Analysing how societal conventions translated into architectural design in a house designed by Aris Konstantinidis, experienced as constraining and oppressive by the resident.

The architect, the resident, and a murder: the case of a house by Aris Konstantinidis

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The architect enters and stares at the couple, who are embracing in the middle of the room [...] 'No, they are not the ones I really wanted. No, no, they are destroying the harmony of the place. It is terrible! Oh no! They have to go...' (The architect slowly brings a revolver out of his pocket) They have to go ... (He points at them.) 'They absolutely must go!' (He shoots twice. The couple collapse on to the floor).[1]

(Electra Kadmou)

Aris Konstantinidis is considered one of the most important Greek architects of the twentieth century and often expressed his commitment to the principles and values of modern architecture, particularly to the dictum of functionalism: 'I am a real modern architect';[2] '[...] my duty as an architect is to give shape to various needs and functions of life'.[3] Konstantinidis had studied architecture in Munich during the 1930s and developed his architectural approach within the social and political context of Weimar Germany. In our research we re-examine Konstantinidis' idea of function in architecture with reference to a house he designed in the early 1960s for a wealthy Athenian couple.

The house was a three-storey private residence constructed as an exposed reinforced concrete frame, like all projects designed by Konstantinidis in his distinctive architectural idiom. It was highly praised as an example of Greek postwar modernism [1]. The building consisted of a plain rectilinear structure measuring 19 x 6 metres, which was set far back on a sloping site, planted with pine trees. Access, on the ground floor, was through a large entrance hall surrounded by servants' quarters and a kitchen [2]. A linear staircase connected the entrance hall on the ground floor with the living quarters on the first floor [3]. The second floor comprised three bedrooms and two bathrooms. All rooms on the second floor had access to rectilinear balconies that extended alongside the length of the building overlooking the serene garden.

1 **Model of the house.**

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The resident of the house, who we will call Electra Kadmou, was well known in the intellectual circles of postwar Athens. Her friends describe her as 'a very modern woman, powerful, restless, travelling a lot [...] a feminist, a suffragette always dressed like a boy, never in a dress but in trousers, who looked like a gamin or a lesbian',[4] which we interpret as a reference to the stereotypical idea of short hair and masculine clothing, suggesting Kadmou broke with the traditional gender expression for Greek women of the time. Unusually, Kadmou wrote an unpublished short story that criticised Konstantinidis and the building he designed for her and her husband, and read it publicly at a big social event to celebrate the completion of her house. In her narrative, rich with symbols and latent connotations, Kadmou depicts the architect as a frenetic genius who designs an absurd house, haunts it, and eventually murders the desperate residents when they try to escape by destroying it, as cited in the extract above. Before being murdered by her architect, the imaginary lady of the house is planning to blow up her residence using explosives. Yet, Kadmou was initially an admirer of the work of Aris Konstantinidis, and had commissioned him to design her house. Why did her short story satirise the design and express such dissatisfaction with its architect, when the house was so highly praised in the architectural world? Kadmou lived in the dwelling for a few years only, eventually demolishing it and selling the land. Why did she demolish it?

We suggest that some of these conflicts stem from Konstantinidis' failure 'to give shape to various needs and functions of life'[5] that Electra Kadmou needed to flourish. We study Kadmou's autobiographical short story through a Freudian psychoanalytical approach. We explore the resident's motives and drives, this instinctual psychic energy that impels individuals to activity.[6] We investigate how psychic impulses were suppressed into the unconscious by constraining societal conventions and norms regarding gender and family prevailing in Greek society of the 1960s. We argue that power relations embedded in the collaboration between the architect and the resident, reinforced by the architect's beliefs on functionality, resulted in a house that reproduced these oppressive social conventions and had a traumatic psychic impact on the resident.

Our story resembles another famous conflict in the history of architecture between Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and his client Edith Farnsworth. In her re-investigation, Alice Friedman explains that Farnsworth, a modern woman herself, highly educated, unmarried, and a successful doctor,[7] was at first fascinated by Mies and assigned him the design of her house. Although Farnsworth was initially drawn to him because of his modernist, unconventional visions, by the end of their collaboration she was dissatisfied. Friedman argues that this dissatisfaction was caused by regressive principles lurking in the project. The absolute transparency of the house and the lack of a separate bedroom programmatically prescribed the absolute exposure of human bodies to the disciplinary public gaze, thus latently reproducing the social stereotype of the American Midwest of the 1940s and 1950s, where a woman outside of wedlock was not expected to have a sexual life. In one of his interviews, emphasising the liberating aspects of transparency and the open plan, Mies van der Rohe argues: 'People say, "Ah, that is cold." That's nonsense. Inside you can really do what you like. You are free to do something.'[8] However, according to Friedman, Farnsworth was not able to do what she liked in her house. She found herself entrapped in a repressive house with a restraining layout that renounced her sexual liberty. In our research we use Kadmou's short story as an alternative form of evidence to address similar questions in the case of her conflict with Aris Konstantinidis.

A note on methods and sources
The house for Electra Kadmou was constructed during the early 1960s and sold and demolished during the 1980s; therefore, all of the information regarding the building has been derived from drawings and photographs, obtained from the architect's personal archive. In addition to the buildings he designed throughout his career, Konstantinidis published numerous articles and books reflecting his ideas about architecture. Konstantinidis' writing is emotional, polemical, moralising, and articulated in the form of sharp manifestos. His texts have been perceived as canonical by many generations of Greek architects. By studying these texts, we identify and explore a series of beliefs and assumptions regarding the occupants of his buildings and their 'functional needs'.

Kadmou's unpublished short story turned out to be an invaluable document that offered useful insights into her own beliefs, on personal aspirations and the design of her house, as well as latent anxieties associated with the process of constructing the domestic milieu for her and her assumed future family. The short story was provided to us by friends of Kadmou, typewritten in four pages measuring 28 x 22 centimetres. By studying her short story from a psychoanalytical perspective, we found it rich in symbolism regarding the resident's unconscious drives and psychic conflicts.

We have also used tools and methodologies borrowed from social anthropology to articulate a study on the Greek society of the 1960s and its latent cultural conventions regarding gender roles and the family. Aris Konstantinidis died in 1993, Electra Kadmou some years later. Consequently, although we were unable to interview them at the time of our research in 2015, we were able to conduct a series of interviews with informants from the architect's and the resident's milieu. We interviewed five close friends of Kadmou's, two neighbours, and three members of Konstantinidis' family. The interviews followed qualitative social research methodologies.[9] All participants have given well-informed oral consent to process the data derived from their interviews for the needs of this research. Our study revealed aspects of the resident's sex life, behaviour,
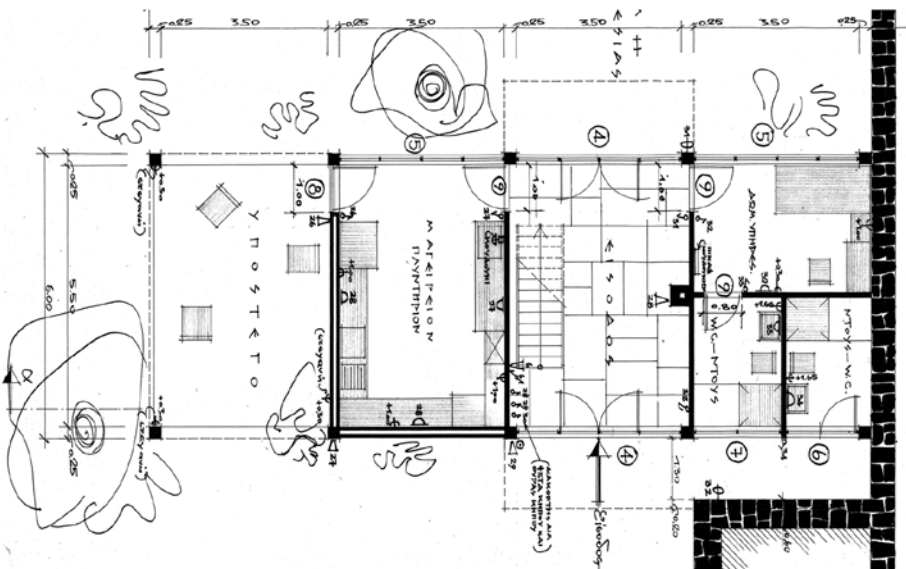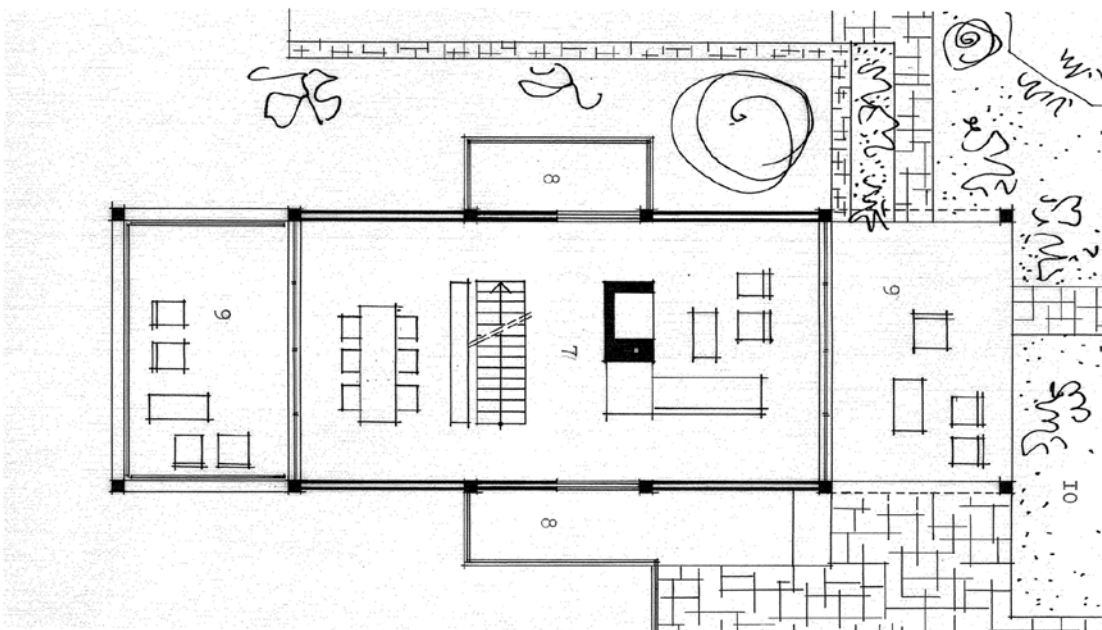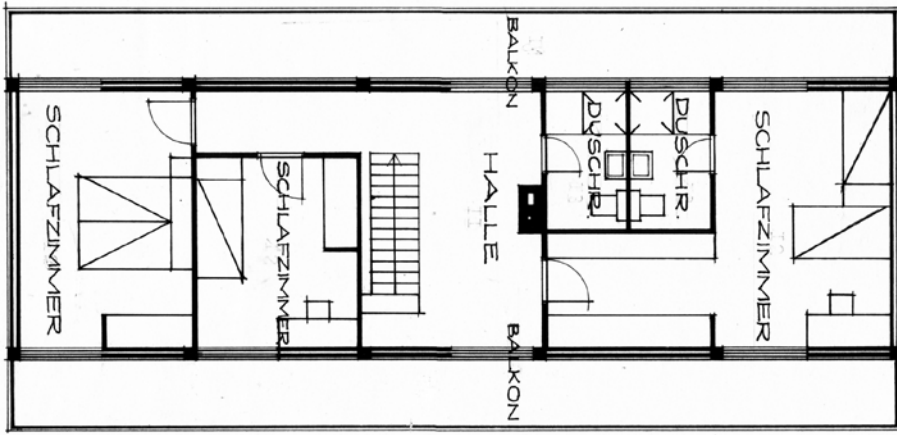
2 Plans of the house.

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and personal relations, all of which are considered personal data according to the European General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).[10] We have thus used two methods proposed by the GDPR for the protection of personal data: 'anonymity' as far as our informants are concerned and 'pseudonymisation' to keep the residents' identities undisclosed. Therefore, Electra Kadmou is not the resident's real name but a pseudonym. We also use a pseudonym for her husband, who we will call Peter Kadmos, and fictionalised a number of identifiers in order to impede the identification of natural individuals related to this research. However, none of these alterations influences the article's main premises.

In our article we aim to challenge the hierarchy between body and mind and constricting normative values regarding gender roles. However we are aware that some stereotypes are reproduced in our text due to the source material we have used. Kadmou is described by our interviewees as an 'unconventional woman'; as a promiscuous and unfaithful wife; she 'dressed like a boy'; 'looked like a lesbian'; was a bad mother; a guilty barren woman; a difficult client; and vindictive for writing an 'embarrassing' short story about the architect. These are all ways women have traditionally been shamed and discredited throughout history. On the other hand, we have Konstantinidis who is described as the 'important', 'passionate', 'visionary', and well-meaning, albeit nostalgic, architect. These are also typical descriptions of men throughout history, meant to indicate power and intelligence. Friends and acquaintances of the resident and the architect have been caught in the same social stereotypes we intend to question, and they reproduce them through their interviews.

The architect and the resident
Kadmou was aware of Konstantinidis' work before commissioning him to design her house. A member of the architect's family noted that, 'Back then, there was a circle of artists who used to meet regularly at our home to enjoy discussions or play cards. Electra was part of our group.' The apartment where these artists met was renovated by Aris Konstantinidis in 1951.[11] A few years before the commissioning of the house, Konstantinidis also designed the interior of a store located close to the apartment of Electra and Peter Kadmos, and had already completed numerous projects, including some of the Xenia hotels.[12] All of the projects were designed with explicit austerity and bareness of space. A Greek journalist, whom Electra Kadmou assisted for a couple of years, described the apartment owned and furnished by Kadmou in the centre of Athens: 'her house was totally bare, always empty, almost vacant, somehow cold, in stark contrast with mine which has always been loaded with furniture, stuffed with pillows and fabrics, and bursting with colours.' Based on these facts and statements, it would appear that Kadmou and Konstantinidis had a similar approach to furnishing choices and colours.

At the beginning of the short story, the architect asks the lady to choose the colours for her house, entrapping her in a discussion where he proceeds to

humiliate her by debunking her choices. Later in the short story she is hell-bent on acquiring a lavish armchair upholstered with yellow velvet, a choice forbidden by the austere Architect who ultimately decides to eliminate all furnishing. Aris Konstantinidis, on the other hand, interprets Kadmou's rejection of his project in one of his interviews:

> at the time I was selecting the lighting fittings for the house and we were ready to start painting the interior walls, the owner of the house finally made her appearance and told me, 'Aris, please, you can go now – let me complete the interior design of my house, because lighting and colours are part of the decor, and I know what suits me.'[13]

It seems that both Konstantinidis and Kadmou interpret their conflict by focusing on alleged differences of opinion on colours and furniture. However, our analysis indicates that the cause of their disagreement was not a matter of taste, as mentioned above, which leads us to wonder what else might have been causing the conflict.

Beatriz Colomina has proposed that the house is a 'spatial-psychological device'.[14] Through the analysis of Adolf Loos's architecture she explores the house as a stage for the theatre of the family, where domesticated drama can be enacted: birth, love, and death. She reveals the two facets of the modern house. One is disciplinary; it moulds the relationship between the individual and society by controlling sexuality and reproduction.[15] Analysing Villa Savoye, the emblematic modern house, with its three bedrooms for the family, Colomina refers to the female figure who is shown in the 'house that frames her [...] already inside, already contained by the house, bounded [...] behind bars.'[16] The second facet is pre-Oedipal, freed from the social conventions that language entails.[17] Using the house Adolf Loos designed for Josephine Baker, Colomina claims that this house that excludes family life can be perceived as a paradigm of a sensual space, permitting an erotic instead of controlling complex of looks. In the centre of the house we come across a swimming pool. There, in the heart of the house, which is more public than private, dedicated to pleasure rather than to reproduction, the image of the resident is shown to be 'liquid, elusive, unable to be controlled, pinned down'.[18] Electra Kadmou was described by her friends as, 'not an easy person to corral inside a house', and as 'a liberated woman who used to have an intense sexual life with numerous partners'. We argue that the house designed by Konstantinidis for Kadmou was also disciplinary, by imposing on her the conventional idea of having to create a family, as a moral obligation for every woman to fulfill.

Konstantinidis had always been explicit about the role of the architect: 'the contemporary architect [...] pays attention – almost like a doctor – to every human material and emotional need'.[19] However, he is often baffled by his clients' desires: 'who actually knows how to live in a house nowadays? People don't know what they want as far as their house design is concerned.'[20] In Kadmou's short story, the architect rebukes the lady of the house: 'We are wasting our

time, madam! We are wasting our time [...] You don't know what you want!'

The case of the house designed for Electra and Peter Kadmos shows numerous similarities with – yet notable differences from – the story of the Chuey house designed by Richard Neutra.[21] According to Sylvia Lavin, Neutra was interested in psychoanalysis, having met Freud himself, and claimed that an architect should most of all resemble a psychiatrist.[22] Neutra was aware of Freud's theory according to which the human psyche consists of three functionally related structures: the id, the ego, and the superego.[23] The id inhabits the unconscious part of the self and consists of drives, inner instincts, raw impulses, and unprocessed desires. On the other edge of the tripartite psychic structure, the superego consists of the moral code of society and corresponds to what we ordinarily call conscience. The ego is an intermediary struggling to form a compromise between the id and the superego. In doing so, the ego often represses to the unconscious drives or desires, which are denied by the superego as immoral or unacceptable. Neutra understood that his clients often had unconscious desires that could not be easily be admitted to their architect.

Although Konstantinidis proclaims that the architect should 'give shape to various needs and functions of life',[24] he rages against individualism: 'I do not respect [...] buildings [designed] according to unbearable subjective caprices.'[25] Following a different approach, Neutra takes the individuality of his clients on board in the design process but also goes beyond to recognise deeper psychic dimensions that are not made conscious. In this context, Neutra asked his clients to complete highly detailed questionnaires about their lives and domestic habits and to keep diaries recounting every aspect of their everyday activities. These documents, which included personalised concerns about highly differentiated lifestyles, have been referred to by clients as 'self-analyses'. After participating in such a psychoanalytical design process, the resident Josephine Chuey gradually realised that her difficulty in deciding how many bedrooms her house should have was related to social conventions regarding motherhood and emotionally connected with internal conflicts about whether or not she wanted to become a mother.[26] Konstantinidis' understanding of human needs was not articulated in such a psychoanalytical context, and thus he could not understand why Kadmou was reluctant to reveal her desires regarding her house design.

Konstantinidis' approach to functionalism

Konstantinidis advocates that 'architecture gives form to functions',[27] paraphrasing the dictum 'Form Follows Function', coined by Louis Sullivan.[28] However, by the term 'function', Konstantinidis does not mean inner purpose as Sullivan does.[29] Konstantinidis uses the term 'function' as a description of the human activities taking place inside a particular building; that is, the ubiquitous, modern meaning of the word 'function' that arose in the twentieth century.[30] He also argues that, 'we all

seek the common solution, the common form, because all humans have the same material and emotional needs'.[31] He echoes Le Corbusier: 'All men have the same organism, the same functions. All men have the same needs.'[32] Konstantinidis studied architecture at the Technical University of Munich from 1931 to 1936.[33] Therefore, his understanding of the term 'function' was developed within the German architectural debates of the beginning of the twentieth century and shows numerous similarities with the ideas of the German critic Adolf Behne, as expressed in his book *The Modern Functional Building*.[34] According to Behne, the 'functional' house is the one that can be inhabited by anyone. Within the social and political reforms of Weimar Germany, modern architects felt ethically obliged to support only common functional needs and to oppose their clients' individualised desires. By designing the common, the standardised, and the typical, the German avant-garde supported the industrialised mass production of low-cost houses for the lower and the middle classes. Konstantinidis' understanding of functionalism follows this line of thought, universalising the idea of human needs, in contrast to Neutra's approach, which focused on his clients' individualised desires and demands.

Aris Konstantinidis claims that architecture should not '[...] serve the vanity of a dominant plutocratic minority to exercise a kind of power over a growing majority of people'.[35] Stylianos Giamarelos argues that although Konstantinidis' native social circle helped him gain access to important commissions, he was at the same time critical of them[36] and of his colleagues who attempted to satisfy individualised desires of their wealthy clients. His refutation of individuality and support of standardisation exacerbated his conflict with Kadmou. Konstantinidis' built work seems consistent with his proclamations. For example, he designed houses for the Athenian upper class prescribing that the bedrooms for the owners, their children, and the so-called 'maid's room' were of exactly the same size, layout, and furnishing. This was an uncommon practice in Greece during the 1960s, where in terms of size the 'maid's room' would usually be a small and poorly lit storage room. We should therefore consider Konstantinidis' belief that all humans have or 'should have' the same functional needs within such an ideological context: equality imagined by a standardised model.

Adrian Forty explains that the dialectic between individuality and collectivity in modernist discourse has also been influenced by the German social theorist Ferdinand Tönnies.[37] Tönnies idealises premodern, rural societies and criticises human relations that are articulated in the complicated, modern, urban society by describing them as impersonal, instrumental, superficial, and individualistic.[38] Konstantinidis also indulges in nostalgia for agrarian societies of the past.[39] He argues:

The agrarian organisation of society was expressed in a rhythm of life which was never degraded to today's ugliness [...]. It is despicable to live according to your

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3 The living quarters
on the first floor.

own wishes and to do solely whatever you want. Living
with others and according to others searching for a
common scheme leads to concrete satisfaction and joy.[40]
Konstantinidis idealises rural communities where
people live according to norms and a moral code.

Sociologist Anthony Giddens argues that the belief
people have a right to individualised and diversified
ways of living is linked to the major cultural shift
from traditional communities to industrialised
urban societies. According to Giddens, it is within
these modern complex societies that people have the
opportunity to deviate from socially defined modes
of everyday living, and reflectively construct
personalised life plans in the context of multiple
choices.[41] In premodern, pre-industrialised agrarian
communities, where tradition ordered life within
relatively set channels, a person had to pursue a
morally nuanced, collectively defined set of everyday
practices according to gender, age, social position,

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and a series of cultural conventions.[42] According to sociologist Panayis Panagiotopoulos, because of its recent and rapid modernisation, postwar Greece should be seen as a hybrid between a premodern, pre-industrialised, agrarian society and a post-industrialised, hyper-modern state.[43] Therefore, we should interpret Konstantinidis' demonisation of individualism as an indispensable part of his regional modernism, related to the excessive frictions produced in Greece as it rapidly underwent an accelerated transformation from a rural to an urban society over the course of a few decades.

Beauty versus function: a contradiction in Konstantinidis' principles

Konstantinidis argues that 'the architectural work […] has true value not because of its material aspects but mostly due to its spiritual beauty'.[44] Konstantinidis' implied inferiority of the materialistic aspects of architecture contradicts his own support for functionalism. This is a contradiction we often encounter in modernist discourse. We readily recall Le Corbusier, one of the most adamant opponents of functional architecture, arguing that:

Architecture has another sense and other ends than emphasizing construction and answering needs (needs understood in the sense, implicit here, of utility, of comfort, of practical design). ARCHITECTURE is the art par excellence, one that attains a state of Platonic grandeur, mathematical order, speculation, perception of harmony through stirring formal relationships.[45]

This contradiction is due to the difficulty faced by modernists in their attempt to challenge the nineteenth-century idealist approach to aesthetics in architecture. According to Panayotis Tournikiotis, the idea that responding to practical needs is a different task in comparison with addressing artistic qualities is exemplified in the theories of aesthetics by Heinrich Wölfflin, Nikolaus Pevsner, and Sigfried Giedion[46] and propagates the premises of German idealism. Indeed, in his book *Critique of Judgement*, Kant argues that we cannot claim something to be beautiful if it is useful.[47] According to Kant, the object we judge beautiful is one whose form causes a lively play of our two cognitive faculties, knowledge and imagination, hence it provides mental satisfactions unrelated to materialistic, bodily gratifications.[48] This idea has a much longer tradition, its origins going back to the Vitruvian three-part rubric of '*Firmitas, Utilitas, Venustas*'.[49] Tournikiotis argues that, despite the recurrent variations on the dictum throughout the centuries, there still exists the fundamental idea that there is a split between *Utilitas*, everyday, material, functional needs related to bodily pleasures, and *Venustas*, beauty, delight, emotional satisfactions linked to the human psyche and mind.[50]

In Kadmou's short story, the architect, frustrated by the Lady's demands, bursts out:

You want a simple home? Is that so? A bedroom, a living-room, and a bathroom […] Well no! A house is not a tent to hide your ugliness. It is a synthesis, a conception, with its own harmony, consistency, its own

meaning never to be revealed to barbarians […] I bring people beauty and they throw ashes back at me!

Kadmou satirises the architect's belief that addressing 'beauty' is a higher goal than responding to everyday bodily needs by designing a 'simple home'. Moreover, this excerpt reveals ethical implications related to a power play between herself and Konstantinidis. It is possible that Kadmou perceived the architect as employing a terminology unknown to non-architects, to pretend that it is far too complex for her to understand and have an opinion.[51] In the short story the resident indeed feels 'confused, frightened, intimidated', and after a while 'whines like a child'. The architect seems to have succeeded in imposing on her a silencing mechanism similar to what adults do to children when they exclude them from decision making by claiming that, 'they would not understand'.

According to Adrian Forty modernists attempted to reconceptualise the idealist approach to beauty so that the fulfilment of bodily, 'functional' needs was now presented as a primary content of architecture, not merely in opposition to the 'aesthetic', but taking its place.[52] What Kant had claimed lay outside art, the useful, was now indeed its very subject. Freud was at that time articulating his own interpretation of the experience of beauty in art. In agreement with the idealist tradition, Freud argues that the enjoyment of works of art is related to cognitive faculties such as knowledge and imagination.[53] However, Freud argues that these mental and psychic satisfactions are mere displacements and diversions of crude, primary, material, somatic impulses and drives that are impeded by our conscience as being immoral.[54] According to Freud, the latent purpose of art is to comfort these repressed bodily needs. Freud's understanding of the experience of beauty as mental, psychic, yet also somatic resembles modernists' attempts to identify the 'functional' with the 'beautiful' in architecture.

The idea that the experience of beauty is related to the fulfilment of bodily needs, initially promoted by modern architects, was such a radical concept that it was eventually diluted by its own proponents, who had difficulty in embracing it and unintentionally contradicted the idea. They reproduced the belief that functional needs are unrelated to mental and emotional responses, an idea lingering in the archaic dichotomy between body and psyche. Konstantinidis notes that, 'the architect, resembling a composer, a conductor, a creator […] gives form and meaning […] to the chant produced by every human practical and functional need'.[55] However, in the short story, the architect rages in ecstasy about 'harmony, consistency […] beauty' as opposed to the 'ugliness' of 'a simple home'. Konstantinidis was entrapped in his contradictory beliefs regarding the emotional dimensions of everyday functions. Therefore, in the case of Kadmou, he did not realise that functional prescriptions embedded in his design, such as the number and layout of the bedrooms, were related to sexuality and reproduction;[56] that is to say, somatic pleasures and practices with psychic implications for the resident.

Konstantinidis and societal views on the family

According to someone close to Konstantinidis, 'family was important for him. He believed that all people had the moral obligation to create a family.' The 'family house' on the Saronic Coast, given this title by the architect himself, is shown standing lonesome amid the peaceful Mediterranean scenery, an ideal retreat indeed for the typical middle-upper-class Greek family of the 1960s. According to Ioanna Theocharopoulou, women played a part in the modernisation of Greek society of the 1960s, despite the restriction of their role to the modernisation of the Greek house and to the creation of a family, in accordance with the premodern sexual division of labour.[57] Kadmou's friends portrayed her as, 'not a family woman' who never had biological children of her own. At the end of the short story, the lady of the house is murdered while embracing her husband at the very moment when the frenetic architect realises that she is pregnant: 'I believe they have gained some weight. She might be pregnant. Oh no! This is unacceptable! They didn't tell me from the beginning [...] They have to go!' Not only does this reveal something about Kadmou's perception of her architect as inflexible but it also allows us to speculate on Kadmou's inner thoughts regarding the idea of family.

At the time Electra and Peter Kadmos asked Konstantinidis to design their residence, the Athenian coastline was already under development as part of a major growth plan implemented by the Greek state that focused on the enhancement of the tourism sector.[58] The public programme incorporated land use plans prescribing tourist development for specific areas and a new master plan for the entire Saronic Coast assigned to Constantinos Doxiadis.[59] In the years that followed, the public as well as the private sector invested in the Saronic Gulf coastline, constructing luxurious private hotel complexes and organised beaches.[60] Some of the most important dwellings in the history of Greek modernism were built during this decade for wealthy Athenians who were gradually beginning to pursue the novel cult of vacations near the sea.[61] Konstantinidis participated in this major development programme and was appointed head of the Greek National Tourism Organisation (GNTO) in 1957. Subsequently, he launched numerous hotel projects under the Xenia Hotels brand throughout Greece.[62]

By the time the Kadmou house was built, the Saronic Coast was envisaged as an ideal future retreat, albeit solely by a few politicians, businessmen, architects, and planners. Throughout the 1960s, the region around the house would remain a lowly remote settlement, underpopulated and one of the few regions that did not participate in the explosive population growth observable in the rest of the postwar city.[63] Before moving to the new dwelling Kadmou had been living in one of the most vibrant neighbourhoods in the centre of Athens. One of her friends describes her lifestyle:

She was a close friend with renowned artists, writers, and actors, whom she met frequently. She was living an intense social life. Her New Year's Eve reception was famous in Athens upper-class circles, and her guests were always famous people who would appear in extravagant dresses and lavish jewellery.

The house on the Saronic Coast *[4]* consisted of servants' quarters on the ground floor, living quarters on the first floor, and three rooms on the second floor. In the architectural drawings, these three average-sized rooms are assigned the term *schlafzimmer*, meaning 'bedroom' in German *[2]*. On the ground floor, next to the kitchen, there is one more bedroom, with the indication in Greek *domatio ypiresias* (the maid's room). This constitutes a typical solution for the architect's clientele; since fourteen out of eighteen family houses selected by the architect himself and published in his monograph *Projects and Buildings*[64] contain a room for the live-in maid. In numerous residences designed by Konstantinidis, we note that there is a room with the designation *xenonas* (guest room), usually located at some distance from the owners' bedrooms, or on a different level. Hence, in the house designed for Electra and Peter Kadmos, it is likely that the three bedrooms on the third floor, clustered around a central hall, were designed to be used by members of the family and not by a guest. The architectural drawings and the model feature the furnishing of these three bedrooms in considerable detail: one is furnished with a double bed, the adjacent bedroom features a single bed, and the third room contains two single beds, a typical arrangement in the family houses designed by Konstantinidis. The layout indicates that the dwelling was designed to house a family consisting of up to three children, based on a socially acceptable assumption and intuitively corresponding to the average fertility rate in Greece in the 1950s, 2.48 children per woman.[65]

Functional and psychic conflicts

However, the biography of Kadmou, as narrated by her friends, indicates a life plan deviating from the socially expected family life. Electra Kadmou was born in the 1920s, into a middle-class family in a small city in the central-western part of Greece. When she turned eighteen, she went to study at the University of Athens. During her studies, she met Peter Kadmos, a successful businessman whom she soon married. Without the necessity to work for a living, she was able to dedicate herself to the arts. According to a friend of hers: 'Electra's dream was to conquer Athens and that's exactly what she did.' She describes her friend's practices and beliefs regarding intimate relationships and motherhood as follows:

Electra had a particularly strong personality. She was a feminist. Back then, there was this group of intellectual women living in the centre of Athens who would call themselves 'apeleutheres' ['liberated' the original meaning in Greek appertaining to slaves who have gained their freedom] and accept women having sexual affairs with men outside their marriage. They would become involved in relationships with other married men, even if they were their best friend's husband. Electra was an active member of that group.[66]

From interviews with friends of the couple, we learn that Electra and Peter Kadmos adopted a child.

According to her friends, after the death of her husband, Kadmou had serious disputes with her adopted child, which led to a complete breakdown in their relationship. A lifelong friend of Kadmou recollects an incident: 'Electra never talked about this adopted child. When she died, I searched for her child's telephone number, a grown up at that time, and I called to announce her death. They replied by telling me that they did not know the woman.' The owner of a store close to the apartment Kadmou maintained in the centre of Athens adds 'Electra was always mean to her child and they rarely spent time together.' In one of her interviews, a friend of Kadmou's divulged the stressful state of guilt Kadmou had to endure because of her choices regarding motherhood:

> Electra once confessed to me: 'Kadmos really wanted me to give him a child. I tried not to, in secret. Ultimately, when I decided to have a child, I was not able to anymore. God punished me for my deeds.'

In her autobiographical short story, Kadmou envisages herself as a pregnant woman murdered by the very same architect, who in real life prescribed that she should become a mother. The process of designing her dwelling, a family house in a remote area, as if she were in an exile, and containing two bedrooms for children, proposed by Konstantinidis and possibly following specifications by Peter Kadmos, brought to the fore the stressful question of whether Kadmou actually wanted to have children or not. Born and raised in a small provincial Greek town and living within the family-orientated Mediterranean culture of the 1960s, Kadmou, we suggest, felt guilty for her reluctance to have children. From a psychoanalytical perspective, she was unable to fully comprehend, embrace, and claim the feeling that she did not want to become a mother publicly or to her architect, and consequently, she did not need two bedrooms for children in her house. Incapable of accepting her own negative disposition regarding motherhood, Kadmou, in her short story, reverses the roles, and projects on to the architect her own lethal and destructive feelings against the idea of a couple with children and maternity per se. Disappointed by the architect she admired and who failed to understand her deeper needs, Kadmou tacitly revoked her initial commission and engaged him for a different imaginary service – to commit on her behalf the unconsciously desired murder.

Conclusion

Far from designing a house for Kadmou that would give 'shape to various needs and functions'[67] of her life, Konstantinidis appears to have designed her a home that she experienced as constraining and oppressive. Kadmou was a modern woman who chose a modern architect to build her house. She found herself living in haunted solitude, imprisoned in a dwelling with vacant children's bedrooms that reminded her of the duties she 'failed' to accomplish as a Greek woman of the 1960s. Konstantinidis declared himself faithful to the dictats of modernism, and was adamant about his dedication to the satisfaction of his clients' functional needs. In this case, however, he designed a house that was perceived by its resident as deeply repressive and restrictive, the product of a reversed dystopian anti-modernity. The house he designed for Kadmou failed because vestiges of premodern beliefs about family and personal life were latent, depriving the resident of the right to be different and prescribing that she should have a traditional family life and not a lifestyle involving physical pleasures such as having various extramarital sexual relationships.

We see Kadmou's short story as providing similar insight to that of Neutra's questionnaires and client diaries. We employ Kadmou's short story, which is a fictional text, to reveal issues related to her sexuality, personal relations, internal conflicts, guilt, and

4 Perspective of the house.

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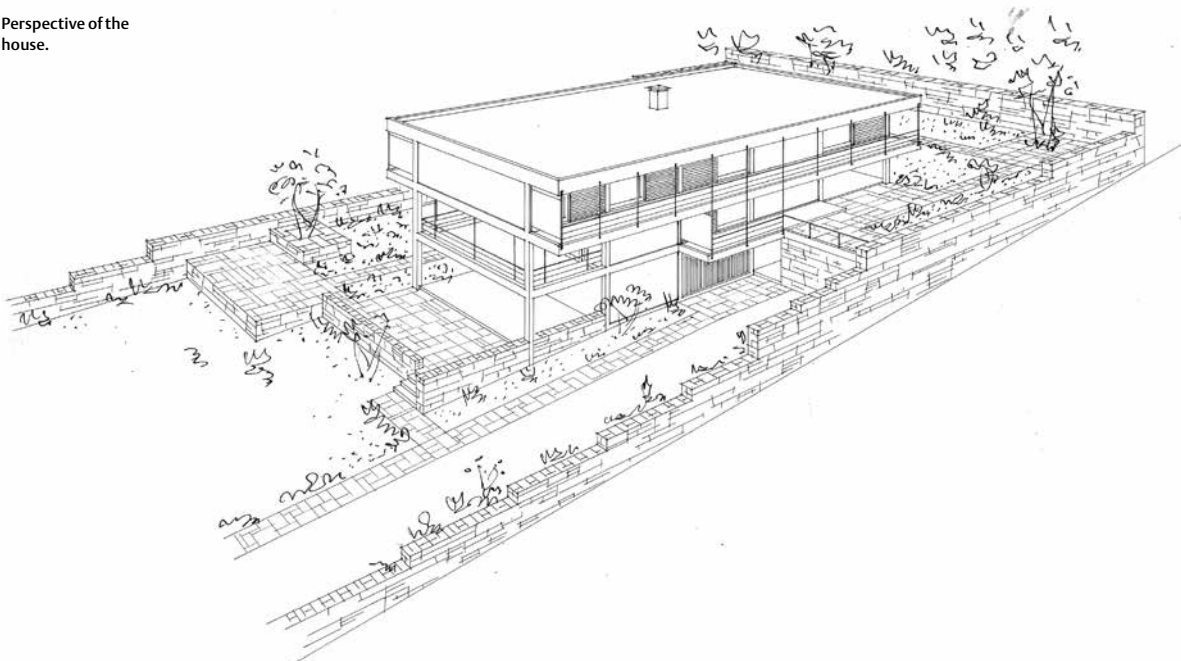
unconscious desires. The analysis of Konstantinidis' articles and books about architecture, on the other hand, concerns non-fiction and discusses ideology, philosophy, and politics. Konstantinidis is not psychoanalysed like Kadmou, we don't talk about his upbringing, appearance, or sexual practices. We also construct Kadmou's portrait through interviews; that is to say, we let others speak about her predominantly in physical and emotional terms. On the other hand, Konstantinidis is left to construct his own image in his own words as a thinker and visionary. He is compared to other 'great' male architects and thinkers such as Le Corbusier. Hence, we have found ourselves, to some extent, reproducing the traditional representation of gender roles we set out to challenge, and which is founded upon the following cluster of parallel oppositions: female–male, passive–active, fiction–science, fantasy–rational, emotion–intelligence, sexuality–creativity, unconscious–conscious, body–mind.

According to Giamarelos, Konstantinidis was very consistent in his prolific writings in how he produced the narrative about his work and himself.[68] In contrast to Kadmou's short story, Konstantinidis' writing self-constructs his image unaffected by desire or subjectivity. Kadmou's narrative not only criticises the architect's design but also proposes an alternative way of writing, which reveals the psychic drama behind the house design process. This drama affects not only the resident but the architect as well.

At the end of the short story and after having murdered the residents, the architect soliloquises: 'It can't be that difficult. Somewhere, there must be a couple who fit this house. They definitely exist. I have to find them. I will find them! Otherwise, I am going to construct them!' Although these words are employed by Kadmou to satirise the fictional image of a narcissistic architect entrapped in his pathological self-image of greatness, the excerpt echoes quotations from an actual book on modern architecture: 'For [the functionalist], every satisfied purpose is an implement for creating new, more refined human beings.'[69] Images of the modern architect with the power to reform society, by shaping human relations in space,[70] have produced the stereotype of the 'great' – usually male – architect, admired, visionary, and at the same time morally judgmental, obnoxious, bullying, egotistical, and caught in an illusory self image of omnipotence.

After the 1960s, the idea of an authoritative architect who abuses his power by repressing the resident was denounced. Critical voices suggested that the integration of residents into the design process by giving them the opportunity to choose, design, and sometimes even construct parts of their houses[71] is an indispensable part of the architectural process. However, it is not obvious that when left alone, residents are always able to design their house according to their real wishes. Social conventions often impede them from realising their individualised desires. In a recent study on contemporary Greek private houses designed by residents in collaboration with an engineer and not an architect – a common practice for the Greek middle class – the residents, despite their dominant role in the design process, reproduced unintentionally standardised houses that enforced social conformity and rejected deviation from the norm.[72] What does Konstantinidis' claim that 'Architecture is the mirror of life; it is the image and the substantiation of the human self',[73] mean today in our hyper-modern, emancipatory societies? If the house is a mirror of the human self, we must ask which self is reflected in it.

Notes

1. Excerpt from the short story written by Electra Kadmou. Following the European General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) we have undisclosed further information regarding the short story. In the article's section entitled 'A brief note on methods and sources', we refer to the methods we adopted for the protection of sensitive data of living individuals related to our research.

2. Aris Konstantinidis, *I architektoniki tis architektonikis: Imerologiaka simeiomata* [*The Architecture of Architecture: Diary Notes*] [1992] (Heraklion: Crete University Press, 2011), p. 19.

3. Aris Konstantinidis, *Gia tin Architektoniki* [*On Architecture*] (Athens: Agra, 1987), p. 89.

4. The descriptions were given by Kadmou's friends in their interviews. We refer to the methods we employed to obtain the interviews in the section entitled 'A brief note on methods and sources'.

5. Konstantinidis, *Gia tin Architektoniki*, p. 89.

6. Charles Brenner, 'The Drives', in *An Elementary Textbook of Psychoanalysis* (New York: Anchor, 1974), pp. 15–30.

7. Alice Friedman, *Women and the Making of the Modern House: A Social and Architectural History* (New York: Abrams, 1998), pp. 126–59.

8. *Conversations with Mies van der Rohe*, ed. by Moisés Puente (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2008), p. 73.

9. Jennifer Mason, *Qualitative Researching* (London: Sage, 2002); Nota Kyriazi, *I koinoniologiki erevna: Kritiki episkopisi ton methodon kai ton technikon* [*Sociological Research: A Critical Review of Methods and Techniques*] (Athens: Ellhnika Grammata, 2005).

10. The European General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) were approved by the EU Parliament on 14 April 2016 and became applicable on 25 May 2018. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2016.119.01.0001.01.ENG&toc=OJ:L:2016:119:FULL> [accessed 23 February 2020]

11. Aris Konstantinidis, *Projects and Buildings* (Athens: Agra, 1981), pp. 38–9.

12. Ibid., pp. 84–111.

13. Thanasis Lalas, 'Aris Konstantinidis, i teleftaia synentefxi ston Th.Lala [Aris Konstantinidis: The Last Interview with Th. Lalas]', *To Vima* (26 September 1993), 51.

14. Beatriz Colomina, 'The Split Wall: Domestic Voyeurism', in *Sexuality and Space*, ed. by Beatriz Colomina (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992), p. 76.

15. Beatriz Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994).
16. Ibid., pp. 289, 293.
17. Colomina, 'The Split Wall', p. 90.
18. Ibid., p. 98.
19. Konstantinidis, *Gia tin Architektoniki*, p. 119.
20. Ibid., p. 101.
21. Aris Konstantinidis and Richard Neutra exchanged a number of letters praising each other's work. Aris Konstantinidis, *Empeiries kai peristatika: Mia aftoviografiki diigisi* [*Experiences and Facts: An Autobiographical Narrative*] (Athens: Estia, 1992), pp. 186–90.
22. Sylvia Lavin, *Form Follows Libido: Architecture and Richard Neutra in a Psychoanalytic Culture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), p. 49.
23. Sigmund Freud, *The Ego and the Id* [1923], trans. by Joan Riviere (London: Leonard & Virginia Woolf at the Hogarth press, 1928); Charles Brenner, 'The Psychic Apparatus', in *An Elementary Textbook of Psychoanalysis*, pp. 31–125.
24. Konstantinidis, *Gia tin Architektoniki*, p. 89.
25. Ibid.
26. Lavin, *Form Follows Libido*, p. 78.
27. Aris Konstantinidis, *Ta palia athinaika spitia* [*Old Athenian Houses*] [1950] (Heraklion: Crete University Press, 2011), p. 15.
28. Louis Sullivan, 'The Tall Office Building Artistically Considered', *Lippincott's Magazine*, 1896, 403–09 (p. 408).
29. Edward Robert De Zurko, *Origins of Functionalist Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1957), pp. 10–11.
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31. Konstantinidis, *Gia tin Architektoniki*, p. 119.
32. Le Corbusier, *Towards an Architecture* [1923], trans. by John Goodman (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2007), p. 182.
33. Konstantinidis, *Projects and Buildings*, p. 274.
34. Adolf Behne, *The Modern Functional Building* [1926] (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1996).
35. Konstantinidis, *I architektoniki tis architektonikis*, p. 258.
36. Stylianos Giamarelos, 'The Art of Building Reception: Aris Konstantinidis behind the Global Published Life of his Weekend House in Anavyssos (1962–2014)', *Architectural Histories*, 2(1), p.Art. 22

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39. Aris Konstantinidis, *Dyo choria apo ti Mykono* [*Two Villages from Mykonos*] [1945] (Heraklion: Crete University Press, 2011) and *God-Built, Landscapes and Houses of Modern Greece* (Heraklion: Crete University Press, 1994).
40. Konstantinidis, *Gia tin Architektoniki*, pp. 100, 142–3.
41. Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity, Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).
42. Ibid., pp. 80–8.
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47. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment* [1790], trans. J. H. Bernard (London: Macmillan and Co., 1892), pp. 46–8.
48. Ibid., pp. 93–4.
49. Peter Collins, 'Architecture: Commodity, Firmness, and Delight: The Ultimate Synthesis', in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* <https://www.britannica.com/topic/architecture/Commodity-firmness-and-delight-the-ultimate-synthesis> [accessed 23 February 2020].
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60. Emmanuel Vourekas, 'Akti Glyfadas [Glyfada Coast]', *Architektoniki*, 1 (1957), 37–9; Anthony Kitsikis, 'Vouliagmeni Yacht Club', *Architektoniki*, 14 (1959), 26–9; Kostas Voutsinas, 'Erga Mikrou Kavouriou Vouliagmenis [Projects in Mikro Kavouri, in Vouliagmeni]', *Architektoniki*, 26 (1961), 23–44; John Triantafyllides, 'Voula Beach', *Architektoniki*, 26 (1961), 92.
61. Maro Kardamitsi-Adami, 'The Coastline of Argosaronikos', in *Tourism Landscapes: Remaking Greece*, ed. by Yannis Aesopos (Athens: Domes, 2015), pp. 180–2; *The Body, Sport and Modern Architecture,* ed. by Panayotis Tournikiotis and others (Athens: Futura, 2006).
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63. Byron Kotzamanis, 'Athina, 1848–1995: I dimografiki anadysi mias mitropolis [Athens, 1848–1995:

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64. Konstantinidis, *Projects and Buildings*.

65. World Population Prospects: The 2019 Revision, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division <http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?d =PopDiv&f=variableID%3A54> [accessed 23 February 2020] (Country or Area: Greece, Years: 1950–1955, Variants: Medium Variant).

66. By 'kids of her own', this informant means biological children.

67. Konstantinidis, *Gia tin Architektoniki*, p. 89.

68. Giamarelos, 'The Art of Building Reception'.

69. Behne, *The Modern Functional Building*, p. 123.

70. Forty, *Words and Buildings*, pp. 103–17.

71. The development 'Half a house' in Chile, by Alejandro Aravena in 2004, which has gained international praise, is a recent example of this approach.

72. Kiourti, 'House-Design'; Myrto Kiourti, 'The Parlor, the Kitchen and Civilised Manners: Residential Space, Practices and Beliefs in Greek Houses of the 1970s', *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research JAPR*, 35:3 (autumn 2018), 258–69.

73. Konstantinidis, *Gia tin Architektoniki,* p. 39.

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