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From cultural history of materialism to materialist history of culture

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Introduction

How to Read (With) Benjamin: From Cultural History of Materialism to Materialist History of Culture

Patrick Healy and Andrej Radman, editors

Only images in the mind vitalize the will. The mere word, by contrast, at most inflames it, to leave it smouldering, blasted. There is no intact will without exact pictorial imagination. No imagination without innervation. (Benjamin, 1920s)¹

Someday, when the prospect of an angel doesn't get readers hot and bothered to identify with it at any price, Benjamin's chastened scrutinizers will realize they'd been had, and that the too-renowned Angel of History Benjamin gives a sentence or so to before literally annihilating it in his Theses was a front and bait for the very identificatory and recuperative takes on him he disowned in the first theses – that, say, of the Marxist dialectician (Adorno) and the theo-hebraic allegorist (Scholem). Benjamin had already identified Klee's 'new angel' with something more ferocious, without anthropomorphic accoutrement (no ruddy cheeks, nice wings, no fake sorrowful back glances at his own hypocrisy toward the dead readers looking to his face). (Cohen, 2016)²

Introduction

Reading Walter Benjamin always seems like a promise to re-read, to take up again the texts which have been saved and presented as his works. They range from essays, monograph studies, large unfinished research projects, book reviews, occasional aphorisms, to radio broadcasts for children, memoirs, autobiographical fictions, travel writing, philological notes, significant epistolary communication, translations – of Proust, Baudelaire – even what might have to be termed feature articles, and

rough working notes. His poems have only recently received a translation and analysis in English.³ Most of his writings were posthumously published.

There is a necessary deferral when first reading Benjamin, a recurring hesitation, as if a first reading avoids the charge of being an intrusion by the concomitant commitment to re-read, and an increasing awareness of the complex demands the multiplicity of Benjamin's written productions makes on any reading at all.

Our reading involves listening attentively to what Benjamin reads. One has only to turn to his essay 'The Task of the Translator' where without offering much by way of example, Benjamin eliminates the very reception and reader-response theory that would become such a mainstay for his interpreters, at least in the Anglophone world, since his texts became available from 1948 onwards.⁴

The essay makes any potential reader aware that translation occurs not only between languages but equally within languages, and the problem of the word/object and object/image for a materialist historiography has to recognise this complex gamut of the interpretative, where a reader often staggers towards a kind of a hermeneutic *mise-en-abyme*.

According to George Steiner, relating a meeting with Gershom Scholem, in which this topic was discussed, a reader of Benjamin would have to meet a host of demands so as to deal with the

kaleidoscope of his writings. Steiner and Scholem came up with a formidable list. One would need to be aware of the emancipation of the German Jewish middle class after Napoleon, understand the phenomenon of Jewish secularization via Marx and Freud, and grasp a persistent idealised version of France among the newly emancipated German Jewish intellectual community.

Further one would need to explore and master the history of German youth movements and the development of Zionism, and at the same time be sensitive to the little studied development of German pacifism, which accounts for Benjamin's substantive silence about the First World War and his constant ambivalence about Theodor Herzl's idea of The Old New Land, *Altneuland*, of Palestine, the title of the novel which when translated into Hebrew as 'Tel Aviv' was to inspire the choice for the city of that name.⁵

After the withdrawal of his *Habilitationschrift* in 1925 further questions arise that require clarification: the issue of Benjamin's relation to academic life and research institutes, his experiments with drugs and the additional claim that in order to read Benjamin one would have to register his life as a bibliophile, collector, and assess his professional activity as a graphologist.

Other requirements made up by Scholem and Steiner was how to evaluate the issue of Benjamin and his writing in German, his complex relationship with the women in his life, and what is termed his 'theology'. Steiner in his address to the Amsterdam congress allowed himself the gratuitous *boutade* of suggesting that most academics who write on Benjamin today would not have the level of German necessary to read him suggesting that only Arendt, Adorno, Löwith and a few others could really meet the demands, and no one singly.⁶

In all of what Steiner posits for the 'ideal' reader, he never raises the question of what is understood by 'history' after Benjamin's researches, and its implications for any reader at all. It would be useful to turn to the Adorno-Benjamin correspondence to see how this question becomes so central to their respective concerns, and the differences that emerge.

Adorno's Benjamin

Adorno in correspondence with Benjamin especially between 1935 and the letter sent by Benjamin in December 1938 is an example of a reader who prides himself on having been familiar with Benjamin's writings and positions himself to both criticise and request from Benjamin work that he – Adorno – takes to be more consistent with his – Benjamin's – development. In one sense Adorno insists on reading Benjamin 'from Benjamin'. He is mainly responding to drafts of the study in which Benjamin has been directly engaged since 1927, and which he will continue until his suicide fleeing Nazi persecution in 1940.⁷

Adorno excuses his own frankness in the name of their friendship and on the basis of a conversation between himself and Benjamin in San Remo. Benjamin is chided for de-dialecticising the dialectical image. The charge sheet is long but turns firstly on criticising Benjamin's citation of a phrase from Michelet that each epoch dreams the following, *chaque époque rêve la suivante*.⁸ This single phrase is for Adorno an undialectical sentence, it makes of subjective alienation a collective idea of consciousness, and the dream is given a utopian future impulse which denies class difference. This individuality of dream, thus pushes it into the bourgeois realm, and in the case of Benjamin, the realm of Jungian psychology.

Adorno raises further telling objections, insisting that the fetish character of commodity, on which

Benjamin focuses, is not a fact of consciousness since dialectics in the eminent sense shows it produces consciousness. Further the dialectical image is undialectical, in that the dialectical image, as it lacks mediation, disallows its own contrary in the concept. It is the dream that needs to be externalised and the immanence of consciousness understood as a construction of reality 'in which Hell wanders through mankind'. This also applies to the way in which Benjamin treats the coalescence of the archaic with the new; by psychologising the dialectical image the work of Benjamin falls for the ruse which invents collective consciousness to deflect attention from the objective state of affairs of alienated subjectivity. Between society and singularity there is no classless dreaming collective.

For Adorno dialectical images in Benjamin are more akin to a model and not a social product; they are objective constellations in which the social structure represents itself. Adorno continues, and suggests that Benjamin in 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproducibility' shows a tendency to obviate the issue of the relations of production by abstract references to the means of production.⁹ As with his acceptance of the first appearance of technology, Benjamin overestimates the archaic as such.¹⁰

Some of the claims he makes in the drafts of *The Arcades Project* as he sends them to Adorno, such as the first use of iron and glass as artificial elements in construction and architecture, indicate for Adorno a lack of historical accuracy.¹¹ Adorno is dubious about Benjamin's notion of distraction and thus the role of architecture for the masses, in Benjamin's account of the reproducibility of the work of art as provender for mass culture.¹²

Adorno also notes that montage is not as significant to film making as Benjamin thinks and that a highly constructed photographic realism is the order

of the day in film studios, one of which Adorno has just recently visited.

The criticism are then expanded, there is a weighty emphasis on Benjamin's lack of clarity at the theoretical level. Adorno declaring himself to be a 'faithful reader of your writings' suggests there is no lack of precedent in Benjamin's procedure, where he observes that motifs are assembled but not elaborated on, suggesting that this is typical of Benjamin's ascetic discipline of omitting decisive theoretical answers to questions and even obscuring what those questions are; they are known only to initiates.¹³

Adorno then raises various other points, some of which he has discussed with Max (Horkheimer): that Benjamin has been overly influenced by Brecht, and that he adopts a Marxist mien, which they consider unnecessary in the form it takes in *The Arcades Project*. He then adds a troubling question about Benjamin's entire methodological approach and direction: 'I remember [...] your essay on Proust and Surrealism in the *Literarische Welt*...' ¹⁴ Adorno questions whether the method applied in those pieces can be deployed in *The Arcades Project*: panorama, traces, *flâneur* and arcades, all without a theoretical interpretation. Adorno wonders if that is not material that can await decipherment without being consumed by its own aura.

His focal point for critique is that Benjamin's is an anthropological materialism with a profoundly romantic character, and further that the materialist determination of cultural traces is only possible if it is mediated through the 'total social process'. The most salient point is that Benjamin's dialectic lacks one thing: 'mediation'.

His very dwelling on detail makes of Benjamin's concreteness a risk for all interpretation, as it gives features from the superstructure a materialist turn

by linking them to corresponding features of the infrastructure.

Benjamin's omission of theory is fatal, Adorno maintains, for the empirical evidence and the theological motif of calling things by their names – effectively a charge of nominalism – becomes then a change into a wide-eyed presentation of mere facts; a nominalist who becomes a jejune empiricist. More to the point, Adorno says that Benjamin's study is located at the crossroad of magic and positivism.¹⁵

The very potential readership he sought from his isolation in Paris and which would give him the detachment needed from his work, by the act of publication, was controlled by those very readers such as Adorno and Horkheimer who exercised direct political power in terms of Benjamin's outreach. Thinking about the issues involved in the correspondence is also a good way of understanding Benjamin's own work and its contemporary actuality.

Benjamin in his response to Adorno will hold on to his 'construction', the way in which the various parts of the work hold together. If his precautionary considerations seem like methodological deficiency, Benjamin suggests that the model he has in mind for the section about the Man of the Crowd, which he refers to as the euphemistic interpretations of the masses – the physiognomic view of them – could be shown by a study of the novels and tales of E. T. A. Hoffmann or more pertinently the work of Victor Hugo, whom he suggests articulated more than any other writer the experience of the masses, as the demagogue in him was a component of his genius.¹⁶

Benjamin finds the focus of the critique relevant, but shows that as he has deployed the term 'modernism', inevitably, from Baudelaire, and the issue of magic/positivism is in fact dissolved in Benjamin's physiognomic and philological astonishment.

He does take the idea of the trace from Poe, but it is conceptually set against the concept of aura, and in some sense it is the concepts that become the source of the dialectical tensions and resolutions: they too have an inclination and collision that eventuate in the archaic/new of modernism as taken up by Baudelaire.¹⁷

In the opening article of this issue, Stefan Koller re-engages with this crucial aspect of Benjamin's own understanding of the relation of physiognomy, expressionism and phantasmagoria, and the matrix of conceptual and dialectical terms deployed by Benjamin's actions as a writer.

Benjamin insists that what he has done bears on method in a precautionary way, since the concept in a monadic rigidity is released by what he calls the base-line of the immanent historical that is the present of decipherment. This decipherment that has in its purview the activity of the detective (Poe's impact on Baudelaire, the *flâneur*, is analogous to the problem of the poet in an industrial capitalist society), the issue of what experience is possible, and the rag-picker who gives the useless another use-value. Benjamin allows a remit of working through citation and novelistic accounts as being of as much value as any vaunted 'primary data' of the professional historical industry which was exploding at this time. It is in the very materiality of image and concept that Benjamin is the furthest removed from Adorno. In the terms of reference in which the 'exchange' between them is joined, Benjamin ineluctably insists on the terms 'panorama', 'traces', '*flâneur*', and 'arcades', and contra Adorno, maintains that this is the material which awaits patient and detailed decipherment.

Benjamin is alive to the colportage and masquerade of space, and how in the new principle of construction the architect is forced, in competition with the engineer to resort to an architecture of masks. The street is also forced into being an

interior and the arcades reveal themselves unwittingly as the furnished and familiar interior of the masses. If there is a role for the *flâneur* in idleness he or she devotes time to exploring the ancient dream of humanity in the labyrinth.¹⁸ Within the dream Benjamin wishes to plot the way that an awakening becomes possible. There is no doubt that the figures he concentrates on, the *flâneur*, the collector and the *Lumpensammler* (rag-picker), all have different complicities in the dissimulations of phantasmagoria.

Benjamin's city

In convolute N of *The Arcades Project* Benjamin makes his own reading a reading that relates to architecture. His aim is to abolish from the historical the notion of progress or rather, as he puts it, decline, and he will attempt to 'encompass both Breton and Le Corbusier', which is the only way to give an account of the expressive milieu.¹⁹ Benjamin goes on to discuss the expressive character of the earliest industrial products of architecture and machines, and to ask in what respect Marx's social-economic theory shares the expressive character of the material products contemporary with it. This makes of theory a material and productive fact. It also identifies Marxism as a product of its time and thus destined to decaying into an image. This is how Benjamin understands giving dates their physiognomy.

A materialist interpretation of history necessarily contains an immanent critique of progress. Benjamin does not require the mediation that Adorno suggests he lacks. His analysis interrogates both the way in which the aesthetic is in flight from the technical, and the way in which the literal masquerade of bourgeois self-protection deploys historicising masks as a refuge: in this flight from reality, architecture has the role of an alibi. The problem of awakening within the multiple simulacra which capital generates and uses to install a phantasmagoria/reality is still the central process that is initiated in his 1938 'Le Paris

du Second Empire chez Baudelaire'.²⁰

There is no gainsaying the way in which Benjamin links the phantasmagoria in Louis Auguste Blanqui's writing *L'Éternité par les astres* to the work of Baudelaire and Nietzsche, and it is in that final phantasmagoria that a critique is made of all that proceeds: finite bodies in infinite space are destined to eternally repeat a small number of possible combination and assemblages, and are running out in terms of time.²¹ More significantly in Benjamin's reading of Blanqui – an author whom he rehabilitates – is the incoherence of the concept of progress in this mechanised and materialist vision of eternal recurrence.

The problem of the tension of and the dissimulation of phantasmagoria and the technical social transformations in capitalist modes of production goes directly to the analysis of urban form as a concretised expression of historicising masks and in what way the role of architecture expresses such a process where expression also means that it both reflects and drives.²² Sarah Stanley's contribution examines the implications of Benjamin's view and his deployment of method, thus enriching a possible understanding of the way in which Benjamin works through his search for affinities and correspondences within the dream-work of mythologising, and the construction of history for the Capital shaped by capital. Three kindred elaborations are offered in this issue's section of review articles featuring Budapest, Paris/Berlin and London by Rodrigo Rieiro Díaz, Stéphane Symons and Stephen Witherford, respectively.

Crucial to this is the way in which Benjamin situates the urbanist master plan of Baron Haussmann who is seen as the purveyor of the tabula rasa, and whose urbanist vision and deployment of perspective are destined to erase the city's history and at the same time, via the work of the artists, install the 'kitsch' of the eternal empire of Napoleon III, and

turn Paris into the most elaborate monument-filled graveyard. The *enfilade* of streets are the *toujours la même* which factories develop for the individual object; homogenisation and serial production are the keys to the urban plan.

The urbanist is imbued with pseudo-artistic aims, and what has taken place in the interior as a flight from the real, from work, from labour, from the transformation of use value to exchange value, is also seen in the destruction of the real history of the city, reduced now to a theme park of empty signs. An impressive engagement with the urbanistic nihilism which is incorporated, in Benjamin's view, in the work of Haussmann, is taken up in this issue in the nuanced reflection by Jolien Paeleman on the structure of remembrance in the work of Benjamin and Rossi.

It might be added that Adorno had fatally misunderstood Benjamin's idea of image and its relation to a past that is never present and a present that feels the past as a future tension, without any suggestion of either progress or decline, thus removing the image from a developmental theory, and understanding its materiality as an already dialectic event. The emergence of the image is thus contingent and memory is a recognition of layer upon layer, that is momentarily halted and recognised. Likewise, the relationship between past, childhood and his own family life should be a strong indicator for any reader:

Wherever the boundary may have been drawn, however the second half of the nineteenth century has within it, and to it belong the following images, not in the manner of general representations, but of images that according to the teaching of Epicurus, constantly detach themselves from things and determine our perception of them.²⁴

In this passage from 'Berlin Chronicle' Benjamin gives an account of his childhood, and points to how

the realm of the dead juts into that of the living, as he is trying in fixing the boundaries of his childhood memory to situate the remoter past which belongs to it. The situation is not dissimilar to Joyce's conclusion to his short story 'The Dead', the past that comes to meet you: the complex and layered composite of memory which is arrested in some decisive moment or image, is literally for Benjamin like a snap-shot.²⁵

Frances Hsu in her article sees the understanding of the dialectical image as crucial for reading Benjamin's *The Arcades Project* and in a fascinating interpretative 'collision' also reads the Rem Koolhaas publication *Delirious New York* as similarly engaged. She examines the way in which the myth – the story told – and logistics in the constellation of image for the city of New York leads to a better grasp of Benjamin's absolute resistance to the evacuation of the temporality of the image, the double temporality of the present/past, past/future which requires different genealogies and concretions. In Ross Lipton's article the textuality and the ambivalent double of image is explored from another set of view-points, which give the image a dialogic character, a necessary ambivalence, and does not disclaim the spectral and haunting element which is traced in an overview of Benjamin's work. Both authors read Benjamin in the prismatic and philosophical sense that Benjamin mentions to Adorno in correspondence. In all of this the problem of the 'historical' remains crucial. The issue of phantasmagoria and image is also explored in terms of the constant flight from the real, the denial of the technical through the plush of middle class escapism or ideological self-protection, which keeps death and violence out of view. Benjamin had discovered when visiting his grandmother that the interior was the place where death did not enter, it was kept at bay by the accumulation of constructed interiors and a specific object world.

Conclusion

A past that contains a future, a past that has never been a present, the notion of what is sent from the past, that which reaches us, is a key to the deeper discussion between Benjamin and Adorno. Adorno will return to the difference in his lectures of the 1960s available in English under the title *History and Freedom*.²⁶ Adorno is still engaged with the work of Benjamin, and with the problem of knowledge and ideology. A certain loss of confidence in being able to give a coherent account that is methodologically self-critical, and that allows for reason to operate without transcendental justification, nor simply reduce it to the question of convention and relativising tropes, is evinced. For Adorno the issue of the dialectic as essentially negative comes to the fore.

The so-called truth of the object is put into question, if only because of the doubts which arise as to the adequacy of concepts which acknowledge there is no immediate givenness, and the process of definition and determination of the object is driven by the conceptual awareness that there is always something more, something of an 'excess' which points back to the Kantian impasse of the antinomies of reason, or what today is taken as the correlationist problem: knowledge from the side of the subject as radically contingent, when no knowledge of the thing in itself is available to the senses, the irrefrangibility of any unity of subject and object, that non-identity of subject and object if they are posited as relational and disclosive entities.²⁷

For Adorno the resistance of the object to knowledge and the way in which the subject exceeds its powers thus failing in its aim, a failure that yields awareness of the complex contradiction for the subject of the negative, places the antinomies of Kant in a more dynamic context; where they are no longer intrinsic limits, but boundaries that facilitate the start of enquiry and which all enquiry seeks to extend. The contradiction in the 'desire' for knowing

is a challenge for knowledge to be a critique, and recognises the disintegration of the apparent identity between concept and reality. In the course of the lectures given by Adorno it is in Lecture 10 that we find him squaring up to the differences between his own work and that of Benjamin. He calls on his students to read Benjamin's theses on history. In the lecture he focuses on several aspects of Benjamin's research and argues, which is central for the concerns also of this issue of *Footprint*, what kind of analysis is required for an effective materialist history of culture as opposed to a cultural history of materialism. From the theses on history Adorno selects the notion of the absolute contrast Benjamin makes between a universal history (Hegel, Marx, Engels), and his own account of what he takes to be a 'materialist historiography' based on a constructive principle.

The question of the distinction of a materialist history as opposed to a cultural history of materialism, must also be traced in very specific exempla, and some of this requires a re-reading of Benjamin's own reading. Lutz Robbers in his article for this issue gives a guide to how this can proceed in detail and via the encounter of Benjamin with the work of Sigfried Giedion and others.

It would be foolish to suggest that Steiner's demands could ever be met in reading Benjamin, but it is surely not improper to suggest that one can learn to read Benjamin again, with the help of other readers. The articles assembled in *Footprint* 18 encourage us to go on, and learn what it means to read Walter Benjamin, with *innervation* yet without *prosopopeia*.²⁸

Notes

1. Tom Cohen, 'Trolling "Anthropos" – Or, Requiem for a Failed Prosopopeia' in *Twilight of the Anthropocene Idols*, eds. Tom Cohen, Claire Colebrook, J. Hillis Miller (London: Open Humanities Press, 2016), 197.

2. Walter Benjamin, *One Way Street and Other Writings*, trans. E. Jephcott and K. Shorter (London: Verso, 1979), 75; partially cited in Brian Massumi, 'Surfacing (Too Late)' in *Deleuze, Guattari, and the Philosophy of Expression (Involuntary Afterword)*, ed. Brian Massumi (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto, 1997).
3. For this see Walter Benjamin, *Sonnets*, translated and with commentary by Carl Skoggard (New York: Publication Studio Hudson, 2014).
4. For this see *TTR: traduction, terminologie, rédaction*, vol. 10, 2 (1997), and especially Susan Ingram's article "'The Task of the Translator": Walter Benjamin's Essay in English, a *Forschungsbericht*', 207–233.
5. Theodor Herzl, *Altneuland* (Leipzig: Hermann Seemann Nachfolger, 1902).
6. The anecdote was related at the International Walter Benjamin Congress in Amsterdam, July 1997. Steiner's key-note address was entitled 'To speak of Walter Benjamin'.
7. For the correspondence between Adorno and Benjamin see *The Complete Correspondence, 1928–1940*, ed. Henri Lonitz, trans. Nicholas Walker (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001). We have drawn in the main from the exchanges between 1935 and 1938.
8. *Ibid.*, letter from 2 August 1935.
9. 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproducibility' appeared in a French translation by Pierre Klossowski, in 1936 in the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*.
10. See Bernard Stiegler, *What Makes Life Worth Living: On Pharmacology*, trans. Daniel Ross (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013), 16. 'Whereas for Benjamin industrial technics, as the essential phenomenon of reproducibility, opens a new political question – imposing on philosophy a new task, new criteria of judgement, a new critique (a new analytic for the new perceptual possibilities arising with the organological turn constituted by the technologies of the reproducibility of the sensible) – for the thinkers of critical theory, this fact was, on the contrary, apprehended essentially and exclusively as a critical regression.'
11. Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press/ Harvard University Press, 2002).
12. Adorno and Benjamin, *The Complete Correspondence, 1928–1940*, letter from Adorno, 18 March 1936. On the notion of 'distraction' see: Jonathan Crary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001).
13. It is perhaps ironic that some submissions to this issue have been refuted by peer-reviewers on the basis of exactly the same reproach.
14. *Ibid.*, letter from Adorno, 10 November 1938.
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*, letter from Benjamin, Dec 9, 1938.
17. On Benjamin's notion of 'aura' see: Félix Guattari, *The Guattari Reader*, ed. Gary Genosko (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 164. 'The Benjaminian aura [...] arise[s] from this genre of singularizing ritornellization. [...] Without this aura, without this ritornellizing of the sensory world – which is established, moreover, in the deterritorialized prolongation of ethological and archaic ritornellos – the surrounding objects would lose their "air" of familiarity and would collapse into an anguishing and uncanny strangeness.'
18. The whole conception of the *flâneur* in Benjamin can also be traced to Karl Gottlob Schelle's neglected and delightful text *Die Promenade als Kunstwerk* (On the Art of Walking), published in German in Leipzig in 1802.
19. Benjamin, *Arcades Project*, N1a,5.
20. Walter Benjamin, 'Le Paris du Second Empire chez Baudelaire' in *Charles Baudelaire: un poète lyrique à l'apogée du capitalisme*, trans. Jean Lacoste (Lausanne: Editions Payot, [1938] 1979).
21. Louis Auguste Blanqui, *L'Éternité par les astres* (Paris: Librairie Germer Baillière, 1872).
22. This is how Brian Massumi appropriates Benjamin's concept of 'shock': 'Every shift in attention against the background mood [...] may carry the ontogenetic charge of an alert triggering a regeneration of experience and its variation.' Brian Massumi, *Ontopower: War, Powers and the State of Perception* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2015), 185.

23. For emphasis on this see Eric Downing, 'Lucretius at the Camera: Ancient Atomism and Early Photographic Theory in Walter Benjamin's *Berliner Chronik*', *The Germanic Review* 81,1 (Winter 2006), 21–36.
24. James Joyce, *Dubliners* (New York: Penguin Books, 1914), 177.
25. Theodor W. Adorno, *History and Freedom (Lectures 1964–1965)*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006).
26. The term 'correlationism' is coined by Meillassoux as 'the idea according to which we only ever have access to the correlation between thinking and being, and never to either term considered apart from the other.' Quentin Meillassoux, *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency*, trans. Ray Brassier (London: Continuum, 2008), 5. For the most recent debate on the issue we refer you to Armen Avanesian and Suhail Malik, eds., *Genealogies of Speculation: Materialism and Subjectivity Since Structuralism* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016).
27. We would like to acknowledge the efforts by scholars who have approached Benjamin from the architectural point of view: Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989); Beatrice Hanssen, ed., *Walter Benjamin and The Arcades Project* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), Andrew Benjamin and Charles Rice, eds., *Walter Benjamin and the Architecture of Modernity* (Melbourne: re.press, 2009); Brian Elliott, *Benjamin for Architects* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011); Gevork Hartoonian, ed., *Walter Benjamin and Architecture* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010); Nadir Lahiji, ed., *The Missed Encounter of radical Philosophy with Architecture* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), to name but a few.
28. *Prosopopeia* (Greek: προσωποποιία) stands for the personification (of the inanimate), i.e. the hegemony of face or anthropomorphism in general – with the assumed correlation of the figurative and the affective. The term derives from the Greek roots *prósopon* face, and *poiéin* to make.

Biographies

After completing studies in Philosophy and later Sociology and Near Eastern Languages, Pontifical University Maynooth, University College Dublin, Patrick Healy has been engaged in writing, research and teaching, mainly in the area of aesthetics and contemporary art. His recent publications include works on aesthetics, the philosophy of science and artists' biographies, including a broad range of other activities associated with his work as Professor of Interdisciplinary research for the Free International University, Amsterdam, appointed 1997. He works as a Senior Researcher and tutor in the Architecture Theory Section at the Faculty of Architecture, Delft University of Technology, and provides lecture series in aesthetics and the philosophy of science.

Andrej Radman has been teaching design and theory courses at Delft University of Technology, Faculty of Architecture since 2004. A graduate of the Zagreb School of Architecture in Croatia, he is a licensed architect and recipient of the Croatian Architects Association Annual Award for Housing Architecture in 2002. Radman received his Master's and Doctoral Degrees from TU Delft and joined the Architecture Theory Section as Assistant Professor in 2008. He is a member of the National Committee on Deleuze Scholarship.