

emerge from nuclear devastation (plate 24). The inclusion of these images suggests surveying linked to technological developments and aesthetic culture as well as, significantly, global politics: one a record before war and another after. Given the current state of the world, these images suggest a politics to the practice of surveying and how architects make sense of a world that is ever changing as a result of global conflicts. They propose that drawing, in its intention to record specific sites, can be a crucial and vital method for imagining new possibilities for those very spaces.

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Notes

1. Denis Wood, "Pleasure in the Idea / The Atlas as Narrative Form," *Cartographica* 24, no. 1 (1987), 27. See also Robin Evans, *Translations from Drawing to Building, and Other Essays* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1999); J. B. Harley, "Deconstructing the Map," *Cartographica* 26, no. 2 (1989), 1–20; Louis Marin, *De la représentation* (Paris: Seuil/Gallimard, 1994).

2. Gilles Deleuze, "The Diagram," in *The Deleuze Reader*, ed. Constantin V. Boundas (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 193–200.

Anna Sokolina, ed.

The Routledge Companion to Women in Architecture

New York: Routledge, 2021, 436 pp., 143 b/w illus. \$221/£190 (cloth), ISBN 9780367232344

To be sure, historiography is "familiar" with the question of the other. . . . But its discipline must create proper places for each, by pigeonholing the past into an area other than the present, or else by supposing a continuity by genealogical filiation. . . . Technically, it endlessly presupposes homogeneous unities (century, country, class, economic or social strata, etc.) and cannot give way to the *vertigo* that critical examination of these fragile boundaries might bring about: historiography does not want to know this. In all its labours, based on these classifications, historiography takes it for granted that the place where it is itself produced has the capacity to provide meaning, since the current

institutional demarcations of the discipline uphold the divisions of time and place in the last resort. In this respect, historical discourse, which is political in essence, takes the law of place for granted. It legitimizes a place, that of its production, by "including" others in a relation of filiation or of exteriority.¹

In her book on gender and the politics of history first published more than thirty years ago, social historian Joan Wallach Scott describes how gender is doubly marginalized, not just by the academy but also by the discipline—that is, by history itself.² The problem with distinct spheres of knowledge about women and their deeds in the form of "her-story," Scott puts plainly, is that these can exist as discrete and separate, and consequently become irrelevant to common knowledge.³ Rather than being applied as a known entity, gender, as Scott notes in a later work, is a means "to get at meanings that are neither literal nor transparent."⁴ Turning to psychoanalysis as a theoretical frame for re-reading gender, Scott argues that gender is important analytically and historically because it is impossible to assign gender a fixed and enduring meaning and/or identity, since gender already embeds "fantasies and transgressions that refuse to be regulated or categorized."⁵ In other words, the scholar who takes gender as an analytical frame is always looking at, and through, the seams of a subject, where something is fraying. For Scott, a historiography that takes gender as its subject must pay attention to—and expect knowledge to avail in, particularly in areas of ambiguity—"slips of the tongue and pen, in parenthetical remarks aimed at containing some irrepressible, mad thought."⁶ The point of such a history is to acknowledge "sexual difference as an unresolvable dilemma" and to trace how this dilemma gets played out in relationships and their outcomes.⁷

The Routledge Companion to Women in Architecture, edited by architect, historian, and curator Anna Sokolina, is a compendium of twenty-nine chapters devoted to the topic of women in architecture. The subjects and their achievements are framed chronologically and thematically into five sections spanning architecture's history in the preindustrial age to the early twentieth century, and concluding, finally, in its

contemporary present. Sokolina's historiographical endeavor is ambitious: the book does not just address the omission of women from the discipline's annals, it offers "arguments and full discursive chapters" (4). The subjects are based primarily in North America, the United Kingdom, and Europe, but the book also covers case studies from Russia, Palestine, and Turkey. In her introduction to the volume, Sokolina divulges how this chronological/geographical approach jostles with other equally viable thematic frames, including women's contributions to the fields of history, practice, and education; the dualities of the global and the local evident in their work; and the extra-architectural boundaries forged by the subjects through their manifold roles as educators, authors, critics, collectors, professional partners, friends, wives, and mothers. Significantly, Sokolina states, "We leave out the narratives focused in particular on the feminist movement, or those preoccupied with compare-contrast investigations of male vs. female proficiencies" (4).

The structuring of the book by professional affiliation and chronological development rehearses Michel de Certeau's argument, quoted above, regarding historiography's insistence on demarcation by place and time. The sidestepping of feminist history upholds the "homogeneous unities" and certainties required in the sites of history, the academy, and architecture, where inclusion of the Other is made through "filiation," or else by "exteriority," through tenuous peripheral relations. Gender, even in a book about women in architecture, is marginalized. Is this a strategic move to make the book appeal to a larger audience? Or does gender constitute too much a political boundary that historiography still does not want to know? Nevertheless, to speak about women, whether in architecture or in another field, is to implicitly evoke social relations and hierarchical structures that in themselves constitute gendered professional differences between men and women in architecture. There is no escaping this duality.

What jars—where the seams of this historiographical project begin to unravel—is how the chapters themselves, through the eccentricity of, and depth in, the subjects surveyed, move sometimes vertiginously, away from a conventional historiographical

frame. By this, I mean that many of the contributing authors do not keep separate the private and public personas of the women studied, often mixing the architect with her other roles as daughter, sister, wife, partner, mother, companion, and friend. They use materials from the archives but equally project their own desires and questions on such inanimate facts, forming embodied rather than genealogical filiations with their subjects. Many draw on throwaway details—what Scott calls “fantasies and transgressions”—that refuse regulation within the discipline to give significance to figures studied in absentia. The most riveting pieces take the question of “women in architecture” to sites and stories that we least expect, leaving us asking for more. Scott, citing Lacan’s definition of “desire” as that which is “ruled by dissatisfaction,” describes feminist scholarship as a “restless critical operation, . . . a movement of desire” to contemplate a “kindling spirit,” where “something more is always wanted.”⁸ Defying the norms of academic scholarship, the chapters reveal a critical closeness with their subjects.

This is especially evident in Nerma Cridge’s “Restless: Drawn by Zaha Hadid,” which connects the transformation of Hadid’s early hand-drawn constructivist-inspired drawings, her sketchbooks with their edges intentionally burned, photographs of her sparsely furnished London flat, and her uneasy professional relationships with her (male) mentors. This chapter speaks of the nature of Hadid’s drawings but also of the architect’s legacy, which remains, at best, enigmatic, despite the wealth of public architectural material available; as Cridge argues, “Her designs, drawings, and paintings need to be revealed and experienced but can never be fully explained” (297). Mary Anne Hunting and Kevin D. Murphy’s chapter on women’s rights activist and architect Florence Hope Luscomb focuses on Elk Horn Ranch House (1940), a one-room cabin in the White Mountains resort town of Tams-

worth, New Hampshire, to reveal how gender discrimination meant that women architects in the early twentieth century had to create rooms of their own to generate professional opportunities. Hunting and Murphy’s detailed study of the cabin’s interior and surrounding summer gardens demonstrates how Luscomb galvanized her love for the outdoors and early ideas of sustainability to build a summer house that doubled as a leftist retreat, a place of both personal rejuvenation and collective critical expression. Overlooked by modern architectural history, the house was a social condenser of pathbreaking midcentury modern social activism.

Carmen Espegel delineates how Eileen Gray’s brand of avant-gardism redefined modernist machine aesthetics as not mechanical, sterile, or eclectic but “colloquial,” “magnetic,” and “vicarious” in its specificity to occupants’ lives and local culture (105, 106). Espegel argues that E.1027 (1929)—Gray’s seaside villa, defaced by Le Corbusier’s lurid murals ten years after it was built, is radical for its deeply regional idioms and geometry—represented an original and daring interpretation of modern architecture far exceeding those of any of Gray’s peers, and far beyond into modernism’s history. Aesthetics implicating personal ethics, particularly in the shadow of strong male peers, are covered in Harriet Harriss’s chapter on the Bauhaus’s women weavers and Rebecca Siefert’s essay on Italian-born architect, artist, and educator Laurotta Vinciarelli, who was also the romantic and professional partner of American artist Donald Judd. Harriss discusses the intellectual complexity and politics in the motifs, processes, and practices found in the archives of the Bauhaus weavers. She argues for how this craft, relegated as a compromise to women students admitted to the Bauhaus in the interwar years, was intrinsically foundational in iconic work of the architectural canon. Similarly, Siefert installs Vinciarelli’s hybrid fine art–architectural drawings—from

her 1970s series *Homogeneous Grid* and *Non-Homogeneous Grid* to her watercolor paintings in the 1990s—within the canon of “paper architecture.” Modernist in logic, these works exhibited an interdisciplinary engagement with art and became the basis of Vinciarelli’s lifelong research into the historical and regional transformation of architectural typology. These specificities disrupt perceptions of paper architecture as mere abstractions.

These authors and others, focusing on the frayed seams of history, automatically enlarge the politics of a discipline where the power dynamics are unequal. They draw the reader toward “the most immediate, [and] the most local power relations at work.”⁹ The volume is at its weakest when “women in architecture” is discussed as a unified and fixed theme. Conversely, when it is read as an unstable conceptual category whose collective identities mean “different things at different times,” the writings shine.¹⁰ The question of women in architecture remains most alive and relevant when it lays bare contradictions in spheres of knowledge, like architecture, that claim to be coherent.¹¹

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Notes

1. Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 343, quoted in Joan Wallach Scott, *The Fantasy of Feminist History* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2011), 3, emphasis added.
2. Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*, 30th anniversary ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018), 18.
3. Scott, 20–21.
4. Scott, *Fantasy of Feminist History*, 4–5.
5. Scott, 5.
6. Scott, 4.
7. Scott, 5.
8. Scott, 34–35.
9. Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*, 26, citing Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1, *An Introduction* (New York: Vintage, 1980), 97–98.
10. Scott, *Fantasy of Feminist History*, 10.
11. Scott, 35.