

its power and effects'. The discussion that follows outlines the interior's connection with 'the social', and its function as a mechanism of psychoanalysis.

The idea of doubleness is further developed in a series of case studies of the processes through which the interior is imagined, consumed and recognized. In chapter three, Rice considers the relationship between plan and comfort in two key contemporary works on domestic planning: Robert Kerr's *The Gentleman's House* (1864), and J.J. Stevenson's *House Architecture* (1880). How the English domestic interior travelled, through images and as a set of material artefacts, is explored in the following chapter through an analysis of the German architect Hermann Muthesius' *Style Condition and Building Art* (1901/03). This is juxtaposed with the domestic interiors of the wealthy Scots Australian pastoralist Robert Barr Smith and his wife Joanna, who imported interiors from the London firm Morris & Co. for their houses in Adelaide, South Australia, demonstrating the fractured geography of the modern domestic interior. The final chapter looks at how the relationship between the interior as a space and the interior as an image was articulated in the works of Adolf Loos and Le Corbusier. The conclusion assesses the distinction between the private home and the outside world, through a discussion of contemporary analyses of electronic media and the boundaries of the home. Through these case studies Rice offers a series of new conceptual insights into the growth of nineteenth-century domesticity and its transition to modernity.

The book unpacks the nuances of a series of carefully chosen images and texts, and is clearly not intended as a broad empirical survey in the historical tradition. Indeed, Rice seeks to distance his narrative from previous analyses that have perpetuated what he views as 'mythic' history. However, the analysis is occasionally compromised by this range of source materials. For example, Rice argues that the English discourse of domestic planning was controlled by male architects and addressed to male clients, in contrast to America where discussions of domestic planning took place in the context of domestic advice literature. Undoubtedly, the relationship between gender and planning was geographically diverse, but Rice does not mention the many English female domestic advice writers, such as Jane Ellen Panton and Mrs Loftie, who also criticized plans by male architects. As an historian of the nineteenth century, this reviewer would also have liked to see a further development of the intriguing proposition that the interior as a concept emerged during the early years of this period, through a sustained analysis of source material from this time. However, my criticisms of this book stem from my perspective as an historian and perhaps demonstrate the limits of interdisciplinarity in this new field. Overall, this is a stimulating and provocative book that will prompt both academics and students to reflect further on the historical meaning of the domestic interior.

**Jane Hamlett**

University of Manchester

**Andrew Higgott**, *Mediating Modernism: Architectural Cultures in Britain*. London and New York: Routledge, 2007. 216pp. Illustrations. £75.00 hbk, £29.99 pbk.

doi:10.1017/S0963926807005378

This is a book about architecture and ideas, and about the role of media such as journals and photographs in taking over the discourse rather than just serving it.

Higgott points out that built work often appears long after the generative ideas, so that the fabric is no longer the primary thing, citing the Barbican, National Theatre and Dome. The first chapter touches on Barthes and Foucault before getting down to a description of how Howard Robertson and F.R. Yerbury of the Architectural Association captured and disseminated continental Modernism in the 1920s. A powerful chapter follows on the role of the *Architectural Review* in the 1930s under Richards, showing how it presented Modernism as 'an ideal brought into being'. Chapter three on the Abercrombie plan is perhaps the most relevant for urban historians, but it is negatively titled 'The forgetting of art' presented as an early symptom of the modernist crisis. This is the tilt point of the book, for the next chapter, 'The shift to the specific', concerns the struggle to avoid the depredations of modernism and to reconnect with everyday life. The Smithsons are the heroes, made central to Brutalism, to the Independent Group, and even to Team Ten, their paucity of built work interpreted as a noble retreat into the world of ideas. Next the *Architectural Review* reappears as a shaper of ideas with Richards and Banham at the helm. Chapter five lurches further from bricks and mortar with a fulsome tribute to Archigram, both magazine and group. This is followed by a fascinating glimpse of *Architectural Design* in its heyday of the 1960s, promoting flexible and technological 'solutions', 'Cosmorama', every kind of non-architecture.

With chapter six the book achieves its climax, documenting Alvin Boyarsky's Architectural Association school of 1971 to 1990, the fertile period that produced Rem Koolhaas, Zaha Hadid and Daniel Libeskind among others. This general summary is the first I have seen and makes good sense, commendably clear even when the material is difficult. By now architecture has turned its back on dreary practice to reinvent itself. Its findings may later be reapplied in the 'real world' – though not necessarily, for the discourse has a legitimate existence of its own. Higgott admits to some dross and blind alleys, yet he canonizes Boyarsky and proclaims effects of world proportion. Having met the Architectural Association with Yerbury, then as teaching base of the Smithsons and of Archigram, and finally as the centre of the architectural world with Boyarsky, the reader might ponder the school's focal role: but look at the biography of the author. Though he now teaches architecture at East London University, Higgott's university subject was English, and he became immersed in architecture as the Architectural Association's slide librarian during the Boyarsky years. This is valuable for the inside view, yet it also makes him partisan.

Higgott writes in a straightforward and economical style, and the chapters can be read independently, as each sets up a distinct argument. It is a positive sign that one often wants more, as if each chapter might grow into a book. The general theme of mediation is tussled with in many ways but remains too large for resolution, conflating photographed buildings, journals, student proposals and even Abercrombie's plan. A number of questions remain: who are the producers and who are the consumers? How many copies? What is or was the political agenda?

**Peter Blundell Jones**

University of Sheffield