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## Heterotopias of High-Tech Architectural Heritage: three conceptual scaffolding

This position paper argues that the disciplinary project of High-Tech Architecture, so as to its earlier postmodernist and modernist project, has always been made by people via a wide range of actors and networks, things and traces, utopias and heterotopias. This fundamentally conditions the emerging disciplinary heritage of High-Tech Architecture, which is approached via the following three conceptual scaffolding:

### 1) High-Tech Architecture as Heterotopias: the Heritage Process:

The first conceptual scaffolding is about those spaces in-between drawings and demolitions, images and imaginations, buildings and bricolages of the High-Tech Architecture, which together serves as the other spaces, as heterotopias compared to the physical High-Tech Architecture. A powerful example is the newly demolished and subsequently digitalized Nakagin Capsule Tower (Fig. 1), designed by Kisho Kurokawa of the Metabolist Group in Japan from the 1960s to 1970s. Since High-Tech Architecture is constantly evolving and not stabilized in nature, it should be expanded as a heritage process which is constantly in the making and in its own right.

### 2) High-Tech Architecture In and Out: the Complex Transition:

The second conceptual scaffolding is that the transition to and out of the High-Tech was no sudden influx but had rather a complex and gradual evolution. This complex transition in and out needs further contextualisation and conceptualisation, such as the U.K pavilion at Shanghai World Expo 2010 – the Seed Cathedral (Fig. 2) designed by Heatherwick Studio, which not only didn't fall into the Euro-centric scoping of High-Tech architecture period, but expressing an equally strong and even boarder heritage on High-Tech Architecture in a developing context.

### 3) High-Tech Architecture beyond Europe: the Other Tradition:

The third conceptual scaffolding is about the other tradition and its multiplicity of High-Tech heritage. It should be enriched and further nurtured through re-reading multiple cultural traditions and trajectories' meeting, learning, assimilating and transforming each social and cultural production beyond a merely architectural arena and a singular authorship, as well as beyond Western hegemony and patronising orientalism.

In general, these three conceptual scaffolding of High-Tech architectural heritage suggests that all its layered past is constituted in the present, socially, culturally, philosophically beyond physically merely, and will be connected to inform its future heritage. It values heritage process, complex transition and the other tradition. It celebrates coexistence, juxtapositions, bricolages – all leading into multiple temporalities and plurality of High-Tech Architecture as heritage, from utopias to heterotopias, and across the East and West.

Fig. 1: Nakagin Capsule Tower, a Metabolist Group milestone work preserved digitally before its full demolition in 2022, via 3D scanning from its immediate urban surroundings to high-tension bolts.

Fig. 2: The Seed Cathedral, the UK pavilion at 2010 Expo, is enclosed by 60000 acrylic rod hairs, each 7.5m and casted in botanical collections with the whole building hosting 250,000 seeds.

Fig. 1 credit: Gluon

Fig. 2 credit: Xiang Ren

Dr Xiang Ren is an architect and academic. He teaches and researches architectural history, theory and design at the University of Sheffield School of Architecture, where he directs the architectural humanities research group and the interdisciplinary research unit East-West Studies in Architecture and Landscape. His research were shortlisted twice in the RIBA President's Research Medal in 2014 and 2016, and recently appeared in the AA Files (on Dong minority heritage), Architectural

Research Quarterly (on mnemonics, ritual and social production), Journal of Architecture (on OPEN architects), Architecture and Culture (on absent architect, communal form and collective practice), The Architects' Journal (on Evans Vettori Architects), Journal of Sri Lanka Institute of Architects (on Tanghua Architects) and The China Journal (on China's second generation architects). Ren's recent research projects are supported by Arcadia (on 3D scanning China's pre-modern architectural heritage), Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (on Asian cultural mobilities and heritage), British Academy (on architectural-anthropology of home-coming) and the French Embassy in the UK (on minority heritage in place and displacement).