THE ABJECT HETEROTOPIA: *LE CITTÀ INVISIBILI* AND 'JUNKSPACE'

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ABSTRACT

This article explores and compares the spaces of abjection in Italo Calvino's *Le città invisibili* and the 'Junkspace' of contemporary cities, as theorized by the architect Rem Koolhaas. Depicted as being simultaneously devastating and scatological as well as exhilarating and aesthetic, abject space is revealed to be paradoxical and disturbing, a formlessness that puts place and identity into suspense. Here, Foucault's notion of heterotopia serves as a perspective from which the nature of this abject space can be better understood. The characteristics of heterotopia – such as heterogeneity, disorientation, fragmentation – are reflected in both the fictional space of *Le città invisibili* and the concretely lived space of Koolhaasian architecture. But in addition, the abject heterotopias in Calvino and Koolhaas rethink and challenge the Foucauldian heterotopia, for they break down Foucault's oppositions between heterotopia and utopia, offering greater critical potentiality and even utopian implications.

Keywords: abject; heterotopia; Italo Calvino; *Le città invisibili*; Junkspace; Rem Koolhaas; Michel Foucault; comparative literature

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Au lieu de s'interroger sur son 'être', [l'abject] s'interroge sur sa place: '*Où* suis-je?' plutôt que '*Qui* suis-je?' (Julia Kristeva)[1]

THE ABJECT HAS the forceful power to disturb, which, as Kristeva points out, privileges the question of space as its site of operation. This dimension of the abject is affirmed by the obsessively recurrent image of junk in Italo Calvino's *Le città invisibili* (1972)[2] and Rem Koolhaas's article about architecture, 'Junkspace'.[3] The space of abjection, on the one hand, can be devastating, assuming the form of a cataclysm of 'crateri di spazzatura' that threatens to submerge the city of Leonia (*CI*, p. 114); on the other hand, it can be of exhilarating beauty, unfurling a 'flamboyant' skein of shiny surfaces with a 'texture of […] euphoria' (J, pp. 177, 179). This space which Calvino and Koolhaas characterize is, therefore, a puzzling paradox which demands our attention. How are we to understand this preoccupation shared by Calvino and Koolhaas with depicting space as abject, and what is the nature of such a space? This is the central enquiry of this article.

When enquiring into this key issue, Michel Foucault's concept of heterotopia proves to be helpful as a means of exegesis. This is because heterotopia poses the

same anxious question of space that the abject space poses: '*Où* suis-je?' The uncertainty of space and orientation is due to the similar power of heterotopia to effect disturbance: it has 'la curieuse propriété d'être en rapport avec tous les autres emplacements mais sur un mode tel qu'[elle] suspend, neutralise ou inverse, l'ensemble des rapports qui se trouvent […] désignés.'[4] Again, like the abject space, heterotopia functions in paradoxical ways. Building upon these similarities which imply connections between the space of abjection and heterotopia, my argument is that the former is a form of the latter. More specifically, I begin by examining how the abject space is articulated in *Le città invisibili* and 'Junkspace', then consider it in the light of the Foucauldian heterotopia, and finally explore how Calvino's and Koolhaas's abject heterotopias challenge and develop Foucault's understanding. Drawing on these analyses, I propose a way of understanding the abject heterotopia as a space that has critical potentiality and even utopian implications, although precisely what these new possibilities are will remain an ethical question.

Articulations of the abject space in 'Le città invisibili' and 'Junkspace'

… le geste confondant du marquis de Sade enfermé avec les fous, qui se faisait porter les plus belles roses pour en effeuiller les pétales sur le purin d'une fosse … (Georges Bataille)[5]

In his essay 'Le Langage des fleurs', Bataille introduces a poetically dumbfounding image of Sade scattering rose petals into a latrine; which provides, in fact, a helpful point of departure for understanding the abject space in *Le città invisibili* and 'Junkspace'.[6] Due to the presence of excrement, bizarrely coloured and fragranced roses, coexisting at a site of deviant identity, the space in which Sade performs his startling gesture is definitely abject,[7] and tells us two significant things: first, that the production of the space of abjection depends not so much upon a scatological presence as upon the uncanny coexistence of incongruous things. More often than not, such a space is where 'l'abject est bordé de sublime'.[8] Second, precisely because of this coterminous existence, in the abject space meanings are disturbingly contaminated, boundaries are uncontrollably overflown. Calvino's and Koolhaas's abject spaces will be examined from these two perspectives.

The discrepant coexistence of objects features prominently in *Le città invisibili*, drowning the reader in a confusing, catalogic 'mare dell'oggettività'.[9] The cities that Marco Polo describes are, on the one hand, increasingly flooded by constantly proliferating refuse; on the other hand, they are simultaneously glittering with pristine constructions and new objects. For example, the underground city of Bersabea is littered with 'pattumiere rovesciate, da cui franano croste di formaggio, carte unte, resche' and so forth, until it is reduced to a splattering cesspool; whereas its celestial alter ego is 'una città-gioiello', full of 'metalli nobili e pietre rare' (*CI*, p. 110). The space in which this muddy tangle of objects exists becomes abject not simply because of the refuse, but more

importantly because of the extremely uncomfortable, even perverse coexistence of contradictory symbolic values. This spatial contiguity, in fact, conflates these values through a process of cross-contamination. For instance, being aware of 'i granchi [che] mordevano gli occhi delle suicide' in the azure waters (*CI*, p. 47), how could the traveller not detect a nauseating stench of decaying flesh from the beautiful odalisques bathing in the lagoons? Like 'una macchia [d'olio] che [si] dilaga senza forma' (*CI*, p. 98), the abject space in *Le città invisibili* is a viscous fluid, the movement of which is unpredictable.

When examined more closely, this sprawling space is found to have the nature of a catalogue, because it encompasses recurrent lists enumerating an encyclopaedic range of diverse objects: 'contenitori, materiali d'imballaggio, ma anche scaldabagni, enciclopedie, pianoforti, servizi di porcellana' (*CI*, p. 113). Nevertheless, unlike the paradigmatic catalogue that creates spatial order through scientific methods of classification, the catalogue in *Le città invisibili* shows the rationalistic desire to superimpose order on reality but actually finds its taxonomic principles obscured by the chaotic complexity of existence. By what logical standard can encyclopaedias, chinaware and wrappings be classified together, except that they are all objects of abjection (they are junked by the inhabitants of Leonia)? The catalogue produced by the abject is therefore jumbled and defies order. This resistance to controlled cognitive designs reveals the fantastic dimension of the abject space in *Le città invisibili*, since the texture of imagination in flight is never smooth or logical, but jerky and erratic. This is manifested as the abject space flows from city to city, and we have 'sfingi, grifi, chimere' together with 'storpi, nani, gobbi' and so on (*CI*, p. 159, 144) – until the reader realizes that Calvino's abject space is nowhere to be found in concrete, lived experiences. It is essentially a fictional textual space created by the mind, the power of which is highlighted in its ability to envision such striking juxtapositions of images which exceed the limits of physical space.

In contrast to Calvino, Koolhaas offers a very different version of the abject space. Instead of constructing a mental space, he derives Junkspace from an exaggerated description of our contemporary urban space.[10] Koolhaas has, however, managed to show that this intensely material and locatable space is simultaneously aesthetic, surreal and unthinkable. In more detail, Junkspace is, firstly, a melting pot of incompatible spaces: its 'iconography is 13 percent Roman, 8 percent Bauhaus and 7 percent Disney' (J, p. 176); it can include 'a rare surviving Siberian tiger in a forest of slot machines, near Armani', with railway stations '[hovering] like iron butterflies' in the background (J, pp. 186–87). Thus, the uncanny coexistence which Bataille's image of Sade points to is fully exploited in Junkspace. As Koolhaas argues, space becomes abject not because its constituent elements are all junk or unpleasant, but because their ensemble forms an explosive plurality which finally collapses all difference into *in*difference: 'Although [Junkspace's] individual parts are the outcome of brilliant inventions, […] their sum spells the end of Enlightenment' (J, p. 175). This sum total is thus not just a blurring, but actually a meltdown of formerly

distinct meanings: 'life/style, reality/TV', 'museum/store, […] health/care, waiting/lounge' (J, p. 183). For this reason, the abjectness of Junkspace resides precisely in the latter's capacity to render things meaningless, abject.

Nevertheless, despite its all-devouring, totalizing character, Junkspace arguably offers an anarchic freedom of fertile imagination. Because the abject breaks down meaning, Junkspace decentralizes power. In such a space, architecture can no longer dictate the human actions occurring in the geography it creates. For example, the office can become the 'urban home' and the theme park may provide shelter for the homeless (J, p. 186). The very unpredictability of movement becomes an opportunity for free circulation. Consequently, urban planning may be liberated to a certain extent from constricting concerns with architectural coherence or local history, since the spatial design could always be subverted by the actual use the public make of it. This is also why Koolhaas's abject space can marry the concrete banality of brutalist apartment blocks with the oneiric fascination of fluorescent gallery façades. In its amazing flexibility of reconciling contradictions, Junkspace shows itself capable of infiltrating the alienating life of the metropolis with ecstatic experiences of fantasy. This is, however, not a 'given'. The 're-entry [of the abject] to a system of value' is always ambivalent,[11] since this system may or may not be that of pure commodity value, i.e. capitalism. In other words, like the messy ooze of abject space in *Le città invisibili*, the workings of Junkspace cannot possibly be pinned down.

The two versions of the abject space in *Le città invisibili* and 'Junkspace' discussed above show that despite the differences of being imaginary/real, internal/external, textual/physical, they share the same characteristics of being protean in form, heterogeneous in composition, and inconsistent in function. Interestingly, these are also the essential qualities of Foucault's heterotopia as expounded in his essay 'Des espaces autres'. In what follows, I will reflect on the question of how heterotopia shares these features with the abject space, and argue that this sharing is more than a mere coincidence. In fact, it shows a fundamental relationship between these two conceptualizations of space.

From abject space to heterotopia

C'est un espace léger, éthéré, transparent, ou bien c'est un espace obscur, rocailleux, encombré: c'est un espace d'en haut, c'est un espace des cimes, ou c'est au contraire un espace d'en bas, un espace de la boue, c'est un espace qui peut être courant comme l'eau vive, c'est un espace qui peut être fixé, figé comme la pierre ou comme le cristal. (Foucault)[12]

Simply put, heterotopia is a space in which 'tous les autres emplacements réels que l'on peut trouver à l'intérieur de la culture sont à la fois représentés, contestés et inversés,' in such a way that heterotopia itself is 'hors de tous les lieux'.[13] Furthermore, Foucault's lyrical description of Gaston Bachelard's poetic space quoted above can equally characterize heterotopia.[14] Like the abject space in Calvino and Koolhaas, space here is portrayed as polymorphic: it is sometimes

airy, sometimes pebbly; a blend of spatialities, it embraces mountain peaks and marshes; it operates in myriad ways, flowing around randomly or crystallizing into enduring structures. To support these three characterizations with concrete examples, it is first necessary to consider Foucault's mapping-out of heterotopic geography, i.e. 'heterotopology'.

To begin with, heterotopia necessarily has a fluid form because it is structurally pluralistic, as the following heterotopologic principle shows: 'il n'y a certainement pas une seule culture au monde qui ne constitue des hétérotopies. […] [O]n ne trouverait pas une seule forme d'hétérotopie qui soit absolument universelle.'[15] Accordingly, heterotopia can take the form of a secluded place such as a psychiatric hospital or a sacred site for ritualistic purposes; or, it can be an open space like a hotel or a train, which connects to all other spaces but is itself transient, never serving as the geographical destination. Secondly, heterotopia certainly means heterogeneous spatialities: 'L'hétérotopie a le pouvoir de juxtaposer en un seul lieu réel plusieurs espaces […] qui sont en eux-mêmes incompatibles.'[16] The pristine café of the Tate Modern in London, for instance, which is itself becoming one of the main attractions of the museum, conflates the spaces of aesthetic contemplation, material consumption and sightseeing. So it is, in this sense, a heterotopia. The conflicting coexistence of different spaces, therefore, contests the symbolic value of each individual space: the museum visitor may begin to wonder whether aesthetic experience is not also a marketable product, or whether locals are constantly becoming tourists due to the constantly increasing new and spectacular constructions in the metropolis.[17] Thirdly, there is no *one* function of heterotopia, nor are its functions unchanging: 'au cours de l'histoire, une société peut faire fonctionner d'une façon très différente une hétérotopie qui existe et qui n'a pas cessé d'exister.'[18] In certain cases, a heterotopia that begins by being oppressive may end up being emancipatory: for example, imperial colonies, heterotopias where cultures overlap and clash, finally became the crucial sites where local identity and political freedom were fought for.[19] Thus, these three principles outline, though by no means in an exhaustive manner, the conceptual territories of heterotopia.

Now, returning to the abject space in *Le città invisibili* and 'Junkspace', which has already been shown as 'jamais *un*, ni *homogène*, ni *totalisable*, mais […] pliable', 'dont les confins [sont] fluides',[20] we find that if 'heterotopia' is replaced by 'abject space' in the three heterotopologic principles above, the analyses still stand. This reveals the fundamental relationship between them: the abject space is a form of heterotopia; indeed, an abject heterotopia. That heterotopic space should be present in Calvino and Koolhaas is not surprising, since both of them feel compelled to engage with the pressing question of space in our epoch when human experiences of the living environment are increasingly fragmented, hybrid and random. The abject heterotopia logically becomes the translation, albeit a distorted one, of the desires, fears and fantasies of contemporary humanity.

The fact that Calvino and Koolhaas articulate two variants of the abject space, however, does not contradict the argument that they are both depicting an abject

heterotopia. They actually offer two versions of abject heterotopia: the fictional, textual, and the real, empirical. Both these types of heterotopia appear in Foucault's writings on heterotopic spaces, which can be understood interactively with *Le città invisibili* and *Junkspace*. Starting with Calvino's case, heterotopia as a fictional space appears in Borges's famous citation of a Chinese encyclopaedia which is equally famously cited by Foucault at the beginning of his *Les Mots et les choses*: 'Les animaux se divisent en: a) appartenant à l'Empereur, b) embaumés, c) apprivoisés, […] i) qui s'agitent comme des fous […], n) qui de loin semblent des mouches.'[21] Foucault comments that this fantastic catalogue reveals a non-existent space, because there is no possible 'lieu commun' for these creatures in the real world.[22] This precisely corresponds to the catalogic abject space in *Le città invisibili* already mentioned, where things are hotch-potched together according to incomprehensible classificatory principles. Subsequently, this imaginary space is termed 'heterotopia' by Foucault because 'les hétérotopies inquiètent, sans doute parce qu'elles minent secrètement le langage'.[23] So this fictional heterotopia is primarily linguistic and textual, i.e. self-referential, which confirms the nature of abject space in *Le città invisibili* as a literary text. The heterotopic text of fiction nevertheless has an impact on reality. Its undermining effect shows the impossibility of totally cognizing the gnarled complexity of the world, and exposes the illusory character of what we normally take for real: language, signs, and the things they refer to. As Calvino has Marco Polo say: 'La menzogna non è nel discorso, è nelle cose' (*CI*, p. 62).

Turning to Koolhaas, the physically locatable heterotopia which *Junkspace* embodies is clearly indicated in Foucault's 'Des espaces autres'. It is one of 'des lieux effectifs […] qui sont dessinés dans l'institution même de la société'.[24] Nonetheless, it is different from other real spaces due to its capacity to create relationships between spaces while simultaneously subverting them. Foucault terms this the 'lieu sans lieu'.[25] The uncertainty of orientation in *Junkspace* reflects exactly this paradox. Intersecting with different spaces and temporalities, without centre or periphery, *Junkspace* 'entangles you in a thicket of cuteness, […] turns you back when you're lost' (*J*, p. 181). It is at once a profuse haemorrhage and a tabula rasa of meanings. If, for Foucault, the ship is the floating sign of the heterotopia par excellence, then, for Koolhaas, it would be the airport. Despite the fact that such a place can be experienced in the flesh, this experience will necessarily remain fragmentary, fleeting and amnesiacally unreal.

In sum, the abject space in Calvino and Koolhaas can be understood as a heterotopia, two variants of which are the literary and the lived. Foucault has, therefore, provided a useful means of interpretation. What can be further observed of heterotopia is, however, that Foucault's heterotopia is mainly descriptive of existent social and anthropological spaces; he remains unclear as to how heterotopia can be constructed and employed, or whether its construction and use can constitute a critical task. In response to this problem, I would like to argue in the next section that the abject heterotopia provides more satisfactory answers because it challenges and develops the Foucauldian heterotopia in several ways.

Rethinking Foucault's heterotopia through the abject

The abject heterotopia questions the dichotomies that Foucault sets up to distinguish heterotopia from all other spaces: namely, that the textual heterotopia can only be self-referential, existing beyond an unbridgeable chasm that separates it from the real, empirical world; that the physically locatable heterotopia is still different from other locatable spaces because of its paradoxical heterogeneity, and is consequently disorientating instead of identificatory; and that, contrary to utopia, which is considered fixed and unserviceable to critical interest,[26] heterotopia is flexible and effective. In the abject heterotopia of *Le città invisibili*, however, these claims are contested. Firstly, Calvino's recurrent treatment of the theme of 'spazzatura' cannot be placed simplistically under the umbrella term of 'literary fantasy'. No doubt it is of a very literary nature, but Calvino is also attempting to use it as a means to understand our lived space. A later essay, 'La Poubelle agréée',[27] the writing of which extended over two years, shows that this preoccupation with the abject is not just a whim for Calvino. In fact, Calvino sees the abject as a means of constituting identity. This is confirmed in the chapter on Leonia in *Le città invisibili*, where the city's identity is 'renewed' every day because of the inhabitants' incessant, almost 'ritualistic' act of throwing away things (*CI*, p. 113). This idea is picked up again in 'La Poubelle agréée': 'Il buttar via è la prima condizione indispensabile per essere.'[28] As in *Le città invisibili*, the street cleaners are again described as being 'come angeli'.[29] Abjection is seen in the positive light of a necessary purificatory act which creates space for identity instead of disorientation and self-dissolution. Finally, Calvino links abjection to the act of writing, remarking that, once produced, the text is metaphorically 'abjected' from his mind and materializes in sheets of paper: 'Scrivere è dispossessarsi non meno che il buttar via, è allontanare da me un mucchio di fogli.'[30] This is clearly a cross-over from mental to empirical space. The gap between these spaces can actually be traversed and re-traversed by the act of abjection and no absolute schism exists: 'non si può sapere se [la scrittura] diventerà alimento d'una lettura altrui, d'un metabolismo mentale.'[31] The potentiality for the constitution of identity, the recycling of ideas, and spatial displacement from one mind to another break down Foucault's distinguishing principles of heterotopia and reveal Calvino's abject heterotopia to be more diffuse in space, more complex in composition, and self-critically aware.

As regards the abject heterotopia in Koolhaas, what can be said first of all is that Junkspace liquidates Foucault's idealizing separation of heterotopia from utopia and all other places. Instead of being the marginal 'absolument autre',[32] the heterotopic Junkspace is the confusion of the central and the marginal, the revolutionary and the complicit, the self and other. Although situated in the middle of nowhere, Junkspace is not radically different from, but is completely incorporated in, and incorporative of, everything else. Yet despite its integration and non-neutrality, Junkspace is not devoid of utopian instances. For example, if museums are increasingly becoming shops, why not make shops more like museums?[33] This explains why Koolhaas builds the New York Prada store in such an intensely aesthetic form that it ends up attracting more attention as

an architectural monument than as a shop. This can, of course, still be interpreted as a cynical capitalist exploitation of aesthetics, but it is not as one-sided as this. By using the very commodifying language of the capitalist system and appropriating it to the language of architecture and aesthetics, Koolhaas produces a more powerful and interesting critique of capitalism because it constitutes an internal deconstruction produced by the system itself.[34] This shows Junkspace in its most indeterminable state: it simply streams from one space to another, from one language to another, from heterotopia to utopia and vice versa.

Following the movement of Koolhaas's heterotopia, we realize that Foucault's dismissal of utopia as unreal, uniform and uninteresting is simplistic and does not do justice to the complex relationship between heterotopia and utopia. If heterotopia can subvert the spaces it relates to, why can it not subvert utopia as well? Moreover, rather than banishing utopia to a remote, impossible sphere, heterotopia could try to plant it in the here and now. This is what Koolhaas purports to do in Junkspace. His aim is not, as the arch-modernist Le Corbusier wanted and failed to do, to bulldoze the vicious knots of slums together with the hierarchical urban structures of Paris to create a utopian 'Ville Radieuse' *ex nihilo*, but to try to make the best of the existing situation, to create small perversions in a totalizing space that will make small but noticeable differences. In fact, any project based upon an understanding of utopia as universalizing, of transformation as total, or of resistance as uncompromising has proved to be impossible.[35] The abject heterotopia à la Koolhaas offers instead self-questioning rather than radically critical spaces, and prioritizes specific instances over the grand total, thus creating, even if only by chance, possibilities for people to find meaning in something, or make an individual choice. It is by means of these possibilities, precariously ambivalent though they are, that utopia – a necessarily fragmented one – can resurface. In this sense, the abject heterotopia is arguably 'l'utopie effectivement réalisée';[36] and it is not the Utopia but utopias, 'many different and divergent communities in which people lead different kinds of lives under different institutions'.[37]

The abject heterotopia in *Le città invisibili* and 'Junkspace' thus resolves various problems of facile oppositions and, seen as an expansion of Foucault's heterotopia, is even more heterotopic. In addition, both Calvino and Koolhaas propose a certain critical necessity in the attempt to construct the abject heterotopia, and in the ethics of its use. In view of its construction and use, politically critical and subversive prospects can be glimpsed, but they are as numerous as they are uncertain. I will make some concluding remarks on these heterotopic potentialities.

Conclusion: heterotopic potentialities

[C]ercare a saper riconoscere chi e cosa, in mezzo all'inferno, non è inferno, e farlo durare, e dargli spazio. (*CI*, p. 174)

I would like to start my conclusion with Marco Polo's final remark: it reveals an existence in hell that is not hell, the recognition and survival of which depend

on our ethical choice. The significant question which Calvino poses – how to recognize this existence and give it space to survive – is the very question that may be asked about the critical potentialities of the abject heterotopia. The problem with the latter is that, as soon as a politically critical or subversive project is in sight, its erratic powers to disturb or reinforce existing social structures and its constant metamorphosis into ambiguous forms seem to render the project chimerical. There are, however, implications in *Le città invisibili* and 'Junkspace' which can be teased out in the attempt to envisage something that is more than a fleeting mirage. We may recall that Calvino once remarked that political engagement can emerge from an unexpected space or from an unintentional act.[38] This is metaphorically expressed in *Le città invisibili*, when Marco Polo describes the confining walls of the city of Marozia: 'Succede pure che, […] quando meno t'aspetti vedi aprirsi uno spiraglio e apparire una città diversa, che dopo un istante è già sparita;' but at that fleeting moment, 'la città si trasfigura, diventa cristallina' (*CI*, p. 155). This crack through which hope gleams is an interstitial space, in which the rules of 'hell' are momentarily suspended. Such an interstice can result from the operation of the abject heterotopia, because the abject is like the Bataillean 'matière basse', '[qui] refuse de se laisser réduire aux grandes machines ontologiques résultant [des aspirations idéales humaines]';[39] it does not have high aspirations to revolutionize the world, but falls low and seeps through the imperceptible crevices of social structures until, suddenly, a partial subversion of these structures takes place. These interstices produced by the abject heterotopia do not constitute an alternative – external – space of resistance to the capitalist 'Empire', but are situated within it, as Koolhaas asserts in Junkspace (J, p. 185). Yet precisely because of their half-hearted 'weak' form, these spaces are less easily grasped and appropriated by totality. Seen in this light, their weakness may be turned to their advantage. Despite the fact that more often than not they are unintentional by-products of capitalism, given the favourable circumstances they can be intentionally used for some kind of critique, some small liberties, some incomplete subversion. These may be the open-ended, diffuse forms of utopian potentialities that the abject heterotopia suggests. Nevertheless, exactly how these implied potentialities can become more than mere implications will depend on the ethical choices of each individual: maybe such heterotopic spaces are too hard to find; or, maybe, we are not looking hard enough.

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NOTES

[1] Julia Kristeva, *Pouvoirs de l'horreur: essai sur l'abjection* (Paris: Seuil, 1980), p. 15.

[2] Italo Calvino, *Le città invisibili* (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1993). References to this edition are given in the text as *CI* followed by the page number.

[3] Rem Koolhaas, 'Junkspace', *October*, 100 (2002), 175–90. Further references will be given in the text as J followed by the page number.

[4] Michel Foucault, 'Des espaces autres' (1967), in *Dits et écrits 1954–1988: Tome 4* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), pp. 752–62 (p. 755).

[5] Georges Bataille, *Documents* (Paris: Gallimard, 1968), p. 53.

[6] This does not mean that Bataille understands the abject in the same way as Calvino and Koolhaas. Bataille's abject is like 'la part maudite', in other words the inappropriable excess, and is different from Calvino's and Koolhaas's abject, which is incorporated in capitalism and does not aspire to an outside.

[7] For excrement as the psychoanalytical abject, see Kristeva, *Pouvoirs de l'horreur*; for deviant identity as the social abject and places of confinement as abject spaces, see Michel Foucault, 'Des espaces autres'.

[8] Kristeva, *Pouvoirs de l'horreur*, p. 19.

[9] Italo Calvino, 'Il mare dell'oggettività', in *Saggi 1945–85*, Vol. 1 (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1995), pp. 52–60 (p. 52). Calvino's 'mare dell'oggettività' denotes both a political concern for the loss of clear projectability of social reality and a catalogic endeavour to structure this reality. *Le città invisibili* mainly involves the second meaning, though the first ultimately ties in with it.

[10] It is worth noting that Koolhaas was well aware of *Le città invisibili*, although it is uncertain whether he consciously blended its aesthetics into Junkspace.

[11] Hilary Powell, 'Recycling Junkspace: Finding Space for "Playtime" in the City', *The Journal of Architecture*, 10:2 (2005), 201–21 (p. 216).

[12] Foucault, 'Des espaces autres', p. 754.

[13] Ibid., p. 756.

[14] This description is not intended by Foucault to articulate his own understanding of heterotopia, but is nevertheless relevant to it, as the following arguments show.

[15] Foucault, 'Des espaces autres', p. 756.

[16] Ibid., p. 758.

[17] This excess of spatial ideologies is similar to that of Augé's 'non-place' (1992), although the latter emphasizes the individual's experience of social solitude, which does not always exist in heterotopia. See Marc Augé, *Non-lieux: Introduction à une anthropologie de la surmodernité* (Paris: Seuil, 1992).

[18] Foucault, 'Des espaces autres', p. 758.

[19] This is not to say that colonialism has the positive result of freedom, but that postcolonial emancipation and identity cannot return to an authentic pre-colonial state and are necessarily a reaction to colonialism.

[20] Kristeva, *Pouvoirs de l'horreur*, p. 16.

[21] Michel Foucault, *Les Mots et les choses: Une archéologie des sciences humaines* (Paris: Gallimard, 1966), p. 7.

[22] Ibid., p. 9.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Foucault, 'Des espaces autres', p. 756.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Foucault, *Les Mots et les choses*, p. 9.

[27] Italo Calvino, 'La Poubelle agréée' (1974–76), in *Romanzi e Racconti* (Milan: Mondadori, 1994), pp. 59–79.

[28] Ibid., p. 65.

[29] Ibid., p. 66.

[30] Ibid., p. 79.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Foucault, 'Des espaces autres', p. 756.

[33] See Hal Foster, *Design and Crime (And Other Diatribes)* (London: Verso, 2002), p. 60.

[34] On the idea of capitalism inevitably producing its own critique, see Pierpaolo Antonello and Florian Mussgnug (eds.), *Postmodern 'Impegno': Ethics and Commitment in Contemporary Italian culture* (Bern/Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009).

[35] The universalizing urban projects of Bruno Taut, Sant'Elia and Le Corbusier could be considered examples of failed modernist visions.

[36] Foucault says this, self-contradictorily, but still clearly distinguishes heterotopia from utopia.

[37] Fredric Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future* (London and New York: Verso, 2007), p. 217.

[38] Italo Calvino, *Il sentiero dei nidi di ragno*, 2nd edn (Turin: Einaudi, 1964), p. 7.

[39] Bataille, *Documents*, p. 103.