

Acknowledgements

Building Institution presents research that has been underway for over fifteen years and began with my dissertation at the Institute for the History and Theory of Architecture (gta) at ETH Zurich (2007–11). During this time, the work took me to the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montréal several times as a research student, to Columbia University in New York as a visiting researcher for a year, and to various archives and libraries (in addition to the Avery Library, also at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, these include Princeton University, Yale University, and Sarah Lawrence College in New York State), and still bears traces of the network of all the intellectual and interpersonal relationships and interactions I enjoyed there. Since then, more than a decade has passed before the release of this publication, and in addition to the subject and method, i.e., institutional history, or indeed institutional analysis based on diligent archival research and a comprehensive oral history, this circumstance alone makes it almost impossible to fully acknowledge everyone for their contributions.

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My interest in institution building through architectural and cultural production began in the mid-2000s, when it became fashionable to found or re-found our own groups, organizations, and institutions, to address the actors and networks (and more specifically periodicals, exhibitions, artefacts, and concepts) of postmodernism, and has now culminated in this book at a time when the institution of architecture itself, the office, the curriculum are being called into question and perceived as in need of repair in the face of the polycrises that humanity is facing in very different ways. Given the task of combating the climate emergency and loss of biodiversity, however, it is hard to tell where to start, because we now know that transformation must be both rapid and comprehensive. Once again, the multifaceted, problematic, and ambivalent relationships with institutions must be explored anew, and it is up to everyone to decide for themselves whether to embark on the journey through existing institutions or to find other paths.