Dissertation Research Project (CRN 39799)

Ethnography, Archives, Translations (EAT)
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N.B. See Assessment Information/Brief 2023-24 for the Dissertation requirements and submission deadlines.

This group adopts pragmatist and realist approaches to study architecture and urban design. Pragmatist means observing and analysing how the world relies on its agencies – thus eschewing idealism (see James, Pierce); realist means according objectivity to objects and observing things as they exist independent of the mind and perception (see Latour, 1999; Yaneva, 2009). Both philosophical approaches are grounded in the empirical and explain how action takes place with *practical* bearings in *this* world.

We will read and analyse architectural practices within their situated environments and milieux, as they *exist in this world* not as they *ought to be* (after Yaneva, 2022). Our methodology is to follow actors (humans, nonhumans), trace associations (speculative historiography), and reassemble narratives (writing and visualizing). The Digital Humanities inform our methods, which include quasi/ethnography, archival research, and translation. We will learn how to write (Latour, 2005; Yaneva, 2017b) – in research mode (vs how to make, in design mode) – and tell stories (Murphy, 2006; Bissell, 2010; McGranahan, 2015; Tsing, 2015).

Figure 1 Bus on Booth Street next to the Alliance Manchester Business School (photo by author, 2023)

The city is our laboratory. You will get an opportunity to explore realized or imagined architecture and urban design projects in the Greater Manchester area (especially Manchester, Salford, and Stockport) and in world cities. The list of suggested projects offers an array of architectural programmes, styles, layouts, structures, and materialities situated within and evolving across diverse social, political, cultural, and environmental landscapes. Some projects express an iconic character or boast a known architect; however, most projects engage with mundane and pop aesthetics akin to what we experience in our everyday. Nevertheless, the politico-cultural and socioeconomic conditions that inform the production of these architectures are continuously dynamic and complex.

Some of these buildings are accessible to the public, which allows you to visit them and conduct a brief ethnographic survey. This means that you will *slow down* (Yaneva, 2017a) and observe people's actions and practices, movements and flows, speeds and rhythms, and materialities and spatialities, among others.

Ethnography/Archives (some examples):
1. Salford Shopping Centre (aka Salford Precinct), Salford, 1970 – brutalism, reinforced concrete, community, arcades, porosity, bus hub
2. Merseyway Shopping Centre, Stockport, 1965 – arcades, porosity, public space, pedestrian-scape, car park
3. Manchester Arndale, Manchester, 1979/1996 – shopping centre, mall, large-scale, development, bomb, reinforced concrete
4. The Sedge Lynn, Manchester, 1907 – monospace, temperance movement, steel frame, community, entertainment
5. Aviva Studios (Factory), Manchester, 2023 – arts, regional development, starchitect, OMA, heritage, water
6. Imperial War Museum – North, Manchester, 2002 – museum, iconic, starchitect, Daniel Libeskind, urban redevelopment
7. The Pyramid (Eamar Developments, formerly Co-operative Bank), Stockport, 1992 – business park, curtain wall, Valley of the Kings, pop architecture, branding, ownership transfer, ring road
8. One Angel Square (Co-operative HQ), Manchester, 2013 – green design, large-scale, curtain wall, BREEAM, urban complex, NOMA, slum clearance history
9. Manchester Victoria Station, Manchester, 1844/2015 – mobility, trains, roof design, EFTE, transportation hub, connectivity
10. The Toast Rack & Poached Egg (aka Hollings Building), Manchester, 1960 – university building, reinforced concrete frame, modern heritage, adaptive reuse, MMU, ownership transfer
11. Old Trafford Stadium (Man United), Manchester, 1910 – sports, urban growth bound, urban traffic, steel structure, renovation
12. Etihad Stadium (Man City), 2002 – sports, commonwealth games, large complex, connected infrastructure, steel structure, renovation/expansion
13. Manchester Prison (formerly Strangeways), Manchester, 1868 – prison, incarceration, violence, security, Panopticon (Bantham/Foucault), Oligopticon (Latour), heritage
14. Hallé St Peter's, Manchester, 1859/2019—music, arts, extension, heritage,
15. The Daily Express Building, Manchester, 1939 – media, conversion, art deco

Online Quasi-Ethnography

1. Salk Institute for Biological Studies, Louis Khan – the architecture of science, Bruno Latour, Albena Yaneva
2. Seattle Public Library, Office for Metropolitan Architecture – the architecture or public space, flows, public funding
3. MAXXI: National Museum of 21st Century Art, Zaha Hadid Architects – architecture as urbanism, flows, filed vs object, public funding
4. City of Culture of Galicia, Eisenman Architects – architecture as urbanism, landscape, formalism, public funding
5. The Broad, Diller Scofidio + Renfro – architecture as machine, museum, storage, hauling, traffic, Los Angeles

Urbanism/Urban Design

1. Salford Campus Master Plan – an archival study of campus evolution
2. ID Manchester (UMIST Redevelopment) – a documentary study of an ongoing urban design project
3. Chapel Warf Development – an archival and ethnographic study of a recent urban design project

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