

建築的國度

The state of architecture



No longer shelter, religious symbolism, nor manifestation of capitalism and democracy, is architecture now the latency of socio-economics, cultural fabrication and anthropology, asks Carl Gouw

建築不再是人類的庇護所，亦不是宗教圖騰、或宣示資本主義與民主精神的工具。建築已經踏入潛藏社會經濟、文化結構與人類學密碼的年代

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I am intrigued by Rem Koolhaas, whose OMA worked on the competition for the West Kowloon Cultural District. Previously a journalist and scriptwriter, he says he suddenly became interested in architecture at the age of 24. Named by *Time* as one of the world's 100 most influential people, he is the only architect who does not use ideas to justify, but as an end in themselves, a vehicle to "poke and provoke".

Koolhaas also gives the impression that he is not particularly keen on architects or architecture. OMA's unique place derives from a determination to think more laterally about the world. This began in the 1970s, when New York was bankrupt. He wrote the book *Delirious New*

York and exposed Manhattan's architecture as "a paradigm for the exploitation of congestion".

In recent interviews, he has noted that any profession becomes claustrophobic if you stay completely within it, and that he encourages everyone to "waste time, to accumulate notions of impressions". In short, Koolhaas has redefined architecture by abandoning the top-down approach, instead believing in arbitrary, experimental, and multi-dimensional processes.

When the world first began, architecture was shelter and security. It was religious symbolism for the ancient Greek and Roman civilisations. It once meant industrial power for New York, which brought Modernism to its height and downfall, decades before the World Trade Center collapsed. To Italy and France, the Renaissance was an enlightenment of humanity. To Hong Kong, sadly, architecture means real estate.

Architectural academics speak almost another language that nobody else understands. After architecture and engineering separated in the 1800s, we saw the avant-garde movement, organic architecture, 'brutalism', post-Modernism and pluralism. Each involved moral and philosophical underpinnings, and expressed political and socio-economical changes, such as mass production and the rejection of aristocratic refinement after World War I, and the technology-led design methodology movement, which influenced architects such as Zaha Hadid.

The greatest architects of the past two decades, including Richard Rogers, Hadid and Koolhaas, all came from the small independent Architectural Association School of Architecture (AA). Here, students are not bound by curriculum, undertaking movie and media projects to understand the overall co-existence of many arguments all in one place.

Like a think tank, AA does not carry the burden of institutionalised legacies. Architecture is not a technical expertise or profession, nor knowledge pursuit as understood in Hong Kong, but processes that involve artistic, cultural, social and political considerations. As the world becomes evermore complex, people like Koolhaas see architecture as a huge topic, fronting media headlines, encompassing sociology and humanities, or provoking philosophies such as post-structuralism and phenomenology. Whether architecture will lead or be led in society, its fundamental meaning remains unchanging – that is, a building touches our senses, peers through our hearts and souls, enlightens social behaviour within and around, stimulates community and urban changes, and invites critical thinking.

有關雷姆·庫哈斯背景的文章都很值得詳細研究，他創辦的大都會建築事務所（OMA）赫赫有名，正是參加西九文化區概念圖則方案設計比賽的三大事務所之一。原本從事新聞記者及編劇出身的他，二十四歲那年忽然愛上建築。庫哈斯名列《時代》全球一百位最具影響力的人物，亦是世上唯一不以意念去辯解的建築師，意念本身已經能夠獨立存在，而且足以激發更多思想與辯論。

庫哈斯從不予人一種特別熱愛建築、或純粹是建築師的形象。OMA的超然地位，在於他們下定決心以更廣闊的視野去看世界。這個思維發源自七十年代紐約經濟大衰退。當時庫哈斯在其著作《Delirious New York》中形容曼克頓的建築是「濫用城市密度的範例」。

庫哈斯的訪問談到無論從事甚麼行業，過度專注其中只會故步自封。他鼓勵大家不怕「浪費多點時間」去「積累不同範疇的概念見解」。由此可見，庫哈斯相信建築的誕生並不源於從上而下般的一條直路，相反建築過程的本質是反覆無常、需要實驗以及多向性考慮的。他的想法顛覆了一般對建築的定義。

盤古初開，建築只是保護人類的棲身之所。希臘與羅馬文明將建築定為宗教象徵。對紐約而言，建築曾經代表工業力量，見證現代主義從巔峰到墜落崩潰，這早於世貿中心倒塌之前發生。意大利與法國相信建築是藝術，文藝復興啟蒙出人性。可惜香港的建築已經等同地產樓市。

建築學者那一套語言，根本深奧得無人聽得明白。自從十九世紀建築與工程分家以來，有機建築、野獸派、後現代主義及多元建築主義相繼冒起，各有其道與哲學支撐，展現出政治及社會經濟的變化，如大量生產、第一次世界大戰後瑰麗修飾風格的未落，以及由科技主導、影響扎哈·哈迪等當代建築師至深的設計方法學運動。

過去二十年最偉大的建築師，包括理查·羅傑斯、扎哈·哈迪及庫哈斯，都畢業於英國倫敦建築聯盟學院（AA）。這所自主的小規模學院的學生不受課程所限，透過電影及媒體作品作專題研習，去了解一個創作背後同時共存的多元論點。

AA學院猶如智慧的寶庫，沒有所謂學院派的負擔與包袱。建築並非技術性行業或專業，更不是香港人心目中的知識追求。建築的誕生過程牽涉藝術、文化、社會與政治考慮。世界前所未有地複雜，庫哈斯視建築為浩瀚的論題、傳媒的焦點、並懷抱社會學與人文學，甚至足以引發後結構主義與現象學的爭議。無論建築將帶領社會又或是由社會帶領，其基本道理始終應該是撩動感官、滲透心靈、從內外啟迪社會行為、觸發社區意識與都市轉變，最後引發連番的批判思考。



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