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POSTPANOPTIC ARCHITECTURE

QUESTIONNAIRE

On the persistence of panoptic imaginaries

1
To what extent does panoptical thought continue to guide architectural practice, even when its literal spatial configuration has long been abandoned?

2
What remains of the panopticon when we understand it not as a prison or radial floor plan, but as a model of intentional controllability?

3
Where does this model manifest itself today – from surveillance infrastructures and securitized circulation to workplaces, schools, hospitals, and even spaces dedicated to well-being?

4
What connects architectures intended to restrict human behavior with those intended to improve it?

5
To what extent does architectural design presuppose that spatial effects can be anticipated and steered in advance?

6
How does the intention to provide well-being, comfort, focus, or even agency become a form of control?

7
Does the critique of controllability require us to distinguish between the impossibility of full control and the reality of partial, situated control?

On the paradigm of uncertainty reduction

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How deeply is the prevailing architectural conception of control rooted in the modern understanding of the world as a machine?

9
Why is uncertainty not merely something that may be reduced, but something that architectural practice is expected to reduce?

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How do building regulations, engineering conventions, safety margins, professional responsibilities, and liability frameworks reproduce this expectation?

11
What happens to material and environmental agency when their effects are primarily treated as variables to be calculated, compensated for, or neutralized?

12
What distinguishes the recognition of uncertainty from its incorporation into predefined tolerances?

13
What becomes of phenomena that cannot be anticipated, calculated, or contained within such margins?

14
Does the paradigm of uncertainty reduction produce its own blind spots?

15
What would it mean to include the *angle mort* in architectural thinking – not with the ambition of making it progressively smaller, but as a constitutive condition of architectural reality?

On normativity and the supposed average

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How is uncertainty reduction connected to the production and reproduction of norms?

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To what extent does architectural standardization continue the modernist idealization of an average human being, exemplified by Neufert's dimensional conventions?

18
How do standards of comfort, productivity, attention, and well-being establish normative expectations of human perception and behavior?

19
What happens when the same spatial configuration induces focus in one person and unrest in another?

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How do neurodivergent experiences challenge the assumption that a spatial configuration has predictable perceptual effects?

21
How does spatial experience vary not only between individuals, but also within one and the same individual, depending on mood, fatigue, activity, social situation, weather, or season?

22
Can any spatial configuration be considered objectively optimal when its effects depend on who experiences it, under what circumstances, and at what moment?

23
Who bears the burden of adaptation when architecture is optimized for a statistical majority?

24
How might architectural practice move beyond normative optimization without abandoning the practical value of standards?

On adaptive architecture and possibility landscapes

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To what extent is adaptability already present in almost every building – through doors, windows, lighting, furniture, and other modifiable arrangements?

26
What distinguishes such elementary forms of adaptability from more extensively adaptive architectural systems?

27
How do adaptive architectures introduce state spaces and landscapes of possibility, moving beyond the assumption that one spatial proposition must serve every situation?

28
How do such systems allow inhabitants to actively modulate the spaces they occupy?

29
To what extent is this agency nevertheless limited by predefined configurations, parameters, and permitted operations?

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Under what conditions do adaptive architectural systems expand the possibilities of open modulation, and under what conditions do they reproduce existing paradigms of control?

31
What distinguishes the modulation of states within a possibility landscape from the modulation of the landscape itself?

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Can an adaptive architectural system transform not only its configuration, but also the range of possibilities and constraints within which it operates?

33
What would it mean for an architectural possibility landscape to be plastic?

On landscape plasticity: stability, transformation, and modes

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How should architectural plasticity be distinguished from flexibility, responsiveness, and adaptability?

35
How can Catherine Malabou's conception of plasticity help us understand architectural transformation?

36
If there can never be one universally best configuration, must architecture remain permanently unsettled?

37
Can a plastic architectural landscape accommodate different modes, some of which converge toward relatively stable configurations while others remain open-ended?

38
How can different processes of stabilization, drift, reconfiguration, and transformation unfold simultaneously within one and the same architecture?

39
How might architectural configurations emerge through interactions between inhabitants, materials, environmental forces, and other participants, rather than being prescribed in advance?

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What distinguishes a landscape that can transition between multiple states from one whose very possibilities can evolve?

41
To what extent must the anticipated capacity for future transformation already be an integral part of architectural design?

On material and environmental agency

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What changes when materials are understood not merely as passive substances subject to architectural intentions, but as participants with their own dynamics?

43
How do material self-organization, aging, creep, deformation, erosion, and other processes participate in the formation of architecture?

44
How can environmental forces be understood as co-authors rather than external disturbances?

45
What does the notion of machinic normativity contribute to an understanding of systems whose operative tendencies and norms are not simply imposed from outside?

46
How might neuromorphic material systems challenge the conventional separation between material behavior and information processing?

47
What becomes possible when material, environmental, bodily, and neural processes are conceived as intertwined rather than as separate domains?

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How might the Neural Continua framework contribute to investigating the interactions and continuities between neural, bodily, material, and environmental processes?

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Where does agency reside when none of the participating systems can be considered fully independent or fully in control?

On vernacular building, maintenance, and ruins

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What can vernacular, self-built, and gradually developed architectures teach us about plasticity as an ordinary building practice?

51
What changes when building and inhabiting are no longer understood as separate activities, but as interrelated processes through which architecture continues to take shape?

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What happens when building is conceived as an ongoing activity rather than a process culminating in a finalized object?

53
How do maintenance-intensive materials and construction techniques – such as earth-based building – give rise to recurring opportunities for modification?

54
When does maintenance become redesign, and how do environmental forces participate in this process?

55
What can the reworking of ruins teach us about architectural continuation without restoration to an original state?

56
How do existing fragments, structural leftovers, and environmental transformations become active conditions for subsequent architectural decisions?

57
Why should an architecture transformed by subsequent participants be considered any less original than its initial configuration?

On expanded intentionality and architectural authorship

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How does landscape plasticity call for a redefinition of architectural authorship?

59
What changes when architectural authorship is understood not only as the creation of an object but as the establishment of conditions for its possible transformations?

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How can architects be considerate of future, potentially unknown participants without diminishing their own authorship?

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What does expanded intentionality mean in this context?

62
Why might the opening of architectural authorship to other participants and unforeseen transformations require greater clarity about one's own intentions?

63
How can those intentions coexist with openness toward transformations that the original author could neither foresee nor prescribe?

64
To what extent does expanded intentionality also require the willingness to relinquish one's primary authorship?

65
How can architectural authorship remain accountable for its intentions and interventions while acknowledging that the work's subsequent development will involve participants and processes beyond the author's knowledge or control?

66
Can authorship be understood as something that changes across time, rather than as a fixed relationship between an originator and a completed work?

67
How might Malabou's plasticity allow us to reconsider originality itself — not as fidelity to an initial state, but as a capacity for continued formation and transformation?

68
What does it mean to expand architectural rigor rather than reduce it?

On post-panoptic architecture as literacy

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If architecture is understood through distributed agency, uncertainty, and landscape plasticity, what kinds of knowledge and sensitivity does its practice require?

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What would it mean to conceive post-panoptic architecture not as a style, typology, or technical solution, but as a specific kind of literacy?

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How does this literacy differ from the ability to anticipate, calculate, optimize, and control?

72
How can architects learn to recognize material, environmental, perceptual, and systemic agencies that are not immediately visible?

73
What role should architectural education play in cultivating sensitivity toward uncertainty and the limits of one's own knowledge?

74
Do we educate architects primarily to control spatial effects, or to engage with the continuously changing relationships through which those effects emerge?

75
How can architectural education incorporate the knowledge that no designer can ever be sufficiently literate in all the systems and processes with which architecture interacts?

76
How might this epistemic openness change the way architectural intentions, design processes, and responsibilities are conceived?

On the epistemic implications of post-panopticism

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What does it mean to understand ourselves not as external observers or controllers of an environment, but as participants who are continuously modulated by it?

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How can we develop the capacity to actively modulate our environments while acknowledging that our own perceptions, decisions, and capacities emerge through those same relationships?

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How can architecture enable inhabitants to actively shape their environments without prescribing how they should live, perceive, or behave?

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How can the recognition of distributed agency avoid becoming a denial of individual responsibility, intention, or authorship?

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What would an architectural practice look like that does not seek to eliminate uncertainty but learns to work with its productive and sometimes disruptive consequences?

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How can the impossibility of complete knowledge become a methodological commitment rather than merely an acknowledged limitation?

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How must architectural knowledge and practice change when the processes shaping spatial experience can neither be fully anticipated nor understood from any single disciplinary perspective?

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And ultimately: how can architecture cultivate the capacity to participate in the transformation of the very landscapes through which we ourselves are continuously being formed?