

The Faculty of Architecture and Town Planning, Technion, I.I.T.

Gender Politics in Israeli Architecture and Landscape Architecture:

Figuration of Gendered Subject and Social Positions

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Womenized Triangulations:

Gendered Subject as Figured through Eldar Sharon's Architecture

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The suggested paper contains two steps. The first follows critically Beatriz Colomina's approach that analyzes traces of the gaze as a mechanism that produces the subject imprinted in Adolf Loos's and Le Corbusier's architecture (Colomina, 1992). This approach is used to illuminate the gendered mechanism as figured in Eldar Sharon's architecture and in the ways his character Sezar specializes Tel Aviv, as described in Yaakov Shabtai's canonical book "Zichron Devarim" (Shabtai, 1977).

Eldar Sharon (1933-1994) was an Israeli-born architect who was part of an avant-garde group striving to create an alternative to the modernist ethos, working with Brutalism and Structuralism as part of post-Second World War architecture. From 1965, he worked with his father, Arie Sharon, and maintained the firm after his father's death. His architecture was also an attempt to contradict the imposition of Zionist modernist architects, most of them immigrants who were educated and influenced by Modern Movement ideas, of which his father was perceived as the main representative (Neuman, 2018). Eldar's generation was expected to fulfill the configuration of a new Jew who was native to and rooted in the ancient/new Land. This designation was based on Jewish longing for the Land. It implemented masculine consciousness of a yearning to find ecstatic redemption and eternal rest in the Land in which the feminine figure was immersed (Idel, 2010).

In "Zichron Devarim," most of the women related to Eldar's life (some of whom were architects), were described as existing under oppression, controlled by and subject to the masculine gaze. The book describes, on the one hand, masculine solidarity, and on

the other, Eldar's consistent repeated triangular movement between spaces and homes that were occupied by multi-faced women such as an ex-wife, wife, mother and lovers. These women were described through a cultural stereotype of female-attributed features such as purity and recklessness. The architecture credited to Eldar was described as a cluster of fixed modular replicating cells (Efrat, 2004) and as exceptionally controlled and violently triangulated geometry, which is both intriguing and distasteful. (Robin, 1965). The main claim of this paper is that Eldar's architecture was entrapped by the enchantment and acquisition of feminine characteristics that overlapped with his morphological obsession. The architecture credited to Eldar had a sweeping effect on Israeli construction. The gender aspect of his architecture indicated the unsettling identity and values underlying post-1967 Israel. In general, his architecture expressed a constant state of uncertain variable growth, which was reflected in an expanding territorialization process (Efrat, 2004).

Through the second step, the paper discusses the points of view of the women who were involved in Eldar's architecture, their relatively unknown architecture and their everyday domestic spaces. This approach suggests an additional layer of architecture reading to the seminal approach suggested by Colomina (1992). By bringing to the fore women's marginalized architecture and micro-history, which characterize the "third wave" of feminism in architecture, the paper also demonstrates, through the current "fourth wave", how such a broader understanding of architecture production may subvert the historiography of a canonical chapter in Israeli architecture.