11.2012]

I suggest that, Beatriz Colomina's interpretation of Le Corbusier's works is an indication of his gradual acceptance of mass media. This was a result of her aforementioned aim to unfold 'the place of photography in Le Corbusier's process of production' and to remove 'the mask on Le Corbusier's non-academic method of working'.

Photography is also an inherent component of *Domesticity at War* due to the rise of new media technologies in the period the book covers. Although many photography-based interpretations can be traced throughout the book, perhaps the most striking of all is Ray and Charles Eames's approach towards photography. Eameses benefited from photography in every part of their work, be it the design of their house, the making of their films or the way they document and archive their lives. As Colomina points out, Eameses "saw everything through the camera. ... [They] used to shoot everything. This was surely not just an obsession with recording, ... but they also made decisions on the basis of what they saw through the lens."⁹⁷ A detailed analysis of Eameses can be found in Section 3.3.3 under the theme 'Strategies of Representation'.

3.2.3 Film:

'Film' is elaborated on in *Privacy and Publicity* with Benjamin's claim that it has the ability to create the shock effect of the modern age. "For Benjamin architecture provides the model of an (ancient) art whose reception occurs collectively and in a state of distraction. A form of reception that 'finds in the film its true form of exercise'." ⁹⁸ In this context, the first movie Colomina explains in detail is Le Corbusier's 'L'Architecture D'aujourd'hui' (1929)⁹⁹. In the film we see Le Corbusier walking through the house, as Colomina states 'he passes through the house rather

⁹⁷ Colomina: 2007, pp.97-98.

⁹⁸ Quoted in Colomina: 1994, p.72.

⁹⁹ The film is co-written and directed by Pierre Chenal and Le Corbusier.

than inhabits it'¹⁰⁰ this statement is noteworthy as it brings an awareness to the fact that in Le Corbusier's houses there is no inhabitant but a detached visitor, this is evident both in his movie and in his photographs of interiors which give the impression that someone has just left the room. Hence, in the movie even the architect himself is estranged.

In *Domesticity at War* Colomina starts by declaring that Charles Eames was introduced to the world of film in the MGM studios where he worked as a stage designer. Thus, the character of Eames's architecture was shaped in the context of film. To clarify this architecture-film relationship Colomina draws attention to their close relationship with the Wilder family¹⁰¹. She analyses a picture of Billy and Audrey Wilder taken by Charles Eames which explains how the Eameses' process of creation has a tripartite structure of domesticity-film-architecture:

Its a voyeuristic image of a domestic scene, capturing not merely the Eameses' intimacy with the filmmaker and with film but also the intimacy of film itself, its closeness to everything, its construction of an endless, relentless domesticity. The Eameses used this *domesticity of the image as the basis for a new kind of architecture*, as exemplified in the house they designed for the Wilders in 1950. The *movement from film to architecture* comes full circle with this project.¹⁰² (Figure 3.2.10)

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p.327.

¹⁰¹ Billy Wilder was a very successful filmmaker with several Academy Awards, He has directed, written and produced many widely renowned films such as, 'The Apartment' (1960), 'Some Like it Hot' (1959), 'Sabrina' (1954).

¹⁰² Emphasis is mine. Colomina: 2007, p.32.



Figure 3.2.10: Photo of Billy and Audrey Wilder taken by Charles Eames.
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p.52,53-34,35.

In the chapter ‘The Eames House’, Colomina reveals that Le Corbusier and the Eameses believed film to be the best medium to represent architecture, however their approach towards film differed. While in Le Corbusier’s ‘L’Architecture D’aujourd’hui’ he walks through the house in a formal manner indicating that he is just a visitor, in The Eameses ‘House: After Five Years of Living’ there is no figure in sight but only signs of living in the house. In fact as in many of the Eames films, the film is a collection of slides: “The film was made entirely from thousands of color slides the Eameses had been taking of their home over the first five years of its life”¹⁰³

Throughout *Domesticity at War* Colomina mentions six films by the Eameses. The films are, in date order: ‘Rough Sketch for a Simple Lesson’ (1952), ‘A Communication Primer’ (1953), ‘House: After Five Years of Living’ (1955), ‘Glimpses of the USA’ (1959), ‘Think’ (1964), (1968) and ‘Clown Face’ (1971). ‘Glimpses of the USA’ and ‘Powers of Ten’ were explained in detail to clarify the Eameses’s way of thinking. Colomina asserts that, “The Eameses were self-consciously architects of a new kind of space. The film breaks with the fixed

¹⁰³ Ibid., p.262.

perspectival view of the world”¹⁰⁴ (Figure 3.2.11-3.2.12a). ‘Powers of Ten’ had the same logic; in this we start with domestic space to gradually move away to outer space and finalize in the human body’s atomic level, whereas in ‘Glimpses of the USA’ we see first outer space then close-up details (Figure 3.2.12b). To further her analysis Colomina quotes a letter from the Eameses, to Vittorio Gregotti ¹⁰⁵ regarding ‘Powers of Ten’:

In the past fifty years the world has gradually been finding out something that architects have always known, that is, that *everything* is architecture. The problems of environment have become more and more interrelated. This is a sketch for a film that shows something of how large-and small-our environment is. ¹⁰⁶

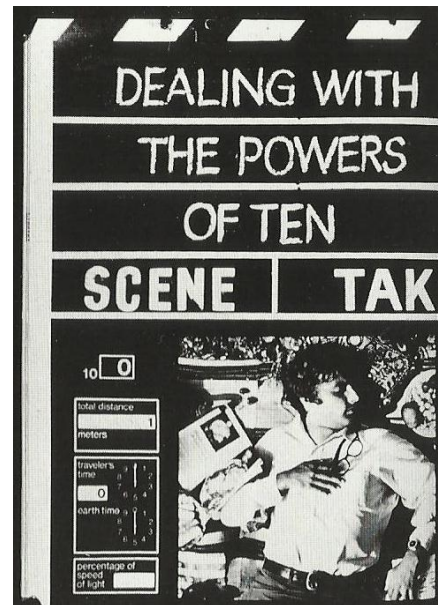


Figure 3.2.11: Charles and Ray Eames in Moscow.

Figure 3.2.12a: Powers of Ten, 1968.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 374, 385.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p.252.

¹⁰⁵ Vittorio Gregotti is an Italian Architect who has designed important buildings such as the Barcelona Olympic Stadium.

¹⁰⁶ ibid., p.270.

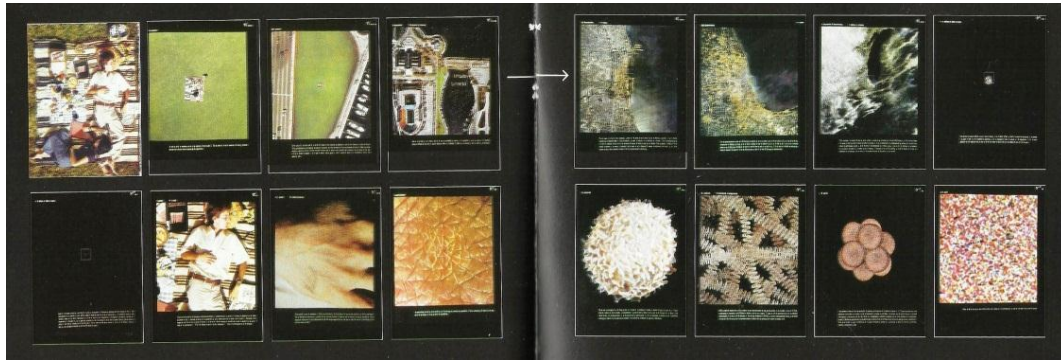


Figure 3.2.12b: Stills from Powers of Ten.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 388-389.

Similarly, ‘Glimpses of the USA’ displays multiple images on multiple screens.

Colomina explains the reason for such a representation with the following words:

The idea of a single image commanding our attention has faded away. It seems as if we need to be distracted in order to concentrate, as if we all of us living in this new kind of space, the space of information could be diagnosed en masse with attention deficit disorder. *The state of distraction in this metropolis*, described so eloquently by Walter Benjamin early in the twentieth century, seems to have been replaced by a new form of distraction, which is to say, a new form of attention.¹⁰⁷

Colomina’s quotation of Walter Benjamin supports this idea: “The film is the art form that is in keeping with the increased threat to his life which modern man has to face. Man’s need to expose himself to shock effects is his adjustment to the dangers threatening him.”¹⁰⁸ In other words, the human eye constantly grasps new scenes, in Benjaminian terms “it cannot be arrested.”¹⁰⁹ Accordingly, it could be said that film with its constant change of scenes comes closest to human perception, especially in the new modern world and its speed. Architects, as seen in the Eames example, are aware of the effectiveness of film on the modern public. Indeed, Le Corbusier who once resisted photography uses film to promote his architecture.

¹⁰⁷ Emphasis is mine. Colomina: 2007, p.240.

¹⁰⁸ Colomina: 1994, p.72.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., on the same page.

On this basis, Walter Benjamin suggests a connection between the aforementioned distraction-attention dilemma and architecture: "... the distracted masses absorb the work of art into themselves This is most obvious with regard to buildings. Architecture always offered the prototype of an artwork that is received in a state of distraction and through the collective."¹¹⁰ Jonathan Crary has an argument in 'Suspension of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture' opposite to Benjamin's approach of 'distraction and concentration forming polar opposites'. Crary contends that "... attention and distraction cannot be thought outside of a continuum in which the two ceaselessly flow into one another, as part of a social field in which the same imperatives and forces incite one and the other."¹¹¹ It could then be claimed that, film is appropriate to modern perception, as distraction is needed for attention; architecture is a collectively observed phenomenon, which is perceived through the distraction of the whole. Similar to Crary's suggestion of attention and distraction flowing into one another, film and architecture flow into one another, as exemplified in the Eames film, 'Glimpses of the USA'. This film was a collection of more than 2000 images showing a typical workday and weekend in the USA, projected on seven different screens. It was presented at the American Exhibition in Moscow, in a specially designed space by Buckminster Fuller (Figure 3.2.13-3.2.14-3.2.15a-b). In her article 'Information Obsession: the Eameses' multiscreen architecture', Colomina states "Glimpses of the USA was not just images inside a dome. The huge array of suspended screens defined a space, a space within a space."¹¹² In this sense, film and architecture work hand in hand and attention through distraction is created not only through the images but also through the architecture it is presented in. Colomina sums up the Eames mentality with the following words:

¹¹⁰ Hannah Arendt, "Walter Benjamin: 1892-1940" in Walter Benjamin. *Illuminations*, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968) p.40.

¹¹¹ Jonathan Crary. *Suspensions of perception : attention, spectacle, and modern culture* .(Cambridge, Mass. : MIT Press, c2001) p.50-51.

¹¹² Colomina, Beatriz, *Information obsession: the Eameses' multiscreen architecture*, The Journal of Architecture Volume 6 (Autumn, 2001), pp.205-223. p.209.

... the Eameses' innovations in the world of communication, their exhibitions, films, and multiscreen performances transformed the status of architecture. Their highly controlled flows of simultaneous images provided a space, an enclosure- the kind of space we now occupy continuously without thinking.¹¹³

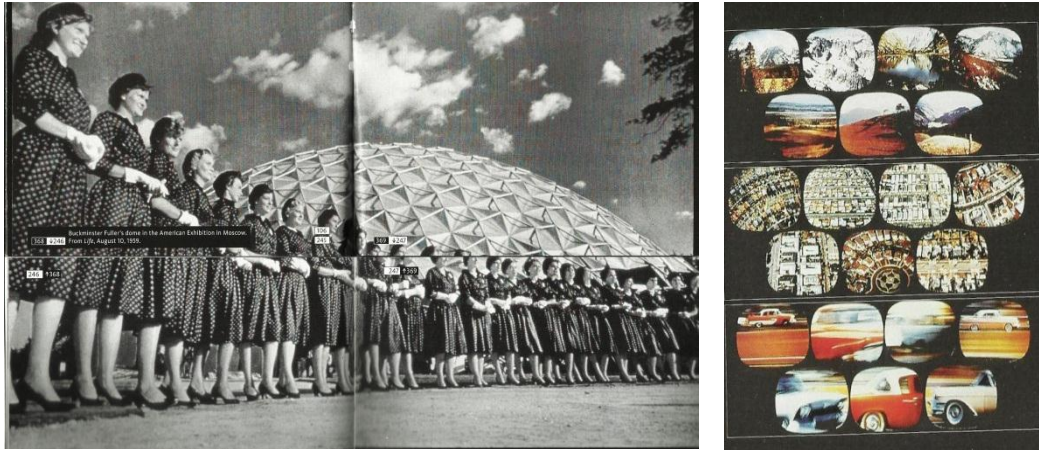


Figure 3.2.13: Dome for American Exhibition in Moscow designed by Buckminster Fuller, Photo published in *Life* August 1959.

Figure 3.2.14: *Glimpses of the USA*, 1959.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 246-47/368-69, 382.

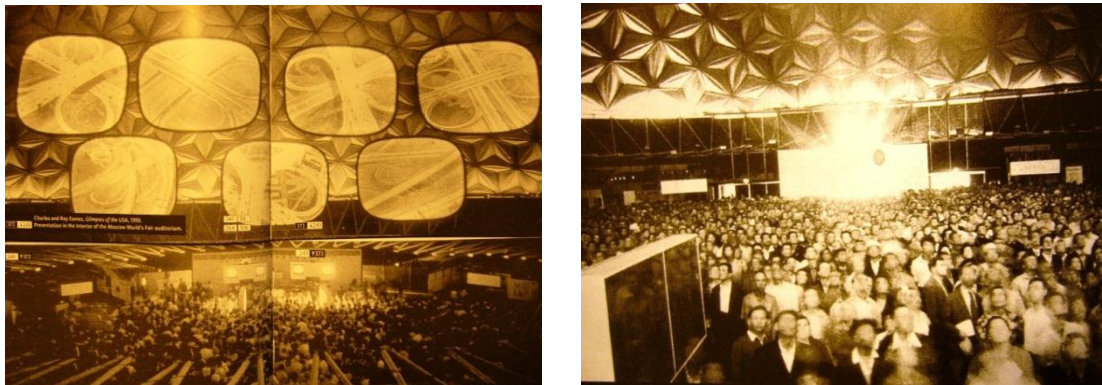


Figure 3.2.15a, b: *Glimpses of the USA* presented in the Moscow World's Fair, 1959.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 248-49/372-73, 384.

¹¹³ Ibid., p.223.

After analysing the tripartite structure between film-architecture-distraction, I would like to add Mitchell Schwarzer's elucidation on another tripartite structure: railway-film-architecture. As aforementioned, the railway and photography share a perception since they both frame the view and we may trace a similar partaking between railway and film. Schwarzer observes that through the railway's "smooth horizontal trajectory, and because it separated the place of viewing from the things being viewed, the train turned the built environment into something of a moving picture show, decades before the invention of cinema."¹¹⁴ As the train rushes through stations the vast change of images is interpreted by Schwarzer as a process of editing similar to that of film, thus from the windows of the train "images of buildings multiply, simplify, and compress into montage-like sequences."¹¹⁵ This is related to Le Corbusier's idea of perception occurring in motion. To clarify the connection between mobile perception, film and architecture the lines of Giuliana Bruno¹¹⁶ on Sergei Eisenstein¹¹⁷ would be helpful,

Speaking of film's immobile spectator, Eisenstein reveals the perceptual interplay between immobility and mobility. There is a mobile dynamics involved in the act of viewing films, even if the spectator is seemingly static. The (im)mobile spectator moves across an imaginary path, traversing multiple sites and times...the consumer of architectural (viewing) space is the prototype of the film spectator.¹¹⁸

Thus, in Le Corbusier's 'L'Architecture D'aujourd'hui' the immobile spectator is literally guided through an architectural space.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁴ Schwarzer: 2004, p.32.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p.55.

¹¹⁶ Giuliana Bruno is a professor of visual and environmental studies at Harvard University.

¹¹⁷ Sergei Eisenstein was a film director and film theorist. *Strike* (1924), *Battleship Potemkin* (1925), *October* (1927) are some of his mostly renowned films.

¹¹⁸ Giuliana Bruno. *Atlas of emotion : journeys in art, architecture, and film*. (New York : Verso, 2002) p.56.

¹¹⁹ See. p. 37. For more information on the film.

3.2.4 Television:

... it is impossible to focus in the Eames House in the same way that we do in a house of the 1920s. Here the eye is that of a television viewer, not the one of the 1950s, but closer to the one of today, looking at multiple screens, some with captions, all simultaneously ...¹²⁰

In *Domesticity at War* the post-war technology and its effect on the American way of life is widely discussed. Colomina mentions that "... the list of the most desirable objects in the post-war years [includes] ... a suburban house and a lawn, what Americans wanted most was a convertible station wagon, an electric stove, a television-phonograph-radio" ¹²¹ However not everyone was welcoming new technology to their domestic environment, for instance Philip Johnson did not accept any of these new technologies in his Glass House (Figure 3.2.16). She draws attention to the irony in Johnson's position by interpreting the Glass House itself as a TV set; "If the postwar suburban house operated as a television set, broadcasting family life through the picture window, the Johnson's Glass House closed itself to the outside, much more radically than a stone house could, to become a TV broadcasting studio." ¹²² The reason for such an interpretation is that Johnson used the house as a set for most of his television appearances. At an isolated site, this house does not work as a television set broadcasting the life within but it is as if Johnson used the house as a "platform for him on the media" ¹²³ (Figure 3.2.17).

¹²⁰ Colomina: 2007, p.103.

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 135.

¹²² Ibid., p.184.

¹²³ Ibid., p.188.



Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 284.
Figure 3.2.16: Interior view of Johnson's Glass House.

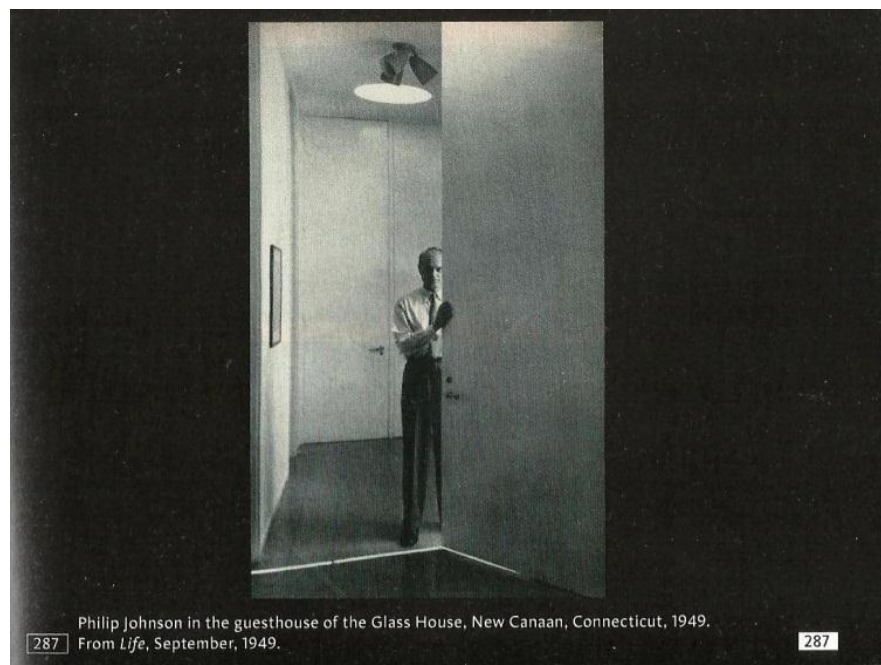


Figure 3.2.17: a photo published in *Life* magazine showing Philip Johnson in the guesthouse of the Glass House.
 Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p.287.

Colomina connects the impact of television on the Eames film 'Glimpses of the USA'. She explains that in 'Glimpses of the USA' the Eameses displayed "space programs and military operations"¹²⁴ which were already introduced to society through television. Further, "As is typical of all the Eameses' work, it was the simplicity and clarity of this synthesis that made it immediately accessible to all."¹²⁵ On the other hand, for Colomina the '1964 New York World's Fair' is also striking in regard to the discussions on television. This fair let visitors take control, they could watch the spectacles through a frame as they walked through the fair (Figure 3.2.18a-b). Colomina interprets this frame as a television screen; "Television was everywhere. Virtually every exhibit in the fair involved television. Indeed, the fair itself was read at the time as 'the biggest television set in the world'... ." ¹²⁶ The fair aimed to portray everything at one place yet this spectacle was now accessible in the domestic interior through television itself, as Colomina states "the public domain had been displaced indoors."¹²⁷



Figure 3.2.18a, b: Visitors in General Electric Pavilion in New York World's Fair 1964.
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 420, 421.

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 257.

¹²⁵ Ibid., on the same page.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p.286.

¹²⁷ Ibid., p.287.

Television is the most influential vehicle of mass media, in the sense that it works as a window, which blurs the distinction between interior and exterior, but also it is literally in the domestic environment and brings ‘the public world into the house’. On this basis, I suggest that Mitchell Schwarzer’s *Zoomscape*, supports Colomina’s argument of the appearance of the public world in the house as he similarly connects architecture with media. He states; “Unlike film, television offers *architecture as an everyday experience*.”¹²⁸ In other words, TV demonstrates that, ‘media not only represents but reconstructs the world’. Martha Rosler’s project, ‘Bringing the War Home: House Beautiful’ photomontages also shows TV as a tool which brings the outside in. About this project Colomina adds:

In these remarkable works, the image on the TV screen becomes the image in the picture window. The house is placed on the battlefield. Rosler removes the division between what is conveyed by the television and domesticity itself. The suburban American house becomes an inhabited television set.¹²⁹

Taking this example into consideration, I would argue that as the windows are conceived of ‘images from battlefields of Vietnam’ in a time when war is broadcast on TV, the TV itself becomes a window. When the lights are on, all windows work like a mirror. The inhabitant sees himself in the battlefield as the background. This may also be valid for the TV screen which works as a window; the television as window has the capacity of working as a mirror and this creates the feeling of outside at home. The inhabitant is placed outside while he is in the interior. Thus, the distinction between interior and exterior has diminished.

At this point, it is worth to remember the physical form of Colomina’s *Domesticity at War* itself, a book which is composed of two sections, one image-only section and one image-text section. The form of the book suggests an innovative method of viewing the collectively assembled images. The images can be viewed connected, separately, by following a rule developed by Colomina, or by creating new

¹²⁸ Emphasis is mine. Schwarzer: 2004, p.287.

¹²⁹ Colomina: 2007, p.290.

compositions. The design of the book could be read as a TV screen. The black background of the images and the form creates this TV screen effect. We would argue that this imitates a TV. For a detailed analysis of the form of the book see Chapter 5 'Investigating Colomina's Books as Media: Being a Reader of Beatriz Colomina'.

3.3. Strategies of Representation

3.3.1 Adolf Loos: Reconstructing Photographs



Figure 3.3.1: Adolf Loos.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1996) p.53.

Colomina mentions Adolf Loos firstly within her discussion on the understanding of the city and mask. For Loos the modern man needed a mask to find a place in the universe; he believed that the modern man uses the mask to hide his identity

whereas the primitive men used it to gain an identity. In this context, Colomina states that, "... the modern mask is a form of protection, a cancelling of differences on the outside precisely to make identity possible, an identity that is now individual."¹³⁰ Colomina further explains; "Loos realized modern life was proceeding on two disparate levels, the one of our individual experience and the other of our existence as society."¹³¹ These levels as private and public identity are connected through architecture which is a social mechanism. For Loos this is achieved through "the introverted character of his houses,"¹³² indeed through his method of silence. Hence, as Colomina points out "Loos believed that the house grows with one, and that everything that goes on inside it is the business of its inhabitants."¹³³

Throughout her analysis on Adolf Loos Colomina focuses on the effect of press; particularly on the production of architecture through writing, drawing or photography. She stresses the fact that Loos was known to criticize the architectural magazines since he believed that they create manipulations. Although this is the reaction of Loos towards press it is known that his ideas circulated via media.

Another aspect that is scrutinized is Loos's attitude towards photography. For Loos architecture could only be represented in built form; drawing or photography is not capable of "translating architecture adequately."¹³⁴ According to him the only sense adequate for architecture is touch. He claims that his clients do not recognise their interiors from photographs. In this sense, Colomina quotes Loos in which he declares that he is proud of knowing that his works were ineffective in photographs:

¹³⁰ Colomina: 1994, p.37.

¹³¹ Ibid., on the same page.

¹³² Ibid., p.39.

¹³³ Ibid., on the same page.

¹³⁴ Ibid., p.65.

... nothing is known of my work. But this is a sign of the strength of my ideas and the correctness of my teachings. I, the unpublished, I whose efforts are unknown, I, the only one of thousands who has a real influence ...¹³⁵

Colomina states that “Loos privileges the bodily experience of space over its mental construction: the architect first senses the space, then he visualizes it.”¹³⁶ This privileging of bodily experience is also valid for the inhabitants of Loos’s interiors. Hence, Colomina states that “Sitte’s plaza and Loos’s *Raumplan* are spaces defined by the perception of the person whom they enclose, not by that of the one who trespasses their limits.”¹³⁷ Loos’s architectural understanding parallels with this need of entering. Here, Colomina makes a connection between Loos’s architectural understanding and his method of writing:

It is writing that requires *entry*. By entering, one extracts from every reading an experience that is unique. Such writing is always *modern*, just like Loos’s houses, because it requires that someone *enter* in order to make sense of it, that someone make it his or her own.¹³⁸

Another noteworthy point in *Privacy and Publicity* is his concept of the ‘theatre box’. In Loos’s interior the body is arrested, Colomina asserts that, “For Loos, the theatre box exists at the intersection between claustrophobia and agoraphobia.”¹³⁹ To clarify Colomina’s ‘Moller House’ example would be appropriate as here windows are used only as sources of light but not as a frames for views (Figure 3.3.2 - 3.3.3a-b). This results with the inhabitant focusing on the interior of the house, as Colomina states, “The inhabitants of Loos’s houses are both actors in and spectators of the family scene”¹⁴⁰ The theatre box results with a duplication of perception, “the

¹³⁵ Quoted in Colomina: 1994, p.42-43.

¹³⁶ Ibid., p.265.

¹³⁷ Ibid., p.51.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p.46.

¹³⁹ Ibid., p.238.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p.244.

‘voyeur’ in the ‘theatre box’ has become the object of another’s gaze”¹⁴¹ this is evident in both the Moller and Müller houses. Another controversial approach could be traced from Loos’s house for Josephine Baker, as here the inhabitant is the object and she does not share the role of being a voyeur with the visitor as in the theatre box. The mirror effect on the glass surrounding the swimming pool reflects her own image on the blurred figures of the voyeurs watching Josephine Baker. As Colomina states, “... she sees herself being looked at by another: a narcissistic gaze superimposed on a voyeuristic gaze.”¹⁴² In the ‘H.O.F’ chapter of her book *Domesticity at War*, she remembers this specific example, as they comprehend each other. She states,

Actual visitors of the house [The House of Future], unable to enter it, would peak inside through the viewing holes in the walls from the corridors surrounding the house at ground level or from the viewing platforms in the upper level...They looked inside it in complete absorption, as if watching a film or a TV program...or a peep show. The viewing mechanism resembled that of Adolf Loos’s project for a House for Josephine Baker, another box inside a box with the visitors occupying the space between the walls, looking in through windows at a sexualized void, the swimming pool where the naked body of Josephine Baker moved.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p.248.

¹⁴² Ibid., p.264.

¹⁴³ Colomina: 2007, p.220.

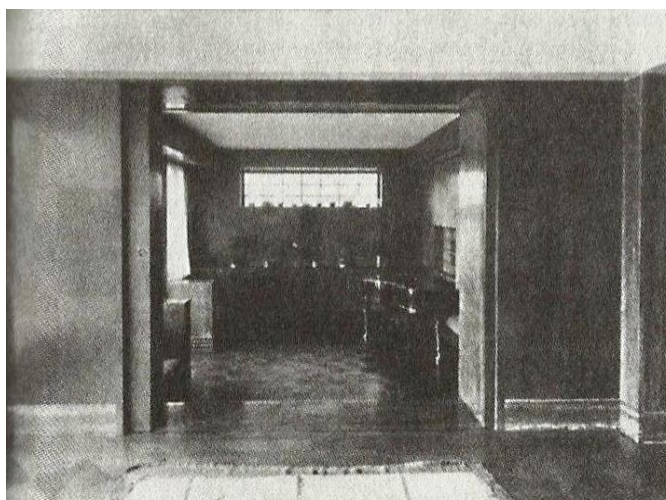
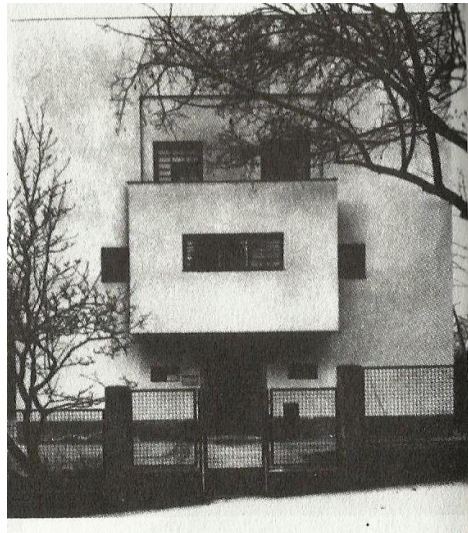


Figure 3.3.2: *Adolf Loos*, Moller House.

Figure 3.3.3a, b: *Adolf Loos*, Moller House, interiors.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1996) p.258, 259.

As mentioned in section 3.2.3 ‘Photography’, “The theatricality of Loos’s interiors is constructed by many forms of representation. ... Many of the photographs, for instance, tend to give the impression that someone is just about to enter the room, that a piece of domestic drama is about to be enacted.”¹⁴⁴ Colomina’s filmic interpretation of Loos’s interior is an assertion of Loos using representation methods, in this case photography, to create the theatricality he aims to achieve. In the photographs of his interiors as seen in Figure 3.3.4 where a man is about to enter the room, there is a sense as if we are going to watch a scene of a film, thus, the photo triggers curiosity. However, one should not neglect the fact that in the beginning Loos was a character whose approach towards photography was similar to Le Corbusier’s; he did not believe in photography’s ability to interpret architecture. In fact, for Loos the only semiotic system capable of interpreting another semiotic system is language.”¹⁴⁵ I would argue that his periodical ‘*Das Andare*’ was an outcome of this idea.



Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1996) p.153.
Figure 3.3.4: Adolf Loos, Rufer House, interior.

¹⁴⁴ Colomina: 1994, p.250.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p..43-44.

To make a better judgement of Loos's approach, Colomina points out an interesting connection between railway and photography. She focuses on how the photographed object becomes placeless similar to the railway, which only exists of arrival and departure points, hence both as aforementioned 'ignore place'. Loos's rejection of photography extends from this idea. I would argue that, Loos's belief that the inhabitants of his houses would not recognise the space they inhabit from photographs is a fear of the object losing its aura, accordingly, losing its identity. As Colomina explains, "To separate the object from its place, which is always part of the object itself, implies a process of abstraction in the course of which the object loses its aura, ceases to be recognisable."¹⁴⁶ However, the inevitable effect of modernism happened and photographs of Loos's architecture were taken, and as Colomina states these photographs suggest Loos' involvement; it is as if Loos felt the need to reconstruct the photographs to represent his architecture.¹⁴⁷ For Loos this modification was through "a repeated presence of certain objects"¹⁴⁸ as well as "a play with reflective surfaces and framing devices"¹⁴⁹ (Figure 3.3.5-3.3.6). To clarify the reason for Loos's intrusion Colomina uses the following words: "What he achieves ... is a critique of photography as a transparent medium The photographs ... are not representations in the traditional sense; they do not simply refer to a pre-existing object, they produce the object; they literally construct their object."¹⁵⁰ However, I would argue that Loos's intrusion fits into Benjamin's description of the destruction of aura.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p.50.

¹⁴⁷ Here a similarity to Le Corbusier's approach could be traced as they both modified photographs of their own architecture.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 270.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 271.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., on the same page.



Figure 3.3.5: Adolf Loos, Khuner villa, interior. The view from the window is a photomontage.
Figure 3.3.6: Adolf Loos, Moller house, interior. The cello on the right side of the room is a photomontage.
 Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1996) p.272, 258.

3.3.2 Le Corbusier: Modifications for Media



Figure 3.3.7: Le Corbusier.

Source: [Data base online] <http://www.ilikearchitecture.net/tag/le-corbusier/> [Accessed, 05.11.2012].

In *Privacy and Publicity* Colomina starts her analysis of Le Corbusier with his concept of movement, which was an inevitable part of his architecture. In this sense she observes that “vision in Le Corbusier’s architecture is always tied to movement.”¹⁵¹ Le Corbusier’s alterations on photographs are also discussed by Colomina; from postcards to photos of his own architecture Le Corbusier made various, dramatic modifications. Le Corbusier’s ideas on media, on the other hand, are scrutinized through a comparison between Adolf Loos and Le Corbusier’s attitude towards magazines of the era. She remarks that:

Loos was reacting to the confusion between architecture and the image of architecture so characteristic of the overfed journals of Jugendstil. Le Corbusier was to go a step further than Loos. In Paris, more precisely with the experience of *L’Esprit nouveau*, he came to understand the press, the printed media, not only as a medium for the cultural diffusion of something previously existing but also as a context of production with its own autonomy.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p.5.

¹⁵² Ibid., p.104.

On this basis, in Le Corbusier's magazine 'L'Esprit nouveau'¹⁵³, modifications on both architectural works as well as advertisements are traceable (Figure 3.3.8). In fact, advertisements used for the financing of Le Corbusier's magazine was a reason for his involvement with mass media. He started to deal with images through his collection of advertisement catalogues or postcards; actually he 'collected everything that struck him visually'¹⁵⁴. For instance, he uses airplane images from publicity brochures in 'L'Esprit nouveau' to easily grab the attention of the reader as these were popular images of war technology during that time (Figure 3.3.9a-b). At this point, Beatriz Colomina's assertion of Le Corbusier's acknowledgement of the relationship between image and book would be appropriate: "This new conception of the book...allows the author to avoid flowery language, ineffectual descriptions; the facts explode under the eyes of the reader by *force of the images*."¹⁵⁵ Thus, it could be said that the airplane images used in 'L'Esprit Nouveau' is an outcome of this strategy.



Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1996) p.143.
Figure 3.3.8: L'Esprit Nouveau front cover.

¹⁵³ 'L'Esprit Nouveau' was the avant-garde magazine published by Le Corbusier and Amadée Ozenfant.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p.148.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p.119, *emphasis added*.

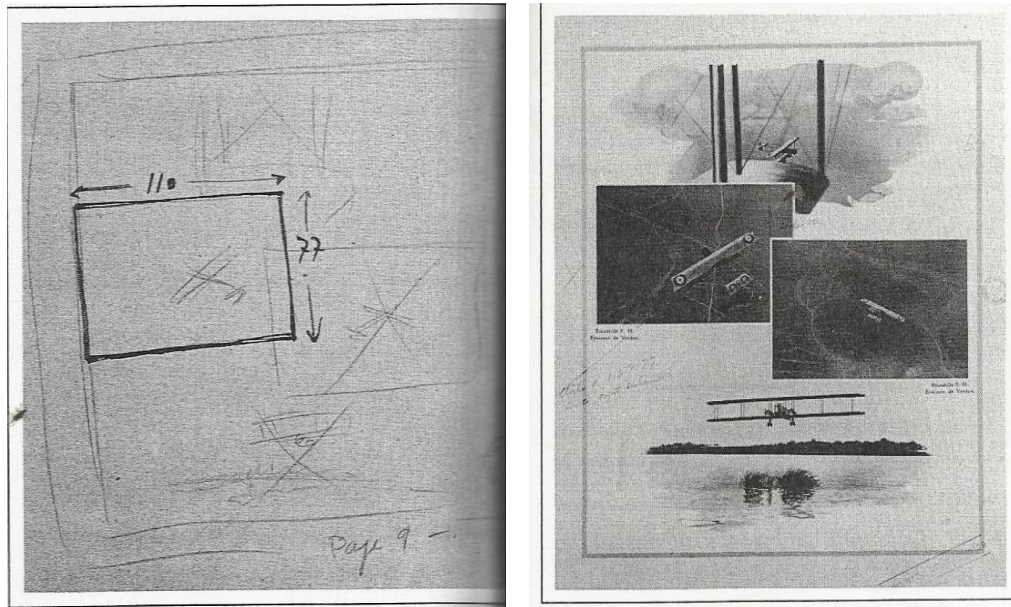


Figure 3.3.9a,b: Airplane pictures chosen from a catalogue to be used in *L'Esprit nouveau* (First picture shows Le Corbusier's sketch for the page).
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1996) p.162,163.

How Le Corbusier represented his own architecture is also worth examining. That he constructed images to give the feeling of motion was mentioned before. Hence, as Colomina states, in Le Corbusier's photographs or in his movie '*L'Architecture D'aujourd'hui*' the important point is that "perception occurs in motion."¹⁵⁶ Colomina's assertion on Le Corbusier's use of his own architecture in advertisements is also noteworthy. She states that, "Sometimes an image of a built work by the architect [Le Corbusier] is placed in the advertisement of a company that has been involved in its construction ..."¹⁵⁷ (Figure 3.3.10).

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p.283.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p.190.



Figure 3.3.10: Le Corbusier's L'Esprit nouveau Pavillon used in an ad campaign.
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1996) p.191,193.

Colomina parallels Le Corbusier and the Eameses regarding the usage of aviation and marine catalogues, she points out how Le Corbusier's new, innovative techniques were appreciated by Charles Eames:

While Le Corbusier theorised the factory-made house, or at least new materials and building techniques, the houses he managed to build in the mean time used the most conventional methods. Like Le Corbusier, Charles Eames was an avid reader of catalogues on marine and aviation equipment.¹⁵⁸

However, "Le Corbusier did not change the face of architecture in the United states significantly. His influence was really in the techniques of representing and promoting architecture."¹⁵⁹ Colomina informs us on how ideas on modern

¹⁵⁸ Colomina: 2007, p. 30.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., p.211.

architecture were very slowly acknowledged in the USA. As a vivid example; Le Corbusier's *Vers une architecture* made its debut in the USA three years later than the date it was originally published.

Another subject of analysis is how "Le Corbusier's [horizontal] window corresponds...to the space of photography."¹⁶⁰ Through the horizontal window "the house was a system for taking pictures."¹⁶¹ It is to say, with the horizontal window Le Corbusier 'inhabits first' and 'places afterwards' to solve the problem of modern habitation. Colomina clarifies this matter with the following words,

For Le Corbusier, 'to inhabit' means to inhabit the camera. But the camera is not a traditional place, it is a system of classification... 'to inhabit' means to employ that system. Only after this do we have 'placing', which is to place the view in the house...to classify the landscape.¹⁶²

3.3.3 Eameses: Collage for Film

In *Domesticity at War* Beatriz Colomina's 'archive' is the Eameses. In this book the post-World War II period is investigated and the Eameses have made essential contributions, from architecture to film, from military equipment to furniture, during this era. In this sense, Colomina shows us how the Eameses used their products and how through their contributions mass media had spread.

Eameses used photography to celebrate their architecture Colomina traced this from their photographs taken during and after the construction of the widely renowned 'Eames House' (Figure 3.3.11a-b). A method they used was making collages on pictures of the house In fact, they used this collage method to elucidate that the role of glass was changing. They took a photo of a reflection of the eucalyptus tree

¹⁶⁰ Colomina: 1994, p.133.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p.311.

¹⁶² Ibid., p.323.

outside their house and replaced an interior panel with this photograph to give the message that “every panel should be understood as photographic frame” ¹⁶³ (Figure 3.3.12-3.3.13).

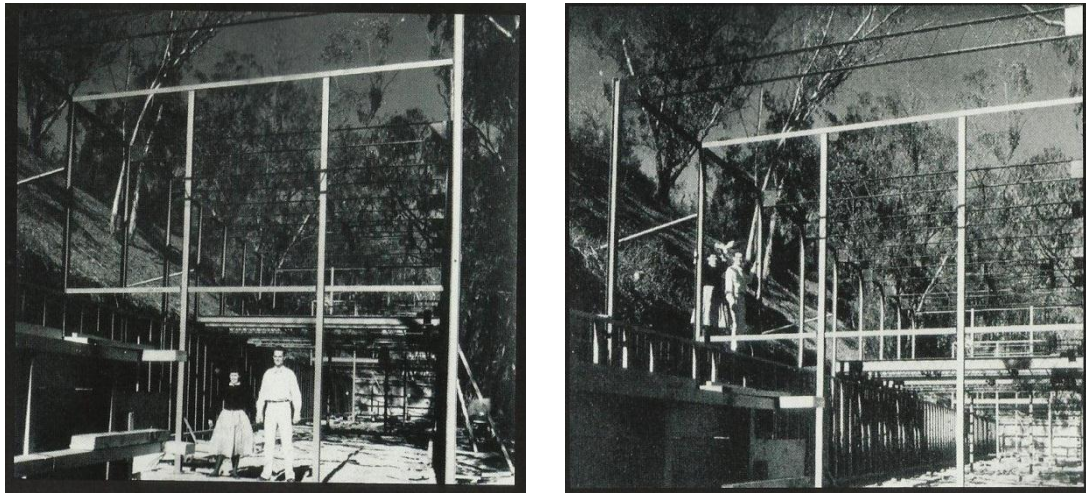


Figure 3.3.11a-b: Ray and Charles Eames on the construction site of the Eames House.
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 124,125.



Figure 3.3.12: Tree reflections on glass walls of the Eames House.

Figure 3.3.13: Photo of reflections placed on glass wall.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 182,183.

¹⁶³ Colomina: 2007, p.98.

To elaborate on Eameses' relationship to photography, Colomina focuses on Charles Eames's fascination with circuses. In a lecture he gave at Harvard University, he used a slide show of circus images and sounds (Figure 3.3.14). To connect this circus fascination to their architectural theories Colomina makes the following assertion: "... this is what Eames thought architecture was-the ongoing spectacle of everyday life, understood as an exercise in restricting rather than self expression."¹⁶⁴ The focus on 'the ongoing spectacle of everyday life' is mostly evident in the 1955 film 'House: After Five Years of Living' which was a collection of images taken of the Eames house (Figure 3.3.15). In fact as Colomina asserts,

The eye that organises the architecture of the historical avant-garde has been displaced by a multiplicity of zooming eyes. Not by chance, the Eameses' 1955 film *House: After Five Years of Living* is made up entirely of thousands of slides. Every aspect of the house is scrutinized by these all-too-intimate eyes. The camera moves up close to every surface, every detail. But these are not the details of the building as such: they are the details of the everyday life that the building makes possible.¹⁶⁵

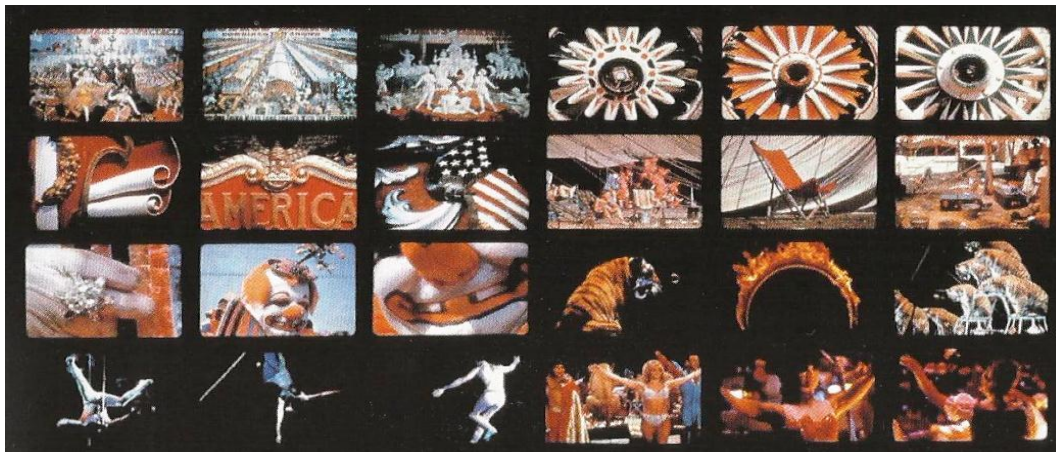


Figure 3.3.14: Pictures of the slide show *Circus*, presented at a lecture.
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 176-129.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p.88.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p.102.



Figure 3.3.15: Pictures of the Eames house, used as slides for the film, *House After Five Years of Living*.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 176-177.

It is meaningful to think that, with new technologies and media, the public became used to absorbing multiple images. Hence, Eameses' most influential contribution to media and architecture was the way they used these 'multiple images'. As a result of these novelties, as Colomina asserts,

Fantasies that had long circulated in science fiction had become reality. This shift from research and fantasy to tangible fact made new forms of communication to a mass audience possible. The Eameses' innovative technique did not simply present the audience with a new way of seeing things. Rather, it gave form to a new mode of perception that was already in everybody's mind.¹⁶⁶

Of particular importance here is that now attention is grabbed through distraction; the distraction achieved through multiple images. Eameses were aware of this new way of perception; in an interview given to *Vogue* they asserted that (regarding their 'Sample Lesson'¹⁶⁷), instead of concentrating on a single message they introduced students to many forms of distraction. There are many works where such an approach is traceable; for example, '*Glimpses of the USA*' was a collection of slides displayed on seven screens simultaneously.¹⁶⁸ Another film 'Think' was also a collection of

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p.253.

¹⁶⁷ Sample Lesson was a 'show for a typical class' which consisted of slides, films, multiple screens, sound, synthetic odors and live narration. The goal was "the breaking down of barriers between fields of learning ..." (Neuhart, Neuhart, and Eames, *Eames Design*, 177).

¹⁶⁸ For detailed information on the film 'Glimpses of the USA' see. Section 3.2.3 *Film*, under the theme

images and “its speed intended to be the speed of the mind”¹⁶⁹ Colomina parallels the ‘cutting’ technique used for television to the multiscreen technique of the Eameses: “The logic of the Eameses’ multiscreen is simply the logic of mass media.”¹⁷⁰ Accordingly, it is meaningful to think that, the modern age brain adjusted to this kind of an image overload (Figure 3.3.16-3.3.17).

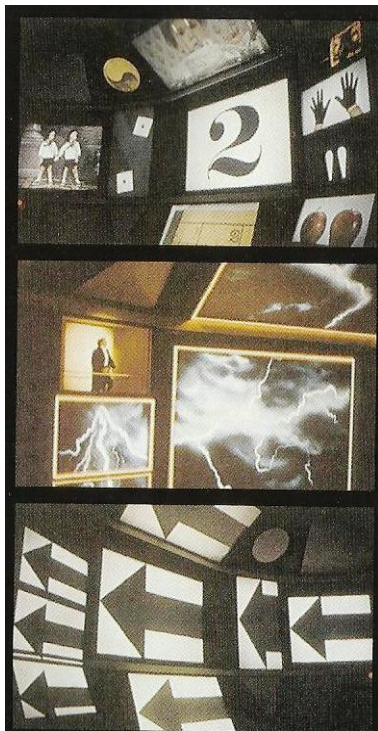


Figure 3.3.16: Details from the Eames film, *Think*.

Figure 3.3.17: Magazine spread on the IBM Pavilion, from *Life*, 1964.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 176-177.

Mass Media of this thesis.

¹⁶⁹ Colomina: 2007, p.268. At this point it should be noted that creating something which has the speed of the mind was an Eames declaration however still the speed of the mind cannot be measured.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., p.269.

3.4 Social Psyche

The ‘social psyche’ of the era that Beatriz Colomina discusses is worth paying attention. Although not a specifically pointed out subject, from various assertions made by Colomina throughout both of her books one can trace such psychological analysis.

In *Privacy and Publicity* such analysis are traceable in the discussions about Adolf Loos and his interiors as well as, his photographs and its relation to Freudian theories, whereas in *Domesticity at War* the general social psychology of the period can be traced as psychological confusion was a preordained part of war and its domestication. As aforementioned, Beatriz Colomina specifically points out, “The bright experiments of postwar American architecture are covertly organized by the trauma of war- the trauma of war that just finished and- the trauma of the fact that it had not really finished after all.”¹⁷¹ Post World War II, houses representing the American dream and the effects of the lasting trauma are evident. In these homes, the seeming aim was to create an environment which would provide psychological health. As Colomina states “... in the two decades following World War II, the ideal home was expanded to include an emphasis on psychological well-being”¹⁷² (Figure 3.3.18). To do so, not only new products of war technology were used to support the ideal home, but also a shelter was placed under the lawn to provide security. Colomina exemplifies this alteration:

Perhaps nowhere was this schizophrenia more acutely represented than in an article in *Life* about a couple in Florida who spent their fourteen-day honeymoon in their fallout shelter. ‘Their Sheltered Honeymoon’ portrays them sitting in the lawn-before going under-with their provisions spread out around them on the grass like ‘wedding gifts’.¹⁷³ (fig.3.3.19)

¹⁷¹ Ibid., p.56.

¹⁷² Ibid., p.163.

¹⁷³ Ibid., p.138.



Figure 3.3.18: ‘Containment at Home: A Cold War Family Poses in their Fallout Shelter.’ From *Life*, 1961.
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 58-98, 59-98.



Figure 3.3.19: ‘Their Sheltered Honeymoon’ from *Life* August 10, 1959.
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 57-97.

Furthermore, Colomina turns to the glass house phenomenon and how it was experienced as a 'source of terror'. A terror caused by the picture window and the open plan house as well. Privacy was now impossible in the interior of the house; indeed for Colomina 'there is no interior':

The picture window, an integral element of postwar American house, turns the building into a showcase of domesticity. It is not, as is commonly assumed, that the house exposes its interiority. There *is* no interior. What the huge window exposes is not a private space but a public representation of conventional domesticity.¹⁷⁴

As an example, Colomina gives Edith Farnsworth, who studied literature, music and medicine and came in contact with the architect Mies van der Rohe who designed the widely renowned Farnsworth House built in 1949. In her book 'Women and the Making of the Modern House' one of Alice Friedman's focuses is the Farnsworth House its design and construction period and the relationship between Friedman and Mies van der Rohe. She also focuses on Friedman's complains regarding the house such as, the high costs and the unconventional design as well as the crowds wanting to see the house because of its popularity. Hence, Friedman complains about her house in various sources. Among these Colomina points out her interview in the magazine *House Beautiful* where she stated that, "the truth is that in this house with its four walls of glass I feel like a prowling animal, always on the alert" ¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., p.168.

¹⁷⁵ Quoted in Colomina: 2007, p.165.

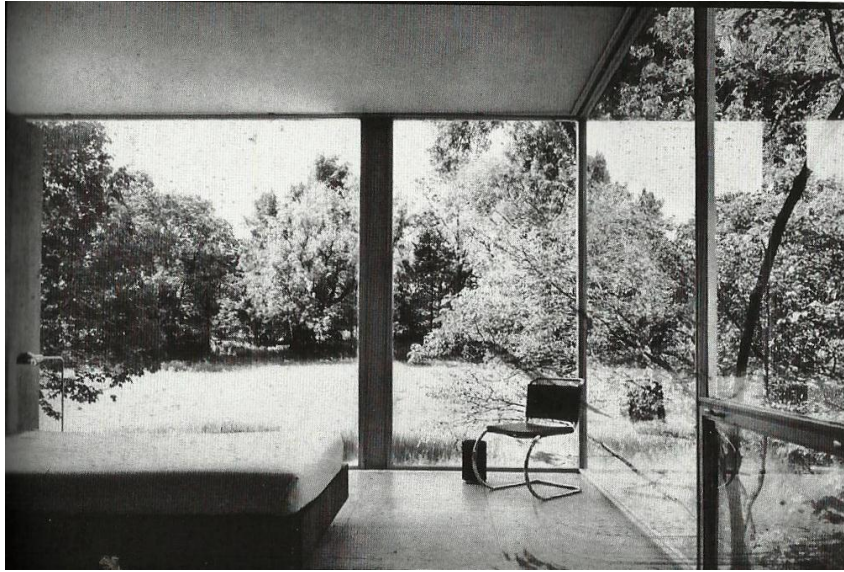


Figure 3.3.20: Bedroom of the Farnsworth House.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p.257.

Remarkably, Adolf Loos proposed an opposite approach, where the picture window is covered with curtains and the inhabitant is forbidden to have access to the window. For Loos “A cultivated man does not look out of the window”¹⁷⁶ In this sense, Colomina focuses on Loos’ interiors from a psychological point of view. She indicates that with the windows preventing a gaze to the outside, the inhabitant of a Loos interior is “turned around to face the space one has just moved through...with each turn, each return look, the body is arrested.”¹⁷⁷ In the Moller House a raised sitting area to read books with a sofa in front of a window - which cannot be accessed - creates a comfortable and more importantly secure area. Here the inhabitant who is placed at an elevated ground can be seen from the entrance but “conversely any intrusion would soon be detected”¹⁷⁸ by him/her (Figure 3.3.21). Colomina claims that Loos’s ‘theatre box’ is a “spatial-psychological device”¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ Quoted in Colomina: 1994, p.234.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., p.234.

¹⁷⁸ Colomina: 1994, p.238.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., on the same page.

which underlines not only the spatial but also the psychological characteristic ¹⁸⁰ of the interior.

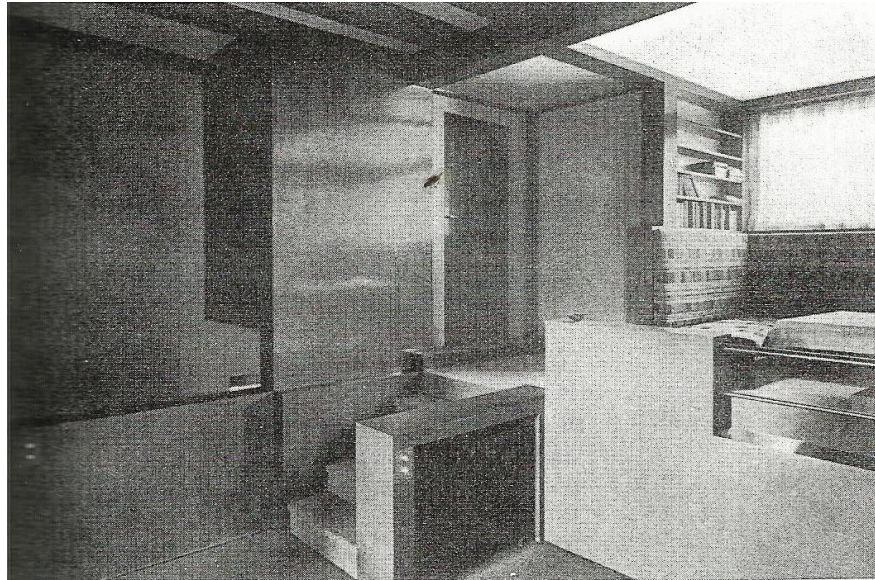


Figure 3.3.21: Moller House, raised sitting area.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1994) p.239.

On the other hand, for Loos the mirror was an instrument to prevent the understanding of house as an object by blurring the strict boundary between its inside and outside. Regarding the mirror in Freud's study Colomina asserts that,

The reflection in the mirror is also a self portrait projected onto the outside world. The placement of Freud's mirror on the boundary between interior and exterior undermines the status of boundary as a fixed limit...Similarly, Loos's mirrors promote the interplay between reality and illusion, between the actual and virtual, undermining the status of the boundary between inside and outside. ¹⁸¹ (Figure 3.3.22)

¹⁸⁰ Colomina states Kulka and Münz have neglected the proposed psychological dimension of the Loos interiors, and interpreted these specific interiors as an 'economy of space'. (Colomina: 1994, p.238.)

¹⁸¹ Ibid., p.255.



Figure 3.3.22: Steiner House, mirror under window of the dining area. Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1996) p.256.

An important relation between psychoanalysis and photography is proposed by Walter Benjamin. In this regard, Colomina quotes Walter Benjamin who states that, “... it is through photography that ‘one first learns of the optical unconscious, just as one learns of the drives of the unconscious through psychoanalysis’.”¹⁸² I would argue that Colomina’s assertion of “the simultaneous and interrelated arrival of psychoanalysis and photography marks the emergence of a different sense of space, indeed of a different architecture”¹⁸³ is parallel with her analysis in *Domesticity at War*. As here, she makes investigations on the Eameses who believed that ‘architecture was-the ongoing *theatrical spectacle of everyday life*’.¹⁸⁴ In their film ‘House: After Five Years of Living’ both the use of media and house as media was traceable.

¹⁸² Ibid., p.82. (Walter Benjamin, “Short History of Photography,” translated by Phil Patton, *Artforum* (February 1977), p.47.

¹⁸³ Ibid., p.82.

¹⁸⁴ Colomina: 2007, p.88, *emphasis added*.

Eameses were aware of the social psyche of the era which can be seen in their work 'Glimpses of the USA'. About this project, they stated that the brain system naturally adapted to an 'image overload', especially in an era where speed was an inevitable part of life. In a time when 'one knows everything about everything' as Le Corbusier states, multiple images and screens used in 'Glimpses of the USA' seem appropriate. Consequently, it could be said that Le Corbusier's prophesy comes to life in Eameses' 'Glimpses of the USA'.

CHAPTER 4

AN OVERVIEW OF COLOMINA'S APPROACH

4.1 Historiography

In order to have a better understanding of Beatriz Colomina's approach as an architectural historian it is important to clarify her position within the literature on modern architecture. In a field, which has an extensive literature, the question that needs to be answered is, 'What differentiates Colomina as an architectural historian?' To answer this question it is necessary to compare and contrast her work with other seminal works on modern architecture. In this regard, I have chosen to investigate Siegfried Giedion's *Space, Time and Architecture: The Growth of a New Tradition* (1941) and Kenneth Frampton's *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (1980). I have

My aim is to compare Colomina to her predecessors in order to reveal the evolution of the historiography of modern architecture. It is my deliberate choice not to compare Colomina with her contemporaries¹⁸⁵ but rather with those who had played an important role in the conception of modern architecture. Giedion is one of those figures who set the standards of modern architectural history.¹⁸⁶ He did this by actively engaging in discussions with the architects of his time who both created modern buildings as well as their theories. In other words, Giedion worked on modern architectural history by simultaneously being involved in the birth of modern

¹⁸⁵ K. Michael Hays with his book *Modernism and the Posthumanist Subject: The Architecture of Hannes Meyer and Ludwig Hilberseimer* as well as Anthony Vidler with his book *Histories of the immediate present: inventing architectural modernism* are two significant examples of Colomina's contemporaries. In fact not very different from Beatriz Colomina Michael Hays highlights the aspects of subject and reception as well as object and production in modern architecture.

¹⁸⁶ In addition to Siegfried Giedion, Nikolaus Pevsner and Emil Kaufman are also accepted as the founders of modern architectural history. See Chapter 1 in Panayotis Tournikiotis's book *The Historiography of Modern Architecture* (1955).

architecture. He was not only in touch with the architectural world in Europe but also that in the USA.¹⁸⁷

Kenneth Frampton, though influential after forty years, is another figure that contributed to the conception of modern architecture with his extensive critiques of its canonical historiography in his book *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (1980). This book has become a reference source over time in many architectural circles, since it has both an informative and critical approach to modern architecture.¹⁸⁸

After this brief look at the historiography of modern architecture, I preferred two historians from different decades to compare with Beatriz Colomina in order to demonstrate the evolution of modern historiography and clarify her position in this ongoing change. Siegfried Giedion and Kenneth Frampton produced books that were and still are today widely renowned and have been immensely influential. These two books provide us with the contrast through which we can highlight the unorthodox approach of Colomina, since they were accepted as mainstream reviews of modern architecture.

Siegfried Giedion is accepted as the author who formulated the history of modern architecture. With his book *Space, Time and Architecture* Giedion focuses on various subjects and it is a systematic explanation of the evolution of modern architecture.

¹⁸⁷ Giedion was the General Secretary of the International Congress of Modern Architecture (*Congrès internationaux d'architecture modern* - CIAM).

¹⁸⁸ Along with Frampton, Manfredo Tafuri with his book *Theories and History of Architecture* (1976), Reyner Banham with his book *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* (1967), Bruno Zevi with his book *Architecture as Space* (1957) and Panayotis Tournikiotis with his book *The Historiography of Modern Architecture* (1955) are other historians of modern architecture. Tafuri has a distinct approach with his concept of 'operative criticism' whereby he attempts to unite theoretical, historical and critical perspectives. Banham, on the other hand, is distinguished with his approach where he draws attention to the review of modern architecture through the lens of technological developments. Bruno Zevi underlines the necessity of modern concepts while writing history of architecture such as, 'collaborative direction of social thinking', 'development of scientific psychology', 'two world wars'. (Bruno Zevi, *Architecture as space*, p. 242). Panayotis Tournikiotis disentangles the understanding of modernity via its historiography to comprehend the relationship of architecture to its history.

His study starts with the explanation of how the historian should approach history of architecture. In this regard, he states, “the historian must be intimately a part of his own period to know what questions concerning the past are significant to it.”¹⁸⁹ His propositions include having a universal outlook, as well as the necessity of being aware that history is not static but dynamic. This kind of an interpretive approach is also evident throughout both of Colomina’s books. Her way of giving information is always interconnected with her interpretive manner, whereas, Giedion after stating his ideas in the beginning of his book, has a more informative approach throughout the rest of his book.

Modern Architecture: A Critical History by Kenneth Frampton, which is one of the most widely read books on modern architecture, could not be left out of an investigation of the literature on modern architecture. Kenneth Frampton, a British architect, critic and historian, who has written extensively on modern architecture starts his book by stating that “... one can no more write an absolute history than one can achieve an absolute architecture” and continues by pointing out the difficulty of choosing the right representatives between so many developments that occurred in the last decade. He states that “... in this sense one can never catch up, for each decade brings a new crop of talented architects while the previous generation is still in the process of attaining its maturity.”¹⁹⁰ Accordingly, Frampton chooses to separate his book into three sections; the first should be read “in a different light from the rest of the book”¹⁹¹ as here the focus is on the cultural, territorial and technical developments that triggered modern architecture. Whereas in the second section Frampton focuses mainly on architects and their revolutionary contributions to the creation of modern architecture, as well as movements and schools that contributed to the formation of modern architecture. In the third section ‘Critical

¹⁸⁹ Siegfried Giedion. *Space, Time and Architecture: The Growth of a New Tradition*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1941), p.6.

¹⁹⁰ Kenneth Frampton. *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992) p. 7.

¹⁹¹ Frampton: 1992, p. 8.

assessment and extension into the present 1925-91' Frampton chooses to focus on The International Style, New Brutalism, the vicissitudes of ideology, international theory and practice since 1962, modern architecture and cultural identity, and world architecture.

Starting with Giedion's attitude towards technology a comparison with Colomina's approach could be made. In his book, Siegfried Giedion approaches technological developments in terms of new materials and new methods in the age of Industrial Revolution. The result of new construction methods through new technologies and how these construction methods interrelated with architecture is discussed in *Space, Time and Architecture*. "... For Giedion the one-hundred-year period of cast-iron column to steel frame and the chasm between technology and architecture shaped the forthcoming 'new architecture'. ”¹⁹² Similarly, Colomina is also aware of the effect of technology on this 'new architecture'. However, her approach does not only focus on the technologies, which created new construction materials and methods, but also on the technologies, which created photography, film and TV. Consequently, for Colomina the major effect of technology on architecture was through media which was created through the potentials of new technologies of the era. Her investigation of how architecture works as media and media works as architecture is what differentiates Colomina from previous literature on modern architecture.

While historians focused on technological developments such as the use of iron and the railway Colomina focuses on photography, which as she declares evolved approximately at the same time with the railway. However, this does not mean that Colomina neglected developments such as the railway, on the contrary; she related these technologies to technologies of media. Be it photography, film or printed media this era provided technologies that created a new world, a new architecture; modern architecture. This modern architecture was through the new buildings created with

¹⁹² Zeynep Ceylanlı. *Siegfried Giedion's 'Space, Time and Architecture': An Analysis of Modern Architectural Historiography*. (METU Thesis: 2008) p.49.

new materials and methods whereas, for Colomina as she has put forward in her book *Privacy and Publicity*, that “modern architecture only becomes modern with its engagement with the media.”¹⁹³ It could be said that Colomina includes technologies that created media, whereas Giedion and Frampton chose to focus on the technologies that effected constructions only.

For Colomina technologies of the era including railroad, electricity, film, newspapers, war... changed also the understanding of the city. Consequently, the change of the urban environment was a shared topic by all of them. Siegfried Giedion focuses on the urban environment in terms of city planning. How town planning developed and how a change in approach occurred by considering humanization as a necessary component of town planning is discussed. Accordingly, he states, “For town planning is first and foremost a human issue: its problems are by no means exclusively technical and economic. It can never be carried on satisfactorily without a clear understanding of the contemporary conception of life.”¹⁹⁴ He exemplifies architects and their approaches towards town planning, how they started to incorporate facts such as the people living in the area, their age, way of life as well as facts such as their marital status (Figure 4.1-4.2).

¹⁹³ Colomina: 1994, p.14.

¹⁹⁴ Giedion: 1941, p.340.

3.1.1 Responses to Modern Life). As Colomina declares, this ‘new city’ correlates with the shock effect created by film, the constant change of images in a film is now a fact of everyday life. Hence, on the railway she makes an analysis as such; perceived through its windows we are confronted with the fact that place lost its importance and accordingly a necessity to define your own limits occurs. This approach towards the new city is what differentiates Colomina from the other two historians. (Figure 4.4-4.5-4.6)

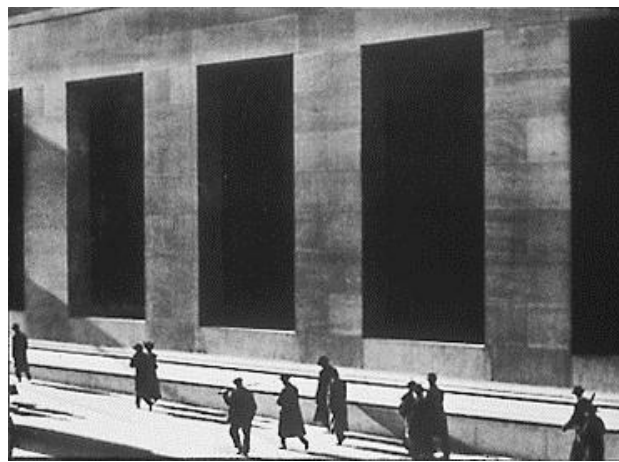


Figure 4.4: ‘Wall Street, 1915. Photograph by Paul Strand.’
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1996) p.19.



Figure 4.5: ‘Accident at the Montparnasse Station, Paris.’
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1996) p.48.

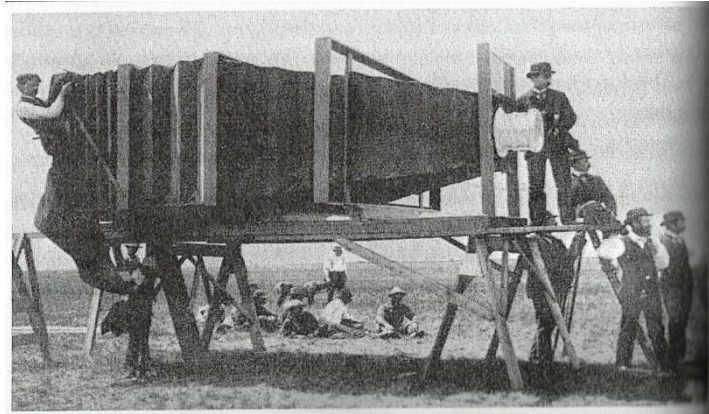


Figure 4.6: ‘The 1,400-pound camera of George R. Lawrence, 1895.’

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1996) p.49.

Throughout his book, Siegfried Giedion focuses on the new potentials of the era as well as the idea of town planning. Regarding ‘American Development’ Giedion focuses on the process of industrialization in America and he makes analysis of trends such as ‘the Chicago School’. Special attention is paid to Frank Lloyd Wright and his accomplishments. An interesting part of his study, which could be directly related to Colomina’s approach is, how he points out the relationship between Europe and America. Giedion asserts that, “The European public had its initial contact with American tools and furnishings at the first international exhibition – the great London Exhibition of 1851. European observers were astonished by the simplicity, technical correctness, and sureness of shape revealed in American productions.”¹⁹⁵ (Figure 4.7-4.8) This approach parallels with Colomina’s investigation of modern architecture in America. The shift from Europe to America, mentioned by Giedion briefly, is thoroughly discussed by Colomina. In *Domesticity at War* she points out that until the year 1949 which was as she states the magic year for American architecture, Europe was the pioneer of ideas whereas after 1949 the whole world turned its head towards the ‘new world’ to understand the inevitable development process that occurred in post war America. In fact, as Colomina asserts, it was ‘war technology’ that triggered the developments. In this regard, Colomina focuses on,

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., p.259.

how war changed the domestic environment through its technologies as well as through its psychological effects, and how these ideas were launched, through the potentials of media, from America to the world (Figure 4.9).

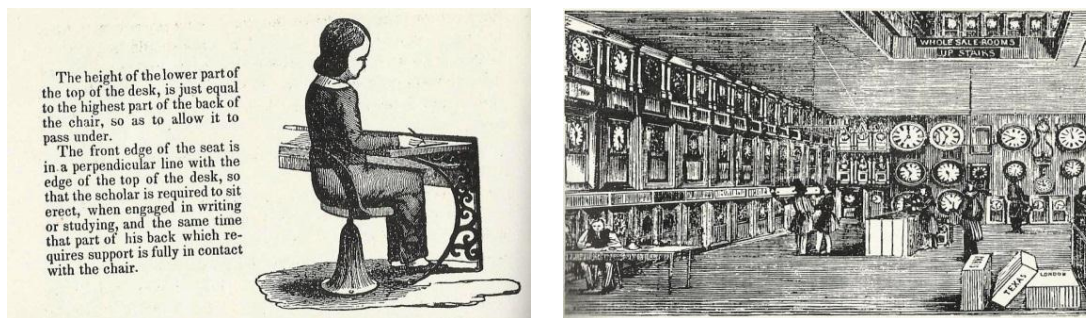


Figure 4.7: ‘American clocks, c. 1850.’

Figure 4.8: ‘Standards of American School Furniture, 1849.’

Source: Siegfried Giedion. *Space, Time and Architecture: The Growth of a New Tradition*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1941) p.259,260.



Figure 4.9: ‘‘Power in the Pacific’ and ‘Tomorrow’s Small House,’ in the *Bulletin of the Museum of Modern Art*, Spring/Summer 1945.’

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p.76.

I would argue that while contrasting and comparing the three historians Giedion, Frampton and Colomina one of the most thought provoking subjects would be their approaches towards ‘the architect’. How they defined the architect, how they defined

the space created by the architect and how they approached the two influential figures Adolf Loos and Le Corbusier?¹⁹⁶

Siegfried Giedion focuses on many architects throughout his book; his method is to give minimum information on the architects' life to then go directly into the architects' constructions related to the discussed subject. As an example, under the chapter 'Ferroconcrete and its Influence upon Architecture' A.G. Perret's apartment buildings in Paris are discussed. Giedion discusses three architects in a more detailed manner; he devoted specific chapters to Frank Lloyd Wright, Walter Gropius and Le Corbusier. If we look at Frank Lloyd Wright's chapter as an example we see that Giedion first informs us about his architectural character-his background to continue with his housing projects, plans and interiors, office buildings and finishes with reactions to his work as well as his influence in Europe. Kenneth Frampton on the other hand devotes the second part of his book; 'A Critical History 1836-1967' to 'the work of particularly significant architects' as well as "major collective developments."¹⁹⁷ Frampton combines each architect to a revolutionary idea, movement or concept and mostly starts with short information on the architects life and career development, as well as collaborations that influenced the architect's career directions. Then in accordance with the related subject mentioned within the title ideas and constructions are explained. Examples are, 'Antonio Sant'Elia and Futurist architecture 1909-14', 'Auguste Perret: the evolution of Classical Rationalism 1899-1925'.

Throughout her books Beatriz Colomina mentions many architects and their contributions however, her focus is directed towards four influential characters and their contributions to modern architecture; Adolf Loos and Le Corbusier in her book

¹⁹⁶ Colomina's studies do include the Eameses however neither Giedion nor Frampton have made assertions on the Eames family and their Works in detail, hence a comparison is not possible.

¹⁹⁷ Frampton: 1992, p.8-9.

Privacy and Publicity, Ray and Charles Eames in *Domesticity at War*. While defining her architect, Colomina does mention constructions and methods as Giedion and Frampton have done in their studies however, her approach towards the architect is focused more on how the architect thinks; as well as his cultural vision. While looking at constructions the focus is not the new style, materials or methods used, but the messages hidden in the spaces. Hence, in Colomina's investigation the occupant of space comes into play. Not the building but how it is represented; how the architect uses media to represent his architecture is discussed, thus this is what differentiates Colomina's study from previous works.

The way architects represented their works with photographs or film encouraged Colomina to interpret their approaches to the occupant or observer of their spaces. To make such an innovative study Colomina goes into the archives of these architects and traces their approaches within.¹⁹⁸ Within these archives she comes across information on the publications of the architects, as well as their use of media thus, with this information Colomina encourages her reader to understand the architect not only as a creator of space but also as an individual who reflects himself and his ideas into every aspect of his work. It could be said that Colomina proposes a new perspective to how modern architecture should be investigated.

If we go into detail to understand the differing approaches taken towards these architects, I would like to start with Adolf Loos. In Frampton's *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* a chapter is devoted to Adolf Loos; 'Adolf Loos and the crisis of culture 1896-1931'. Frampton gives a short biography to continue with his career development process, his publications as well as explanations of his ideas and concepts. His ideas on ornament and the fact that for Loos; only the monument is art, everything that serves a purpose is not art, is pointed out by Frampton. Information on his buildings are included; about the Möller and Müller houses, the fact that

¹⁹⁸ See chapter two; 'Two Books Two Archives: From *Privacy and Publicity* to *Domesticity at War*', pg. 6-13.

spatial movement is created and living areas are differentiated from one another is declared. Colomina on the other hand introduces us to Adolf Loos while discussing his approach towards his archive, with his request of the destruction of his documents Colomina informs us on Loos's character. In fact, in the second chapter of her book *Privacy and Publicity*, 'City', we are confronted with Loos's approach towards the subjects 'identity formation' and 'mask'. His rejection of photography's interpretation of architecture and his preference of writing is discussed.¹⁹⁹ Later on Colomina goes into an analysis of Loos's architectural works. Hence, here she discusses not his achievements as a builder, but what he suggests with his interiors; How Loos intends the occupant of his architecture to acknowledge the suggested space is one of Colomina's focal points. As seen an important feature of Colomina's work is the fact that she includes the position of the occupant. Thus, what to my mind differentiates her work mostly from other historians is the fact that in her work the producer and user of architecture is ever present; she acknowledges how the architects approached the inhabitant/client. To exemplify, on Loos interiors Colomina states, "the spaces of Loos's interiors cover the occupants as clothes cover the body (each occasion has its appropriate 'fit')." ²⁰⁰ (Figure 4.10-4.11)

¹⁹⁹ See footnote 130.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., p.265.

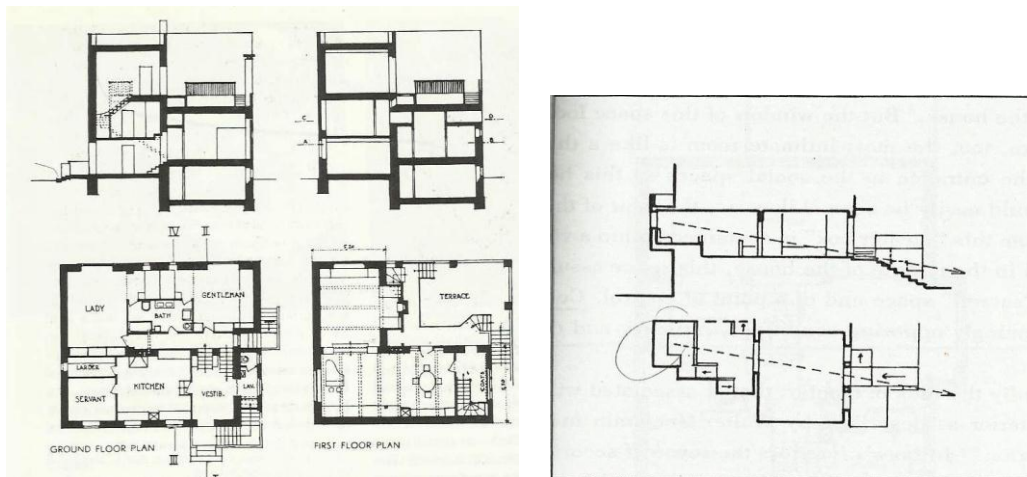


Figure 4.10: ‘Loos, villa project for the Venice Lido, 1923. Left, transverse sections (through I-II and III-IV).and plans of ground and first floor.’

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p.243.

Figure 4.11: ‘Moller house. Plan and section tracing the journey of the gaze from the raised sitting area to the back garden. Drawing by Johan van de Beek .’

Source: Kenneth Frampton. *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992) p.95.

Le Corbusier is the second architect I would like to discuss, all three historians have written on this influential character of architecture. Giedion approached him as the first architect to adopt the concrete skeleton into architecture. He remarks that, “... the main characteristic of Le Corbusier, ... [is] his ability of simplifying the problems without surpassing their importance.”²⁰¹ Frampton on the other hand starts his analysis with information on Le Corbusier’s life and career development process. He focuses on what influenced him throughout his career such as the *Werkbund* contact which introduced him to modern production engineering. Several works are explained such as, *Villa Schwob* and *Maison Citrohan*. Hence, Frampton focuses on Le Corbusier’s influential projects and concepts behind them.

All three historians focus at some point on Le Corbusier’s publications, however for Beatriz Colomina the importance of publication is connected with Le Corbusier’s use of media. She focuses on how Le Corbusier used mass media to interact with his

²⁰¹ Ceylanlı: 2008, p.60.

reader. His use of advertisement brochures in 'L'Esprit nouveau' could be stated as an example.²⁰² Regarding Le Corbusier's constructions it would be appropriate to compare Giedion's approach towards Villa Savoye to Colomina's. Siegfried Giedion focuses on Villa Savoye as the expression of Le Corbusier's five principles. He points out an interesting assertion regarding the isolated site of the house; he states, "The city dweller for whom it was designed wanted to look out over the countryside rather than to be set down among trees and shrubbery. He wanted to enjoy the view, the breezes, and the sun ..."²⁰³ The intended user and his comprehension of the house is indicated here, consequently, this is what Colomina emphasises throughout her analysis of the house. To do so she points out Le Corbusier's way of representing the house through photographs and film. In fact, the house is not explained structurally as in Giedion's work but here the work is analysed through the investigation of the role given to the user by Le Corbusier. In Le Corbusier's movie *L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui* a woman is followed while she goes through the house, how she is contained and framed by the house is pointed out by Colomina, thus she states, "Here we are literally following somebody, the point of view is that of a voyeur."²⁰⁴ Although we have traced the place of the user from Siegfried Giedion's work, for Colomina this is the main discussion. She does not explain the house structurally but she introduces us to what the house was intended for. The architect's scenario is given and a scenario of a house inevitably includes the inhabitant. As Colomina declares, "The house is no more than a series of views choreographed by the visitor, the way a filmmaker effects the montage of a film."²⁰⁵ (Figure 4.12-4.13-4.14) In fact the inclusion of the inhabitant is relevant for both Loos and Le Corbusier. In a comparison of the two Colomina states, "the inward gaze, the gaze turned upon itself, of Loos's interiors becomes with Le Corbusier a gaze of dominion over the

²⁰² For further information on L'Esprit nouveau' see p.55.of this thesis.

²⁰³ Giedion: 1941, p.413.

²⁰⁴ Colomina:1994, p.293

²⁰⁵ Ibid., p.312.

exterior world ...”²⁰⁶ She pursues her idea with the following words:

The inhabitants of Le Corbusier’s house are displaced, first because they are disoriented ... because the inhabitant is only a ‘visitor’. Unlike the subject of Loos’s houses who is both actor and spectator Le Corbusier’s subject is detached from the house with the distance of a visitor, a viewer, a photographer, a tourist.²⁰⁷

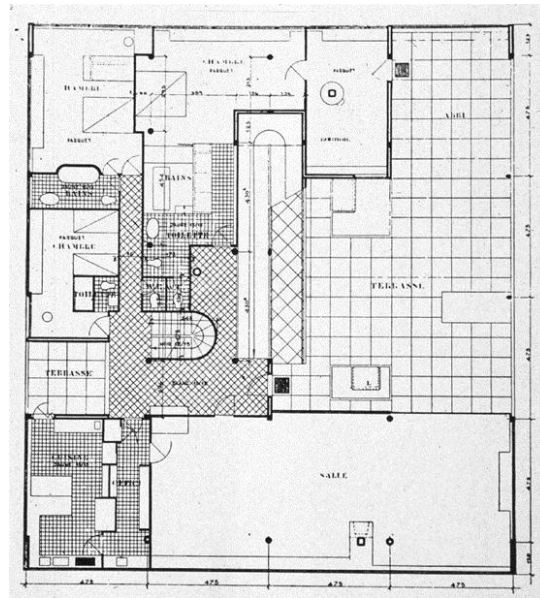


Figure 4.12: ‘Le Corbusier and P. Jeanneret, Villa Savoye, 1928-30. Plan.’
Source: Siegfried Giedion. *Space, Time and Architecture: The Growth of a New Tradition*.
(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1941) p.415.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., p.306.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., p.326.

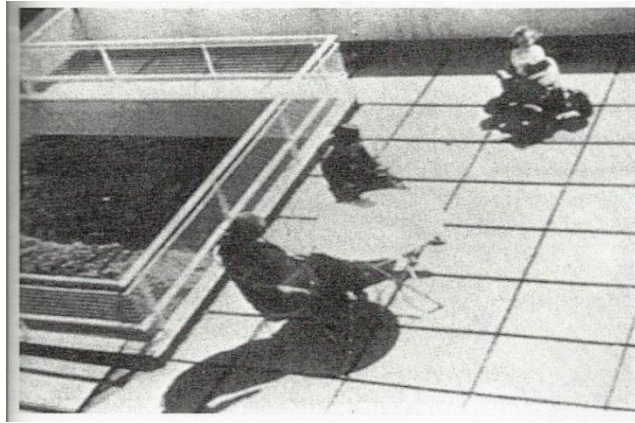


Figure 4.13: ‘Villa a Garches. Still from L’Architecture D’aujourd’hui.’

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1996) p.291.

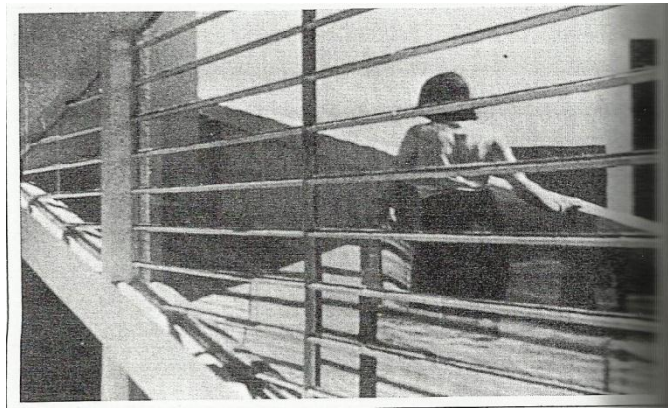


Figure 4.14: ‘Villa Savoye. Still from L’Architecture d’aujourd’hui: “Une maison ce n’est pas une prison: l’aspect change a chaque pas.”’

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1996) p.292.

As seen, there are many points that differentiate Beatriz Colomina as a historian from her fellow scholars. I would argue that the three main topics which separate Colomina’s studies from Giedion and Frampton’s books are; ‘media’, ‘the approach of the architect’ and ‘war’ summarize the ideas of her two books. Her way of approaching history of architecture is innovative because of the way of classifying her ideas under these topics. Regarding ‘media’, Colomina investigates architectures relationship with media, how media came into play, how architects used media and what kind of media was used, as well as how different media, different approaches and different results happened is investigated in both of her books. Regarding ‘the

architect', Colomina investigates the architect's cultural vision, his way of thinking and what the visual materials of his works say. Regarding 'war', Colomina investigates how architects correlated with war, what effects it had on them, what were the results of being a pre-war and post-war architect, did the architects make war popular or was it through wars popularity that architects were so successful. Her approach to these and also how war and its technologies changed the domestic environment made Colomina an influential historian. However, other important aspects which again differentiate Colomina as a historian are 'visuality' and 'gender' which are common within the discussed topics, 'media', 'the approach of the architect' and 'war'.

4.2 Visuality

It could be said that, in her studies, Beatriz Colomina shows us what effects the visual had on architecture. In fact, visuality is both the reason and the result of change in modern architecture. Visuality became an inevitable part of life through technological developments such as photography, film and television. Colomina's studies draw attention upon the 'critical transformation of traditional culture'²⁰⁸ occurring through the visual. This critical transformation changed the understanding of architecture. Colomina investigates the architect's interpretation of how visuality affected architecture; throughout her books we not only understand what position the architect takes towards this visual boom but also how he used visuality. In this regard, Colomina points out how the house became a media centre. Through media the private house was publicized, in exhibitions not only in museums but also places such as department stores this publicity reached both people who could afford it and the middle class. Architecture now became not only a product for the occupant but also for the public who could appreciate the new way of living.

In *Privacy and Publicity*, we see how the private house is publicized with photographs and models of house designs by architects, whereas in *Domesticity at*

²⁰⁸ Ibid., p.160.

War images totally take the place of the house. Here Colomina shows us that images are in fact the new architecture. Hence, in this book, she confronts us with the ‘designed images of domestic bliss’; we can literally observe how these images were distributed with chosen magazine covers. To specify how visibility took over the world Colomina’s following assertions on Gregory Ain’s ²⁰⁹ Exhibition House presented in the garden of the Museum of Modern Art, would be appropriate.

The first images of Ain’s house were presented in the June 1950 issue of *Woman’s Home Companion*. The context of the museum was airbrushed to make look like a regular suburban home. As one reads the article, it becomes clear that it was the museum that had approached the journal and not the other way around. The journal, which calls Ain’s house ‘our house,’ doesn’t push very hard to have readers visit it at the Museum of Modern Art: ‘Even without a visit to New York, you can go through our house on these pages by means of pictures.’ ²¹⁰ (Figure 4.15)

The fact that it is encouraged to visit the house via the pages of a magazine instead of encouraging a visit to the museum shows the awareness of the effect of visibility.

²⁰⁹ Gregory Ain was an architect who ‘is one of the few modern architects with experience in building moderate priced housing developments’ [Data base online] at http://www.moma.org/docs/press_archives/1434/releases/MOMA_1950_0043_1950-05-15_500515-37.pdf. [accessed: 12.01.2013]. He worked in the USA during the mid-20th century.

²¹⁰ Colomina: 2007, p.50. (includes quote from “Our House: With a View to the future,” *Woman’s Home Companion*, June 1950, 65-72.)

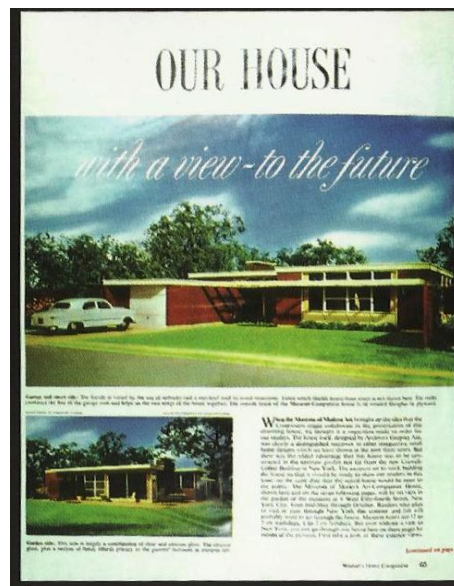


Figure 4.15: ‘Gregory Ain, Exhibition House in the Museum Garden, as published in *Woman’s Home Companion*, June 1950. The context of the museum has been airbrushed to make it look like a suburban setting’.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p.82.

4.3 Gender

Although not specified as a chapter in her books gender issues are present in Colomina’s studies. While reading her books you are constantly reminded of her awareness of gender issues. As she states in *Privacy and Publicity*, “The question of modernity cannot be separated from that of gender and sexuality.”²¹¹ In *Privacy and Publicity* her focus on gender is related to the two architects she discusses, Adolf Loos and Le Corbusier. She makes gendered interpretations of their works. Regarding Loos’s conceptual use of the theatre box²¹² as a design method, which suggests an enclosed space overlooking the house, Colomina states that this is a female space because of the character of the furniture. Her analysis continues,

The raised alcove of the Moller house and the *Zimmer der Dame* of the Müller house ... not only overlook the social spaces but are exactly positioned at the end of the sequence, on the threshold of the private, the

²¹¹ Colomina:1994, p.38.

²¹² In Loos’s Moller House a raised sitting area facing the interior of the house suggests a theatre box like area from where the occupant can control the house.

secret, the upper rooms where sexuality is hidden away. At the intersection of the visible and the invisible, women are placed as the guardians of the unspeakable.²¹³

Regarding Le Corbusier Colomina investigates the film 'L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui' and what messages are given with Le Corbusier's placement of the woman figure in it. Colomina points out that the face of women in Le Corbusier's films or pictures are never seen, they mostly do not share the space with a male but if they do it is usually an admiration of the male figure that is pointed out (Figure 4.16-4.17). As Colomina states, "... the woman looks at the man, the man looks at the 'world'." ²¹⁴

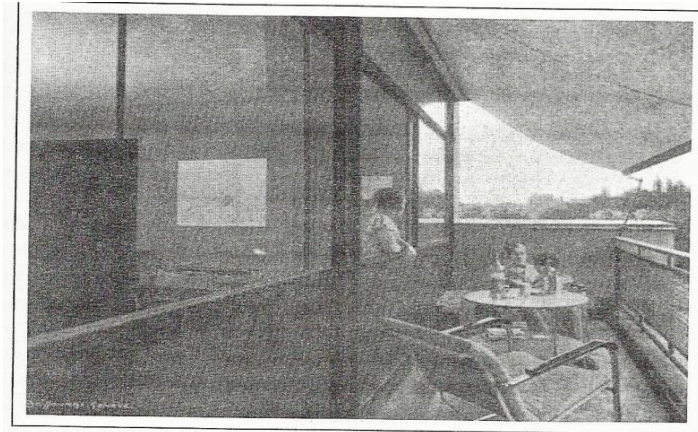


Figure 4.16: 'Immeuble Clarté. The terrace.'

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1996) p.295.

²¹³ Ibid., p.248.

²¹⁴ Ibid., p.296.

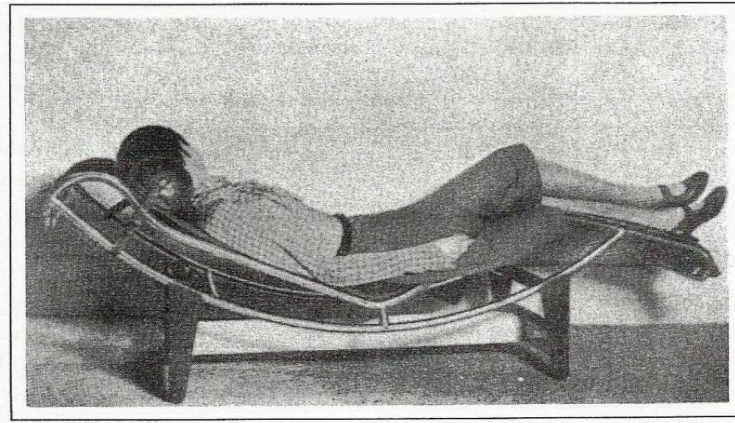


Figure 4.17: ‘Chaise-lounge in the horizontal position.’

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1996) p.299.

When looked at from a gender perspective many clues are traceable from *Privacy and Publicity* under the headings ‘Interior’ with Adolf Loos’s interiors and the gendered environments created, and ‘Window’ with Le Corbusier’s film ‘L’Architecture d’aujourd’hui’ which highlights the ‘faceless’ woman. In *Domesticity at War* on the other hand, gender issues are not specifically related to architects but generally to the developments of the era. The developments of the era were evident in magazine covers, this was how they were distributed around the globe then and this is how Colomina reveals it in her book today. The most interesting gender based assertions she made is the specific gender split seen in advertisements published in these magazines. Regarding one of these she states,

The gender split in these ads – the girl inside, on the carpet, the boy outside on the grass – reproduces the separation of domestic tasks in the suburban house. The postwar lawn was the territory of men or grown boys ... while women kept to the green Formica postures of the interior.²¹⁵ (Figure 4.15)

²¹⁵ Colomina: 2007, p.132.



Figure 4.15: ‘Advertisement for Poll Parrot shoes for children. From *Life*, July-August 1946.’
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p.200.

In fact, gender roles were seen as a necessity for the ideal American life, “For Nixon, American superiority rested on the ideal of the suburban home, complete with modern appliances and distinct gender roles.”²¹⁶ Colomina’s assertions encourage her readers to make similar interpretations. I would suggest such an interpretation regarding the two pictures “the image of Ise and Walter Gropius at breakfast on the screened porch of their house in Lincoln, Massachusetts,”²¹⁷ and “of Gropius and Le Corbusier sitting at a small round table at the Café des Magots in Paris,”²¹⁸ which Colomina used in the beginning of her book.²¹⁹ The women in these pictures, both Gropius’ wives, are placed very differently but although Colomina suggests that Alma Gropius in the second picture seems as a stranger it is also a fact that she is framed by the two men and inevitably becomes a central figure.

²¹⁶ Ibid., p 244.

²¹⁷ Ibid., p 13.

²¹⁸ Ibid., on the same page.

²¹⁹ See pg.10 of this thesis.

Investigating what Beatriz Colomina focuses on and what she extracts from the developments of modern architecture are crucial to understanding her approach as a historian. As seen in this chapter, analysis on the inclusion of the inhabitant and spatial experience of architecture, as well as her ideas on visibility and gender all seen through the lens of media is what differentiates her as a historian. These are the aspects that make her a revisionist.

CHAPTER 5

INVESTIGATING COLOMINA'S BOOKS AS MEDIA: BEING A READER OF BEATRIZ COLOMINA

Analysing Beatriz Colomina's two most influential books under several interrelated themes was the main premise of this thesis. To do so, it is fundamental to draw attention to the relationship between Colomina and her reader. There are many questions that could be raised about this relationship. What messages does the reader get from Colomina's books? What do the forms of the books suggest? Does Colomina reflect her image use and media analysis made in her books to her own use of images? Indeed, my intention is to search for the answers in reviews of readers of Colomina and then juxtapose my own comments as a reader on them.

I shall start a detailed analysis of the media usage of Colomina with a review on her book, *Privacy and Publicity*.

As Colomina argues, "In the terms conditioned by the logic of the mass media, a photograph does not have specific meaning in itself but rather in its relationship to other photographs, the caption, the writing, the layout of the page" (93-100). Such is not the case in this book. By isolating each image on a full page and surrounding it with generous borders, the layout draws attention to the independent value of the photographic image (as opposed to the architecture). Rather than engage in any meaningful dialogue with her text, the images merely illustrate it, unlike those that accompany the texts of Le Corbusier, for whom "meaning is in the void, in the silence of the white space between the images and the written text" (170-171). The pairing of images neither clarifies distinctions between the approaches of Loos and Le Corbusier nor draws upon disjunctions between the images or between images and text, as Le Corbusier so effectively did with his layouts to engage the reader in acts of interpretation.²²⁰

Caroline Constant's criticism is noteworthy, but the question that needs an answer is why Colomina chose to use such isolated pictures, why are they framed? First of all,

²²⁰ Caroline Constant, Review: [untitled], *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 56, No. 2 (Jun., 1997), p.245.

the pictures, if not all, are products of archives and the archive is an essential subject in Colomina's studies. Through the archives she deciphers the attitudes of the architects, many hidden aspects are revealed. It could be that she wants to remind us of her archival process by framing each single picture in a separate page. Colomina does not direct the reader to the related figure, the pictures are not placed directly under the related subjects page. You read a subject then you encounter with the related picture a few pages later (Figure 5.1-5.2). I would argue that by not proposing a strict pattern for the images Colomina creates a self-determining reader who can observe images independently by giving their full attention to it. On this issue Cristhopher Ho, who is an artist and curator, states in the review of *Privacy and Publicity* that, "... discrete close readings of specific works are offered, thematically similar but disparate enough to foster the reader's engagement. Accordingly, the accompanying images are relevant to the text, but not overly so: they allow room for individual speculation and meditation."²²¹ Hence the book is neither a battle between image and text nor a mutual relation in which image is merely supplement to text. Each part is separately important and has a value as an individual book. Likewise, Sarah Mcphee states in 'The Architect as Reader', "... features such as typography, the composition of the page, the size and quality of the illustrations, the ornamental frontispiece-has a crucial role in the creation of the 'order' of that book."²²² The order of Colomina's book allows "the reader to make sense"²²³ on his own, hence, as Karin Littau quotes from Barthes, "... 'the goal of literary work (of literature as work) is to make the reader no longer a consumer, but a producer of text.'²²⁴

²²¹ Christopher Ho, Review: The Mask of Architecture, *Performing Arts Journal*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Sep., 1997), p.110. This situation differs in her second book *Domesticity at War*, here the aim is, to my mind the direct opposite; with the physical structure of the book the reader is caught in a web. This idea is elaborated on page 79 of this thesis.

²²² Sarah Mcphee, "The Architect as Reader", *JSAH*, 58/3 (1999-2000) p.455. It should be noted that Sarah Mcphee's comment is generally about books, not specifically on Colomina's books.

²²³ Littau: 2006, p.105. (the full quote is "... literary theorists ... do not stop at asking how a particular reader reads a specific text, but ask instead after the protocols of reading in general, that is, how readers make sense".)

²²⁴ Quoted in Littau: 2006, p.104.

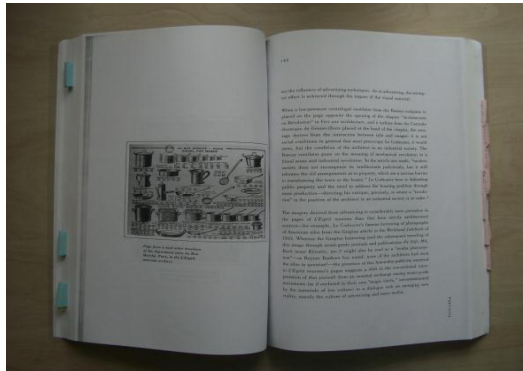


Figure 5.1: *Privacy and Publicity*, image and text.

Figure 5.2: *Privacy and Publicity*, images.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Privacy and Publicity* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1996).

Domesticity at War on the other hand has a very intriguing form; as soon as one is confronted with it, curiosity comes into play. Concentrating on a period of media in this book she uses images as a significant part of her study. In fact, *Domesticity at War* is composed of two books, one book of images and one book containing both text and images and these two books are bound together to form an *exquisite corpse* like structure (Figure 5.3-5.4).

Exquisite corpse is a method by which a collection of words or images is collectively assembled, the result being known as the exquisite corpse or *cadavre exquis* in French. Each collaborator adds to a composition in sequence, either by following a rule or by being allowed to see the end of what the previous person contributed.²²⁵

²²⁵ [Data base online] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exquisite_corpse . [Accessed: 01.12.2012]



Figure 5.3: *Domesticity at War*, ‘exquisite corpse’ system.

Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007)

Figure 5.4: A Printer’s Exquisite Corpse. Thirty-eight 5” x 8” cards printed by thirty-four different printers. Source: <http://www.bookways.com/a-printers-exquisite-corpse/>

The form of the book suggests a similar method for the collectively assembled images by Beatriz Colomina; here the images can be viewed connected, separately, by following a rule as suggested by Colomina, or by creating new compositions. Throughout the text, Colomina directs her reader to the related pictures, these pictures are the ones in the image section of the book. In the text-image section of the book, there are no full images. Hence, all pictures are incomplete unless they are complemented with the image only section, whereas the image-only section can be read as an individual book. Accordingly, I would argue that the critical question is what kind of messages does this complex physical structure of the book have?

Opposing Caroline Constant’s comment on *Privacy and Publicity* I would suggest that in *Domesticity at War* the reader is ‘caught in a web’ with the physical structure of the book,. The reader is confronted with an image overload that has to be put in order by the reader himself, a confusion does occur however this web is intentionally created as it represents the confusion of the period discussed. The overwhelming situation however changes into an enjoyable and calm process as the system of the book becomes clearer and corresponds with the information given in the book. To clarify this process of reading, it is meaningful to turn to the chapter ‘The Lawn at

War' of *Domesticity at War*. Here, the focus is on how the image of the lawn became an image of the 'victory garden'. Hence, as Beatriz Colomina states, "... The lawn was used to display the consumer products that were the by-products of war, or as wartime advertisements announced, the American way of life that soldiers were fighting for." ²²⁶ However, underneath the lawn the honeymoon couple is settled, they are hiding from the nuclear threats, captivated by fear; thus, this lawn represents both the American dream and the American fear, hence, a divided psyche is evident (Figure 5.5). I would argue that, accordingly this book divides our psyche mechanically by dividing the pictures into half. Thus, the divided psyche occurs during the reading process and it is united with the help of the book of images.

Throughout the book, Beatriz Colomina wants us to connect the pictures by following the indicated numbers on the pages (Figure 5.6). Colomina has given instructions, but still various new images with different juxtapositions could be envisaged. In other words through the form of the book we could propose new compositions other than those suggested by Beatriz Colomina. As an example, I have transgressed the rule and proposed a new juxtaposition of images.

²²⁶ Colomina: 2007, p.134.



Figure 5.5: 'War Games', 1961 by Wilde World.
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 207-123.

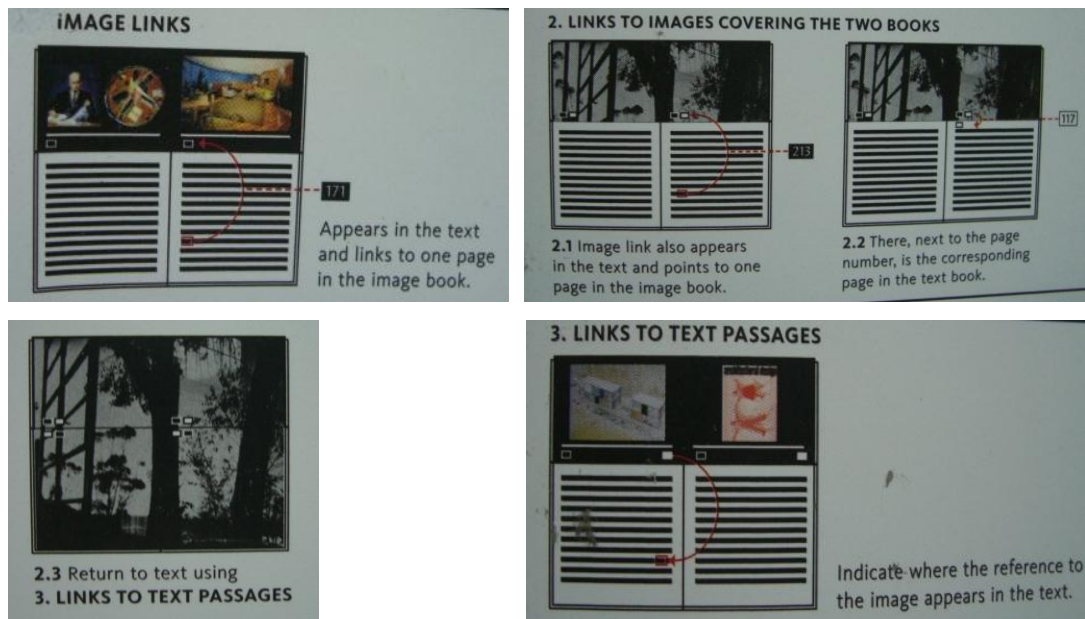


Figure 5.6: Image Links. (Colomina's directive for the book.)
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007)

Figure 5.7 shows Colomina's proposition for the picture. It is the picture of Mies's Lake Shore Drive Apartments taken at night. Colomina states that this apartment "brings the suburbs to the city, as if stacking suburban houses on top of one another."²²⁷ In fact while connecting the sections of the pictures it could be said that Colomina draws attention to this stacking process. However, I suggest a different juxtaposition (Figure 5.9). In my composition, the upper part is composed of details of the Eames house taken by the Eameses themselves, whereas the other part shows a portion of an image of Mies's Lake Shore Drive Apartments at night. From the pictures taken by the Eameses we can trace that these show not the details of the building but "they are the details of everyday life that the building makes possible."²²⁸ In Mies's Lake Shore Drive Apartment with images taken at night 'every apartment turns into a TV set' and here the details of everyday life are exposed as well. This juxtaposition could be interpreted as a step by step deepening of the details

²²⁷ Ibid., p.173.

²²⁸ Ibid., p.102.

of everyday life. From a view through the window, the details start to be exposed and with the Eames photographs, we are invited into a much more intense stage of everyday life.



Figure 5.8: Mies van der Rohe, 860-880 Lake Shore Drive Apartments. At night, every apartment turns into a Tv set. From *Life*, March 18, 1957.
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p. 178-179/176-177.



Figure 5.9: Possible juxtapositions of opposite images. Juxtapositions of, Details of Eames House and studio from 1949 to 1978. Photo: Charles Eames, with Mies van der Rohe, 860-880 Lake Shore Drive Apartments. At night, every apartment turns into a TV set. From *Life*, March 18, 1957. Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2007), p.178-179/268-269.

Karin Littau's following analysis has parallels with Colomina's assertions on concentration through distraction with multiple images.. She states,

In an environment where distraction is the rule, this leaves little room for contemplation: here, responses are necessarily 'reactive', and the capacity to reflect is its casualty. It follows that, in such an environment, reactions are felt first of all at the level of sensations before they enter the conscious mind as reflections; that is to say, a reader's or a spectator's responses are immediate and visceral before they are mediated critically by the mind.²²⁹

With the amount of images that the reader is confronted with and the immediate emotional response that follows, a state of chaos occurs in the reader's mind. This response has both a confusing and dramatic effect, and this is a representation of the impulse of American life during the post-World War II period. It should not be forgotten that this was a period (and still is today) when attention comes through

²²⁹ Littau: 2006, p.48.

distraction. Colomina observes that “Glimpses [of the USA] breaks with the linear narrative of film to bring snippets of information, an ever-changing mosaic image of American life” ²³⁰. It could be said that her visual essay does the same; she breaks the linear narrative of an ordinary book and provides us with various pieces of information, reflecting the ever-changing nature of American life. Here it would be again appropriate to turn to Karin Littau’s analysis on the reader. She states,

No longer does the reader get to know the book intimately, no longer does the city dweller know his neighbour, or the train traveller his companion in the compartment. Just as there is little time to make out one face among many in an anonymous crowd, or one image from the next when it is glimpsed from behind a window of a speeding train, so reading is increasingly marked by a fleeting familiarity that knows little of the contemplative tranquillity of earlier times. It is as if there is now little time for the reader to think, reflect at their leisure, or truly digest. ²³¹

Another noteworthy point is the black background of the images in *Domesticity at War*. I would argue that the black background indicates a TV screen. The pictures change as if we are changing the channels of a TV. The importance of TV during this period was that it brought the public world into the house. Beatriz Colomina declares that this was a period when war was broadcast live on TV thus, the domestication of war was through TV. Our TV is the image section of this book (Figure 5.10).

²³⁰ Colomina: 2007, p. 256.

²³¹ Littau: 2006, p.45.



Figure 5.10: The black background could be interpreted as a TV screen.
Source: Beatriz Colomina. *Domesticity at War*

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The research process of this thesis, in terms of the investigation of Colomina's *Privacy and Publicity* and *Domesticity at War*, could be envisaged as an attempt to both integrate and disintegrate the content as well as the form of these two books in light of specific questions in order to understand how an architectural historian's works are interconnected and how these interconnections give rise to new ideas.

Accordingly, starting with an investigation of Colomina's archival experience, I have discovered not only how approaches towards archives hide essential information of their creators, but also how an architectural historian unseals these mysteries. By using four themes as an analytical framework, namely modernism, mass media, strategies of representation and social psyche, I distilled the intertwined focuses of Colomina's two books, which enabled me to merge them into a common understanding.

Regarding the topics media, architect and war, I compared Colomina's work with that of two prominent architectural historians, namely Siegfried Giedion and Kenneth Frampton. After this historiographical research, I put a reader's lens on her books in order to uncover Colomina's strategies as a writer and historian.

In this concluding chapter, I would like to summarize the main arguments of the two books under consideration and then address the final question I raised in the introductory chapter: what is Colomina's contribution to architectural historiography?

What are the main elements of Colomina's *Privacy and Publicity*? The main argument of the book is: 'Architecture is modern while engaging with media'. Drawing on the work of Loos and Le Corbusier, we are confronted with how the age

of communication generated the industrial product as tradition; how the world adapted to speed; and how, as a result, the norm transformed into “one knows everything about everything.”²³²

Domesticity at War, on the other hand, is filled with ‘Images of domestic bliss’. Here, the architect as a ‘domesticated agent’ transformed the military work into domestic use, which is a reflection of the ‘divided psyche’. The lawn, which was one of the symbols of the American dream, was used to exhibit the consumer products for domestic use, which were ‘the by-products of war’. Ironically, however, the same American houses had shelters underneath the lawn to protect themselves from the threat of nuclear war. This was also indicative of the increasing importance of images in the 1950s, which became the new architecture. Building as a physical structure was superseded by its representation ‘in all forms of media’, thereby rendering its image more significant than itself. In a world of images, attention could only be achieved through distraction. Aware of this new angle, one of the main focuses of this book is the work of Eameses and their usage of multiple images in various projects.

In each book, images have an independent value. In *Privacy and Publicity*, the reader is not referred to images and the images appear after a few pages of text, which encourages the reader to digest what they have read, before confronting with the images and associating them with the text. On the other hand, *Domesticity at War* separates the image part from the text part, although the text refers the reader to which image they should look at. However, the independence of the two parts provides the reader with the freedom and independence of combining different portions of text with different images.²³³ Therefore, the two books are characterized by two different kinds of interactive experience, whereby the reader actively engages with what they see and is free to form their own perception and interpretation. It would not be wrong to say that Colomina as a writer does not have an authoritative

²³² Colomina: 1996, p.160.

²³³ See Chapter 5, p. 89-97 for a more detailed elaboration of ‘the reader’.

approach. She informs, interprets and leaves the rest to the reader. Colomina touches and nurtures the reader's psyche by giving the reader the freedom and the independence to be 'no longer a consumer but a producer of text'. The physical structure of the *Domesticity at War* is such that the image section is separate from the text section, which gives the reader an opportunity to exercise control over the reading experience.

What is then Colomina's contribution to architectural historiography? Colomina's novelty lies in the common denominator of the two books, which is 'the possibility of thinking of architecture as media'. I would argue that Colomina reaches the idea of 'architecture as media' by proposing three innovative approaches to architectural history, which I developed during the construction of this thesis. From the investigation on archives to the developed themes as well as from extractions on visuality and gender, the following approaches that unite the two books were derived:

First, Colomina not only uses historiography but also, and perhaps more importantly, makes a **cultural analysis**²³⁴ of the period of modern architecture. This analysis entails firstly an investigation of responses to modern life in *Privacy and Publicity* with a focus on general urban responses as well as responses by specific architects, whereas in *Domesticity at War* the focus is on the response of the war-traumatised American.²³⁵ Secondly, Colomina examines this traumatising by making an assessment of the general social psychology of the cold war period through a detailed analysis of images distributed by mass media.²³⁶ Thirdly, she points out that the modern media disseminating these images is an outcome of the war technology in that new communication technologies of the time were initially developed for

²³⁴ It should be noted that this approach is mainly derived from the analysis made within the themes 'Modernism' and 'Social Psyche'.

²³⁵ Please see 3.1.1 'Responses to Modern Life' on pp.14-16.

²³⁶ Please see 'Social Psyche' on pp. 64-71.

military purposes.²³⁷ Finally, Colomina's awareness of gender issues is visible throughout her cultural analysis. Indeed, gender is mainstreamed into both of her books.²³⁸

The second innovative approach that I have extracted from Colomina's two books is her inclusion of the **architect's cultural vision**²³⁹ in her historiographical research. There are four aspects to this cultural vision. Firstly, Colomina understands this cultural vision by highlighting the importance of the architect's non-academic method of working.²⁴⁰ In fact, she uses this method in her own analyses. Secondly, the architect's relationship with mass media forms another aspect of the architect's cultural vision. In this context, Colomina investigates how the architect perceives, accepts and uses photography, film, magazines, newspapers and television to represent and distribute his work. The third aspect of the cultural vision refers to the architect's relationship with war. Colomina assesses how war affects the architect's life and methods of working.²⁴¹ Finally, the architect's approach towards his client/inhabitant is investigated by Colomina.²⁴² As Colomina elaborates on all of these different aspects of the architect's cultural vision, we are constantly reminded of her extensive study and use of archives.²⁴³

Colomina's third innovative approach is related to her unique **perception and**

²³⁷ Please see 3.1.2 War (pp.16-21), section 3.1.3 Domesticity (pp.21-26).

²³⁸ Please see section 4.3 'Gender' on pp.85-88.

²³⁹ It should be noted that this approach is mainly derived from the analysis made within the themes 'Mass Media' and 'Strategies of Representation' as well as the chapter 'Two Books Multiple Archives: From *Privacy and Publicity* to *Domesticity at War*'.

²⁴⁰ Please see section 3.2.2 Photography on pp.28-37.

²⁴¹ Please see section 3.1.2 War on pp. 16-21.

²⁴² For Adolf Loos' approach towards his client/inhabitant please see section 3.3.1 'Adolf Loos: Reconstructing Photographs' on pp.48-55, for Le Corbusier's approach towards his client please see section 3.2.3 'Film' on pp. 37-43.

²⁴³ Please see Chapter 2 'Two Books Multiple Archives: From *Privacy and Publicity* to *Domesticity at War*' on pp. 6-14.

interpretation of visuality²⁴⁴, which in fact is the basis of her methodology. She develops her arguments mainly by drawing on this distinctive understanding of visuality and in doing so she also encourages us to approach visuality in a fundamentally different manner. Perhaps the most concrete example of this is the form of her book *Domesticity at War*, which breaks the linear narrative of an ordinary book.

In conclusion, this thesis aimed to understand Beatriz Colomina's contribution to architectural historiography by making a close reading of her two prominent books *Privacy and Publicity* and *Domesticity at War*. I argued that her uniqueness lies in the way in which she reaches her elaboration of 'architecture as media' through three innovative approaches to architectural history; her cultural analysis of the period of modern architecture, her inclusion of the architect's cultural vision in her historiographical research, and her distinct perception and interpretation of visuality.

²⁴⁴ It should be noted that this approach is derived from the whole scope of the thesis as well as the chapter 'Two Books Multiple Archives: From *Privacy and Publicity* to *Domesticity at War*' on pp. 89-98.

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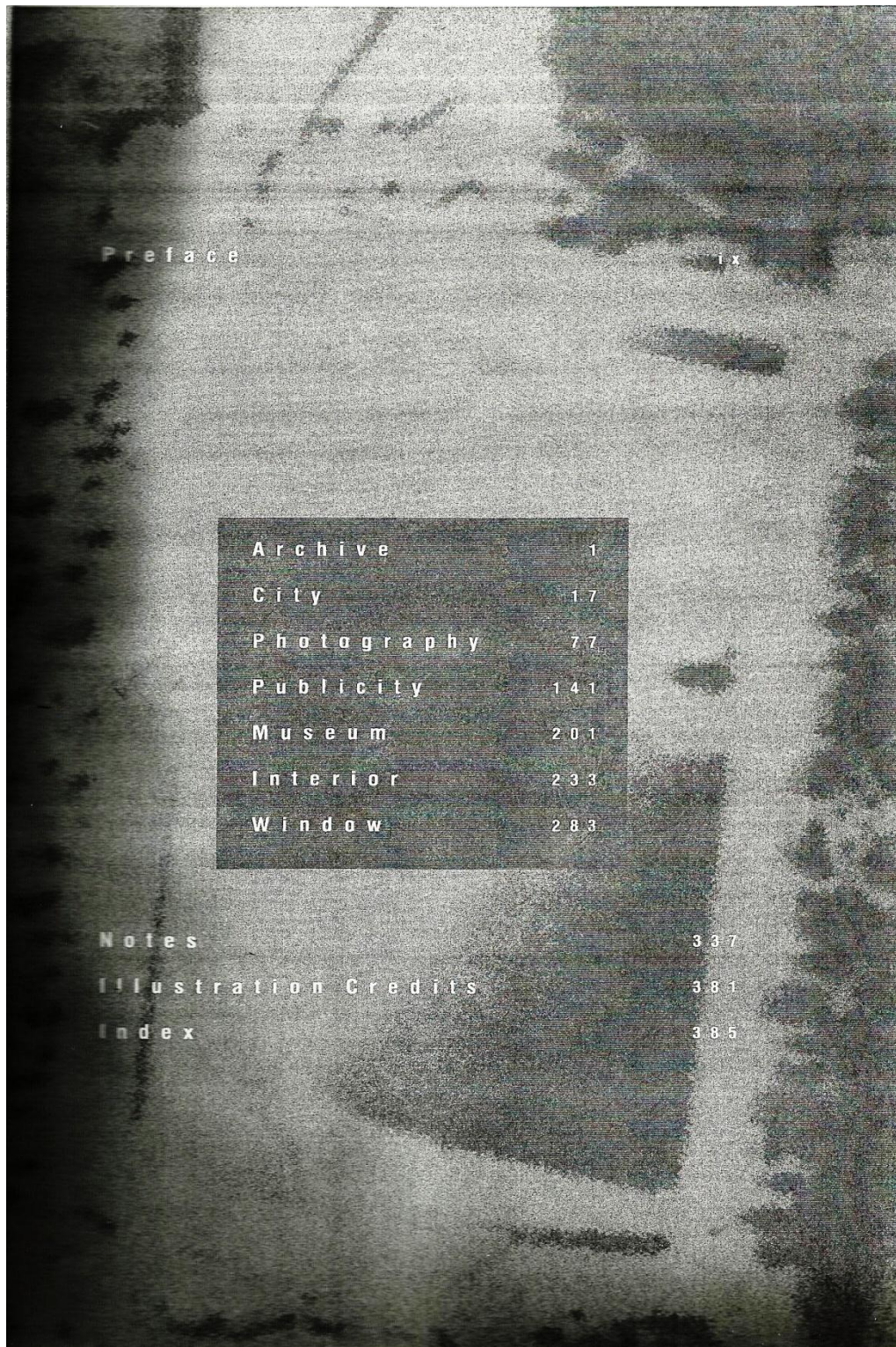
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APPENDICE

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Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü ☒

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü ☐

Enformatik Enstitüsü ☐

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

YAZARIN

Soyadı : Karamanoğlu
Adı : Sema
Bölümü : Mimarlık Tarihi

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : One Historian Two Books: Beatriz Colomina's
Historiographical Approach in "Privacy And Publicity" and "Domesticity at
War"

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans ☒ Doktora ☐

1. Tezimin tamamı dünya çapında erişime açılsın ve kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla tezimin bir kısmı veya tamamının fotokopisi alınsın. ☒
2. Tezimin tamamı yalnızca Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi kullancılarının erişimine açılsın. (Bu seçenekle tezinizin fotokopisi ya da elektronik kopyası Kütüphane aracılığı ile ODTÜ dışına dağıtılmayacaktır.) ☐
3. Tezim bir (1) yıl süreyle erişime kapalı olsun. (Bu seçenekle tezinizin fotokopisi ya da elektronik kopyası Kütüphane aracılığı ile ODTÜ dışına dağıtılmayacaktır.) ☐

Yazarın imzası Tarih