
The Architectural Competition

Research
Inquiries and
Experiences

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The Architectural Competition Research Inquiries and Experiences

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Contents

Foreword	7
<i>Magnus Rönn</i>	
The Architectural Competition: Research Inquiries and Experiences	9
<i>Jonas E. Andersson, Reza Kazemian, Magnus Rönn</i>	
PART ONE	
New Architectural Competitions: Communication and Dialogue	19
<i>Tom Danielsen</i>	
Experimenting with The Experimental Tradition, 1989-2009: On Competitions and Architecture Research	37
<i>Hélène Lipstadt</i>	
Promoting the Best: On Competition Rhetoric	77
<i>Elisabeth Tostrup</i>	
PART TWO	
Architectural Competitions: Empirical Observations and Strategic Implications for Architectural Firms	101
<i>Kristian Kreiner</i>	
Architectural Policies, Regulation and Jury Dilemmas in Architecture Competitions	127
<i>Magnus Rönn</i>	
Routine and Exceptional Competition Practice in Germany as published in Wettbewerbe Aktuell	153
<i>Torsten Schmiedeknecht</i>	
Innovative vs. Qualified: The Experience of Competitions in Contemporary Greece	181
<i>A. Kouzelis, I. Psilopoulou, A. Psilopoulos</i>	
Speaking of Architecture: A Study of the Jury's assessment in an Invited Competition	211
<i>Charlotte Svensson</i>	

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End User Participation as an Input to Shape the Brief in Architectural Competitions: A Threefold Translation Process <i>Marianne Stang Våland</i>	235	A “Qualculative” Inquiry into Urban Design Competitions <i>Van Wezemaal, Silberberger, Paisiou, Liang</i>	549
Creating Empathetic Architecture for the Frail Elderly: Socio-political Goals as Criteria in an Architectural Competition <i>Jonas E. Andersson</i>	261	Urban Design Competition versus Design Interactivity and Communicative Quality Judgment <i>Reza Kazemian</i>	561
Utzon’s Unbuilt Competitions Projects: Archetypal Images, Landmarks, Platforms and Additive Architecture <i>Jaime J. Ferrer Forés</i>	303		
Architectural Competitions, Post-Industrial Housing and Town Planning <i>Klas Ramberg</i>	331	PART THREE	
Collective Housing Competitions in Switzerland: The Parameter of Innovation in Architectural Conceptions <i>Antigoni Katsakou</i>	351	The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Design Competition, Washington DC, 1980-81 <i>Paul D Spreiregen</i>	581
The Building of Visions and the Municipal Client’s Role? Findings from an Investigation into Architectural Competitions 1900-1955 for Nordic Civic Projects, as Reconsidered in the Present <i>Gerd Bloxham Zettersten</i>	373	The Outcome of the Stockholm City Library Competition: A Study of Entries From Internationally Renowned Architects <i>Rasmus Wern</i>	605
Competitions on Modern Urban Centers Arne Jacobsen, Architect and Urban Planner <i>Yolanda Ortega Sanz</i>	395	Architecture Competitions from a German Viewpoint <i>Ragnar Uppman</i>	635
The Competition System <i>Stina Hagelqvist</i>	425		
The Winner Takes It All <i>Leif Östman</i>	451		
Competitions for a Better World <i>Beatriz Villanueva Cajide Francisco Javier Casas Cobo</i>	469		
Between Church and State The Competition for the Romanian Patriarchal Cathedral, Bucharest, 2002 <i>Andreea Mihalache</i>	491		
The Rhetoric of the Interwar Period The Competition for a New Office Building for the Norwegian Shipowners’ Association <i>Birgitte Sauge</i>	509		
What is Contemporary Architecture? Changes in Architectural Competitions and Architectural Discourse <i>Reidunn Rustad</i>	533		

Foreword

This publication is an anthology featuring 26 papers presented at the Conference on Architectural Competitions organised by the School of Architecture and the Built Environment at KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm from the 16th to the 18th October 2008.

What can be learnt from the Stockholm Conference? Firstly, whilst there is only limited research being carried out, at separate universities and institutions focusing on the study of architectural competitions in Europe, there is a vast potential for further research into how architectural firms, their affiliated architectural associations and the competition organisers can cooperate to improve competition processes and outcomes. Secondly, it has demonstrated that both researchers and professional practices can benefit from the development of robust, two-way communication aimed at both dispelling the myths associated with the architectural competition and to test its perceived realities.

For these reasons I hope this anthology will support the establishment and maintenance of a network that will promote communication between the various architectural competition stakeholders and further encourage the exchange of information and knowledge sharing. The conference has demonstrated that scientific research into the architectural competition can offer a multifaceted field of study of significant importance to university based researchers, practicing architects and urban planners alike. By learning from the Stockholm conference, we can reflect upon the various research challenges that will occur in the future and rethink the use of competitions as a design tool to facilitate the production of innovative ideas, improve standards and the commissioning of projects.

Magnus Rönn
Stockholm, November 2010

The Architectural Competition: Research Inquiries and Experiences

Jonas E Andersson, Reza Kazemian, Magnus Rönn

INTRODUCTION

The anthology you have in your hand is the result of a symposium on architectural competitions which took place in Stockholm, 16–18 October 2008. We are pleased to be able to present the papers from the symposium in an extensive anthology. We hope that these texts will inspire new research projects, critical reflections and contribute to building up long-term scientific knowledge about architectural competitions. This is a research field which covers many questions of major importance, both for practicing architects, architectural associations and architectural researchers looking for scientific knowledge.

There hasn't been much research in this field. Earlier conferences on architectural competitions have concluded with exhibits about the competition project and catalogues. This time it was the papers and their scientific quality that were the center of focus. The symposium in Stockholm was probably the first international scientific conference on architectural competitions in the Nordic countries and perhaps in the rest of Europe. We tried to verify this afterwards by checking English language registers, data bases and the Internet. We were surprised to find there hadn't been more scientific conferences and research in this field, especially when you consider that architectural competitions are a profession-based institution that has been in practice used for over 100 years in Europe. The texts in the anthology are divided into three sections:

KEY-NOTE SPEAKERS

The first section presents papers from three key-note speakers. Hélène Lipstadt begins the critical review. She takes up the critical discussion of architectural competitions as an object of scientific knowledge. The question is how the research field should be constructed. Then Elisabeth Tostrup examines competitions from a Nordic point of view. She focuses on the rhetoric used in competition material. The section is brought to a close by Tom Danielsen who looks into competitions from a professional point of view.

He uses his own competition experiences and examples to reflect upon competitions and the professional challenges they pose for architects.

SCIENTIFIC PAPERS

The second section of the anthology is made up of papers that have been peer reviewed in the same way as texts submitted to scientific journals dealing with architecture and urban design. Two reviewers have read, commented upon and judged the scientific quality of the papers in this section. After review and revision these papers met the specifications for publication in a scientific journal. One motive behind this procedure is the need of PhD students. Since several of these papers are part of their doctoral theses there are formal requirements for quality control which we try to carry out in this way. The other motive is the voluntary seeking of scientific quality which is rooted in our ambition to contribute to the research front.

ESSAYS

The third section in the anthology is essayistic. The literary essay form is well suited to architecture, which by nature is a humanistic area of knowledge. Here are papers well worth reading, which in some cases describe personal and practical experiences from competitions, but are not scientifically based on theory, method and research questions which should be answered. It has been educational, exciting and interesting for us to read these papers.

We hope this anthology will communicate multifaceted knowledge and at the same time be a reading experience. With these words we pass on the final quality control to the reader, who has the last word.

SYMPOSIUM

The symposium was organized by the School of Architecture and the Built Environment at the Royal Institute of Technology in cooperation with the association Nordic Architecture Research. The association publishes a scientific journal, *Nordic Journal of Architectural Research*, and arranges an annual symposium on architectural research. The idea for a conference on architecture and urban design competitions grew as a research programme was established at the School of Architecture in Stockholm. One of the PhD projects in our research programme that received a grant had competitions as a research subject. So we needed to meet colleagues and exchange experiences about research and competitions in architecture and urban design. This is the background for the symposium in Stockholm.

The purpose of the symposium was to clarify, critically review and discuss architectural competitions from different viewpoints. Both practicing

architects and researchers were welcome. The invitation outlined the four themes that were the framework for the symposium:

- *Architectural History Theme*: Background, establishment, demands, use and the development of roles for the architectural competition in the building sector.
- *Architectural Judging Theme*: Organization, judging, ranking and selecting an entry; how the jury appoints/selects a winner in architectural competitions and justifies/motivates its choice.
- *Professional Theme*: The importance of architectural competitions for developing best practice, professional skills, designing new ideas and as a way to purchase architects services.
- *Political Power and Urban Design Theme*: Architectural competitions as political issues in architecture and urban design, public spaces and town planning; competition as a way to express power, making decision for the future built environments.

An organization committee at the School of Architecture and the Built Environment was responsible for planning the symposium and was composed of Magnus Rönn, Reza Kazemian and Jonas E Andersson. A scientific committee of experienced researchers was appointed for the symposium to review the papers for the planned book.

SYMPOSIA ARRANGEMENTS

The organization followed a classical academic tradition. The method used for the symposium was made up of key-note speakers, parallel workshops, panel discussions and study tours. Two of the four key-note speakers invited were researchers in the field, and the other two were a practicing architect and a town planner. All the key-note speakers were invited to describe the symposium themes from their own expert positions. The persons were:

- Architect Tom Danielsen, partner in C.F. Møller, Århus
- Associate professor, Hèléne Lipstadt, researcher/ lecturer MIT, USA
- Architect Mikael Sundman, City planning Department, City of Helsinki
- Professor Elisabeth Tostrup, the Oslo School of Architecture and Design

The invitation resulted in papers and presentations from PhD students and senior researchers from Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, England, Spain, Switzerland, Greece and the USA. About 50 persons attended the symposium. The papers were discussed and managed in three parallel workshops during two days by the following workshop leaders: Stina Hagelqvist, Reza Kazemian and Inga Britt Werner. One workshop was devoted to papers written in the Nordic languages.

Each participant with papers was given 40 minutes to make their presen-

tations and critique. Two participants in each workshop were appointed as opponents by the organization committee. This was done to enable the opponents to read the papers beforehand and prepare questions so they could contribute to a qualified discussion in the respective workshops. The papers were also available to other participants using the password on the symposium's homepage.

The participants have been given the opportunity to revise their texts twice before publication, partly in consideration of the remarks from the opponents, partly after review by the symposium's scientific committee. Lynn Taylor-Edman edited the English language and translated the texts from Swedish to English.

After the workshops the symposium continued with panel discussions managed by Rolf Johansson. First the workshop leaders presented the debates to their groups (workshops). Then the key-note speakers presented their impressions of the symposium after which the public was given the opportunity to ask questions.

The symposium closed with a study tour of the City Library in Stockholm which was the object of a two-stage international architectural competition which attracted a lot of attention. It was an open competition in the first stage which became a competition on invitation in the second stage. The first stage resulted in 1,170 competition proposals which made this one of the biggest competitions ever. Six proposals were chosen for the second phase. Katarina Nilsson, competition secretary for Swedish Architects, was jury secretary. During the study tour she described the jury process and how they went about choosing a first-prize winner, the proposal that had the best suited solution to the competition's task. The jury's choice has been the object of much debate since then¹.

SOME OVERLAPPING PERSPECTIVES

We note that there are (at least) four distinct perspectives in architectural competitions which are described in varying degrees in the anthology. The competitions context can be summarized as follows:

RESEARCH

Firstly, we see an interest in architectural competitions as research object at universities and colleges. This is where we find the driving force behind our work with competitions. The symposium in Stockholm can be seen as an

1. The competition ended in fiasco. In October 2009 the arranger (Stockholm City) announced that the competition was not to be carried out because of financial reason.

expression of an academic interest in competitions. A growing number of PhDs devoted to architectural competition projects is another side of the scientific interest. Through the symposium we have been able to identify about 10 ongoing PhD projects in Europe, from newly started to almost finalized theses. These PhD projects vary from architectural history to a contemporary complex of problems. Competition in architecture and urban design is turning into a scientific field of its own. There is therefore a need for a research network, a critical group of researchers, who have architectural and urban design competitions as a common field of research at universities and colleges.

MARKET

Secondly, we note the interest for using competitions as a tool for negotiating architectural assignments. This is a market-orientation of the competition that is connected to the changes in regulations at a European level. The EU directives on project competitions (directive 2004/18/EC), regulations that have become laws in the member states, has lead to competitions being used as a means for public assigners to purchase services. The effect of this directive is that it is no longer possible to control the participation in competitions by limiting them geographically. The basic principle is that competitions should be open for everyone within the EU. Competitions by invitation are made available through prequalification. The regulations enable architectural competitions to serve as a tool that can be used in several ways; partly by providing and visualizing background material for decision-making, partly to encourage innovative solutions to design problems and partly as a method for selecting architects for public building assignments. The post-industrial picture of architectural competitions is marked by a market-oriented perspective that pays tribute to competition in the development of architecture and urban design.

POLITICS

Thirdly, there is a political interest in architectural competitions that coincides with deregulation and global competition. The European Council conclusions "on architecture: culture's contribution to sustainable development" (2008/C 319/05) can be seen as an expression of this politically oriented interest. The Resolution has contributed to an increasing number of member states have developed national policy documents.² Design and architecture appeared in the Nordic countries as a new political field during

2. For more information see European Forum for Architectural Policies, www.architecture-forum.net and www.sadas-pea.gr/EFAPhistory.pdf.

the 1990s when the architectural policy programme was drawn up by the department officials sometimes together with representatives from the architectural associations; Sweden, *Forms for the future* (1997), Finland, *Finland's Architectural Policy* (1998), Norway, *Surroundings as Culture: Action Programme for Aesthetics in Public Environment* (1992), *Aesthetics in Government Building and Constructions* (1997) and *Architecture.Now* (2009), Denmark, *Danish Architecture Policy* (1994), *Architecture 1996* and *A Nation of Architecture Denmark* (2007). In these documents the architectural competition is seen as a tool for quality improvement in design, architecture and town planning. The governments encourage public promoters to arrange competitions on a larger scale. A similar development with government-based architectural policy programmes is found elsewhere in Europe, among others in the Netherlands, *Space for Architecture* (1991), *Architecture of Space* (1996), *Constructing the Netherlands* (2001) and *Action Programme Space and Culture* (2005), Ireland, *Action on Architecture* (2002), Scotland, *BUILDING OUR LEGACY, Statement on Scotland's architecture policy* (2007), Germany, *Building Culture in Germany* (2001) and Austria, *The Austrian Report on Building Culture* (2006). In addition to these national programmes, cities, municipalities and large property companies have developed their own programme for quality in architecture and urban design.

PROFESSION

Fourthly, architectural competitions are in architects' own interest. The need for modern competition rules arose in Europe at the end of the 1800s when architects began to organize to better protect their own common interests. The industrial society generated new building tasks and competitions were used to find solutions for these new challenges. One of the associations' first tasks was to establish rules for architectural competitions and have them accepted internally among their own members and externally by promoters and other potential assigners. Competition regulations were established in the Nordic countries at the beginning of the 1900s and today the architect associations have become administrators of the competition as an institution. Such is the case in the Nordic countries. The associations' influence is expressed in the competition regulations which are generally accepted by the building sector, their own competition committees and the competition secretary who chooses representatives for the competition jury. The Nordic architect associations' usually appoint two representatives to the jury. Another expression of the architect associations' interest is reflected in the requirement that the competition programme must be approved by the associations. The associations vend their competition services to the organiz-

ers, from the programme brief to the administration of the competition procedures. The architect associations market the results of the competitions in their own publications and home pages. In this sense the competition contributes to building collective and professional knowledge.

In closing we would like to express our thanks for the financial support for the planning and realization of the symposium. Without that support we would not be able to present the results in a book. We received financial support from the following companies and research councils: ARQ; Foundation for architecture research, Estrid Ericssons Foundation, F-foundation, SWECO Architects, The Swedish Fortifications Agency, The Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning and finally The School of Architecture and the Built Environment at KTH Royal Institute of Technology.

We also wish to thank all those who participated in the symposium and reviewed the texts; the key-note speakers for their educational lectures; the competition secretary for her stimulating account of the jury work during the competition for the extension of the Asplund library; the workshop leaders who kept track of the presentations; the members of the scientific committee who reviewed the papers; the translator and language reviewer; the symposium participants whose contributions we may now acquaint ourselves with. And lastly, our thanks to the publisher of this book, Axl Books.

Stockholm, June 2009
The Organization Committee

Part One

Abstract

This paper is based on professional experience from competing in architecture. Different types of competitions and new challenges are described in the beginning. After this the paper presents two larger architectural competitions as cases by a professional point of view. The Danish firm C.F.Møller has carried out the entries in dialog with the client. The first case is an extension of a museum in London, Natural History Museum, the Darwin Center. The second case is a competition for a new university hospital in Aarhus. The main conclusion of the paper is that the competition contributes to innovation and architectural quality.

Keywords

Dialog, communication, new challenges, different types of competition

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New Architectural Competitions: Communication and Dialogue

Tom Danielsen

INTRODUCTION

An architectural competition does neither concern prestige nor academic theories. It concerns creating the best result within the stated limits as regards financial circumstances as well as time. Or what is even more important: An architectural competition concerns architectural quality – not only for the client, but also for all the users and for the neighbourhood of the project in question. This article describes the purpose and history of Danish architectural competitions. Furthermore it describes new types of architectural competitions. In this context and in general you will find an analysis of the 4 challenges of architectural competitions in the future – national as well as international. Finally and most importantly two case stories are described. The chosen case stories are two large and very important architectural competitions for Arkitektfirmaet C. F. Møller A/S and both launched as dialogue based competitions.

In spite of the fact that both competitions were dialogue based, the 2 competitions were quite different as regards the client's competition programme. One programme was very detailed and the other hardly existing – the programming of the building was to take place during the dialogue phase. Subsequently it has been observed that all the suggestions in both of the competitions are most broad-spectrum, visionary and inventive.

Thus demonstrated the differences in size and extent of the two competition programmes and discussion papers had no effect on the architectural quality and inventiveness of the projects. In the two case stories it is notable that the dialogue based competition may generate competition solutions beyond the “safe-play” solutions of traditional architectural competitions. However, a precondition of a successful development is a client who is interested in and qualified for raising the level of the answers in the dialogue phase. The dialogue based competition is a splendid competition type if the conditions are prepared correctly and if the dialogue phase is organized soberly and quality-consciously.

DANISH ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITIONS: PURPOSE, CONQUEST AND HISTORY

In Denmark, a number of formal rules of organization of architectural competitions have had to be followed since 1907. During these past hundred years – and before that time as well – architectural competitions have been the “place” for development and debate and nothing has had more influence on the quality of Danish architecture than architectural competitions. Among the institutions that during the past hundred years have made use of the AA Competition Secretariat are: local authorities, county councils, government authorities, art galleries, banks, schools, education and research centres, housing associations, building societies, private companies and foundations.

ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITIONS AND THE ARCHITECTS ASSOCIATION IN DENMARK

Before the rules were introduced competitions took place on very different terms, and in 1907 members of the Architects’ Association in Denmark – AA (AA is the organization for all Danish architects educated in accordance with the EU directive 85/385/EEC) thought the time had come to establish a clear framework for competitions. The result was the adoption of the AA Competition Rules, the purpose of which is to ensure that architectural competitions are organized in a way that is satisfactory to all parties involved while at the same time giving the organizer the optimal response.

The number of competitions held each year has of course depended on economic trends. However, following the adoption of the Services Directive by the European Union in 1993 and rapid growth in the Danish economy, there was an almost explosive increase in the number of competitions organized. The Services Directive stipulates that architectural and engineering services supplied to government authorities for which the fee value exceeds 162,293 euros must be offered for competitive tendering in all EU member states. The sum is 249,682 euros for projects initiated by local authorities and other public-sector contracting authorities.

About 20 percent of the competitions organized by AA have been open competitions, while the rest have been restricted competitions, the typical number of architects invited to participate in these being five or six. In addition, a small number of non-registered competitions have been held each year for the design of minor projects. The competition conditions applying to these competitions have been somewhat unclear. Furthermore there are Design-and-Build competitions, which are not considered to be architectural design competitions since they are aimed at developers who appoint architects as sub-consultants.

Almost all major building commissions in Denmark and many major urban development projects have been the result of architectural competition. The AA Competition Secretariat participates in the majority of architectural competitions in Denmark. The Secretariat offers advice and assistance to public- and private-sector clients about matters relating to competition procedures throughout the competition period – from the first initial planning and the formulation of the competition brief to the jury’s assessment of the entries submitted.

The AA also appoints architects to sit on the jury. Usually two or three architects are appointed. The actual number depends on whether it is an open or a restricted competition and on the scope and complexity of the competition assignment. As opposed to general practice in several other European countries, the AA has made it a strict rule that the client’s representative must have the majority of seats in the competition jury.

It used to be an invariable rule in Danish architectural competitions that entries should be submitted anonymously, but in recent years various deviations from the rule of anonymity have applied in some restricted competitions. Concurrent with an increase in the number of consultancy assignments and the development of new approaches to collaboration in the building sector, it has proved expedient – particularly for clients – to open up a dialogue between competition entrants and jury members to ensure that the building design will take place on the best possible basis. Consequently the AA has waived the rule of anonymity on certain conditions, one such condition being that competition must always aim to ensure equal treatment of entrants as well as good architectural quality.

NEW TYPES OF ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITIONS

New types of competitions are developed and tested on an ongoing basis, for example competitions with several winning entries and subsequent negotiation with the winning entrants; restricted competitions with 12-15 entrants and the award of prizes rather than fixed fees; interactive, internet-based competitions; or conceptual competitions in which the focus is on the overall architectural concept.

However, the typical approach remains a restricted competition with five participating teams. In many such competitions the entrants are requested to submit a fee tender as well. Almost all competitions ask for complete consultants’ services, which means a form of consultation by which a consultant undertakes or group of independent consultants in a single joint agreement undertake to perform all, or the most important parts of, the architectural and engineering consultation work as well as landscape design work involved.

In most countries, including Denmark, it is difficult for newly started architectural practices to obtain design contracts through restricted competitions, since the number of entrants invited is generally limited to five or six and since the focus is often on teams that can provide complete consultancy services.

The AA always suggests that the client invites a wide range of architectural practices to submit entries in a competition, including young and talented architects. If requested by the client, the AA appoints one or two independent advisers to assist the client in selecting entrants for a specific competition. It should be noted, however, that the AA in no way interferes in the actual selection of entrants.

Architectural competitions are held because many years' experience shows that they ensure architectural quality for clients and contribute to innovation and development in the architectural profession. To this should be added that most architectural practices in Denmark have been established on the basis of a first prize won in an architectural competition that subsequently led to an actual design and planning assignment. In other words, architectural competitions are a precondition for the generation of "growth layers" in the architectural profession in Denmark and consequently for continued development of Danish architecture.

ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITIONS AND THE FUTURE

In the future AA as well as others authorities that invite tenders will make use of far more forms of architectural competitions. The right form of architectural competition is always based on an individual choice. The various forms of architectural competitions are:

Programme dialogue competitions

Competition based on dialogue among pre-qualified architect practices.

The starting point of the dialogue is a precise programme.

Multi-winners competitions

Several winners are appointed – subsequently they shall work together.

Charter 99 competitions ('dogme'-competitions)

This form of competition is open or invited. It corresponds to the film industry's dogma concept. The carcass and the "space" are the essential points of the proposals.

Competitions with the possibility of adding more phases

May be a combination of an open and an invited competition. Divided into phases. The client may choose more phases for further illustration.

Conceptual competitions

Also called "low cost competitions". In several respects the level of the competition is reduced to an absolute minimum. The idea is in focus.

Extended invited competitions

More than the usual 5-8 architectural practices are invited to submit entries.

Competitions with no anonymous final judgment

Initially the competition is anonymous. When the final suggestions have been chosen the names will be revealed and the final judgment is not anonymous.

Interactive competitions

All entrants produce computer animated 3-D models which are basis for decisions made by the judging committee.

Competitions based on dialogue

Competitions without a programme. Very early in the process a working relationship between the client and the invited architectural practices is planned.

Design & build competitions

This all-inclusive contract competition is not an architectural competition but a market oriented competition.

Property sales competitions

This form of competition is not a real architectural competition as it addresses investors, construction firms (who subsequently work together with architectural practices).

Parallel commissions

A number of architectural practices are asked to analyse a site / location and reveal the possibilities of the site. Not anonymous.

Open ideas competition

The classical open ideas competition illustrates a wide range of solutions of the assignment. Also new talents get the chance of submitting a proposal for the architecture of the future. This form of competition entries is anonymous and may well be carried out in phases.

THE FOUR CHALLENGES OF ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITIONS

It is obvious that in the future four challenges in particular, in well-defined areas will emerge:

1. THE FIRST CHALLENGE IS VISION

Without a constant renewal and visionary testing of new competition forms and without a constant development by adaptations and adjustments the

existing competition forms will not be able to maintain their first place as “development laboratory” – the proper forum of renewal. In the future interdisciplinary working relationships between the architect and the users of the project will be vital.

Other contributors to the process could be interdisciplinary partnerships with relevant occupational groups such as sociologists, biologists, psychologists, artists and others. In fact it is vital to bring the competition process into focus. A more sliding process may be the object – a new method where the entrants compete for programme and process after which an elimination race could take place to reveal the most powerful architectural idea. The inevitable demand must be not to cut out the vision. In order to constantly stimulate and encourage the growing mass of young talents it is very important that existing wild card arrangements comprise all forms of architectural competitions.

2. THE SECOND CHALLENGE IS INTERNATIONALIZATION.

In spite the fact that the adoption of the Services Directive by the European Union in 1993 has caused a positive and extensive internationalization among architects it is still advisable to improve the internationalization in other architectural competition correlations. The schools of architecture already encourage the internationalization as they exchange teachers and students.

The organizations and institutions of this trade need to establish new and develop existing international networking. The purpose could be to create contact between architectural practices in different countries. A data bank on the Internet with information about members/architects and their international competences could be the instrument for sharing knowledge about international issues. The fact that architects and architectural practices compete with each other should not prevent the sharing of knowledge and working together for common good, nor should it prevent strengthening the reputation and position of architecture in general in the international arena. Most importantly the architects need to shake off national chauvinism, nepotism and narrow-mindedness.

One consequence of this challenge could be a demand that all national and international architectural competitions should be in English. Another possible effect is an increased participation of international judges in national competitions. The competitions may also be arranged / divided into phases.

Sustainability in the building industry has been a very important topic in recent years and in the future it will be of even further interest and subject to legislation. In the light of the demand for internationalization of the architectural competitions the solution is to form the basis of the architectural competitions with homogeneity and a common understanding of the term sustainability.

An example is the text below from a letter sent from an eminent British architect to The Times in connection with the Danish architect Arne Jacobsen being commissioned to design a new college for Oxford University in 1958: “It is the worst insult to British architecture since 11th century when a Frenchman had been entrusted with the rebuilding of Canterbury Cathedral”. Concrete and accessible suggestions to improve internationalization: - All national and international architectural competitions are in English. -The competitions may be arranged / divided into phases. Participation of international judges in national competitions.

3. THE THIRD CHALLENGE IS THE JUDGING COMMITTEE

One of many fine anecdotes about the history of architecture is how the winner of the large international architectural competition in 1957 for the opera in Sydney was found. Early on during the evaluation phase architect Jørn Utzon’s proposal had been discarded. However, this decision was made without all the judges being present.

Due to a delay of his flight The Finnish/American architect Eero Saarinen was prevented from participating in the initial meetings. As he arrives at Sydney he asks to see all the proposals before making the final decision. Saarinen had an eye for quality and he immediately saw that Utzon’s drawings revealed a masterpiece. The rest is history and ever since the world has agreed with Saarinen. Saarinen was a technical judge – and before as well as after the Sydney Opera technical judges have increased the architectural quality. The act of judging is a vital element of the architectural competition. In some architectural competitions several judges may immediately be accepted as part of the judging committee whereas in other architectural competitions the judges may need to be strengthened in their communication and assertive skills. Thus it is very important that organizations and those who arrange architectural competitions ensure by way of education and examination that the judges are qualified for this important process. It is also important that the judging committee is made up of multidisciplinary representatives in order to ensure a combination of new ideas and innovation with experience and a good eye for architectural cultural heritage.

4. THE FOURTH CHALLENGE IS THE COMPETITION MATERIAL

A problem which is always relevant in connection with architectural competitions is on the one hand to limit the competition material with regard to quantity and nature of the material (in order to make all competitors equal) and on the other hand to provide each competitor with the best possibilities of communicating with the judging committee.

Particularly when it comes to digital and 3-D material, some aspects still need to be finalised. Questions like: – What are the demands on the judges' software and – not least – the judges capability of using it? – Does the new digitalized competition material influence the reading and the presentation of the competition project?

The tendency is towards more services without an increased fee. A possible solution may be more small architectural competitions or competitions divided into phases and the judging committee giving a prize for a winner concept / a winner idea and not for a complete winner project. Or a combination of these possibilities with the architectural competition based on dialogue.

DIALOGUE BASED COMPETITION CASE STORY I: DARWIN CENTRE – NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, LONDON

DESCRIPTION

The Natural History Museum is one of London's most treasured buildings. The new extension of the museum, the Darwin Centre Phase Two, is in its final design stages and is expected to be opened in 2009. In the design of the Darwin Centre Phase 2, a compelling and strong architectural image communicates the vast and unparalleled entomological and botanical collections of the Natural History Museum. The collections have been conceptually translated into the 'cocoon', which is the inner protective envelope of the archive. Unable to see the entire cocoon from any single angle, its curves betray its unseen dimensions as the mind completes its geometry. The shape and size of the cocoon provides the visitor with a palpable understanding of the scale of these unparalleled collections. The public access to the scientific core of the Darwin Centre takes the form of a visitor path up, over, around and through the archives and laboratories. This path gives the public the opportunity to explore and probe a sampling of the world-class working scientific research facilities, while allowing the bulk of the laboratory and archive areas to function without interruption. As visitors and staff move through the Darwin Centre, they will encounter a series of spatial hierarchies and dynamic contrasts. One experiences the building's architecture and the scientific activity within, from many vantage points ensures a building that is dynamic and vibrant. We propose one further experience at this point: a connection from the café via a roof terrace into the top level of the West Tower. This existing space can be renovated into one of the most stunning spaces in the Natural History Museum and possibly, the city of London.

All Darwin Centre areas must achieve the NHM accessibility aspirations while fully complying with current design standards, regulations and access norms. Key areas of focus are: entrances, orientation, horizontal circulation, stairs, lifts, signage, facilities, toilets, and travel distances. This includes required facilities and vertical access cores within appropriate distances from the initial point of access.

Our design approach to access for all visitors to the Darwin Centre, able and disabled, is intended to be holistic. The experience of all visitors should be comparable, and the aim is to avoid any obviously special design measures for dealing with disabilities, ensuring however that the design provides an integrated solution equally accessible to all. Our approach may be summarised as "Highway for Everybody".

A notable example of this approach will be the Explore 2 experience, in which visitors are taken into the heart of the collections, research and curatorial areas and given an insight into the scale, breadth and importance of the research of the Darwin Centre. Instead of escalators and stairs as the principal means of vertical circulation, supplemented with special lifts for the disabled, lifts and ramps will provide the same access for all visitors to all parts of the Explore 2 experience.

To achieve this, the design proposes twin 'scenic' 13 passenger lifts and ramps of very low gradient (approx. 1:22) to ensure that the experience is comfortable and interesting for able and disabled alike.

MASTER PLANNING ISSUES

The NHM will be setting priorities for future access issues as an integral part of the ongoing Master planning study. The design of the Darwin Centre Phase 2 will support and inform a number of access issues on the western side of the NHM campus. The present routes for disabled access to DC1 and DC2 from Exhibition Road (Earth Galleries) or the north service entrance are too remote to serve as viable, long-term solutions.

A number of options for disabled access to the Darwin Centre will be investigated. Staff access is possible directly from the outside via the lift core situated at the end of the colonnade (the northeast core). It could also be feasible to have disabled vehicular access from the service road area on the north end of the site. On grade access may also be possible from the terrace area on the west façade, although the consequences of vehicular access in this area has yet to be resolved.³

3. Architect: C.F. Moller, architects, Engineer: Arup (Structurel), Fulcrum Consulting (Services), Turner and Townsend (Cost)

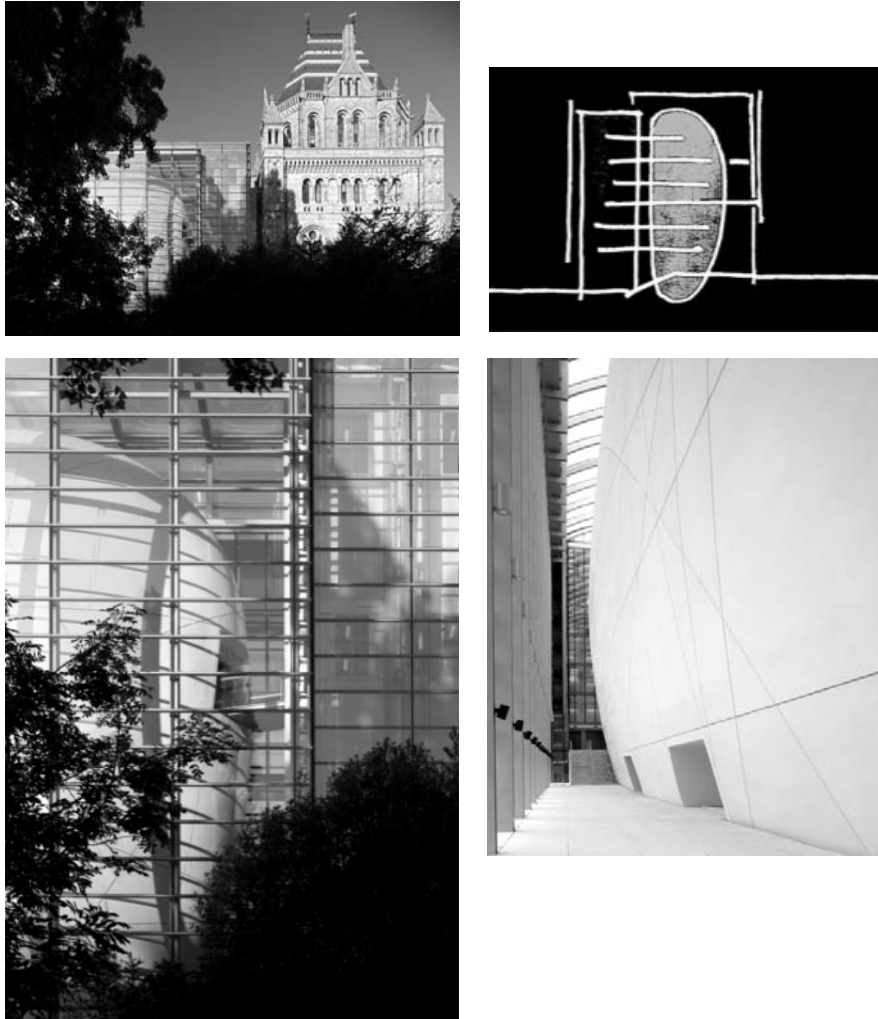


FIG.1: Illustrations from the extension of the Darwin Centre. Top: Images showing how the new facade are intended to communicate with the old museum. Bottom left: Sketch of the design idea behind the "cocoon". Bottom right: The meeting between the new and old buildings from a distance. Source: C.F Møller Architects.

COMMUNICATION AND DIALOGUE

In 2001 59 international architectural practices applied to become qualified for an architectural competition for The Darwin Centre. Arkitektfirmaet C. F. Møller A/S was among the five architectural practices (the others were: 3 practices from London and 1 practice from Spain) chosen to participate in a dialogue based competition which we won. The written competition material on which the dialogue process was to be based, was very scanty:

- A working paper called "Design aspirations" (see below)
- A working paper called "Our Vision for the Darwin Centre" (see below)
- And finally a working paper called "The Award process" (see below).

THE WORKING PAPER "DESIGN ASPIRATION":

The Darwin Centre must be designed to the highest architectural standards and become a model for new museum buildings in the 21st century. The new building will:

- Respond to the significant urban character of its central London location and integrate with Waterhouse's original Natural History Museum building, an outstanding example of 19th century British architecture
- Optimise visual and physical access to the entire collection whilst ensuring the highest standards of research, environmental protection and operational efficiency
- Be a highly efficient, flexible and sustainable design that reduces whole life and maintenance costs and provides value for money
- Maximise integration with its neighbours and surrounding public spaces with a confident design that reflects the spirit, technology and materials of its time.

THE WORKING PAPER "OUR VISION FOR THE DARWIN CENTRE":

The Darwin Centre is the most significant development that The Natural History Museum has undertaken since it moved to its present site in South Kensington in 1881.

It is a new and unique Life Sciences complex, the scale and nature of which have not been attempted anywhere else in the world. The completed Darwin Centre will put virtually all the animal and plant collections of the Museum on display (at present, less than one percent of the Museum's whole collection is on display).

The Darwin Centre consists of two separate building projects. The first phase, which is nearly complete, has been fully founded at £27 million. It will be fully operational by 2002, housing 20 million animals, research

laboratories and visitor facilities. The second phase, which is the subject of an international design competition and fundraising campaign, will be realised by 2006.

Project Objectives

The new project is the second phase of the project and will achieve three main objectives:

- safeguard the world's finest scientific collection of 28 million insects and 6 million preserved plants in secure and environmentally stable conditions that will be accessible for research
- reveal what is currently hidden from public view and permit interaction between visitors and Museum scientists to enable the public to understand the value of the collection, its associated research, and science as a process
- create modern, high quality facilities for Museum scientists and visiting professional scientists to enable them to conduct research on the collections.

THE WORKING PAPER "THE AWARD PROCESS":

The candidates who express an interest in being considered as tenderers will be assessed on the material returned, and it is intended that the Selection Panel will choose 5 of those candidates to be invited to a formal tender process.

Those selected for tender will be reimbursed a fixed sum of £10,000 towards their costs of providing a full tender response.

The Selection Panel, supported by the Technical Committee, will consider the tenders and make recommendations to the Trustees regarding the award of an appointment.

The Architectural Selection Panel will be making a recommendation to the Museum Trustees. The Trustees are the final selection authority.

We had four meetings with the client – one in Denmark the others in London. The dialogue participants – the committee – consisted of seven users of the Museum i.e. the director of the museum and six scientists working at the museum. At the final dialogue meeting – the presentation of the proposals – the committee was supplemented by an architect, a consulting engineer and the trustees.

OBSERVATIONS AND REFLECTIONS

After the competition it is obvious that the client as required has had a varied elucidation of this difficult assignment which probably would not have

been the result if a detailed competition programme had existed. The diversity of the four proposals clearly proves that the "scientific" committee – the client's dialogue committee – did not reveal ideas from one architectural practise to another. This as promised at first meeting, however, it could have been a promise hard to keep. All four proposals show great audacity in their way to solve the many technical and architectural problems. The mere fact that this is an extension to a listed national treasure might have caused architectural fear of contact. That was not the case in any of the four proposals.

The adjustment of the judging committee at the final meeting i.e. the replacement of some of the scientist by an architect and an engineer appeared in practice to be appropriate as well as adequate and the technical judges ensured to focus on and discuss problems of technical and architectural nature during the judging phase. The dialogue based process lasted for approximately 7 months.

DIALOGUE BASED COMPETITION, CASE STORY II: NEW UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL IN AARHUS (DNU)

DESCRIPTION

The large hospital complex is organised like a town, with a hierarchy of neighbourhoods, streets and squares providing the basis for a diverse, dynamic, and green urban area.

It is the biggest hospital construction project in Danish history, the New University Hospital in Aarhus, will be built onto the existing Aarhus University Hospital, Skejby, to form a combined hospital complex. The total floor area will be approximately 400,000 m². The New University Hospital in Aarhus will be the size of a Danish provincial town, and will also be the largest workplace in the city of Aarhus with more than 9000 employees. The hospital is intended to function both as a university hospital, regional centre and basic hospital for citizens in the region. The large hospital complex will be organised like a town, with a hierarchy of neighbourhoods, streets and squares providing the basis for a diverse, dynamic and green urban area. The hospital has been designed to flexibly accommodate future requirements with regard to technology, forms of treatment and working practices, and it will also bring about a considerable qualitative lift in both the experiences of patients and the working conditions of the staff. The task will stretch over the next 10 years.⁴

4. Consultants: C.F. Moller Architects, CUBO, Ramboll, Alectia, Soren Jensen engineers

COMMUNICATION AND DIALOGUE

After the pre-qualification four teams of consultants were chosen to participate in a competition for the assignment The New University Hospital in Aarhus. The four teams were quite large and consisted of many companies within the following occupational groups: architects, landscape architects, engineers, medico technicians, information technology etc. All the teams had considerable international references and Danish/foreign partnerships.

The client had made extensive preparatory studies for the dialogue based competition and programme describing the break-up of the hospital city into seven communities was available. The 400,000 m² – the largest hospital in Scandinavia – should accommodate these seven communities of individual subjects together with floorage for research and education. The dialogue process followed this time table:

Themes for Discussion at Dialogue Meetings – (3 hours per meeting)

First Dialogue Meeting

- Organization and working relations
- Objectives and limits

Second Dialogue Meeting

- Follow-up on first dialogue meeting
- Project and process control
- Contractual relations
- Objectives and limits

Third Dialogue Meeting

- Follow-up on second dialogue meeting
- Objectives and limits
- Adjustment of the substance of the quotation

EU procedure – DNU – The New University Hospital in Aarhus

- Form of Procedure: Competitive dialogue
- Award criterion: The most economically advantageous tender
- Sub criterion 1: Solution of the assignment – 50 %
 - Function
 - Logistics
 - Architecture
 - Flexibility
 - Technical skills, technology and environment
 - Total financial circumstances
- Sub criterion 2: Organization, working relations and process – 30 %
- Sub criterion 3: Price – 20 %

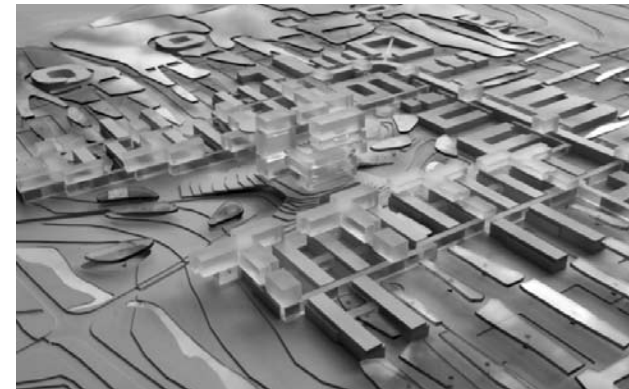
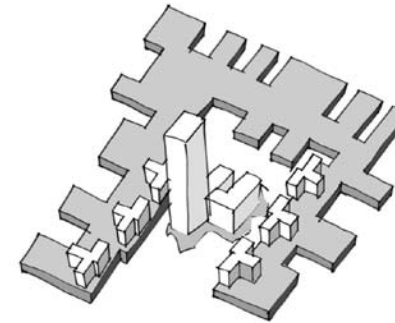


FIG. 2: The New University Hospital in Aarhus. Both the idea sketch and the model above show the design principal for the plant as a whole. The lower illustrations show how the entry is supposed to be experienced as a built environment from an eye level perspective in the future.

OBSERVATIONS AND REFLECTIONS

The purpose of the dialogue competition was to find a “continuous consultancy team” i.e. client’s consultancy and design in one total contract for the entire hospital complex – the largest contract in Danish history for a construction assignment. This is the first time the term “continuous consultancy team” is seen.

The client wanted a small client organization with a few external consultants within the fields of legal, financial and technical matters attached. These consultants have been characterized as “the third eye” indicating the client’s extensive confidence in “the continuous consultancy team”.

The four proposals / projects received by the client after the dialogue process were of vast dimensions and quite detailed.

The four teams had made a gigantic piece of work – a staking not corresponding with the announced remuneration.

Light was thrown on the assignment in all its aspects by the proposals. The dialogue process and the competition programme had not narrowed down the inventiveness and the creativity. On the contrary it was obvious that the entrants had shown great audacity trying to comply with the client’s wish for a hospital of the future and genius architecture at the same time.

Subsequently the competitive dialogue has been evaluated by the client who draws the conclusion that the dialogue based competition has been a success. In the report it is mentioned among other things that the dialogue ensured:

- Quality assurance of the tender documents
- Improved understanding of the assignment as a continuous consultant
- Improved understanding of the requirements of the project
- Few questions to the tender documents
- The best outline solution – a good basis of the future work
- The best competences and the best organization for the project at a competitive price
- Inspiration from other quotations
- No complaints

As in the other case story, Darwin Centre II, the judging committee was supplemented in the final phase by two architects appointed by The Architects Association and one engineer appointed by The Association of Engineers.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Architectural competitions have been of great importance to the architectural quality and development in regional as well as international respect.

Architectural research practically is the competition phase and the working method of the architectural trade has always been and will remain empirical.

In recent years the term Evidence Based Design is mentioned in connection with the architectural trade. The method is good and a necessary support when making a decision in the increasingly complicated processes. However, it is not possible to maintain the artistic element in the architectural method in an EBD matrix. It might limit the development of the architectural trade. The rational and the irrational are inseparable terms – you cannot have the one without the other.

The most important innovative force of the architectural trade is the architectural competition.

The never settled discussion on democracy, art and architecture is an important and conclusive topics of our time in the field of architecture. And it will not be more simple in the future – the discussion will on the part of art and architecture in a democracy will not arrive at a conclusion as the discussion is an important part of the influence of art and architecture on the democracy.

In other social systems the social norms and standards by definition were common or the final authority whereas democracy is a system is characterized by being neither common nor the final authority. Thus the dialogue is of increasing importance during the judgment phase of architectural competitions. The open, public and anonymous architectural competition is still justified and will still result in surprising innovation which may never have come to light in other ways than in this form of a “one-way statement”.

The dialogue based competitions reflect our time – demands for user influence, democracy, complicated programmes and processes.

Common for all types of competitions are: the inspiring dialogue and communication, the pictures, the writing, the speech, the senses etc. All these elements – separately or in a combination – depend on a homogeneous and fair basis of the competition. The success of future architectural competitions depend on these elements!

Abstract

I propose that competition researchers enjoy an affirmative relationship with competitions which, if unrecognized and unavowed, prevents their understanding the logic of practice of the essentially illogical event of competing and impedes constructing the competition as a truly scientific object. This results in serious deleterious consequences for competition research as an emerging discipline. The notion of affirmation is taken from formal logic and indicates an acceptance of a relationship of terms as they are stated. A review of my 1989 theorization of the competition as an “experimental tradition” and of analyses by a scholar/critic and several competition researchers supports the conclusion that the belief in competition as a disinterested act subordinates scholarship to preconstructions or *representations*, in the sense of the unquestioned beliefs shared by a social group, including those of both ordinary knowledge and scholarly knowledge. Conceiving competitions as disinterested displays the intellectualism which constructs ordinary practice on the model of scholarly thinking and reiterates architects’ own inherent intellectualism.

I argue that exorcising preconstructions (the “as-it-is”) is the precondition for the construction of a scientific object and propose that Pierre Bourdieu’s sociology of the field of cultural production and its insistence on “thinking in terms of field” enables a break with the affirmative relation. Conceiving the field as a space of objective relations requires relational thinking, which brings with it the necessary rupture with preconstructions. The competition then ceases to be seen by the scholar “as-it-is,” and since that “as it is” includes the relationship of terms as stated of the architect’s and scholar’s belief in the disinterestedness of the competition, affirmation ends, and competition research can begin to establish itself as a scientific endeavor. The utility and scientific value of thinking a competition in terms of field is illustrated by an analysis of the competition for the “Berlin Jewish Museum” (1989), won by Daniel Libeskind.

The focus of the analysis is on the interplay of objective forces and positions that his position in the competition thought in terms of field and the *modus operandi* that allowed him to win that particular competition game by not doing what is usually done to win one. I explain how in this case, as in all competitions, the competition and its space of possibles, including that of representations of competitions as breakthrough events, created both the creator and the project created.

Keywords

Epistemology of Competition Research. Bourdieu. Liebeskind.

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Experimenting with The Experimental Tradition, 1989-2009: On Competitions and Architecture Research

Hélène Lipstadt

A scientific practice that fails to question itself does not, properly speaking, know what it does. Pierre Bourdieu, 1992

THE CHALLENGE OF THE COMPETITION AS A SCIENTIFIC OBJECT

In 2005, a group of researchers, designers, government officials, and critics met at Princeton University to assess the problem of the relative underutilization of competitions in the United States and the advisability of looking to Europe for a solution. The counsel of the internationally acclaimed British critic and academic Deyan Sudjic was sought. Sudjic first bestowed the highest praise on the competition’s place in society:

Public architecture can be understood as a reflection of a culture’s view of itself A competition is seen as a clear way of acknowledging that understanding and the importance of architecture’s cultural role [It] implies the use of experts with no personal or professional stake in a project to help make decisions according to the defined criteria, of which one is architectural excellence (Sudjic 2006, 55).

He then delivered a message that, given the purpose of the meeting, was certainly meant as a provocation. The “architecture world[’s].... received wisdom,” its most cherished beliefs about competitions, he proposed, were in need of “interrogat[ing].” The main obstacle to that interrogation were the beliefs themselves.

Competitions are regarded within the architectural world almost as motherhood and apple pie issues, concepts that nobody could reasonably question, presented as good deeds in an unkind world. They are understood as an expression of a disinterested commitment to quality.... The received wisdom [is] that competitions are uncomplicatedly good things (Sudjic 2006, 55).

This astute observer of the architectural world (and occasional juror and knowledgeable reader of the history of competitions)¹ appears to have leveled three charges concerning the competition “concept.” The burden of his argument is best weighed when it is read in reverse. First, there exists a “received wisdom” about competitions. Second, according to that received wisdom, they are “uncomplicatedly good things” that are believed to be “expressions of a disinterested commitment to quality.” Third, and as a result, the “competition concept” is like “motherhood and apple pie,” an issue that is never “reasonably questioned.” Although there is no evidence that Sudjic’s remarks were aimed at competition researchers, it is useful for those of us gathered here to act as if they were. Quite inadvertently, he has challenged us to consider the scientificity of our questioning of the competition “concept,” in other words, to ponder if we have constructed that “concept” (which we will henceforth refer to as the competition) as a scientific object.

There can be no better time or place than here and now to give serious consideration to constituting the competition in architecture (in which I encompass urban design, and, with some need for future discussion, certain kinds of urban planning) as a scientific object. Our meeting may well be the first international scientific conference devoted to scientific research about competitions. Such a ‘first’ designates us as an emerging discipline, one that is not only forging its instruments and defining its legitimate problems, but also striving to establish its position among other fields of research. The epistemological questions of the nature of our object and the scientificity of our methods of research are matters in which we all have a stake [fig. 1].

A comparison of competition research with that of research on the subject of authorship in architecture can help us understand our situation.² There are both substantial and situational parallels between our research task as I see it and that of the researcher on authorship, as it has recently been described by Tim Anstey, Katja Grillner, and Rolf Hughes, members of a research group at the KTH. Substantially, in both cases, researchers must account for the existence and “survival” of a concept and activity that their research has established as, respectively, “contradictory” and “conceptually uncertain.”

1. Sudjic drew on original archival material when writing about the competition for the United States Capitol and the British House of Commons competition, 2006, 53–54. He was a juror in the international competition for the design of the Polish National Gallery of Contemporary Art, Warsaw (2006) and the international architectural competition for the design of London’s Aquatic Sports Complex (2005), <http://www.kingston.ac.uk/fada/research/sudjic/publications.html>, accessed November 12, 2008.
2. My discussion of the issues of authorship in architecture is indebted to Anstey, Grillner and Hughes 2007, and to the research project, “Architecture and its Mythologies,” www.auctor.se, accessed as <http://auctor.se/> April 10, 2009.



FIG. 1: Nordic Symposium Conference Participants at the City Library (Gunnar Asplund, competition, 1905; construction, 1923), October 2008. Courtesy, Angelos Psilopoulos, TEI Athens/ Interior Architecture & Design Department, photographer.

Structurally, they face identical problems, for in both cases, they must contend with what Sudjic called “received wisdom” and what they call “apocryphal stories” that “bind” the architectural group together.³ There is, however, one highly significant difference. Anstey, Grillner and Hughes have made a convincing case that research on authorship in architecture can benefit by taking into account the problematization of the concept of the literary author. After all, it is in the context of literature that the modern concept of the author emerged; it is in the context of literary studies that Roland Barthes proclaimed the latter’s death, Michel Foucault declared all authors to be a “function”; and it is in the context of those proclamations some of the contemporary challenges to the notion of the architectural author arose. Even more fundamentally, as the KTH research team

has shown, today the stakes for researchers in both literature and architecture are identical, because the research conundrum is identical; for despite the aforementioned “conceptual uncertainties” and along with “abdications and crises, ... architecture, like literature, persist; architects, like literary authors, continue to flourish” (Anstey, et al. 2007, 7–9).

One need only compare the KTH research team’s cited bibliography⁴ to that available to the competition researcher⁵ to see the distinction (in the sense of difference and dignity) that the connection to literature creates between the position of the two research questions. Beside a rich body of scholarship and an established historical ‘time line’, researchers who take the questioning of the author as their object receive the following without necessarily seeking them: well-honed instruments; collectively avowed and legitimated problems; consensually designated points of scholarly disagreement, and, since the time of Barthes and Foucault, a consecrated research object.⁶

3. For “survival,” “stories,” “conceptual uncertainty,” and “ambiguity,” see Anstey, et al. 2007, 12, 6–7. Barry Bergdoll, quoting William Robert Ware, described the problem for competition researchers as one of the competition’s “survival,” Bergdoll 1989, 21.
4. Anstey, et al. 2007, 175–176, specifically, notes 4–14.
5. For a recent bibliography of scientific work on competitions, see Nicolas 2007, 197–198.
6. That transformation is studied in Pinto 1986 and Fabiani 1989.

Perhaps more fundamentally, while research on authorship brings out the similarities between architecture and other forms of cultural production, the study of the competition brings out its singularity. In the space of cultural production, there is plenty of competing and prize contests (some of them involving performances), but none, to my knowledge, require the competitors to submit a fully thought-out work created *ex-novo* for future possession by a person or institution other than the competitor. That kind of competition is peculiar to architecture, and, when compared to the activities of other groups of competitors and authors, peculiar, *tout court*.

By the same token, competitions set architects apart from members of the other so-called liberal professions. We have learned from Dr. Kristian Kreiner at this Symposium that every competition, including those in the European Community that are now designed to lessen the burden on competitors, is a process of “participation and choice” that makes winning a “chance event.” Considered in terms of rational action and reasonable judgment, architects aiming at winning could “justif[ably] have “a sense of taking part in gamble,” except, however, that they do not: “such a sense is not common.”⁷

With these differences in mind, let us return to the challenge Sudjic unintentionally posed to competition researchers. I will argue that Sudjic’s general proposition that beliefs about the competition render it resistant to “reasonable questioning” and his own effort to overcome that difficulty sound an alarm about our methods of constituting our object of research that cannot be ignored.

Sudjic’s general point is that the competition goes unquestioned because it is viewed as an “apple pie and motherhood issue” throughout the “architectural world.” On the face of it, the statement is puzzling. I, at least, would not expect a critic of Sudjic’s stature, who is also an academic, to make so vast a claim and, furthermore, to make it in terms drawn from American popular culture. Since even the most well-traveled critic cannot claim to know what the entire “architectural world” thinks, I take the “world” to mean that of his audience’s architecture culture, the one located at the intersection of practice and academia.⁸ His use of popular language suggests

7. Kreiner 2008, 1, 3. Dr. Kreiner described the situation in even starker terms in the abstract submitted in response to the call for papers, originally available on the Nordic Symposium website (and now presented in this book). He then stated that the question of the probability of winning in a procedure in which criteria are established after submission creates the conditions of a “stochastic world” in which “the ambition to be a rational actor . . . may seem absurd.”

8. *The Cambridge International Dictionary of Idioms* defines the idiom “as American as apple pie” as “be typically American,” cf. <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/define.asp?key=american> 1+0&dict=I Accessed February 27, 2009. The phrase “apple pie and motherhood” is reputed to be the reason that U.S. soldiers either gave or were given

that Sudjic was drawing on his ordinary knowledge of architecture culture, acquired through his participation in it, and was expecting his audience to recognize it as their ordinary knowledge, as well. We can therefore consider Sudjic as an excellent informant on the state of the “received wisdom” or ordinary knowledge of the architectural world to which we belong. If his characterization of the competition as a disinterested act sounds familiar, it is because it echoes not only statements by architects of the past—Louis I. Kahn’s aphoristic description of the competition as “an offering to architecture” (Lipstadt 1989c, 10) comes to mind—but also those of today.

Disinterestedness is the stated motivation for competing in at least one European country, France.⁹ Jean-Louis Violeau has shown that disinterestedness is the primary rationale that French architects under the age of 35 gave for entering publicly and privately sponsored promotional competitions. They spoke of their total submission to architecture, their obedience to it and the sacrifices that they willingly endure (Violeau 2002, 8–15, 85–87 & Violeau 2002, 64–95). And, Véronique Biau found in her study of 20 French architects who orient their efforts toward the public competitions required by French regulations that established practitioners with a middling record of success recognized the impossibility of their invoking disinterest as a motivation for their competing, whereas the *most* successful and the *least* successful competitors were at ease in making that claim. The less successful could do so because a lack of success allows them to identify with the young, for whom the assertion is reasonable, while the most successful, because, having graduated to the ranks of state competition jurors, were able to believe themselves to be disinterested arbiters of taste who work on behalf of “architecture as a whole” (Biau 1998, 42–52).

REPRESENTATIONS, AND FAILED METHODS OF “INTERROGATING” THE COMPETITION

By confronting Sudjic’s account of current “received wisdom” with Violeau and Biau’s scientific findings, we can recognize Sudjic’s account of the former as a *representation*. For sociologists and cultural historians representations are presuppositions and assumptions which are shared by a social group. They are inscribed in the workings and makeup of daily life and in the social institutions and social organization grounded in these beliefs. Representations allow social groups to come into being, to consolidate that being, and to form group identities. They function as principles of vision and division or ordering principles,

for fighting World War II, see Bentley c1998, 3.

9. Cf. for a longer discussion of this subject Lipstadt 2007, 170–172.

providing criteria of similarity and difference that establish the boundaries of a group and the identity of its members in relation to other groups, and allow that group to order the world. Because they are self-evident, they are not taught; and because they have been learned without being taught, they provide the cognitive structures which are used to construct the world and make sense of it. Being self-evident, in normal conditions they are beyond questioning, for to question them is to question the world the group has constructed.¹⁰

If Sudjic meant his audience to learn from his example, then surely he wanted it to consider his manner of interrogating the competition concept as a model for reasonable questioning. It consisted of a review of a number of celebrated and infamous twentieth century competitions¹¹ and the contemporary competition systems of Barcelona and Frankfurt; an analysis of their specific successes and failures; and a general judgment concerning the value of all competitions derived from that analysis. He concluded that competitions are not a “panacea by itself”: for “every successful architectural competition, there is another that ends in embarrassment or worse.” When, however, it forms a “natural part of a national or civic culture,” the competition can be “a powerful tool to build better cities” (Sudjic 2006, 66, 58, 65–66).

Sudjic’s approach in his “interrogat[ion]” of the competition combines a method that is frequently employed in surveys of historical competitions with one that has been employed for what its authors characterize as “systematic” research (as opposed to research grounded in personal experience) about contemporary competitions. In the manner of the historians, he limits his inquiry to famously successful or notoriously unsuccessful competitions or competition systems, and in the manner of the “systematic researchers” he seeks results that are “prescriptive,” i.e. that produce usable assessments of competitions’ “organization and effectiveness.”¹²

Arguably, neither of these methods can lead to the degree of reasonable questioning of the competition that can be deemed scientific. In the instance of the historians’ method, there is the problem of drawing general conclusions

10. For discussions of representations from the historian’s point of view, see Bourdieu and Christin 2004, 7.

11. Among the competitions discussed are those for the Sydney Opera House, the Opéra de la Bastille, the Cardiff Bay Opera House, the Georges Pompidou Center, and the Reichstag.

12. For a critique of this focus on “prestigious” contests and of methods used to survey 20th century competitions, see Nicolas 2007, 12–13. The categories of “systematic research” and “prescriptive” were first proposed by Alexander and Witzling 1990, 100. They opposed the different types of “systematic research” included in the issue of the peer reviewed journal they edited, namely “descriptive,” “prescriptive,” and studies of participants’ perceptions, to the “isolated case studies” and “collections of case descriptions” then typical of competition research.

about all competitions from the examples of competitions that are familiar precisely because of their great or abysmal results. Working from examples chosen for their fame issues an open invitation to the reader to insert personal knowledge garnered not from the scientific (here, historical) literature but from information ‘that everybody knows’. The “prescriptive method” does the same for another conventional view that Sudjic also describes, without, however, giving it the prominence of the first. Rather, he allows architects to make the case that competitions are ‘abnormal’, first, because they constitute a departure from the norms of practice and second, because they are more likely to occasion violations of those norms of good practices or, more simply, to fail.¹³

It may be hard to see where the problem lies in the competition-as-problem. Both conventional points of view seem incontrovertible.¹⁴ Where, then is the harm is ‘saving some steps’ and taking them as a given? Turning the tables on the competition/commission comparison makes the notion of the competition-as-problem as a preconstruction easier to grasp. To my knowledge, there is no emerging discipline of ‘commission research’. There is no need for such a field for architectural historians and sociologists, for their dominant representation of architecture is as commissioned and realized architecture. Scientific and ordinary knowledge converge on this point in the United States, at least. The problem of massive structural building failure and the related ethical problems are not addressed in the standard American handbook of practices and national codes of ethics.¹⁵ In other words, architecture succeeds, except for exceptions. Not so competitions, which are perceived as inherently problem ridden. Yet, the problems for practice that conventional wisdom tends to make the special province of competitions are not unique to it. Bias, favoritism and unethical behavior are also encountered in the

13. For example, Frank Gehry’s reluctance to compete demonstrates that competitions are “rather less convincing” means of commissioning buildings when the architect is well known and that they can end up as “fiascos,” while John Pawson is made the spokesperson of the position that competitions can never substitute for interaction with the client, 2006, 58–59.

14. The consensual view of competitions as prone to abuses and infractions is not without historical foundation. Heide Becker speaks of competitions surviving “in spite or because of their long tradition” of a “truly astonishing ... continuity of problems,” Becker 1992, 15, and of “issues giving rise to dissatisfaction and annoyance.” She cites nine different types of issues in a list that she indicated was far from complete, Becker, Knott and Krause 2002, 11.

15. To fail in architecture means, global dramatic and disastrous structural failure and not the mundane problems of unsatisfactory performance of building elements. cf. Kremer 2001, 3. In the unabridged version, Archrecord.construction.com/practice/pdfs/0610ethics_full.pdf, accessed February 8, 2009, Kremer points out that the focus of the standard American handbook for professional practice is on avoiding risk and conflict and the NCRAB rules of conduct used by the boards of the 50 states which license architects does not establish ethical norms for dealing with disaster.



FIG. 2: *The Experimental Tradition: Essays on Competition in Architecture*, 1989. The Architectural League of New York, Michael Beiruit, Vignelli Associates (New York), designer.

search for commissions. Contractual relations can have complicated denouements, including controversy and law suits. The representation of competitions as, for example, quintessentially unethical (Alexander, et al. 1990, 100) is as much a representation as its obverse, the belief that they are “good deed[s] in an unkind world.”

A clarifying remark is in order. With the ‘normalization’ of competitions in the European Community, the perceived problems of the competition have themselves been normalized as questions of administration, regulation, and the integration (or not) of the EU’s directive into existing national traditions and competition systems. It will require transnational and historical

research to determine if the representation of the competition as the exception to the rule or norm will cede to this new reality.¹⁶

Sudjic’s solution has exacerbated *his* problem, for his method of interrogation has only made clearer how “received wisdom,” or representations, impede reasonable questioning. He has exacerbated *our* problem because he has shown that two standard modes of inquiry into the competition can be considered to have failed to reasonably question the competition concept. These may not be our particular methods, but they have made a claim to scientificity that we have validated by citing works in which they are used. As a result, these methods’ subordination to commonplaces, to what everyone knows, is of general concern.

As the person who is raising the alarm about the nature of our object and the scientificity of our methods of research, it would seem only fair that I be the first to offer up my object and method for critical review. It might appear, however, more than a little immodest to devote a keynote address of what appears to be first scientific symposium on competition research to a retrospective consideration of one’s own work. I am spared that embarrassment by the conveners, who specifically requested that I take a backward look at my own work at the time of its inception in 1989, in the book entitled *The Experimental Tradition*, and specifically in the title essay of the same name [fig. 2]. It would seem, nonetheless, that I am not off the hook

16. Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, Biau and Weil 2002, 9–11, provides a brief summary of the Europeanization of public service contracts from 1985 to 1997. For a more complete discussion of the 92/50/ EWG “Services directive” of 1993, see “Einführung,” Bundesamt für Bauwesen und Raumordnung 2001, 3–6.

just yet. If I speak of that work in conditions as serious as these—with the metaphoric alarm bells ringing and the scientificity on our shared research object and our emerging status seemingly in jeopardy—it might appear that I assume that my work’s relative age makes it the progenitor of all that came after. To the contrary, I take this opportunity to question the adequacy of that first theorization not out of any pretension to primacy or extensive influence, but because of my recognition of the ordinariness of my situation.

My earliest work, specifically, the essay “The Experimental Tradition,” demonstrates that one does not need to naively believe that the competition is an “uncomplicatedly good thing” to fail to fully and completely reasonably question it.

EXPERIMENTS IN COMPETITION RESEARCH, 1989:

“THE EXPERIMENTAL TRADITION”

“The Experimental Tradition” introduced *The Experimental Tradition: Essays on Competitions in Architecture* (1989), the group of scholarly articles published to accompany a retrospective exhibition of American competitions from an era of a so-called ‘competition revival’ (1960–1985), (Lipstadt 1989b). At that time, in a departure from the American norm, the competition procedure had become an accepted form of designer selection. I began the exhibition research in the belief that the (relatively) great quantity of design activity of this ‘competition revival’ was likely to have been the occasion for the generation of a proportionate number of designs of exceptional quality, with quality determined by the degree of innovation. I believed that projects that had proven too inventive to be premiated and published remained to be discovered in archives.

Archival research carried on conjointly with a review of the history of the historiography of competitions prompted the recognition that this hypothesis was a restatement of the beliefs held in common by historians and practitioners. These were the “breakthrough” and the “obstacle.” They had harnessed competition history to that of stylistic, formal or technical progress and the activities of genial creators for centuries.¹⁷ In a breakthrough competition, a “new style, a new solution, or a new talent” is revealed, while in an “obstacle competition, that style, talent or solution is revealed and revealed as exceptionally, even radically, innovative by being passed over. The locus classicus (and seemingly also the point of origin) of the notion of a breakthrough competition is Giorgio Vasari’s account of the contest between Filippo Brunelleschi and Lorenzo Ghiberti for the second set of

17. Bergdoll 1989, 23 and Lipstadt 1989c, 15, citing, for “priceless pearl,” Louis H. Sullivan’s review in the *Architectural Record*, 53 (January–June 1923), p. 156.



FIG. 3: Composite collage of Filippo Brunelleschi and Lorenzo Ghiberti's models for the second set of doors for the Baptistery of the Florence cathedral (1401). Hélène Lipstadt, designer.

doors for the Baptistery of the Florence cathedral (1401) [fig. 3]. The locus classicus of an obstacle competition is the Chicago Tribune Tower (1923) competition, whose jury preferred Howell and Hood's more conventional skyscraper design to the audacious one by Eliel Saarinen. The design that the great Chicago skyscraper designer, Louis Sullivan, likened to a "priceless pearl" that the jury had "thrown away" became the spring board for Saarinen's career and renown in the United States.¹⁸

My goal then became the writing of a history capable of disempowering beliefs about competitions so that the competition could be studied as a practice characteristic of the architectural profession. This required a double renunciation and a subsequent double conceptualization. First, I had to break with traditional architectural history's "affirmation of a historical association of competitions with great style-forming moments of innovation." Second, I had to forswear the "unquestioning faith in [their] benefits" that that affirmation presupposes and enables.

The notion of an "experimental tradition" took the place of the model of

18. Bergdoll 1989, 23, assigned the notion of the breakthrough to Vasari's first edition of the *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects* (1550). Lipstadt 1989, 11, cites the Chicago Tribune Tower as an example of a barrier competition.

the breakthrough/obstacle. The competition was redefined to emphasize its unsurprising regularity, without denying its inherently conflictual, 'winner take all' nature, its demonstrable historical record of the aforementioned problems, unfavorable odds, etc. It was a "battleground of opposing ambitions and ... solutions, ... a public tournament, ... a struggle for one's personal best" and, for the "happy few," an occasion to "triumph." Over many centuries these "ephemeral events" that were "always changing" in their composition but not in their structure, had been "endlessly repeated" for the same purpose, to arrival at "permanent results" (Lipstadt 1989c, 9). As a "process," they recurred without being required by law: they were a "tradition." As the "process" predictably produced unpredictable outcomes, the tradition was itself an "experiment."

In my presentation of the competition, every party participates in the experiment. There is a collusive agreement among all the participants to accept the competition's "basic premise," that "the rewards to be accrued from the design of a possibly exceptional building make both the costs and uncertainties worthwhile." In modern times, that possibly exceptional building is often a public one that communicates the symbolic intentions of its sponsor. This characteristic association of the expectation that competitions generate exceptional designs that are also exceptionally representational or meaningful is a product of the early Italian Renaissance. There then emerged both a type of owner or sponsor capable of articulating their desire for a building whose qualities were not reducible to their programmatic or physical characteristics and a recognizable class of builders with the skill needed to depict buildings in technical drawings in which these qualities could be discerned (Lipstadt 1989c, 13).

In the early Italian Renaissance, competitions which had previously been bidding processes were remodeled to conform to the agon of antiquity, which had been a competition for aesthetic superiority. The competition which had initially been conceived as a means of selecting the best work for less, and then, in the early Renaissance in Tuscany, for asserting the claim to superiority of one commune over another and to lasting fame of the commune and of the group of contributing patrons (merchants, associations, guilds) became a "public spectacle of artistic discernment" (Bergdoll 1989c, 24). In competitions for architecture, the agreement that commissions are awarded on the basis of a judgment of superior quality was premised on the recognition of architectural drawings as works that could be so judged, which was itself premised on the recognition of the activity of projection, or *disegno*, as a conceptual and intellectual activity. The intellectual ability of projecting separately from and in anticipation of construction differentiated architects from members of the building trades and architecture from the manual arts.

When architectural quality could be judged on the same grounds and in the same way as artistic quality, it could acquire some of the “sacral value” of art, or what would later become Immanuel Kant’s notion of the functionless function of art (Lipstadt 1989c, 14).

The legacy of those competitions is a living one. It was thanks to the Renaissance competition that architecture initially acquired a “patent of nobility as an autonomous art,” the necessity of a client as the condition of possibility for realizing that art notwithstanding (Lipstadt 1989c, 15). At all times since then, competitions create opportunities for architects to design projects that closely resemble commissioned ones (at least in their earliest stages) with a freedom from external limits on creation that is almost identical to that usually granted to the artist. A project “conceived in the autonomy of the relation of designer to program” is thus an autonomous creation which, in contradistinction to the “fantasy drawing” of a building projected for an imaginary client on a site of one’s own choosing, has the same legitimacy as one that arises from normal “give-and-take of exchange with the client.”¹⁹ Architects’ acquisition of an autonomy somewhat like that enjoyed by artists in the Renaissance and, in the nineteenth century, a limited acknowledgment of their professional specificity does not however, change the fact that now, as then, they need a client to actually have their work realized, making them unlike most artistic producers.

Competition design also reveals the architecture profession’s dominated status. The unfavorable odds faced by competitors makes entering a competition a course of action that would be deemed irrational by members of the other liberal professions. Competitions therefore remain symptomatic of architects’ failure to establish the production of design as a specialized knowledge whose value to society is on the par with that of law and medicine and thus deserving of a state-sanctioned monopoly (Lipstadt 1989c, 16.)

Since the competition encapsulates the autonomy/domination relationship characteristic of architecture, I characterized it as an antinomic pair, and as ethnographers have shown, antinomic pairs function as sense-making devices, the competition could itself be seen as a representation used by architects to construct a world in which the seemingly disadvantageous activity of competing makes perfect sense. A comparison of competitions and carnivals illustrated this proposition. The annual Lenten carnival of medi-

19. In contrast to designs produced for publication, exhibition, or the art market, with neither client nor site, competition designs are always accorded the legitimacy of professional work, Lipstadt 1989c, 15. When the essay was written, the right of what was then called ‘paper architecture’ to be considered a full-fledged professional activity was still contested, cf. Lipstadt 1989a, 109, 111, 131, n. 4.

eval and early modern Europe was a moment of symbolic inversion, or what anthropologists call a ‘world upside down’. Carnival was an occasion when exception to the rule is the rule and excess is the norm. In both, rituals, games and performances allow roles and relations, especially hierarchical ones, to be inverted. As inferiors lord it over superiors and women over men, stable practices are subjected to time-honored, but still creative, reinterpretation.

The expectation sanctioned by history that competitions are occasions when youthful talents triumph not only over their seniors but also over conventional ideas and traditional solutions makes the competition a ‘world upside down’. A comparison of competitions to the vast interregional and international fairs of early modern Europe amounted to the assertion that the opportunity for ‘overturning the world’ was available to competitors of all ages and all positions. The trade in goods originating in far-off cosmopolitan centers involved (and in fact required) novel practices and attitudes that had only recently become tolerated in urban centers. Their performance made it possible for those observers to absorb in practice the lesson of the changing boundaries of the permissible.

I concluded that the contemporary competition that was “lived as carnival” created an “opportunity of making architecture for its own sake.” Its loan of professional legitimacy to a design which, in the end, may turn out to be no more than occasion for one’s own edification, “affirm[ed] the individual and the creator” and made possible a “space for architecture-as-art” in the “city of practice.” Competition design done in the spirit of carnival drew on the sources of “hope, aspiration and pleasure” of the design process itself (Lipstadt 1989c, 16–17).

EXPERIMENTS IN COMPETITION RESEARCH, 2008: THE AFFIRMATIVE RELATIONSHIP

If this were a seminar, it would be at this point that the methodological equivalent of the intelligence testers’ question “what’s wrong with this picture” would be posed, twice over. What should have been disturbing then, and what should disturb now?

I now realize that the 1989 reader of this text might justifiably have been befuddled. In the light of my preceding arguments, the conclusion that the competition affirms an individual as a creator might seem like an inexplicable theoretical *volteface*. The invoking of the creator could be seen as reopening the door that the notion of an experimental tradition had barred to the reign of genius and authorship by making the process itself an agent of creation, and thus something of an author itself. It was also hard to square a single creator with my theorization of the competition as an unintended collusion

between the interests but not necessarily the intents of all the participants.

The present day more theoretically attuned reader might object to the agency I attributed to architects. As I had provided no explanation of how the interested actions of competing were suppressed when a competition was experienced as carnival, it could be reasonably assumed that architects intentionally chose to work in an entirely disinterested way. This implied that the architect had somehow arrived at an understanding of his or her own practice that was identical to that of the ethnographer. It was as if competing empowered them to a perfect understanding of their condition which, in turn, made disinterestedness the most rational course of behavior.

My present misgivings about my past work would be merely of autobiographical interest if my personal failure were not an indication of a condition known to occur in the population of competition researchers. I had put a scholar's mind in the architects' heads. More precisely, I had put *my* head in those minds. By the same token, my conviction that architects consciously act out of disinterest is evidence that the competing architect's mind had become firmly lodged in my head. In the concluding paragraph, the competition had become what it is for architects, Kahn's "offering to architecture." With this acceptance of competition "as-it-is," I unwittingly allowed a part of my research object to be constructed for me by the very world of architecture that I had taken for my object. This conception of the competition was a preconstruction of ordinary knowledge, and, as such, was fabricated from representations. I had created a relationship to the competition that I will call affirmative.

The notion of affirmation does not mean that the acclamation or celebration produced a favorable bias. I use it here as it is employed in formal logic, where it indicates an acceptance of a relationship of terms as they are stated. In our case, this would be taking as given the relationship of architects and competitions as they represent it to themselves and hope to represent it to others. At the risk of controversy, I propose that the affirmative relationship is a condition that many competition researchers share, and further, that as long as it goes unrecognized and unavowed, it prevents our constructing the competition as a truly scientific object. The idea most frequently affirmed in this context is, of course, Sudjic's "disinterested commitment to quality" (Nasar 1999).

In the affirmative relationship, arguments that appear to a researcher to make good scientific sense often have an equivalent in ordinary sense, where they are commonplaces. That argument that the multiplication of solutions instigated by competitions not only benefits the competition's sponsor but society as well in the most fundamental ways is one such commonplace. As Bergdoll has pointed out, the competition has been "vaunted

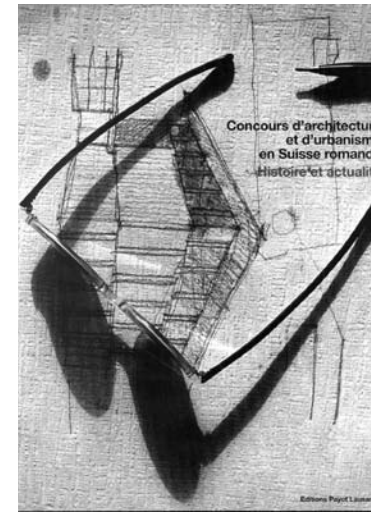


FIG. 4: *Concours d'architecture et d'urbanisme en Suisse romande: histoire et actualité*, 1995. Editions Payot., Werner Jeker, les Ateliers du Nord (Lausanne), designer.

and condemned with equal vehemence" for millennia. That "vaunting" has often been an assertion of the competition's disinterested contribution to society, or what Sudjic called the "acknowledging of architecture's cultural role."

Consider, by way of illustration, the similarity of three examples of the argument made for disinterestedness over the course of a century to the positions taken by scholars today. (It is worth noting that while the arguments were made by architects in different countries with very different competition traditions at very different times in architecture culture, each one made the same case that competitions ultimately exist because they are for the 'greater good'.")

In 1899, at the time when the American Beaux-Arts was at its apogee, the important educator and competition expert, William Robert Ware, called competitions an "almost unmixed good" for the "community at large," for, by "employing all the talent available," they "improve the world in which the community has to live" (Ware 1899, 109).

During the interwar years in the United States, in 1939, the very year that it became crystal clear that American modernism had superseded the Beaux-Arts, the modernist architect, historian and critic Talbot Hamlin observed that "competitions lead inevitably to experimentation in design, and the effect of experimentation will be seen not only in the building finally erected, but even more in the education they give to juries, to architects, to clients and to the public" (Hamlin 1938, 565 cited by Lipstadt 1989d, 79).

In 1993, at a time when, thanks in part to 'critical regionalism', modernism had itself ceded to postmodernism, the *commissaire général* of an exhibition devoted to 100 years of competitions in the Swiss canton of the Suisse Romande, Bernard Meuwley, described competitions as "the occasion for entirely reformulating a question. By bringing new elements to the table [they have] allowed the collectivity to accumulate ... a cultural patrimony composed of projects and of realizations of an absolutely exceptional dimension At their best they allow us to respond to the instructions left to us by Alberti: to create 'works that correspond in the best way to the most important needs of man'" [fig. 4], (Meuwley 1995, 5).

Compare these, then, with the positions of contemporary competition researchers on the effect of the same multiplication of designs, as they appeared to a Canadian team of scholars made up of Georges Adamczyk, Jean-Pierre Chupin, Denis Bilodeau, and Anne Cormier. They write that “scholars and historians” are “increasingly recognizing the competition formula as a promising method for research and experimentation,” as the “process is known to produce bold and innovative solutions.” Competitions are said to engender innovation in four ways: when aesthetic and technical solutions are produced; when competitions “play a key participatory role in the definition of social values, in the context of a public sphere of debate”; when they grant “young firms ... access to a public venue for their work”; and when they serve as a “source of critical and reflexive practices in architecture.” For Adamczyk and colleagues, the competition’s value lies in the “intellectual heritage” of the “‘potential’ architecture” it creates. In a complementary paper, Chupin, Bilodeau and Adamczyk explain that potentiality. Competition “procedures contribute as a whole to the building of a public space of exploration and debate” of social values and thereby magnify occasions for practices that allow “social inquiry and cultural mediation at the very core of projects of architecture.” For them, the value of competitions lies in a conscious reflection rich in the potential for the amelioration of architecture and society, a reflection it stimulates in the form of the project (Adamczyk, Chupin, et al, 2004, 2, 1; Chupin, et al. 2002, 6, 5).

The scholars and historians that they reference are all reputed to have given the competition serious thought (Full disclosure obliges me to say that I am one of them). Yet there is a striking family resemblance between these scholars’ most important and fundamental claims about the competition and the commonplaces of ordinary knowledge of the world of architecture.

I am not the first scholar to express the concern that the commonplaces of the architecture world inhibit scientific understanding. In 1989, in his brief but seminal history of the historiography of representations of the competition, Bergdoll described the challenge of competition history as the overcoming of the “myths and self-conceptions of the architecture profession.” He meant those which, by mortgaging competition history to that of style and to a teleology of stylistic progress, had impeded understanding the competition’s place in the history of architecture as a specialized practice. His example was the conviction that competitions’ function is to reveal young talents whose designs are of such an unparalleled inventiveness that they change the course of architecture. The equation of the discovery of young talent with innovation is, of course, the

breakthrough, and the breakthrough is the contemporary descendant of Vasari’s history of Brunelleschi and Ghiberti’s competitive encounters in 15th century Florence (Bergdoll 1989, 23, 22). Bergdoll described the function of youthful discovery as a “claim” so entrenched in both professional and historiographical arguments in favor of competitions that it had caused them to be “intertwined.” I call that intertwining the affirmative relationship.

Affirmation continues that intertwining when it leads researchers to think as architects do. Like architects, scholars can ignore the unreasonable costs, history of deleterious outcomes, unfavorable odds and irrationality, or understand them as being far outweighed by the competition’s potential benefits. They can espouse a kind of wishful thinking in the form of a means/end rational whereby the interests that motivated the organization of particular contests, systems of contests, and the designs produced for them by independent, and differentially motivated designers are canceled out by the ultimate good these interests produce. By embracing disinterestedness, they can look beyond the competing part of the competition and the objective relations of the participants, both inside and outside the particular contest. Finally, and most importantly, they can postpone grappling with the fundamental question of why architects tolerate competitions when other professions do not and what it says about the lack of the autonomy of either other artists or members of the traditional professions. Either the question is not posed, or, if it is, it is rationalized as cost attendant on the privilege of being an art that is also a profession.

How can all this occur and go unnoticed by the scholars themselves? Easily. Scholars already belong to and operate in a world founded on disinterestedness. The pact that defines scholarship as an agreement about the subjects about which one can disagree is grounded in their common interest in disinterestedness. Disinterestedness enables scholars to see the competition project as a disinterested act of research and the competition as primarily educative. They can champion the cause of the competition process without sacrificing their own disinterested stance as scholars.

We have returned to our starting point of the inability of those who see the competition as disinterested to “reasonably question” the competition. The affirmative relationship creates a complicity that puts reasonable questioning out of reach and endanger the scientificity of the object. If by definition what is affirmed is not questioned, and in the Western research tradition of the scientific method what is not questioned is not scientific, then the scientificity of competition research is in desperate need of our joint reflection.

EXPERIMENTS IN COMPETITION RESEARCH: THE NORDIC SYMPOSIUM

My concerns about our object are relatively new. From 1989 to 2000, there was no reason for me to reconsider my theorization of the competition. In that year, I began to use Pierre Bourdieu's sociology of the field of cultural production (Bourdieu 1993) as an analytical tool for the study of competitions. Up to the year 2000, I had employed individual elements of that sociology of intellectuals but had avoided using the notion of the field. Like other scholars who had turned to Bourdieu's sociology to analyze architecture, I was convinced that architecture lacked the autonomy that made it possible to understand it as a field and to analyze that field as field of cultural production (Biau 1996; Montlibert 1995; and Violeau 1999, 7–10). When, in 2003, I posed the question "Can 'Art Professions' be Bourdieuan Fields of Cultural Production?" and took as my example "The Case of the Architecture Competition,"²⁰ I determined that the competition creates a time and space when architecture resembled a field of cultural production.

My reconsideration of the competition at that time was in part prompted by Bourdieu's first and only analysis of architecture in his forty years of studying cultural producers and intellectuals. On the occasion of an international scholarly meeting in 2000 devoted to ways that his core concept of *habitus* could further be used in research in architecture and planning, Bourdieu had told his audience of researchers that "architecture was "in some respects a very intellectual or intellectualist art, but [one] which can anyway be understood according to the schema I propose to describe literature." He then went on to "leave [architecture] aside" in order to discuss the "epistemic consequences" of the use of the notion of *habitus* for the study of the practice of painters and poets (Bourdieu 2002, 32). A shift from "I" to "we" in the text that followed this statement indicated that his topic was, in fact, the intellectualist practice of his audience of architectural researchers. Bourdieu's position that intellectualism is an impediment to scientific research and his typically indirect way of bringing audiences face-to-face with a deferred truth about their practice made it highly likely that, despite the fact that the word "intellectualism" appeared nowhere in his talk, he had incorporated into his address a proposal for scientific research in architecture that breaks, or to use the technical term, induces a rupture, with intellectualism.²¹

20. Lipstadt 2003. The term Bourdieuan was used by the editors to avoid using the grammatically appropriate term 'Bourdieuin', which had been give a pejorative meaning by Bourdieu's critics in the media. The now accepted term Bourdieusien was then just coming into use.

21. Choosing to seem not to speak about architecture to architects also conformed to

Knowing of the skepticism of my Bourdieusien colleagues, but heartened by Bourdieu's remark, I began the task of understanding architecture as a field. The task was sufficiently difficult for me to defer considering the consequences of intellectualism for architecture researchers for another time. That consideration can no longer be deferred and the Nordic symposium is the time and place to begin. There is a discipline to shape in our future and a threatened object in our present.

To take on the once deferred task, I will decode Bourdieu's text, articulate the core instruction for breaking with intellectualism, and, after providing some background on both intellectualism and rupture, identify the means we can use to advance toward the needed break, which in our case is "thinking" the competition "in terms of field" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 96). I will therefore recapitulate my 2003 analysis, before drawing out the epistemic promise that that "thinking" offers for achieving a scientific object. Then, looking beyond our disciplinary needs, I will consider the consequences of our "thinking" for architecture research in general.

Bourdieu began by differentiating the art work of the "aesthetic tradition," or "*opus operatum*," the finished work, from the manner of working of artists, their "*modus operandi*." He called the latter an "*art* (in the etymological sense) which the artist brings into play." This art is a "*métier*," a "practical mastery," or, in Bourdieu's special language, a *habitus*. The *habitus*, the idea of a mastery that is practical and practiced without theory, he continued, cannot be understood by scholars and especially by those "analysts of art" who are also teachers, unless they make a "radical break" from their own scholarly *habitus*. As scholars, they are menaced by a "scholastic bias," or the "tendency [that is] very common among scholars, to put a scholastic mind, a scholar's mind into everyone's head, to treat an artist like Manet or Flaubert, ... [and] the scholar himself when he or she acts in daily life, ... as a rational agent, [as] *homo calculans*, calculating man ... [or] academic man." Using the notion of *habitus* *requires but also enables* (italics mine) that "radical break." This is not easily done, for scholars, who, like the members of his audience,²² are "cultivated persons," have incorporated a "*scholastic unconscious*" that prevents them from understanding that practice is not governed by conscious calculation, but rather has its own *untheorized* (italics mine) "logic of practice," which Bourdieu often describes as a "practical sense" or a "sense of the game." Bourdieu concluded by advising his listeners that they would find

the way he typically addressed audiences from other disciplines, see his own remarks. Bourdieu 1987, 9, and the analysis in Brubaker 1993, 217.

22. At this point, Bourdieu abandoned the first person singular for the plural "we."

the habitus a “useful, indeed an indispensable instrument of social analysis” on condition that they strip off the misinterpretations that had become attached to it (in all probability, those they had themselves applied) and use it with “theoretical rigor.” It would be much “better,” however, if they used it “with a practical mastery of its properties—for sociology, too, is an art.”²³

While Bourdieu had not mentioned intellectualism, in a text of 1992 he had asserted that the main purpose of the habitus was to effectuate a rupture from a similar “theory of homo oeconomicus” and had called that theory intellectualist. And, although he did not refer to the construction of the scientific object in his address to the architect researchers either, in that same earlier text and throughout his work he argued that one of the major functions of the concept of habitus was the formation of a “scientific habitus” and a method of constructing the object which is itself scientific.²⁴

A bit of background—and it is a bit, because it is not a complete account of how Bourdieu’s insistence on reflexivity as the principle of scientific research interpenetrates his theory of practice²⁵— will help us understand the convergence of his advice to researchers in architecture on the use of habitus to combat intellectualism and on the construction of the object. Bourdieu holds that the scholastic bias (also called the *intellectualist* or *scholastic fallacy*) causes the scholar to project the “scholastic unconscious” (which is found not only in scholars’ minds but also in their scholarly categories of description and evaluation) onto the human agents who are the object of social research.²⁶ For Bourdieu, when scholars “place the models that scientists must construct to account for practices into the consciousness of agents,” they commit the most serious epistemologi-

23. Bourdieu 2002, 32–33. Bourdieu was responding to the conveners’ request that he comment on a set of questions that, while open ended, would have struck him as misconceptions, for example, whether habitus was “a useful research tool” for the analysis of rapidly changing contemporary societies or whether it could be turned into an “efficient [method] of spatial analysis,” Bourdieu 2002, 27.

24. Bourdieu makes this argument throughout his work. I chose the 1992 text because the explanation was part of a spoken presentation to young researchers and thus was made in a context somewhat similar to the 2000 address. Bourdieu explains the origins of the 1992 text in his “Preface,” Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, vii.

25. Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 121, summarizes this interpenetration as follows: “it [the notion of the habitus] designates first and foremost a ... scientific habitus, ... that is, a definite manner of constructing and understanding practice in its specific logic... Against positivistic materialism, the theory of practice as practice posits that objects of knowledge are *constructed*, not passively recorded; against intellectualist idealism, it reminds us that the principle of this construction is found in the socially constituted system of structured and structuring dispositions acquired in practice.” Classically, the habitus is defined as “systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures,” Bourdieu 1990, 53.

26. Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 70, 121, 142, 182, also explained at length in the context of his experience studying the Kabyle in Book 1 of Bourdieu 1990 and in Bourdieu 2000, 8–32, 49–84.

cal error imaginable in the social sciences.²⁷ Exorcising the scholastic viewpoint or intellectualism at the root of this error is a precondition for beginning the work of constructing a scientific object. It requires a radical break, or a rupture. A practical mastery of the notion of the habitus is one way to make the break that allows social analysis to go forward in a non-intellectualist and scientific manner (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 121–122).

Bourdieu’s insistence on rupture as a precondition for the construction of a scientific object is rooted in the Bachelardian epistemological tradition. Gaston Bachelard maintained that rupture involves a dramatic break with one’s own practice and the modes of understanding on which it relies, which is why it is often described as an “epistemological rupture.” The scientific construction of an object requires breaking (a rupture) with everything that is taken for granted and with the usual methods of knowing about it (epistemology), or, what amounts to the same, with the preconstructed object and the associated modes of understanding it. Rupture from the commonsensical goes hand in hand with the requirements that the theoretical and empirical stages of research proceed simultaneously, for the two are inseparable, and that the individual research object (a case study, for example) be treated as a “particular case of the possible” which reveals invariants present in all cases.²⁸ For Bourdieu, Bachelard’s epistemological rupture requires a “genuine conversion of one’s gaze, ... a rupture with modes of thinking, concepts, and methods that have every appearance of common sense, of ordinary sense, and of good scientific sense,” in a word, “a mental revolution” (Bourdieu 1992, 251).

We already know that the affirmative relationship obstructs the scientificity that we seek for our object and our discipline by putting scientific knowledge at the mercy of *ordinary knowledge*. Now it appears that the affirmative relationship puts it at the mercy of ourselves, as scholars, and our *scholarly knowledge*. When the architect’s rationale that competition projects are a “disinterested commitment to quality” is accepted by scholars and then returned to architects in the form of a characterization of the competition itself as a force for the greater good and when a competition is seen as a research project and the actual competition as a pedagogic process, then scholars have put the scholar’s mind in the architect’s head, seeing the latter acting just as scholars themselves do in their daily life. The affirmative relationship is an example of the intellectualist architectural research Bourdieu had in mind in his 2000 address.

27. Bourdieu quoted by Wacquant in Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 70, n. 10.

28. For very brief explanations of Bachelard’s epistemology, see Bourdieu 1992, 233, 251–252.

Having recognized the affirmative relationship as intellectualist and as the obstacle to our construction of that scientific object, can we avail ourselves of the solution Bourdieu proposed to his audience, namely that architecture researchers use the notion of habitus to effectuate and maintain a rupture with their understanding of all action as calculated? On the one hand, it would seem as if the habitus is made for use by competition researchers. When seen from the competitors' point of view, a competition is a "gamble," a "lottery," an "experiment" that "predictably produces unpredictable outcomes."²⁹ This is an activity that in itself calls for being understood as something other than rational action. In addition, use of the habitus would free us from believing that the actions of all the other participants are as rational and calculating as they are claimed to be, and help us understand their investment (psychological and social) in the costly and risky enterprise of sponsoring competitions or, for 'senior members of the profession,' the seemingly unprofitable one of trading competing for judging. On the other hand, the habitus alone is insufficient for our particular use; for to understand the practical sense, the "sense of the game," of all the participants, we need to describe the game itself of the competition.

Our problem is resolved by using Bourdieu's schema for "describ[ing] literature," the *analytical* concept of a field of cultural production. "Thinking" the competition "in terms of field" can, I want to argue, secure the construction of the competition as a scientific object.

THE FIELD

The *field* is one of the four concepts at the center of Bourdieu's sociology, the others being *habitus*, *capitals*, and *illusio*. Bourdieu analyzes society by seeing it as a space, or social cosmos, that is constituted by dynamic, ever-shifting spaces of related positions and stances whose boundaries are formed by relations of competition and collusion with other pertinent contiguous or overlapping microcosms within that cosmos. As a relatively autonomous universe of social relations, a field has stakes, capitals, interests, and a logic that are distinct from those in any other field. Belonging to a field requires a habitus, certain kinds of capitals and, especially, the *illusio* needed to consider that logic and stakes as worthy of one's total investment.

Fields are structured configurations or *spaces* of objective relations between *positions* and *position-takings*. Positions, both formal jobs and tasks and

29. For "gamble" (Kreiner), "experiment" (Lipstadt), and "experimentation" (Adamczyk et al), see supra; for "lottery," see Bergdoll 1989, 21.

roles, are objective, being characterized by the capital, or the amount and species of real and symbolic resources needed to achieve and maintain positions and which endow a given position with the weight needed to dominate other positions, or lacking that weight, to be dominated by them. Position-takings are the stances, practices and expressions of agents, including artistic expressions. The field is dynamic, any change caused by the ongoing struggles in the location of or weight within a field of any one position and its holder, be it agent or institution, or a change in any of the stances/position-takings shifts the positions of all the others, the extent and shape of the boundaries of the field itself.

A field can be compared to a battlefield, for everything is always at play and also up for grabs, including the stakes and logic that define the identity of the field and that are used to establish the boundaries that distinguish it from others. Because these matters of perpetual dispute are also contests for power and domination, fields are also spaces of struggle and fields of force. Conveniently for the study of the game-like competition, Bourdieu argues that the field and all its components are best understood and deployed if they are conceived as a board game.

The players (who are known as *agents*, and these can be individuals and/or institutions) enter into the game voluntarily, committing themselves to it (the *illusio*) and to the foundational value of the stakes (the *doxa*) without question. The unquestioned commitment to the game makes the game a *collusion*. Players possess chips valid only in a specific game (*specific capitals*) and trump cards that are valid in every game (*fundamental capitals*), but these latter may change in value from game to game. The player's stock of cards and chips establishes her place in the game (a *position in the field*). The stock works together with the experience of the game underway and other games played by the player that have conditioned her and that have provided her with the schema (*representations*) through which she perceives the world (*habitus, disposition*). The players can avail themselves of the field's *space of possibles*. It is everything that one must already know to play the game, a kind of back of the mind awareness of the history of the playing of the game, of past winning and failed strategies, for example. The *space of possibles* is called that because it makes it possible for those whose habitus is especially well attuned to the game (*symbolic revolutionaries*) to invent new strategies, subvert old ones, and change the rules and shape all future playing of the game itself (as Flaubert and Manet did).

An understanding of a field can begin with grasping the nature of the *illusio*, for the functioning of a field depends on there being agents who recognize the *illusio* as valid and recognize each other as possessing that *illusio*. The *illusio* is so central to a field that Bourdieu calls it "the root of the com-

petition which pits [players] against each other and which makes the game itself” (Bourdieu 1996, 228). To be interested in the game and believe it is worth playing at all requires an *illusio* specific to it. The *illusio* is thus at once a relationship to the game that is demanded as the price of admission to the game and a necessity for those who stay to play it. It is possessed by those who are totally and completely invested in the game, an investment that, because it is socialized and not conscious, is also called a *libido*. The investment is made by those who are already predisposed and oriented to the game mentally, whose minds are structured in such a way that they play the game without an awareness that it is, in fact, a game (Bourdieu 1998, 76–7).

The space of possibles is always in the background as the game is played. It is particularly necessary for playing an intellectual, literary or artistic game. Upon admission, every agent receives in exchange for accepting the codes of conduct and expression, that is, the *habitus*, of that field, access to the same universe of possibilities which provides both the definitional grammar of everything that can be possibly conceived and the ability to invent endlessly within the limits established by the grammar, all of which is internalized, rather than consciously known (Bourdieu 1996, 235).

The logic specific to a field establishes the limit of a field as the point where the *effects of the field* cease to operate, that is to say, where agents no longer benefit or suffer from those effects. Another *field effect* is the kinds of works deemed to be legitimate products of the field. A field is discernible when it “is no longer possible to understand a work (and the value, i.e., the *belief*, that it is granted) without knowing the history of the field of production of the work” (Bourdieu 1993, 75). The limit of the field effect describes the field as a space by identifying its limits. For example, the logic of the ‘mathematical field’ makes it perfectly understandable that a mathematician kill a colleague to obtain his theorem (Bourdieu 1998, 78). The limit is then the point where mathematically motivated murder becomes incomprehensible. The *illusio* is the belief that makes mathematicians ready to die as well as to murder for that theorem.

THE FIELD OF CULTURAL PRODUCTION

The mathematical field would seem to be an extreme case, but it is not. It is one of the many fields which depend on the highest stake *not* being material gain, at least not directly. This marks it as a field of cultural production, where products possess a symbolic value that is incommensurate with their commodity value. Symbolic goods circulate on their own *market*, an *up-side-down world* in which an *anti-economic* logic prevails, and where cultural capital is far more valuable than economic capital. That anti-economic logic is disinter-

estedness. In contrast to the economic field, where ‘business is business’, the field of cultural production is “so ordered that those who enter into it have an interest in disinterest” (Bourdieu 1993, 113, 140; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 98). Disinterest exists whenever an action is taken in accordance with the field’s definition of its highest purpose, despite the sacrifices entailed.

All fields of cultural production possess a greater degree of autonomy than other fields. The artistic and literary fields possess one unequalled by any other. They function as if they were a prism that “refracts” the “external determinations” of demographic, political, and economic events. This “refraction coefficient” or, in a word, its “degree of autonomy” is an “effect” of its field, for without it, works, relations between individuals, ideologies, genres, and the history of the field’s evolution as an autonomous one cannot be understood (Bourdieu 1993, 163–164, 182).

Also, contrary to the economic field (and the university field), jobs or posts in the literary or artistic fields are so ill-defined that agents must be ready to “face the risk of this profession which is not really one.” A significant difference between those agents and members of those professions that are ‘really one’, even those who have acquired some of the cultural capital possessed by agents in a pure field of cultural production (Bourdieu mentions engineers, experts, and administrators), is that the latter can never acquire the “symbolic capital” that allows a writer or philosopher to enjoy “liberties and daring gestures ... which would be unreasonable or quite simply unthinkable” in any other field, including the “right and duty to ignore the demands and requirements of the temporal powers.” The *illusio* required for entry into this field is a belief in its stakes, of course, but also a belief in these stakes as sacred. For Bourdieu, the *illusio* permits certain agents to be consecrated, and to have their products accepted as “*sacred* objects.” The producer of this work is the field itself as a “universe of belief” which itself produces the value assigned to the work of art (Bourdieu 1996, 226, 222, 230, 229). The field, to adapt a famous phrase of Bourdieu’s, “creates the ‘creator’” and the belief that there can be creators and creations.

MAPPING THE SPACE OF A FIELD AND THE “SQUARE TABLE OF PERTINENT PROPERTIES”

Being spaces of social relations, fields have boundaries that must be mapped to establish that the space they define has the requisite autonomy to make a field a field. The field effect is helpful in this regard, for a field is a “space within which an effect of the field is exercised, so that what happens to an object which traverses that space cannot be explained solely by the intrinsic properties of the object in question” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 102).

But mapping a space made of social relations often requires the use of existing social units which, because they are themselves not sets of relations, are preconstructions. To avoid succumbing to preconstructions even as one extracts data from them, Bourdieu advises the use of a “square-table of the pertinent properties of [the] set of agents and institutions” of the social entity under consideration. The table isolates the traits that set it apart from all other entities. It is filled in with the properties peculiar to the object one is constructing, which involves comparing it and differentiating it from other entities. Constructing the table constructs the object, for the properties with which one is left (which may, in fact, be abstract qualities) are an objectivation of the *relations* and not the properties that constitute the object. An object thus constituted fits a preliminary understanding of a field (Bourdieu 1992, 230; see also Bourdieu 1988, 9).

Turning to architecture, the impediments to conceiving of it as an autonomous field that operates as a field of cultural production were many and, for many scholars, had long seemed insurmountable. Architecture ordinarily circulates in a right-side-up world of economic profitability, where the principles of the neighboring *economic* and *power fields* are embraced. The disavowal of economism of ‘business is business’ is thus more difficult to assert. The presence of the heteronomous principles characteristic of that field is a leading indicator of the absence of the autonomy of a field of cultural production. The dependency on the client for realization means that whatever architects may say or write, the autonomy they claim is not that of artists and writers.

The above-mentioned obstacles were overcome by applying the square table and the field effect to architecture. The use of the square table established that the competition is a “pertinent property” and “analytically relevant trait” that makes architecture a field, *tout court*. The competition is also a field effect. Architects are alone among the state-regulated ‘professions’ in sometimes submitting their work for competitive judgment in order to secure a commission. The competition is specific to architecture as a ‘liberal profession’ and expresses (and depends for its existence on) a logic and an illusion that would make little sense in any other field. There is a field effect, as well, in the fact that competition work—both in the sense of the material, labor and related opportunity costs and in that of the design itself—can only be truly comprehended if one knows the history of competitions in architecture.

In sum, when architects compete the dependency on the sponsor is suspended and the act of entering formal competitions gains them the kind of autonomy historically accorded to artists. The degree of autonomy is so much greater than elsewhere that we can consider that the activity of competing constitutes a space in architecture somewhat comparable to that of

the artistic and literary field. A competition is thus the space in which architects can act as if, and believe themselves to be, full-fledged, relatively autonomous creators. Although we cannot consider them here, there are other similarities, notably a common historical point of origin of ‘emancipation’ from clients and an analogous form of publication, or the way a field produces the meaning a work has for its public (which may only be architects.)

THE COMPETITION AS FIELD

It follows logically that an individual competition is a scaled-down field, as well as, specifically, a field of cultural production. Every competition possesses the constituting elements of all fields and some of those particular to a field of cultural production

Let us look at the competition as if it were a field (any field) writ small and then as a field of cultural production. A competition is in its very nature a battlefield, a force field and a field of struggle. It is also a game, with players of different sorts, each with interests and investments in the game. Like a field (any field), a competition is constituted as a structured relational configuration of objective relations between and among *positions* and *position-takings*. The objective positions are the basic jobs of client, competitor, juror, professional adviser, technical juror, etc. The position-takings or stances are made up of the competition program, designs, jury report and the content of the subsequent critical and polemical pronouncements. There will be a play of forces between these positions, concomitantly with the play of forces between the individual position-takings of their holders as they vie to win, choose the winner, or consecrate him or her, or consecrate the runner-up. As in a field, the dynamic of struggle fuels the field.

The competition is a space constituted as if it were a field of cultural production. In competitions, the sponsor or owner relinquishes its role in the process that ordinarily produces realized architecture when his or her power is translated in the brief or program as a set of conditions over which competing architects enjoy conceptual control. Rules, anonymity, and, above all, the jury of independent judges endow it with an autonomy from the economic field not present in the commissioning process, even in today’s regulation-driven European competition.³⁰ Business is not business, rights and liberties are claimed that no client would allow.

Most pertinently for us, the competition, like a field of cultural production, is ordered so that those who enter it have that characteristic interest in disinterest.

30. The issue of anonymity in European Community competitions is discussed in Biau 1999.

Economic and other interests, while not entirely disowned—people are in it for the money, everyone is playing to win—are verbally denied by everyone’s conceiving the ultimate objective to be a disinterested commitment to architecture.

Like a field, the competition depends on an *illutio* for its existence. That *illutio* is identical to the one required for entry into a field of cultural production. The open, promotional, and ideas competitions are made by the *illutio* that this game is “worth the candle.” Remove the investment in the game, and it will not be played. The *illutio* on which the game depends is the one that prompted those who have it to enter the greater game of architecture. By bracketing or obscuring the truth of dependency and encouraging an interest in disinterest, the competition recreates the moment when architecture was initially embraced for the happiness it afforded. It reenacts the aspiration for the productive and creative life hoped for by an individual who chose a liberal profession that understands itself to be an art. Every competition entered is a reaffirmation of that initiatory moment when architecture acquires its capital A—when the young architect held the sincere belief that the design of architecture would be an autonomous art.

The competition creates the creator and the belief in his/her work as art. The competition project is, in a sense, designed not only for but by the field. It is conceived in anticipation of the judgment of jurors and of the imagined solutions and strategies of other competitors, who thus co-make the project artistically and formally. The jury, the program, the likelihood of publication and exhibition, the history of competitions, the beliefs in the ‘breakthrough’ and ‘obstacles,’ and the particular competitors’ instinctive grasp for what the space of possibles contains—all these are also authors of the projects. As in the case of any design, the winning project is then remade by publication, publicity, and reception. The winning competition design is remade to the degree that it reinforces or changes the space of possibles.

The collective labor of collusion that is the *illutio*’s counterpart is also manifested in the competition. Nowhere is the social reality that designs require the collective labor of architects and client to become realized buildings more evident than in the competition, and nowhere does the *illutio* function more evidently to deny that reality. The competition makes a public performance of the designer selection process that usually goes unseen by the public; and the very structure of the process, with its multiple actors and experts, shows that it is the field that is literally creating the creator. We need go no further than a competition report in which the jurors’ choice is justified to find a clear demonstration of the collective labor of disavowing the collectivity of their labor.

Even when dissension is acknowledged, its existence is perceived not as evidence of the give-and-take of compromise between jurors, but rather of



FIG. 5.1: Jury for the Competition for the Extension to the Berlin Museum to include Jewish Museum, June, 1989. *Realisierungswettbewerb, Berlin Museum mit Abteilung Jüdisches Museum, Senatverwaltung für Bau- und Wohnungswesen, Berlin, p. 48.* Matthias Könsgen, photographer.



FIG. 5.2: Herman Hertzberger, member of the Jury, discussing the plans and photographs of Entry 1021, June, 1989. *Realisierungswettbewerb, Berlin Museum mit Abteilung Jüdisches Museum, Senatverwaltung für Bau- und Wohnungswesen, Berlin, p. 48.* Matthias Könsgen, photographer.

the power of the winning design – and thus of the ‘genius’ of the creator – to overcome objections and doubts. Daniel Libeskind’s entry in the competition for the ‘Berlin Jewish Museum’³¹ is one such case. Jurors have described how the design’s brilliant translation of the disrupted and irreparable history of Berlin’s Jews into an architectural composition of jagged parts and inaccessible voids overcame the misgivings of first the jury and then the actual client, the Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin (the Jewish Community in Berlin). In doing so, they unintentionally revealed not only how each of their positions contributed to the consecration of the winner, but also how those positions had been shifted by the new objective relations established by that very consecration [Fig 5.1 and Fig 5.2]³²

31. The actual name of the project was Extension to the Berlin Museum to include the Jewish Museum. The competition was announced in November 1988 and judged in May 1989 (preliminary examination) and June of 1989. 165 entries were submitted. The winners were: Daniel Libeskind, 1st prize; Raimund Abraham, New York, 2nd prize; Lange/Ullrich, Meschede [Federal Republic of Germany], 3rd prize; Thoman Langenfeld and Markus Torge, Berlin, 4th prize; and Axel Schultes, Berlin, 5th prize. The members of the architectural jury were: Harald Deilman, Dr. Christoff Hackelsberger, Heinz W. Hallmann, Klaus Humpert and Peter Schweger, all of the Federal Republic of Germany; Herman Hertzberger, Netherlands; Isaak Luxemburg, Israel and Chair, Josef Paul Kleihues, Federal Republic of Germany.
32. The jurors reported that “the obvious solution may have been to build a normal museum if one of the entries had not put forward a quite extraordinary, completely autonomous solution. And thus he unusual nature of the brief provoked a profound response which was first impossible to interpret but was then deeply understood and appreciated and supported by the entire jury,” Heise and Holstein 1990, 165, and , for individual comments by assessors and the representatives of the Gemeinde, see pp. 166-167.

THE BERLIN JEWISH MUSEUM, HABITUS AND THE SPACE OF POSSIBLES

The same ‘Berlin Jewish Museum’ competition allows us to envision how “knowledge of the field,” to cite Bourdieu, “in which [individuals or agents] evolve allows us best to grasp the roots of their singularity” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 107). While the information that would enable a full field analysis to be undertaken is not available, there is sufficient knowledge of the facts of Libeskind’s life and professional trajectory to place him securely in the interplay of forces and positions that a field analysis would describe, to establish his position, and to deduce the singularity of his point of view [fig. 6].

Libeskind was one of the architects who in the 1980s had made it a matter of principle to eschew building. His skill as an architect-artist had allowed him to make a career as a world-renowned architect notwithstanding a total lack of realized projects. He was a Jew, the child of survivors of the Holocaust who, after being born in Poland immediately after the war, was raised in Israel, where he won acclaim as a musical prodigy. Libeskind invoked the circumstances of his birth when he described the museum as a project that he had worked on all his life. While we can now recognize this statement as a highly interested profession of disinterest, the fact that it was made and was received as plausible in Berlin and around the world suggests that he occupied a position in this competition unlike any of the other contenders. (A counterfactual helps here: try to imagine any of the German-born architects who made up the vast majority of the competitors or the few Israeli or foreign competitors making the same claim.³³) That position in the competition was supported by his exceptional position in the general ‘field’ of architecture of an architect who has achieved international renown by claiming the rights and privileges “unthinkable” for most architects.

This sketch of his position makes it possible to account for the strategy he used to win the competition, which, if envisioned as a conscious calculation, would seem to preclude the possibility of his winning. Rather than use one of the typical strategies available—playing pragmatically to the jury members’ known preferences, playing to press and public with a ‘publication friendly’ design, or ignoring the rules entirely in order to design for one’s personal satisfaction—he chose a highly atypical one of meeting the rules, but flagrantly bending them. His entry was physically as well as programmatically out of kilter. He set the walls and even the elevator shafts

33. They were: Perla Kaufmann, Haifa; Ram Karmi, Tel Aviv; Kader Architects, Haifa; Al Mansfield, Haifa; and Yacov Yaar, Tel Aviv. Among the other foreign entrants were Raminond Abraham, Peter Cook and Christine Hawley, and Adrien Fainsilber.



FIG. 6: “The Names Model,” Entry 1021 and First Prize in the Competition for the Extension to the Berlin Museum to include Jewish Museum, 1989. Studio Daniel Libeskind (Milan at time of competition /New York in 2009), designer. Courtesy, Studio Daniel Libeskind.

at an angle, cut inaccessible basement-to-roof voids into the interior, and clad the volume in a metal that violently clashed with the adjacent historic structure to which the project was an extension—all this when the makeup of the jury and, especially, the urban and architectural philosophy and political power of its chair advised a far more conservative, contextualist, approach.³⁴ Seen in the light of the singularity of his position in the field, Libeskind’s design appears to be the product of a *modus operandi* of someone who had heard the unaccomplished possibles of the space of possibles as a summons meant only for him. It was not an act of calculated subversion but the work-

ings of a practical sense, the habitus that had oriented him all his life. It was his practical ‘feel’ for the game of architecture formed by the encounter of a particular mix of capitals with a state of the field that meant that he could develop a style of playing which allowed him to win the game by not doing what is usually done to win it.

While this analysis is admittedly hypothetical, the field effect can be invoked to sustain the proposition that this competition operated as if it were a field. The operation of the effect is revealed by the fact that the history of the field is needed to understand one of the beliefs granted to this work. It is knowing the place of the “breakthrough” in the history of competitions that explains how the 43-year-old Libeskind was admitted into the 500 year-old ‘hall of fame’ of untried talents revealed or proven by their triumph in a competitions, despite the fact that he was already an artist of international renown and the winner of another competition, indeed of a competition for Berlin, the Wettbewerb Stadtrand (city edge) Berlin of 1987 (also known by the name of the Urban Design Competition of the International Bauausstellung) [fig. 7]. In this instance, the competition thought of in terms of a field can be understood to have *re-created* the creator.

34. Josef-Paul Kleihues, known for promoting the “critical reconstruction” of traditional Berlin typologies and street space and an important influence on then current planning and urban design was the chair.

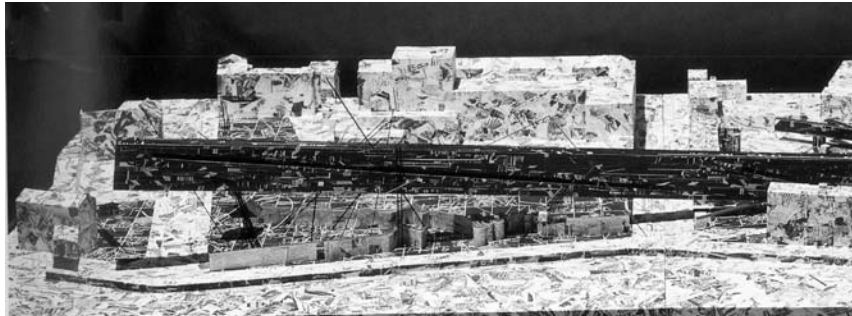


FIG. 7: "Ante-Berlino Cloud Prop model," First Prize Entry in the Stadtamrand Competition ['City Edge'] of the International Bauausstellung (IBA), 1987. Studio Daniel Libeskind (Milan at time of competition / New York in 2009), designer. Courtesy, Studio Daniel Libeskind.

EXPERIMENTS IN COMPETITION RESEARCH: THE FUTURE

My account of my experiments with the experimental tradition was meant to serve a discipline at the moment of its emergence. Here, as I see it, are some of the benefits to be gained from this review of my research trajectory. My retrospective look at "The Experimental Tradition" has shown us that the aesthetic tradition can ambush efforts to extirpate it and even overtake ideas that were meant to replace it, such as the notion of the competition as an unintended collusion between interested participants who together create the object and its meaning. Placing the essay side-by-side with my article of 2003 has revealed that ideas that existed in a state of intuition in that essay gained their full interpretive potential when they were systematically integrated through the use of the notion of the field, with its structure, logic, field effect, etc.

The competition thought as field brought us responses to fundamental questions about competitions. The space of possibles provides an explanation for why, on occasion, breakthroughs happens, while protecting us from falling victim to the conventional idea of the competition winner as a romantic genius who possesses the innate gift for the impossible and unconventional. The question of why architects not only tolerate competitions but actually clamor for more of them is answered by the notion of *illusio* and the many opportunities autonomy offers. The fact that it has been plausible for architects and for us to believe in the competition as a "disinterested commitment to quality" and a force for the good is understood as a field effect of the competition constituted as a field of cultural production.

Yet, until we have confronted the affirmative relationship, these benefits will not achieve the disciplinary goal of constructing a scientific object. Given that the affirmative relationship is intellectualist and intellectualism pro-

hibits the construction of an object that is scientific, what are the steps we can take toward achieving a rupture with it? Much like the habitus, thinking in terms of field is an instrument of rupture. "To think in terms of field ... demands a conversion of the whole ordinary vision of the social world which fastens only on visible things." This would surely count as a "radical break." However, given that the "visible things" are the "individual," the "group," and "relations understood as interactions,.... [as] actually activated connections,"³⁵ this conversion is not easy to accomplish.

This should come as no surprise. For Bourdieu, the "mental revolution" is not made overnight. It takes incremental steps, some taken simultaneously, some serially, but always, when one is a scholar, in the course of one's research and through the practice of research. Although it does not by itself replace the break with scholastic bias and one's own intellectuality, relational thinking in the course of research is one way to begin.

Thinking for Bourdieu must be relational, for, "*the real is the relational*": "what exists in the social world are relations—not interactions between agents or intersubjective ties between individuals, but objective relations" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 97). The essential point for our discussion of the scientificity of the object is that relational thinking rescues one from an intuitive understanding of reality "as-it-is" (Bourdieu 1992, 246) and taking that too-real reality as one's scientific object. The scientific fate of researchers who do not think relationally is truly grim. If, for example, they study an influential elite school of architecture without relational thinking, they can end up knowing everything about the object they study and can still know absolutely nothing about it, for the object itself is nothing without the relations to the whole. In the case of a school (and Bourdieu's example was the *Ecole Normale Supérieure*, which is the seedbed for the elite of the French academic field), the real object, scientifically speaking, is the "network of relations of opposition and competition which link it to the whole set of institutions of higher learning" and beyond that, to the set of all possible positions (roles and jobs) in the *field of power* to which Normale gives one access.³⁶

Bourdieu advises students to begin with the field. Thinking in terms of field is that important first step because conceiving the field as a space of objective relations requires relational thinking; indeed, because the field *is* relational thinking (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 96). The field's value for the construction of a scientific object is the relational thinking it requires

35. Italics, mine. Bourdieu quoted by his co-author, Wacquant, in Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 96, n. 48.

36. Bourdieu 1992, 232. The field of power is Bourdieu's name for the 'establishment' or 'ruling class.'

and supports. Referring continuously to the relational concept of *field* serves as a constant reminder (Bourdieu likens it to a Post-it with a to-do list on it) to think the real relationally, not once, but again and again as construction progresses (Bourdieu 1992, 228).

Relational thinking goes hand in hand with confronting preconstructions. At this point, we no longer need Bourdieu to know that the “*preconstructed is everywhere*.” Its ubiquity makes a “break with [the] common sense” of official representations and ordinary knowledge the “first and foremost” condition for constructing an object. The next step is the break with scholarly notions. An example of how and why competition researchers can do this was conveniently provided by Bourdieu when he singled out the profession as one example of scholarly knowledge that was particularly “dangerous” (Bourdieu 1992, 235, 242).

The profession combines both ordinary and scholarly preconstructions. The ‘profession’ appears as a value-neutral concept, and even better—an established scientific one. It is, in fact, neither. A ‘profession’ is a representation, a notion historically produced by a group which is under construction as such and which wishes to impose that construction on others through the superseding of other groups and the intentional effacing of differences within itself and with others. As such, it is a folk category that, because it is a representation, has contaminated scientific language. An unquestioning scholarly use of the word ‘profession’ unwittingly introduces into scientific language a word from ordinary language that is the expression of a group’s triumphant self-representation of itself. The whole notion of a profession obliterates the conflict and struggle that produced that triumph. The notions of ‘lawyer’, ‘doctor’, etc., for all the appearance of certainty that certification gives them, are also products of struggles around which the groups constituted themselves. Because the profession is a reality that does exist in minds and in society, it is one of those things that Bourdieu counts as “too real.” Consider the profession one studies as a field, see it as a “structured space of social forces and struggles,” and “everything,” Bourdieu promises us, “becomes different” (Bourdieu 1992, 242–245).

Conceiving the competition as field is relational thinking. The competition ceases to be seen by the scholar “as-it-is” and since that “as it is” includes the relationship of terms as stated of the architect’s disinterested relationship to the competition, affirmation ends. When preconstructions of ordinary knowledge, including the primary one of disinterest, and preconstructions of scholarly knowledge, including the “dangerous” one of the profession, are seen for what they are, as representations, they no longer form the object. In the first instance, the hold of the world of architecture

on the object of research starts to loosen. In the second instance, when the notion of profession is replaced by that of the field, one of the most important “visible things” to which our research is “fastened” is smashed to smithereens, one of our taken-for-granted modes of understanding is no longer taken for granted, and the difficult work of science has begun. The competition will have met the first of Bachelard’s criteria for the construction of a scientific object. Because his epistemology is widely accepted in scientific disciplines, this process will help our discipline attain the recognition of one that has reasonably questioned its object in the manner expected of scientific disciplines.

What I saw in 1989 as a local matter of historiographical methodology today appears as a question of epistemology. What concerned me and a small group of colleagues working as authors of a collective work is now a matter of concern for scholars who are sufficient in number to begin to constitute a discipline. This broadening can continue. A discipline that has been formed through the “reasonable questioning” of the competition that I envision can arguably serve more than itself. Members of a discipline who have undertaken scrutiny that I propose will enter the larger game of architectural research with a notion of what the stakes are that can change the game itself into a greater, more scientific, endeavor.

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Promoting the Best: On Competition Rhetoric

Elisabeth Tostrup

Abstract

This paper explores the rhetoric involved in architectural competitions based on Norwegian cases from mid 20th century up until today. How does the promotion of the best projects reflect prevailing values? From the preoccupation with health in the early Welfare State to the inflation of “landmarks” of today’s diffuse power relations, the successful competition rhetoric also appeals to consensus.

Keywords

Rhetoric, Judgement, Modernity, Landmarks

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INTRODUCTION

Architectural competitions are about having a number of architects make projects or proposals to solve a particular task. The competitors do this simultaneously, responding to the preconditions and requirements set forth. The Latin origin of the word *compete* means to strive or to seek together, and the Norwegian word for competition – *konkurranse* and the verb *konkurrere* equals the English *concur* or Latin *com currere*, that is: to run together. By definition, the point of a competition is to select the best among those who “run” together. Often this can become a surprisingly complex evaluation, with the criteria of “the best” relative to the prevailing cultural values in the field as well as open to further reappraisal. In a running competition, the criterion of *the best* is clearly measurable; it is to run a certain distance in the shortest possible time. In the world of sports, this is internationally agreed upon. However, in other fields of competition such as in the arts, the criteria are essentially subjective and dependent on the norms within the particular field or culture.

From my window overlooking a hill on the outskirts of Oslo, Norway, I am able to follow the consequences of a recent architectural competition – the new Holmenkollen ski jump. They tore down the past jump during some autumn weeks in 2008. The rebuilding provides the opportunity to pay a brief visit to another kind of competition, that of ski jumping and to examine its history along with the corresponding developments of its architecture. In 1892, when ski jumping competitions started in Holmenkollen, the arena was merely a clearing in the woods; the jump consisted of a heap of twigs covered with snow, and the entire slope followed the hill’s natural contour. Nonetheless, then – as today – ski jumping competitions at Holmenkollen were big events, assembling a large number of spectators [fig. 1].

The Holmenkollen arena was reconstructed and extended several times during the last century: in 1914, 1928, 1952, 1963, and in 1982. Each iteration aggressively increased the angle of approach which in turn corresponded to increasingly longer jumps – from 21.5 meters in 1892 to 111 meters in 1982 (This is counting *standing jumps*, which means that the ski



FIG. 1: Holmenkollen Ski Jump, 1917

jumper has to remain in an upright position after landing). Each iteration also relates to developments in material, construction, and form. In 1928 a wooden tower was imposed on the arena, elevating the inrun above the hillside. This tower was replaced by a larger concrete structure for the 1952 Olympic Winter Games. The ski jump was restructured again for the 1982 World Championship and remained essentially the same until last autumn. Thus, the profile or the contour of the slope and the built constructions were altered a number of times. As part of the later developments, the jump tower was painted white and for many years has been flooded with artificial light creating an imposing icon on the skyline west of Oslo. Skiing is inextricable from Norwegian culture, whether one considers the mythic past or contemporary rituals, and with this most-visible structure, the Holmenkollen ski jump has attained the status of a national icon, subsequently becoming the most frequently visited tourist attraction in Oslo.

In ski-jumping, competitors are judged based on *length* and *style* of their jump. Length is measured on a metric scale and style is judged according to how well the skier performs in relation to the prevailing norms of the time. These two parameters are obviously interrelated: as the arena was extended and allowed for longer jumps, the skiers adapted their style to take advantage of the new conditions and maximize the distance of their “flight”. First there was the Telemark style, in which the skier stood upright in the air,



FIG. 2: Crown Prince Olav's jump, 1922

using his arms to steer and balance the body. A famous photograph of Olav, the Crown Prince of Norway jumping at Holmenkollen in 1922, illustrates this style (his is not perfect Telemark style because the skis should have been nicely together – parallel. Nonetheless he was a good jumper) [fig. 2]. The Hip-bend style was prevalent for a long time, and later the so-called Finn-style which has the jumper leaning even more forward, still with the skis close together and parallel. More recently, the V-style developed which benefited from a greater aerodynamic effect. In the latest W-style, the skier is gliding, hovering even better in the air.

In ski jumping competitions, there are five judges – as often is the case in architectural competitions; they award points for style, evaluating take off, gliding while in the air, and landing. Thus, besides having a clearly objective, measurable criterion – the length, ski jumping competitions also depend on aesthetic, more subjective parameters. Significantly, these two parameters are closely interrelated – the style is dependent on the technical conditions and constructions involved.

PROMOTING ARCHITECTURE WITH VISUAL AND VERBAL MEANS

Architectural competitions and sports competitions share value systems typical of modernity. However, ski jumping competitions as an analogy or

allegory for architectural competitions should not be pushed too far as the assessment of architectural quality is much more complex and the objectively measurable factors are more fragmented, less decisive, and more tentative. Most importantly in this comparison to ski jumping, the question of style is more complex in architectural competitions. In a wide sense, style is architecture or architecture is style.

Rhetoric – the means of persuading – is a core issue in architectural competitions, since the essence of competitions is to select and to promote the best solution among a number of parallel proposals. Admitting that architecture is a field in which we can have no objective, certain knowledge, the choices and judgements must be sought and substantiated within that which is *probable*. Søren Kjørup, the Danish philosopher writes, “Rhetoric does not deal with ‘truth’, especially not truth with capital T, but with that which is sensible and reasonable and well argued. And it deals with presenting this in a convincing manner” (Kjørup 1996, 221). In line with Kjørup’s position on rhetoric and truth, the winner of an architectural competition does not win by an objectively measurable performance, but by executing his project in the most convincing manner – by all means of available argument. The language and visual expressions of competition proposals are acts strategically directed towards an audience prejudiced in terms of preconditioned desires, knowledge, and emotions. In architectural competitions, as in classical rhetoric, the “speaker” must inform (*logos*), delight (*ethos*) and appeal to the emotions (*pathos*), in order to obtain adherence from the audience.

Moreover architectural competitions are a public matter, especially so in the Nordic countries. Rasmus Wærn points out in his 1996 dissertation that in competitions, the classical triangle of “client-architect-master builder” is replaced by “client-architect-public” (Wærn 1996, 13). This triangle constitutes the field of reference for evaluating the best project. One goal of classical rhetoric is to speak in such a way that professionals think it is good, and non-professionals think it is true. Good rhetoric persuades the audience to the speaker’s point of view and competition rhetoric must be effective in this manner *both* to professionals and to laymen. This broad audience influences the competition rhetoric and makes it slightly different from rhetoric used solely among architects in purely professional spheres (such as in the schools of architecture).

In order to succeed, then, competition rhetoric must operate within a shared field of values and ideology; it must appeal to the prevailing *doxa* in order to be understood and appreciated. Hence the competition material expresses hegemonic architectural values of any given time – hegemonic in Antonio Gramsci’s sense, referring to a broad network in which political, economic and social

groups attain dominating positions in various fields of society by exchanging services within the framework of a mutual ideology. Dominance is not executed by coercion but through acceptance and adherence to shared norms.

The specific rhetorical material in architectural competitions comprises both *visual* and *verbal* forms of argument. Moreover, the visual material has two dimensions which operate separately. Firstly, the proposed building is an argument in the ongoing debate on good or bad architecture. Secondly, the visual renderings – drawings, photographs, models or other visualisations – have their distinct rhetorical dimension which can emphasize, exaggerate or veil and ignore certain aspects of the proposed architecture and its context. Thirdly, there is the text material which comprises the programme and the jury’s assessment as well as the architects’ texts accompanying the projects. Thus, in the case of architectural competitions we have three kinds of rhetorical means, and this threefold rhetoric enables a many-sided communication legible at different levels and accessible to a broad audience.¹

The rhetoric examined in the following is from architectural competitions held in Oslo, spanning a period of seventy years – from 1939 to 2008. Looking at these projects and their reception we can see changing values within the architectural community as well as society at large.²

NEWNESS WITH “THE FORCE OF AN AVALANCHE” AROUND 1940

Seventy years ago, in the 1939 competition for the New Government Building, the jury was not able to agree on a winner and as a result there were four shared-prizes (Norske arkitekters landsforbund 1940, 34-56). The prevailing ideal as expressed in the competition material referred to the “Hygiene Gospel” demanding *sanering* – from the original Latin *Sanitas* – to make something healthy; sanitized in English, meaning to remove unpleasant or undesired features. In this case, removing the undesired features by and large implied the total removal of the old buildings. *Sanering* – to sanitize – was for a long period, up until around 1970, the common term for reconstruction in debates on urban development and architecture in Norway. In this way, it is a deeply charged term linking health and a particular model of urban development so that only radical reconstruction – implying demolishing of the old – was re-

1. Further on architecture and visual rendering as rhetoric, see Tostrup 1999.
2. Today, Oslo has around 530,000 inhabitants (with a population of around 1 million people in the greater Oslo area), while in 1939 the population was around 390,000. Oslo is situated in the innermost part of the Oslo fjord, which extends from the North Sea connecting to Sweden on the east side and Denmark to the south. The city centre is down by the fjord and the harbour, and the city is surrounded by large areas of woods and hills which are open to public use for hiking, skiing and so forth.

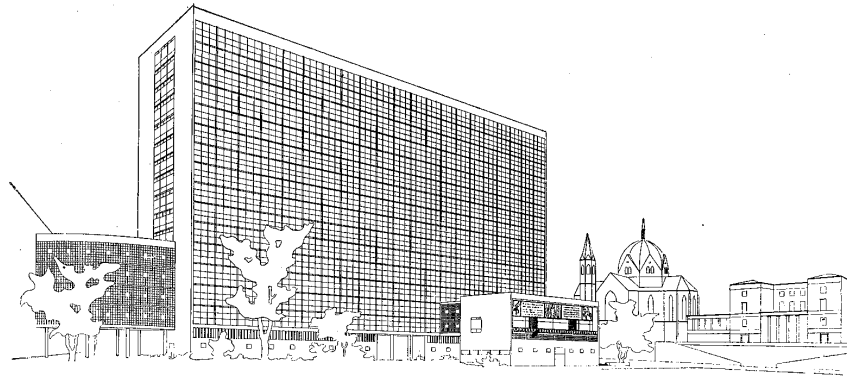


FIG. 3: New Government Building, motto "Rytme"

garded as adequate to provide healthy buildings and healthy neighbourhoods. And who would not be in favour of good health? Some quotations from the town planning underscore this relationship: One of the main issues of the Labour Party manifesto in 1915 called "to level the old buildings to the ground, make plans and erect new buildings so that there can be light and air in the streets and in people's dwellings"³. The trend was that, as a journalist put it in 1915, "The new pushed the old aside with 'the force of an avalanche'"⁴.

The text from the New Government Building competition included harsh criticism of the existing buildings: they were regarded as dirty, derelict, decayed, ugly and thus above all, unhealthy. One of the shared-prize projects, "Rhythm" (Rytme), made by the leading Norwegian functionalist architect Ove Bang, showed a high-rise building placed exactly in the North-South orientation, creating an oddly oblique relationship to the old Government Building. The drawings are abstract and schematic, illustrating a row of offices with a structural system set in a regular module and featuring a façade with a conspicuously neutral grid pattern evoking distinctly egalitarian ideals [fig. 3].

The building's monumentality – and most memorable aspect – is secured in its contrast to the existing situation; marked by cleanliness, simplicity and lack of ornament, Ove Bang's proposed building is much taller than *all* of the surrounding buildings. In the rendering, the surroundings are subdued graphically and partly omitted. Such is the case with the old Government Building to the left in the perspective drawing. There was, in fact, a disagreement among the members of the jury on the matter of the relationship to

3. One of the main issues on the Labour Party manifesto in 1915, quoted in Kjeldstadli 1990, 367.

4. *Morgenposten*, 1915, quoted in Kjeldstadli, 366.

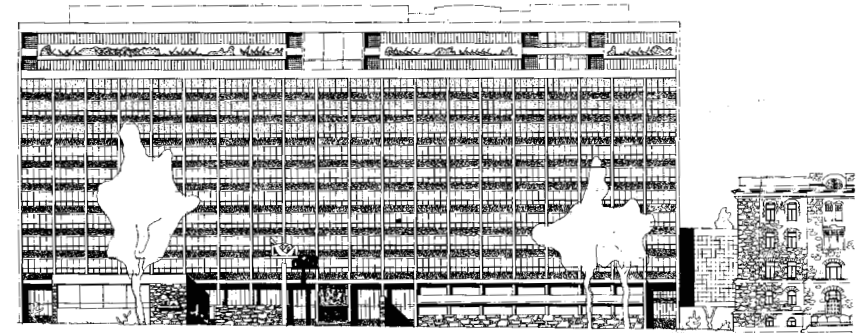


FIG. 4: New Government Building, motto "Vestibyle"

the existing Government Building – since the programme *required* that the new should form a whole together with the old.

Another shared prize project, titled "Lobby" (Vestibyle), was chosen for realization after WW2. It too is a high-rise building decidedly different from the surroundings. Interestingly in this project, although the contrast is pronounced, the visual material indicates attempts at relating more to context. The granite proposed on the façade of the new building is sympathetic to the existing Government Building on the adjacent site. The competition presentation graphically emphasized an association between the proposed and the existing; between the new and the old [fig. 4]. Moreover, the plans demonstrate a greater degree of concreteness, of spatial identity and character by showing a higher degree of detailing.

INVENTIVE AND SEDUCTIVE ARGUMENTS

The problem with this competition was the size and the programme, especially as the prevailing ideal of light and air efficiency was exclusively conceived to be solved by high, clean buildings which were situated at large distance from each other and from the existing buildings. The issue of height caused the Oslo Association of Architects to address the Government, stating that the association supported the majority of the competition jurors' conclusion that the site was not suitable for the New Government Building. To make the case, an architect jury member inserted one of the prize-winning high-rise buildings into a photograph taken from Royal Palace Park [fig. 5].

Finally, after WW 2 architect Erling Viksjø, who had been awarded a prize for his project titled "Lobby", was commissioned to carry out the project, however with a much smaller programme (and in the end was



FIG. 5: New Government Building, motto 'Vestibyle' viewed from Royal Palace Park

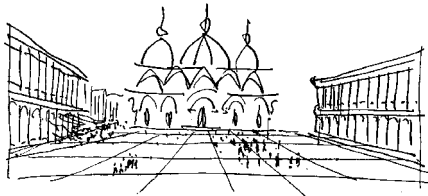


FIG. 6: Viksjø's visual argument: San Marco in Venice

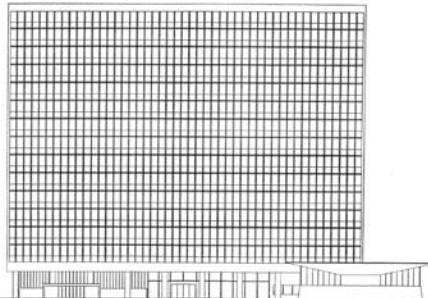


FIG. 7: New Government Building, final elevation

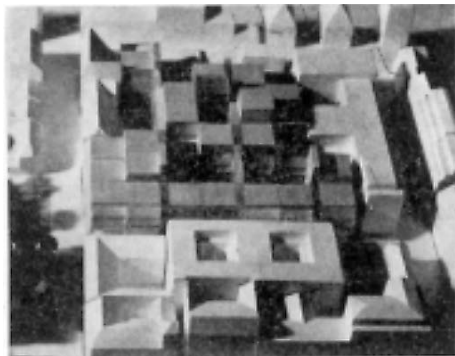


FIG. 8: Bank of Norway Head Office, 1 st. Prize project, model photo

solved with a smaller high-rise in the centre and a low Y-shaped building in addition). Building a case for his project, the architect compared the contrast between the new architecture and the adjacent, old Trinity Church with that of the buildings on Piazza San Marco in Venice. This was an inventive and seductive visual argument [fig. 6]. The final façade of the new office building expresses the egalitarian ideals of the ruling Labour party in Norway (the Labour party had been in power since the mid-1930s except for the five year long German occupation); the grid of the façade composition is even more strictly neutral than in the competition project, showing no differentiation of spaces whatsoever [fig. 7]. It is noteworthy that the New Government Building – virtually the building for the Nation's highest power – for many years simply was called “the State Office Building” (Statens kontorbygning) just like any State administration office building such as the State Telephone Works or the State Electricity Works. This understatement can perhaps be seen in-line with the strong anti-monumental attitude that was typical of the 20th century architectural competitions in Norway up until around 1990 (see also Tostrup, 1999, 68-82).

PROMOTING ADAPTATION YET A DISTINCT MODERNITY AROUND 1970

Thirty-four years later the situation for competition-architecture and its rhetoric had again changed in significant ways. There had been intense riots and broad political protests in the late 1960s. Radical left-wing activists and moderate cultural-conservative groups joined in attacking what they perceived to be an alliance of Labour Party and large scale capitalist power. This activity was influential and led to large development projects being rejected in Norway. The New Ministry of the Environment was established and preservation and adaptation of existing buildings were a prevailing agenda when the competition for the New Head Office of the Bank of Norway was held in 1973. The site was in a central city area which was proposed for preservation. The competition programme states that a new building could be considered “[...] if the façades were adapted to the rest of the built environment” (Norske arkitekters landsforbund 1974, 25). A large part of the competition text deals with the issue of preserving the historic buildings and adapting the new structures. In the words of the jury, the objective was:

[...] to invite the competitors to work towards development principles and solutions which not only take the existing buildings into consideration – but which, moreover, in relation to the dimensions of these buildings, the environment and proportions, give the new buildings adequate expression. [...] Not only would a new edifice for the Bank of Norway give the block a new distinctive character but it would also lead to a refinement of the existing buildings that would be preserved (Norske arkitekters landsforbund 1974, 3).

The author of the 1st prize project, Lund & Slaatto architects, had conducted an extremely thorough analysis of the site and the surrounding area. The clue here was that the large masses could be decomposed into units which, when it comes to height, scale and dimension, form and character, relate to the existing buildings slated for preservation [fig. 8]. The development system of Lund & Slaatto's winning proposal was based on 11.5 by 11.5 meters one storey high construction units, which could fill in larger or smaller parts of the site. Model photographs show a variety of examples depending on how much of the existing buildings were preserved. The architects even extended the grid into the surrounding area, and laid it down in the paving of the entire Bank Square (Bankplassen). The New Head Office of the Bank of Norway is exemplar of Norwegian *structuralism*. From the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s several outstanding structuralist projects won prizes in architec-

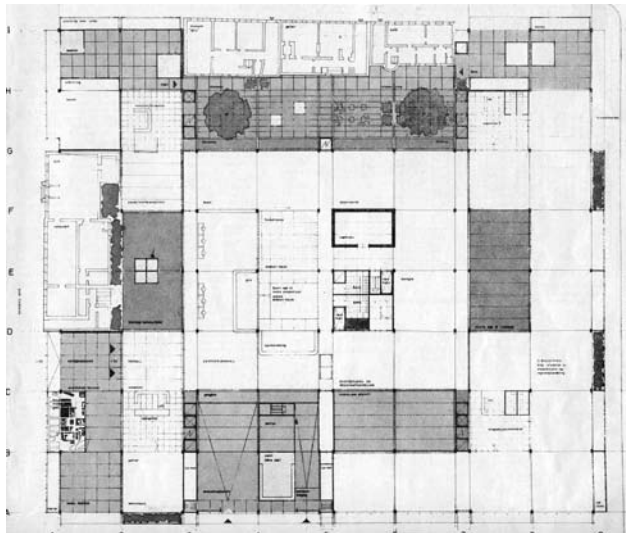


FIG. 9: Bank of Norway Head Office, ground-floor plan

tural competitions, but only a few were realized. For instance, merely a tiny part of the prizewinning projects for the universities in Oslo and Trondheim were built (see also; Grønvold 1988 and Tostrup 1999, 101-113).

The verbal rhetoric in the case of the Bank of Norway Head Office competition was most convincingly elaborated on the metaphor *chess set* and *chess game*. In the words of the jury:

The starting point of the author is a *construction system* which can incorporate the buildings evaluated for preservation and the urban dimensions of the quarter, and simultaneously permit the functions of the bank to develop with flexibility and elasticity within the given framework. [...] Alterations in the interior can easily be made. The construction unit is developed into a *dynamic and elastic three-dimensional chess set* (Norske arkitekters landsforbund 1974, 9; author's italics).

The metaphorical expression quite succinctly and poetically points to the essence of the project: the construction unit and its three-dimensional grid system are compared with the chessboard and the fascinating possibilities inherent in the rules of the game of chess. On the one hand, there is the spatial unit and the simplicity and regularity of its structuring order creating similar situations throughout the entire complex; on the other hand, there is the apparently infinite range of possible options for forming and inhabiting

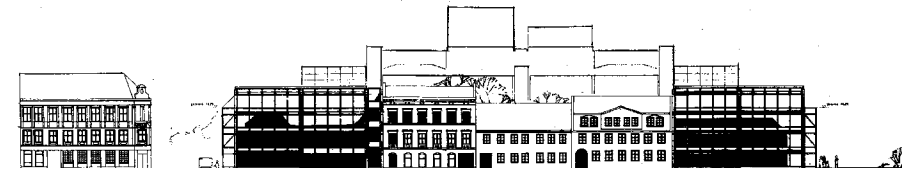


FIG. 10: Bank of Norway Head Office, 1 st. Prize project, elevation

the building. Small moves may be of crucial significance, but it is invariably necessary to follow the rules. In this case the system not only permits a flexible adaptation to different internal needs but simultaneously provides a sensible tool for adapting to the external spaces.

The chess allegory gives priority to the *process* of designing and carrying out the project. Once the edifice is built and inhabited, the play of multiple options – similar to those of the chess game – is limited and not immediately visible to the beholders, although it is underlying the architectural appearance. Providing rather strict guidelines with an aura of enthusiasm and sophistication while embellishing the idea of freedom, it became a useful tool guiding both the architect and the client through the lengthy planning process.

In correspondence with the text, the visual argument underpins the proposal's main thesis. The plans emphasize the grid showing the positioning of the structural system with its columns, beams and floor slabs – the construction units. Walls and vertical spatial boundaries are left out and ignored, thus exaggerating the impression of freedom and transparency [fig. 9]. The spatial framework reigns with an overall impression of regular order and uniform calmness, but the spatial openness and continuity allow individual solutions within the framework and thus enable the ground floor plan to appear with a certain degree of variety or disorder.

There is a distinct contrast between the new architecture and the old, which is in accordance with the jury's statement that it "rejects proposals for building new edifices in the old timber frame style" (Norske arkitekters landsforbund 1974, 28). Nonetheless, the new is graphically toned down both in the elevations and the perspective to give a "decomposed" and transparent impression. The graphic technique emphasizes the figurative and material lineaments of the existing buildings and displays the light, ambiguous transparency of the new walls. Notably, the shading of the façades featuring reflections of the buildings across the street graphically distorts the actual uniformity of the façades, making them appear to have smaller dimensions and a more varied image than is probable [fig. 10]. This toning down of the impact of the new edifice represents a significant difference from the New Government Building competition a generation earlier. Perhaps the quality of light-



FIG. 11: Bank of Norway Head Office, façade as realized

ness and transparency during the planning process was felt to be too fragile for guarding the Nation's gold and assets, because the finalized Bank of Norway façades are dominated by large stone components marking the structural grid and thus providing concreteness and texture to the walls [fig. 11].

In the Bank of Norway competition rhetoric it was especially the *human scale* of the building, rather than façade features, which was stressed. As long as this imperative was achieved by adapting the dimensions and masses of the new to the existing environment and its scale, a totally different and modern architecture could be promoted successfully.

“LANDMARKS” IN THE 2000S

After an intense fight about where it should be located, in the western or eastern part of central Oslo, the competition for the New Opera House in Oslo was completed in 2000. Bjørvika, the main bay in the eastern harbour area, was finally chosen, a site then marked by decay which was earlier occupied by timber yards and other storage buildings. In recent years culture is seen as a motor in Norwegian town development, echoing the Bilbao effect. It was an open international competition with a huge number of entries which attracted long queues of visitors when they were exhibited to the public. The competition was won by Shøhetta, an Oslo based architects' office [fig. 12].

A kind of poetic and metaphorical language runs like a connecting thread through the publication of the competition result. Metaphors have been especially popular and useful for a very long time in architecture. However, during the last ten to twenty years it is arguable that a metaphoric-shorthand has exploded not only in architecture, but in mass media as well – replacing the specifics with platitudes.

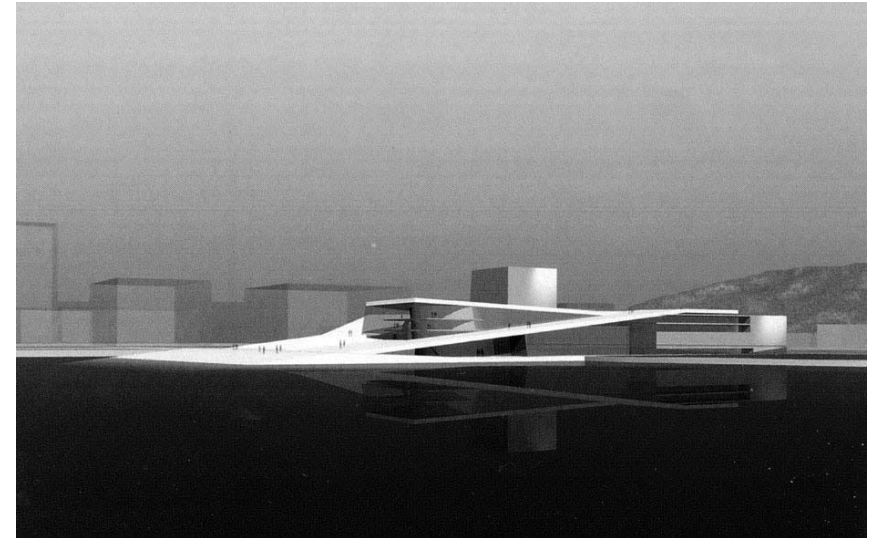


FIG. 12: Oslo Opera House, 1st. Prize project, rendering

The heading of the introductory chapter of the opera publication goes as follows: “Elements of ice, earth, fire, water and air capture distinct spaces” (Norsk arkitekturforlag 2000, 3). The opera rhetoric displays an interesting bridging of opposites further expressed in the following chapter headings: “Soft versus hard describe indoors from out” and “Landmark quality is obtained through a memorable yet discreet silhouette” (Norsk arkitekturforlag 2000, 7, 21). “A contemporary monument” was an important issue for the promoter, but in what context? The new development behind the opera site will be dense and high, consisting of tall individually shaped buildings when it is finished. In relation to this, the opera architect stressed that they wanted the Opera House to have a kind of low-key monumentality. The quotation “Landmark quality [...] through a memorable yet discreet silhouette” is intriguing as a “discreet landmark” would seem a contradiction of terms. If it is discreet, it cannot act as a long distance landmark, but perhaps distinguish itself in the immediate surrounds; which is in fact what the new Opera House in the Oslo harbour does.

However, the discreteness, the fact that it is not a very high nor ornate building matches the functional programme of the Opera House, which demanded a logical solution as treated in the chapter called “A sculpted landscape veils a direct functional solution” (Norsk arkitekturforlag 2000, 25). The word “veils” makes the argument charmingly mysterious and somewhat theatrical. Is functional by definition contrary to being a sculpted landscape? The edifice is not a landscape, but a man built structure. However, the landscape metaphor



FIG. 13: Oslo Opera House after the inauguration.



FIG. 14: Oslo Central Railway Station 1 st. Prize project



FIG. 15: Culture Struggle in Bjørvika (Aftenposten).

conveys positive connotations, and the edifice is “sculpted” – which includes the artistic component. Finally the two last chapter headings relate that “The platform meets the water, renewing coastal conditions in the city centre” and noting that “Connecting land and sea, a public platform rises from the fjord” (Norsk arkitekturforlag 2000, 43; 51). These passages underpin the poetic bridging-of-opposites rhetoric typical of the Oslo Opera House competition.

The Opera House 1st prize drawings are quite simple and easily understandable, insofar as the zoning of function categories in the plans is emphasized by colour-shading. In a similar way as the ground floor plan of the Bank of Norway Head Office, you can grasp what kind of space and use are intended here and there. In the case of the Opera House, however, the spaces are far more specialised than in the bank. At the same time the tectonic components and the structures of the Opera House are more superficially presented: The renderings make the constructions appear like the building is made of card-board, just indicating the surfaces and the bare volumes with no characterisation of structural or material qualities.

Although opera is an art which only an extremely small segment of the population appreciates, the new Oslo Opera House has become a tremendous success. The entire project has from the very beginning been promoted and handled in an exceedingly clever way by the commissioner, by the politicians involved and not the least, by the architect. In a poetic as well as a

concrete manner the project manages to provide an empowerment of the common-man. Giving access to the roof of the building is similar to saying: you’re welcome to step on top of it! During the first eight months after the inauguration more than 800,000 people visited the site. One of these was the taxi driver who, he told me, in the middle of the summer night brought some food to spend his break high up on the opera roof [fig. 13].

INFLATION OF LANDMARKS

A wave of architectural competitions and development proposals related to the Bjørvika area has followed in the wake of the Opera House project. Both the projects and the accompanying rhetoric are thought provoking. The invited competition for the extension and reconstruction of the Oslo Central Railway station, Oslo S, illustrates further some typical features of Norwegian early 21st century competition rhetoric. In the words of the jury, the first prize project “signals a classical station and a modern metropolitan point at the same time” (Carlsen 2008, 9). As in the case of the Opera House, the pairing of two ostensible opposites – a classical station and modern metropolitan point – is seductively inclusive and wide when it comes to qualities that are promoted. It shall be classical and modern! The old station building can vaguely be seen in the dark behind the proposed tall, modern building called “The Crystal”, which in the “night perspective” rendering stands out fully lit by contrast to the surroundings [fig. 14]. Another rendering displays a series of huge vaults gleaming in reddish sunrise while two high-rise edifices appear more discreetly in the background.

Influential politicians in cooperation with investors have now decided to arrange a limited, international competition for the new Edvard Munch Museum and another for the major public library, both prospectively sited directly adjacent to the new Opera House. Twenty architects will compete in each case: ten selected after a prequalification process, and ten “starchitects” who are invited specially to tender their vision. A “culture struggle” has been going on about the Bjørvika area. The drawing accompanying the editorial in a major Oslo newspaper in September 2008 illustrates the jumble of competing wishes and ideals in this respect [fig. 15]. Meanwhile critical voices have been raised against this boom of bigger, higher, faster and more spectacular development projects. Rasmussen, professor emeritus of the University of Oslo, writes about the “Mini Dubai around Oslo S” as the result of negligent town authorities who have given in to the market economy of private investors (Rasmussen 2008, 15). Moreover architect and editor Malmquist points to the superficiality of the “post-card” architecture as principle of urban development and claims that Bjørvika needs a sustainable commitment (Malmquist 2008, 14).

RELENTLESS COMPETITION SMOOTHED BY CONSENSUS RHETORIC

During the last 15 years, architectural rhetoric in Norway has been increasingly dominated by an inflation of “landmark” architecture, and “flagship buildings”. Every commissioner, every institution or company almost automatically proclaim that they want their edifice to be a landmark or flagship or lighthouse, be it a regular office building or a cultural institution. Politicians try to legitimate new development proposals by using the term “signal edifice” (*signalbygg*) as if a signal edifice is self-explanatory and by virtue a vehicle of unambiguous goodness. Appealing to vanity and conceit, the superficial persuasiveness of these ideas is misleading: it conceals important aspects of the problem and acts as pretence for relentless profit maximization and conspicuously high exploitation of the ground. With landmarks becoming the ordinary and normal, everywhere, soon there will be no land left and presumably the landmark effect will disappear. Similarly extending the metaphors of “flagship” or “signal edifices”: there are no flagships without a number of subordinate ships to command, nor signal if you cannot discern it from surrounding sounds or images. The real and truly fascinating lighthouses are very far apart or else the shipping lane, as well as all other functions which meaning is defined by short range qualities, are disturbed and disregarded. Lighthouses are distant beacons one approaches and passes. This kind of rhetoric favours the long distance effect and neglects the near environment and people’s use of the buildings, the surroundings and the city.

Architectural critic Lotte Sandberg addresses this problem in a recent commentary on the question of professionalism and leadership related to National cultural institutions. Pointing to the importance of professional quality in the activities of museums and other cultural institutions, she states that “There is evidence that content is losing to the advantage of façade and veneer in Norwegian culture life”. She argues that:

The new Opera House in Bjørvika is but one example of results measured by the number of visitors – in this case 800,000 people have so far walked on the roof. The fact that *opera* – which is the reason for the new building – has become underfunded, does not seem to worry many (Sandberg 2009, 11; author’s italic).⁵

5. The last sentence refers to the fact that the recent financial budget for the Opera and Ballet granted by the Parliament was reduced and puts down severe restrictions with respect to the activities.



FIG. 16: New Holmenkollen Ski Jump, 1 st. Prize project

An architectural rhetoric preoccupied with landmarks, lighthouses, and flagship and signal edifices impoverishes the debate on architecture and reduces its protean aspects to a single facet. We need to enhance the communication with more nuanced terms and expressions to describe and promote architectural quality.

Returning to the architectural competition for the Holmenkollen Ski Jump, here too we find a bridging-of-opposites rhetoric. The motto of the 1st prize project “New Holmenkollen Lighthouse – Extending Tradition” (Norske arkitekters landsforbund, 2007, 1) implies connecting to the past, appreciating tradition, yet at the same time expanding it to become bigger and more gleaming – yes, like a lighthouse. The proposal shows artificial lighting projecting from and visually extending the contour of the jump inrun far beyond the top of the actual tower. The arc of the line beams up into the sky [fig.16]. In the debate that followed the publication of the competition result, several architects and laymen claimed that the jump would be better placed on the other side of the road. Their arguments were that wind and fog problems would be better taken care of, and that the slope would follow the natural hillside instead of having to excavate a much deeper hole in the rocky ground to accommodate the bottom of the slope. For the moment, the old jump has been torn down, but financial problems connected to the new have already led to restrictions and drastic simplifications of the proposed project. Yet, the new Holmenkollen ski jump can indubitably be called upon as a unique landmark – as it has been a famous, as well as conspicuous icon of Oslo.

On the other hand, one could well imagine a totally different approach: a dark coloured arena discreetly hidden in the woods, closer to the topography, which once you were gathering there, revealed fantastic ski jumping events; something more in the line of the Paul-Ausserleitner-Schanze arena in Bischofshofen, known from the annual German-Austrian international ski jumping contest (only more beautiful). Then, from long distance, the natural hillside would dominate visually as a specific asset of Oslo, just as I saw it the other night: with dense spruce woods outlining the familiar contour of the ridge, with scattered lights from the houses glimmering as small gems in the hillside, and most wonderfully: the evening sky undisturbed by obtrusive earthly lighting embracing us with sparkling stars – Orion’s Belt, the Big Dipper, Cassiopeia and brightest of all, Venus, – not to forget the moon.⁶

Dag Østerberg, the Norwegian sociologist-philosopher, maintains that:

Sports – functioning as culture, institution and social apparatus – is the newest legitimatizing and integrative institution in society. It expands increasingly with sports halls, sports colleges and elite sports centres, golf courses (instead of fields and meadows), marinas, slalom- and ski jumping arenas, football grounds, buildings for sports associations and clubs, etc., [...] professional managers, equipment industry with marketing of branded articles and logos, sports biographies and television recording – all this constitute a huge socio-matter which demands attention and adherence. [...] Sports today relentlessly demand more and more (Østerberg 2008, 222-223).

Like science, sports embodies the struggle for progress of modern culture, a struggle that until recently also was typical of the arts. Architectural competition-rhetoric, as shown above, has developed increasingly in the direction of sports culture, promoting bigger, higher and more spectacular enterprises in the perpetual rush for ever new records. Surfaces and simple image symbolism are easier topics to handle in public debates by the man in the street than detailed knowledge of various aspects of the architectural complex. The implicit value systems – size, numbers and degrees of intensity – seem more “measurable” than the “subjective” complexities of architectural quality. Urban development schemes and public building projects, especially in

6. Eventually the author finds the realized new Holmenkollen Ski Jump quite successful, especially owing to the cladding material of grayish metal screens which reflects the various shades of the sky beautifully. The huge structure simultaneously stands out like an elegant sculpture in the environment and blends in creating a delicate and sophisticated dialogue with it.

central areas, depend on continuous political commitment, and as pointed out by Kjeldsen, political rhetoric tends to be more and more marked by consensus and manoeuvres to avoid rejecting people (Zahl 2007, 9).

Such consensus rhetoric can be traced in the Oslo architectural competitions from the use of granite in the Government Building façade smoothing the hygiene imperative around 1940, via the playful cult of freedom dressing the adaptation of huge built masses of the New Bank of Norway, to the typical and metaphorical bridging-of-opposites competition rhetoric of today which promotes an unprecedented grandiosity. As in the case of the Opera House, activities appreciated by the very few are dressed to be recognized as a mass culture phenomenon and this rhetorical process may appear to be an unavoidable aspect of democracy. Østerberg points out that the art friends and devotees of art often look favourably upon sports, but the goodwill is not necessarily mutual. The sports devotees may not hate art, but are nevertheless dangerous for art, because the socio-material of sports veritably swells out and occupies ever more resources and more attention in relation to the arts (Østerberg 2008, 223). The challenge to architects now is to contribute to a far more nuanced rhetoric that can balance the extreme cult of the extraordinary and grandiose, that can provide sustainable, functional and beautiful everyday environments.

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Part Two

Abstract

This paper explores architectural competitions as processes of participation and choice. The participation of architectural teams involves a choice of reading the competition brief for *instructions, indications or inspirations*. The participation of the competition jury involves a choice of reading design proposals positively or negatively. Both sets of choice rely more on judgment than on calculation. An integral part of making these choices is the definition and selection of criteria on which choice can be made.

For architectural teams winning a competition is a chance event, because the judgments they must make in preparing the entry may all equally well become the cause of success and the cause of failure. The subsequent choice of the jury will determine the soundness of the judgments. If winning is a chance event there is little room for strategic thinking. On the other hand, such awareness creates the freedom for architectural teams to choose between reading competition briefs for instructions, indications or inspirations for other reasons than winning competitions. By analyzing the results of a simulation of repeated competitions between different strategies it is found that the value of wins that are won by chance may systematically be related to competition strategies.

Keywords

Field studies, judgments, simulation models, luck, competition strategies

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Architectural Competitions: Empirical Observations and Strategic Implications for Architectural Firms

Kristian Kreiner

[Successes] are not tryings, but things got by trying or luck.

Gilbert Ryle, 1949

INTRODUCTION: THE ROLE OF CHANCE

Architectural competitions represent important and complex social institutions in modern society. From society's point of view they belong among the legitimate mechanisms for allocating work efficiently and fairly and for stimulating effort and creativity. From clients' point of view they are ways of producing variety in the pool of alternative built environments from which solutions can be drawn. From architectural firms' point of view they are opportunities for gaining work, fame and future income – and occasions for exercising and celebrating creative and aesthetic skills.

The intricacies of the architectural competition *as a process and procedure* have somehow escaped attention, however. Specific design proposals, and the specific results of architectural competitions, have sometimes been widely published, reviewed, and discussed, but the ways of preparing such proposals and of selecting the winner have more or less been taken for granted. Capabilities and competition rules are assumed to explain the individual and collective outcomes and the mere suggestion that the selection of the winner involves more than just an objective comparison of achievements on well-established criteria raises fears that the competition be unfair and biased. Such fears risk undermining trust in the legitimacy of the architectural competition as social institution.

As soon as we start to reflect on the nature of architectural competitions we come to realize that *making judgments* is an integral part of the competition process. The competition brief defines a severely under-determined task, and in making sense of it the architectural teams supplement the brief with a host of additional design premises and inferences about the intentions of the client, the needs of the users, the architectural preferences of the jury, etc. On their part the juries face an over-determined task of selecting only one winner among the design proposals that differ on multiple dimen-

sions and criteria. The jury members make individual and collective judgments concerning the intentions and potentiality of the individual proposals which also imply the selection and prioritizing of criteria on which the winning proposal excels. Thus, judgments being an integral part of architectural competitions we cannot claim to understand them unless we understand how judgments are made and how they are legitimized.

My first aim in this paper is to account for the role and exercise of judgments in relation to architectural competitions. Conceptually, judgment will normally imply the arrival at *reasonable* conclusions. A rational conclusion would be calculable from pre-established premises, but in our case such premises do not exist. Therefore, making judgment entails the concurrent choice of premises and conclusions. The conclusion is reasonable to the extent that it can be meaningfully justified on legitimate premises without being derived from them. Premises and conclusions are co-produced in the process of making judgment. But it is also implied that multiple combinations of premises and conclusions might have been engineered, and that judgments may subsequently be rendered incorrect, biased, or random by subsequent events.

My account of the co-production of premises and conclusions in architectural competitions will build on an extensive empirical study of competing architectural teams as well as of the jury. The fallible character of judgment will become evident in the sense that only the winning entry will not in some respect become mistaken by the subsequent decision of the jury. The contingent character of judgment is established by accounting for some of the multiple alternative combinations of design premises and conclusions that might as well have emerged, but happened not to emerge on this occasion.

The history of architectural competitions is littered with failures, because on every occasion there is only one winner and many more losers. Apparently, there is ample opportunity to learn from failure. You may learn from losing that you made an erroneous judgment on one or more aspects of the competition, but it would be a vacuous conclusion for the future that you should take care to make only correct judgments. Being correct is not a quality of the judgment but of the situation that prevails after the judgment was made. No matter what, those situations only allow the winner to have his or her judgments corroborated by the result of the competition. It would also be a vacuous conclusion that judgments should be replaced by evidence, because such evidence cannot exist at the time when design premises have to be chosen by the architectural teams. Without design premises it would be impossible to produce an entry, but whatever premises the architectural team chooses they will be rendered right or wrong by the jury's subsequent

decision. Any design feature that originates from such chosen premises may equally well become the reason for selecting or for disqualifying the design proposal. Since the selection of a winner entails judgment on the part of the jury, criteria do not exist a priori to be known, revealed or inferred by the architectural teams. Thus, from the point of view of the architectural team aiming at winning the competition a sense of taking part in a gamble would be justified even if such a sense is probably not common. In practice, the randomness of the outcome is construed as a failure to foresee the true premises or, in the words of one of the architects, "to have pressed the wrong buttons". Based on our empirical observations, no right or wrong buttons exist to be pressed. There are only buttons that are made right or wrong after having been pressed.

Randomness as an idea is shunned because it is believed to spur fatalism and relativism. If it is not possible to predict the consequences of one's action the basis for behavioural choices seems to erode. If consequences are random, one action is as good as any other action. However, these implications do not necessarily hold. Even when it is impossible to predict what one will get, it is not necessarily inconsequential what one tries to achieve, i.e. what strategies are pursued. Strategies are not necessarily equally good even if none of them will predict the outcomes in any specific context. But to distinguish between strategies we have to imagine a very large number of competitions from which certain patterns may be recognized. Since we can only hope to observe a few competitions the large sample must be produced "artificially". This is possible to do in the form of a simulation model. The vision is to be able to characterize the observed phenomenon not in terms of evidence (that it indeed happened) but in terms of probabilities, odds etc.

Imagine that whatever is observed to happen represents a draw from a probability distribution over a range of possible outcomes. Alternative strategies shape the probability distribution and delimit the range of possible outcomes in distinct ways that are not necessarily similarly appreciated – even if they are equally bad in predicting the result of the architectural competitions at the level of individual and aggregate outcomes.

My second aim is to explore alternative competitive strategies and to suggest criteria on which they differ. If such criteria can be found they can be made subject to conscious (rational) choice. No strategy will change the fact that for each competition you will have only one winner and many more non-winners. But the many ways of winning, and the many more ways of losing, may not all be of equal value and attractiveness.

PLAN OF THE PAPER

The paper is divided into three parts. The first part covers the methodology of the research. I will reflect on the non-intuitive use of ethnographic data in building simulation models. Normally ethnographic case studies are charged with the task of explaining what actually happened with reference to the specifics of the context. A successful explanation will convince us that *what happened had to happen*, given the circumstances. Simulation models assume a large role for chance and randomness, to the extent that other things than what actually happened might just as well have happened. The focus is on understanding the range of things that might happen and to define some probability distribution over this range of possible outcomes. Thus, to link our ethnographic study to the simulation model we re-interpret the data, not to inform us of what happened and why, but to sensitize us to the things that did not happen, but might have happened, and will probably happen in the future.

The second part covers the empirical evidence and the interpretation of all the points of bifurcation that the process contained. Most of the empirical data are published elsewhere, and here I will only give a few illustrations of the types of judgment which architectural teams and juries are making in the process of conducting a competition. The discussion concludes by suggesting alternative sets of strategies that architects might pursue, strategies that might influence the ways in which judgments are exercised and rationalized.

The third part is creating a simulation model on premises largely derived from the empirical study. Running the simulation produces a wealth of results of the comparative aggregate performance of architectural teams which are pursuing different strategies. The results are analyzed to show that on other criteria than winning some strategies are systematically better than other strategies. Winning is a chance-event, but the situation in which you likely find yourself, should you be lucky to win the competition, is not unaffected by your choice of strategy. Thus, an argument for strategic choices can be made in spite of the randomness of the competition.

METHODOLOGY

DATA

This paper builds on empirical data and analyses published elsewhere (Kreiner 2005; Kreiner 2006; Kreiner 2007; Kreiner 2007). The centrepiece is a detailed case study of a particular architectural competition.

Data were collected in a number of ways. First, in preparation for the case study, and to sensitize us to technologies and practices of doing architectural design, we conducted a full ethnographic study of a competition team in an

architectural firm. It pointed us towards important issues, such as the negotiated authority of the competition brief, the construction of the client and the jury, and the definition of Archimedean points for the design (Kreiner 2005) – issues that were subsequently pursued in the interviews with the architectural firms in our case study.

Secondly, we conducted participatory observations of the jury of the competition being studied. The author being a regular member of the jury, full access to all documents and all negotiations were ensured. The first-hand experience of the jury at work allowed a rich reading of the official documents. Especially the ambiguity of the competition brief and the assessment report became visible in the deliberations of the jury.

Thirdly, subsequent to the announcement of the competition result we interviewed three of eight architectural firms participating in the competition. Interviews were semi-structured and were aimed at getting the participants to reconstruct their design process, but also to have them self-assess their entry *ex post facto* and to evaluate the result of the competition. We interviewed the winning team and by implication two losing teams. All interviews were tape-recorded and fully transcribed. The CEO and another partner from each architectural firm participated in a full-day seminar to discuss and validate our observations and tentative interpretations.

Finally, we have continued to follow the subsequent design process and its implementation and are able to document the inscription into physical structures of the intentions of the winning architect, the preferences of the jury, and the multiplicity of actors and events that emerged subsequent to the competition itself. However, in the present paper I will focus on the process up until the announcement of the winner.

CASE STUDY METHODOLOGY

This wealth of data would allow a rich and detailed case study. However, a traditional case study doesn't utilize our data very well. Case studies are focused on explaining what actually happened. Beyond doubt it is valuable to understand why things happened. But hindsight – the knowledge of what did in fact happen – lures us into believing that what happened had to happen (Fischhoff, Kahneman et al. 1975)! We reconstruct and rationalize the sequence of events in support of this contention. E.g. realizing subsequently that the client does not appreciate corroded iron, the failure of such unfortunate design choices appears to be inevitable. But such inevitability does not exist in our data. Rather, we know from observations that (a) such negative or positive preferences may be outcomes as well as premises; (b) that acknowledged preferences are negotiable and often simply neglected, and (c)

that the jury is free to draw very conflicting implications from unfavourable design features, including to discard the entry or to demand this feature to be reworked during the subsequent implementation. The last-mentioned option allowed in our case the jury to prefer a particular entry in spite of strong doubts about the viability of its most salient feature, i.e. the glass façade (see below). To honour such observations I will reorient the case study to include not only what actually happened but also all the things that might easily have happened, while did not happen on this occasion!

To categorize highly complex, contradictory, incommensurable ideas and entries into a very distinct, yet crude categorization of winners and non-winners: that is the task which juries face. Since the jury is held accountable to the institutional logic of architectural competitions they must be explicit and convincing in their justification for categorizing one as winner and the others as non-winners. The assessment report contains a specific assessment of each individual entry, highlighting good and bad features according to the jury's criteria. The assessment concludes with the categorization of the entry. Both the assessments and the justification for selecting the winners require explicit criteria.

However, by necessity the criteria for categorization must be developed or chosen after the architectural teams have submitted their entries. Categorizing entries into winners and non-winners will require comparisons across entries on design solutions that differentiate the entries. Until we know the proposed solutions we cannot know what differentiates them. There exists no prescription that would ensure winning, because if everybody followed the prescription they would not be differentiable on that point and picking a winner would still require additional criteria.

But if criteria are developed after the architectural teams have submitted their proposals there is no way for the teams to predict their fate in the particular competition. Whatever the future will bring is uncertain and undetermined at the time of action. Action must be taken without the knowledge of the future and winning is no part of the action itself. As Ryle (1949/2000) reminds us, winning is a situation that emerges only after the action, and is not a quality of the action taking us to that situation. In terms of preparing an entry, there is no difference between the winners and the non-winners. Their proposals all rely upon judgments subject to error, and most of them are made erroneous subsequently by the decision of the jury. Since the decision of the jury is also necessarily judgmental, in the sense that outcomes and criteria are co-produced in the process of making the decision, those teams who were proven correct in reality might conceivably have been proven wrong, and vice versa.

Thus, what we learn from case studies and ethnographies of architectural competitions cannot be linked to the actual evidence of what happened. What happened is only significant in the sense that it proves that it *could* happen, not that it had to happen. We also learn that many other things could have happened, even if they did not happen. As we will show below, the jury in this case took the design requirements in the brief lightly – and we know now that to do so is an option for juries. However, this insight has no predictive power, since on the next occasion the jury may interpret the competition brief literally, if that will serve the argument for picking a winner. The jury did in fact neglect explicit requirements in the brief, thus it could happen – and it *can* of course happen again, but also it may not happen next time. Thus, such reflections make us aware that experiential learning is potentially misleading. They also make us aware that the judgments necessary for action most likely will be made erroneous by subsequent events. Such awareness will be meaningful and realistic, even if it is shunned as unfortunate because it risks undermining motivation for participation and effort (Brunsson 1989).

SIMULATION MODELLING

In the simulation model to be described below the driving force is randomness, chance or luck. In each competition the achievement of each architectural team as evaluated by the jury is represented by a number between 0 and 1. In repeating the simulation again and again we look for patterns in the aggregate performance and outcome. We claim to find such patterns, but what do we learn from this?

Simulation models are not reality, even if I would claim that the model developed here takes inspiration from our empirical studies of architectural competitions. It is hard to believe that the results of simulation models *in themselves* can teach us anything. The value lies in the ways in which the model inspires us to learn from empirical facts – or rather, to prevent us from drawing too strong implications from single events in a complex reality.

Our model produces results that are clearly consistent with highly individual careers and successes. If e.g. an architectural team wins a disproportional high number of competitions we are inclined to ascribe certain abilities and practices to the team in order to explain the success. They become role models for other architectural teams which achieve a lesser degree of success. While it is perfectly possible and imaginable that different teams have different capabilities we can show in the simulation model that it is also perfectly possible that the teams differ only in terms of luck. If the latter is the case there would be nothing to learn from successful teams.

Simulation models allow us to put experienced events into a broader picture and thus to reduce the significance of what actually happened in view of all the things that might have happened. Actual events are significant, not least in their consequences for actors and context. But they may be less significant as lessons to learn from. History may be a lousy teacher when it lures us into seeing causalities where randomness prevails. Simulation models may serve as an antidote to being fooled by randomness (Taleb 2007). But as for all antidotes, the simulation models only have a role to play in relation to empirical observations. It is in the interplay between the simulated (i.e. imagined) and the experienced worlds that insight may be obtained: imagination framed by experience, and experience enriched by imagination.

SOURCES OF UNPREDICTABILITY IN ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITIONS

As mentioned above, the data from the case study of architectural competitions have been published and elaborated elsewhere. Thus, what follow is a distillation and a brief illustration of our observations and analyses.

The phenomenon studied is *a single, sealed bid, invited tender competition* (Kreiner 2007). Eight architectural firms were invited to participate in the competition which involved preparing a design for the remodelling of an old factory building to fit the needs of a modern university. All design proposals were submitted anonymously, and the architectural firms behind each entry were revealed only after the jury had selected the winner.

The jury consisted of three professional architects and civil engineers, appointed by the Architects' Association which also appointed a secretary for the competitions to oversee that the competition was professionally, fairly and legitimately executed. A number of representatives of the client organization sat on the jury as well, while several consultants were hired to provide certain inputs to the proceedings, including preparing the competition brief.

The competition brief outlined the task and was distributed to the architectural firms. It contained a short description of the client organization, the existing building and some parameters of the acceptable solutions. Some requirements were spelled out clearly and unambiguously. E.g. it was stated that the principles of construction and installation should be simple, that the building should provide good working conditions, and that operational costs of the facility should be minimized. On other aspects, the brief served more as inspiration. E.g. design proposals were invited that either matched the surrounding built environment or deviated from it distinctively. On yet other

aspects the brief ventured to provide illustrative examples. This was true of the floor space plan which was explicated in the brief, but explicitly not as a mandatory plan. Thus, the brief was a mixture of instructions, inspirations and illustrations provided to the architectural teams.

The time limit was narrow, allowing just a few weeks of work with an absolute deadline. The task was complex and included the collection of a substantial amount of additional information as well as developing creative solutions that could be communicated in short texts and be summarized on bulletin boards. The teams experienced an excessive but not unusual work pressure. For more detail on the processes of architectural competitions, please refer to Kreiner (2005, 2007).

THE ARCHITECTS' JUDGMENT: GRANTING AUTHORITY TO THE COMPETITION BRIEF

I will focus on just one of the many dilemmas that architectural teams face in preparing an entry to a competition. The dilemma is whether to interpret the competition brief literally or inspirationally. Below data are provided to illustrate the dilemma and the strategies to deal with them.

Invariably, architectural teams begin their work by reading the competition brief closely and repeatedly. Thus, it is a very central source of information. The teams related how they repeatedly returned to the brief for inspiration and confirmation when they met obstacles in the design work. While the brief consists of few mandatory requirements and many expansive, conflicting and engaging ideas and illustrations, the teams seemingly search it for clues to the needs, desires and dispositions of the client and the jury.

It almost goes without saying that such a text will be read in many different ways by the architectural teams. Prior experience from working with the client and the jury members may bias the reading. The following occurrence illustrates this point. As mentioned above the competition brief contained an illustrative floor space plan which included a multifunctional auditorium of a certain size is. One of the teams had difficulties fitting in a full-sized auditorium – in their own word this requirement became a “road block” for them. In an interview, the architect reflected on this experience,

... you always learn when you see the final result. When seeing the winning entry I realized ... that they had not taken the brief's m² requirement for this function literally. We gave it priority – yes, we found it important. [Authors translation].

This little piece of evidence has significance in several ways. It shows that

this architectural team interpreted the text as a requirement and a strong preference of the client. The fact that the brief categorized the floor space plan as an illustration could meaningfully be understood as indicative of a specific expectation and desire. The team read the illustration as revealing a preference. Furthermore, on a previous occasion, the architectural firm had experienced the capacity of auditoriums to be a very important issue for this particular client. Thus, one cannot blame the architectural team for taking the indicated size of the auditorium seriously – and for feeling compelled to make sacrifices on other aspects of the design in order to honour this requirement. This proved to be a mistake since without penalty the winning team deviated from the illustrative floor space plan. Thus, reading the brief as instruction on this aspect turned out to be a mistake in the end, but at the time the architectural team made its judgment it would be unfair not to acknowledge the judgment as sensible.

While not reading the illustrative floor space plan as an instruction the winning team still included the indicated type of auditorium in their proposal, if somewhat smaller than mentioned in the brief. In a sense the brief was read as an indication, not only as a source of inspiration. What I am suggesting is the possibility that the auditorium could have been left out altogether. Elsewhere in the brief the university was quoted as being dedicated to interactional forms of teaching. Auditoriums facilitate a lecturing type of teaching. Putting more emphasis on the pedagogical values than on the illustrative floor space plan might possibly have led to a proposal with no auditorium at all. That might prove to be a mistake too, but it might also have allowed the optimization of other design features that could create new preferences in the jury. We cannot know if the winning team would still have won, had they cut out the auditorium; we also cannot know if the winning proposal would have won, had other architectural teams dared to skip the auditorium. All we can know is that fact that the teams make (and have to make) explicit and implicit judgments about the text of the brief – judgments that reflect a reading of the brief as instructions (delimiting the solution space), as indications (symbolizing the identity and values of the client organization, e.g.) or as illustrations (providing inspiration for exploring what the client could get).

I will analyze how architectural teams can strategically choose to read the competition brief as instructions, indications or illustrations. There is little empirical evidence that such reading is actually chosen strategically. The practice seems to imply a literal reading – reading for instructions and indications – as far as it is possible. The design task being highly creative and underspecified in any case, it would not seem unreasonable to search for

some premises for the work, and the brief would be a natural place to search. Premises are also routinely searched for elsewhere, as when the teams collect information on the preferences and past records of the jury members. While reassuring in a psychological sense, and possibly instrumental in the sense of ensuring a consistent design proposal, there is little rational argument for reading the brief literally. Compliance with a constructed image of expectations of the client and the jury will not guarantee success – it may as well lead to failure, as illustrated above.

The architectural teams seem invariably to read the brief carefully and continuously during the competition. While they cannot choose to read it correctly, they might choose to read it in a specific way – within a consciously chosen frame of mind that makes the team interpret the text as instruction, indication or illustration. Whatever choice they make, it may be proven wrong by later events. If we are dealing with a competition for primacy (March 1999), any reading will most likely be proven wrong. Thus, the argument for strategically reading the brief must find its rationale in some quality other than being proven correct and winning the competition.

THE JURY'S JUDGMENTS: READING THE ENTRIES

One would think that the legitimacy of the architectural competition depended on the fair and objective application of the criteria stated in the competition brief. The fact that the results of architectural competitions are seldom contested suggests that they are found to be fair and legitimate. However, this does not mean that winners are found by the objective application of criteria specified in the competition brief within the bounds of a set of institutional rules. Below I will illustrate what juries actually go through when selecting winners in architectural competitions.

As mentioned above, parts of the brief are very ambiguous descriptions of the client organization, of its values and needs. Other parts are fairly explicit requirements that must be met. This suggests that certain points of the brief should be kept out of the architectural teams' strategy considerations. If failing to respect the stated parameters would automatically disqualify the proposal it would be foolish not to take them literally. To disqualify such proposals would at the same time testify to the fairness and legitimacy of the competition.

Such opinions are prevailing among practitioners, but they are not justified by empirical evidence. We only need one illustration of a jury disregarding the formal requirements to know that because it happened it could happen again.

Below we give such an illustration from our case study and the way in which the winning proposal was reviewed in the assessment report. The proposal was highly praised for its robust and visionary design, but the façade towards a public park was commented on critically several times,

The proposed glass south-façade is interesting, but is also technically challenging. The shown façade is still to find its final form. ... In relation to the south-façade a number of issues remain to be resolved, e.g. water-proofing and especially [shading]. The façade must possibly be changed somewhat to function satisfactorily. ... The south-façade should be simplified and possibly also modified in order that its expression to a higher extent concords with the identity of the surroundings. Further the jury has doubts about the economical viability of the heat-reflecting glass without any form of sunshades. The façade needs further elaboration and technical documentation. [Authors translation].

The façade was an integral element in the design, and in many respects it is said in no uncertain terms that the jury does not find it persuasive. It violates the general requirement that “the principles of construction and installation should be simple” (The Jury’s Assessment Report, 9); it violates the mandatory requirements of working conditions in the building; it violates technical requirements; it violates the explicit concerns for minimizing the operational costs of the facility. Nonetheless, the jury issues an invitation to elaborate on the proposed façade. It is fairly obvious that the jury might also have decided to disqualify the entry on exactly these grounds.

The fact that the jury did not disqualify the entry in spite of serious reservations and qualms indicates the amount of license the jury has. If it wants to it can read the design proposals as “work in progress” and invite the architects to change, elaborate and correct elements of the design. But it can also read the proposals literally – as one architectural team experienced in our case study when a choice of colour was criticized for being too expressive. The motivation to read the proposals one way or the other has less to do with the seriousness of the design aspect, and more to do with the result of the architectural competition. In the present case, the jury was convinced that the proposal with the glass façade should win – and found ways of reducing the seriousness of the technical, economic, aesthetic and functional problems with the façade. The seriousness was reduced by inviting the architects to change the façade, thereby making the serious problems transient.

It is suggested that the jury’s choice of a winner cannot be rational, because the criteria for evaluating the alternatives are developed or discov-

ered in the process of choosing. Assessments are made of multiple design aspects and features, but it is the choice of a winner – and by implication, of the many non-winners – that determines the evaluation of such design elements. Knowing it is the winning design proposal, the jury will reduce the weight and importance of unfortunate design aspects by portraying them as transient problems to be expected at this early stage of the design process. Knowing it is a non-winning design proposal, the jury can portray distinct aspects and features as unfortunate and ultimate for the design proposal – thus making them disqualifying for the entry.

Let me emphasise that there is nothing illegitimate in these practices of reading the winning and the non-winning design proposals differently. First of all, the jury’s decision was not formally or informally contested. The architectural teams expressed only a few misgivings about design intentions having been read wrongly by the jury. Secondly, the jury is charged with the task of differentiating a winner from the rest on criteria that cannot be stated a priori, and that need to be developed and elaborated simultaneously with or subsequent to the selection of the winner. The multiplicity of aspects and nuances need to be glossed over before the entries can be categorized in only two types: winner and non-winners. The differential reading of the proposals is a mechanism for increasing the contrast of the competitive picture to justify the selection of the winning proposal.

The license of the jury in reading the design proposals is demonstrated above. Such license can be misused to treat certain ideas and proposals unfairly. However, it can also be used to ensure that the client will invest in the best design proposal to the knowledge of the jury at the time when the competition is over. That knowledge is significantly different from the knowledge on which the brief was originally written. Among other things the client and the jury is now informed by eight specific proposals that teach the client what it is possible to get – and what they might have asked for in the first place had they known then what they know now. Such retrospective sense-making needs not be a sign of weakness of mind or lack of discipline. It may also be the hallmark of learning.

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS: THE ROLE OF JUDGMENTS IN ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITIONS

In one sense, a case study faces an easy task of explaining what actually happened. In explaining why the architectural competition found the winner it did we can rely on the jury’s assessment report, which was convincing enough to dissuade criticism. The losing teams blamed the failure on their own misreading of the brief. But in another sense, a case study faces another

task as well – the task of explaining all the things that might have happened, but did not happen on this occasion. Following the necessary judgments made by the architectural teams in the face of the vastly underspecified design job we can reconstruct their rationale and see the result as guided by reason. But not least in comparing judgments across teams and the subsequent decisions by the jury we also come to realize that many different judgments could be justified with reason. The implication of this insight is the fact that the saliency of what actually happened is weakened. What happened is a specific empirical manifestation of the multiple judgments made by architectural teams and the jury. But every judgment might have fallen out differently, even under the specific circumstances that we studied here. A change of any judgment might have changed the composition of entries and the decision of the jury. Thus, we become convinced that what happened was merely one specific empirical manifestation of all the things that might have happened under the given circumstances. That these alternative histories did not occur cannot be explained by pre-existing and given parameters of the competition and its participants. The only thing that is pre-given is the fact that the competition will have one and only one winner in the end. But which particular well-articulated and rationalized entry that will win appears to be a matter of chance.

Explaining what actually happened entails the construction of a causal argument: that what happened had to happen given the circumstances. But our case study and the way we have interpreted the data provides a very different kind of insight, namely that what happened did not have to happen at all! Alternative histories would have been just as likely to occur under the given circumstances – and just as easy to rationalize in causal terms *ex post facto*. My argument is not that the outcomes would have been different had the circumstances been different. Given the circumstances of the studied architectural competition, the outcomes might easily have been different, in terms of the design proposals submitted and the choice of winner.

In one view, the case study reaffirms the trust in the architectural competition as a social institution. It produced not only a winner, but also a fair winner, the selection of which could be argued convincingly enough to pre-empt any open opposition or criticism. Given the rarity of such opposition and criticism, this reaffirming result is probably not a matter of chance. However, this does not imply that chance has no role to play – that luck may not better explain the particular winner than the causal reasoning used to justify the design proposals and the competition result. We may test the role of chance by asking ourselves what implications we may draw from the particular history of events experienced in the studied competition. Chance events harbour no

lessons for the future; if there is a causal argument there will be such lessons to be impressed on future participation in architectural competitions.

Consider the architectural firm that read the competition brief literally and came to consider the illustrative floor space plan as revealed preferences. They lost to a competitor who did not take the illustration for an indication, but this could hardly be taken as a lesson to be followed in the future. They knew well that on previously occasions the client actually did take the brief seriously – and we know that it would certainly be within the jury's zone of license to do so. Thus, the lesson is simply that a jury in the future may or may not interpret the words of the brief literally. There is little advice from this lesson on how to act rationally in architectural competitions. It becomes clear that judgments are required for which there is no independent reason or cause. Luck or chance, then, must be a more appropriate way of explaining the subsequent success of the design judgments of architectural teams: the luck of predicting the eventual preferences of the jury, or the luck of invoking such preferences in the jury that will favour one's proposal.

The unpredictability of the jury's decision (and the criteria and preferences used to justify it) is explained by the fact that the decision is more judgment than choice. The definition of decision criteria and the choice of the winner are not separate, consecutive processes, but intertwined and iterative processes. Only in retrospect will the sequence be corrected so that preferences and criteria come to determine the outcome. We know that other combinations of premises and outcomes would have been possible – and perhaps even likelier given the serious reservations expressed in the assessment report about the glass façade. The lesson is that the zone of license for juries in architectural competitions is wide. Where within this zone a particular jury will come to rest, is a matter of chance more than circumstances and boundaries.

ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES

We should acknowledge that when luck and chance play important roles experiential learning towards improved performance is inhibited. However, if our empirical results are valid we should not regret such inhibitions because the learning that would be possible would most likely be false. However, events driven by chance do not rule out that patterns at aggregate levels of performance exist. Strategies for acting now can be chosen with an eye to what would pay in the long run, and may be rationally justified even if leading to catastrophic consequences in the short run. Insights into what pays off in the long run may be hard to get when you have access only to the short run. Likewise, insights into the odds of chance events may be hard to calculate when the number of observations is very limited.

Before suggesting ways of circumventing such problems, let me discuss examples of competition strategies that might be possible to choose. In this paper I will concentrate on the strategy of architectural firms in preparing a design proposal. And in continuation of the above results from the case study I will assume that the different strategies are based on the various ways in which the competition brief can be read. Reading it as instructions (whenever possible), as indications or as illustrations represents different strategies for locating and balancing proper premises in producing the design proposals. When the brief is read as instructions the challenge is to find solutions that honour the brief without sacrificing other design criteria too much. When read as indications the challenge is to collect additional information about the client and/or the jury to be able to interpret the brief richly and adequately. When read as illustrations the challenge is to make the brief a resource and foundation for the creative exploration of design options. In the two first-mentioned cases, the proper premises are assumed to pre-exist, if hidden, implicit and not easily discerned; the aim is to determine the expectations of the client and the jury, and fulfil such expectations to the best of one's ability. In the last-mentioned case, the design premises are constructed and implicitly the challenge is to teach the client and the jury new preferences and criteria. The two former strategies have an exploitative nature, applying the creative skills and architectural competence to solve a given design problem. The third strategy has more of an explorative nature in searching new applications for the creative skills and architectural competencies.

These different ways of reading the brief are all possible. The jury remains in control of the fate of any design idea and proposal, of course. But the different strategies lead to proposals that *allow* different types of acclamations whether or not the jury actually perceives them in each particular case. They differ in terms of affordance (Gibson 1986). A proposal that builds closely on the requirements stated in the brief lends itself less easily to strong positive or negative evaluations. Thus, if the strategy of reading the brief literally succeeds it is unlikely that the evaluation will be very bad. It is also unlikely that the evaluation will be very positive. Giving people what they expect will create satisfaction, but no excitement. Furthermore, since taking the brief as instructions requires compromises on other design aspects in the end the jury may also end up mildly unsatisfied with the proposal.

If the architectural team makes inferences about the preferences and desires of the client and the jury, it may come to base their proposal on a much better understanding of the situation than what the literal reading of the brief would allow. Thus, with luck the team may produce a proposal that

better fulfils the needs and wishes of the client than it was able to express in the brief. The evaluation will be comparably more elated. On the other hand, such inferences are uncertain and the assumptions about what the client and the jury really want and prefer may be misguided. In that case, the evaluation will be comparably stronger, but now on the negative side.

Finally, when the architectural team ventures out to explore what design would fit the site, the type of client and the circumstances irrespectively of the brief and the current expectations, the design proposal may easily become controversial. If the proposal is really path-breaking the jury may find excuses for neglecting or circumventing the requirements stated in the brief. The motivation for doing so is highly related to the quality or originality of the proposal. More likely, perhaps, such proposals fail short of being considered ingenious and will then receive immediate disqualification.

Such considerations lead us to formulating two generic strategies, based on what the team attempts to achieve on which parameters. The risk element is one such parameter. Clearly, the strategy of reading the brief as merely an illustration and inspiration implies a high risk of losing badly, i.e. of receiving very bad evaluations and finish last. But it also implies a chance (however slight) that the deviation from the expectations will be considered ingenious and that the evaluation will be extremely positive. The variance in results will be more temperate in the two other cases. The chance of winning with a big margin is low, but the risk of losing with a big margin is also quite low.

The high variance strategy is probably associated with a lower average performance in the competition. Very poor performances will be more frequent than very excellent performances will be, and this drives expected performance down. Thus, we can express the generic strategies as either gambling on the tail or on the mean of the probability distribution over the range of performance levels. Gambling on the mean translates into a desire to do well most of the times by sacrificing the chance of rarely doing extremely well. Gambling on the tail of the distribution translates into a desire to preserve the chance of doing extremely well by accepting that you will do very bad most of the times (March 1999).

We have no way of knowing how in reality the two strategies compare in terms of success. We have far too few observations to determine the probability distributions, and we have far too much noise from other factors to isolate the effects of competition strategy. In this situation we may have to rely on modelling in order to get an idea of the relative strength of the competition strategies. In the next section, we will describe a simulation model of architectural competitions and let the various strategies compete against

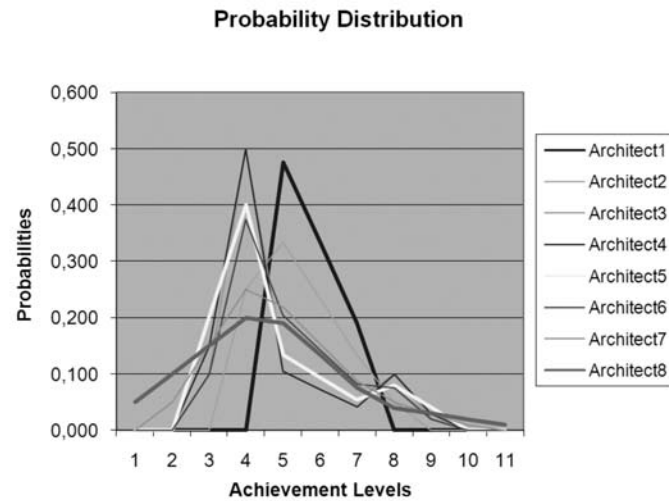


FIG. 1.

SIMULATION MODEL

The model simulates repeated competitions between the same eight architectural firms. Each simulation consists of 50 competitions, and the simulation is run ten times. In reality, we experience such competitions in small numbers, one at a time and only a very few in total. The large number of repeated competitions in the simulation model allows us to situate the specific outcome of a single competition in the contexts of all the other outcomes that the competition might conceivably have had.

In each individual competition a winner is found and the data on the winning entry is accumulated. Thus, we have a total of 500 wins to be distributed over eight architectural firms, and we have five hundred winning entries to be distributed over a scale of achievement level (explained below).

For each architectural firm, in each individual competition, a random number between 0 and 1 is generated. The number is translated into the level of performance in the evaluation of the jury. This translation depends on the strategy adopted by the architectural firm. Thus, a random number of 0.5 will translate into the mean performance within the distribution defined for the architect, and the mean performance is lower for architects gambling on the tail of the distribution than for architects gambling on high average performances.

The random number reflects several elements of chance. First, architectural teams employ a very uncertain technology when preparing a design

each other.

THE

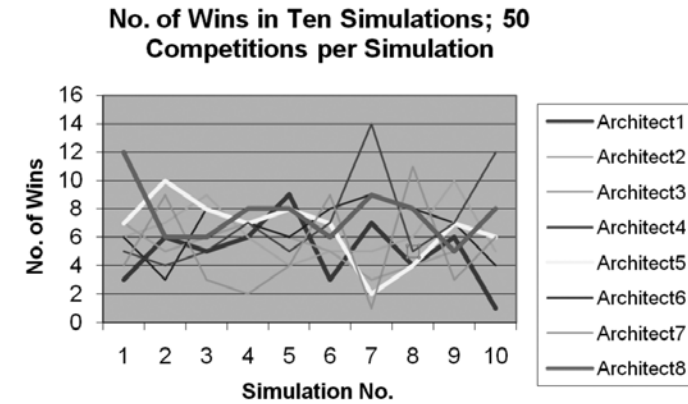


FIG. 2.

proposal. Add to this the very tight deadlines for the competition, and we would expect the level of achievement for the same firm to vary quite a bit from one competition to the next. Relative to what one aspires to do performance will vary from time to time. Secondly, the random number represents the unpredictability of the jury's reading of the proposal. Occasionally, the team successfully predicts the preferences of the jury. On other occasions, the team successfully plants new preferences in the minds of the jury and the client. We recognize such occasions after the competition, but during the competition judgments subject to error are the only way forward. The outcomes are unpredictable.

The performance level represents the jury's evaluation of the team's performance. The levels vary from "1" to "12". The higher the number the more positive enthusiasm is expressed about the proposal; the lower the number the stronger criticism is levelled against the proposal. In between, more or less satisfaction will be communicated in the assessment report and elsewhere.

RESULTS

Assume that we let a variety of strategies compete against each other. See Figure 1 for the strategy profiles that compete in this version of the simulation. Recall that each simulation consists of 50 competitions, repeated ten times. The number of wins per simulation for each architect is depicted in Figure 2.

It appears that there is no pattern in the number of times each strategy wins competitions. Notice that surprisingly Architect 8 (who represents the most radical strategy in terms of high-variance/low mean) starts out by win-

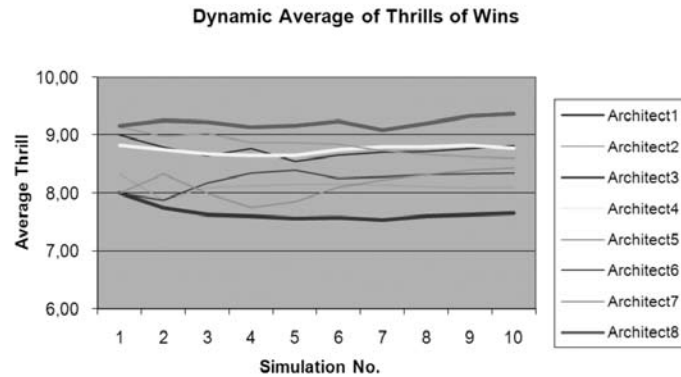


FIG. 3.

ning a very high number of competitions relative to the other architects. It seems that either Architect8 is lucky enough to score very high, or is lucky that the rest of the architects score sufficiently low, with a frequency that ensures him (or her) more than a “fair” share of the wins. The result is achieved by chance, of course, but still it testifies to the fact that such outcomes are possible. The number of wins evens out over time across the architects. This is shown in the dynamic average of wins across the repeated simulations in Figure 3. It appears that the dynamic averages converge as the number of competitions grows large.

It is hard to distinguish between the various competitive strategies as represented by the eight architects in the simulation model. This is perhaps significant in itself since reading the competition brief for inspiration only (the essence in the strategy of Architect8) might be seen as a risky strategy. However, within the parameters of the simulation model it seems not to imply a reduced winning rate.

However, on other dimensions the strategies become distinguishable. We calculated the average performance level on which each strategy won their competitions. We suspect that the higher the performance level, the higher the enthusiasm of the jury and the client. Such wins on a very high performance level will probably be more intensely communicated, and probably also earn the architect more fame than wins on the lower part or in the middle of the scale. Probably, such projects will also satisfy architectural firms professionally. In Figure 4 we present the average “thrill” of wins for each strategy across the ten runs of the simulation. The picture is not surprising: with due variation (and with due reservation in view of the simulated reality) the

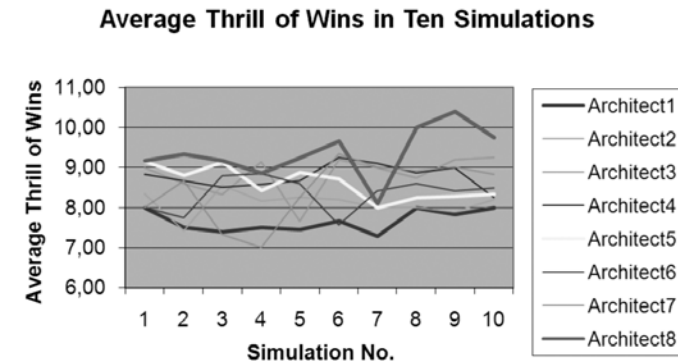


FIG. 4.

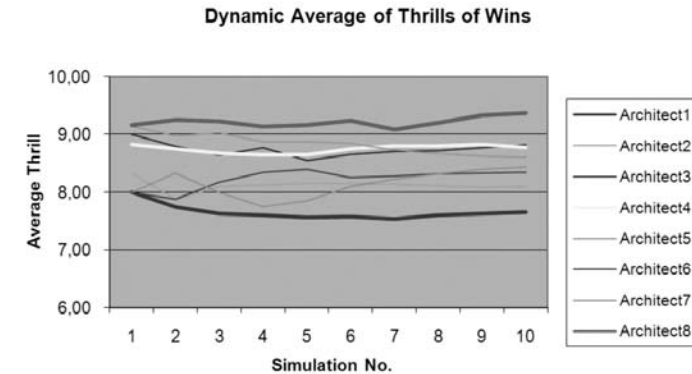


FIG. 5.

most daring gambling on the tail of the distribution is rewarded, while the most radical gamble on the mean is penalized. The pattern is confirmed in Figure 5 by showing that the dynamic averages do not converge.

The competition between different strategies can now be summarized. You cannot influence the odds of winning by choosing any particular strategy. However, you can influence the situation in which you find yourself after the competition, should you be lucky to win a competition. When reading the brief literally and making compromises to honour the requirements and expectations of the client and the jury you will end up having to implement designs that are less attractive projects – from an architectural as well as a reputational point of view. When entering with the type of proposal that you think is optimal regardless of what is required and expected, you will end up implementing much more attractive projects.

It takes luck to win architectural competitions. But if our analysis is correct, it takes strategy to maximize the benefits of being lucky. The less authority granted to the brief and the jury, the more likely will the architectural firm spend its time and resources on worthwhile projects. The reassuring (and somewhat surprising) part of the story is the fact that pursuing worthwhile projects does not reduce the volume of work that the architectural firm will acquire through architectural competitions.

CONCLUSIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

My focus on architectural competitions is narrower in many respects than it needs be. Architectural firms acquire contracts in many other ways than by winning competitions. Also they cannot choose which competitions to participate in. Often they rely on being invited. In my discussion and in the simulation model a competition for primacy is assumed. That is, it doesn't matter if you end second or last. What matters is winning or not winning. However, regularly doing very badly in architectural competitions may influence the chance of being awarded work without competition, or lower the chance of being invited to the next architectural competitions. We should be aware that the spectrum of interests and concerns may be much broader than described here.

On the other hand, we are studying a set of problems that are noticed elsewhere. The winner's curse could serve as headline for tendencies noticed in architectural practices as well as in other spheres of action. Compromising on professional, ethical, economic, and academic standards will often be claimed to improve the chance of being hired, being awarded the grant, or the like. When such compromising is excessive the attractiveness of the job or the grant etc. will be reduced to a point where winning may not be valued at all. This study suggests that perhaps the compulsive compliance with external, preconceived expectations and norms is neither attractive nor instrumental. Whenever a competition for position is real the criteria for rank ordering entries will partly be rationalized retrospectively. If this is the case, the chance to invoke or teach the jury or client new preferences and criteria through creative and radical proposals is never nil. Deviating from expectations may often harm the chances of winning, but occasionally it may give the jury the opportunity for positively distinguishing the proposal. Integrity may pay off sufficiently often to allow architects, researchers and others to excel and grow.

If we were able to convince all architectural teams to follow the strategy of reading the brief for inspiration only, what would happen? We have already shown that the strategy does not influence the chance of winning.

Knowing that there are no more competitions to be won than before, the wins will still be distributed on participants by chance. But the level of thrill will change dramatically. The chance of winning with a pedestrian design proposal is substantially reduced. From society's point of view, such change would lead to increased quality of the built environment – as well as to increased satisfaction amongst architects and clients alike.

Finally, we have yet to study and model the strategies of clients and competition juries. They can choose to write competition briefs for communicating expectations and requirements, or write them to maximize their inspirational effects. They can choose to read the design proposals for indications of the architects' intentions or read them for inspiration for future elaboration of the proposals.

Perhaps the most general lesson from our study is the demonstration that aim and focus may diverge in complex and uncertain realities. The aim of participation in architectural competitions is to win, no doubt. But we showed that focusing on winning would be in vain – and would risk harming the value of winning. With a focus on the quality of the design proposal in itself, winning becomes a side-effect, and nothing in our study would suggest that the side-effect may not fulfil the aim better than the alternative. Applying for research funds, and doing business for profit, does not imply that the focus should be on the application or the making of money. Focusing on designing good research project and on creating customer value may possibly lead to funding and profits as side-effects.

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Abstract

The Nordic tradition of architectural competitions is over a hundred years old and is very significant for an architect's professional and practical external training. Approximately one hundred competitions are arranged annually in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland. The majority are organized by the public sector, state promoters and local councils. The European Union's (EU) regulations for competitions is used as a means of developing good solutions for design problems and as a tool for negotiating competitive architectural services. This has brought competitions into focus again. These regulations have been incorporated into the Swedish Public Procurement Law (LOA). When the building sector became more market oriented in the 1990s Nordic governments developed an architectural policy programme. Architectural competitions were described in these programmes as a means of securing quality and renewal. The competition method of course raises dilemmas such as conflicting goals, roles and interests that juries must confront during the assessment process. Power is divided.

Juries are composed of representatives from organizing bodies and members appointed by the Swedish Association of Architects. Organizers may choose politicians, civil servants, property developers and end-users as members of the jury. The jury's composition reflects the different interested parties in the competition and its task is to identify the best solution for reaching the competition's goal. It must be a united effort. The difficulty lies not only in the fact that the jury must consider the various interests in the competition but that there are always several good solutions to design problems in architecture and town planning. Choosing the winner is therefore a decision-making process riddled with doubts and genuine insecurity. All aspects of one proposal are seldom overwhelmingly better than the others.

Keywords

Architecture Policies, Competition Rules, Assessment, Jury, Dilemmas

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Architectural Policies, Regulation and Jury Dilemmas in Architecture Competitions

Magnus Rönn

INTRODUCTION

This article discusses architectural competitions from a Nordic point of view. Competitions have a strong impact on architects' professional identity and self-image. Architectural offices market the winning contributions on their home pages. The competitions are used to obtain new assignments for the bureaus. The aim of this article is to describe, shed light on and get a deeper knowledge of the system of architectural competitions both as political and professional practices. Approximately 100 architectural competitions are held annually under the auspices of Swedish, Norwegian, Finnish and Danish architectural organizations. These organizations advertise the competitions on their home pages. There are seven major areas of competition:

1. Town planning and urban environment (18%),
2. Schools (18 %),
3. Culture and leisure (16 %),
4. Housing (13 %),
5. Health and social welfare (11 %),
6. Offices (10 %) and
7. Others (14%), which include churches, parish homes, and interior decoration.

The building sector in Finland and Denmark compete somewhat more in architecture and town planning than in Sweden and Norway.

The text is divided into three parts. The first part briefly describes the assessment work in architectural competitions and then outlines the basic regulations. The second section describes the Nordic architectural policy programme. The programme was drawn up in the 1990s in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland. Denmark's architectural policy programme was revised in 2007. The third part of the paper discusses the problems arising from the competition system as seen from a jury's point of view. Competi-

tions *per se* pose dilemmas for assessing proposals, such as conflicts of interests and other dimensions which the jury must carefully weigh against each other. There is never one perfect solution to these dilemmas, only varying degrees of balance between the different parties' interests.

In this paper I will try to explain in part how fundamental quality issues are dealt with in a professional and architectural policy context. Further, I would like to increase the understanding of problems competitions pose for a jury whose task is to single out the winner with the best solution to the assignment. Considerable evaluation is involved in this process. Without sorting and ranking it is not possible to award a first prize.

The questions dealt with in this research concern competing in architecture and town planning, the jury's quality assessments of the entries and the underlying regulations. How do architectural policy programmes describe the competitions? Which competition forms are there with regard to the objectives? How do these forms influence the work of the jury? On what grounds are winners decided upon? Which requirements, goals and interests are to be weighed against each other during the judging process?

The article is based upon two recent Nordic studies carried out by the Royal Institute of Technology during 2005-2007 (Kazemian, Rönn and Svensson; 2005 and 2007). The analysis is based upon interview data, competition documentation and literature. Eighteen experienced Nordic jury members were interviewed. The interviewees represent the three important parties in competitions;

1. Organizing bodies (promoters, clients, developers); seven persons.
2. Competitors; five persons.
3. Architectural associations; six persons.

The persons interviewed were chosen for their knowledge about and experience from competitions. Together they represent first-hand experience from hundreds of competitions as competitors, architectural judges and representatives of the organizing bodies on juries. But they all represent the architecture perspective of the competitions system and its traditions. I have not interviewed any end user or professionals that don't compete.

THE JUDGING PROCESS

All interested parties in architectural competitions are represented on the jury. Members are architects and their clients. The jury's assignment is to identify the proposal which best meets the competition's objective. Judging the entries is done in various steps. Good proposals come forward. Poor so-

lutions are eliminated. These quality judgements are made keeping in mind the goals, intentions and requirements of the competition programme. The choice of winner is also influenced by "tacit knowledge" in the professional quality assessment of the proposal.

The judging work has an air of searching about it. The jury wants to find a winner. In the final round of an open competition there are a handful of entries the juries consider to be possible solutions to the problem posed. The winner will be the proposal the jury agrees upon. Consensus is a sign that the jury has found the best overall solution for the task. Unanimity in the choice of winner creates security in a competition.

The jury normally meets five times before deciding upon a winner. Between these meetings members usually gather in smaller groups to further discuss the various proposals, judge their quality and prepare for the next jury meeting. The architects on the jury must describe the projects in a comprehensible and coherent way to the organizers' members. Afterwards ranking and sorting of the proposals can take place. Each member chooses a few favourite entries for further examination. If they find it difficult to agree during the final round they have to discuss their favourite choices again. The discussions continue until a unanimous decision is reached. Usually the jury selects one winner of the architectural competition. Jury members rarely have difficulties finding a handful of good solutions for the task in question. But choosing between the best and second best is more difficult. There are always several good ways to solve design problems in architectural and town planning projects (Rittel and Weber, 1984). A genuine uncertainty and indecision are therefore always present in architectural competitions up until the end.

COMPETITION RULES

The tradition for architectural competitions is over a hundred years old and very significant for the architectural profession. Modern competitions are a revitalized historical product of the industrial era and the rise of the middle-class. Competition rules were set up at the end of the 19th century. The need for regulations increased as architects began to organize to better protect their professional interests (Viljo, 1992; Waern, 1996). In spite of a long history there is surprisingly little research done on competitions, how juries judge the quality of entries and how they nominate winners (Nasar, 1999; Tostrup, 1999; Östman, 2005).

The basic principles for architectural competitions are the same throughout the Nordic countries, even if regulations vary somewhat. There must be a programme for the tasks with appropriate administrative provisions, technical competition data, requirements, goals and evaluation criteria. The anonymous

entries are judged by a jury representing the organizing body and the architectural community. Finnish regulations define architectural competitions as “a procedure in which the organiser of the competition asks two or more designers for an architectural plan, proposal or outline, to be submitted at the same time and following the same brief.” (Finnish Association of Architects, § 2).

Usually the jury is made up of 6-8 members. At least one-third of the members should have the same qualifications as the competitors (Directive 2004/18/EC). There should be at least two external members appointed by the architectural community. In Swedish competitions these members are appointed by the Swedish Association of Architects. This is a professional organization for architects, interior decorators, landscape architects and planners. The organizing body appoints the remaining members including a chairperson for the jury. A secretary is provided by the organizing body as well as a competition administrator, who “is responsible for all contacts with the competitors while maintaining their anonymity.” (Swedish Association of Architects 2007, § 6).

Architectural competitions serve as a foundation for decision making, initiating solutions to competition tasks and negotiating architectural services. The organizers can choose between four basic forms of competitions: project competitions, ideas competitions, open competitions and competitions on invitation. According to Swedish regulations, a project competition is appropriate when the aim is “realising the project, where the copyright holder will be appointed to carry out the winning proposal.” (Swedish Association of Architects 2007, § 2). An ideas competition is recommended when the aim is to “analyse alternative solutions to a problem without any specific intention of realising the project, nor to giving an assignment to the winner, (Swedish Association of Architects 2007, §2). An open competition is open for all who wish to participate as opposed to a competition on invitation where there are a limited number of competitors. The advertisement announcing the competition should specify the criteria for choosing these participants.

Open competitions result in many suggestions. In Finland during 1999 and 2000 these competitions had from 30 to 300 contributions (Kazemian, Rönn and Svensson, 2007). This amount requires a quick appraisal and elimination of many contributions at the beginning of the assessment process. It is easier to administrate a competition on invitation which is only available for a limited number of participants. Usually 3 to 6 architectural bureaus/project groups partake in these competitions. According to the Law on Public Procurement, LOU 2007:91, public organizing bodies should call for at least three entries to ensure an effective competition. However, all architects should be able to partake in project competitions. This requirement is met by sending in an application together with information about the competitor’s background experience, former

projects and a financial statement from the bureau. The organizing body then chooses the final competitors among the applicants. This system is called pre-qualification and is a selection system based on the EU’s procurement directive (Directive 2004/18/EC). This directive has been incorporated into the LOU which regulates the use of project competitions as a negotiating tool.

Architectural competitions need not be carried out in one stage, but may be done in two stages. The second stage is “restricted with competitors selected from the first stage.” (Swedish Association of Architects 2007, § 3). This two-stage competition is useful when intermediate assessments are needed. Complicated tasks often benefit from feedback. An open general ideas competition gives the organizer a broad base for decision-making and may be followed up by a project competition on invitation with the aim of implementing the task.

The assessment of the entries in an architectural competition is carried out at meetings where “only members of the jury, the secretary to the jury and any retained experts may be present. . .” (Swedish Association of Architects 2007, § 10). Members must observe professional secrecy. The jury shall award, as it says in the Finnish rules, “those entries which solve the task in the best possible way, according to the criteria set out in the competitions conditions (Finnish Association of Architects 2007, § 9). A winner must also be nominated. “A shared first prize is considered to be an unfortunate solution which often negatively affects further work on the project.” (*Juryarbete/Bedömning* undated, 3). The jury shall “recommend a proposal for execution or for further elaboration, if this is not obviously inappropriate.” (*Competition Rules in Sweden*, § 11). There is a moral obligation implicit in the Competition Regulations to award the project assignment to the winner. In competitions arranged according to LOU the winner of a project competition will be awarded the contract. According to Danish Competition Rules, an organizer who does not carry out an architectural competition as planned within two years must pay financial compensation to the winner (Architects Association of Denmark 2007, § 4.2).

Behind the similarities in traditions there are two different models in the Nordic countries, which steer regulations: on one hand, the Danish-Norwegian model with profession-oriented competition rules. In this case the regulations are drawn up by architectural associations and only apply to architects’ work. On the other hand, the Finnish-Swedish model is based on rules drawn up by trade associations. These include both architects and promoters. The Regulation Authorities in Finland and Sweden include more parties from the building sector than Denmark and Norway do. So far these differences have not had any substantial influence on competitions. The majority of competitions are organized in Denmark and Finland and each have their own model (Kazemian, Rönn, Svensson, 2007).



FIG. 1. *Framtidsformer* (Forms for the future)



FIG. 2. *Finlands Arkitekturpolitik* (Finland's Architectural Policy)

ARCHITECTURAL POLITICS

Architecture and politics have a long common history. Power has traditionally expressed itself through the construction of impressive buildings/structures that have put high demands on architectural quality. Nowadays, quality issues in architecture have developed into a specialized political area. Competitions have become an institution encouraging creativity, competitiveness and negotiation. From a cultural point of view, the Nordic countries' architectural policy programmes clearly demonstrate the political interest in using the competition system as an appealing means of influence. In a world marked by deregulation and global competitiveness, national competitions are regarded as an architectural policy tool for renewal, quality development and marketing. We acquire a national social structure based on international models.

The Swedish Cultural Report SOU 1995:84 pointed out that architecture and design are cultural expressions which are vital to people's well-being. The report suggested therefore, that the government take the initiative to formulate an architectural policy programme. A new political area was thereby created. Two years later, in 1997, the Swedish Action Programme for Architecture and Design was presented, *Framtidsformer* (*Forms for the future*) [fig.1]. The public sector was encouraged by the government to use competitions as a tool, in particular open competitions, to implement major municipal building tasks. The recommendations from the Ministry of Culture to state, regional and local organizations were as follows:

Public promoters should encourage competitions, especially open competitions, which have a wide range of participants. The decision

about whether or not a competition should be held and which form should be used, should be decided upon from case to case. Every competition should aim at reaching the highest level of quality possible for the end product. (*Framtidsformer* 1997, 25).

The Finnish programme, *Finland's Architectural Policy* (*Finlands Arkitekturpolitik*) is from 1998 [fig. 2]. Compared with the Swedish government's action policy programme, the Finnish description of competitions for architecture and design is more appreciative. The Ministry of Fine Arts and Education has an uncomplicated view of competitions. The following quote from *Finlands Arkitekturpolitik* (*Finland's Architectural Policy*) shows the Finnish government's positive attitude towards the competition system:

Nearly all significant buildings created in our country during the past century are the result of architectural competitions... Architectural competitions promote innovation, stimulate the building sector and renew architecture. Competitions are a complimentary form of education and open up possibilities for new planners. The large number of solutions presented for competitions make it easier for people to discuss alternate possibilities for developing the environment. Finland's successes in international architectural competitions have been an important channel for promoting Finnish know-how and culture (*Finlands Arkitekturpolitik* 1998, 24).

The following advice is given:

The Council of State encourages public administrations acting as promoters to augment their use of various task-oriented architectural and planning competitions to find planning solutions and to choose planners. (*Finlands Arkitekturpolitik* 1998, 24)

The first Norwegian architectural policy programme is from 1992. The programme is called *Omgivelser som kultur: Handlingsprogram for estetisk kvalitet i offentlig miljø* (*Surroundings as Culture: Action Programme for Aesthetics in Public Environment*) and was drawn up by a working group within the Ministry of Culture [fig 3]. The aim was to highlight aesthetic qualities for cultural policy. Architectural competitions were only briefly mentioned. There are enormous differences between this programme and the second Norwegian architectural policy programme, *Estetikk i statlige bygg og anlegg* (*Aesthetics in Government Building and Constructions*), which was drawn up in 1997 by sev-



FIG 3. *Omgivelser som kultur: Handlingsprogram for estetisk kvalitet i offentlig miljø* (Surroundings as Culture: Action Programme for Aesthetics in Public Environment)



FIG. 4. *Estetikk i statlige bygg og anlegg* (Aesthetics in Government Building and Constructions).

eral departments [fig.4]. This programme gave a more complex picture of architectural competitions. In contrast with the National Norwegian Architects Association it states that parallel commission, which allow direct communication between the organizer (client) and the competitors, is a form of competition. Call for tender competitions are also considered possible when areas and functions have already been defined.

The programme makes several references to the EU's procurement directive from 1994. Much of the text is devoted to describing legal and administrative routines. This is to help set up guidelines for public promoters. Architectural competitions are considered suitable for projects with very demanding quality requirements. In such cases half of the jury members should be architects. State promoters are encouraged to make it easier for younger architects to participate in competitions by invitation. These decisions, however, are left to the judgement of the promoters. The Norwegian government's position on competitions as a work method is described as follows:

Project competitions give promoters the best foundation for further continued planning and in principle is the preferred competition form when high aesthetic ambitions and tasks are to be fulfilled. At the same time project competitions can increase costs and time factors. For basic assignments, it is up to the promoter to make these decisions after evaluating each case (*Estetikk i statlige bygg og anlegg* 1997, 21).



FIG. 5. *Dansk Arkitekturpolitik* (Danish Architecture Policy).

The following comments pertain to open competitions:



FIG. 6. *Arkitektur 1996* (Architecture 1996).

Where especially high levels of aesthetic quality are required, public promoters should use open project competitions to procure aesthetic advisors. When arranging open competitions for municipal building half of the jury members should have at least the same professional competence as the competitors and at least two of the jury members should be external (*Estetikk i statlige bygg og anlegg* 1997, 21-22).

Younger architects should be given the possibility to participate in competitions by invitation:

When using pre-qualifying for limited competitions, public promoters should consider the value of giving more opportunities to younger, non-established professional groups for basic assignments (*Estetikk i statlige bygg og anlegg* 1997, 22).

Danish architectural policy has been developed in three government manifests dated 1994, 1996 and 2007. The first manifest from 1994 was drawn up by the Ministries of Culture, Environment and Finance. The manifest is called *Dansk Arkitekturpolitik* (Danish Architecture Policy) [Fig 5]. The programme stressed that particular attention should be paid to architectural quality. Public promoters were encouraged to augment the use of competitions. Competitions by invitation, open ideas, and project competitions are described as methods for developing quality. The second manifest was issued by the Ministry of Housing. This program was entitled *Arkitektur 1996* (Architecture 1996) [fig. 6]. The



FIG. 7. *Arkitektturnation Danmark* (A Nation of Architecture Denmark).

Danish National Association of Architects (DAL) issued a programme called *Arkitekturpolitik* (Architecture policy). DAL requested publicly organized architectural competitions which they consider necessary for professional development. They would like to see the field of competition broadened to include for example technical innovations, design and functional studies.

The third governmental/state architectural policy programme was published by the Ministry of Culture in 2007 and is entitled *Arkitektturnation Danmark* (A Nation of Architecture Denmark) [fig. 7]. It is an extensive programme of a visionary nature. According to this programme, the success

of Danish architectural bureaus may be directly attributed to winning national and international competitions. One of the goals of architectural policies is to create good conditions for continued development and renewal in architecture. Competitions are regarded as a precondition for growth and development. At the same time, two negative aspects of open competitions are brought up. On the one hand, general competitions require resources from the organizing body and the competitors. Many entries need to be assessed and only the winning proposal receives compensation. The remaining participants work gratuitously. On the other hand, promoters feel insecure in their choices because entries are submitted anonymously and communication between the organizing body and the competitors is prohibited. This criticism has resulted in the government preferring competitions by invitation which has become the main form of competition. The aim is to make it easier for newly established bureaus to participate in competitions by invitation. The following two initiatives are discussed in the programme:

Similarly to the world of sports, it is important that young and untried talents, who have not yet found their way into official rankings, are given an opportunity to practice in competitions where they can be measured against the elite and prove their value in practice. In cooperation with the Danish Competition Agency and other relevant parties, the Danish Architecture Centre (DAC) plans to launch an information campaign and prepare a series of specific procedures and

guidelines aimed at promoting a competitions environment which considers access to the market of architectural services for the growth layer...The guidelines will describe how to establish objective requirements so that these do not cut off younger firms...As a part of this effort, a Wild Card list will be produced and maintained for the advance invitation of growth layer companies. The Wild Card list will be based on objective criteria and be open for all who meet the criteria (*Arkitektturnation Danmark* 2007, 46).

The second measure to help young architects into the competition system is:

In order to promote access to the growth layer of the market for architectural services, a showcase is needed to extol the qualities of the young architectural firms. For the first time, Denmark is taking part in EUROSPAN – an inter-European partnership focusing on development and discussion of new ideas in architecture and urban design. EUROSPAN addresses European architects under the age of 40 (*Arkitektturnation Danmark* 2007, 46).

It is a sign of the times that governments and ministries in the Nordic countries draw up architectural policy programmes. These programmes make up a special political area. Architecture has become part of the cultural struggle and is fought with aesthetic means. That is why the Ministry of Culture issues the programme, not the Ministry of Enterprise and Finance. The goal is to create buildings that are noteworthy and serve as models for society. Competitions are a good tool for combining an interest in design, architecture and culture with attractiveness, competitiveness and marketing.

The architectural community is the caretaker of the competition system and as such must both defend the authorities' regulations and adapt the competition forms to changes in the built environment. That is one reason why the community finds it difficult to move from open competitions to competitions by invitation. One solution is to make it easier for younger architects to participate by invitation. In that way a professional interest in the competition culture would coincide with maintaining career possibilities while encouraging new thinking in architecture and city planning.

There are several cases where young architects have used their prize money and commission from winning architectural competitions to start their own firms and build their careers. Alvar Aalto is a very good example from the Nordic countries. Some very famous buildings are the results of competitions, for example: The White House in Washington (1792), The Eiffel Tower in Paris

(1886), City Hall in Stockholm (1903), the Opera House in Sydney (1956) and the Pompidou Centre in Paris (1970). The next section will deal with some problems competitions pose, as seen from the jury's point of view.

THE DILEMMA

There is tension between rival opinions and interests in the competition system. I call these differences in goals "dilemmas" when there is no clear single solution to the problem. The jury has to weigh a number of legitimate interests against one another when looking for a winner. This is what makes the assessment work so complicated for the jury. Some of the dilemmas can be found in almost every architectural design process from development of ideas at an early stage to implementation, but they become much more clear and intensive in competitions. The jury has to deal with these difficulties in a couple of meetings and the time is limited.

The weighing of interests is done during meetings between (a) *jury members* who have different roles, interests and judging qualifications, (b) the *competition programme* which describes the assignment, conditions, requirements and goals (c) the *competitors* who present different solutions for the assignment and (d) *competition regulations* which set the general rules. From the jury's point of view, the assessment process may be seen as a series of evaluations made from the early start of the competition until the final award nomination and statement are made. The driving force behind the complexity of competitions is public building with its rival opinions, interested parties with power demands and professional philosophies. To conclude, the dilemmas presented by competitions and how they influence the outcome are discussed.

DEMOCRACY VERSUS EXPERT DECISION

The first dilemma concerns competitions seen as architectural policy. Architectural competitions have a public (open) exterior and a (closed) private interior. From a democratic point of view, it is desirable to have the entries on public view to encourage people to discuss the contributions' architectural and urban qualities. Awakening widespread public interest in architecture and municipal building among laymen through exhibitions and coverage in the daily press is viewed very positively by organizing bodies, competing architects and the architectural community.

"For larger and more important assignments a draft is exhibited before the jury begins to work. This is part of democratic openness...We believe exhibits have many advantages. They are important for the public and important for the architectural community." (Norwegian Competition Secretary, interview, 2005). But members of the jury should not be influenced by public opinion

when assessing the quality of the entry. The jury must maintain its integrity without being influenced by outside forces and evaluate only according to competition regulations and the programme. Swedish rules for architectural competitions stipulate that only members of the jury, the secretary and the expert advisors may be present at the meeting when the winner is nominated.

The public aspect of competitions is a starting point for debate which may in the long run contribute to the development of the built environment. However, exhibiting architectural and municipal building projects does not in itself give the public any sort of direct influence on the project. Citizens of the community do not vote in architectural competitions. There are no public observers during the assessment process. The jury nominates the winner according to the competition regulations and during meetings where they are bound by professional secrecy. The democratic contribution to architectural competitions is limited to deciding that a competition should take place, what the programme should be, how the public organizing body appoints its members to the jury and how the politicians participate in the jury work.

ANONYMITY VERSUS DIRECT COMMUNICATION

The second dilemma is related to the requirement for anonymity and its associated prohibition of direct communication. "Each proposal must be presented in such a way that the author remains anonymous." (*Competition Rules in Sweden*, § 8). The competition takes place at the beginning of the planning and building process when the idea stage is central to both the competitor and the jury's assessment of the entry. The possibility of influencing the work is greatest at this early stage. Even so, during this conceptual phase the organizing body is not allowed to communicate with the competitors to clarify their wishes. It is the fundamental idea of the entry, the quality of the solution and the ability to find a good design which will determine the outcome of the competition – not the name of the contributor.

The final product is more important than the person. The requirement for anonymity is based on an open-minded philosophy. The best entry will win. The jury should judge the architectural firm's concept instead of considering irrelevant matters. "Both the strength and weakness of the competition form lie in the fact that the jury's point of departure is the programme and not a dialogue with the competitors...Part of the strength lies in the fact that there is no dialogue. That is why the programme plays such an important role in competitions. The organizing body gives the architects an assignment to draw a house in three months and there is no discussion." (Copenhagen City Architect, interview, 2005).

The organizing body can only indirectly influence the development of ideas through the competition programme and its description of the goals, requirements, assessment criteria, technical competition regulations and basic data about the assignment. Eventual questions about the competition programme are handled by a special official who is bound by professional secrecy. All direct communication between the organizing body and the competitors is prohibited. The end-user's influence is limited to the programme stage which comes before the concept stage, or the project development stage which comes after the jury has chosen a winner. During the assessment and users only can participate in sub-committees.

PROJECT VERSUS ARCHITECT

The third dilemma stems from the dual function of the competition system: to be both a *project* competition and an *architecture* competition. For promoters a competition is a means of filling a multifaceted need. A project needs to be given an artistic design and a practical solution. From the architectural community's point of view, competitions are a means of acquiring new assignments. It is a job application. Competitions are also a useful opportunity to test new design ideas. According to the persons interviewed, architecture develops through competitions. From this point of view, the competition system would appear to be an objective for architectural organizations that use it to bring attention to the role architects play in the development of society.

The work of the jury in project competitions is to find the best solution and architect to carry out a building assignment. In this way, the assessment of the competition entry becomes a part of the negotiating process. Only an ideas competition has no requirement for continued work. The basis for negotiation in a project competition is a blueprint or building description that will result in a building. The contract for this work according to LOU, chapter 4, § 9, will be awarded to the winner. If the competition results in several first prize winners, all will be invited to the negotiations. This is true regardless if the project competition was a general one or with a limited number of participants chosen by pre-qualification. In both cases the first-prize winner can count on a commission for implementing the winning entry.

"In recent years, a combination of pre-qualification and direct invitation has become popular, something which did not exist earlier...competitions have become a sort of public negotiation. Earlier, architects were not involved, but now they are. This has its pros and cons. The positive side is that the architect is the negotiator for the assignment...The negative side of pre-qualification and direct negotiation is that it tends to eliminate younger

architects and newly established firms. We always try to include one or two newer bureaux...and it is not so easy to find such suitable firms. We would like to know something about the bureau we choose and that's where the problem lies." (Stockholm City Architect, interview, 2005).

SECURITY VERSUS INNOVATION

While competitions reflect a longing for something new, promoters require well-proven construction which is useful, efficient, safe and durable. This is the root of the fourth dilemma. One way of reducing this uncertainty is to invite well-established architects with good reputations to participate in competitions. A certain amount of security is also achieved by having qualified architectural judges point out the project, which could be built with proven techniques at a reasonable cost. "Both well-known foreign architects and young Finnish architects who have done something of interest at the beginning of their careers, are now asked to participate in competitions by invitation. This new practice leads to a very interesting mix of competitors." (Architect, former General Director of National Property Board, interview, 2006).

The interviewees in the Nordic countries frequently pointed out that younger architects represent new thinking in the field of architecture. They considered therefore open competitions particularly suitable for promoters looking for new, innovative solutions to aesthetic design problems; solutions, which make architecture, stand out and be noticed. A general competition can be seen as something daring and a signal for architectural renewal.

"I really believe in the competition form. It acts as a laboratory for the community to look into the order of things and get the wider picture of an assignment." (Copenhagen City Architect, interview, 2005). New ideas lead to suggestions that are somewhat untried which is an unavoidable consequence of renewal. The unknown is both enticing and frightening. Innovative solutions hold a certain amount of risk and there is no underlying experience on which to base design and assessment. The organizer (client) must rely on the opinions of qualified architectural judges to find the solution which best fits the assignment.

PRECISION VERSUS LATITUDE

The fifth dilemma is related to the degree of steering and the need for latitude required by the jury. How detailed should the assignment be before the jury members receive the entries and begin their assessment work. "The competition programme should be formulated in such a way that there is a balance between being as clear as possible about the requirements and yet leave as much latitude as possible for the competitors to operate and without locking them in

more than necessary.” (Swedish Competition Secretary, interview, 2005). As it is a steering document for the competitors it should clearly state what the assignment is, so they know what requirements and goals their contribution should meet. A precise competition programme is of the utmost importance. Unclear descriptions result in competition entries that are difficult to interpret.

In contrast to the need for detailed specifications is the jury’s desire to have a freer hand, to take care of good competition entries and to reward developable solutions. Therefore, goals and evaluation criteria have a more open nature in a competition programme. The criteria for judging the general competition in 2005 for the open competition *Visans Hus* in the city of Västervik were described as “architectural quality, functionality, development possibility and economic feasibility”. The number of evaluation criteria reflected the promoter’s need for negotiating room. Competition entries can reveal unexpected possibilities as well as requirements in the programme that were not completely thought through. The need for using good judgement comes up when the jury examines a proposal and gets new insight into the problems of competition. There is a creative moment built into the competition system that members want to use without feeling locked in by overly detailed requirements in the competition programme.

PROGRAMME REQUIREMENTS VERSES FEEDBACK

The sixth dilemma is how to foresee the potential created by the competition, what type of solution may be expected and how the suggestions may be developed for future project assignments. The organizing body should state what criteria will be used for assessing the entries. The competition should be predictable. No surprise grounds for judging should ever appear afterwards.

However, the quality judgement of the entries should lead to new insights into the task at hand. The entry should clarify the problems of the competition. “Yes, we have criteria called development ability (usefulness). It is a matter of seeing how the suggestion can be further developed and improved. It can be important, for example, to differentiate between the structural weaknesses of a contribution... and shortcomings in the dimensions of parts of the building, which can easily be corrected during the production phase”. (Architect, Building Planning Office in Helsinki, interview, 2006). Part of the jury’s assignment is to relay the experience they gained from assessing the quality of the entry to the appropriate groups in the community. In the same way, the criticism of the winning contribution expressed in the jury’s verdict is a way of transferring feedback from the assessments to the future development of the project. In choosing the winner, the jury should try to foresee and ensure the quality of future buildings. The

jury can use the criteria to explain why one entry is a better overall solution than its competitors’ and how the design can be further developed to enhance the environment.

MINIMIZING FAULTS VERSUS MAXIMIZING QUALITY

The seventh dilemma is associated with the interpretation of quality. When assessing the competition entries, the jury should identify quality and at the same time see that the programme requirements are fulfilled and the regulations followed. An entry which does not adhere to the main directives cannot be a winner; only slight deviations are acceptable. The jury, therefore, must determine to what extent an entry fulfils the competition programme’s specifications. However, the jury’s job is not to rank the entries according to their number of shortcomings but to nominate as winner the one entry with the best overall solution to the problem.

“Architectural quality is a clear aesthetic dimension, but also an overall view... Engineers have a tendency just to see the parts, to atomize. It is the entity that is the decisive factor. Function in relation to the place and surroundings.” (Promoter’s representative, Copenhagen, interview, 2005). Also the former General Director of National Property Board saw differences in how quality was understood: “Is quality a technical characteristic, measurable in tables which should be ranked or a question of architectural solutions to be examined in an aesthetic context? We have architects in Finland who have fought hard against having entries quantified in technical tables and ranked according to criteria... Quality is something more than fulfilling requirements. Eventually, all parties accepted the fact that architectural solutions in competitions could not be judged by quantifiable factors alone.” (Architect, former General Director of National Property Board, interview, 2006).

Architectural quality is characterized by a well-balanced entity. The jury’s brief is to point out the suggestion most likely to lead to the best built environment possible. Maximizing architectural quality during the assessment process seems to be a better strategy than looking for a fault-free contribution. The entry’s development potential becomes a key criterion. A good overall solution is more important than shortcomings in minor details which can be corrected at a later stage. At the same time, a faultless solution may be an important negotiating point for a public organizing body. The risks of a successful appeal which delays implementation should be minimized. From this point of view, aiming for “zero faults” could be seen as an administrative plus for promoters in the public sector. Nevertheless, according to the interviewees, the final result – a well built environment with as many positive qualities as possible – must be the goal of the assessment process.

LETTER OF INTENT VERSUS EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The eighth dilemma concerns competitions as part of a learning process. “You can learn something from every proposal!” (*Juryarbete/Bedömning*, undated, 3). In the beginning of a competition, the organizer (client) has a preliminary picture of an assignment and how it can be solved. Goals, requirements and opinions develop during the process of drawing up the competition programme. When the organizing body comes in contact with the proposals they acquire a deeper understanding of the assignment. The proposals are answers to the competition’s questions which in turn shed light on the competition programme and the way the assignment is described.

The learning experience comes both from the solutions for the assignment and the jury’s quality assessment of them. “Competitions stimulate the progress of architecture; the organizing body receives suggestions they never expected.” (Practising architect, former Head Architect at National Property Board in Norway, interview, 2005). Testing the suggestions is a learning process which gives members of the jury better insight into the problems posed by competitions. “Competitions encourage development among jury members. You learn more and are able to see projects in a somewhat new light.” (Competition Secretary in Denmark, interview, 2005).

By examining the contributions, members sort out the advantages and disadvantages of the entries. This evaluation leads to criticism, which in turn enhances the jury’s judging competence. Based on the knowledge acquired during the competition promoters may, for very good reasons, reconsider their position and let the new evidence influence their choice of winner. This knowledge can also be used by promoters to justify not implementing a proposal if they are unhappy with the competition results.

The two-stage competition will maximize the educational experience. The possibility of acquiring extra knowledge makes the two-stage competition a valuable tool in an uncertain situation. The organizing body will have a better foundation for decision-making. The intermediate assessment lets the jury apply their experience from the first round to the second stage in the competition. It’s not only the jury members and the competitors that develop their personal skills. The official accounts of the decision and the winning suggestion make the competition a part of the professional and collective learning process in society.

OBJECTIVE VERSUS PROCESS

The ninth dilemma concerns the competition entry which is the objective for the jury and at the same time the result of the competition is influenced

by how the work of the jury is organized. When the focus is on the object to be assessed it is the contribution and how the assignment is fulfilled that the jury pays attention to. Seen as a process, the organization and how the jury arrives at its choice of first-prize winner is the focal point. These are two parallel viewpoints which are present in the architectural competition and are mutually dependent on one another.

“Bureaucrats and politicians on the jury often expect to reach their decisions during meetings; a problem will be presented and they will decide on which project will win.” (Architect, former Competition Secretary in Norway, interview, 2005). The client wants the competition question to generate as many good answers as possible from the architectural community. For the jury to identify the best answer to a competition question there must be a point in the judging process when the various contributions are sorted out. The jury’s work entails controlling how the programme specifications are met, studying the contributions, accounting for and analyzing the differences, evaluating the advantages and disadvantages, ranking and, finally, selecting the winner.

The members progressively work their way towards the choice of a winner. The difficulties usually turn up towards the end of the process when the members’ personal favourites have to be ranked and sorted out. At the same time there is a demand for unanimity. One solution to this dilemma is that the jury has small models built and brought to the competition so they can see with their own eyes which of the suggestions best suits the site. The models can illustrate some qualities that were not visible earlier to the jury members. The jury can also develop additional criteria to clarify the differences between the competing entries. It is impossible to identify the best solution without emphasizing the differences between the various contributions. The object and the process are both separated and coordinated by the jury during their work of finding a competition winner.

THE PRESENT VERSUS THE FUTURE

The tenth dilemma is about future orientation and the long life-span of a building. The point of departure for a competition is the present-day situation. A piece of property should be built up. A competition is organized to find a solution for the near future. The jury must look towards and relate to a future environment as opposed to a here-and-now situation. One reason for this is that project competitions are aimed at buildings which are constructed in an urban environment where they have both a long and short term impact.

It is important to understand that a project is a long journey, and a competition comes at an early stage in the project...therefore it is important that the jury find a concept that lasts as an entity and which is strong enough to adapt to changes during the continuation of the process. The competition programme reflects today's needs but the building should stand for a hundred years. You can't build something today and be completely locked in by it. It should be possible to use it for a number of undetermined purposes in the future. (Competition Secretary for Sweden, interview, 2005).

Since the jury is focussed on the future it is natural to make strategic judgments which may sometimes be seen as wishful thinking because of inadequate assumptions about the assignment. It's not just the present-day requirements of the promoters that should be met in a competition. The jury also has to imagine how the winning contribution will be experienced by tomorrow's users of architecture and municipal building. The lengthy time-perspective in urban planning competitions creates an uncertain judging situation with new decision makers in a future planning process. The quality of the building is connected to the specific place and should be seen in the context of future situations with different degrees of steering and possibilities for promoters to adapt to the changing needs of the market. Proponents in the jury emphasize the advantages of a proposal and point out its possibilities. The doubtful see the risks and uncertainties in the solutions. It is equally difficult for both parties to judge the future.

PROFESSIONAL VERSUS COMMUNITY APPROVAL

The eleventh dilemma concerns the different interested parties in competitions. Control over the competition regulations and their content affect several parties in the building community. The architectural community strives to influence competition rules and a faith in the system among its members. Educating new architects about the competition culture is part of the community's administration of competitions as an institution. But control over competition regulations must be shared with the organizing bodies. Otherwise, promoters will choose similar forms, such as parallel assignments, instead of arranging competitions with programmes that are approved of by architectural societies. Policies and markets are a playground for the interested parties.

Sometimes private promoters organize competitions in Copenhagen which are not governed by the EU regulations. We look upon this as

an opportunity to experiment beyond the boundaries of architectural societies' regulations. This doesn't pose any problem as long as the architectural bureau agrees to experiment. (Copenhagen City Architect, interview, 2005).

The competitions I am involved with generally concern larger questions of urban building programmes and development issues in Stockholm. The predominant form of negotiation is the parallel commission. I consider this to be an investigation form that I can participate in, discuss and plan...Perhaps 90-95% of negotiations are carried out as parallel commissions. (Stockholm City Architect, interview, 2005).

The interested parties in an architectural competition are reflected in the jury's composition. In the Nordic countries, the jury is appointed by the organizing body and architectural societies. The organizing body has a strong position and can appoint the majority of jury members. The organizing body is responsible for carrying out the winning project and takes the financial risks. Consequently, it is not sufficient to anchor the competition system in the architectural policy programme or refer to the law on public procurement and the profession's innovative capacities. It's the architect's client – the promoters, property developers, entrepreneurs and town planning offices – whose interests must be met to ensure a continued positive attitude towards architectural competitions. The architectural community wants a strong competition culture. This requires cooperation among potential clients: both the public sector who are governed by architectural policy programmes and private promoters who are governed by market conditions. This is a strong reason why the system needs to be secured among organizing bodies that have courage, power, interest, goodwill and the capacity for seeing a competition through.

SUMMARY

In this paper I have tried to consider architectural competitions as an issue about architecture, policy and quality assessment. On a practical level competitions appear to be a professional undertaking, defined by competition regulations, the competition programme and competition entries. The rules are flexible and can be used for developing ideas, building assignments and town planning. Moreover, competitions are a tool for negotiating architectural assignments. On a political level, architectural competitions are about culture, competitiveness and renewal. Competitions suit the architectural policy programme that is directed towards finding market-oriented solu-

tions to architecture's fundamental quality question: what is quality? How can new and exciting solutions be found? How can architectural competitions solve society's needs and meet the demands of future environments?

The jury's task in architectural competitions is to find the best solution. The winner is nominated in a very complex assessment process that must include choice, evaluation, ranking, negotiation and consensus. The building's life span, its physical span, visibility and static position on the site must appeal to present-day interests and future strategic judgements. This is where policies, the market and professional communities meet. Since there are many good solutions for every design problem in architecture and city planning, the jury's work is characterized by genuine uncertainty, opposing wishes and conflicting ambitions which must be balanced out. Competitions involve making a series of decisions which are difficult to get an overview of; they begin when the programme for the competition assignment is drawn up and last throughout the assessment process, until the winner is finally chosen.

Although I have some critical reflections I would like to point out, in conclusion, that the competition form has many positive aspects for the building sector. It is hardly a coincidence that the buildings mentioned as good examples in architectural history books and which architects keep referring to in their rhetoric, have come about through architectural competitions. A surprising number of award-winning architectural and building projects are the result of competitions. It seems that architectural competitions are an institution that generates development and creativity. Competitions give the town planning offices and promoters the possibility of choosing an architect according to a documented decision. Thanks to competitions, architectural assignments are negotiated with quality in mind. Making a choice according to hourly wage can hardly be considered a better method. I believe the important advantages of architectural competitions are the bringing together of different interests, the system's innovative influence and the possibility of creating a foundation for qualified assessment at an early stage in the complex competition assignment.

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Abstract

This paper will discuss the work of the monthly journal *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* (*WA*) which was launched in Germany, in June 1971, with the aim of documenting competition results from all over the country.

With a current distribution of 13,500 copies (estimated readership 30,000), since July 1971, *WA* has published the detailed results of more than 2500 architecture competitions. Its first 36 volumes present the largest single collection of drawings of design proposals in contemporary German architecture.

Categorised by “functional” building type, every month the results of six to ten competitions are documented and published in detail; the prize winning entries of usually between ten and fifteen other competitions being presented in outline form. The detailed documentation of a competition consists of two parts: first an abbreviated version of the design brief and the jury’s recommendation, listing prize winners, judges, prize money and dates; and secondly the publication of drawings and model photographs of the prize winning projects, together with the jury’s evaluation of each project.

WA’s reference system, the division of projects into *functional* building types, and the diagrammatic drawings of the projects themselves present the design of competition architecture as a logical operation. As an extensive data-bank of design solutions – in 14 categories, subdivided into 104 sections – the format of *WA* appears to promote the cutting and pasting of borrowed solutions.

With a particular focus on the changes brought about in 1997, by the introduction of the *European Services Directive* (92/50/ECC), to Germany’s competition system, the paper investigates the difference between what is perceived as *routine* (local competitions in which participants routinely submit standard solutions) and *exceptional* (national competitions with international participants submitting non-standard contributions) competition practice in open anonymous architectural competitions in Germany from 1977 (*exceptional*) and 1986 (*routine*) to 2001 as published in *WA*.

Routine practice, until 1997, is assessed by an analysis of type considering whether or not predominant architectural types may be detected in successful competition entries across the 14 *functional* categories established by the journal *WA*.

In contrast, a close reading of the competition for the *Deutsches Historisches Museum* (German Historic Museum) in Berlin (won by Aldo Rossi in 1988), provides a comparative look at *exceptional* practice.

Keywords

Wettbewerbe Aktuell, competition practice, routine, exceptional, type

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Routine and Exceptional Competition Practice in Germany as published in *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*

Torsten Schmiedeknecht

INTRODUCTION

The central subject of the broader research this paper is part of is the journal *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*. In this paper the journal and its impact on competition practice is looked at from two directions. Firstly and most importantly the investigation analyses the influence the journal may or may not have on competition practice in Germany with regard to the two categories of competitions identified, *routine* and *exceptional*. Secondly, the first research question is seen in the context pre and post implementation of the *European Services Directive*.

The paper, set out to investigate the differences between *routine* and *exceptional* competition practice in Germany, before and after the implementation of the *European Services Directive* in 1997, and the relevance of the journal *WA* for both types of competition, is structured in five sections. Section one briefly looks at the changes in the German competition system in order to set out the context of the research. This is followed in section two by an introduction of the terms *routine* and *exceptional* competition practice. Section three examines *routine* practice via an analysis of the use of specific types across four of *WA*’s categories. The subject of section four is the *exceptional* competition for the *Deutsches Historisches Museum* (*DHM*) in Berlin in 1988, which was won by Aldo Rossi, briefly looking at its context in Berlin, within the publication of *WA*, and other German architectural journals. Its relevance within the work of Aldo Rossi will also be assessed.¹ The paper closes and concludes in section five.

I. CHANGES IN THE COMPETITION SYSTEM IN GERMANY

The implementation of the *European Services Directive* (92/50/ECC) into national law in Germany on the 1st of November in 1997, in the *Verdingung-*

1. Aldo Rossi’s relevance for this paper is hence twofold: one as a successful participant in *exceptional* competitions and two as a propagator of the use of type as a design tool which, as we will see, has a strong influence on *routine* practice.

sordnung für freiberufliche Leistungen (VOF - contracting regulations for services carried out by the free professions) brought with it one important change to the German competition system.² Until then, it had been possible for clients to limit the geographical area from which architects would be eligible to compete in open competitions. The new rules, however, stipulate that any open competition in which the anticipated combined fee for all consultants (including architects) exceed €200,000 has to be advertised in Europe and that every architect registered in a country of the European Union is eligible to participate.³

While at first it was feared by German architects that this would increase the competition from foreign architects in the domestic market, these concerns have turned out to be somewhat unfounded. However, the lack of local or regional restrictions has resulted in two other and by far more drastic effects on the German competition landscape: firstly the competition between architects registered in Germany has increased as, for instance, now architects from Berlin can enter secondary school competitions in Munich, and vice versa; and secondly, as a result of this, the number of open competitions has, in an attempt by public clients to limit the increasing number of participants even in small open competitions, decreased significantly.

II. ROUTINE AND EXCEPTIONAL PRACTICE

In order to define what constitutes *routine* and *exceptional* competition practice in the German context from 1971 onwards, and how the work submitted to these competitions might or might not respectively differ, a number of criteria need to be looked at.

Routine practice as discussed here, applies to open and anonymous local or regional competitions in which participants normally submit standard solutions. *Exceptional* practice is the term employed for open national competitions with international participants, (which should be) resulting in the submission of schemes of a *formally* and *conceptually* less conventional character.⁴

2. See also Franke and Kuemmerle 2006 and Weinbrenner, Jochem, Neusüß 1988.

3. As the 92/50/ECC was introduced in Europe in 1992, effectively most German public clients started applying it in 1995.

4. In her book *Geschichte der Architektur- und Städtebauwettbewerbe*, Heidede Becker classifies the development in Germany of architectural competitions after WWII into three phases. She states that after the phase of “rebuilding and stabilisation” there followed the phase of “consolidation and critical change” during which a more scientific approach towards the assessment of competitions was sought. Becker describes how this was a time in which mathematical assessment methods were applied “under a general absence of aesthetics”, also coinciding with the implementation of the competition guideline GRW 1977, which stipulated the principles and rules for architectural and urban design competitions. The beginning of the phase of “consolidation and critical change” Becker is referring to, also roughly coincides with the first publication of *WZ* in June 1971 and with a particular practice of competition architecture which is de-

It is also inferred here, that, as a starting point, *routine* practice is applicable to what could be termed “everyday” or “ordinary” projects whereas *exceptional* practice applies to what could be considered to be “prestige” projects.

Considering the status that success in *routine* and *exceptional* competitions respectively might lend to architects, it is assumed here that the value of *routine* practice is limited with regard to adding to an architect’s reputation beyond their local or regional area of operation. Typical briefs for *routine* competitions are not those considered to be particularly glamorous as it is often more important to fulfill functional requirements in these competitions than to find spectacular formal solutions. The scope for “unconventional” design proposals in a national museum competition can perhaps be assumed to be greater than, for instance, that in a local primary school competition. This is, however, not an absolute rule, but having won a competition of national importance, it is also assumed, attributes infinitely more kudos to an architect, than winning at a local level in, for example, a series of small town halls or schools. Open national competitions are thus also perhaps considered to fall into the realm of “high” architecture and are perceived to be the place where the avant-garde can show their credentials:

Within the profession of architecture a certain group of opinion making architects sees itself as the artistic avant-garde. The opinion makers are also role models. For these architect role models, who consider themselves to be obliged mainly to the artistic aspects of their work, architectural competitions are particularly valuable as they provide a kind of protection zone⁵

The difference between competitions of national interest and local or regional importance is also reflected in the pre-competition media coverage of respective contests, particularly with regard to the non-trade press. The project, and its development in the political arena, for the *Deutsches Historisches Museum* (DHM) in Berlin was repeatedly covered in the years of its gestation

scribed here as *routine* and which, as I argue, has formed a reciprocal relationship with *WZ* for the best part of 25 years. Becker concludes her classification with phase three, which she refers to as the period of “new urbanity and (public) expression”. Competition practice in this phase, it is argued here, shows similarities to the characteristics of what is referred to here as *exceptional* practice (Becker 1992, 250).

5. “Innerhalb der Berufsgruppe der Architekten versteht sich eine meinungs-bildende Gruppe als baukünstlerische Avantgarde [...] Die Meinungsführer sind auch Vorbilder. Für Architekten-Vorbilder, die sich insbesondere dem künstlerischen Aspekt ihres Wirkens verpflichtet sehen, ist der Architektenwettbewerb als geschützter Raum besonders wertvoll”. (Franke and Kuemmerle 2006, 61-62). Trans. T. Schmiedeknecht.

and there was a lively debate going on in the national daily broadsheets and weekly publications such as *Die Zeit* and *Der Spiegel* as to whether or not it made sense at all to have a museum of this nature, and if so, whether the site in the *Spreebogen* opposite the *Reichstag* was an appropriate one.⁶ For a small local competition to get national broadsheet or television cover prior to the competition taking place – unless the competition is highly controversial for, say, political or ecological reasons – is, to the contrary, highly unlikely.

Until the mid nineteen nineties, for open local competitions the participants were normally drawn from architects registered in the eligible area and thus quite often the same architects would compete with each other. Similarly, in national open competitions for particular briefs (in the case of this research mainly museums), the names of a number nationally known architects keep re-occurring and competing, with a number of high profile international invitees.

The same applies to the field of jurors: until the mid nineteen nineties it was unusual for a client of a small competition to invite a high profile member from the opposite end of the country to the jury; jurors mostly came from the region in which the competition was held. For national contests jurors were / are drawn from anywhere in the country and abroad and yet, similar to the contestants, a number of jurors seem to be ever present in certain types of competitions.

The phenomenon of “a small tribe of repeatedly employed jurors” is still intrinsic to the competition system today⁷

This allows perhaps also for a few assumptions with regard to the differences in the assessment process in jury sessions in the respective *routine* and *exceptional* competitions. *Routine* competition practice in Germany in open competitions particularly in the nineteen seventies and nineteen eighties, had developed something of a reciprocal relationship with the journal *WZA*, whereby the work published in the journal perpetuated the work submitted to subsequent competitions. It could be argued that this had a stabilising effect with respect to maintaining certain standards but that it also contributed, perhaps, to the limited development of *routine* practice. One of the consequences of this relationship was that a small number of architectural plan types could be identified in the winning schemes published in *WZA* in *routine* contests. The journal thus, it could be argued, had become not unlike a *manual* for *routine* competi-

6. See also: (Stölzl 1988).

7. “Das Phänomen ‘eines kleinen Stammes immer wieder berufener Preisrichter’ durchzieht das Wettbewerbswesen bis heute” (Becker 1992, 210). Trans. T. Schmiedeknecht.

tion design. In *routine* competitions the fulfillment of functional criteria, and therefore the given importance to these in a competition’s assessment by a jury, it can be assumed, plays a bigger role than in *exceptional* competitions, where the aim often is to find a more representative architecture.

Considering the jury process in *routine* contests, as the material published in *WZA* might suggest, jurors perhaps see their method of assessment as being more *objective* and that, as stated by Becker, aesthetics perhaps really play a relatively minor role with regard to finding a winning scheme. In those national or international contests, however, which yield *exceptional* results, questions of aesthetics and / or *formal preferences* seem to be more at the forefront of the decision making process – and as the example for the *Deutsches Historisches Museum (DHM)* demonstrates, the formal preferences and hence the work of high profile participants are often recognisable.

TYPE

One definition of type in this context is derived from Quatremère de Quincy in the 19th Century via Aldo Rossi in his book *The Architecture of The City*:

The word type represents not so much the image of a thing to be copied or perfectly imitated as the idea of an element that must itself serve as a rule for the model [...] the model, understood in terms of the practical execution of art, is an object that must be repeated such as it is; type, on the contrary, is an object, according to which one can conceive works that do not resemble one another at all [...]⁸

According to Quatremère de Quincy, the development of type lies in transformation, whereas the model is merely subject to repetition. In the contemporary German context Quatremère de Quincy’s definition was voiced by OM Ungers, whose theoretical work was also concerned with the question of the operative use of typology for the designer:

[...] typology as such, can only be a means for recognition and not the final goal. This functional typology may be able to discover different types as well as archetypes, but it too easily lets the type freeze into a stereotype, a cliché, a motif or even a label. A reality that is directed by clichés rather than ideas, stereotypes rather than images, and classifications rather than concepts, is stagnant, unable to develop or transform further [...]. For thinking in types and structures – an in-

8. Quatremère de Quincy, *Dictionnaire Historique D’Architecture*, quoted from Rossi 1982, 40.

dispensable presupposition for creative thought in general – one must understand thought in terms of analogies, images, and metaphors. [...] The pure type, the ideal type, only has meaning as a thought, as a starting point or a thought model (Ungers 1985, 93)

Another interpretation of type is that of C19 architect and teacher Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand, manifest in his *Précis des leçons d'architecture données à l'École Royale Polytechnique*.⁹ Durand's idea of type, however, is one that is based on repetition rather than transformation, which is also illustrated by his view on the graphic representation of architecture, pointed out here by Sergio Villari:

Durand cleansed architectural design of every painterly or plastic effect, eliminating all lyrical or sentimental inflection; [...] Design, after all, had to be a rigorous instrument for the geometric representation of architecture, a technographic transcription (Villari 1990, 56).

Villari is referring to Durand's *Recueil et Parallele des édifices de tout genre, anciens et modernes remarquables par leur beauté, par leur grandeur ou par leur singularité, et dessinés sur une même échelle*, the publication of a *cahier* of six prints at the Salon de l'an VII. One of the keys here, and the relevance to *routine* practice and its representation in *WZA*, is that, despite the fact that Durand is dealing with monuments, the representation of buildings to the same scale and systematically organised into types, has a similar "objective" undertone to that of *WZA*.

For contemporary *exceptional* competitions this cannot be argued; partly because of the briefs that could be classified as *exceptional*, but also because type as defined above is at odds with the idea of an architect's *formal preferences* – unless, that is, the architect has a particular approach to design based on type. It can therefore be assumed, that *exceptional* practice competitions as published in *WZA*, are of limited value with regard to typology (and thus adapted and transformed repetition of previous solutions).

In the context of *WZA*, both types of competitions – *routine* and *exceptional* are published in the same way. The journal makes no distinction in the way schemes are laid out in its pages, whether it publishes a national competition for a government building in Berlin or a local contest for a small Kindergarten in a village in Bavaria. The treatment of both *routine* and *exceptional* competitions in *WZA* can thus be described as having a singular character in both cases. It is this fact that distinguishes *WZA* from most other architectural publications.

9. Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand, *Précis des leçons d'architecture données à l'École Royale Polytechnique*, Paris, 1802-5.

However, a number of nominally *exceptional* competitions, particularly in the nineteen eighties and early nineteen nineties, yielded far from *exceptional* results and thus would rather belong in the category of *routine* competitions. Of 20 *exceptional* practice competitions studied which were published in *WZA*, only the results of four – considering mainly the schemes awarded first prize – could really be classed as *exceptional* with regards to their derivation from the use of type in *routine* competition practice.¹⁰ The assumption here is, that the combination of *WZA*, the competition system (its rules and methods of assessment) and the social and cultural circumstances in Germany, perhaps contributed to the fact that *routine* practice, as demonstrated in *WZA*, has a stronger impact on *exceptional* practice than vice versa, in competition architecture. This is not necessarily what one would have predicted. However, an observation made by Alexander Purves in his 1982 essay *The Persistence of Formal Patterns*, might serve to illustrate the continued use of type across both practices:

The origin of a particular form is beyond our understanding. We can, however, observe the persistence of forms. Those that persist do so because they resonate so strongly in the experience of human beings that they are chosen again and again. Clear reasons for these choices cannot be articulated because such motives make up an elusive web of conscious and unconscious needs, desires, and associations (Purves 1982, 138).

Purves' thoughts could be said to be true for both *routine* and *exceptional* competition practice, particularly with regards to the multitude of motives leading to the choice of types. In *routine* practice it could be argued that the reasons are of a more practical and perhaps calculating nature, supported by and feeding the contents of *WZA*, whereas in *exceptional* practice perhaps the use of type infers a more considered and analytical design method, which draws certain influences from *routine* practice nonetheless, resulting at times in what is termed here *routine exceptional* competition practice.

It is necessary to point out here, that in the context of this paper the starting point in the analysis of *exceptional* and *routine* competition practice is seen in the context of programme, participants and jurors – before the actual work submitted, awarded prizes and subsequently published in *WZA* is considered. The term *exceptional* is used here not as a quality judgement but rather as classifying that which is outside the norm, in the case presented here outside the *routine*. Simultaneously, "routine" is not to be mistaken

10. Those were: Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart 12/77; DHM, Berlin 8/88; Berlin Museum mit Jüdischer Abteilung 9/89; *Spreebogen*, Berlin 4/93.

for what recently has been termed “the ordinary” or “the everyday”. Hence, the category of *routine exceptional* competition practice, in the context of this research, is applied to competitions, which due to their programmes, procedures, participants, jurors etc. fall into the category of *exceptional* competitions, but in which the majority of successful i.e. prize winning solutions, as published in *WA*, bear a strong resemblance — with regard to the use of standard typologies and perhaps the lack their transformation or manipulation — to the results of competitions classed here as *routine*.

With respect to the media coverage of competitions in other architectural publications, the majority of competition results published in journals such as *Baumeister*, *Bauwelt*, *Arch +*, *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, *Deutsche Bauzeitschrift* etc., but also in the other specialized German competition journal *Architektur + Wettbewerbe* (which published, until December 2008, themed issues on specific competition types) is drawn from supposedly *exceptional* contests. Results of *routine* competitions are hardly ever published in architectural or other media with the exception of *WA*, whereas the coverage in the arts and cultural sections of non-architectural broad sheets or weeklies for *exceptional* contests is fairly standard. However, *routine* competition results can find their way into the mainstream journals, but only as finished buildings — in which case they are somewhat removed from the competition context.

Considering further the implications of *routine* and *exceptional* competition results for other competitions, *WA*'s value for *routine* competitions is evident, and it could be argued that *routine* competition architecture, digested via *WA* finds itself in a self-perpetuating cycle as the journal by default becomes a kind of pattern book of acceptable and successful solutions for specific building types. For *exceptional* competitions the same would be difficult to ascertain as it seems to be in the nature of *exceptional* competitions to achieve the opposite, and to work towards paradigm shifts or breaks from the status quo.

Truly *exceptional* competition practice can be seen as a confirmation of the avant-garde to itself of its own existence and draws a line between those architects who consider themselves worthy of an elevated status and those who according to Jacques Herzog, belong to the producers of simulation architecture:

A narrow elite of author architects... opposite an overpowering ninety percent majority of simulation architecture¹¹

For the profession as a whole, and for architecture, Herzog's statement,

11. Jacques Herzog in his speech on receiving the Pritzker Prize on 07 May 2001 (Franke and Kuemmerle 2006, 77)

however must also be registered with considerable doubt, as *routine* practice might borrow and lend stylistically from the *author-architects*, but, with regards to competition architecture being disseminated into the mainstream, *routine* competition practice, it must be assumed, has a bigger impact on built (non-competition) architecture than vice-versa.

III. ROUTINE PRACTICE

Every form of training, be it learning to ride a bike or speaking a foreign language, aims at a permanent change in behavior. In the early stages, the trainee is painfully aware of the externally imposed patterns of behaviour; once he has mastered ease or fluency, he tends to forget the artificial character of the learning process. It becomes second nature, a habit (Prak 1984, 93).

The paper will now address the question as to whether differences in routine competition practice in *WA* could be detected between the material published pre and post the introduction of the *European Services*.

As stipulated previously, an analysis the use of type as a design tool in *routine* competitions is of particular interest here. Hence, type and standard solutions are seen as comparative means. After an initial study of the competitions, five reoccurring types were identified: courtyard / atrium types, linear double loaded corridor types, other double loaded corridor types, linear single loaded corridor types, other single corridor types and examined more closely with regard to how dominant either of the types might be within their category and across the other categories.

The relevance of *WA* for *routine* competition practice and the use of type, as described above, was tested through an analysis of a total of 58 competition results published in the journal across four categories: 11/1 - Town Halls (32 competitions), 12/1 - Court Buildings (8 competitions), 4/5 - Central University Facilities (11 competitions) and 3/4 Secondary (*Grammar*) Schools - (7 competitions). The categories chosen provide a cross section of different functions and the aim of the research was to see whether or not typological similarities could be identified across categories.

The selection was sampled from 53 issues of the total of 204 issues published in *WA* between 1986 and 2001. The research was split into two sections: 1986-1994, representing the time when the majority of competitions were still locally restricted; and 1995-2001, as from 1995 onwards the majority of competitions were in line with the *European Services Directive* and thus open to participants from the European Union.

The types identified have been analysed in the sense that Ungers had stipulated, namely as starting points, and the projects, even if they were classed in the same type, at times were considerably different from each other. In line with the arguments brought forward by Quatremère de Quincy, Rossi and Ungers, this is considered to be the virtue of typology, both as a design and as an analytical tool for *routine* competition practice.

Studying the occurrence of type in and across category but also the number of competitions per category published in the two time frames considered, a number of conclusions can be drawn, particularly with regard to the question as to whether *routine* practice has changed since the implementation of the *European Services Directive* needs.

In both time frames, schemes based on courtyard or atrium types occurred more than projects based on any of the other types. Between 1986 and 1994, these solutions were present in just over a quarter of all schemes studied (61 of 222). Between 1995 and 2001 the type was used in almost half of all schemes (32 of 70). The type and its derivations were used in almost a third of all schemes studied of category 11/1 – Town Halls (47 of 148) between 1986 and 1994. This also represented two thirds of all schemes that had used the type across category. Between 1995 and 2001, 7 out of 14 Town Hall schemes were based on the type, representing just less than one quarter of the 32 schemes across category based on atriums or courtyards. The distribution of the type during this time in absolute terms, is even, as there were 7 Town Halls, 7 Grammar Schools and 7 Central University Buildings based on it. The highest occurrence of the type here was in the category of Court Buildings with 11 out of 19 schemes. Proportionally, 50% of Town halls, 50% of Court Buildings, 50% of Grammar Schools and one third of the University Facilities looked at were based on courtyard / atrium solutions. If one considers the time from 1986 until 2001, courtyard / atrium based solutions present on average around one third of all schemes published in each category and the picture for the other types established, with regard to the consistency of their use pre and post European Services Directive, is similar.

While it had been anticipated at the beginning of this project that changes would be detectable in the work awarded prizes in *routine* competitions of the categories established, particularly with regard to the use of standard types, this could not be confirmed. The work, at first glance, might look different, due to changes in the presentation conventions – the use of colour etc. – and a certain preference for the use perhaps of right angles that had not been as prevalent in the mid nineteen eighties as it seemed to be towards the end of the nineteen nineties, but typologically the same standard solutions were employed in 1986 as in 2000 [fig. 1-4].

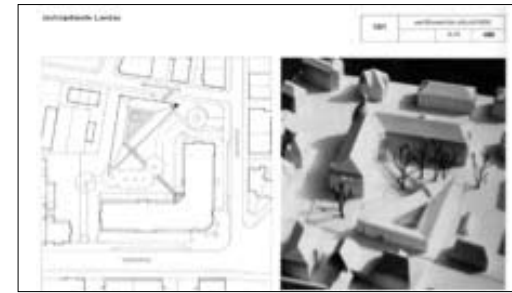


FIG. 1. *Routine practice: courtyard / atrium type in Wettbewerb Aktuell 8/86. Competition Justizgebäude Landau (category 12/1), Jürgen Lay, 2nd prize.*

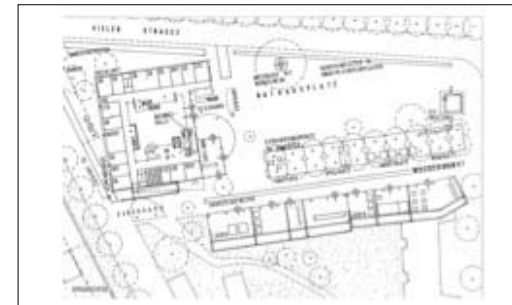


FIG. 2. *Routine practice: courtyard / atrium type in Wettbewerb Aktuell 12/93. Competition Rathaus Kronshagen (category 11/1), Wilfried Kneffel, 1st prize.*

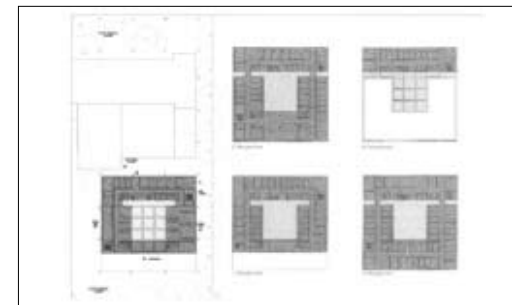


FIG. 3. *Routine practice: courtyard / atrium type in Wettbewerb Aktuell 6/2000. Competition Hochschulverwaltung der Universität Hamburg (category 4/5), Schweger & Partner, 3rd prize.*

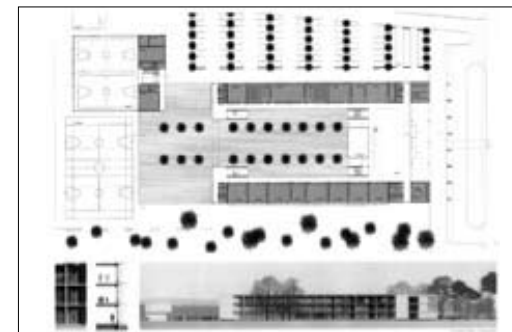


FIG. 4. *Routine practice: courtyard / atrium type in Wettbewerb Aktuell 6/2000. Competition Gymnasium Bruckmühl (category 3/4), Klein & Sängler, 1st prize.*

What has changed, are the opportunities for architects to participate in local *routine* contests, as most competitions are now subject to a pre-selection process of the participants. Hence, local networks, or to some degree, the “usual suspect” syndrome that used to occur in many *routine* competitions have virtually disappeared. With regard to *WA*, what has been detected is a decrease in the number of *routine* German competitions published, while national and international *routine exceptional* (i.e. *exceptional* contests with *routine* outcomes), and *exceptional* (also both national and international) contests have become a bigger focus in the journal. For *routine* practice, when it does take place, the journal *WA* seems as relevant as a source now as it has been twenty years ago.

IV. EXCEPTIONAL PRACTICE: DEUTSCHES HISTORISCHES MUSEUM COMPETITION: CONTEXT IN BERLIN

It is not the purpose of this paper to discuss this competition’s controversial history and the development of its gestation. This is well documented in a 700 page volume edited by Christoph Stölzl, who, as the museum’s founding director was also greatly involved in the competition process.¹²

The museum, after years of debate and consultation, was eventually given as a “present” by the then Chancellor of West-Germany, Helmut Kohl, to the city of Berlin on 27 February 1985. Kohl had wanted the museum’s foundation stone to be laid for the celebrations of the 750th birthday of Berlin in 1987 and had, allegedly, while looking out of a window of the Reichstag on 12 June 1985, pointed to the site in the *Spreebogen* stating “Hier soll das Deutsche Museum hin”.¹³ Kohl’s ambitions were high; he aimed for a project that would be “architecturally first class”, a “one off building of radiant external appearance”, reflecting the “dignity of the subject” and would be designed by “a world class architect” (Krüger 1985, 64).

The site for the competition, set in the *Spreebogen*, opposite the *Reichstag*, was highly controversial. Since the end of WWII the *Spreebogen*, with the exception of the Swiss Embassy and the rebuilt Reichstag¹⁴ (1973), had been derelict and empty in most parts and it had been anticipated that this would be the case until reunification could be achieved, in which case the area was earmarked to become the government quarter of a unified Ger-

12. Christoph Stölzl ed., *Deutsches Historisches Museum. Ideen – Kontroversen – Perspektiven*, Verlag Ullstein, Frankfurt am Main, 1988 (703 pages).

13. “This is where the German museum shall be” (Frank 1987); (Krüger 1985, 64).

14. A detailed account of the two Reichstag competitions can be found in Becker 1992, 69–81.

many. Hence, the decision to place the *Deutsches Historisches Museum* in the *Spreebogen* was seen by some as a premature and unnecessary measure that would potentially hinder future – post reunification – developments.¹⁵

However, in 1985/86 the urban design competition *Platz der Republik* was launched in order for the *Spreebogen* to “regain spatial qualities and act as political forum and central place of German history”, but it was also used as an exercise to locate a precise site for the *DHM* (Geisert, Haneberg, Hein 1990, 197).

THE COMPETITION IN WA AND IN THE CONTEXT OF OTHER COMPETITIONS: PARTICIPANTS, WINNERS, JUDGES

To provide a context for the *DHM* competition’s publication in *WA*, 20 high profile competitions, all considered here as potentially being part of *exceptional* practice, which had taken place in Germany and had been published in *WA* between 1977 and 1998; have been studied.¹⁶ Of these competitions, ten (nine museums) were published prior to the *DHM* and a further nine (six museums, five post-reunification) were featured in *WA* after the publication of the *DHM* contest.¹⁷

As befits *WA*’s format, and in order to provide comparative data, contextualising the *DHM* contest, the analysis of the selected competitions has focused particularly on the names of the prize winning architects and the jury panels, whether or not competitors had been especially selected and invited, the geographical areas from which eligible contestants were drawn, but also the clients and the type of competition. This analysis envisaged to examine

15. A detailed history of the site, dating back to the late eighteenth Century, was part of the documents handed out to the participating architects and has been reprinted in part in Stölzl’s volume. “Geschichte des Bauplatzes”, Bundesbaudirektion Berlin 1987 (Stölzl 1988, 672–690).

16. A number of competitions were excluded from the research in order to keep the data manageable and some competitions could not be considered for lack of available data in the journal. The most notable exclusion for lack of data was the competition for the *Museum Abteiberg* in Mönchengladbach which took place towards the end of the nineteen seventies and which was won by Hans Hollein. Further competitions excluded but worth mentioning were the conversion of the *Karmeliterkirche* in Frankfurt into a museum (1980/81, first prize Kleihues), the *Römerberg* competition in Frankfurt (1980, first prize BJSS) and the extension to the *Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nürnberg* (1984, first prize me di um).

17. The competitions considered were: Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart 12/77; Bundespostmuseum, Frankfurt 4/83; Museum f. Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt 8/83; Kunstmuseum Bonn, 5/85; Museumsinsel, Hamburg 6/86; Platz der Republik, Berlin 8/86; Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle, Bonn 10/86; Haus der Geschichte BRD, Bonn 2/87; Völkerkundemuseum, Frankfurt 6/87; Kunstpalast, Düsseldorf 3/88; DHM, Berlin 8/88; Berlin Museum mit Jüdischer Abteilung 9/89; Museumsbauten Türkenkaserne, München 7/92; *Spreebogen*, Berlin 4/93; Reichstag, Berlin 4/93; Neues Museum, Berlin 5/94; Bundeskanzleramt, Berlin 2/95; Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum, Köln 3/97; Museum Georg Schäfer, Schweinfurt 3/97; Umbau Zeughaus, Berlin, 11/98.

whether or not a “who’s who” would emerge from the data collected – both with regard to the prize winners, but also the jurors involved and whether there might be an overlap between individual jurors and prize winners. Or furthermore, perhaps jurors turned into prize winners (and vice versa).

Consideration was also given to the design proposals themselves; the drawings and model photographs published in *WA* were studied to establish whether certain rules could be observed with regard to similarities between winning projects in the respective contests and which of the published schemes effectively could be considered to be *exceptional*, in that they provided solutions that would not normally be expected in a *routine* type of competition.

The *DHM* competition, published in *WA* issue 8, 1988, was open to architects from West-Germany and in addition 19 architects from Denmark (2), Britain (2), USA (5), Austria (2), Japan (1), Israel (1), Italy (1), Sweden (1), Netherlands (1), France (1) and Spain (1) were invited to participate. Of the over 600 architects who had requested the invitation to tender, 216 from Germany and four of the 19 invited international architects submitted their projects.¹⁸

In total 6 prizes and 11 commendations were awarded and Aldo Rossi’s scheme won first prize (Fig.5). The other international competitor being awarded a prize was Wilhelm Holzbauer from Vienna. Rossi’s design was voted for by 14 to 7 and the jury’s unanimous verdict was to recommend the realisation of Rossi’s scheme.

JURORS

The jury for the *DHM* competition was chaired by Prof. Max Bächer who in the 1970’s and 1980’s was one of the most prolific judges of architecture competitions in Germany. Amongst others members of the architects in the jury were Gustav Peichl from Vienna, Austria and the Swiss Luigi Snozzi from Locarno.¹⁹

The most present jurors in the 20 competitions investigated were the Austrian Gustav Peichl (6 times), Max Bächer (Darmstadt / Stuttgart,

18. Amongst the architects who turned down the invitation were Norman Foster and James Stirling (UK), Ralph Erskine (Sweden), Aldo van Eyck (Netherlands), Hans Hollein (Austria), Arata Isozaki (Japan), Helmut Jahn, Richard Meier, I.M. Pei and Robert Venturi (all USA), Jean Nouvel (France) and Rafael Moneo (Spain). (*Der Spiegel* 44/1987, p100). Stirling, Meier and Isozaki initially agreed to participate but for unknown reasons did not submit. In a recent conversation between the author and Stirling’s business partner Michael Wilford, the latter could not recall the competition or an invitation!

19. The full list of (expert / architect) jury members was: Max Bächer, Otto Casser, Harald Deilmann, Ingeborg Kuhler, Ernst Maria Lang, Gustav Peichl, Karljosef Schattner, Fritz M Sitte, Luigi Snozzi, Eberhard Weinbrenner, Georg Wittwer. Source: *WA* 8/88.

5 times) and Josef Schattner (Eichstätt, 5 times). Alexander Freiherr von Branca (Munich) and Karl Heinz Mohl (Karlsruhe) both had three mentions as jurors. Peichl, Bächer and Schattner were also all part of the eleven strong expert contingent in the jury for the *DHM*.

ARCHITECTS

Looking at the architects, and their relative successes in the context of these competitions reveals that Axel Schultes was by far the most successful contender. He won prizes or commendations in 8 competitions (6 with Charlotte Frank, and two with Bangert, Jansen, Scholz und Schultes), not least third prize in the competition for the *DHM*, first prize in the second *Spreebogen* (1992/93) competition and joint first prize in the *Kanzleramt* (chancellery) competition (1994/95), both of which were subsequently built. Schultes and Frank won a commendation in the competition for the conversion / restoration of the *Reichstag* and in 1985 Schultes had also been awarded first prize in the competition for the *Kunstmuseum Bonn* as part of Bangert, Janssen, Scholz und Schultes; he was subsequently a jury member in museum competitions in Munich (*Türkenkaserne / Pinakothek der Moderne*) and Schweinfurt (*Museum Georg Schäfer*).

Another successful architect with five entries in the competitions in question was O M Ungers, who also featured twice in juries and was effectively the second most successful practice ahead of those of von Gerkan, Marg und Partner and Schweger & Partner, who respectively won prizes in four competitions. Von Gerkan and Schweger also both featured once on jury panels. Wilhelm Holzbauer (Vienna), awarded 6th in the *DHM* competition won three prizes in total in these competitions.

Schweger²⁰, who came second in the *DHM* competition is one of the most often featured architects in *WA* across the spectrum of all 14 categories – both *exceptional* and *routine* practice – thus providing a cross over between the two types of contest. Similarly Prof. Gerber²¹ stands out, having come 5th in the *DHM* competition, with the second most entries, 87 in total, in *WA* between 1981 and 2001.

Of the prize-winners in the *DHM* contest, only Aldo Rossi (1st) and Florian Musso (4th) had won no other prizes or awards in the competitions compared here. Rossi, however, together with Peichl, was part of the jury panel for the Bundeskanzleramt (won by Schultes / Frank).

20. In different configurations: Schweger & Partner; Graf Schweger

21. Also in different combinations: Prof. Gerber & Partner; Werkgemeinschaft Prof. Gerber

Of the practices being awarded commendations for their *DHM* submissions, only O M Ungers (five in total) and Schneider & Schumacher (two in total) were successful in any of the other competitions in question. Neither of the other eight practices awarded commendations featured amongst the prize winning teams before or after in the contests analysed.

Of the 16 prize / commendation winners in the *DHM* competition, two came from four foreign practices that had participated, (from the 19 that had been invited). Furthermore, the seven practices (BJSS (Schultes), Gerber, Gerkan, Holzbauer, Schneider-Schuhmacher, Schweger, Ungers) amongst the 15 winning teams who had also been successful in other competitions, between them share 28 prizes and commendations of a total of 129 awarded in the 20 competitions, providing about 20% of the winning teams in these high profile contests.

ASSESSMENT

The scale of the *DHM* competition (contestants were asked to submit four A0 sheets and a model scale 1/500) and the number of entries (220) meant that the judging and assessment process of the *DHM* competition presented a logistical challenge to the organisers, the client and the panel. Unlike the process in smaller (*routine*) competitions, the schemes could not be presented or pinned up in one single space, for the jury to walk around and to compare schemes directly. For the *DHM* contest the jury would sit in front of a custom made square carousel onto which one scheme was hung from the back while one at the front would be looked at and, after two ninety-degree turns schemes would subsequently be removed from the back. During the jury session every member was given only a copy of the preliminary report of each scheme, illustrated with model photographs and reductions of the ground floor plans of every project. The inference here is that perhaps the first time the jury members would have been directly able to compare schemes was when the competition was published in *WA*.

One of *WA*'s main assets, that it allows for direct comparison and analysis of competition material – albeit limited to the winning entries and at a reduced scale – contrasts with the processes and practices established in jury sessions particularly for competitions with large numbers of participants. This in turn might suggest a number of conclusions regarding the journal's role in the realm of what is termed here *exceptional* practice. One obvious suggestion would be that in competitions for programmes and buildings of more significant public interest, the direct comparison of typologies is likely to be of less interest, as typolo-

logically uncommon results are what is sought – in the case of this study particularly for museum projects. Should this be the case, the material published in the journal has probably little or no impact on the design process or ideas of the respective “high profile” competitors. In *routine* practice competitions, the types employed, are limited. This is reflected in the journal *WA*, but also highlights a common jury practice in which a number of types are settled upon at an early stage of the jury session with the aim of subsequently identifying and awarding prizes to the best scheme of each type.

The second suggestion, rendering the journal's influence on the result of the *DHM* competition to a negligible level, particularly with regards to the award of first prize to Aldo Rossi (whose buildings and graphic representation are instantly recognisable) is that if a client invites architects to participate in a specific competition, the likelihood that one of the invited participants wins is very high. Of the 20 competitions analysed, 7 had a mix of invited and automatically eligible participants. In 6 of these competitions five first prizes, four second prizes, two third prizes, one fifth and one sixth prize were awarded to invited participants.

For competitions like the *DHM* *WA*'s role as a disseminator of information becomes less important as the result of the competition was discussed widely in other media. The approach of the journal is thus more significant for *routine* practice competitions for which it is assumed that the journal is widely used as a primary source.

ROUTINE AND EXCEPTIONAL IN EXCEPTIONAL TYPE COMPETITIONS

However, in the 20 competitions analysed for this study, only four resulted in what could truly be called *exceptional* results – particularly with regard to the schemes awarded first prize. Interestingly, the winning entries in these competitions did, to varying degrees apply standard types, but it is the use, combination and transformation of types, which in this author's view makes them *exceptional*. The *Staatsgalerie Stuttgart* (built), 1977, first prize James Stirling, the *DHM* in Berlin (unbuilt), the *Jewish Museum* in Berlin (built), 1989, first prize Studio Daniel Libeskind and the *Spreebogen* competition Berlin (partly built), 1993, first prize Axel Schultes with Charlotte Frank, are the only competitions in which unprecedented, unexpected and unusual architectures were awarded first prize. These competitions were either internationally open (*Spreebogen*), nationally open with international invites (*DHM*; *Jewish Museum*) or invited (national / international) competitions [fig. 6-8].

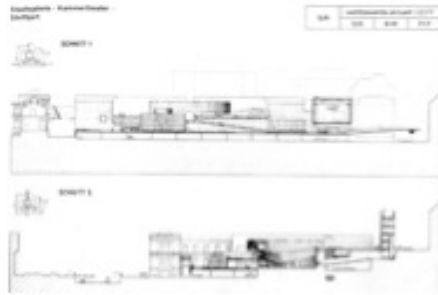


FIG.6. *Exceptional Practice*: James Stirling & Partner (1977), Competition for *Erweiterung Staatsgalerie – Kammertheater, Stuttgart*. Part of the publication in *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* 12/77.



FIG.7. *Exceptional Practice*: Studio Daniel Libeskind, (1989), Competition for *Erweiterung Berlin Museum mit jüdischer Abteilung, Berlin*. Part of the publication in *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* 9/89.

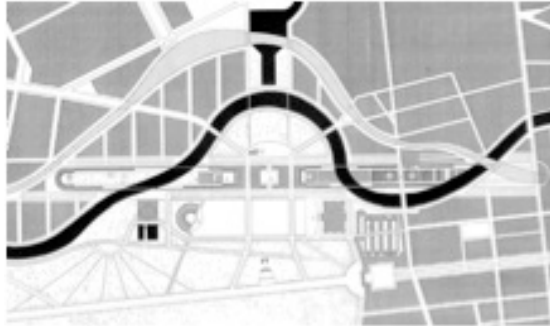


FIG.8. *Exceptional Practice*: Axel Schultes mit Charlotte Frank (1992), Competition for *Spreebogen, Berlin*. Part of the publication in *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* 4/93.

Of the other competitions studied, two yielded above average results in terms of the quality of the work subsequently published in *WA*: *Kunstmuseum Bonn* (nationally open), 5/85; *Museumsbauten Türkenkaserne München*, (nationally open), 7/92.²²

The distinction between *routine* and *exceptional* begins to further blur when looking more closely at the results and numbers involved: in total 2490 schemes were submitted to the 20 competitions investigated. In five out of the

22. This competition was classed as open to the Federal Republic of Germany in *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*; however, Mario Botta (Lugano / Switzerland) won 7th prize.

20 contests an invited architect won first prize, three of which were considered to be *exceptional* above²³, and yet, it is assumed here that the results of 14 of the 20 competitions are either straight forward *routine* or fall into a “hybrid” category between *routine* and *exceptional*. Taking this into consideration together with the number of competitors, it does seem plausible that *WA* is also being consulted as a source for *exceptional* type competitions – and if only by the vast number of *simulation architects*, to quote Jacques Herzog once more.

THE COMPETITION RESULT IN OTHER DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURAL PUBLICATIONS

The result of the *DHM* competition was covered by the majority of domestic (mainstream) architectural publications, who mostly and not surprisingly placed an emphasis on the winning scheme by Aldo Rossi. *DBZ* gave a factual account but interestingly published more images of the Schultes / Frank scheme than of Rossi’s first prize. A more critical approach was taken by Falk Jaeger in *db*, where the winning scheme was referred to as a “mausoleum for German history” and the analysis of Rossi’s floor plans was concluded with the pointing out of a number of inconsistencies in the design. In *Arch+* Julius Posener was more critical towards the idea of the museum itself but attributes the shortcomings in Rossi’s scheme to the “artificial character of the brief” – in his view Berlin was more in need of a natural history museum – than of Rossi’s project. Christoph Hackelsberger’s view of Rossi’s scheme and the whole competition process in *Der Architekt* was highly critical; Hackelsberger accuses Rossi of a “sloppy” use of the “rationalist show off elements rotunda, colonnade and the archetype house” which in his view indicates an equally “sloppy” and “functional” use of history. *Detail* mentioned the competition in their section about “marginal reports”, emphasising that only four of the invited 19 foreign architects had taken part and, in addition, that neither Behnisch, Boehm nor Schürmann had submitted schemes to the competition. In *Bauwelt* 28/29-1988 which had dedicated 27 pages to the competition, the jury chairman Max Bächer saw the need to defend the competition process and Peter Rumpf thought of Rossi’s scheme as a good response to the problem of the site and the brief, making reference to the 1986 *Platz der Republik* competition. However, Rumpf also pointed out that “studying the 20 submitted schemes one can’t help but to conclude with regret that the aim of the majority of participants must have been to stand out from the crowd, employing whatever means they deemed necessary”. In Rumpf’s view

23. The other two invitees who won first prizes were Hans Hollein (Vienna) for the Museum für Moderne Kunst in Frankfurt, 8/83 and Gustav Peichl (Vienna) for the Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle Bonn, 10/86.

Rossi's project was flexible which he did not think of Schweger's and Schultes / Frank's scheme. Rumpf describes Rossi's design as being neither trendy nor un-trendy and leading the museum's architecture away from trying to achieve more and more spectacular effects. In the same issue of *Bauwelt*, which had the *DHM* competition as its topic, Hans Gerhard Hannesen, who has also written the introduction in Stölzl's volume to the section *Der Architektenwettbewerb* (The Competition), refers to Rossi's scheme throughout positively.

The architecture inside the building, in its serving function, does not want to carry meaning for its own sake – as opposed to many of the museum projects we have seen in recent years, in which the architecture tried to become the most important exhibit itself. As we know, there is no traditional architectural form for the museum; and this is particularly relevant for the *DHM* which has no precedent. It was therefore the task of the competition to find an architect who could give form to an idea, which would then un-mistakenly become the museum²⁴

In *Bauwelt* 34-1988 a furious letter by German architect Helmut Spieker who at the time lived and practiced in Switzerland, was published. Spieker attacked the jury, questioned the anonymity of the competitors and pointed out typological inconsistencies that, in his view, were evident between Rossi's scheme and the design report (which had also been published in part in *Bauwelt*). Rossi had referenced the main exhibition hall as a *cathedral* and his scheme as a *medieval city*, Spieker thought, in particular with a view to the urban design configuration of the scheme, was ludicrous and untenable.²⁵

WA's factual publication format and how it differs from other mainstream publications and their editorial / journalistic approach on competition results is evident. In the case of the *DHM* competition and unfortunately for Aldo Rossi, the majority of reporting in other publications on his scheme was either indifferent or negative²⁶; a fate spared to competitions published in *WA*.

24. "Die Architektur tritt im Inneren in ihrer dienenden Funktion voellig als eigener bedeutungstraeger zurueck, gerade im Gegensatz zu vielen Museumsbauten der letzten Jahre, in denen als wichtigstes Ausstellungsstueck die Architektur sich selbst in Szene setzt[...] Bekanntlich gibt es fuer die Gestalt eines Museums keine tradierte Architekturform; dies gilt erst recht fuer das Deutsche Historische Museum, das auf einen Vorlaeufer aufbauen kann. Es galt also, in dem Wettbewerb einen Architekten zu finden, der einer Idee eine Gestalt gibt, die dann unverwechselbar das Museum ist (Hannesen 1988, 1211-1212). Trans. T. Schmiedeknecht.

25. (Jaeger 1988, 1021); (Posener 1988, 20-21); (Hackelsberger 1990, 4-10); ; (Hannesen 1988, 1194-1221); (Spieker 1988, 1375, 1411-1412);

26. The only person to defend the scheme who was not involved in the competition was *Bauwelt*'s Peter Rumpf.

ALDO ROSSI AND THE MUSEUM

In his speech to the participating architects at the handing out of the brief on 25 August 1987 in the Reichstag in Berlin, the then Secretary for Spatial Order, Building and Urban Planning Oscar Schneider, referred to the *DHM* competition as the "biggest competition" and, "according to the Federal Government's point of view the most exciting contest with the most responsibilities attached that West-Germany will launch before the millennium". The site, he explained, had been chosen because "from a place where formerly wars have been conducted, we want to construct an edifice for culture, for information and for enlightenment".²⁷ Schneider remarked on what he would expect architecturally, dismissing the "rational architecture in the sense of Nietzsche which in insofar has nihilist tendencies as nihilism is the end product of the rational." The "Perspective of usefulness" and the "end of un-reflected spontaneity" were leading into "the purpose (functional) rationality of modern science", according to Schneider, and there was too much rationalism in architecture; *Baukunst* (the art of building) was not rightly understood as an art. In his view architecture had to be based on a people's history of architecture, that scale and formal principles had to be based on man and that they had to satisfy man's physical, emotional and aesthetic needs and, furthermore, that a building had to represent the "classical triad of architectural elements: function determined by purpose, permanence of materials and construction, formal beauty".

Fragments of a conversation between Aldo Rossi and Bernhard Huet, published in the catalogue to an Aldo Rossi retrospective in the Berlinische Galerie in 1993, reflecting on Rossi's position with regards to being *modern* or not and whether or not he felt that he was part of an *elite*, provides us perhaps with one insight to Rossi's approach:

BERNARD HUET: While you are talking I can't help but thinking of Roland Barthes' view : "Suddenly I don't care that I am not modern". What are you referring to when you say that you have never been modern?

ALDO ROSSI: I am referring to the journalistic use of the term "modern" which seems to go with a certain "modern" history of architecture, which I doubt is particularly useful. I am sure that there is a continuity over time in architecture. . . . But let's not talk about this question. . . . which in a country like the United States has no meaning anyway. . . . In some states

27. Oskar Schneider, "Ansprache [...] anlässlich des Ausgabe-Kolloquiums am 25. August 1987" (Stölzl 1988, 670). Trans. T. Schmiedeknecht.

you see Georgian houses, in others buildings in steel and glass. American architecture is a conglomeration of all of this.

BH: For mass produced architecture this question is irrelevant. But it is different for the architectural elite, because in one way or another the elite has to pursue the art of “being different” in order to exist as an elite. To a certain degree you are part of this elite. “

AR: No, because I don’t believe that there is such a thing as an elite in architecture²⁸

In the same catalogue, Rossi in a short caption describes his project for the *DHM*, which by this time had long been cancelled, employing the analogy of the cathedral and his idea of collective memory. Rossi refers to the cathedrals, the churches, the museums, the town halls and the law courts as the places of collective memory and its safeguarding, declaring the museum to be the place par excellence of collective memory (Berlinische Galerie 1993, 202).

Until the submission of his proposal for the *DHM*, Aldo Rossi had no experience with the actual building of a museum.²⁹ In line with his concern with collective memory and his interest in the typologies of institutions the *DHM* would have added to Rossi’s oeuvre, together with the Modena Cemetery (1971-78), the housing block in Milan Gallarate (1969-70) and the schools in Fagnano Olona (1972) and Broni (1979) another built exercise in the study of type.³⁰

28. “Bernhard Huet: Während Du redest, kann ich nicht umhin, an die Haltung von Roland Barthes zu denken, [...] ‘Pötzlich ist es mir gleichgültig geworden, nicht modern zu sein.’ Auf welche Geschichte beziehst Du Dich, wenn Du sagst, Du seist nie modern gewesen?”

Aldo Rossi: Ich beziehe mich auf die journalistische Verwendung des Begriffes ‘modern’, die mit einer bestimmten ‘modernen’ Architekturgeschichte einhergeht, deren sachdienlichkeit ich bestreite. Ich bin davon überzeugt, daßes eine Kontinuität der Architektur in der Zeit gibt [...] Aber lassen wir diese Frage [...] die in einem Land wie den Vereinigten Staaten jede Bedeutung verliert [...] In manchen Staaten sieht man georgianische Häuser, in anderem wieder Gebäude aus Glas und Stahl. Die amerikanische Architektur ist ein Konglomerat aus alldem.

B.H.: Natürlich stellt sich diese Frage nicht für eine Architektur der Massenproduktion. Für die Architekturelite ist das anders, denn sie muss auf dies oder jene Weise die Kunst der ‘Unterscheidung’ betreiben, um als Elite forzubestehen. In einem bestimmten Maße gehörst Du auch dazu.

A.R.: Nein, denn ich glaube nicht, daß es eine Elite in der Architektur gibt (Berlinische Galerie 1993, 27).” Trans. T. Schmiedeknecht.

29. He had previously been engaged with a scheme for the fitting out for the Museum for Contemporary History in Milan and in various designs for temporary exhibition spaces (Milan Triennial 1964; Venice Biennial 1980; Milan Triennial 1981; Venice Biennial 1985) and had made a proposal for the Museum in Marburg, Germany, in 1987, designed as a cloister type

30. In 1988 he was already undertaking the design for a small museum for contemporary art in Vassiviere, near Clermont Ferrand France (completion in 1991) and in 1990 he began work on the Bonenfantenmuseum in Maastricht, Holland. In Germany, Rossi had become known with his book *The Architecture of the City*, which had been

Rossi’s design report for *DHM* competition hints at the importance that Rossi had given the project:

The competition documents for this museum, which obviously has a high scientific and didactic value in Europe, have much restricted the typological and the design choices³¹

Rossi continues to explain the typological aspects of his project, likening the central exhibition hall to a cathedral or a huge hangar with a uniform, dock like elevation towards the river. The elevation towards the city he likens to, due to its more fragmented, that of a medieval city. These elements according to Rossi emphasise the analytical and analogue spaces of the history of the German city. In Rossi’s view it is precisely the fragmentation of his scheme, the arrangement of different types next to each other, that distinguishes it from other museums he considers to be in the same realm: the British Museum in London, the Louvre in Paris and the Pergamon in Berlin. In Rossi’s view, these museum buildings were attempts to reconstruct the fragment and to bring it back into a system of unity, instead of, as he proposes, to celebrate the fragment as that what it is in its poetic and dramatic purity. According to Rossi, his *more intelligent* architecture proposes to put together the fragments of German history – fragments of life, of history and building fragments, understandable to everyone by their own standards.

Rossi’s denial of an architectural elite and his own membership of it must be seen, considering the above, as somewhat questionable. Furthermore, his own insistence on the value of the idea of type as a design tool and the worth of typology for architecture, are somehow at odds with his own status, as the ideas of type and repetition intrinsically suggest, if not the denial of authorship, then at least the avoidance and denial of the notion of celebrity architects.

CONCLUSION

This paper attempted to explore the differences between *routine* and *exceptional* competition practice in Germany, before and after the implementation of the *European Services Directive* in 1997, and the relevance of the journal *WZA* for both types of competition.

translated into German in 1982 but also through his involvement in the Internationale Bauausstellung in Berlin (IBA) 1983-87.

31. “Die Ausschreibung dieses Museums, dessen Bedeutung in Europa von offensichtlich hohem wissenschaftlichen und gleichzeitig großem didaktischem Wert ist, hat die typologischen und gestalterischen Wahlmöglichkeiten weitgehend eingeschränkt” (Bauwesen und Städtebau 1988, 13-18). Trans. T. Schmiedeknecht.

Through the study of the material published in the journal, it has been established that *routine* competition practice, particularly with regard to the use of standard types and solution has not been affected by changes in the competition system. However, the number of competitions published that can be classed as routine has decreased over the years. The reasons for this are twofold. Due to the changes in the competition system caused by the implementation of the European Services Directive — particularly the rising number of restricted and invited competitions — signature buildings designed as one-off spectacles, since the turn of the millennium seem to have been in higher demand. Well documented in the more recent issues of *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*, this reflects a change in the nature of the publication. Whether this is a positive departure from the use and transformation of existing types in mainstream architecture, is open to question.

The study further revealed that, contrary to what had been anticipated, *routine* and *exceptional* practice, were still as different in 2001 as they had been in 1986. However, a third type of competition practice, termed as *routine exceptional* emerged through the study. These competitions are the ones that by the nature of their status and briefs could be classed as *exceptional* but seem to, nevertheless, often yield *routine* results. There also seems to be a tendency currently for the journal to publish a proportionally higher number of these competitions compared to *routine* and *exceptional* competitions.

Despite the fact that the work published today might visually vary from that of, say 25 years ago, a great consistency in the use of standard types for *routine* and *routine exceptional* competitions has been detected, which indicates an ongoing value of *WA* for architects taking part in competitions.

The consequences and implications of both *routine* and *exceptional* competition practice for mainstream, none-competition architecture, it must be noted, were not subject of this paper, but an investigation of these are part of the broader research I am currently undertaking on *WA*. However, the inference is that particularly *routine* competition practice and *standard* architectural practice form a reciprocal relationship, which does in turn reflect the relevance of *WA* for architectural (*routine*) design practice in Germany.

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Abstract

The practice of competitions in contemporary Greece as a mode of developing public procurement buildings has been a particular issue of controversy. And while one may anticipate the – all too common in the international experience – issue of specifying for a design competition and validating the choice of the jury in undisputed terms, it is the validity of opting for a design competition itself that proves to be a great issue of controversy in the Greek experience. The latter offers a case study on how public authorities understand the notion of building development, leaning primarily towards quantitative and construction demands, rather than qualitative principles and solution novelties. It is argued that this controversy is rooted in, and developed from, a strict axiomatic and authoritarian milieu, namely, every prescription which derives from an exacting proclamation text that is usually formulated in qualification terminology. This observation reveals also a notion of friction which underlies the – in extremis – understanding of the project either as a “technical” one or an “architectural” one. The cases of the competitions for the New Acropolis Museum and the extension of the building of the National Theater will serve respectively as an example on each of the two extremes.

These arguments are primarily investigated through the study of Greek legislation and particularly Law 3316, which implements the EU directive 2004/18/EC on the award of public work contracts. It will be shown that Law 3316 allows for a variety of types of competition and leaves equal room for interpretation when authorities are called upon deciding on a type of award process. It will also be shown that the question of “architectural quality” is identified only in the case of an Architectural Design Competition by a competent jury, while in all other cases it is reduced to a prescriptive factor of “aesthetics”, weighing along with several other technical and economical issues on the judgment at hand. It is in this manner that the authors will focus on the Greek experience as an issue of administration, rather than raising questions of methodology on conducting a competition.

Finally, following especially the four competitions for New Acropolis Museum will show that both the provisions of the Law and the insistence on prescriptive norms for the conduct of competition have failed to achieve consensus, as public dispute proved inevitable every time. It will then be argued that in spite of issues of controversy, architectural creation is rather subject to a “fortunate coincidence” of the play of forces at hand, while the final verdict projects both in the present context of the competition as well as in the future past of society. Therefore, it is the authors’ aim to argue that establishing qualitative criteria of architectural authenticity is more of a matter of a new understanding, than a ratification of the process through the ever expanding establishment of qualification criteria.

Keywords

competition policy [in Greece], legislation, qualification vs. quality, New Acropolis Museum, National Theatre.

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Innovative vs. Qualified The Experience of Competitions in Contemporary Greece

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INTRODUCTION

The question of how and why a competition affirms the quality of a chosen proposal for a project, especially when the question comes to architecture since its impact lies on a variety of public scales, has been raised many times and has been an issue of research for many scholars around the world. It is fair to acknowledge that competition has been historically established as a method of choice for the erection of constructions of major public impact (e.g., see Kostoff, ed., 2000, or Lipstadt, ed., 1989). However one may find that literature on the subject has been scarce (Tostrup, 1999, p.15) and the case is not all too different in the Greek experience. Apart from a number of interventions in the form of articles, public letters in the press, and empirical contributions in round tables, there is little more other than the two following attempts to address the field of the practice of competitions in Greece (this assessment was cross – checked with Mr S. Theodosopoulos, representative of the Association des Architectes diplômés (SADAS – PEA) on the Commission – Study Group on the regulatory framework of architectural competitions; personal communication, May 4, 2009): one is the report of a research program conducted by the General Secretariat of Research and Technology (Filippedes, ed., 2000), which provides the single most elaborate overview available to date on the subject (and implements most of the scattered references worth mentioning, albeit it covers ground prior to the current legislation which we will be discussing later on), and the other is the report of a permanent committee on Architectural Competitions formed in 2003 by the SADAS – PEA which was adopted in April 2005, aiming to propose an upgraded regulatory framework for architectural competitions, in replacement to the existing (ministerial decree of 1976); this was made through the thorough investigation and a comparative analysis of data on the practice of Architectural Competitions in Greece and other members of the European Union until September 2004 (SADAS – PEA, 2006, p.p. 30-36).

However, State Law was to be reformed in respect to the Directive 2004/18/EC (OJ L134, 30/04/2004, p. 0114-0240), approved and adopted by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union on the 31st of March 2004, which refers to “the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts”. This directive was implemented in the Greek legislation with Law 3316/2005: therefrom we feel that this piece of legislation may serve as a case study for our argument, namely that building development of public scale in Greece is, and may in fact be, addressed to by the competent authorities in a factorial manner suitable to a “technical” issue, rather than as an – always ill defined and controversial – “architectural” issue, and that in this shift of scope may foster an issue of (mis)interpretation, that construction demands and architectural quality are two parts in opposition. This shift of scope may also be evident should one cross reference the aforementioned EU directive with Council Directive 85/384/EEC of June 1985 “on the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications in architecture, including measures to facilitate the effective exercise of the right of establishment and freedom to provide services” (OJ L223, 21/08/1985, p.0015-0025), which provides for an understanding on the subject of architecture, especially in comparison to the notion of (architectural)“service” which is the issue of Directive 2004/18/EC.

Finally, it is important to understand that an “Architectural Design Competition”, being characteristic in the fact that its main requirement is an architectural proposal rather than a construction offer and that it is subject to the authority of a jury who is presumed competent in identifying “architectural value” – the term used in all its controversy to note the poverty of the term “aesthetics” used in a factorial manner in the legislation –, is merely one out of many other possible ways the Greek Law provides for developing public procurement buildings. Although there are no references of statistical data (this was also suggested at the conference held by the Technical Chamber of Greece, 19-21 April, 2005. See Vettas, 2005), it is common empirical knowledge that the majority of public contracts of the kind in Greece are awarded as “packages” consisting of both the architectural proposal and the construction offer combined, in terms where technical and economical factors prevail. Although strong empirical arguments have been made from time to time on either sides, in lack of statistics and other solid references we do not aim to argue for or against any of the ways of conduct; however we do consider noteworthy to examine the provisions of the law itself as a case study in terms of a critical review, as the phrasing and the terminology

themselves are indicative of this distinction of understanding that we mentioned a few lines earlier.

We shall then examine the examples of two public procurement buildings of landmark value in Athens: the extension of the building of the National Theatre, and the New Acropolis Museum. And while the former will serve us merely to present our case on the subtext of the law’s provisions, the latter will serve us to inquire whether prescriptive measures in general are in fact enough to secure the success of a competition, especially when the matter concerns an architectural proposal. This is the all too common discourse over methodology, on judging quality issues etc. We will aim to argue that prescriptive measures cannot manage to achieve consensus on their own; rather we propose that in order to address the issue of opting for a competition, it is important to distinguish “quality” from “qualification criteria”, and that this understanding is only possible if we can consider the practice of competition in: a) the context of its present time, i.e. the procedure and relevant issues for the selection of “a winner”, and b) the context of the future past of the building itself, that is, the way it implements itself into society, memory, cultural identity, etc.

KEY CONCEPTS OF THE EU DIRECTIVE

The award of contracts concluded in the Member States on behalf of the State, regional or local authorities and other bodies governed by public law entities, is subject to the respect of the principles of the Treaty and in particular to the principle of freedom of movement of goods, the principle of freedom of establishment and the principle of freedom to provide services and to the principles deriving therefrom, such as the principle of equal treatment, the principle of non-discrimination, the principle of mutual recognition, the principle of proportionality and the principle of transparency.

[...] for public contracts above a certain value, it is advisable to draw up provisions of Community coordination of national procedures for the award of such contracts which are based on these principles so as to ensure the effects of them and to guarantee the opening-up of public procurement to competition. These coordinating provisions should therefore be interpreted in accordance with both the aforementioned rules and principles and other rules of the Treaty (Directive 2004/18/EC, Recital 2, OJ L134, 30/04/2004 p.114).

The Directive 2004/18/EC deals directly with the subject of public contracts, i.e. it basically addresses the issue of conduct for public procurement. On the Europa site, Summaries of legislation (Europa, “Public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts”, 2009), we read:

The European Union is updating the rules concerning procurement procedures for public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts. This revision is based on the fundamental principles of the internal market and basically strives for simplification, harmonisation and modernisation. [...]

Quite clearly the idea is to form a common platform of public procurement conduct, in order to ensure the fundamental concepts of the internal market of the EU. On the evolution of the aim, again we read directly on the Directive 2004/18/EC:

On the occasion of new amendments [...], the Directives should, in the interests of clarity, be recast. This Directive is based on Court of Justice case-law, in particular case-law on award criteria, which clarifies the possibilities for the contracting authorities to meet the needs of the public concerned, including in the environmental and/or social area, provided that such criteria are linked to the subject-matter of the contract, do not confer an unrestricted freedom of choice on the contracting authority, are expressly mentioned and comply with the fundamental principles mentioned in recital 2 (Op.cit., recital 1, p.114).

Extending our scope on the issue of public procurement, in view of the internal market of the EU, on the *Consolidated Version of the Treaty Establishing the European Community*, Article 4, we read:

Article 4

1. For the purposes set out in Article 2, the activities of the Member States and the Community shall include, as provided in this Treaty and in accordance with the timetable set out therein, the adoption of an economic policy which is based on the close coordination of Member States' economic policies, on the internal market and on the definition of common objectives, and conducted in accordance with the principle of an open market economy with free competition (OJ, C 321 E, 29.12.2006, p.45).

This complies with the freedom concerning the movement of persons, services, goods and capital, and the freedom of establishment (Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, Preamble, OJ C303, 14/12/2007, p.2), combined with the provisions of the *Treaty Establishing the European Community*, Article 47, recital 1:

In order to make it easier for persons to take up and pursue activities as self-employed persons, the Council shall, acting in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 251, issue directives for the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications (OJ, C 321 E, 29.12.2006, p.54).

The latter has been an issue addressed to in a general manner with Directive 1999/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 June 1999 “establishing a mechanism for the recognition of qualifications in respect of the professional activities covered by the Directives on liberalization and transitional measures and supplementing the general systems for the recognition of qualifications”. This directive was repealed and replaced by Directive 2005/36/EC as of 20 October 2007 (Europa, “Mechanism for the recognition of diplomas in craft trades, commerce and certain services”, 2009). For Architects in particular, the matter was addressed to with Council Directive 85/384/EEC of 10 June 1985 “on the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications in architecture, including measures to facilitate the effective exercise of the right of establishment and freedom to provide services” (OJ, L223, 21/8/1985). This directive was repealed and replaced by Directive 2005/36/EC as of 20 October 2007 (Europa, “Architecture: mutual recognition of qualifications in architecture”, 2009).

All in all, a certain number of key issues concerning public procurement and professional practice are noteworthy:

Public procurement contracts address three types of commissions: “works”, “supplies”, and “services”. “Definitions and General Principles” of the Directive 2004/18/EC, Article 1, recital 2, reads:

- (a) “Public contracts” are contracts for pecuniary interest concluded in writing between one or more economic operators and one or more contracting authorities and having as their object the execution of works, the supply of products or the provision of services within the meaning of this Directive.
- (b) “Public works contracts” are public contracts having as their ob-

ject either the execution, or both the design and execution, of works related to one of the activities within the meaning of Annex I or a work, or the realization, by whatever means, of a work corresponding to the requirements specified by the contracting authority.

A ‘work’ means the outcome of building or civil engineering works taken as a whole which is sufficient of itself to fulfill an economic or technical function.

(c) ‘Public supply contracts’ are public contracts other than those referred to in (b) having as their object the purchase, lease, rental or hire purchase, with or without option to buy, of products. A public contract having as its object the supply of products and which also covers, as an incidental matter, siting and installation operations shall be considered to be a ‘public supply contract’.

(d) ‘Public service contracts’ are public contracts other than public works or supply contracts having as their object the provision of services referred to in Annex II. A public contract having as its object both products and services within the meaning of Annex II shall be considered to be a ‘public service contract’ if the value of the services in question exceeds that of the products covered by the contract.

(30.4.2004 EN Official Journal of the European Union L 134/127).

A public contract having as its object services within the meaning of Annex II and including activities within the meaning of Annex I that are only incidental to the principal object of the contract shall be considered to be a public service contract (OJ L134, 30/04/2004 p.126).

Annexes I & II of the Directive 2004/18/EC, distinguish respectively between an “activity” and a “service”: Architectural services are subject to the latter (Category No 12, CPC ref. No. 867, Annex IIA, op.cit, p.163), whereas “Construction” and its subsidiary provisions are subject to the former (CPV code Division 45, op.cit., Annex I, p.157).

A number of remarks can be made on the subject:

The Directive aims to guarantee public benefit concerning the end product that will derive from the contract.

However, in the case of the production of space, Architecture is not an issue on its own, but rather a constitute part of the product “building”. In other words, not every building is architecture. Therefrom, an issue is raised on what kind of building *is* architecture. Subsequently, an issue whether the identity of the environment is a matter of architecture, is also raised.

Competition guarantees and applies fundamental freedoms of the EU on

the matter at hand (public contracts), and ensures the selection of the “better” offer to the benefit of the public. However this raises a matter of qualification criteria: the advantageous nature of the awarded offer in comparison to others, rises in terms of a required “quality”, may it be an economic one, a technical one, or any other one specified by the authority that awards the contract. Competition is therefore subject to a prescriptive procedure (specifications etc), as well as an award procedure, such as the performance of a specific competition event according to rules, validated by the decision of a jury, etc.

Should the matter turn then to architecture, it is important to consider that the Directive provides a framework for transposition on a national level, on behalf of the Member States. On November 20th, 2004, the Architects Council of Europe (ACE) has adopted a paper developed in view of the “European Public Procurement Legislation and Architectural Services”, concerning “Recommendations and Guidelines for Transposition to National Law” (ACE, 2005); in the introduction ACE proposes that “Member States should use this opportunity to amend national public procurement legislation to the maximum benefit of the citizens, economic operators and contracting authorities.”, and states that she “supports this goal, especially in the area of procurement of architectural services, as an important objective.” (Op. Cit., p.3)

Part II of the paper however, raises significant questions focusing on the particularities concerning the architectural profession. Right away ACE suggests that the EU directive should be considered as a framework rather than an all-in-one solution to every problem:

The Procurement directives offer a set of new instruments and procedures, some of which are not suitable for the procurement of architectural services. The Procurement Directives offer a framework for procuring a wide range of services, supplies, goods and works. Some of the procedures are not necessarily required or useful for the procurement of architectural services, but on the other hand, the directives allow a transposition on a national level, which takes into account the specific nature of architectural services. Therefore, the ACE recommends careful consideration of the following comments on the suitability of the new procedures and instruments for the procurement of architectural services (Op. Cit., p.4).

The ACE focuses her proposals on four areas: the first considers new procedures, namely the competitive dialogue and electronic auctions, the second,

new instruments, namely Framework Agreements and Dynamic purchasing systems, the third, the Architectural Design Contest, and the fourth, other areas, namely the need for a clear distinction between design and execution of works.

On the issue of the competitive dialogue, ACE considers the definition given in the Directive “not suitable for the procurement of architectural services”. She also raises questions on the protection of author’s rights, considering that

The Directive describes several situations where it would be impossible for the contracting authority to “objectively” define the means of satisfying its needs, or of assessing what the market can offer, in the way of technical solutions and/or financial legal solutions. “Objectively” means that this does not depend on the individual capacity of the contracting authority, and that even by a definition of purely performance or functional requirements (Art 23 paragraphs 3b, c and d) no useful solution can be expected (see Article 1, paragraph II(c)). This situation may arise, in particular, with the implementation of important integrated transport infrastructure projects, large computer networks or projects involving complex and structured financing, the financial and legal make up of which cannot be defined in advance (“particularly complex projects”). These considerations show that the competitive dialogue is tailored for projects – e.g. certain public private partnership models – which cannot be handled in a standard procedure (Op. Cit., p.4).

On the matter of the introduction of new instruments, ACE focuses mainly on Framework Agreements, assessing them basically as “not suitable for architectural services”:

The purpose of framework agreements is to establish the terms governing contracts to be awarded during a given period with regard to price and, where appropriate, the quantity envisaged (see Article 1 paragraph 5). Every single project should be open to competition, as every building deserves a specific quality approach. The awarding decision must be based on qualitative criteria. Architectural services are not measured by price and quantity. Secondly, framework agreements – even with the time limit of four years – restrict access to single contracts. (Op. Cit., p.4).

On the matter of the Architectural Design Competition, ACE focuses on the award of the contract to the winner of the competition, and proposes the use of the negotiated procedure:

The ACE recommends the transposition of the directives in such a way that, in the case of a design contest, the contract is awarded to one of the winners (successful candidates) of the design contest by using the negotiated procedure without publication of a contract notice (Art. 31 paragraph 3). If the contracting authority chooses the negotiated procedure under Article 30 paragraph 1c, an architectural design contest should be integrated to obtain the best results for the design of works. The combination of the above instruments (design contest and negotiated procedure) is the best way to guarantee a high degree of quality and economically beneficial results which cannot be achieved by using the open or restricted procedure (see also above under II.4) Design contests should, in all cases, be remunerated by an adequate and fair prize allocation (payment) (Op. Cit., p.4-5).

Finally the ACE addresses the issue of a clear distinction between design and execution of works:

The ACE recommends a clear separation between design and execution of works. The European legislator has decided not to prescribe such a separation, but has clarified that the decision to award contracts separately or jointly must be determined by qualitative economic criteria, which may be defined by national law [Directive 2004/18/EC, Recital 9, OJ L134, 30/04/2004 p.115]. Member States are recommended to determine such criteria on the basis of existing studies of the qualitative and economic results of separate or joint contracts. The ACE specifically draws attention to existing studies undertaken by courts of auditors which reveal the economic risks of design and build projects.

Summing up this overview of EU provisions, reviewed in scope of the practice of architecture and building construction, we should note firstly that the Directive 2004/18/EC attempts to define a number of subjects for public contracting, and to categorize them in framework types such as “activity” or “service”. ACE commented on the matter that architecture (in the terms of architectural services) should be clearly dissociated with the notion of “construction”, however she proposed that it should be clear that the former is indispensable to the latter.

Secondly, it is important to notice that the general principle of competition gives rise to the matter of establishing suitable and fair criteria for the indisputable evaluation of offers. However this has been a very difficult task for architecture, a claim the academic study of architectural competitions alone may give us adequate arguments to support.

Finally, we may support a position, that this attempt to define a framework in the best regulated manner possible is based on a qualification terminology, rather than a quality scope. This is evident in the paper ACE has produced and adopted, where one notices the need to specify quality issues on the practice of architecture, rather than exacting “architectural factors” in the activity of construction.

Still, we should take into consideration that architecture is all but unappreciated in the legislative framework of the EU. In Directive 85/34/EEC “on the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications in architecture, including measures to facilitate the effective exercise of the right of establishment and freedom to provide services” (OJ L223, 21/08/1985, p.0015-0025) it is stated:

[...] Whereas architecture, the quality of buildings, the way they blend in with their surroundings, respect for the natural and urban environment and the collective and individual cultural heritage are matters of public concern; Whereas [...] the holders of recognized diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications are able to understand and give practical expression to the needs of individuals, social groups and communities as regards spatial planning, the design, organization and construction of buildings, the conservation and enhancement of the architectural heritage and preservation of the natural balance.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DIRECTIVE IN GREECE

The Greek State incorporated the EU Directive into Law 3316/2005 on the “Commission and Execution of public contracts for Studies and supply of similar services, and other provisions” (Official Gazette of the Greek Government 42, 22/02/2005, p. 453-491). This law adjusts the commission and execution of all public contracts, regardless of value, for studies and supply of similar services of engineers and other liberal professions [...] who are subject to “Annex IIA” of Directive 2004/18/EC and to “Annex XVIII” of Directive 2004/17/EC” (which we haven’t covered in this paper since it doesn’t concern architectural services) (op.cit., Article 2, recital 1, p.454). In

short, it covers the area of “Services”, as defined in Directive 2004/18/EC, regarding construction studies of all possible sorts. Chapter B (“Procedures on Commissioning contracts for Studies and Services”), Articles 4 – 11 (op.cit. p.456-467), describes the framework within which these commissions are made.

In that sense it appeared that, for the larger part of the Greek technical community, the law was primarily addressing the matter of public procurement contracting, and especially one of the major issues public commissions had suffered until that point: the experience of the “mathematical equation”, a calculation method introduced by Law 2576/1998, which would usually result higher than normal discount prices and therefore unreliable construction offers. It is indicative that a number of presentations at the conference held by the Technical Chamber of Greece, 19-21 April, 2005, on Public procurement Construction, (e.g., Vettas, 2005), raised issues concerning for the most part technical and economical aspects.

However, law 3316, Article 5, recital 6, does provide for an Architectural Design Competition:

When projects of great importance of the extended public sector, or projects of a wider social, architectural, urban and ecological significance are concerned, and their function, volume or any other specific features have an impact on the wider built or natural environment, such as important building projects, projects of a repeated type, monuments or projects of monumental scale, landscape design or refurbishment projects of a regional or historic character, or urbanism interventions of special significance, the selection of a contractor is performed through an Architectural Competition, or a Competition of Studies [the use of the term “studies” refers to the intentionally generalizing terminology used in the Greek text. It is interesting to notice that the law distinguishes between an issue of Architecture and amore general issue of Study]. In these contests no economic offer is submitted, while the competition notice should at least state the number and the economic value of the awards, the composition of the jury, the possibility or not of rewarding studies beyond the number awarded by the competition rules, the evaluation for the fee considering the completion of the design awarded the contract including the necessary supplement studies, and the source of funding for the competition and the final study. [...] When the competition subordinates to the application of Directive 2004/18/EC and 2004/17/EC, the provisions concerning competitions are applied. When an International Competition is concerned,

the rules of the Union International of Architects also apply.” (Official Gazette of the Greek State, 42/ /22.2.2005, p.457)

This is the only time the matter at hand is subject to the *authority* of a jury, which is presupposed to be competent on the issue at hand (e.g. architecture). In all other cases the law describes “Studies” of several levels: “preparatory studies”, “preliminary studies”, “final or other studies”. It is once again the notion of a prescriptive framework that prevails, and in the Greek example criteria are formed to establish an undisputable foundation for the selection of a candidate. An example of this factorial approach may be found in the provisions of Article 6:

When the matter concerns the study of a complex project which may take alternatives, the preparatory and preliminary studies are awarded through the same contract notice (Op. Cit., article 5, recital 1, p.457).

Such being the case,

- i. For the preparatory study “the commission is awarded to the candidate offering the most advantageous economic offer” (op. cit., article 6, recital 3, p.459), in view of
 - a. “the completeness and consistency of the assessment of the general and special object of the study, as it derives from the technical report
 - b. the efficiency of the team of professionals who will perform the study, as it derives from its composition, the partners and their proven colleagues, their proven ability to study alternatives beyond that which was proposed and awarded,
 - c. the completeness and reliability of the method, as proposed by the candidate,
 - d. the efficiency and reliability of the proposed timeframe, in combination with the composition of the study group and the involvement of the candidate in produced studies and provided services.” (op. cit., article 6, recital 4, p.459)
- ii. For the preliminary study the award criteria are:
 - a. “The quality of the technical offer, which is subsequently comprised of:
 - i. the extend of studying an alternative
 - ii. the particular characteristics of the proposed solution, which are the following:
 - iii. the functional characteristics of the solution
 - iv. the aesthetic value of the solution

- v. the easiness of construction
 - vi. the cost of the project, including both the cost of the realization of the solution and the cost of operation and maintenance during its life cycle. Factors for this calculation are provided in the tender documents of the competition’s proclamation text.
 - vii. The time projection for the realization of the project
 - viii. The environmental impact of the solution.
- b. The economic offer of the participant for the completion of the further studies, including the necessary supplement studies and works (op. cit., article 6, recital 9, p.460).”

For the preliminary studies offer, the technical offer of the candidates [part a] is determined at 85% of the final evaluation whereas the economic offer of the candidate [part b] is determined at 15%. The aforementioned 85% is divided according to the proclamation text and this division is subject to no particular provision of the law. It is evident that the technical character of the project at hand is broken into ratified factors such as “functional”, “aesthetic”, “economically efficient”, “easy and quick to build”, and “environmental footprint”, while a whole 15% is awarded to the cost of service offered by the participant, namely his or her fee.

This view of a project subject to public procurement becomes even more apparent in the case of the award of the “final or other studies” for a project. Again, the participants submit “a technical assessment of the project, an organizational chart of the study group, an elaborate report on how the applicant will perform the required works to complete the study, and finally a detailed timetable of the aforementioned works” (op.cit., Article 7, Recital 4, p.462), whereas the criteria for award of the contract consist of:

the completeness and consistency of the assessment of the general and special object of the study, as it derives from the technical report, the organizational efficiency of the team of professionals who will perform the study, as it derives from its composition, the partners and their proven colleagues, their proven ability to study alternatives beyond that which was proposed and awarded,
The economic offer.

The weight of the aforementioned criterion (a) on the total of the evaluation is defined at 35%, criterion (b) at 40%, and criterion (c) at 25%. In the case of a closed procedure, the weight of criterion (a) is determined at 35%, criterion (b) at 35%, and criterion (c) at 30% (op. cit., Article 7, Recital 6, p.462-463).

Finally, in the case of a Combined Offer Competition (in view of Framework Agreements, as described in Directive 2004/18/EC, Article 1, recital 5, OJ L134, 30/4/2004, p.127 and Article 32, *op.cit.*, p.137), the participants may submit an offer covering in partnership or consortium one, or more, of the types of studies covered in Article 2 [“engineering and other liberal professions’ studies”, i.e., architectural, mechanical, electrical, structural, etc.].

The contract is awarded to the candidate submitting the most advantageous economical offer, evaluated by the following criteria:

a. the organizational efficiency of the team of professionals who will perform the study, or the team of the service provider, as it derives from its composition and its characteristics, considering primarily the partners and the proven colleagues of the candidate, the proven ability of the coordinator of the team in finding technical solutions and the additional staff that is provided for the execution of the contract beyond the provisions of the notice, as well as the efficiency and reliability of the method proposed.

b. The economic offer.

[...] the weight of the two criteria on the overall evaluation is determined at 75% and 25% respectively (Law 3316/2005, Article 8, recital 6., Official Gazette of the Greek State, 42/ /22.2.2005, p.465).

It is quite clear that one may trace in the reading of the law a significant distinction between:

A project subject to the authority of a jury presumed competent in recognising value particular to the character of the project (e.g. architecture)

Every other type of project, albeit still concerning “studies and supply of similar services of engineers and other liberal professions”

But as far as the subject of architecture is concerned, Article 5 (*op.cit.*, p.457) indicates that the provisions of article 6 [combined award of preparatory and preliminary studies, which in turn presuppose the award of the final studies through the provisions of Article 7 or 8] apply, amongst others, in the case

Of complex projects which may take alternative solutions, (recital 1, *op.cit.*, p.457)

Of building construction studies, and projects for the development or refurbishment of free public space (recital 3, *op.cit.*, p.457)

The aforementioned distinction also suggests an understanding of two notions of quality: an ill-defined one, which is the subject of a design contest [in the terminology of the Directive 2004/18/EC], being characteristic in the fact that it presupposes the authority of a competent jury to be rec-

ognized, and a well-defined one, consisting of a number of defined factors, characteristic in the fact that it is measured in percentage grading.

In light of this reading, let us quote once more recital 6:

When projects of great importance of the extended public sector, or projects of a wider social, architectural, urban and ecological significance are concerned, and their function, volume or any other specific features have an impact on the wider built or natural environment, such as important building projects, projects of a repeated type, monuments or projects of monumental scale, landscape design or refurbishment projects of a regional or historic character, or urbanism interventions of special significance, the selection of a contractor is performed through an Architectural Competition, or a Competition of Studies

It becomes evident that the opting for a design contest, lies in the realm of the subjective, whereas all other types of construction (development of the urban and rural environment, buildings included), remain subject to a ratified, factorial and basically economical transaction, where the offered price prevails as the main objective. Although this doesn’t necessarily eliminate the possibility that a quality architectural design may apply in such a procedure, it is certainly clear that the requirement of it is simply not prescribed in the context of the requirements for the project.

On the 29th of July 1999 the Architects Council of Thessaloniki (SATH) issued a statement concerning the issues involved with the construction of the Thessaloniki Concert Hall, a building the design of which was awarded by the method of a Combined Offer Competition to the firm of Tzonos, Hoipel, Hoipel & Associates. According to Prof. Tzonos, who eventually resigned from the project due to extended friction with the construction developer and the project management team on the side of the proprietor, this type of competition

[...] instead of securing the architectural quality as a precondition for the project [...] it turns it into a business transaction under the control of the project manager (Tzonos, 1999).

THE BUILDING OF THE NATIONAL THEATRE

The listed building on Agiou Konstantinou St. in Athens began being built in 1891 by architect Ernst Ziller, many of his buildings being now considered cultural heritage in Greece. In 1885 the works came temporarily to a



FIG. 1. Extension of the building of the National Theatre.

halt due to economic recession; finally the building was completed in 1901 and operated as host to the “Royal Theatre” until 1908 when it was renamed “National Theatre”. During the period of 1930-1932 extensive refurbishment works were performed, while in 1941 the renovation of the circular revolving stage was completed.

Further refurbishments, extensions additions and repairs took place in 1960, in 1971-72 and in 1981, but the earthquake of 1991 put the operation of the Central Stage, to a cease in order to proceed with the full examination of the building’s structural conditions, which was indeed questionable not only because of the earthquake but also due to the numerous alterations that had been performed in the past.

In 2004, the Ministry of Culture announced the call for Tenders for the “Renovation and Extension of the National Theatre” a public Inquiry including Design and Examination Works. The inquiry required from the participants to keep the neoclassical stone built building as a shell and to erect from within a new complex covering an area of 12.000 m². Additionally, the theatre would extend to the empty lot behind the old building with a New Theatrical Stage, multi shaped with multiple arrangements. There would also be a full rearrangement and renovation of the Central Stage inside the old neo-classical building, with the installation of modern stage equipment etc. Altogether, the proposal should secure the smooth co-existence of the old neoclassical build-

ing with the new and modern complex. (Marinou, E, 2008)

As this Project was considered a “Special Technical Project” in view of the extensive structural refurbishment it called for, the auction was realized through a Combined Offer Competition, i.e. including both Design and Execution works and qualifying on the best economic offer. This created severe embarrassment of the Greek Architects as they seemed to fail once again to defend a well established point of view of the Architects’ community (e.g. UIA. “Why an International Competition”, or or the provisions of Greek Law 3316 for “projects of great importance of the extended public sector”, Article 5, Recital 6) that an Architectural Design Competition should prevail as the preferred method of choice for projects of such impact.

The Project was finally awarded to the Construction Company “THOLOS S.A.” who collaborated with “STUDIO 75 Architects” for the architectural design. As discussed previously, the basic criterion for this Public Competition was the “offered price” and the fulfilment of the technical and legal requirement specifications.

In Greece, the Ministry of Public Works has issued a Ministerial Decree, which designates weighing factors for the criteria of the technical offers in a series of cases. Especially for construction works the following weighing factors are set forth (Ministerial Decree ΔΜΕΟ/α/01κ/1161 concerning the evaluation of the weighing criteria for technical tenders, article 2):

- For the operational characteristics of proposed solution: 5% up to 20%
- For the aesthetic quality of the solution : 5% to 20%
- For the easiness of the construction : 5% to 20%
- For the economical attractiveness of the solution : 15% to 35%
- For the duration of the execution of the works 15% to 35%
- For the environmental protection measures : 5% to 15%

With the help of this coding it is trusted that the proper weighing of the proposals (total 100%) will ensure the fair treatment of the Tenders, but it is still obvious that the aesthetic and general design requirements continue to weigh less. However, although the National Theatre would clearly fit the description of article 5, recital 6 of law 3316, the contract was not awarded through the process of an Architectural Design Competition. The consideration of the project by the competent authorities as a technical one (renovation and refurbishment, in view of severe structural damage) rather than an architectural one (the design and production of a complex of a high cultural impact and historic patrimony issues) allowed for primarily requiring technical skills and competence rather than design ingenuity. It is a fact that the

timely completion of the project was at hand, therefore a time – consuming process such as the one we will be discussing further on with the example of the New Acropolis Museum would be out of the question. However it is also important to take this opportunity to note a lasting debate concerning the practical difficulties of the Architectural Design Competitions:

Although architects tend to agree on the qualitative advantage regarding the final result (of course there are noteworthy oppositions, such as Frank Lloyd Wright's, see Bergdoll, 1989, note 2), at the same time design contests appear to be disadvantageous regarding the timely completion of the project itself, due to its time consuming procedures. The basic parameters that are considered to aggravate the procedures time-wise are:

- a. The necessity of submitting concrete proposals regarding each part of the project, depending on the type of the competition (ideas, preliminary studies, step-by-step competition etc). For all the above, a proper time margin is needed from the competition announcement date up to the submission of the required parts of the proposal. However, even taking into account solely the elaboration of the building program by the competitors – a work that is very complicated and difficult – this “proper” time margin becomes considerably long.
- b. The completion of the evaluation procedure in the different stages. Obviously, the time for the completion of the competition procedures is directly proportional with the number of the submitted proposals and the complexity of the project at hand.
- c. The establishment of three different committees in view of the achievement of a coherent and transparent competition procedure: The Greek Law provides for an Advisory Committee for the Architectural competitions, a Committee for the elaboration of the Call of Tenders and Competitions Programming and finally the Jury. Each Committee plays an independent role and has specific responsibilities as regards of the two stages of the Competitions.

Taking all the above into consideration, it is evident that the idea of an Architectural Design Competition may rarely be of service when construction of an urgent nature time wise is concerned. However, when the discussion turns towards the architectural product itself and the expectations it needs to meet, the notion of competition is itself considered to, at least, provide by definition the necessary consensus on the selection of the “best” proposal. On the same note, it is also argued that the process of an Architectural Design Competition may also be considered as the more efficient way to obtain the best value for money solution both from the technical and quality point of view (see ACE, 2005, e.g., p.7 or p.10).

THE NEW ACROPOLIS MUSEUM

Apart from the time-consuming processes mentioned before, the story of the four competitions that took place in order to conclude on a design proposal for the New Acropolis Museum poses a different kind of question, in fact one that has been extensively studied and argued upon over the years: can architecture competitions actually achieve consensus by definition?

The example offered by the story of the erection of the New Acropolis Museum in Athens (for a retrospective reference see Filippopoulou – Michailidou, 1991; Pantermalis, 2009; also To Pontiki, 2007; Filippedes, ed., 2000) not only suggests the negative, but it may in fact be used as an argument against those who value the timely completion of the project as a crucial factor for the business of construction.

This project has been the issue of four Architectural Design Competitions, each one bringing forth issues and forces at play, at times novel, and at times repeating – yet sometimes with alternate manifestations. Following each story on its own, one may be inclined to focus on particularities, such as the prescriptive process, the play of politics or the interests hidden behind the project, or the dispute of what constitutes architecture of a national impact. This would justly infuse a conversation on methodology, or other practicalities concerning the organization of an Architectural Design Competition, as it may equally justify a more theoretical conversation on the parts of the process, e.g. the authority of the jury, the management of outside forces, or the prescription of architectural values into tender documents of a factorial nature.

On the other hand, a more general view will reveal that these issues and forces have applied always, although it may be in different terms, a case apparent not only in the comparative view of these four stories but in the history of competitions internationally (see, eg. Lipstadt, ed., 1989). Such being the case, it is the faith in the notion of competition itself that establishes the procedure as an institution, and therefore the question of the “Architectural Quality” rises not in the form of prescriptive measures but rather in terms of a “fortunate result” which is projected both in the focused time of the competition as well as in the historical and social context it refers to, or is embedded into.

1976 AND 1979:

Two National Architectural Design Competitions were concluded without success. The project had been officially approved by Prime Minister Constantinos Karamanlis himself, but all the efforts came finally to nothing, twice (To Pontiki, 2007): the first competition awarded only a 3rd, 4th and 5th

prize, as well as 5 honorable mentions, but no winner, while the second was concluded unfruitful. The persistence of the Ministry of Culture to locate the New Museum in the Makryiannis area posed a very difficult question to the competitors. Although situating the museum right across the Acropolis seemed a reasonable choice in terms of the contextual connection between the monument and the building, the site itself raised a series of issues, namely urban planning issues, traffic issues, environmental issues, the relation between the building's size and the Acropolis etc. Moreover, construction on the site was quite possible to stumble upon extensive archaeological findings which hadn't yet been revealed at the time, and even the Ministry of Culture had included in Feasibility Study a clause that stated that in the case that the archaeological excavations proved the existence of archaeological findings, this location would be abandoned.

The above restrictions, the poor and incomplete justification of the existing data, and by extension the building specifications, and the reactions of the Greek Architects Union and of distinguished independent Greek architects, forced the organizers of the Competition to refrain from awarding a first prize on each occasion, admitting thus their failure.

1989:

Ten years after the last attempt and with the late Melina Merkouri serving as Minister of Culture, the third in line Architectural Design Competition was announced on May 16th, 1989 by the Ministry of Culture. The struggle for validity drove the organizing authorities to conduct an International Design Competition, issued under the auspices of the Union of International Architects (UIA). The regulations set forth were very strict and without legal gaps and the Jury included well known names with word-wide reputation.

The Competition posed its key questions around:

- a. The positioning of the Museum
- b. The formation and arrangement of the surrounding area
- c. The eventual inclusion of the existing Acropolis Museum and the Acropolis Studies Center in the operational scheme of the New Museum.
- d. The organization of the spaces and the morphology of the New Museum.

It seemed again that the focus of this Competition would be the positioning of the new Museum: this time the Ministry of Culture presented the participants with three possible locations, namely the location in Makryiannis area, already known from the previous two competitions, as well as two other locations at the sides of the Philopappou Hill, also near Acropolis. All three locations established the already formed belief that the new Museum had to maintain the relation between the archaeological exhibits and the Acropolis itself.

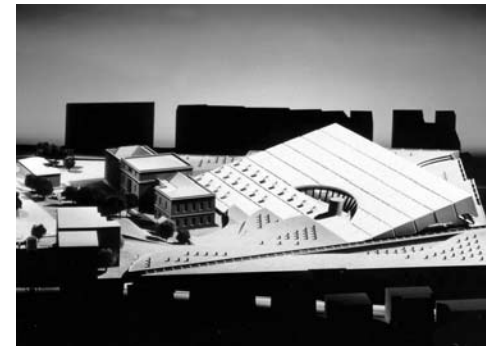


FIG. 2. M. Nicoletti & L. Pasarelli, Italy. Winning entry for the Competition for the New Acropolis Museum, 1999, Study model.

Initially, 1270 architectural offices from 52 countries expressed their interest to participate in the competition, out of which 156 were from Greece. Finally, 438 proposals from 26 Countries were submitted. The competition was held in two stages, and it concluded with the final awards in the 10th of November 1990.

The debate that was developed in Greece in the meantime regarding the three locations of the New Museum became fierce. Quite unexpectedly, the archaeologists preferred the site at Makryiannis area (in the view of many, in order to keep their headquarters at their current location), while the architects would accept any other site but the one at Makryianni, even one far away from Acropolis, maintaining their position on the site being problematic in the same terms described for the preceding two competitions. The debate was more or less official, but always very intensive and the matter was left to be resolved within the competition itself.

The decision of the Jury to award the 1st prize to Italian architects Nicoletti and Passarelli lit up the fire anew.

Not only had the Italian architects proposed to situate the building in Makryianni area, but they furthermore proposed a design covering almost 45.000 m² while the inquiry called for only 18.000 m² to cover the needs of the new Museum; most of the participants that reached the final stage of the Competition proposed an average of 22.000 m² and even the architect who elaborated the building program and was a member of the Jury voted for a modest proposal which included premises of 6.500 m². However, nobody could protest officially because the program of the competition left a lot of room for freedom in keeping with the building program to the letter. It is worthy to mention that the years' long request of the Greek Architects to the Competent authorities of the Architectural Competitions was to maintain an already established policy in other types of competitions at the time, of keeping the deviations of the proposals in relation to prescribed building program in a range of 15%, in order to have comparable proposals.

Then, the progress from this Competition towards the realization of the awarded project was not at all smooth. After being awarded the contract, the Italian architects were asked to decrease the size of building up to 50%. This

resulted in a more than significant cost increase for the necessary studies. At the same time, the Greek Architects appeared to the Supreme Court asking for the abrogation of the Competition due to environmental and archaeological reasons. Four years later, in 1993 the Supreme Court declared the Competition abrogated according to the appeal.

In 1994 Minister of Culture Melina Merkouri died of cancer, with the vision of the return of the Parthenon Marbles from the British Museum to their Cradle vivid as ever, while also strategically and emotionally combined with the erection of the new Acropolis Museum. In view of this vision the State instituted a new Organization for Building the New Acropolis Museum (OANMA), which afterwards directly entitled the Italian architects to proceed with regulating the project in order to move on towards the realization of the project.

However in 1995 the schedule was terminally upset due to the discovery of a whole district of Ancient Athens at the Makryianni site. The archeologists, who were at first advocating for the Makryianni site, joined the architects in protesting, while the locals followed as well defending against the expropriation of their houses. The project's budget skyrocketed at around €87 million in order to cope with the new findings (especially the time consuming process of evaluating the site by the archaeological service). Eventually the project stopped, the Italians were reimbursed a settlement and went their own way.

2000

The officials' acknowledgement that the unpredicted discovery of an ancient Athenian district (part of the town from the period 1st-7th A.D.), and the fact that the findings were more significant than initially estimated, blocked the initial schedule. OANMA went on to announce the fourth Architectural Design Competition, firmly insisting on the site of Makryianni, but this time with the inclusion of archeological discoveries in the design of the building as a prerequisite.

Despite protests from the part of architects, archeologists and locals, who ended up appealing to the European Parliament on the grounds of destruction of archeological treasures and the illegal expropriation procedures (Galpin, R., in BBC News, see also Lobell, J., 2004), OANMA went on with the realization of the Competition. The latter was held as an International Competition in two stages, namely a qualification stage judging on experience the participants had "on projects of such impact", followed by the actual submission of proposals by the qualified teams which included both a design proposal and the necessary supporting studies (structural, electrical, mechanical). It is interesting to mention that the authorities called for expe-



FIG. 3. The new Acropolis Museum, B. Tschumi, M. Fotiadis.

rience on both an International level *and* a National level, in order to ensure the ability of the winner to cope with particularities on both levels.

The 12 architectural practices that were qualified in the first stage submitted their proposals and models according to the Inquiry requirements which were the following (Pantermalis, 2009):

- a. Pioneer proposal for incorporating the local archeological findings in the new Museum in a way that they will be part of the Museum exhibitions.
- b. Use of natural light and creation of a natural ambiance sensation, in view of the fact that most of the exhibits were originally (in the Antiquity) exposed in open air.
- c. A balanced relationship between the Museum's architecture and the Acropolis.
- d. Satisfactory incorporation of the new Museum into the neighboring and the wider urban surrounding.
- e. Putting the visitor into the position to look in the same time at the Parthenon sculptures in the new Museum and the Parthenon itself up to the Acropolis rock (an idea which derived from the 1993 competition winners).

As a highlight of the Program, OANMA included the exhibition of *all* the Parthenon sculptures including the famous "Parthenon marbles" which currently remain in the British Museum.

On September 2001, the Jury unanimously awarded 1st prize to architects Bernard Tschumi and Michalis Fotiadis.

The realization of the project started immediately, with an intensive pace and a projected deadline towards the Olympic Games of 2004, that is, to have the Museum ready for the games. Unfortunately for OANMA, in 2003 the Supreme Court ordered the halt of the construction works, following the appeal of the international Council of Monuments / Greek branch, and the Makryianni site locals. This was followed in the beginning of 2004 with a prosecution against the members of OANMA, members of the Central Archeological Council and the Jury of the Competition, a prosecution which was considered by many a political issue fuelled by the Opposition of the government. Interestingly enough, in April 2004, along with the change of the Government, and the subsequent change of faces in strategic places, the scene is reversed. The prosecutors, in most of their part, become allies, the works start again, but the vision of having the Museum ready for the 2004 Olympic Games is off.

In 2007 the New Acropolis Museum finally became a reality. Since 2008 the Museum is in operation, but the arguments, the protests, the debates etc. still go on concerning a wide variety of issues. But then, isn't it true that this is what the international experience from the practice of Architectural Competitions shows we have to expect, further to the legal, regulatory etc. issues?

CONCLUSIONS

In the Research Program funded by the General Secretariat of Research and Technology and the Technical Chamber of Greece under the title "Architectural Competitions and the Contemporary Greek Architecture" (Filippides, 2000) we read:

[...] the Competitions give the possibility to detect confrontations and conventions and through them to introduce a framework of the architectural works acceptance field at a given historical moment [...] (op.cit., p.5)

and further more :

[...] having, thus no doubt that the objective of the Competition is the selection of the best possible proposal, based on the criteria set forth at a certain level by the Competition Organizer and at another level – rather more decisive – by the Jury, as soon as the result is announced, both the awards and the criticism start and a new course of things is inaugurated which is practically autonomous. It is the complicated

and inconsistent route of the long lasting criticism of the architectural proposals in the particular Competition [...] (op. cit., p.7).

Practically, the award of an Architectural Design Competition is judged upon at least twice: initially by the Jury and then by society itself, the body of especially interested parties for one (e.g. architects, politicians, developers, locals, etc.), then the public as a whole. Although it may seem otherwise, these juxtapositions of the views may in fact be regarded as productive. The example presented in the New Acropolis Museum shows us without doubt the drawbacks in view of completing a project in a timely fashion (if at all), yet it is also important to notice how every other competition implemented issues that were revealed through discourse – even protest and prosecution –, such as the vindication of speculations of archaeological findings in the Makryianni site and the eventual implementation of them in the final project as an aspect of design. Equally, one may notice that ideas that had been even slightly traced in the beginning (such as the contextual connection between the Museum and the Acropolis itself) become an actual design aspect (in the winning proposal, awarded in 1990) and, further on, a specification (in the 2000 competition).

It should be taken into consideration then that any building, especially should it be considered "architecture", exists within a framework which extends both socially and historically. Competition has been established in public conscience as a practice to ensure the best quality, or at least as a ground for fair comparison in order to find "the best proposal", for many years now. In the same manner of faith, the actual judgement on architecture is in fact projected to the aforementioned future past (historically wise) or the generative power it may apply to the social context it is embedded into (socially wise).

Then what of the competition in present time? Is there a way to prescribe the consensus the notion of competition itself supplies into factorial parameters, especially when it comes to architecture?

The questions raised by participants in all the Competitions are quite indicative. Two of them from the 1989 New Acropolis Museum competition read as such:

- "Question No 26: Based on which criteria the Jury will be able not to award all the prizes due to their judgment that there are no studies submitted which deal with and satisfy all the basic operational needs of the project as well as its general Cultural meaning or its aesthetical requirements or that they are solutions that will drive towards economically and technically unacceptable project (article 10.4 of the Tender)
- Answer : the criteria will be set forth by the Jury" (Ministry of Culture, 1989, p.7)

- “*Question No 103* : the non justified rejection of proposals by the Jury is not in conformity with the International and Greek Legislation (article 10.2 of the Tender)
- *Answer*: According to the Contracting Authority, the minimum required justification of the Jury’s decision is described in said Inquiry Article. It is up to the Jury itself to justify in more details its decision up to a level that they consider necessary.” (Ministry of Culture, 1989, p.13)
A relevant comment of the Greek Architects Union reads as such:
- “Article No 21 must be amended by adding the Contracting Authority’s point of view, regarding the philosophy and the character of the New Museum. It is not feasible, nor practicable even not advisable for the Jury to be obliged to formulate such criteria, in so little time, without having as guidelines the point of view of the Contracting Authority.”
And the answer of the Ministry was:
- “The philosophy and the character of the New Museum are objective of the Competition” (Ministry of Culture, 1989, p.42)

Therefore, regarding the fulfilment of the technical, economical and operational requirements, the answer lies undoubtedly in the Legislation in terms of a detailed framework, laid out in a factorial manner. On the other hand, the problem seems difficult to solve as far as it concerns the “Architectural Quality” of the project at hand since both experience and legislative framework place the answer under the authority of a “competent jury”.

Coming back to the provisions of Law 3316, it is then inevitable to look upon the other possible cases of public procurement competitions, especially since it seems that the more the call for “realization” rises, innovation and creative thinking gives way to experience, practicality and economics. This is also of importance since the Architectural Design Competition has been, until recently, quite the *less* popular way for the Greek State to award building contracts; all other types, and especially Combined Offer Competitions are basically the norm as they facilitate rather the *building development business*, a thriving sector of seminal importance to the Greek Economy (grossing up to 14% of the country’s GDP, see Mirza & Nacey / ACE, 2008, p.84), than the consensus on the – as always controversial – architectural quality of the building.

Looking back at the overview of EU and Greek national legislation, two contextual pairs of extremes are formed:

- a. Qualification criteria and Quality
 - b. The procurement of the business of construction and architectural creation
- But then, the examination of the examples of the building of the National Theatre and the New Acropolis Museum, shows us, if nothing else, that the method of conduct either way can be equally flawed and advantageous. The

New Acropolis Museum has been an issue of such extreme controversy that it almost failed to realise; the National Theatre extension basically evolved on time, but the prescription of the development of the building (i.e. the way it was commissioned) failed to inscribe the ever prevailing demand for architecture (at least on behalf of architects, through their institutional representatives). Still, both buildings are subject to criticism and the final verdict on them will be passed in the days of future come.

Should we then start talking about Architectural Design Competitions, and as it happens in architecture itself, the parameters that affect the fortunate completion of the project and the way of determination of the project’s quality are factors that cannot be weighed easily, and there are no guarantees or unquestionable determinism that blindly drives things (Filippides 2000, p.125). It is apparent that the Legislation sets preconditions, specializing the quality issues and requirements, still it’s failing to take public dispute out of the picture. It is therefore important to consider the notion of “*qualified*” (as a deterministic procedure would consider it) in new terms. What is then the factor that justifies the value of a particular architectural work in comparison to others?

As we said before things are not so simple, and generalities and good will cannot give answers, neither will insuring the objectivity of the quality of an architectural work by means of issuing implicit building, and techno-economical requirements and not for its substantial evaluation. That is why qualification cannot be directly compared with the *qualitative* upgrading or innovation that is expected to be achieved through the institution of the Architectural Design Competitions.

The masterpiece is not a result of the fulfilment of set forth requirements, but of the way and the methodology that these requirements are fulfilled through the completion of the architectural work in praxis. This should mean that the produced architecture reinstates the historical mission as criterion, and consequently the result of an Architectural Design Competition offers to the public a project – symbol that stays pioneering and exemplary for the whole of the produced architecture.

Therefore, and within the framework of this contextual basis, what the institute of Architectural Design Competition should be in need of is not another more specific, regulative and prescriptive framework. Rather, it is important for it to be set on a basis of a new awareness, where the highlight of its function is the selection of an architectural masterpiece, liberating the judgment from codes of classification and the false objectivity of requirements, and formulating the competitions’ preconditions in view of a *qualitative* competitiveness, representing the authentic creation with inspiration and vision for all Architectural Competitions.

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Abstract

This paper reflects the way architecture is treated in a professional context. The point of departure is a case study of the jury assessment in an architectural competition. This practical aspect of evaluation as part of the design process is analyzed in the context of a survey of competitions in the Nordic countries.

In the architecture profession, discussing and assessing architecture is a means of gathering knowledge as well as a way of evaluating architectural projects. Since evaluation is a part of the professional practice, these discussions become influenced by a set of assumptions, implicit criteria and tacit knowledge that is sometimes hard to penetrate.

In a competition jury, a discussion of architecture is held between architects and laymen of architecture, with the aim of reaching a common decision. It is an evaluation of architecture in an early phase of the design process, which also makes it a part of this process. The architects must explain their views and mediate qualities of the entries that can be hard to see for a layman of architecture.

The presentation of the jury's process reveals different strategies of evaluation in an illustrative way. The jury's evaluative discussions are further related to theoretical models of qualitative evaluation of architecture and architectural judgement. Awareness of the different strategies and the possibilities of combining and explaining these is one way of directing competition juries towards an efficient assessment process.

Keywords

Evaluation, decision-making theory, design practice, quality assessment, architectural competitions, case studies

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Speaking of Architecture: A Study of the Jury's Assessment in an Invited Competition

Charlotte Svensson

INTRODUCTION

Whereas drawing is a code over which architects hold a large measure of control, their command of language will always be disputed by every other language user (Forty 2000, 14). **Referens saknas!**

During the spring of 2006 an architectural competition concerning a new school building was held in the small town of Hagfors, Sweden. I had the opportunity to follow and observe the jury's work with the assessment of the competition. This article is a descriptive analysis of the competition's assessment process, the prequalification and the jury's assessment of the entries. The point of departure is questions concerning the jury members' ideas of quality: Which are the main problems? What questions about issues appear in the discussions? Which are the underlying strategies? How does the jury reach a decision?

The jury's evaluation is a creative process that evolves as the members gradually increase their understanding of the entries through their continued internal discussions. This study illustrates this as well as how the preconditions in the program, the competitor's interpretation of the demands in the programme and the jury's interpretation of the entries affect the assessment.

Four central findings concerning the process are traced. Firstly, the study shows how *public opinion* influenced the jury's work. The competition project appeared to be controversial and caused a public debate, which put pressure upon the jury. Secondly, *two separate strategies of decision-making* appeared through the jury process. The strategies originated from the jury members' different ways of regarding the process. Thirdly, the study shows *how the evaluation-criteria are used* as a means to compare the entries. Fourthly, the study illustrates how the assessment process led to a *positioning* between architects and laymen of architecture. This is due to differences in the jury members' knowledge and experience as well as their different responsibilities and interests in the competition.

The focus of the study has been the jury's assessment of the competition

entries and the discussions that finally led to a decision. The overall purpose has been to investigate how a jury decides on a winner and to get a picture of the assessment process and its strategies. Related aims have been to study the professional discussion of architecture and the jury members' various professional backgrounds and spheres of interest. Which problems are a jury facing? What questions arise during the assessment? What are the underlying strategies of decision-making? How does a jury reach a decision? What is the role of the architect on the jury?

The work has been carried out as a case study of the competition's assessment process. By studying a competition as a case, the unique process is captured as well as the complexity of the case itself. The focus is on particularisation instead of generalisation. The aim is to find out as much as possible about the case to get a complete picture of it and its context (Stake 1995).

The empirical material consists of observations and documentation of the jury's meetings. The documentation has been made through notes, which appeared viable considering the character and extent of the meetings^[1].¹ During the observations I was part of the group without participating in their discussions. The group consisted of nine persons several of which did not know each other before. My influence on the process was diminished because of the dynamics that appears in a group of persons with a common task. The jury did not have access to my notes.

My presence at the jury meetings was an exception that needed some ethical considerations. The jury process in architectural competitions is always conducted behind closed doors. Only jury members, the competition secretary and possibly experts may take part in the jury meetings and only the members shall appoint the winner (*PM Juryarbete/bedömning*, 2003). The jury did not take any formal notes during the meetings, which caused some considerations in the use of quotes.² I chose not to use the jury members or the competitors' names in the description. I have also selected quotations that were representative rather than those that reflected individual points of view.

ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITIONS

Competitions encourage those who only observe, including the public, to applaud or admonish architects as if designers were contending in a public tournament (Lipstadt 1989, 9).

1. Altogether the meetings lasted about forty hours and included a discussion among at least nine persons.
2. The competition secretary recommended that the jury not make any notes during the assessment process. This was a strategy to make it easier for the jury members to change their opinions during the process.

Critique, comparison and concurrence are fundamental concepts within the architectural competition system. The jury's assessment in an architectural competition includes a quality assessment of the architecture on the basis of the drawings, perspectives, photomontages, texts and illustrations of the entries. The jury must interpret these architectural representations to form an opinion of the entries' contents.

As in most professional areas, an internal discourse exists within the architecture profession (Lundequist 2002). The habit of using the evaluative discussion to develop knowledge leads to an internal mode of speaking about architecture. Implicit meaning and tacit knowledge influence the architectural discourse, which further obscures a layman's understanding of the professional discussion about architecture.

This makes the jury situation interesting: because a competition jury consists of both architects and laymen of architecture, the discussion must be held on a different level. The demand for consensus in the final decision forces the discussion to be understandable even for persons who are not familiar with architect's discourse. This makes the jury's discussion a forum for a concentrated and pedagogical discussion about architecture in a professional context.

The interest, and importance, of competitions among architects is reflected in the large number of entries that usually are handed in to open competitions. The illusion of competition under the same conditions becomes an encouragement for young architects and a stimulation for the more experienced: "it embodies the fundamental conditions of the profession intrinsic in the competitive mentality that permeates professional life" (Tostrup 1999, 21). The design of competition entries is regarded as a unique way of experimentation and creativity within the field of architecture. Architectural competitions are considered to lead to better results owing to the thorough evaluation of the design at an early stage in the process. (Kazemian et al. 2007) Wærn (1996) argues that the high status of the architectural competition can be traced to the use of the concept *competition*, which stands for something noble and fair.

The reasons for a builder to arrange a competition can be many. Lipstadt (1989) identifies four reasons:

1. To choose an architect or a design.
2. To distinguish excellence in appearance and in function.
3. To award commissions.
4. To educate young architects.

When the question was put to a number of experienced jury members in the Nordic countries, five more reasons to arrange competitions emerged:

1. To cast new light on a problem.
2. To market a project.
3. To increase the quality of the project through the jury assessment.
4. To run architecture politics.
5. To coordinate different fields of interest. (Kazemian et al. 2007)

In the studied competition, the main aim of the municipality of Hagfors was to select a suitable architect for the assignment and to market the project and the arranger in a positive context.

The competition was an *invited project competition* in accordance with the Swedish Law on Public Procurement (LOU 1997) and the EU directive for the award of public contracts (OJ 2004 L 134/114).

The purpose of a project competition is to get a proposal for implementation, and to assign the winning architect for the project. The alternative is an *ideas competition*, where the first prize is the prize sum without any promise of a further assignment (SAA 1998).

An *invited competition* has only a limited number of competitors. The selection of competitors gives the arranger a certain amount of control over the competition. The alternative is *open competitions*, where anyone can send in an entry. An important difference is the smaller amount of entries in an invited competition, which affects the jury's work. All the competitors in an invited competition get some financial compensation for their work, which makes it possible to increase the demands and the complexity of the competition task (Kazemian et al. 2005).

Since this competition was held as a public procurement process in accordance with the LOU, the selection of competitors was made through a *prequalification*. This is a regulated form of selection, where the arranger invites everyone who is interested to send in a notification. The selection of competitors is then based on these notifications.

Two coherent demands are put on the jury in an architectural competition: one winner shall be appointed, and the decision shall be made in consensus. In that sense, the jury process is a regulated sequence of work with a well-defined goal.

It is usually the arranger of the competition that appoints the jury members. When the Swedish Association of Architects (SAA) is engaged as a consultant, the organization appoints at least two of the jury architects. (SAA 1998) According to the EU directive, at least one third of the jury members

in an architectural competition must be architects or have equivalent qualifications (OJ 2004 L 134/114). The other members of the jury are usually representatives from the arranger and the users. It is especially important that the arrangers are represented on the jury, since they have control over the implementation process. (Kazemian et al. 2007)

In the interviews referred to above with experienced jury members in the Nordic countries, the characteristics of a good jury member were defined as: (a) Skill within his or her field of competence, (b) Social competence, (c) Orientation towards a solution and (d) Pedagogical and communicative skills. The success factor within the assessment process depends on the competence of the jury members and the good functioning of the group. (Kazemian et al. 2007).

The architect in a competition jury is both a temporary member of the jury group and also a permanent member of the architecture profession. This makes the role of the jury architect rather ambivalent. The following four roles of a jury architect can be presumed:

- *Expert on architecture.* An architect as an expert is able to interpret the design ideas as well as the functional, economical, planning and construction qualities of the entries.
- *Representative and advisor to the arranger.*
- *Educator.* The architect as interpreter and mediator of the entries becomes a link between the designers of the entries and the other jury members.
- *Colleague.* The architect on the jury has the same professional identity as the competitors.

These roles represent different spheres of interest that the architects on the jury hover over during the assessment process.

The observed jury followed the directives on the jury's work in architectural competitions that is usually handed out by the architects' organisation to all jury members by the competition secretary. The document contains advice to the jury and a systematic model of the assessment process. This model contains four steps: learning > evaluation > comparison > decision (Pm, *juryarbete/bedömning* 2003). This can be compared to Bazerman's (2006) model of a rational process of decision-making. Rationality refers to a process that efficiently leads to the best result. The model consists of six steps:

1. Define the problem.

2. Identify criteria.
3. Weigh the criteria.
4. Create alternatives.
5. Grade every alternative with respect to every criterion.
6. Make the ultimate decision.

Translated to a jury's work in an architectural competition, the points 1, 2 and 3 are the writing of the programme. Point 4 is the design, handing in and approval of the competition entries. The assessment lies in points 5 and 6. The key to the assessment process, according to Bazerman, lies in the identification and weighing of the criteria.

Bazerman stresses that this model is an ideal situation that diverges from an actual situation. In a decision making process there is a number of simplifications that are necessary for practical reasons. It is impossible to get a correct picture of the consequences of every alternative in real situations of choice. Instead, the decision makers search for a solution that is acceptable or reasonable on a certain level. The alternative that is good enough is chosen instead of the one that is indisputably the best (Bazerman 2006). This over-valuation of the known qualities is used to create a dominance structure in order to convince the decision makers that the best decision has been made (Montgomery *et al.* 1990).

To discuss and evaluate architecture, as references or as examples, is part of the architect's professional knowledge. By the critique that is included in architectural education, at the architect's offices, in the written architectural criticism and as self-critique during the design process, knowledge is mediated and created within the profession (Lundequist 2002). Thereby, architecture criticism becomes an important part of the jury's evaluative discussions as well as their final report.

Criticism is based on ideas of quality and can be expressed in many ways depending on the object or the function. Attoe (1978) identifies three basic groups of architecture criticism:

1. Normative criticism, based on doctrines and rules. A normative critic often compares the criticized object to models.
2. Interpretive criticism is based on the object itself and suggests how to understand it.
3. Descriptive criticism depicts or describes the object and its context.

Architecture criticism is a strategy for assessment that permits an overall picture. It can complement or oppose the rational decision making strategy

and the weighing of criteria. But it is important that the assessing group is conscious of which model to use. One of the jury's assignments is to define the problem and the relation to the real situation. Instead of excluding alternatives, the strategy of architecture critique includes evaluation of every entry as well as comparison between the different entries to identify a winning entry.

CASE DESCRIPTION

Hagfors is an industrial small town in the middle of Sweden. The background for the investigated project was a need to unite four schools into one. The project was also meant to market the town through architecture. In brief, the competition about 'an educational and cultural centre' was organized like this:

1. Prequalification
 - Advertisement.
 - Selection of competitors.
2. Invitation to offices
 - Four selected offices were invited to compete.
3. Composition of competition entries
 - The offices design and hand in their entries.
4. Jury work
5. Public announcement of the winner

The following analysis report concerns point number 4, the jury assessment.

THE COMPETITION PROGRAMME

Since the design of entries in an architectural competition lacks all dialogue between the architect and the builder, the competition programme becomes essential. It is a contract between the jury and the competitors (PM, juryarbete/bedömning 2003). In the programme the preconditions of the competition and the task are formulated. The programme is a starting point for the competitors design process as well as for the jury's assessment. Here follows a description of the programme of the competition studied.

The competition project emerged because of a decreasing number of pupils in the schools in Hagfors. Uniting four schools into one large educational centre would minimize the operational costs.

By procuring the architects through a competition, the arrangers hoped to get some positive marketing. "the aim is to get a centre for education with such qualities in the physical environment as well as in the activities that it

can motivate people to remain or move to Hagfors” (Nordberg 2005, 13).

The object to be rebuilt was an existing upper secondary school called “Älvstrandsgymnasiet”. It was built in 1974 in a central part of Hagfors, by the shore of a stream, Uvån. The building contained the municipality’s library, a swimming hall and sports facilities.

The existing building would be rebuilt and extended into an educational and cultural centre containing:

- compulsory school
- special school
- upper secondary school
- adult education
- learning centre
- music school
- youth recreation centre
- municipal library

The programme also includes plans for a future “Growth- and innovation centre”. This innovation centre is thought of as a link between the existing steel industry and the upper secondary school in Hagfors. The evaluation criteria stated in the programme are:

- The functional, pedagogical and architectural qualities within the proposed building and its outer environment.
- The possibilities of development of the entries.
- The possibilities of implementation/ economical realism of the entries (Nordberg 2005).

These are general and comprehensive criteria; all except for the pedagogical qualities can be regarded as fundamental criteria in competitions. The use of fundamental criteria indicates what the arrangers want but aims to give the competitors a scope for their creativity (Svensson 2006).

The pedagogical visions of the project are described as ‘Pedagogy in change’. The plans for the pedagogical activity are made from a ten-year’s perspective. The activities are expected to “go from a traditional education, which often is oriented towards function, toward a more flexible learning, that is oriented towards process and where a vision of wholeness, multi-disciplinary and comprehensive learning is in focus” (Nordberg 2005, 15).

The description is brief, bearing in mind that the pedagogical qualities of

the building are one of the assessment criteria. This imprecise description of learning raises questions about demands of knowledge that are reasonable to put on the architects.

THE JURY PROCESS

The jury needed three meetings in order to appoint a winner. The jury met in the town hall in Hagfors. The jury consisted of the following nine representatives.³

- Two architects, appointed by the Swedish Association of Architects.
- Three local politicians: the chairpersons of the municipal executive committee, and the committee for children and education and one opposition politician.
- Two representatives of the users: one from the teachers union and one professor in pedagogy.
- Two directors from the municipality: the director of schools and the director of technical matters.

The competition secretary from the Swedish Association of Architects also participated in the meetings.

THE FIRST MEETING

The 1st of March 2006 was the last day to hand in the competition entries. A local debate concerning the school project had started in Hagfors. Letters to the editor with headings like *The Concept Large-School Fills me with Anguish* and *Let the People of Hagfors Vote about the Large-School* were published in the local paper. A petition with demands for a referendum on the project had also been started (Sjöström 2006). The opponents of the project were critical of the closure of three schools. Four local politicians had answered with a debate article headlined *The New Centre of Education Shows a Wiser Hagfors*. The article focused on the visions of the future school in Hagfors and the aims to create better education and thereby bring more optimism into the community of Hagfors (Dahlqvist et al. 2006).

The politicians on the jury expressed their worry about public opinion. It was important to them that the competition could gain approval among the inhabitants of Hagfors. Otherwise it could be difficult for the politicians to support the winning entry.

3. The jury consisted from the beginning of seven persons, but one opposition politician and one representative from the teachers union was added to the group. Since the competitors are supposed to be represented by one third of the jury it was decided that the technical director in the municipality of Hagfors would count as one of those together with the two architects.

The chairman of the jury referred to the importance of the programme: “This is what we are committed to: a school that fits all ages. It must be the interaction within the building that leads to the fulfilment of the curriculum...” (comment, jury member, 6 march 2006).

The competition secretary proposed a public exhibition of the entries. The representatives of the arranger were all sceptical about an exhibition and the jury decided to wait. The competition secretary warned that this could look like they were hushing something up. He reminded the jury not to comment in public about the process.

Then the jury’s review of the entries began. At first they made an individual survey of the entries. After a while spontaneous discussions came up between some of the persons present; the comments were clearly evaluative. Other jury members did not participate in the discussions and remained silent.

After the individual survey, the two architects on the jury went through and explained the entries to the others. The following aspects were discussed:

- The planning and the inner organization of the rooms,
- The outer organization of the entries. The movements of the children and the possibilities to play. Safety matters related to the nearby stream and the traffic.
- The emplacement and design of the innovation centre.
- Entries, logistics and loading of transports.
- The day and night time activities within the building.
- Design.
- Pedagogical methods; how traditional or innovative the entries seemed.
- Availability.
- Understanding of the entries. All the entries were regarded as unclear in showing what was old and what was new.

After this survey, two of the politicians and one of the municipal directors expressed their disappointment. The entries did not correspond to their expectations. The chairman suggested that the jury think about the criteria. He asked them to write a checklist as a basis for the assessment starting with the following criteria:

The building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Three schools together, with clear transitions - The safety of the younger children + play environment - Everyone must be able to meet in learning
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Way of working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education with many variations - Learning with many variations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cooperation between subjects/comprehensive - Environment for reflection - Facilitate entrepreneurship - Acceptance for innovations - Counselling - Access for transportation - buses
Centre of innovation Entries:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Common - Access to the library - Especially sport and swimming

The chairman then advised the jury members to go through the criteria systematically. The competition secretary suggested that they should add *ability for development* to the list. One of the jury members suggested *attractiveness*, *adjustment to the place* and *the sense of the place*. One of the architects wanted to add *generality*, *changeability* and *ability to interchange/ divide into stages* to the list of criteria. A comparison to the programme shows that the jury now substantially expanded the first assessment criteria “Functional, pedagogical and architectural qualities within the building and the environment” (Nordberg 2005).

THE SECOND MEETING

During the week that passed between the first and the second assessment meeting, the debate in Hagfors continued. An information meeting was to be held on the 11th of April. The arrangers wished to present a winning entry by then. An exhibition of the entries was discussed again. The politicians were still worried about public outcry if all the entries were showed; they would only like to show the winning entry.

The chairman of the jury suggested that this time the jury should start by eliminating two of the entries and work with two finalists. He had two suggestions for finalists which he would not reveal. Some of the jury members agreed, but the architects stressed the importance of keeping all the entries in the assessment.

One of the entries, here called Entry 1, did not fulfil one of the central programme demands. The designer placed one part of the school in a separate building, despite the wish in the programme to place three schools within one building. The chairman wanted to eliminate this entry. One of



FIG. 1: Entry 1.



FIG. 2: Entry 2.



FIG. 3: Entry 3.

the architects meant that it was important to let all the entries remain in the assessment until the presentation of the problem was clear. The competition secretary meant that it was too early to rule out any entry. The chairman wanted to hurry up the process by starting to eliminate entries in this phase. A survey of all four entries was made, which can be summarized like this:

Entry 1

- This is the entry that differs from the programme demands and is therefore discussed briefly.
- The energy solution is not good
- One of the architects stated that the architecture is well designed. He considered it as positive that the designers had reacted to the programme and regarded this as a development.

Entry 2

- These designers had decided to tear down much of the old building, which was considered as worrying. It would be hard to explain to the inhabitants of Hagfors why it should be demolished.
- The jury liked the emplacement of the innovation centre.
- The entrance was good and visible.
- The younger children's schoolyard was not considered as well designed. It was too small and too close to the stream.
- The jury liked this design of the library.
- One of the architects meant that this design was not thought through enough
- The proposal was joined to the existing building. Jury members described it as a dense and confusing building. It looked rational and clear, the designers seemed to have tried to get rid of the corridors.
- The design of the upper secondary school was diffusely presented.
- The jury did not like the inner organization.
- The special school was well designed.
- This designer had worked to a great extent on the connection to the town compared with the other competitors.
- This entry seemed to have the best pedagogical design.
- An expensive project
- It was considered as having good chances to develop

Entry 3

- In this entry, the innovation centre lies outside the building, which was not considered good.

- The special school was placed on the outskirts of the school. Those on the jury with experience of special schools had different opinions about this emplacement.
- The entrances were good, the main entrance was grand and its emplacement was good.
- The access for the transportation of goods and people was not very good.
- The inner planning of the building was linear and traditional with corridors.
- The exterior had a brutal expression. “The structure is too brusque” (comment, jury member, 13 march 2006)
- The new, additional part of the building was considered good; the old parts were mostly intact.
- There was a lack of flexibility within the solution. “Smart solutions but the ground floor is not very stimulating. It does not look like an exciting environment” (Comment, jury architect, 13 march 2006).
- A well functioning library
- The facilities for the younger children looked too much like nooks.
- The safety of the younger children in the outdoor environment was partly problematic. They were placed far from the traffic but too near the stream.
- The proposal was considered as possible to develop.
- Finally, one jury member wondered whether this should be ruled out, but it was not.

Entry 4

- The innovation centre was hidden within the building in this design.
- The designers had thought of the entrances.
- This was the only designer that considered the energy solution.
- The architects had illustrated the seasonal changes. The presentation focused on the activities within the building.
- The design concept of this entry was a large extension at right angles from the existing building. The architects on the jury were negative towards this, while many of the laymen were positive. “The problem is the direction; they split the existing building apart” (comment, jury architect, 13 march 2006). “I am no architect, but it becomes stimulating inside ... I think it is exciting” (comment, jury member, 13 march 2006), “The other entries have more structure, this is more like something strange has been laid down” (comment, jury architect, 13 march 2006).

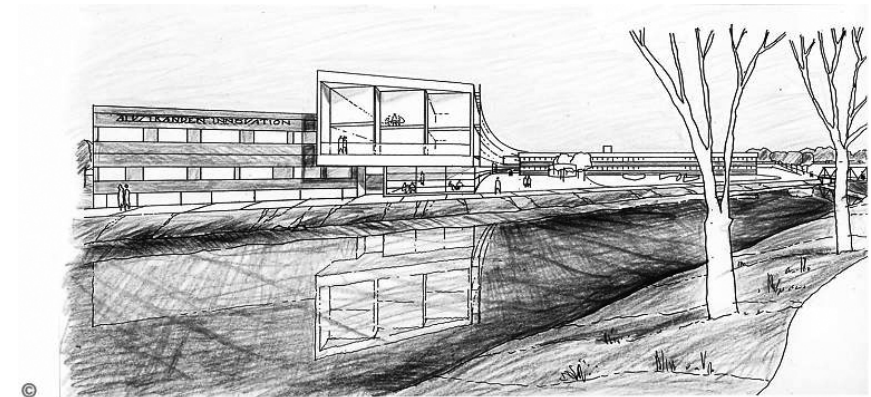


FIG. 4: Entry 4.

- These designers seemed to have understood the programme best.
- The library was considered to be well solved; the facilities for the younger children were placed adjacent to the library.
- The inner environment was not considered good, the design was unfinished.
- The entry was designed as a traditional school building with respect to the movement within the building.
- The entry had the best outdoor environment. They seemed to have worked more than the others with the outdoor design.

In this last survey of the four entries, a clear difference in preferences appeared between the architects and the rest of the jury. This became clear in the discussions concerning entry 4. The architects disliked this entry while most of the laymen favoured it. “[The extension] is considered a burden by our friends the architects, I regard it as an accent” (comment, jury member, 13 march 2006).

The chairman asked all the jury members to rank the entries from 1 (favourite) to 4 (least suitable winner). The division became evident when the architects and one layman voted totally differently from the others and from each other as well. This transfer from qualities into numbers did not make the jury’s ranking of the entries more clear.

A survey of this assessment not only showed that the jury members had different preferences among the entries. It also revealed the jury members’ different approaches to the assessment process. While the majority of the laymen wanted to eliminate entries, the architects wanted to keep them all in the assessment. Two different models appear: one rational and efficient

assessment strategy that comprises ranking, grading and a gradual elimination of entries. The other strategy can be seen as the architect's usual way to assess architecture through architecture critique.

THE THIRD MEETING

Now time started to run out; this was the last meeting. Eight days later the arranger wanted to present a winning entry at the public information meeting.

Now, an economical calculation was made of the entries. The differences between the assessed building costs of the four entries were considerable in relation to the arranger's budget. The calculations were rather uncertain due to the early stage of the process, the uncertainties of the local area programme and the unclarity within the entries. A new criterion appeared: *the level of bargaining*: the buildings' possibilities to minimize the areas, and thereby reduce the costs.

Now two of the entries were eliminated. Entry 1 was excluded because it deviated from the programme. The architects claimed that this entry had good possibilities for bargaining and the best architectonic solution. The rest of the jury were not convinced, and finally they all agreed to exclude it. Entry 2 was criticised for its shortcomings in the planning and the organisation of the rooms. Even this entry was eliminated after a short discussion.

The assessed costs of the two remaining entries were not significantly different, though the difference in the price per square meter was visible. In the following, thorough discussion about these two entries, the following points came up:

Entry 3:

- This entry had the *lowest total assessed costs*, but the price per square meter was calculated as higher than Entry 4.
- *The planning*: The new addition seemed to go well together with the existing building. The opinions about the planning differed between the two jury architects.
- The project seemed to have a great overall potential. This way to handle the task was considered as the easiest to control.
- The jury did not really like the design of this entry. Many thought it was brutal. One of the architects described it as having a strong identity. The other meant that it was not very 'Hagfors-like' but more international in expression.
- This designer was considered as a potentially good partner for the municipality.
- The entrances were considered superior in their design and emplacement.

- The level of bargaining was judged as good in this entry. The areas could easily be reduced.
- The pedagogical methodology within this entry did not appear as innovative; "creative learning is not a major theme" ([comment, jury architect, 3 April 2006](#)).

Entry 4:

- The basic idea of this entry was a large extension. There was a problem with overshadowing the swimming hall. One of the architects meant that the overall idea was pretentious. Two of the laymen liked it. 'An exclamation point, it will be noticed and become heard of.' ([comment, jury member, 3 April 2006](#))
- This entry was a bit more expensive, but had lower costs per square meter than Entry 3.
- The planning of the new parts differed from the existing building. One of the architects said there seemed to be something logistically wrong with the building.
- The entrance appeared anonymous.
- The possibilities for minimizing the areas were considered to be small.
- The designer did not appear to use the potential of the entry. It seemed impossible to develop since it was only based on one idea. 'What I see is not good architectural quality' ([Comment, jury architect, 3 April 2006](#))
- The architects expressed that the building did not seem 'Hagfors-like'. In contrast, one of the laymen meant that this was a good object in Hagfors.
- The pedagogical thinking in this entry was considered as somewhat innovative.
- The outdoor environment was well designed.

None of the two remaining entries seemed to be an obvious winner. The architects argued that Entry 3 had the best architectural solution; the laymen thought that Entry 4 would attract more attention. Once again, the criteria were brought up. Five criteria were identified as the most important:

1. A changeable pedagogy.
2. The younger children's environment.
3. Identity, separation between the grades.
4. The money; the level of bargaining.
5. The architects must be a good partner to cooperate with.

A survey of the entries considering these criteria followed. The jury stated that Entry 4 possibly had a better pedagogical methodology, without any major differences. Considering criteria 2 and 3 there were no strong arguments in favour of any of the entries. Concerning criterion 4, Entry 3 appeared to have more possibilities for bargaining, and its building costs could therefore be reduced. The architects of Entry 3 seemed to have interpreted the programme better and thereby composed a more complete design than the architects of Entry 4. This was interpreted as an indication that the architects of Entry 3 were a better partner to cooperate with.

Criteria 4 and 5 now became critical for the jury's decision. Thus, Entry 3 suddenly appeared as the winner. The jury could finally decide to appoint Entry 3 as the winner of the competition.

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

The examined assessment of a new educational centre in Hagfors is an illustrative example of the jury's work in an architectural competition. The jury's assessment process is an important part of the architectural competition, and also an enlightening forum to discuss architectural quality. The jury consists of experts and laymen of architecture with a common target of deciding on a winner. The need for all the members to agree makes the final discussion careful and critical, in order to reach a common understanding of the entries.

In the quality assessment of the entries a disparity appeared between the different jury members due to their various views, interests and responsibilities. A positioning emerged between the architects and the laymen; it arose out of different preferences in taste, but also from different strategies for assessment. After a pressured process the jury finally agreed on a winner. The discussions illustrate some realizations of the process as well as the professional discussion of architecture. The most important findings of the case study can be concluded as:

1. The public opinion did influence the assessment process.

One of the aims of the competition in Hagfors was to market the project and the town. But early in the process a local debate about the project emerged. The decision to unite four schools into one was controversial and caused a local debate. This criticism did influence the jury, and especially the politicians, to find a winner that would be supported by the inhabitants of Hagfors.

This aspect of the assessment reveals the double structure of the competition that has an open outside and a closed inside. The openness is

apparent in the publicity that usually surrounds a competition. The announcement of the competition, the marketing, the presentation of the winner, attracts attention to the competition project.

Meanwhile, the competition has a closed inside. The jury work must be conducted in private; only the jury members shall decide on a winner. This way, the open outside communicates with the enclosed inside, while the closed inside creates excitement and generates more interest in the competition.

2. The jury process was influenced by two different strategies for decision. The jury in Hagfors consisted of experienced decision-makers from different professional areas. Most of them were used to a rational decision process, with identification of criteria and a gradual exclusion of alternatives. The jury architects probably also had experience from traditional decision-making, but in the assessment of the architecture they endeavoured to use architecture critique as a strategy. This means evaluation and comparison of the entries as starting points in order to get a more complex picture of the task.

The two different strategies became apparent when those who advocated a rational decision strategy wanted to eliminate two entries immediately. To identify two finalists was regarded as a way to reach a decision as fast as possible. The architects wanted instead to keep all the entries in the assessment for as long as possible and use them as clues to the solution to the problem in the competition. Entries can be excluded after they are carefully examined and compared.

I did not become aware of the use of different strategies during the process, but afterwards while analysing the empirical data. All the jury members worked according to their habits and the time pressure reinforced a kind of 'narrow-mindedness' among those present. The parallel assessment and decision strategies were combined in the final meeting and led to a common decision.

3. The assessment criteria were used as a means of finding differences between the entries.

In the competition programme, the assessment criteria were general ones in order to give the competitors creative freedom. It also would help the jury to handle any unexpected answer to the task. In the assessment of the entries the jury expanded the criteria throughout the whole process. The precision of the criteria was used as a strategy to find differences among the entries. Thus the criteria emerged and were re-shaped when the assessing jury met the entries. The work with the criteria can be seen as a strategy to separate the entries and to identify

their different qualities. The expansion of criteria emerges from the understanding of the entries and can be seen as one of the surprising and creative moments in the assessment process.

4. The jury process meant a positioning between architects and laymen of architecture.

The discussions of the competition jury concerned available facts, interpretations of the entries as well as personal experiences and preferences. The different backgrounds of the jury members and their various interests and responsibilities lead to different points of departure in the assessment process. The most noticeable positioning within the jury appeared between the architects and the laymen on the jury.

This positioning became clear in the jury members' different views of Entry 1. Since it did not follow the preconditions of the programme, most of the laymen became hesitant. The representatives of the arranger were responsible for the correctness of the procedure, and a winner that breaks the fundamental preconditions in the programme can lead to complaints. The architects interpreted the deviation as creative and critical thinking from the architects. They also appreciated the esthetical qualities of this entry. Even though it remained in the assessment, the discussions were brief and more polarised than in the assessment of the other entries.

This competition was special in as far as the chairman of the jury was a representative of the users, not of the arranger or the architects. This indicated a wish from the arranger to focus on the activities within the building, the learning. The case study shows that a complex assessment process and the jury members' different points of view, spheres of interest and experiences should result in a decision of consensus. The fact that they found a winning entry that stood the test of assessment meant that a certainty about the advantages of this entry was created. Unanimity in the choice of a winner eliminates doubts and reinforces the picture of a well-grounded decision by the jury.

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Abstract

In this paper, the potential relationship between two design processes that are traditionally regarded as independent: the architectural and the organizational respectively, is being considered and discussed through the implications that *end user participation* might have on the written brief, upon which an architectural competition is being based. The empirical context is the establishment of a new municipality town hall outside of Copenhagen, Denmark. In this project, end user participation has served as a vehicle to induce the design process, while results from the participational activities have provided a provisional input to form the competition brief. This process of transference: from participation to brief and subsequently to design, discloses a complicated endeavor, in which the outcome of the end user participation is being brought through various phases of translation; interpretation and coding. The paper is a preliminary illustration of three particular instances of coding – *moments of translation* – in which features that traditionally characterize the two design processes involved (the architectural and the organizational) in such a setup somehow get entangled. The paper suggests that end user participation might form an *organizational parameter* in the process of designing architecture, and tentatively discusses how such a design criterion might form a challenge for contemporary architects in terms of professional identity and work method. Although not at all fully unfolded in the following text, concepts that derive from ethnography, communities of practice and actor-network theory have served – and will in forthcoming papers serve – as inspiration.

Keywords

end user participation, architectural competition brief, the architectural design process, organizational design

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End User Participation as an Input to Shape the Brief in Architectural Competitions: A Threefold Translation Process

Marianne Stang Våland

INTRODUCTION

[...] the central reason [that the architects won the competition] wasn't as such that they had outlined a really stimulating house – which I think it is, also based on some aesthetic considerations – but because [they] had been faithful to the assignment. The guy that lead the team [...] responded that this was exactly what they had made their success criteria: to translate our process, the user oriented process, in a way that made it visible in the house.

In this quote, the managing director of the municipality administration, Daniel, describes his first meeting with the team of architects, who had won the architectural competition that outlined the design of the new building – a town hall – that would subsequently form the physical framework of the organization, of which he was in charge. The quote reveals the essential factor that distinguished this particular proposal from the other competitors and made the selection process approachable. The team had, as he puts it: “succeeded in [...] translating our written propositions and transformed them into an architecture that assigned organizational understanding.”

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the potential relationship between two design processes that are traditionally considered as independent; the architectural and the organizational respectively, through implications that *end user participation* might have on the written brief, upon which an architectural competition is being based. The empirical context is a building project: the establishment of the new town hall outside of Copenhagen, Denmark. In this project, end user participation has served as a vehicle to induce the design process, while results from the participational activities have provided a provisional input to form the competition brief. The point of

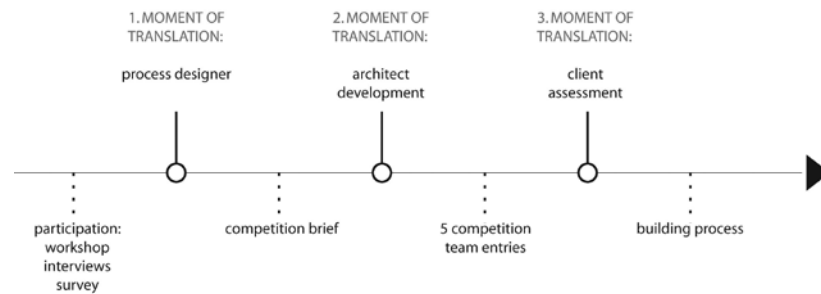


FIG. 1: Model 1 illustrates the emergence of the design as a sequential process. Each moment of translation is based on an input that results in an output, subsequently used as an input to the next moment of translation.

departure is a series of participational workshops, in which some 60 out of 575 municipality administration staff members participated. The activities took place prior to the architectural competition that initiated the town hall project, and also prior to that the competition brief was being written. This process of transference: from participation to program and subsequently to design, discloses a complicated endeavor, in which the outcome of the end user participation is being brought through various phases of translation; interpretation and coding. In the following, three particular instances of coding or *moments of translation* are in focus, and it is the content of and the transfer between these processes that will be preliminarily unfolded.

The first moment of translation was a process of encoding. Here, a group of *process designers* undertook an interpretation of the raw data produced in the initial participational workshops. The interpretation resulted in a *requirement analysis* subsequently referred to as a central input to the competition brief. The role of such a process designer as a newcomer in the building industry, as well as the methodological approach that the process designer represents, will be briefly illustrated and discussed below.

The second moment of translation was a process of decoding. Here, the point of departure is the actual competition brief, wherein the economical, technical, organizational and other criteria upon which the competition is based, was brought forth. The competition itself was a public tender, where five consortia, consisting of a contractor, an engineering firm and an architectural firm, were invited to participate. In this process, each of the competing teams undertook an interpretation of the material in the brief and formed a proposal. Below, it is the architect's process of interpretation (in general) that is in focus, and in particular the correspondence between the methodological approach that might characterize the traditional architectural design process on the one hand, and the type of organizational input that was included in the brief as a result of the participational workshops, on the other.

The third moment of translation was yet another process of decoding, in which the client organization responds to the proposals provided by the five competing teams. Based on the implications that the participational workshops afforded on an organizational note, the client's response to the architectural proposition was also a result of these same implications. On a general level, the paper offers a few points to a preliminary analysis of the potential consequences that such conditions might have for the process of designing architecture and thus indirectly for the architect profession.

The town hall project provided a setting, in which end user participation served as a vehicle to induce not only the architectural, but also the organizational design process. Here, the interactive workshops and other participational activities were initiated in order to induct significant developments within the organizational design – in the context of designing architecture. The organization itself was a result of a recent fusion between two municipality administrations, an event also seen as an opportunity to set forth a certain organizational redesign. Added to this came the planning and emergence of the new town hall, which was expected to contain and support forthcoming organizational activities. These two design initiatives were somehow considered integrated by the managing director, who saw the latter (the town hall) as a resource to that of the first (the fused organization). The setup indicates that end users are given an opportunity to influence not only the design of the new building, but also the rationale upon which the design is being based – a rationale that may reflect the current organizational design and at the same time designate an organizational redesign. The notion thus seems to be that organizational design and architectural design might constitute one another in a mutual relationship. Certain organizational components are brought into the architectural design process as an input that has derived from the end user participation, while the emerging architectural configurations are conversely being applied in the continuous developments that take place in the organization. The competition brief is but one of the instances that represent the potential link between the two design processes at stake: the architectural and the organizational respectively.

THE LITERATURE

The type of project introduced above is one that might describe why managers as well as scholars within the field of organization studies recently seem to have found joint interest in the spatial structure of organizational practice (e.g. Becker 1981, Hatch 1987, Gagliardi 1991, Horgen et al. 1999, Weick 2003, Boland and Collopy 2004, Kornberger and Clegg 2004, Hernes 2004,

Dale 2005, Clegg and Kornberger 2006, Taylor and Spicer 2007). The concern reflects current societal tendencies, such as the increased focus on individual needs and wishes within processes of organizational development, or on the continuous request for types of collaboration that can generate new products and services, often entitled innovations. In order to support and direct that these innovations can come about, contemporary managers aim to explore approaches that can endorse such developments. Acknowledging that this type of work – towards the new – cannot be commanded but rather supported, factors that might facilitate processes of development and collaboration, have become vital. A result is that the spatial design of an office environment is increasingly being recognized as a component that can be considered relevant to the way performance in organizations transpires. If managers need new arguments to undertake the management assignment, the spatial context of organizational life might represent a potential substance to such arguments.

Although end user participation seems to have been established as an integrated part of the design process within larger parts of the design industry throughout the last couple of decades (e.g. Wasserman 2002, Hedegaard Jørgensen 2003, Kristensen and Grønhaug 2003, Oxford Research/Inside Consulting 2004, FORA 2005, Sander 2006, Friis 2007), ethnographically based approaches do not yet seem to have been thoroughly established, either within the contemporary architectural firms or within the architectural educations. Conversely, the focus on the spatial context of organizational life as a potential strategic contributor, seem to be growing among contemporary managers. Here, end user participation seems to represent an opportunity to establish a connection between organizational life and the architectural framework in which it unfolds. This said, we still need actual knowledge, as well about how spatial design can matter in an organizational perspective, as about how this type of input can be handled in the context of designing architecture.

End user participation as a conceptual approach seems to be methodologically based on a rather compound and eclectic approach, which among other traditions can be traced back to broader areas such as ethnography, environmental psychology and human computer interaction. In recent years, the involvement of users in design processes seems to have been associated with a variety of concepts, such as *participatory design* (Schuler and Namioka 1993, Horelli 2002, Bell et al. 2005, Ivey and Sanders 2006, Sanders 2006,) *user-centered design* (e.g. Norman 2002, Hedegaard Jørgensen 2004) and more broadly *ethnography in design* (e.g. Blomberg et al. 1993, Anderson 1994, Forsythe 1999, Dourish 2006), in the attempt to enhance various

types of product development. In terms of the interaction between work processes, technology and the spatial framework, the approach referred to as *new ways of working* (e.g. Duffy 1990, Bjerrum and Bødker 2003, Duffy and Worthington 2004) seems particularly central.

As for the architectural perspective, and the various developments that the architect profession currently seems to go through, the somewhat ambiguous understandings of what the profession might be characterized by, still seem persisting. Starting with Vitruvius some 2000 years ago, the confusion seems to have continued, which is in various ways noted in contemporary studies that describe different aspects of the architectural design process (e.g. Saint 1983, Blau 1984, Gutman 1988, Cuff 1991, Brand 1994, Pinnington and Morris 2002, Fisher 2005, Beim and Vibæk Jensen 2006). This somehow unclear profile leads to conflicts in regards to whether the profession and its knowledge can be codified and represented in scientific form, or if it should rather be seen as a part of the arts (Fisher 2005, Beim and Vibæk Jensen 2006). The price of such a lack of closure in regards to daily practice is, among other things, diminishing fees and a fragmented market with many small firms, compared to other services such as law or accounting. On the other hand, the unclear characteristic is also keeping the professional identity together.

ON METHOD: A RESEARCH APPROACH AND A RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

In this research, ethnographic method serves as inspiration on two levels. In terms of the general research design, the fieldwork, the data and subsequent analysis, the work has been inspired as well by ethnography and qualitative research (Spradley 1979, Van Maanen 1988, Chambers 1994, Tedlock 1994, Strauss and Corbin 1998) as by case study research (e.g. Yin 1981, Gioia and Chittipeddi 1991, Stake 1994, Flyvbjerg 2005). This dual approach of combining participation and observation in order to get access to data, requires a fine balance between “going native” and playing the part of the classical, neutral observer. I have concurrently partaken in workshops and other participational activities and consciously tried to establish a relationship with the involved parties, while also continuously pointed out my role as an external researcher.

The data material, upon which the paper is being based, has been collected over a period of approximately 18 months. I have taken part in a substantial part of the workshop activities that have included the involvement of end user representatives, as well as in managerial meetings within the client organization; collaborative meetings between the client’s top management and the process designer; collaborative meetings between the client, the contrac-

tor, the architect and the process designer, and finally two larger gatherings to which the entire client organization (the municipality administration) have been invited. I have undertaken 19 semi-structured interviews with representatives from the client organization, the process designer and the architect, who in one way or another have been involved in the participational activities. I have also had access to a substantial amount of documents and working papers upon which the end user participation as well as the general development of the building project, has been based. During the period of time that the participation were planned and carried out, I also spent approximately three months full time at the process designer's office. My data is thus comprised not only by input from semi-structured interviews, available documentation and various types of material produced during the design process, but also by informal discussions and conversations that I have partaken in and observed among people who have been involved in the project.

Parallel to this, the participational activities themselves, which represent a central research object also seems to be based on an ethnographic tradition. In this type of building project, end user participation seems to represent a vehicle in order to induce design processes, end user participation signify a certain *product* that currently seems to be establishing as an important aspect of the collaboration between the client and the construction team, and thus as a contribution to developing the actual design. The product seems to be represented by a type of methodological approach that is undertaken by a group of advisors entitled "process designers". These approaches have been studied to some extent in order to understand how users might contribute in certain types of product development. But although the participational activities have become acknowledged as a useful resource in design processes within various industries, it still seems unclear what the contribution consists of (e.g. Blomberg 1993, Anderson 1994, Forsythe 1999, Dourish 2006).

INPUT TO MOMENT OF TRANSLATION 1: END USER PARTICIPATION IN WORKSHOPS

End user participation in architectural design involves activities, in which representatives of the client organization, who are also the forthcoming tenants of the building, are being invited to contribute to different phases of the architectural design process. An overall purpose seems to be to identify and anticipate central work processes in order to unfold the potential coherence between organizational practice and spatial context. In the town hall project, the end user representatives were primarily involved in a series of workshops, several workplace surveys and a small amount of interviews. The participants were some 60 staff members, who represented various parts of the organiza-

tion, predominantly invited to partake in the activities by their managers. Within the framework of these activities, the staff got the opportunity to discuss organizational matters such as current and forthcoming work processes and the spatial contexts within which they appear. Here, issues like collaboration, proximity, acoustics and concentration were among the central.

The purpose of workshop 1 was to map out the reservations and concerns that the staff had in regards to the establishment of the new building, as well as to discuss the various new opportunities that such a venue could generate. The managing director introduced the workshop by pointing out that the interactive sessions were part of the current development of the municipality's overall vision, in which the new town hall would play a significant part. The workshop was organized as a "café seminar" (Brown, Isaacs, Wheatley 2005); a concept in which dialogue sessions based upon one particular question or several questions that address different themes, take place in smaller groups (approx. 5-8 people) around tables, like in a café. In the workshop, each table represented its own theme, and the participants were mixed across departmental affiliation and professional status. Each table also had a voluntary "café host", who was the group's timekeeper and responsible for its contribution to the plenary presentations. The questions primarily regarded the participant's perception of present and future work processes and routines, as well as their expectations – worries and hopes – to the physical structure that these activities would take place in.

While workshop 1 served as an introduction to end user participation as a contributor to the development of the town hall project, but also as a potential vehicle to support internal discussions about concerns and expectations on the journey towards a new organizational structure in the new building, the purpose of workshop 2 was rather to more systematically map out how work actually took place within the departments: the relationship between professions, competencies and work processes on the one hand, and the spatial framework that accommodated these activities, on the other. It was again structured as a café seminar, in which the tables were organized departmentally and asked questions like:

What is your work responsibility and what are the important factors that characterize the physical environment that should accommodate this work? When do you work alone and when do you collaborate? With whom do you collaborate and what are the competencies you need to be close by in order to solve your tasks? Can you characterize the type of atmosphere that would enhance the type of work you are responsible for?



FIG.2 : Images from workshop 2 in the Town hall project, in which the participants discuss current and forthcoming conditions in terms work processes and relationships in relation to disposition: placement, proximity and distance in the new building.

The questions were supported by equipment like cardboard plates and pictograms to go with it, upon which e.g. current and future tasks/responsibilities or workplace atmosphere characteristics were printed. The plates were photocopied while produced, and subsequently presented by the café host and discussed in a plenary session by the end of the workshop.

MOMENT OF TRANSLATION 1: PRODUCING A STOCK

In the first moment of translation, a group of process designers undertook an interpretation of the raw data produced in workshop 1 and 2. The results from these workshops were sequentially generated in two steps, as the outcome of the first workshop gave input to the content of the second. The result was a requirement analysis; a report that had as its purpose to inform the subsequent design process and, more concretely, the written brief upon which the architecture competition was being based.

The development of such an analysis is based upon an approach, in which the process designers transform large amounts of submitted input – factual or technical pieces of information that describe the staff and their daily habits around the individual workstation, as well as more general considerations about the work processes in the organization and the spatial contexts that these appear in – to an output, through which the development process can progress. These raw data produced by the participants were accompanied by a number of meetings between the process designers and the management team, as well as by a survey that aimed to map out the proportional relationship between work processes, their spatial context, and time. In this process of translation, the process designers reduce the compound amount of raw data to form a somehow firm requirement analysis. As one of the process designer explained to the participants in one of the workshop in the town hall project:

Our method is to take all the input and material you produce [in the workshop] and boil it down to an extract.

The raw data is necessarily a rather intricate material, based upon perceptions, convictions and expectations from a highly compound group of participants. Asking the process designers about their process of translation, the replies primarily emphasized the importance of categorizing the input, and discussing the patterns that emerge through the categorization in relation to the organization's formulated vision:

We arrange it after some headlines that we think represent what the workshop is all about. [...] Based on the wording, we go in and process it according to these categories. [...] we make a vast spreadsheet that says: what is about their locational utilization, what is about their support rooms, what is about IT, what is about...etc. a whole lot of categories.

Another process designer emphasizes the more strategic relationship between the things said in the workshops, those that appeared in the observation studies and those defined in the overall vision:

[We] try to define some categories, through which we can check whether there is a coherence between what we [they] say and what we [they] do. And if there isn't [coherence], what does it then mean? [...] we take the whole tool box we have been served through workshops, observations, surveys, factual pieces of information, and bring all this stuff back home and assemble it into a requirement analysis that is being benchmarked with the vision. And then we ask: what is possible, and which elements need to be reshuffled in order for this [the vision] to succeed?

The process designer's product thus aims to secure cohesion between the client organization's forthcoming physical framework and the activities it is supposed to accommodate. This notion of consistency between the architectural product and the organization's professional practice potentially discloses a focus on how a building project may be utilized as an opportunity to reconsider certain organizational aspects in terms of work processes, professional relationships and structure, and it is upon this potentiality that the process designer base her product. In such a perspective, the product might be said to address certain strategic aspects of the client organization's activities, and thus attend to the management assignment.

The content of the activities that constitutes the end user participation (being it workshops, interviews, surveys or other) is usually based on a range of meetings between the management team of the client organization and the process designers, upon which the process designers develop a program draft that they concurrently discuss and negotiate with the management team as the project proceeds. The process designer's methodological point of departure in the planning of these activities seems to be a series of so-called *tools*; sequential concepts based on the particular phases that a client project normally run through, in which each phase include certain interactive exercises where different levels of the organization: top management, middle management and other staff, are invited to participate.

But how might we characterize this methodological approach? What signifies the area of doing ethnography is, among other things, that it can be seen as analytical rather than purely descriptive (e.g. Spradley 1979, Van Maanen 1988). It is the analytical aspect that makes ethnography ethnographic: through the empirical experiences of the ethnographer upon which her interpretations are made (Dourish 2006). The ethnographer's ability to attend to and handle the analysis subsequent to the processes studied is thus seen as crucial. Might the process designer's methodological approach thus be characterized as ethnographic? As one process designer points out:

The method has accumulated through experience, but there are none of us that has any ethnographic training. [...] You can see also it through that all of us are architects, who haven't as such worked with it. And there hasn't been any [ethnographers] hired.

Dourish' point seems to be that as ethnographical approaches are often used inconsistently, the results might come out as helpful, but also somehow ignorant to the potential contribution that the ethnographic methodology can provide.

INPUT TO MOMENT OF TRANSLATION 2: THE BRIEF

Because of the fact that the first workshops took place prior to the architectural competition, the result of the workshops, represented by requirement analysis, could inform the written brief upon which the architectural competition was based. In order to include parts of this material into the brief, the process designers were involved in the actual phrasing. In this sense, the staff's input somehow made up a kind of organizational design parameter; one of the criterion that set forth the architectural design process.

The brief itself consisted of two sections that, among other things, includ-

ed an overview of the collaborational conditions of organizing the project in a partnering structure; a description of the technical preconditions of the building site as well as an overview of the existing buildings; climatal conditions and ambitions; factual information about the municipal context that the new town hall was supposed to accommodate, as well as key financial figures upon which the project was being based. Included in the text was also a part that might be characterized as an "organizational" piece of input. This description, which covers 8 out of 104 pages, strongly highlights the type of clients that the building is supposed to support and accommodate: local citizens, politicians and administrative staff, and the way in which the building's intentions corresponds with the needs of these user groups.

One of the process designers, responsible for the end user participation in the town hall project, describes the requirement analysis' influence upon the brief in a subsequently published article (CINARK 2006):

The requirement analysis was reflected in the brief and a tender material, differently configured than in a traditional setup. In the brief, the human relationships that the house was supposed to accommodate, as well as the desired connections between the work processes and their spatial contexts, were described. It thus [...] took some of the soft, human factors and translated these into spatial requirements. The brief also indicated the type of ambience that the locations should support, according to the activities. The relational descriptions were supported by the traditional part of the brief, as we know it [from conventional programs], in which a range of factual conditions that the competing firms are supposed to address, are listed. The competing teams have defined solutions and visions in an unconventional manner, which have made them more open towards opportunities than in traditional competitions, and made them produce unusual proposals (Andersen 2006, 65).

Here, the process designer somehow defines her product in the context of the production of a requirement analysis, not only as an integrated part of the process of designing architecture, but also as a primary input to the competition brief: "the traditional part of the brief, as we know it" is here represented as a supplement to the input from the end users. In this version, the organizational project: the development process that the organization involved was made subject to through involvement and participation, becomes a crucial point of departure from which architectural design can be developed and constituted.

TOWARDS MOMENT OF TRANSLATION 2: THE LANGUAGE DIFFICULTY

There are possible reasons for the potential collaboration between the architectural and the organizational fields to appear as a complicated endeavor. One is that of language, which seems to involve a dual communicational challenge. The organizational parameter brought into the brief as a result of the end user participation represents a format and a style that might be perceived as unfamiliar to architects (Markus and Cameron 2002). Conversely, the professional language shared by architects and the methodological approach they use in their process of developing a design proposal, is also known to be difficult for outsiders to decipher (e.g. Cuff 1991, Brand 1994, Lawson 1997, Fisher 2005, Basar 2005).

This lack of an unequivocal verbal outline somehow seems to be unconsciously included in the professional identity (Gutman 1988, Cuff 1991, Fisher 2005). Theoretically, the phenomenon of a secluded professional language does not point toward the architect profession in particular, but more generally towards how groups of people form a mutual frame of reference in establishing a shared practice (Steiner 1998). In such a perspective, interaction between different types of traditions, like e.g. an architectural design process on the one hand, and an unfamiliar organizational input, on the other, might somehow collide. A theoretical concept that illustrates this might be that of *communities of practice* (Wenger 1998, Merriam et al. 2003). Here, a practice is basically the compound amount of things that people within a certain group do in order to solve their tasks and feel recognized and competent. On this basis they form a genuine sense of belonging.

The community forms their own vocabulary and ways of doing things, and to crack the code of these ways might be difficult for outsiders. The increased interest in end user participation in design processes that is brought forth on a societal level might thus offer an opportunity to discuss the friction between these two fields as they seem to draw closer: architecture and organization. In this friction, a certain amount of *linguistic experimentation* is most likely necessary. In an interview, a young architect reflects upon the fact that their professional language can be difficult for people with other professional backgrounds to make out:

I don't think we're aware of it – that we have an esoteric language that others cannot understand. But I think it'll help to bringing others [people with different professional backgrounds] in [to the work process], as that will make them question what we talk about.

He refers to the current situation for contemporary architects, who are increasingly confronted with an extended amount of collaboration partners in the design process, an extension that represents a communicational challenge – but also a potentiality.

In the town hall project, a community of professional architects is confronted with an input – produced by a different community with a different professional language – that takes a shape that to them seems unfamiliar. But if the brief is perceived as unusual compared to traditional briefs, then what constitutes its difference?

MOMENT OF TRANSLATION 2: WHEN BRIEF MEETS ARCHITECT

The architect Peter, who was closely involved in the design of the town hall, describes the difference like this:

There was something about the [written] format that struck me. You could easily see that it was someone with a different viewpoint that had written this brief than had it been an engineer or [one of the contractors]. They would have used a different angle, that's for sure. [...] It also had to do with the content and prioritizing what's important and what isn't.

He reflects upon the implications that such differences might have in the actual design process:

Those things [factual information like e.g. the amount of staff] are very loosely defined. [...] Don't ask me why. But they are very vague. And I can perhaps also allow myself to say about the whole brief [...], it was very rough, and rougher than they usually are. [But] having said that on the one hand we would have liked it to have been more firm [...], there is also something about the freedom that it gives the process of designing; that we also indirectly can influence the programming with our tools. That our design can contribute to bring opportunities across that we might not have seen without [the roughness that characterized the brief]. This is often the problem with the very dry engineer based briefs; you put up so and so many square meters of this and so and so many square meters of that. Such a setup makes you locked in the creative process.

Here, he points out the paradox that this type of input seems to produce: it might be perceived as difficult to work with for an architect, as it appears

imprecise in terms of concrete spatial requirements, while at the same time including a lot of indications. On the other hand, he finds that this ambiguity gives the architect an increased freedom in the actual act of designing.

The second moment of translation was then a process of decoding, in which the brief was interpreted by the five competing consortia that were invited to participate in the public tender. Here, the competing teams used the various aspects of the brief as their primary design parameters. The focus in this paper is on the architect's process of interpretation and the way in which the traditional architectural design process corresponds with the organizational input that was included in the brief as a result of the end user participation.

What happened in the encounter between brief and architect in the town hall project? The architect Peter describes what happens on a general level when he, as an architect, is confronted with a brief, which he also relates to his experience in this particular project:

INTERVIEWER: What happens when you read the brief?

PETER: It sets forth a process. And then there are a lot of other things that is set in motion, so to speak. The brief itself is one thing, but we also use a lot of other things.

INTERVIEWER: What are those?

PETER: Those are time and place. [...] The historical context; where we are time wise and all that. [...] The scenic situation, and at the same time making a modern house that corresponds with our time. All of that is one big chunk. And then there is the user program, which is the other big chunk. And then there is the technicality of the house that is a big chunk as well. And all of that go into one big pot and is somehow supposed to get processed. And here we probably use the process of designing to test, that is, we give it some kind of shape and sketch up some spatial frameworks, some correlations and some diagrams, where we test all this – ping-pong. Try some; sketch; try again. How does that work? Is it possible to have natural ventilation in [the town hall in this project] in 2007 with such and such user requirements? There are a lot of leads to pull at the same time, so it's not the kind of thing that can be put into a concept, I think. [...] To begin with, I think we often follow many tracks. [...] It's difficult to explain in words. It's easier to explain in a sketch. [...] I claim that it's an analytical method.

INTERVIEWER: What do you mean by that?

PETER: I mean that we make a range of analyses to begin with, where you analyze the place, analyze the technical requirements, analyze

the lighting conditions. Those things. But it's not very scientific – it's more of a feeling, a sensing way, I think I'd say. And then it is out of that analysis that some ideas, and sketches, and form, manifest themselves. And that is what generates a new draft, and then you do the [process of] analysis once more, or go back and do the test. [...] You somehow work in circles or spirals. [...] You try to identify, you try to get all the way around. You do one round, and then something falls off in the centrifugal force, and thus the circle eventually gets smaller and smaller. It's really difficult to explain in words.

The dialogue might illustrate the lingual dilemma: he finds it hard to explain his method in words, but it also comes forth that he is highly familiar with the process he pursues – “the analytical method” – which might be characterized as intuitive rather than scientific. The different types of approaches that contemporary architects today seem to take represent an ongoing and significant discussion within the field (Beim and Vibæk Jensen 2006, CI-NARK 2006, Friis 2007).

The winning proposal in the town hall project held direct references to the brief in terms of the interior disposition of the office plan [“according to the efficient interior propositions in the brief”] while describing the actual workplace area. Although not appearing particularly lucid, phrasings like: “In a modern workplace, it is important that whether the interior design implies individual offices or open plan offices divided by shelving units, the scale should continuously zoom into smaller units, all the way down to the individual work station and its contemplation. Only that way is it possible to create a balance between individual work and collaboration” might indicate an ambition to emphasize a particular focus on the individual office worker that had been involved in workshops prior to the competition. But the quotation represents a part of the translation of an unfamiliar input. As Markus and Cameron describes the architect's meeting with written briefs that seems ambiguous or contradictory:

Communication works by inference, and interpretation begins from the assumption that what is said or written, is said or written for a reason: however redundant, enigmatic, illogical or contradictory it appears on the surface, an attempt will be made infer the reasoning behind it. (Markus and Cameron 2002, 76).

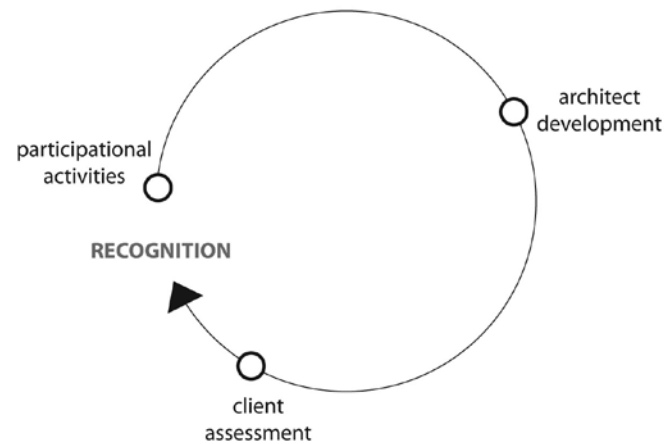


FIG. 3: Model 2 illustrates how the processes of end user participation not only seems to inform the brief in the architectural competition, but also somehow forms an assessment criterion, upon which the selection committee choose the winner. In this circular process, the participational activities are somehow revisited, through the format of the proposal.

MOMENT OF TRANSLATION 3: WHEN PROPOSALS MEET CLIENT

The third and final moment of translation discussed in this paper was yet another process of decoding. Here, the client organization responded to the proposals, and it is in this process that the potential entanglement between the architectural and the organizational design processes seems most obvious. As indicated in the introduction to this paper, the competitor's ability to handle the organizational parameter was considered a central assessment criterion to the committee. The managing director describes how it became a selection principle:

[...] the project we were choosing was the one most loyal towards the organization's own thoughts about what the house should accommodate.

The managing director emphasizes the important of this recognition by pointing out how a few of the proposals – the winning project as one – were distinguished from the others:

Some of the sketches [from the competing proposals] seemed to illustrate standardized concepts – designs that could have been developed for whoever, whenever – and then there were a couple, in which it

clearly came through that they had studied some of our ideas and conceptualized on this basis.

According to data, the committee fully agreed to the winning proposal, which also came forth in the written feedback where all of the five proposals were being assessed. One of the members of the selection committee highlights the proposal's interior flexibility as one of the central features that distinguished the winning project from the others:

Well, it signified that kind of dynamics. That is, it signified a building that wasn't static. It signified a building, in which you could see it would be possible for them [the inhabitants] to change. [...] That is, where we could see that it could end up in different ways. This was also what we'd asked them to do in the proposal; to show different scenarios of how the departmental areas could be used, [...] to make sure that the scenarios we had indicated [through the organizational input in the brief] were kept alive throughout the project. [...] they had a very fine interpretation of and empathy for the things that were important to signify.

But what are the implications of this type of organizational input? Below, a few of these will be preliminarily discussed in an architectural, as well as an organizational perspective.

DISCUSSION

Inviting the end user as a potential contributor to the architectural design process through an interactive process, in which information on an organizational level is produced in order to inform the architectural design, also indicate that a more delineated connection between the two design processes; the organizational and the architectural respectively, seems to be approaching. As we have preliminarily discussed above, a higher level of proximity between these design processes might have certain implications to an architectural practice, which collide with e.g. the secrecy that characterizes as well the traditional architectural work process, as the professional language shared by the architectural community. But it also points towards a certain feature as to how a design can emerge, being it architectural or organizational, and to how the factors that influence the development of a design, can interact. In the town hall project, we have to do with two fields that involve rather different methodological traditions, and to consider these performed in an integrated design process, might also offer some potentiality to both.

In search for an approach to understand more about the relationship between the architectural and the organizational, and the potentiality that a closer connection between them might hold, we briefly turn to *actor-network theory* for inspiration (e.g. Callon 1986, Latour 1999, 2006). Actor-network theory might be characterized as an empirically based methodology, in which a central point of departure is that the social reality should be comprehended and analyzed, not simply as the result of the interactions between cognitive subjects in a social network, but rather through the actual conglomerate of components that are involved in all types of social action. It is thus not only the human (often cognitive), but also the non-human (often material) contributors, as well as the relationship between them, that is in focus. These relations, and the conditions upon which they are based, are neither static nor stable, but perpetually transforming – in the very cause of their interaction. If we consider end user participation in such a context, we might see it as an illustration of how an architectural design process, in which an organizational parameter is integrated, might be perceived as the collective process that it indeed is. This would require that it should be understood in a collective perspective: the architectural design process is informed and influenced by a lot of things, and among them are the organizational aspects and the intricate network of factors it represents.

What seems to happen in the town hall project, in which a vast amount of human as well as non-human contributors interacts, is that their encounters; their assembly and overlap becomes constituting for the direction in which the actual designs (being it architectural or organizational) seem to develop. The assembly between these different factors, and their ability to mutually overlap and swap properties and competencies, is of particular interest in the search for the possible connection between the architectural and the organizational. On the basis of the relationship between the original and the interpreted version in the various translations done by the designers – the new can occur. To handle this operation of assembly and overlap, and to understand more about the transference that they cause, we need to accept translation, not as “a shift from one vocabulary to another, from one French word to one English word, for instance, as if the two languages existed independently. I used translation to mean displacement, drift, invention, mediation, the creation of a link that did not exist before and that to some degree modifies the original two” (Latour 1999, 179).

In this perspective, end user participation might be perceived as a product that affords an ongoing change in the components (human as well as non-human) that are made subject to it. They mutate and thus become something or someone else. In the workshops: the conversations and exchanges

that the participants are invited to partake in, they undertake a certain *cognitive displacement* during the cause of their participation. Data shows that their perception of factors such a work processes, collaboration opportunities, as well as the general characteristics that signify their organizational identity, somehow seem to modify throughout the town hall project. This notion of a cognitive displacement that continuously influences the client’s sense of organizational identity might be seen as a challenge to the architect: to be able to respond to an organizational parameter thus somehow demands an ability to handle *a moving target*. The input that grew out of the first moment of translation and were brought into the brief might as such be perceived as unfamiliar to architects. If we add to it, that the consigner of the input also changes continuously, as a result of the subsequent discussions that their participation seems to have caused, it is likely to include an extra challenge.

As we have seen above, *recognition* appears to be crucial to the process of selection: the winning project is the proposal that, according to the selection committee, were most loyal to the organizational parameter. But this experience of recognition is also affected by the continuous displacement that the interactions cause: the participational activities modify the participant’s perception, a modification that is a potential reason for perceiving the design configurations as unrecognizable. In the process of selecting among the five proposals in the town hall competition, the amount of time that passed from the initial workshops until the actual selection process was relatively short (approx 5 months). Here, the time frame might have supported a certain level of recognition; a sense of coherence between the client perception of the organizational input that was given on the one hand, and the architectural configuration that specifically aimed to meet this demand, on the other. But there are also examples from data of how client representatives – much later in the design process (in which end user participation kept playing an important part) – strongly reacted to certain architectural solutions, based on how their sense of organizational identity unconsciously seems to have modified. A part of not finding the architectural proposition recognizable might thus be that of having changed yourself. In that perspective, end user participation as a method and the outcome that such participational activities result in should be perceived as ambiguous. For the designers – being it architects or managers – it might thus be important to take the modifications that the method itself go through, as well as those it seems to catalyze, into account.

As it appears multiple times in the data, architects generally seem to claim the profession’s tradition for a close and persistent dialogue with client and user. In that sense, the conditions upon which the architectural de-

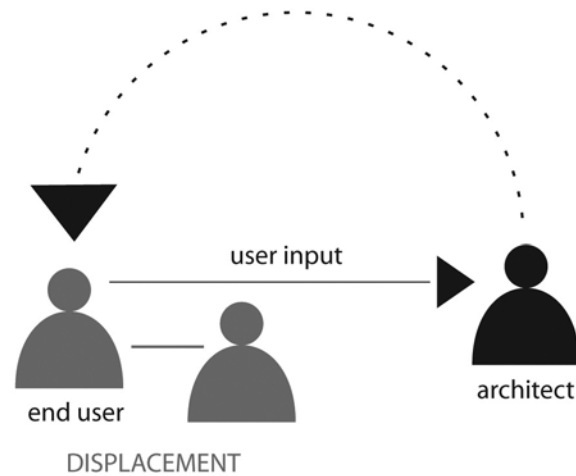


FIG. 4: Model 3 illustrates how the participating end users might be subject to change through the cause of their participation.

sign process is being based in the town hall project can hardly be perceived as “completely different”. The type of requirements called for in this type of extended contact with the client, might even be perceived as fairly similar to those traditionally put forth by users – and thus not as such radically different from that of the traditional architectural design process. What is different, though, is that the dialogue seems expanded in several ways: the organizational input is produced *throughout* the process, which necessarily extends the actual dialogue in terms of duration. And not only is the amount of data that makes up the initial input significantly more extensive in terms of volume, the frame of reference that client organization rest on, also seems to be continuously alternating: the eyes and the mind of the client undertakes continuous changes throughout the process. By being invited to participate in an interactive dialogue about the spatial organization of the activities in a forthcoming building, and accepting this invitation, the end user is made an active part of the architectural design process.

The potentiality of a closer relationship between the architectural and the organizational design processes and the implications that such a connection might have for the architect profession, obviously needs to be thoroughly explored in forthcoming papers. A closing comment to these preliminary indications could be that an increased amount of end user participation in building projects, which might include different types of parameters to inform the process of designing, does not preclude professional architects to

perform as just that: professionals with an expertise. But if the design of a spatial framework is supposed to emerge in a collective process, it seems important that contemporary architects get more closely involved in such a process. Throughout the town hall project, the end user participational activities were planned, facilitated and interpreted by process designers – the architects (of the winning team) never partook in any of the subsequent workshops, nor were they thoroughly invited. As the architect Peter pointed out above, an organizational input might be perceived as vague, open and voluminous: an approach that somehow imply freedom, while at the same time require a close contact and a continuous openness. It seems necessary for contemporary architects to accept this extended contact as ongoing, while continuously release from the interaction in their own professional process of translation.

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Abstract

In 2006, the Swedish municipality of Jaerfaella arranged an open architectural competition focusing on future-oriented architectonic visions for elderly citizens. The location would be in a new residential area that would be developed at a former airbase. The jury assessment report praised the town plan in the winning Danish entry, but concluded that the majority of the thirty-three entries, including the winner, had designed rather conventional housing for elderly citizens who would have need of daily assistance and care. This paper is based upon findings in a single case study, and focuses on the municipal organizer's decision-making process in arranging an open municipal architectural competition. The research material consisted of interviews, official records, drawings and other relevant documentation of the process. The collected research material implied that the organization of an architectural competition in a Swedish municipality is a *viva voce* process, where spoken arguments are summarized in writing. Having delimited the case study, structured and thematic questions were designed for use in interviews with a sample of thirty interviewees. The thematic section of questions was inspired by the French Photolanguage method, and was used to discuss an important Swedish principle for creating a sense of homeliness for the frail elderly. Twelve interviewees were then identified as key informants and their statements were correlated with official records, drawings and other documentation. The analysis of the research material called for a guiding theory of discourses integrated into architecture as a field of practice. Based upon the guiding theory, six theoretical conclusions were formulated: 1) The municipal organizer used divergent discourses to assess the feasibility of an open architectural competition; 2) The discourses were shaped by personal experiences with built environments filtered through an individual profession-based framework; 3) There were five different discourses: a planning-based, a visionary, an ethical, and a conceptual discourse, all of which interacted with a human-spatial bound discourse on ageing and architecture; 4) A concept of integration open for interpretation unified the five discourses and furthered the possibility of an architectural competition. The concept was understood differently in the five discourses; 5) The motives for a competition were connected to the possibility to market the municipality. 6) The main principle of the Swedish concept of homeliness needs further defining to generate stronger guidelines for architecture.

Keywords: architectural competition, municipal organizer, discursive model, frail elderly, design process.

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Creating Empathetic Architecture for the Frail Elderly: Socio-political Goals as Criteria in an Architectural Competition

Jonas E Andersson

INTRODUCTION

Within the study of architecture lies the ambition of realizing a built environment without resemblance to anything built before, something completely *nouveau* – a dream of the ideal city. One example of such an ideal city would be Vällingby, an ABC-city¹ some 15 kilometres northwest of Stockholm. The town planning and the architecture in this city embody social ambitions spanning from improved housing standards and human working conditions to realizing public welfare goals of democracy and public health (Sax 1998). The Royal Saltworks at Arc-et-Senans in Franche-Comté, which reflects the ideal city from the Age of Enlightenment, would be another example. A third example would be the small Italian town of Sabbioneta in Lombardy, which is an unfinished realization of the ideal Renaissance city (Marten 1995). Sabbioneta reflects the Machiavellian vision of the princely autocracy, whereas the Royal Saltworks at Arc-et-Senans embodies the enlightened thinking about human existence and the societal responsibilities of an absolute monarchy. The suburb of Vällingby exemplifies the Swedish model of organizing dwelling and work for the modern welfare society. Hence, architecture must be seen not only as a result of an artistically driven design process (Lundequist 1995), but also as a result of cultural and social beliefs (Bourdieu 1972) where practice influences architecture.

In our time, the realization of architecture or large-scale built environments can be seen as a collective endeavour (Bloxham Zettersten 2000) resulting from a democratic decision-making process, which has become an integrated part of the modern society (Dunin-Woyseth 2001). What follows is an examination of a Swedish municipality's ambition to create an ideal city for the elderly by arranging an open architectural competition. In

1. ABC-staden is the Swedish abbreviation for Work (Arbete), Residence (Bostad), and Centre (Centrum).

2006, the municipality of Jaerfaella, a suburban district some 30 kilometres northwest of Stockholm, invited architects and affiliated professionals to contemplate the topic of future-oriented habitats for the increasingly larger number of people aged 65 or higher within the municipal population. This paper has two purposes: first, to investigate and understand a municipal organizer's decision-making process in organizing an open architectural competition in order to find new ideas for a residential area with a focus on innovative architecture for housing for the frail elderly; second, to investigate and understand how socio-political and welfare goals are transformed into spatial concepts in architecture and built environments. The global research question is two-fold. It asks whether new ideas for eldercare and their translation into architecture and built environments were of importance for the municipality of Jaerfaella, or if assistance and care for an ageing population were merely tools for establishing a political consensus concerning a comprehensive plan for a former airbase. In Sweden, assistance and care for the elderly is a municipal responsibility, and one group of elderly in focus for the architectural competition were frail persons suffering from dementia, complex multi-diagnoses, or somatic disabilities². To distinguish this group, the phrase *frail elderly* will be used in the following text.

FUTURE-ORIENTED HABITATS FOR THE ELDERLY

The open architectural competition "Flottiljen – Future-oriented Habitats for the Elderly"³ focused on innovative concepts for housing and living for elderly people (including those still active and those experiencing some age-related frailties), on the tarmac of the former military airbase of Barkarby. During the competition period, July 5 to November 1, 2006, the participants

2. The frail elderly have a rightful claim to municipal assistance and care, and they can apply for municipal housing with assistance and care twenty-four hours a day. After assessing their needs, the municipality offers them leases of a mini-apartments (bedroom, small living-room with kitchenette, and private bathroom) in a housing with commonly shared kitchen, dining-room and living room spaces.
3. The title "Flottiljen – Future-Oriented Habitats for the Elderly" is an approximate translation of the Swedish title for the open architectural competition "Flottiljen, framtidens boende för äldre" (Järfälla Kommun, 2006). The organizer of the competition wished to imply not only shelter, but interaction with architecture, built environments, society, and nature, and thus *habitat* (Collins English Dictionary, 1998a) was thought to best reflect these issues. The adjective "future-oriented" was chosen to imply a movement beyond today's conventions in terms of social behaviour patterns of the elderly, home medical services, and eldercare technologies. One of the main goals of the competition was to generate ideas about how these technologies and behaviours would change in the next few decades, and how architecture and built environments could be oriented toward this future.

digested the competition brief⁴. In the brief, rational aspects of municipal comprehensive planning and socio-political welfare goals were mixed with the municipality's assumptions about future-oriented assistance and care for an ageing population.

The programme was labelled with the self-promoting slogan of "Jaerfaella Leads the Way"⁵ (Järfälla kommun 2005). At the end of the competition period, thirty-three entries had been registered by the municipal competition committee. Following the Swedish rules for architectural competitions (Sveriges Arkitekter 2008), each entry was handed in anonymously along with a sealed envelope containing information about its creator. A temporary exposition of the entries was arranged in the town hall, where the jury and the jury's advisory council could contemplate the entries. The jury's advisory council consisted of two working committees. One working committee was formed by experts in housing and nursing the frail elderly, and the second from national organisations for the rights of the elderly, the municipal Senior Citizens Council⁶, and the political realm representing both left-wing and right-wing political parties. The public had the opportunity to examine the competition entries during three guided visits in November and December of 2006. The jury, consisting of seven municipal representatives and three external experts, assessed the entries until February 2007. The jury consulted the jury's advisory council on four occasions to ask for their views on specific questions concerning the needs and opinions of the elderly and to evaluate some entries from a specific angle of interest. The jury reached a unanimous decision and announced that the Danish proposal, "The Flowery Meadow", had won the competition. On February 14, 2007, the prize and the diploma were handed out by the Swedish Minister for Elderly Care and Public Health (see Fig. 1).

4. The author of this paper participated in the work of writing the competition brief as an adviser, revising the text, giving suggestions of what to include or exclude. Also, the author wrote an overview of housing for the frail elderly with definitions of commonly used terms in eldercare included in an appendix to the brief.
5. The slogan "Jaerfaella Leads the Way" is a credo for the municipality of Jaerfaella, and it is linked to a policy and development programme for the municipality entitled *Vision 2015* (Järfälla kommun, 2005).
6. The municipal Senior Citizens Council corresponds to *Kommunala Pensionärsrådet*, a board of representatives from different local organisations for the rights of the elderly. At the municipal level, Senior Citizens Councils have existed since the 1970s. Their purpose is to be an arena for political discussions between representatives from pensioners' organizations and the municipalities. Since 1991, a Pensioners' Council has existed at the Swedish Ministry of Social Affairs. The Council's purpose and structure were spelled out by the government in the Commission of Inquiry Directive. According to this directive, the Council is to be a forum for deliberations between the government and pensioners' organizations (Feltenius, 2004). In the municipality of Jaerfaella, a Senior Citizens Council has existed since 1981 (Falkeblad, 2009).

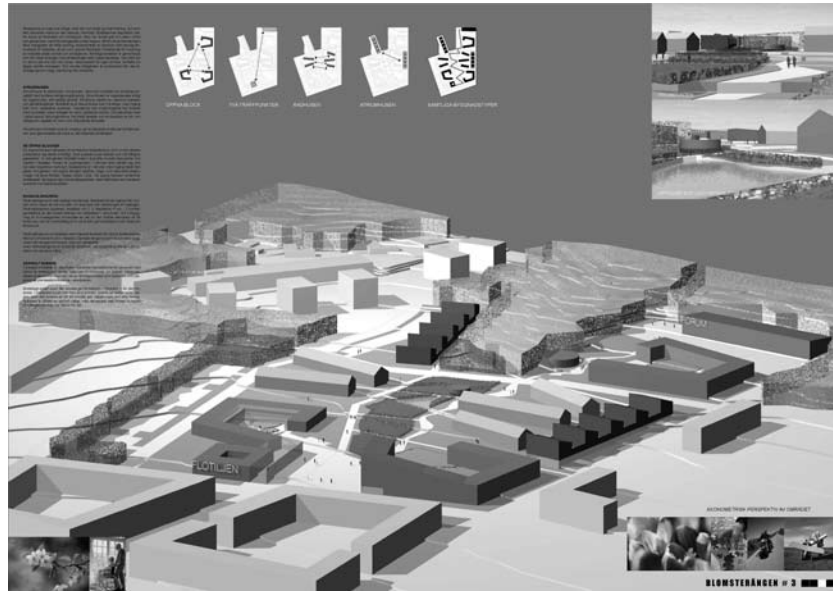


FIG. 1: The winning entry in the architectural competition "Flottiljen – Future-oriented Habitats for the Elderly by the Danish architecture office GPP Arkitekter A/S, Aarhus (courtesy GPP Arkitekter A/S).

THE JURY'S ASSESSMENT AND REFINING THE WINNING ENTRY

The jury concluded that the competition task had been two-fold; 1) creating a town plan for the site and 2) designing innovative and supportive housing for the elderly suffering from age-related frailties (Järfälla Kommun 2007). The jury praised the winning Danish entry (designed by GPP Arkitekter A/S, Aarhus, Denmark) for its town plan for the competition site: "The Flowery Meadow is presented with first prize for a committed and well thought-out approach for the area, based upon a competent analysis of the competition site" (Järfälla Kommun 2007, 14). But the jury concluded that "several participants in the competition have given the housing for the frail elderly a design with spatial qualities, which do not differ significantly from existing, conventional design of housing for the frail elderly" (Järfälla Kommun 2007, 11). In some aspects, the design for the housing for the frail elderly in the winning entry was included in this evaluation; the jury detected several good ideas, but also "shortcomings" in the proposed design that called for a further refinement (Järfälla Kommun 2007, 18).

Since the end of the competition, the winning Danish architecture office, in close collaboration with the municipal City Planning Office, has refined their town plan into a detailed development plan for the site. The Municip-

pal City Planning Office made the legal planning document, and the Danes have supplied an advisory architectural program⁷ (Tornberg 2008) containing guidelines for the new architecture and built environment at the site. The detailed development plan is divided into different zones of development and the housing for the frail elderly is part of the first step. Because of the jury's opinion that this housing in the winning entry was not adequate, the Administration for Social Welfare established a special programming document of building requirements (Socialförvaltningen 2007)⁸, which was meant to guide the architects in their work of revising their drawings for the housing for the frail elderly. This document was the result of a participatory process that gathered representatives from the care staff at existing municipal housing for the frail elderly, from the unions organizing staff workers, and from the municipal Senior Citizens Council. This participatory process continued during autumn 2007. The refined drawings of the housing for the frail elderly were scrutinized during three meetings by this group of representatives. A final approval of the architectural design for the housing for the frail elderly was announced in December 2007.

RETRACING A VIVA VOCE PROCESS – THE CASE STUDY

This paper is based upon a single case study (Yin 2003) of the decision-making process of an open architectural competition organized by the municipality of Jaerfaella. The Swedish principle of public access to official records allowed for a reconstruction of the organisational process of the architectural competition. Reviewing the consultation process between municipal committees, which follows upon each administrative matter within the municipal organisation, helped in determining how the idea of organizing an architectural competition evolved. This reconstruction retraced the decisive moments, and the key actors were identified by both name and affiliated municipal administration. Yet the motivating forces behind the idea were hidden elsewhere.

7. According to the Swedish Planning and Building Act, a detailed development plan should supply a program which describes in a comprehensive way the goals and the intentions for the built environment to be [Planning and Building Act, chapter 5, section 18 ("The Planning and Building Act. The Act on Technical Requirements for Construction Works, etc. The Environmental Code with ordinances of relevance. SFS 1987:10," 2006)]. This type of program has various names depending on the municipality's way of addressing the issue. In this paper, the term *architectural program* is used, referring to findings in a recent licentiate thesis on the subject (Tornberg, 2008)
8. This program is entitled "Flottiljen, future-oriented habitats for the elderly" (Socialförvaltningen, 2007). The author of this paper acted as an adviser to the Administration for Social Welfare, and put together this program of spatial requirements for the revision of the design of the housing for the frail elderly in the winning Danish entry.

A GUIDING THEORY FOR UNDERSTANDING A DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

The official records pertaining to the matter of organizing an architectural competition focusing on future-oriented habitats for the frail elderly suggest that the idea of a competition was part of an ongoing discussion between the key actors before and after the decisive moments in this municipal matter. Municipal matters in a Swedish municipality seem to be a *viva voce*⁹ process, involving different actors in various professions and with different municipal affiliations who continuously have input into the matters at hand. In order to understand the motivating forces behind the idea of organizing an open architectural competition in the municipality of Jaerfaella, this case-study is based upon the basic assumption that this spoken exchange must be included in the research material. These discussions are cultural and social interactions (Van Dijk 1998) with architecture and built environments and are an oral criticism of contemporary architecture intended for the frail elderly. This case study considered that any spoken, written, or illustrated documents may have held a key for understanding the *viva voce* process regarding the competition at the Flottiljen site. This approach determined which documents were collected and the choice of research methods. Most important, however, it necessitated a theory to understand and analyze 1) spoken and written information pertaining to human interactions with architecture and built environments, and 2) the relationship between spoken or written information and the conception of architectural space.

SPOKEN AND WRITTEN INFORMATION ABOUT ARCHITECTURE

The theory for this case study assumes that spoken and written information about the decision-making process are speech acts (Van Dijk 1977) that form different discourses¹⁰ dealing with the topic of the open architectural competition at the Flottiljen site. Interviews with a structured questionnaire were used as an instrument to collect these discourses from informants who were identified as the key actors through the official record. The spoken Swedish obtained in the interviews was remodelled into a written language and translated into English. Following the ideas of French structuralism, the establishment of the logic of the events in these speech acts was of key im-

9. *Viva voce* stands for by word of mouth, and can be shortened to *viva* with the same meaning (Collins English Dictionary, 1998b).
10. This definition of *discourse* is a layman's understanding of the word, and based upon the dictionary definition of "A connected series of utterances by which meaning is communicated, esp. forming a unit for analysis; spoken or written communication regarded as consisting of such utterances" (Oxford English Dictionary, 2009a)

portance (Barthes 1966). Therefore, the information about the competition in the collected interviews were correlated with official and written documentation¹¹ in order to establish verifiable facts for valid conclusions. Transcribing the interviews served as an instrument of analysis, which had some references to applied discourse analysis (ADA)¹², in that the transcription did not focus on language itself, but rather on what was expressed through the language in specific contexts (Gunnarsson 1998). This interpreting, structuring, and transforming work called for a framework (Fisher 1997) for understanding the collected information before turning the speech acts into written text. In this case study the framework for understanding was built upon a trained architect's ability to identify words of importance in spatial thinking.

DISCOURSES AND ARCHITECTURE AS A FIELD OF PRACTICE

The discourses obtained on human interactions with built environments were filtered through the trained architect's ability to translate verbally-bound information into spatial thinking. The creation of architecture implies several parallel design processes regularly interrupted by decision-making meetings with the commissioner or the user that are necessary for the architectural design to evolve (Lundequist 1995). Although architecture is a form of tangible space, the essence of architecture is difficult to define. Therefore, a graphic model that demonstrates architecture as a field of practice (Cold, Dunin-Woyseth, & Sauge 1992)¹³, was used to show how the

11. The documentation regarding the organisation of an open architectural competition in the municipality of Jaerfaella consisted of all possible documents that were generated within the municipality. Members of the Municipal Assembly may table *motions* regarding a specific question in the assembly, whereas members of a Municipal Committee may introduce an *item for discussion* regarding a certain question in the committee. The Municipal Assembly may entrust to a municipal committee a *task*, while in the opposite case a committee may raise a *matter* in the assembly ("The Swedish Local Government Act," 1991). Beside this administrative documentation, other documents such as comprehensive plans, detailed development plans, policy documents, programming documents, and material related to the competition (competition brief, Jury Assessment Report, and the programming documents) were consulted for this case study.
12. *Discourse analysis* is defined in the dictionary as "a method of analysing the structure of texts or utterances longer than one sentence, taking into account both their linguistic content and their sociolinguistic context; analysis performed using this method" (Oxford English Dictionary, 2009b).
13. The Norwegian model has been revised for this paper, and this has resulted in a relocation of some of the items in the original model. Also, the items have been approximately translated from Norwegian into English. The following changes have been undertaken and noted in the model: 1) In the original model this item is placed at the current position of "Work/ Processes"; 2) In the original model this item is placed at the current position of "Emotional Experiences"; 3) In the original model, this item is placed at the current position of "Institutions/ Resources"; 4) In the original model, this item is placed at the current position of "Care/ Taken Care of".

discourses on human interactions with built environments could be integrated with spatial thinking. In this model, human beings, architecture, and built environments are at the centre of four dimensions of space (see Figure 2). The first dimension of space is space perceived as a phenomenon where experience, practice and technics influence space and spatiality. This phenomenon of space can be a subject for theorizing, and may create spatial visions with social implications such as the idea of the ideal city. This, then, is the second dimension of space: where ideologies about space and spatiality exist. In this model of architecture as a field of practice, these dimensions form two terminal points of the vertical axis. The third dimension of space is the individual use of space and spatiality; we arrange space according to our activities and needs, and thus create functions in architecture. In addition to the individual use of space, there is a collective use of space and spatiality on social level. This is the fourth dimension of space where practice and cultural traditions define the use of space. In this model for integrating discourses on human interactions with built environments, the third and fourth dimension form a horizontal axis in which the individual use of space and space for societal use form terminal points.

The vertical axis and the horizontal axis can be sub-divided into different aspects, which will affect the realization of architecture and built environments. The closer to the centre the aspect is located, the more direct is the influence it has on architecture and built environments. Relevant to this case study are social welfare goals. These political ambitions influence architecture and built environments through the spatial dimensions of ideology and society where space is regulated by the two aspects of ideas/theories, and interpretation/realization on the vertical axis, and by the two aspects of legislation/rules, and site/location on the horizontal axis. The intersection between the horizontal and vertical axis result in a fifth aspect of institutions/resources that influences human interactions with architecture and built environments. The ideological and societal dimensions of space affect the individual and phenomenal dimension of space, changing the aspects of function/use, and activities in daily life on the horizontal axis and the aspects of experiences/practices and technics on the vertical axis. Of note, the aspect of emotional experiences, located to the intersection of the individual and phenomenal dimension, will also change.

DISCOURSES ON ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENTS

The spoken and written information showed divergent discourses, but this divergence was overcome by superimposing the discourses over the quadrants of the noted model of architecture. Thus a simple classification of the

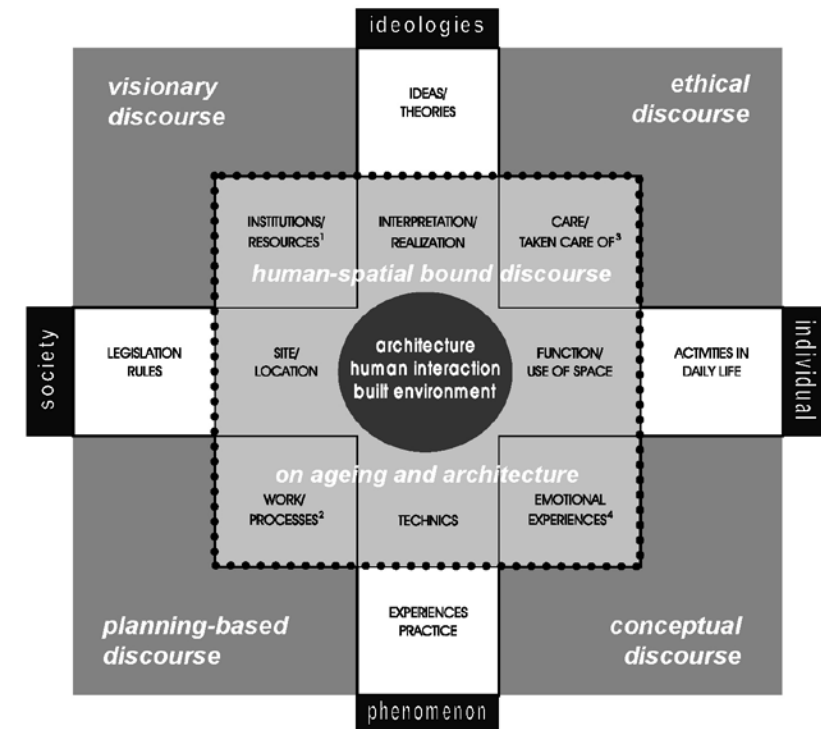


FIG. 2: Architecture as a field of research (the horizontal axis, the vertical axis, and twelve aspects influencing architecture and built environments) (Cold et al, 1992) combined with a distribution of discourses found in the research material (fields in grey placed in the quadrants between the axes and over the eight central aspects). The combination of discourses with architecture is named the discursive model of an open architectural competition in a Swedish municipality (see also footnote 13)

research material was made possible. This adapted model in which architecture, human interactions, and built environments were combined with discourses will be referred to as the discursive model of an open architectural competition in a Swedish municipality [see Fig. 2]. The discursive model is comprised of five discourses. Each of these discourses has a key issue. In the core position and exerting influence over all eight central regulating aspects of architecture and built environments, there is the human-spatial bound discourse on ageing and architecture based upon everyday experiences of housing for the frail elderly. The key question in this field is: What is thought of the existing space and social milieu for the elderly? Located in each quadrant between the axes and surrounding the central discourse there are four professional discourses with different approaches towards ageing and architecture.

In the societal-ideological quadrant, there is a visionary discourse with political implications. Here, the key question is: What would a future-oriented, empowering space and social milieu for the frail elderly look like? The ideological-individual quadrant reflects an ethical contemplation of architecture and human interactions with built environments. Here, the key question is: How would space empower a social milieu for frail the elderly? The individual-phenomenal quadrant displays a conceptual discourse, where the key question is: What constitutes a supportive space for the frail elderly resulting in an empowering social milieu? Finally, the phenomenal-societal quadrant reveals a planning-based discourse. Here, the key question is: How can one achieve a supportive space and social milieu for the frail elderly?

RESEARCH MATERIAL

The research material in this case study consists of spoken and written statements from interviews pertaining to human interactions with architecture and built environments in the municipality of Jaerfaella. In all, thirty persons (the Danish winning architects in the competition, representatives from municipal administrations, politicians, care staff, and representatives from national organisations for the rights of the elderly) were interviewed. The interviews were transcribed and sent for approval and correction to the interviewees¹⁴. All quotations from the approved texts of the interviews presented in the next section of this paper are in italic font. Non-approved text was not included in this paper, but was used a source of knowledge. The interview with the Danish architects was translated and transcribed into Swedish, and then English. The information obtained from the interviews was correlated with prior written documentation. Such prior written documentation included official records of the viva voce decision-making process for the period of 2002 to 2009 pertaining to the organization of the open architectural competition. Also, the research material has included drawings and illustrations of all submitted entries in the competition, mainly the winning entry, the second prize and the three entries rewarded with an honorary mention¹⁵.

14. One informant (Informant K-A) declined this opportunity. Therefore, this interview will not be cited, but used as a source of knowledge about the process of organizing an open architectural competition in the municipality of Jaerfaella.
15. The jury of the open architectural competition "Flottiljen – Future-Oriented Habitats for the Elderly" presented two prizes and three honorary mentions (Järfälla Kommun, 2007). First prize was attributed to the Danish entry "Blomsterängen" (The Flowery Meadow), by the architecture office GPP Arkitekter A/S, Aarhus, Denmark. The entry "Unikabox och Praliner (Lunch box and chocolate), by Swedish architect G Lundqvist in collaboration with WSP Sweden AB, Stockholm, Sweden, was rewarded second prize. No third prize was given, instead three honorary mentions were given to

RESEARCH METHODS AND SAMPLE

In the interviews, there were 12 question themes each with five to six sub-questions for a total of 82 questions. The architects from the winning Danish architecture office were interviewed under only five themes¹⁶, and the interview was conducted in a mix of Scandinavian languages. In general, the interviews lasted 90 minutes on average. The Swedish Social Services Act (Social Services Act 2001) proposes a homelike environment as the ideal setting for the frail elderly, and promotes this as the main principle¹⁷ appropriate for both the design of this type of housing and the task of giving care to elderly. The interviewees were invited to answer thematic question about this principle by choosing one to three photos from a collection of 25 photographs. This section of the interview was inspired by the French method of Photolanguage (Baptiste, Belisle, & Pechenart 1991). From the larger sample of thirty interviewees, a sub-sample of 12 informants was singled out for this paper. Of this sample, eight informants were identified as key agents in the organisational process or the design process of the winning entry, while four informants were influential bystanders to the endeavour. The sub-sample was made up of seven women and five men, aged from 40 to 58 from a variety of professions. Ten of the interviewees were affiliated with the municipality of Jaerfaella, and two interviewees represented the winning Danish architecture office. From the full interview protocol 38 questions were selected for this paper, the chosen questions focused on processes connected to the competition and on ageing and architecture (see Appendix A). All five themes used for interviewing the Danish architects were included in this paper (see Appendix B).

"Nybakat" (Fresh made) by Swedish architecture office Engstrand & Speek AB, Stockholm, Sweden; "By" (Village) by Swedish architects T Lundberg and M Forshamn, Gothenburg, Sweden, and "Boalla" (Community-living) by German architecture office RealArchitektur, Berlin, German.

16. The idea of asking questions on themes was based on the author's previous experiences of interviewing persons having an architectural background. In these cases, structured interviews have seemingly put the informants in awkward situations resulting in information of less value (Andersson, 2005). Further, as this interview was to be conducted in Scandinavian, a mixed language of Danish and Swedish, the option for question themes seemed to be a better solution to a language confusion that might arise.
17. The Swedish Social Services Act suggests that the homelike environment is the ideal setting for the frail elderly ("Social Services Act," 2001). This legal recommendation for homeliness has been interpreted into guidelines for eldercare and design criteria architecture and built environments. The design criteria can be summarized in four concepts: 1) a residential-like features derived from private detached houses or apartment buildings that creates 2) a homelike environment that will form 3) a supportive milieu for way-finding and 4) an opportunity for a spatial overview inside the architecture in order to enforce a better understanding of the architecture and (Svensson, 2008).

DEFINITIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The names of the municipal administrations presented in this paper are approximate translations of the Swedish titles used in the municipality of Jaerfaella¹⁸. Swedish municipalities independently organize their responsibilities within the context of the Swedish Local Government Act¹⁹; consequently, one municipality's organizations will differ from another's. The names of central municipal institutions are translated according to the official Swedish standard (The Swedish Local Government Act 1991). It should be noted that the empirical findings in this paper are subject to the following limitations. Firstly, the interviews were made in 2008. This was three years after the process of organizing the open architectural competition was initiated in 2005, and one year after the assessment process of the submitted competition entries. The time lag may have been an influence on the informants' capacities to recollect events related to the competition. Secondly, this case study took place in a Nordic context. Ten of the twelve informants were of Swedish origin, and two were of Danish nationality. The Photolanguage method detected a difference between Danish and Swedish cultural traditions²⁰. If this possibility to detect cultural differences was to be verified in a larger study, the Photolanguage method could prove to be an effective way of uncovering culture-biased notions.

AN OPEN MUNICIPAL ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION – RESULTS

The question of future eldercare in the municipality of Jaerfaella was part of the political agreement between the left-wing parties (the Social Democrats, the Left Party, and the Ecologist Party²¹) when they formed a local

18. The Municipal Assembly corresponds to Kommunfullmäktige; the Municipal Executive Committee corresponds to Kommunstyrelse (“The Swedish Local Government Act,” 1991). The Committee for Social Welfare corresponds to Socialnämnd; the Administration for Social Welfare corresponds to Socialförvaltning; the Municipal Executive Office corresponds to Kommunledningskontor; the City Planning Office corresponds to Miljö & Stadsbyggnadskontor, which in Jaerfaella is a division within the Municipal Executive Office.

19. By law, a Swedish municipality should provide childcare and preschools, social services, eldercare, care for the physically and intellectually disabled, primary and secondary education, planning and building issues, health and environmental protection, refuse collection and waste management, emergency services and emergency preparedness, and water and sewerage (“The Swedish Local Government Act,” 1991).

20. The Danish architects and the Swedish informants were asked similar questions about homelike and institutional-like architectural features. The Swedish informants made use of the whole photo collection. The Danish informants assessed the scenes in the collection as being typical Swedish, and therefore, used the photo collection to describe different levels of scale or abstraction that would pertain to these features (Informant K-M and Informant K-N).

21. The title Social Democrats corresponds to the Swedish political party of Social-

government for the mandate period of 2002 – 2006 (Håkansson-Harju, Hillman, & Rylander 2002). In spring 2003, the Centre Party, member of the right-wing political opposition²² tabled a motion in the Assembly calling for sustainable solutions for future eldercare in the municipality by forming a special committee supervised directly by the Municipal Assembly (Kommunfullmäktige 2003). The assembly entrusted to the Municipal Executive Committee to prepare the motion by initiating a consultation process. The Administration for Social Welfare supported the motion (Kommunledningsskontoret 2004), but the Municipal Executive Committee advised against a special committee arguing that the Committee for Social Welfare already had begun revising the question of future eldercare according to the three-party agreement (Kommunstyrelsen 2004). Thus the left-wing political majority in the Municipal Assembly rejected the idea of a special committee, and the matter was then sent to the Committee for Social Welfare with the instructions to investigate the state of municipal eldercare and assess the needs of the elderly and their expectations of assistance and care both in the near future and some decades ahead. Also, the administration should involve local organisations for the rights of the elderly in the work, and consult prognostic development plans for the Stockholm region made by the Stockholm County Council (Kommunfullmäktige 2004)²³.

ON THE ORIGINS OF THE MATTER OF AN ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION

The idea of organizing an architectural competition can be linked to the Committee for Social Welfare's investigation into improving municipal eldercare. In 2004, the Administration for Social Welfare detected an urgent need for short-term housing for the frail elderly that initiated a discussion within the

demokraterna, the Left Party is the English name for the Vänsterpartiet, and the Ecologist Party is the English word for Miljöpartiet de Gröna. Ranged after the number of municipal voters, the three left-wing parties had the following order in the Municipal Assembly during the period 2002-2006: the Social Democrats, The Left Party and the Ecologist Party.

22. The right-wing political minority for the period 2002 to 2006 consisted of conservative and liberal parties. The Center party corresponds to the Swedish political party of Centerpartiet, and the Conservatives is the English name for the Moderaterna. Yet, two more parties were part of the right wing opposition; Christian Democrats is the English name for the Kristdemokraterna, and the Liberal Party of Sweden is English for Folkpartiet. Ranged after the number of municipal voters, the four right-wing parties have the following order in the Municipal Assembly during the period 2002-2006: the Conservatives, the Liberal Party, the Christian Democrats, and the Center Party.

23. A preliminary report, presented in 2006, explored demographic changes 20 to 30 years in the future and identified new objectives for future eldercare (Äldrepolitiska gruppen, 2006). This programme was revised and an updated version was presented to the Committee for Social Welfare in 2009 (Socialförvaltningen, 2009).

Administration and the political Committee about existing architecture for the frail elderly (Socialnämnden 2005b). The discussion ended up in an idea of organizing an architectural competition focused on innovative thinking about architecture and built environments that aid in the assistance and care of the frail elderly (Socialnämnden 2005a). In April 2005, the Committee for Social Welfare addressed a matter to the Municipal Executive Committee suggesting an architectural competition along this line of thinking (Socialnämnden 2005b). The idea puzzled the politicians in the assembly to such an extent that the matter was resent to the Committee for Social Welfare for further revision (Informant K-J). Yet the Municipal Executive Committee included the question of an architectural competition in the budget proposal for the years to come, 2006 and 2007, and the task of organizing the competition was entrusted to the Committee for Social Welfare (Kommunstyrelsen 2005). In June 2005, the left-wing majority in the Municipal Assembly corroborated the budget proposal and entrusted to the Municipal Executive Committee to decide the matter in the council's stead (Kommunstyrelsen 2005). Although the right-wing political minority contested the budget proposal, no particular argument against the idea of an architectural competition can be traced in the official records (Kommunfullmäktige 2005). In October 2005, as a way of preparing for the architectural competition, the Committee and the Administration for Social Welfare arranged a seminar, entitled "Looking for Future-oriented Habitats for the Elderly" (Socialförvaltningen 2005). The seminar had a multi-disciplinary approach towards contemporary research on housing and care for the frail elderly. Researchers from architecture and nursing presented their ongoing research on housing and eldercare for the frail elderly (Socialförvaltningen 2005).

REALIZING AN ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION

The pilot study in 2004 regarding forty apartments in a new residence for frail elderly on a fringe location nearby the railway (Socialnämnden 2005a), and the seminar in 2005 and added power to the idea of an architectural competition. Referring to the new policy document for the municipal work (Järfälla kommun 2005), the Administration for Social Welfare involved the City Planning Office as well as the Municipal Executive Office in the process of organizing the architectural competition. Early in June 2006, the Committee for Social Welfare addressed a detailed matter to the Municipal Executive Committee and presented the idea of an open architectural competition for the development of the former airbase of Barkarby, the so-called Flottiljen site (Socialförvaltningen 2006). The Administration for Social Welfare opted for an open architectural competition in order to get

a multitude of ideas (Informant K-B, K-E, K-H, and K-J). The competition was to be arranged according to the Swedish rules for architectural competitions (Sveriges Arkitekter 2008). The Swedish Association of Architects²⁴ had gradually become involved in the preparations in the autumn of 2005 (informant K-A), and the spring of 2006, when representatives from both the Administration for Social Welfare and the City Planning Office met with the competition secretary from the association to discuss the preparation of an open architectural competition at the Flottiljen site (informant K-A). In June 2006, the Municipal Executive Committee unanimously passed the motion and allocated two millions Swedish Crowns for the arrangements of the competition. The Municipal Executive Committee supplied guidelines for the composition of the jury (Kommunstyrelsen 2006). The Committee would appoint two politicians (one from the ruling left-wing majority and one from the minority group of right-wing political parties) and the heads from three municipal administrations (the Municipal Executive Office, the City Planning Office, and the Administration for Social Welfare). The Committee mandated the head of the Municipal Executive Office to appoint two additional jury members (the head of the municipal eldercare at the Administration for Social Welfare and a contracted external expert on architecture and eldercare). The head of the Municipal Executive Office would also name the members of the jury's advisory council, which consisted of two separate working committees. Finally, the Swedish Association of Architects appointed a competition secretary and two qualified architects as jurors (Kommunstyrelsen 2006).

MOTIVES FOR AN ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION

The two submissions by the Committee for Social Welfare arguing for an architectural competition were based upon three factors. Firstly, the Committee and the Administration for Social Welfare expressed a discomfort with the existing architecture for the frail elderly. The resulting seminar provided valid support for rethinking this type of architecture. Secondly and in a parallel to the work of the Committee and the Administration for Social Welfare, the municipality's difficulty in finding a site for a short-term hospice in 2004 had shown that municipal planning for future housing for the frail elderly had been neglected. This oversight had resulted in a nar-

24. The Swedish Association of Architects is a professional organization for architects, interior architects, landscape architects and spatial planners. The organisation has 10,000 members, among which 2,100 are architectural students of either orientation mentioned (Sveriges Arkitekter, 2009).

row choice of sites, often in inadequate locations²⁵ (Informant K-A, K-B, and K-C). Thirdly, the question of future eldercare and housing for the frail elderly dovetailed with the need to establish a comprehensive plan for the former military airfield: - *The report about future eldercare²⁶ is an important piece in the puzzle, but so, too, is the comprehensive plan. It was possible to unite them in an architectural competition* (Informant K-K). The report on the future eldercare in the municipality²⁷ paired with the municipal credo of - *Jaerfaella leads the way²⁸* supplied two important arguments for an open architectural competition: - *The architectural competition was an opportunity to market the municipality* (Informant K-G).

I. What Was Said About the Architectural Competition at the Flottiljen Site

The research material can be seen as a form of architectural criticism on contemporary architecture for the frail elderly who are in need of assistance and care twenty-four hours a day. This criticism has been distributed among five discourses in the discursive model: The first discourse is the human-spatial bound discourse on ageing and architecture, which is in the core position of the model. It includes all of the informants' responses as they discussed questions of a general nature pertaining to architecture, ageing, and built environments. Further questions generated different responses according to the informant's professional background, creating four additional discursive fields, which were placed in each quadrant of the model. These fields are: a planning-based discourse; a visionary discourse; an ethical discourse, and a conceptual discourse [see Fig. 3]. The informants often used two discursive fields; however, one field was always the principle discourse with a neighbouring field supported in the reasoning. For example, an ethical discourse would annex a conceptual discourse in order to promote the idea of an improved architecture for ageing: -*In the municipality of Jaerfaella, it doesn't exist in any tradition to consider social needs in the planning process for land use and development. But my colleague and I are used to dealing with these matters in such a process. Therefore, it was never a problem for us; we just took on the responsibility and let others hook up in order to help us* (Informant K-B). This statement suggests that an open architectural competition was an important instrument for the Administration for Social Welfare in promoting innovation in the housing

25. The site for the new hospice would be on the fringe of an existing schoolyard, which turned out to be the only adequate solution.

26. See footnote 23.

27. See footnote 23.

28. See footnote 5.

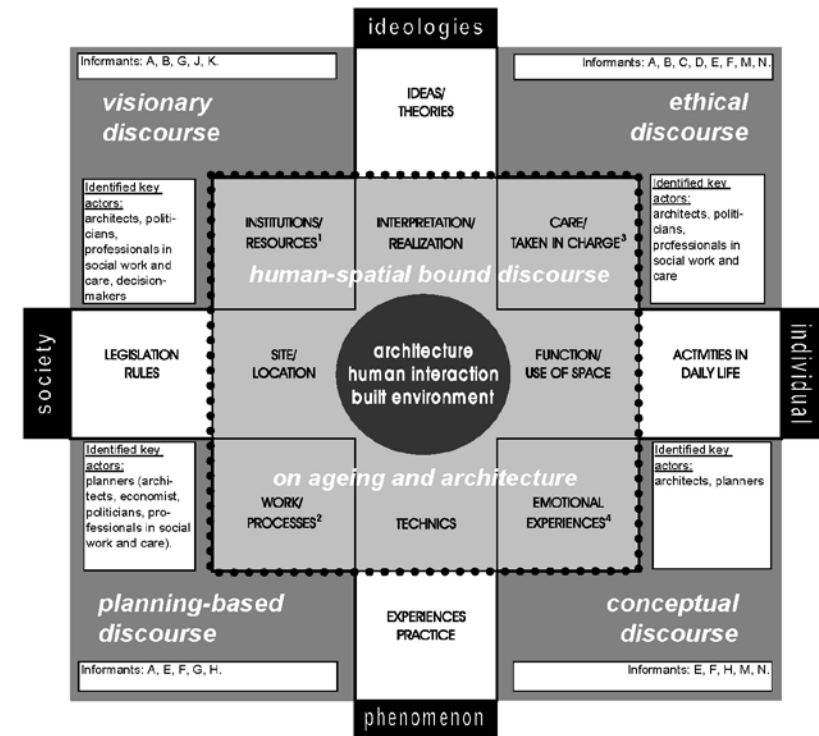


FIG. 3: The discursive model of the open architectural competition "Flottiljen – Future-Oriented Habitats for the Elderly" in the municipality of Jaerfaella, Sweden. The professions of the key actors are indicated in the profession-related discursive fields.

for the frail elderly, and this is an ethical rather than in a visionary, planning-based or conceptual discourse to suggest possible means to solve the problem. The selected sample of interviews in the case study indicates that the events of importance for the next step in an ongoing process of realization, or a planning-based discourse, dominated the other discourses. Of note, planning-based discourses were registered in the official documentation, whereas conceptual, ethical, or visionary digressions on ageing, architecture or eldercare were detectable in the appendices and in the interviews.

Human-Spatial Bound Discourse

Opinions about ageing, architecture and built environments are part of a human-spatial bound discourse and found in the core position of the discursive model of the architectural competition. All of the informants had opin-

ions about architecture and human interactions with built environments, and some pointed out that the architectural impressions were based on an individual's feeling of like or dislike: *–It is a matter of beliefs and taste, simply!* (Informant K-J). The main instrument for assessing architectural influences was the individual experience: *–You just have to look at your own reactions in different environments [...]. If I come to a dark and narrow environment where the room height is low then it will influence me – I do not feel at my best. But if I come to a house, and perhaps am feeling a bit low, then if there is daylight it feels like it is possible to breath and my eyes are drawn to what is happening – I feel at ease. Such experiences mean a lot* (Informant K-K). It became apparent that ageing was a difficult concept to which to relate. When asked about preparations taken for old age, one informant said: *–I have not begun planning for my retirement yet, and I have not paid much attention to it. I feel and I hope that I have still many good years ahead of me* (Informant K-G). The interviewees seemed reluctant to imagine themselves as aged: *–It is very hard to know what will be of importance 40 or 50 years ahead. Today, I would say that sleeping late once or twice a week is very important to me, but whether this will be important to me when I am 70 years old, that is hard to say* (Informant K-D). Further, the informants associated eldercare with poor health and sickness: *–It is a matter for the elderly who have a great need of assistance and care* (Informant K-H). Informants not trained in social work or care had a technical approach to eldercare, and defined it according to the Swedish Social Services Act (Social Services Act 2001): *–Of course, our elderly must at least have the eldercare that the Social Services Act stipulates. Then, there are the human aspects, which we have to attend to, such as giving as much service as possible* (Informant K-G). Informants involved in social work and care, however, added an ethical dimension to the word: *–Eldercare is primarily a supportive relation allowing me to live a worthy life whether in my body or in my social life* (Informant K-B). Another informant stated: *–The notion of “social welfare for the frail elderly” is much more attractive to me than the word eldercare, which implies a medical care and nursing [...]. Social welfare for the elderly is about security, reception, and [...] something about someone putting his or her arm around my shoulders. [...] Social welfare for the elderly should have a salutogenic objective; it is about the whole person, whether sick or not* (Informant K-D).

Overall, the informants' answers suggest that ageing was perceived as an individual process with personal responsibilities: *–Either, I ensure I have a suitable living space within the ordinary housing market where I can easily find fellowship or security through my personal network of acquaintance or I do this by applying to the new kind of housing that has begun to develop recently with a focus on*

*security and community for the elderly*²⁹ (Informant K-B). The concept of ageing as an individual responsibility (using both personal resources and the assistance of family and friends) is identical to the current political paradigm for ageing in Sweden and the contemporary notion of active ageing, promoted by the WHO (World Health Organization 2002). One informant added to this by anticipating change in future social expectations: *–Political preferences put aside, I think we are heading for a more flexible type of eldercare adjusted to the specific need which has arisen. Future eldercare must be more individually adapted, and not given along predefined standards* (Informant K-K).

Architecture was thought to influence human behaviour subconsciously: *–Beauty, art, and artistry stimulate people* (Informant K-F). Or as another stated: *–I think the environment influences us; it targets our self-esteem, which is of positive importance in any case* (Informant K-B). The sensation of appearance and space were two key aspects: *–Architecture is about what the house looks like, how you enter it [...] it can be the room height, [...] the spatial impression, spatiality, and the functionality* (Informant K-C). The spatial configuration and form were also another key aspect: *–Architecture is a powerful source of energy for me, and I think that especially silhouettes and demarcations are especially important aspects* (Informant K-B).

The Planning-Based Discourse

The usual focus on tangible facts in the planning-based discourse may explain why the initial motion for an architectural competition focusing on housing for the frail elderly appeared odd to the members of the Municipal Executive Committee: *–I think there was a mutual feeling of “How curious, why address this question to us?. Can't they deal with that matter with the Committee for Social Welfare?”. But then, gradually, we came to realize [...] that it was a question with a wider implication than just housing for the frail elderly, it was about municipal planning for our future society, which had to be addressed on a governmental level* (Informant K-J). In the planning-based discourse, the question of rethinking existing architecture for the frail elderly was compared to existing development plans: *–Well, this matter was short of time, since the housing had to be ready by a certain date [...]. This forced us to focus on areas that had an established detailed development plan and where it would be possible to realize the project. In that sense, it was the idea for the townscape that I hoped the competition would enlighten [...]. And*

29. The informant is referring to a new type of sheltered housing for the elderly people, suggested by the Delegation for Elderly Living, DEL, (Äldreboendedelegationen) in 2007. This would be a living in a community, based on mutual interests with a high perceived feeling of security. In a sense, a type of safe-haven residences for elderly people with few or some need of assistance from eldercare (Äldreboendedelegationen, 2007).

combining the question of the townscape with the question of housing for frail elderly made the cause even worthier (Informant K-H). The rational motives for an architectural competition were also considered: *–I think the motive for the decision to organize an architectural competition was that the politicians wanted to make something spectacular at the site. [...] Now when the competition has ended and entered into a phase of realization, a completely new strategy for the whole development of the former airfield has been presented. Now, the strategy for the area envisions several categories of inhabitants: children, youths, adults and the elderly* (Informant K-F).

The Visionary Discourse

The visionary discourse had a political dimension, and the question of a dignified life in old age was addressed in a general way: *–I think that those who were involved with social welfare primarily, they searched for a new architecture that would allow for a change in how to assist and care for the frail elderly. But for me personally, I was more interested in the vision for the future and how the elderly in the future would like to adjust their habitat* (Informant K-J). In the visionary discourse, housing for the frail elderly was put in a larger context involving built environments for any group of people in modern society: *– The question for the architectural competition was to design a residential area that would allow for many types of living within the area* (Informant K-K). There was also concern about what would come out of the competition: *– There was a certain problem with the design task in the competition that came from the phrase ‘future-oriented housing for the elderly’ and what we would define as future-oriented. We are caught in the present thinking of today, or, as one could say in the dim and distant past of the old thinking when it comes to housing for the frail elderly* (Informant K-G).

The Ethical Discourse

The informants representing the Administration for Social Welfare often used an ethical discourse, and were concerned with: *–How to lead a dignified life despite old age* (Informant K-B). These informants claimed that the key question for the architectural competition was to design housing for the frail elderly – *so good, that everyone in Sweden would like to come to visit them* (Informant K-C). The discomfort with existing architecture for the frail elderly spurred the representatives from the Social Administration for Welfare to emphasize the need for rethinking such architecture: *– Obviously, housing for the frail elderly must not be in a secluded area just for the elderly [...] contact with other people reinvigorates the elderly. We hoped for an architectural competition where the outcome would be an architectonic vision that would create a sensation of beauty and quality* (Informant K-B). Other informants at the administration agreed with this idea: *– There was an alarming need for new housing, which pref-*

erably should have been available already in 2008 (Informant K-E). Semantic arguments were put forward to establish that the intent with the architectural competition was to search for future-oriented habitats for the elderly as the motive: *– I think that the idea almost from the start was innovative thinking for housing the frail elderly. That is why we used the phrase ‘habitats for the elderly’: to get beyond the definition special forms of accommodation for the frail elderly in the Swedish Social Services Act* (Informant K-D).

The Conceptual Discourse

Discussions about the essence of architecture revealed a conceptual discourse. The informants had an understanding of architecture other than the normative Swedish definition of architecture (Nationalencyklopedien, 2009) in which architecture is perceived in its broadest sense as any type of human building or, more specifically, as individual buildings that convey an artistic ambition: *– In general, for non-architects, I think architecture is about the exterior, but the competition has made me realize that it is also about the interior. It is also about how to experience the milieu, the floor plan, the penetration of daylight, walls, colouring, and textiles* (Informant K-G). Another informant suggested that architecture is: *– the sensation of space within a building [...] what it looks like and its structure* (Informant K-C). For others, architecture had a wider meaning: *– For me, architecture contains both well-adjusted and useful functions – that everything works smoothly – but it is also something beautiful and exciting [...]. Architecture should add value, which is what I expect from the built environment* (Informant K-B). Some informants were trained architects or engineers. One of these trained informants explained that *– architecture is a form of art, and the architect’s task is the equivalent of the film director’s, to define the space of the play* (Informant K-H). Another informant said: *– Architecture is our [...] physical environment, which should be supportive and sublimating. Beauty for everyone!* (Informant K-E).

II. What Was Written for the Architectural Competition at the Flottiljen Site

What could have been a challenging mission, writing the competition brief, the Administration for Social Welfare assumed without any hesitation. This dauntless attitude might be explained by the fact that the idea of an architectural competition had sprung from the Committee for Social Welfare and its administration, and that the Municipal Executive Committee had entrusted the Committee the task of organizing the competition. In addition to this, there existed within the administration previous experiences of organizing an architectural competitions and writing competition briefs (Informant

K-A). To prepare for the task, the Administration for Social Welfare had contracted two external consultants, one in architecture and eldercare, and one in engineering. The competition brief evolved through a series of preliminary drafts that were mailed to the municipal jurors (the two politicians on the Municipal Executive Committee and the four representatives at the three municipal administrations) and to others within the Administration for Social Welfare, who were involved in the process indirectly. These interested parties were invited to comment on the text and suggest necessary changes. In accordance with the Swedish rules for architectural competitions, the final version of the competition brief was sent for approval to the representatives from the Swedish Association of Architects, i.e. the competition secretary and the two architects appointed as jury members.

The Competition Brief

There were eight thematic sections in the competition brief, along with three appendices, containing short information on Swedish eldercare and its terminology. The first section outlined the competition task. Before inclusion in the second section, information from official documentation such as the comprehensive plan and the detailed development plan for the site had been adjusted. The final section enumerated the Swedish competition rules and assessment criteria (Sveriges Arkitekter 2008). The discourse used in these sections and the appendices was identified as a planning-based discourse focusing on factual arguments. The third section used a conceptual and ethical discourse to give a summary of past and future trends for eldercare. The organizer emphasized the institutional feeling in contemporary housing for frail elderly, and the need to rethink the matter. In the fourth section, the organizer used a planning-based discourse to detail the competition task and describe the site. In the three following sections, the organizer used an ethical and visionary discourse to visualize goals for the Flottiljen site in terms of human interaction with built environments, prognostic for future eldercare (home medical services, eldercare technologies) and recommendations for the envisioned housing for the elderly.

The organizer had a clear intent to influence the participants' design process through the brief (Informant K-E). In the sixth section of the competition brief, which deals with goals and visions for the competition site, the organizer put key issues for ageing, architecture and built environments in italic font to present an architectonic vision for the site: "Architecture shall encourage a feeling of being present and of the sublime. The interior setting must be designed as a homelike milieu, displaying memorabilia from different design epochs. The exterior shall stimulate sensory impulses – scent, vision, sound

– and invoke agreeable feelings. All should be set in an accessible and useable landscape planning. All sensory faculties need stimulation (Järfälla Kommun, 2006, 16). It is unknown how all the participants understood the competition brief, but the winning architects thought that the programme was vague and it made them unsure how to solve the design problem in the competition: – *But we focused on the site, how the greenery could be integrated in the town plan [...]. And we chose to build as much as possible because that is a winning quality in a competition entry* (Informant K-M). Yet the organizer's visionary ideas for the future-oriented habitats for eldercare and the frail elderly were left unheeded by the winning architects: – *We designed the housing for the frail elderly schematically. Afterwards, we have noticed that some competition entries elaborated this type of housing, but we estimated that the municipality lacked a clear idea how they would co-use the different types of housing for the elderly* (Informant K-N).

The Jury Assessment Report

The Jury Assessment Report considered the future-oriented aspect of architecture for the elderly using a conceptual discourse. The reasoning took two directions: architecture and built environments assessing the elderly's need to participate in social life, or "the elderly's perspective" (Järfälla Kommun 2007, 11), and the feasibility of organizing an efficient eldercare within architecture and built environments or "the operational perspective" (Järfälla Kommun 2007, 11). An idea of integration and co-use was elaborated:

The jury argues that a form of integration is important and that it would be erroneous to place housing for the frail elderly in a separate enclave. On the other hand, the jury does not think that an extensive mixture of housing for the frail elderly and regular housing would be a model appropriate for everyone. [...] There has to be the possibility of free choice (Järfälla Kommun 2007, 11).

The jury's assessment of the submitted entries opened up ideas of social planning on several levels: – *This competition was not just about housing for the elderly, it was about all types of housing. [...]. And the site was of interest for the whole municipality* (Informant K-K). When the municipal informants were asked if they thought the decision to organize an architectural competition had been just, nine informants answered in the affirmative³⁰.

30. Informant K-F was not asked this question because the informant stated that he/she entered the process just before the open architectural competition was announced publicly.

One informant expressed doubts whether the fundamental question about the housing of the frail elderly had been answered by the participants (Informant K-A). Six municipal informants³¹ were then asked if they would consider arranging another architectural competition like the Flottiljen competition. Here, the positive picture cracks as three informants hesitated and three responded in the negative. A hesitant informant concluded that open architectural competitions had not generated new thinking regarding the specific issue (Informant K-A), and another informant concluded that these things had to be “assessed from case to case” (Informant K-J). Another hesitant informant said that “normally entrepreneurs bring the municipality new ideas, without the support of a professional jury” (Informant K-G). Two of the informants opposed to the idea of organizing another competition suggested in a similar way that this type of competition demanded a “unique design task”, to be productive (Informant K-J and Informant K-C). The third negative informant said quite simply that “the municipality was too small for a second venture”, but felt that the Flottiljen competition had raised interest in architecture in the municipality (Informant K-B).

III. Integration and Co-Use as a Unifying Concept

The idea of integration and co-use of premises is a recurrent theme in the written documentation and in the interviews. The words served as “primary generators” (Darke 1984) for creating new ideas in the process of organizing an architectural competition. The word *integration* was used by several informants, but with divergent meanings. The Administration for Social Welfare supplied one definition of the word: – *Integrating. That’s what we have been talking about: to achieve integration, which means that housing for the frail elderly must not be in secluded area, set aside from everyday life* (Informant K-B). During the process of defining the competition brief, the word integration and inflections of the word acquired a political implication: – *Integration implies several aspects; there are many ethical standpoints, which can be included in the word. [...] The key issue is to create a useful built environment,*

31. Some informants were not asked this question directly but answered the question indirectly: Informant K-C thought the decision was right because it had been a unique competition question, but expressed serious doubts about the architectural competition as a universal tool for finding new ideas regarding other questions. Informant K-K had a similar approach towards an open architectural competition, but emphasized that an architectural competition demanded a unique question. Some informants were not asked this question. Informant K-D and Informant K-F emphasized that he/she entered the process just before the open architectural competition was announced publicly, and because of their professional backgrounds. Informant K-K and Informant K-E seemed biased to answer the question affirmatively.

which will function for all of those who live there (Informant K-K). The words *integration* and *co-use* had a unifying effect on those organizing the architectural competition. One informant stated: – *When I realized that it was a question larger than just building a new housing complex for the frail elderly, and that it was supposed to be integrated with ordinary forms of housing [...] then it became a question of municipal comprehensive planning* (Informant K-J). The winning architects were struck by the words *integration* and *co-use*, and made them their key concepts. In a sense, integration and co-use became primary generators in the design process of the entry for the competition: – *What was really new to us was the idea that housing for the frail elderly should be integrated with the rest of the built environment. [...] In Denmark, when we design housing for the frail elderly, they tend to be located on virgin soil, without connection to any other built environment* (Informant K-N). His colleague continued: – *In this competition, we understood this idea of integration as being something out of the ordinary, something inspiring* (Informant K-M).

IV. Visions of Future-Oriented Architecture for the Elderly

The research material supported the conclusion that contemporary Nordic architecture for the frail elderly was perceived as institutional. The Danish architects remarked: – *When travelling in Denmark, it is possible to point out from far if the building [...] is used as a home for the elderly or not. They are institutions for the elderly. There is no doubt about it, it is impossible to imagine that a family with children would live there, or even ourselves* (Informant K-N). A Swedish informant made a similar remark: – *Anywhere you go in Sweden, it is possible to identify a building either as a home for the elderly or a kindergarten. [...] The significant details of a home for the elderly are the height of the building, normally two or three floors, the vast entrance, and since [...] the building is quite long, windows upon windows; you’ll see the long corridor from the outside* (Informant K-D). Other informants had doubts about whether the institutional features were visible from the outside or perceived only inside the building: – *Well, I can’t say if it is directly noticeable from the outside, but inside you’ll see it* (Informant K-F). Another informant remarked: – *Housings for the frail elderly are all institutions. They are often located away from other built environments: set aside from the rest of the living, so to speak. Inside, it is the whole feeling inside: long corridors and individuals slithering up and down the corridors* (Informant K-J). Another informant admitted that attempts were made to make the housing feel less institutional: – *Well, when entering some housing for frail elderly, you’ll get the feeling of being in an institution, but at the same time there is an attempt to make it homelike [...] although a professional sort of homeliness* (Informant K-K). Another informant tried to explain the institutional



FIG. 4: Selection of photographs illustrating from left to right an institutional-like environment (U), a sublime environment (F), and a residential-like environment (E, Q).

look: – *We have had a penchant for standardizing, which has made it possible to identify a building as housing for the frail elderly. In a way, the ambition has been primarily to build a stable house, economically and materially: the human being has not been considered properly* (Informant K-B).

Characteristics of an Institutional-Like Environment

Having been asked to think about institutional features of housing for the frail elderly, the informants were asked to choose photos from the photo collection that portrayed their feeling. Seven out of the ten Swedish informants, picked photograph U of a ceiling [see Fig. 4]. As one informant noted: – *This is a good example: I can't even say what it is* (Informant K-F). This opinion about this photograph was repeated by another informant: – *I don't know what it is, a floor or a ceiling, [...] it doesn't look homelike, more institutional* (Informant K-G). Institutions were perceived as something negative and circumscribing. One informant suggested that the photograph of the ceiling felt “de-individualizing” (Informant K-H). Another concluded: – *How terrible, I may not even have seen such a place in real life, but if I imagine me lying in a bed and looking up to this ceiling – how awful!* (Informant K-K). There were eleven photographs chosen in total to illustrate the institutional in architecture but no other pattern of choice was established with the other photographs.

Characteristics of an Envisioned Sublime Architecture

The competition brief envisioned “a milieu that interacts with our senses and instils a feeling of quality, being well taken care of and being in a secure place. We should be made to feel the sublime in such an environment. Architecture, interior design and colouring, as well as the exterior landscape should be in harmony and interact, contributing to this feeling” (Järfälla Kommun 2006, 17). Seven informants lacked exemplary models to describe the envisioned

architecture and they used existing housing in the municipality to describe desired requirements: – *Well, of all the municipal housings for the frail elderly, [...] there is a municipal building that I think is different from the other ones. It is a high-rise building. Of course, there are advantages and disadvantages with such a layout, [...] But, I think this housing is a good example because it is located near the centre of the built environment* (Informant K-K).

Three informants as well as the winning architects referred to housing for the frail elderly in Ystad in southern Sweden.³² This particular housing is inspired by anthroposophy both in its architecture and in its execution of assistance and care for the elderly. This example nourished the vision of an innovative architecture for the frail elderly: – *But in my own imaginative idea of the world, there must be the possibility to work and strengthen the feeling of well being. Hence, my thoughts of a place to meet, inspired by Vigs Ängar in Scania* (Informant K-B). When invited to elaborate on the sublime dimension of innovative architecture for the frail elderly at the Flottiljen site, eight out of the ten Swedish informants picked the picturesque garden, photograph F [see Fig. 4] and described the sublime feeling within the envisioned architecture: – *And this is something nice: flowers! To get out in a garden, it gives a feeling of joy and delight* (Informant K-C). Another informant said: – *This picture symbolises the human faculties that are activated when you are allowed to get outside. It is greenery, there are scents and you can hear the birds twitter* (Informant K-D). No informants could find an interior setting with a similar effect in the photo collection. The interior photos were said to “represent something which was not attractive” (Informant K-E). There were 17 photographs chosen in total to illustrate the sublime in architecture, but no pattern of choice was established with the other photographs.

The Swedish Main Principle of Homeliness

Seven informants were able to answer the question about residential-like qualities. The interior photo of a room, photograph “E” [see fig. 4] and an exterior photo of a small village, photograph “Q” [see fig. 4] both attracted three informants. Yet, it was difficult for the informants to discern the residential-like environment from the homelike environment seemed difficult to discern. The comments became arbitrary: “I think photograph ‘E’ would be homelike for some people and photograph ‘Q’ for some others. [...] The kitchen in photograph ‘C’ is also residential-like” (Informant K-J). There were five photographs in total chosen to illustrate residential-like qualities in architecture, but no pattern of choice was established with the other pho-

32. This refers to the Elder Centre of Vigs Ängar, Köpingsbro, in the municipality of Ystad.

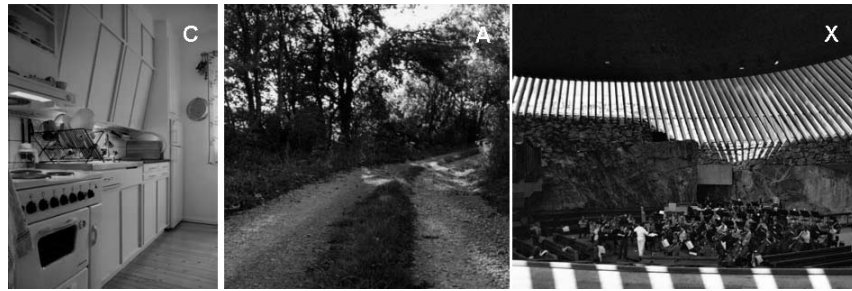


FIG. 5: Selection of photographs illustrating from left to right a homelike environment (C), support for wayfinding (A), and an opportunity for an overview of the spatial configuration (X).

tographs. Nine informants were able to describe a homelike character. Five informants used photograph “C”, photo of a kitchen, to describe homeliness [see fig. 5]: “A kitchen, photograph ‘C’, is obviously homelike [...]. You see the washing-up and the copper bowl on the wall” (Informant K-F). Three informants chose a view of a room to describe homelike features. One remarked: “Homelike and residential-like, it is the same thing for me, I choose photograph ‘E’” (Informant K-K). There were eight photographs in total to illustrate homelike qualities in architecture, but no pattern of choice was established with the other photographs.

Wayfinding and Spatial Overview

Eight informants were able to answer the question about wayfinding and spatial overview. Three informants used the photograph “Q” [see fig. 4] to describe an environment perceived as being supportive for the quality of wayfinding: “Wayfinding, oh gosh, no I can’t find any photo [...]. Well, if I live in a room with this view, photograph ‘Q’, then it would be supportive for wayfinding” (Informant K-C). One informant (Informant K-E) explained: “In this picture, photograph ‘Q’, the houses are different. That’s supportive for wayfinding” (Informant K-E). There were five photographs chosen in total to illustrate wayfinding qualities in architecture, but no pattern of choice was established with the other photographs.

Hesitantly, two exterior photos were chosen to illustrate spatial overview. One informant chose photograph “A” [see fig. 5], stating: “I think this photo; photograph ‘A’ looks inviting” (Informant K-B). The other informant chose photograph “X” [see fig. 5], noting: “It is a road that leads straight ahead” (Informant K-J). Two informants thought that the interior view of

a church³³ illustrated a spatial overview. The first commented that: “This is, photograph ‘X’, what I call an overview of a room” (Informant K-C). The other informant felt that: “This scene, photograph ‘X’, is undeniably possible to overview” (Informant K-F). There were eight photographs chosen in total to illustrate spatial overview in architecture, but no pattern of choice was established with the other photographs.

V. List of Findings

A guiding assumption for this paper was that a municipal matter is part of a viva voce process, where discourses must be taken into consideration in order to understand the motivating forces behind a decision to organize an architectural competition. This assumption necessitated a theory that posited spoken and written information about the competition could be seen as a series of speech acts that formed critical discourse on architecture and built environments for the elderly. These discourses were then integrated in a graphic model of architecture as a field of practice. Using this framework for understanding, the case study has supplied a basis for the following theoretical conclusions:

1) A municipal decision-making process for organizing an architectural competition can be explained with a discursive model of architecture as a field of practice. The discourses in the model reflect the divergent considerations that the organizer must deal with in order to create a consensus climate.

2) In the case study on the municipality of Jaerfaella, five main discourses were detected. These discourses were driven by personal experiences of architecture and human interactions with built environments, but they were also coloured by an acquired professional bias.

3) The discourses formed a hierarchy in which the planning-based discourse was the most influential as it supplied factual arguments that pushed the organization of an architectural competition one step further. The visionary discourse was the second most influential discourse as it nurtured political ambitions and marketing possibilities. These two discourses helped to solidify the idea of organizing an architectural competition. The ethical and the conceptual discourses had less influence as their argumentative validity was weakened by their relationship with general beliefs about human interactions with architecture and built environments. These beliefs came from every-day experiences of architecture for the frail elderly and were found in the human-spatial bound discourse. These three discourses helped prepare the idea of arranging an architectural competition.

33. The Rock Church in Helsinki, Finland

4) A unifying concept was necessary for harmonizing the divergent discourses, and for promoting a consensus climate around the idea of an architectural competition. The unifying concept had to have a multidimensional character, which allowed for an understanding of the unifying concept within each discourse. In this case study the words of *integration* and *co-use* have united the divergent discourses.

5) The organizer's motives for organizing an architectural competition are connected to the possible outcome of the competition. An architectural competition must engender advantages for the municipality, solve internal problems, and create an aura of innovation around the municipality possible to market.

In addition to the above theoretical conclusions, the Photolanguage method demonstrated that:

6) The Swedish main principle of creating a homelike and residential-like milieu for the frail elderly, which forms a supportive environment for both wayfinding and a spatial overview of the architecture, is too vague to generate pertinent spatial concepts necessary for generating new architectural thinking for ageing and care. The principle suffers from culture-based bias and is tied to time, place, class, and gender. Therefore, further definition is necessary to make this principle useful for creating pertinent spatial requirements for future-oriented architecture and eldercare.

DISCUSSION

This paper presented findings from a case study on an open architectural competition in the municipality of Jaerfaella, Sweden. The paper is necessarily explorative in nature as knowledge of similar studies in architecture is lacking. The paper is also based upon a single case study, and does not allow for an external triangulation. However, correlating post-competition spoken statements from interviews with official records has allowed for an internal triangulation (Stake 1995) of the empirical findings to reach valid conclusions. Thus a degree of reliability has been sustained (Yin 2003), and the collected research material forms an evidentiary base, that will allow for a secondary analysis and comparative studies.

The paper had two goals. Firstly, it set out to investigate and understand a municipality's decision-making process in organizing an architectural competition for a residential area incorporating innovative architecture for housing for the frail elderly. Secondly, it sought to understand how welfare goals are transformed into spatial concepts for this kind of architecture. The paper assumed that 1) a municipal matter is a *viva voce* process and 2) the spoken and written statements in this process are a form of architectural criticism

that must be taken into account to detect the motivating forces behind the creation of an architectural competition. The results were a graphic model of an open architectural competition in a Swedish municipality, which turned the matter into a scientific object, and a general conclusion that the Swedish principle of homeliness is too vague to generate pertinent spatial concepts necessary for generating new architectural thinking for ageing and care.

The global research question was two-fold and asked whether new ideas in architecture and built environments for the frail elderly were of importance for the case study of the municipality of Jaerfaella, or if these issues were simply a tool for establishing a political consensus concerning a comprehensive plan for a former airbase. Ageing and architecture was the focus of the competition, but the case study showed that the mere focus on innovative architecture for the frail elderly did not activate the visionary and planning-based discourses. In the end, it was the fusion of the two issues of ageing and architecture under the unifying concept of *integration* and *co-use* in the discursive model of an open architectural competition that created a winning team. One can conclude, then, that the answer to both parts of the research question is in the affirmative.

PROMOTING INNOVATIVE ARCHITECTURE

The winning Danish entry was praised for its townscape, but the housing for the frail elderly was perceived as not adequate. This outcome of a competition focusing on future-oriented architecture for the elderly should have been a disappointment for the organizer. Yet most of the municipal key informants were pleased with the Danish vision; only one informant expressed serious doubts. However, given the heteroclitic character of the organizer's thinking displayed in the discursive model of the competition, this outcome is logical: It was the idea of relocating and integrating housing for the frail elderly in the built environment that supplied the argument for organizing the architectural competition. The presented discourses, however, suggest that the municipality of Jaerfaella did not produce an equally strong argument for the future-oriented design of housing for this group of elderly. For example, the organizer supplied his visionary thinking only as a list of pros and cons in the competition brief, hoping that this alone would generate new ideas in the competition. The fact that the majority of the entries were assessed as conventional demonstrates that this tactic was not fortunate. This case study highlights the difficulty in setting up a competition in which the matter at hand is complex theoretical and not easy to define in spatial terms.

COMPETITION NOT EQUAL TO REALIZATION

A municipality is a stakeholder with a valid claim to influence built environments (Ryd 2003). The municipality of Jaerfaella both respected and attempted to surpass existing Swedish competition rules in the creation of a competition brief backed with the intention to be part of the participants' dialogue with the design task (Lundequist 1995). The organizer's goal was to field a variety of architectonic visions, which would display different and new ideas of future housing for the frail elderly along with new thinking regarding assistance and care for this group. However, the winning architects interpreted the competition brief as the first draft of the subsequent construction briefing. The Danish architects noted the fuzziness in the competition brief, but felt that further details would be supplied after the competition. This case study supports the conclusion that the organizer's competition brief invited the competitors to integrate socio-political welfare goals in their design thinking for the competition task, but that the competition brief was not the preliminary summary of the future construction briefing. In conclusion, in an open architectural competition in a Swedish municipality the competition brief and the construction briefing are two separate documents, which are the outcome of two different municipal decision-making processes. The competition brief reflects the agreement between local politicians and municipal administrative representatives of the possible orientation of the competitions task, defining limits but leaving the task open to substance, while the construction briefing supplies requirements for the building, which can be interpreted architecturally and calculated.

NEW FORMS OF ARCHITECTURAL

COMPETITIONS TO PROMOTE INTERACTION

The empirical findings in this paper suggest that the Swedish principle of homeliness upheld by a personalized assistance and care to the frail elderly and in creating a residential-like architecture for them is ambiguous. The informants' choice of photographs implies that homeliness resides in the opportunity to interact individually with architecture in order to adjust it to personal needs of safety and well-being. Further, this case study has detected a problem with the Swedish competition rules, because these fail to consider the case of a competition in which the complexity of the task necessitates an on-going communication with the organizer during the competition period. This suggests that an architectural competition about socio-political welfare goals also includes a question with an ethical and ideological implication: what ideal society should architecture embody? The municipality of Jaerfaella came to realize that their vision was a society in which the elderly were

“a heterogeneous population with a variety of challenges which demand a multiplicity of solutions” (Rosenberg & Everitt 2001, 143) including “housing alternatives and maximisation of choice” (*Ibid.*). This would be a vision understood by most industrialized countries that are seeing a demographic shift towards a larger share of the elderly in their population. The winning Danish entry details these aspects thoroughly, and therefore it can be seen as the worthy winner of the competition, who created innovative architecture for an ageing society. Yet a final two-fold question emerges from this case study: Is an architectural competition the right forum for generating new spatial thinking meant to fulfil socio-political welfare goals, or does this task demand a new competition form? Such an architectural competition form, with an intentionally imprecise competition brief to feed a discussion on architecture and socio-political goals between organizer and participants, would be something in between a *design competition* and an *ideas competition* (Sveriges Arkitekter 2008). It would allow for an exchange of ideas during the competition period. In modern society, such a competition form would be a true innovation of the current forms of architectural competitions and it would allow for a new interactive way of dealing with future-oriented issues pertaining to ageing, architecture, and eldercare. Such an architectural competition form would generate true ideal cities welcoming people of all ages and of all abilities.

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Järfälla: Järfälla kommun.

INTERVIEWS

The following informants have been identified as key actors in the process of organizing an open architectural competition in the municipality of Jaerfaella, Sweden. They have been anonymized as to name and municipal duty by a two-letter code. K stands for key and the following letter is an identification code.

- Informant K-A, Administration for Social Welfare, Municipality of Jaerfaella, Mar. 2008
- Informant K-B, Administration for Social Welfare, Municipality of Jaerfaella, Jan. 2008.
- Informant K-C, Administration for Social Welfare, Municipality of Jaerfaella, May 2008.
- Informant K-D, Administration for Social Welfare, Municipality of Jaerfaella, May 2008.
- Informant K-E, Administration for Social Welfare, Municipality of Jaerfaella, April 2008.
- Informant K-F, Administration for Social Welfare, Municipality of Jaerfaella, Febr.2008.
- Informant K-G, Municipal Executive Office, Municipality of Jaerfaella, Jan. 2008.
- Informant K-H, Municipal Executive Office, Municipality of Jaerfaella, April 2008.
- Informant K-J, Municipal Executive Office, Municipality of Jaerfaella, February 2008.
- Informant K-K, Municipal Executive Office, Municipality of Jaerfaella, March 2008.
- Informant K-M, GPP Arkitekter A/S, Aarhus, Denmark, October 2007.
- Informant K-N, GPP Arkitekter A/S, Aarhus, Denmark, October 2007.

APPENDIX A

The following 38 questions were selected from the protocol comprised of 82 questions. The number of valid answers (VA) is indicated for each question, and implies an eloquent description of a series of events on a given theme.

- * - questions used for identifying a conceptual, ethical, planning-based, or visionary discourse
- ⊠ - question used for identifying a human-spatial bound discourse on ageing, architecture, and built environments.

* 3.0 ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION

- 3a) Have you been involved in the process of organizing an open architectural competition, where the task was to design a future-oriented housing for the frail elderly? (VA 10).
- 3b) Do you know the reason why the municipality decided to organize an open architectural competition centred on housing with care for the frail elderly? (VA 10).
- 3c) Do you know if the municipality discussed alternative forms of architectural competitions, i.e. an invited competition or parallel commissions? (VA 10).
- 3d) What is the main reason, in your opinion, why the municipality decided to organize an architectural competition? (VA 10).
- 3e) What was the key question in the architectural competition? Valid answers 9.
- 3f) In hindsight, do you believe that it was a correct decision to organize an open architectural competition centred around the question of future-oriented design for housing for the frail elderly in the municipality of Jaerfaella? (VA 10).
- 3g) Do you believe that the submitted entries in the architectural competition succeeded in answering the question for the architectural competition? (VA 9).

* 4.0 CONCEPTS IN THE COMPETITION

- 4a) In the architectural competition, the concept of future-oriented living for elderly people is a key concept for the organizer. How would you like to define that concept? (VA 10).
- 4b) What does housing with care for the frail elderly or housing for the frail elderly imply to you? (VA 10).
- 4c) According to you, who are the elderly, how old are they and what specific needs do they have? (VA 9).
- 4d) What does the concept of innovative thinking for the elderly living in 2010 mean to you? (VA 9).
- 4e) In your opinion, how would you like to define architecture, and does architecture mean anything in particular to you? (VA 9).
- 4f) Do you believe that architecture or the built environment can affect a human beings on different emotional levels? (VA 9).

✕ 5.0 ELDERCARE AND CARING FOR THE FRAIL ELDERLY

- 5a) Caring for the elderly, what does that imply to you? (VA 9).

- 5b) Do you believe that there is some distinctive feature in buildings used in housing for the frail elderly? (VA 9).
- 5c) In your opinion, what does good eldercare or good care for the elderly mean? (VA 7).
- 5d) Do you have any examples of architecture that in your opinion would be considered as a well-executed environment for the frail elderly? (VA 8).
- 5f) The competition brief invites the participants to reflect upon their own way of living in the later stages of life. What is your own vision like? (VA 7).

✕ 6.0 INSTITUTIONAL-LIKE ENVIRONMENT AND HOMELIKE ENVIRONMENT, (PHOTOLANGUAGE METHOD)

- 6a) The competition brief describes contemporary housing for the frail elderly as an institution or an institutional-like environment. The phrase “institutional feeling” is used. Using between one and three photographs can you define what such a feeling consists of? (VA 10).
- 6b) The competition brief suggests an architecture that shall encourage a sublime feeling, and a feeling of being present. The interior setting must be designed as a homelike milieu, displaying memorabilia from different design epochs. The exterior shall stimulate sensory impulses – scent, vision, sound – and create agreeable feelings. All this should be set in an accessible and useable landscape. All sensory faculties need to be stimulated. Using between one and three photographs can you define some features in such an environment? (VA 10).
- 6c) The Swedish Social Services Act has recommendations for the environment in the housing of the frail elderly. When it comes to building design, these recommendations have become guidelines when conceiving environments for elderly. Often, the following four concepts are used: residential-like, homelike, support for wayfinding and opportunity for a general overview of the spatial configuration. Using between one and three photographs can you define what these concepts means to you? (VA 7, 9, 8, 8).

* 7.0 COMPETITION BRIEF

- 7a) In hindsight, what do you think of the competition brief for the architectural competition? If you had the possibility, is there anything that you would have liked to have seen changed? (VA 8).
- 7b) Do you think that the competition brief includes key issues when it comes to high quality in eldercare and caring for frail elderly? (VA 8).
- 7c) If you think of all the submitted entries in the competition, in your

opinion, do you think that the competing architects have understood the question of a future-oriented living for the elderly? (VA 6).

- 7f). Could you describe how the municipality of Jaerfaella started the process of defining and describing the design question in the competition? (VA 5).
- 7g) When the competition brief was designed, did the organizer try to influence the participants by presenting the design question in a specific way? Were any special adaptations made of the text in order to communicate the design question? (VA 6).
- 7h) Do you believe, that the participants used the competition brief as they worked to find a design solution? (VA 5).
- 7j) Do you believe, that the competition brief succeeded in communicating the design task to the participants and acted as a guiding force in their work? (VA 3).
- 7k) Did you use the competition brief during the competition, when assessing the entries and finding a winner or after the completion of the competition? (VA 7).

* 8.0 ASSESSMENT OF ENTRIES

- 8a). Having assessed the submitted entries, do you believe that their originators succeeded in answering the design question for the architectural competition? (VA 7).
- 8c) Did you find it easy to select the entries of interest or did you experience a growing feeling of criticism the deeper you assessed the originator's interpretation of the design question? (VA 5).
- 8j) How was the winner of the competition found, and what decided the matter according to you? (VA 5).
- 8k). Do you think that the winning entry has taken into account the considerations one has to make when designing housing for the frail elderly? (VA 5).

* 9.0 REALIZING THE WINNING ENTRY

- 9d) After the winner in the architectural competition of "Flottiljen – Future-oriented Habitats for the Elderly" was announced, a study tour was made to Denmark. Did you take part, and if you did, do you think it was of any value? (VA 6).

* 11.0 PARTICIPATORY PROCESS FOR REALIZING THE WINNING ENTRY.

- 11 a) The work of realizing the winning entry in the architectural competition has begun, and when it comes to the design of the housing for the frail

elderly, a participatory advisory process with staff, representatives from the unions and organizations in defence of the rights of the elderly has started. What is your opinion about the process? Do you think it will work? (VA 9).

* 12.0 SUMMING UP

- 12 c). In hindsight, do you believe that the municipality of Jaerfaella made the right decision when organizing an architectural competition about future-oriented forms of housing for the elderly? (VA 6).
- 12d). If you had the opportunity to organize an architectural competition similar to "Flottiljen – Future-oriented Habitats for the elderly", would you do anything different? (VA 4).
- 12e). Have you acquired any personal experiences or knowledge by participating in the process of organizing the architectural competition of 'Flottiljen – Future-oriented Habitats for the Elderly'? (VA 5).

APPENDIX B.

The following thematic questions were used for interviewing the two winning architects at GPP Arkitekter A/S, Denmark. A valid answer implies a description of a series of events or arguments on a given theme. A complete answer indicates that the question has not been fully answered.

THEMES FOR DISCUSSION:

- A. Creative approaches – starting the work of developing a competition entry; - the use of the competition brief; sources of information; collaboration with affiliated professionals within eldercare for the frail elderly; primary generators/ exemplary models, possible cultural difference in care for the frail elderly in Denmark and in Sweden. Complete valid answer.
- B. Organisation of the competition team – number of involved persons; estimate of total hours of work; competences involved in the competition team. Complete valid answer.
- C. Literature for planning – Danish sources; influence from organisations in defence of the rights of the Elderly in society; societal welfare goals in Denmark to fulfil when creating architecture for the frail elderly. Complete valid answer.
- D. Study tour – selection of exemplary models used for a study tour for the municipality of Jaerfaella; criteria for the selection. Complete valid answer.
- E. General discussion about architecture for the frail elderly in Denmark (Photolanguage method); ethical values for daily care for the frail elderly; institutional-like versus homelike environment; homelike versus residential-like environment. Valid answer to some extent.

Abstract

The paper aims to examine the unbuilt competition projects of the Danish architect Jørn Utzon (Copenhagen, 1918 –Helsingør, 2008) focusing in particular on the themes he developed throughout his career. With an approach to Utzon's unbuilt competitions, that includes a selection of his most significant projects grouped into periods, the paper proposes an overall overview with references to the competition context, revealing the key aspects of his unique poetic universe.

A lyrical career that goes from his early competition projects developed with his friend Tobias Faber in which building landscape is superposed and combined with a fascinating formal inventiveness and a revived admiration for the elemental wisdom of primitive architecture and natural approach developed initially with Arne Korsmo, passing from the landscape sequence of his courtyard house through the iconic constructions proposed in the competition for Langelinie Pavilion (1953) to reach his more lightweight piece, the winning proposal for the international competition for the Sydney Opera House (1957), and end with a process of reflection evinced in Sydney with the additive architecture characterised by the synthesis of geometry, modulation and standardised production.

As a tribute to the Danish master Jørn Utzon, this paper reviews his competition proposals as a whole that summarize his lyrical and tenacious career.

Keywords

Jørn Utzon, unbuilt, Competitions, Nordic architecture.

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Utzon's Unbuilt Competitions Projects Archetypal Images, Landmarks, Platforms and Additive Architecture

Jaime J. Ferrer Forés

1. INTRODUCTION

This article aims to demonstrate the importance of architectural competitions for developing the career of the Danish architect Jørn Utzon. The article is divided in several sections. Firstly, the article will present briefly Jørn Utzon's career. Secondly, the article will introduce the main distinctive characteristics of Jørn Utzon's architecture. It does not attempt to describe his extensive work, but to point out the central elements in his efforts. There are many ideas in Jørn Utzon's work, which are developed through his participation in competitions and are presented in this article in four main themes: the archetypal images, the landmarks, the platforms and additive architecture, exemplified by selected unbuilt projects.

2. JØRN UTZON: RESEARCH THROUGH COMPETITIONS

The career of the Danish architect Jørn Utzon (1918-2008) flows from two essential convictions, building and landscape, on which he builds, with the material tradition of the master builder, an architecture derived from timeless principles of form and a product of a highly creative imagination.

Utzon has experimented developed and combined through a series of basic motifs or themes in project after project. He had the opportunity to essay several themes, as the platform idea, that prepared him for maturity: in collaboration with Tobias Faber, he proposed modern buildings in historic centres as the Theatre in Randers (1947), designed in large scale projects such as in Viborg (1944), Bellahøj (1945) or Borås (1947), and participated in international competitions projects as the Crystal Palace in London (1946) awarded with a mention. In collaboration with Arne Korsmo, he developed competition entries for the Central Railway Station in Oslo (1947), an urban development for Vestre Vika, Oslo (1948) or the competition for the Business School in Göteborg (1948) where combines modern architecture, landscaping intelligence and plastic capacity.

Aside from the formal exercise through competitions, during this period

Utzon obtained first prize for the Skånska Hustyper competition for low-cost housing in Skåne, Sweden (1953). But the scheme did not lead to any commission in Sweden, due to which Utzon promoted the development of the model in Helsingør (1956) and later on Bjuv (1956), Lund (1957) and Fredensborg (1959) based on these ideas.

Formal research based on masterly reinterpretation of the symbolic past and modern architecture was revealed to the full in the competition for the Langelinie Pavilion in Copenhagen (1953) where cantilevered floors around a core define the radiating profile of an iconic tower that was awarded with a mention in the competition with Arne Jacobsen and Mogens Lassen as jury members. Nowadays, it seems a failure to do not appreciate Utzon's scheme, which would have given an extraordinary attraction in Copenhagen Harbour.

Nevertheless, a platform crowned by a succession of weightless shells becomes the winning entry in an international competition for the Sydney Opera House (1957). The massive nature of the platform -developed in previous competitions- and the iconographic value of the vigorous white shells turned into symbol of a whole continent. The shells that Utzon raises by the Sydney Harbour become an extraordinary aesthetic achievement, but also the result of an enormous effort to combine all the technical and formal aspects of the building. The shells that Utzon raises by the Harbour herald the presence of a new landmark.

Utzon's projects designed during the development of Sydney Opera House comprise a group of proposals developing the formal discoveries of the Ancient World. Massive platforms and lightweight roofs characterise his proposals for the competition for the Copenhagen World Exhibition, Amager (1959), the urban development of Elviria, Spain (1960), the Wolfsburg Theatre (1965) -awarded fourth prize- or the proposal for the University centre in Odense (1966). However, Utzon won a competition for the High School in Højstrup, Helsingør (1958), the competition for the urban development in Frederiksberg, Copenhagen (1959) and an international competition for the Zurich Theatre (1964). Nevertheless, none of these projects was developed [fig. 1].

3. ARCHETYPAL IMAGES

Competitions took up much of Utzon's time in his early years. In his formative projects Jørn Utzon combined the diversity of human cultures -as a source of inspiration and analogy- absorbed during his travels with the Nordic sensibility to nature he extracted from some of the modern masters.

Utzon's architecture demonstrates a fascination for the architecture of

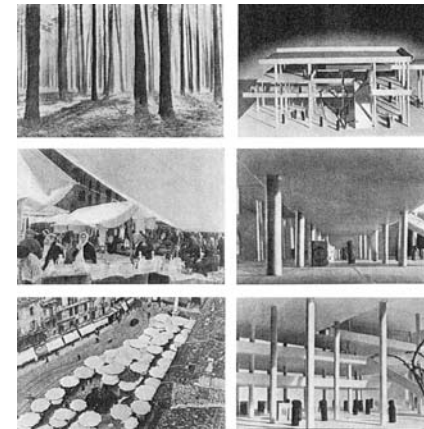


FIG. 1: Jørn Utzon. Crystal Palace competition in London, 1947. Utzon's metaphorical mode of thought: the exhibition hall was compared with a beech forest and an Italian market.

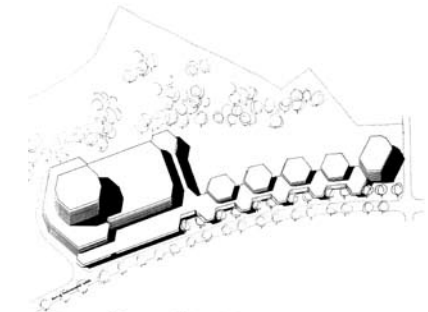


FIG. 2: Jørn Utzon. Aalborg Convention Centre competition, 1945. The project was located in an alternative location on an adjacent site and was ruled out of consideration.

the Ancient World. His works condense apprehended ancestral cultures of foreign countries and reveal a profound poetic understanding of world culture. His archetypal elements as the platforms and floating roofs all have evidently historical precedents. Utzon asserts: "I have never copied these things, but I have allowed these thoughts and elements to influence the way I work" (Utzon, 1989).

He also finds poetic metaphors in nature, as sources of creative inspiration and as a reference for structural analogy. Utzon's approach is extremely sensitive and skilful in assimilating already existing formal structures into his personal synthesis. A particular interesting aspect of Jørn Utzon's work is the repeated appearance of certain images or metaphors, such as the beech forest and a clearance or the image of clouds that becomes a recurring motif. These metaphorical images played an important role in Utzon's particular design method.

At this early stage of his career, these analogies with nature become a catalyst to Utzon's own evolving thinking. These early competitions can be seen to contain hints of much that was to come [fig. 2].

In 1945 Utzon and his friend Tobias Faber entered the competition for the Aalborg Convention centre in Denmark. The design was based on a hexagonal grid and proposed a compact and contained architecture that, without giving up its representative character, is able to adapt to the scale of its site and to meet the functional demands of the complex program. In addition, his design proposed an alternative location in the area where the old Aalborg Hall was placed, outside the specified site. Among the 33 proposals

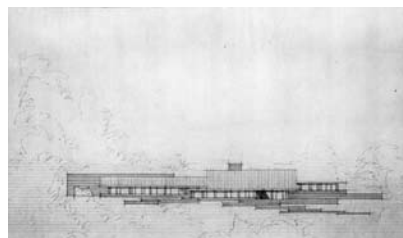


FIG. 3: Jørn Utzon. Hobro forest pavilion competition, 1946. The volumes of the pavilion adapt to the topography and the boundaries between the natural and artificial are blurred.

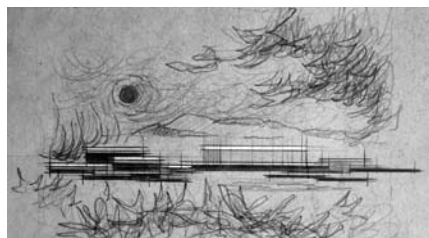


FIG. 4: Jørn Utzon. Aarhus sport complex competition, 1946. The pieces of the complex are arranged following the contour lines to adapt to the changing relief of the landscape.

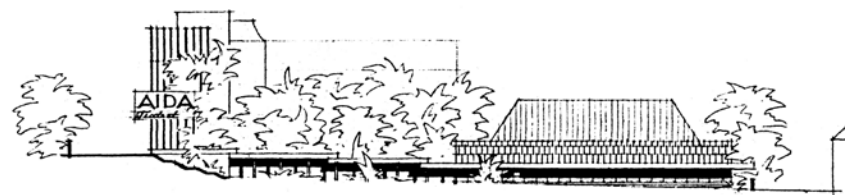


FIG. 5: Jørn Utzon. Randers Theatre competition, 1947. The project penetrates the urban block to create a courtyard that welcomes different uses.

submitted to the competition, the jury appreciates its geometric rigour and formal clarity and described the proposal as “curious and crystalline” but was not awarded a prize. (Lund, 1945). This early proposal reflects the crucial role already then being played by modules in Utzon’s work as tools of economy and formal rigor [fig. 3].

In 1946, Utzon and Faber entered the competition for the forest pavilion in Hobro, Denmark. The continuous slope allows setting small pieces on the hillside grounding the building in the place. The formal simplicity and the slippage of the pieces around the chimney highlight the spectacular views of the surroundings and emphasize Utzon’s impressive command of site planning. Among 45 entries, Johan Pedersen, a jury member, wrote: “it is very beautiful, but is not fully developed. Apart from the echoes to the American architecture in the roof of the restaurant, all is designed and produced in a very sensitive way in which it’s attenuated the transition between nature and building – between inside and out” (Pedersen, 1946).

Nevertheless, the competition committee awarded the careful articulation of volumes conceived by Arne Jacobsen and Nils Koppel: an inspired articulation that gives formal unity and functional coherence to the project. Despite obtaining first prize, Arne Jacobsen did not get any commission.

Two more competitions entries were submitted in 1946 in collaboration with Tobias Faber. The first, combining topography and vegetation, the project

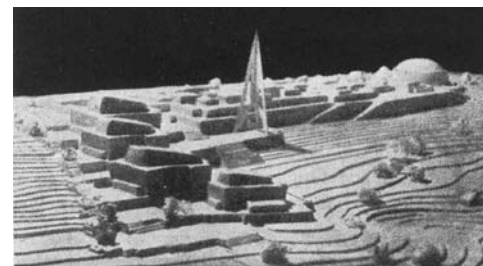


FIG. 6: Jørn Utzon. Crystal Palace competition in London, 1947. The entry arranged the main auditorium and fourth performance halls and exhibition spaces on a terraced platform which frames the perimeter of the site.

transforms the existing facilities of the sports park at Næstved into a park. Among 17 projects submitted, the judges awarded third prize. The jury committee composed by Arne Jacobsen and the great Danish landscape architect C. Th. Sørensen emphasized its qualities: “the sports park character is particularly valuable” (Sørensen, 1946) [fig. 4].

The second proposal, submitted for the extending of the stadium in Aarhus, addresses a new topography generated after mass movement and serves to place the stands as an old reminiscence of classical architecture where architecture blends with nature. Utzon carved with sports facilities the natural environment and covered with light horizontal floating planes. In addition, to establish a dialogue with the landscape, “the complex is fragmented in three clearly expressed groups, which consist of the three halls, each with facilities. This solution provides simplicity to the complex and a harmonious building in scale with the forest and terrain”. Despite publishing among the winners, Utzon’s proposal was not awarded (Schlegel, 1947) [fig. 5].

In the competition for the theatre in Randers, Denmark, the scheme presented together with Tobias Faber is configured as an amphitheatre carved out in the ground and whose ceiling responds to the acoustic of the hall. The project searches for a rigorous image achieved with the design of a solid and closed volume opening to a large square that helps to assert its public character. However, their effort did not receive any award.

Among the 59 entries submitted in the competition, Arne Jacobsen’s proposal was conceived as a volumetrically expressive design whose open façade in glass and steel serves as structural framework through which one discern movement in the interior. (*Konkurrence om et Teater i Randers*, 1947).

Competition provided an opportunity for winning important jobs and helped young architects starting out a professional career. Lacking regular clients, Utzon was forced to enter numerous architectural competitions in Denmark and Sweden. He did not limit himself to Scandinavia [fig. 6].

In 1947 Utzon and Faber, joined Mogens Irmig, entered the international competition for the Crystal Palace in London. The proposal grouped the buildings along the ridge, where the Crystal Palace had once stood. The complex consisting of exhibition area, group of theatres, sporting buildings area, stadium and amusement centre rest on a massive stepped platform

placed along the ridge. The complex is divided into compact volumes and platforms that slide down the hillside, minimizing their presence and evoking Ancient platforms and terraces. Utzon asserts: “each building stands on its plateau following the changing levels of the grounds” (*Konkurrenceforslag til Crystal Palace i London, 1947*).

The terrace arrangement of the platform allows for multiple views of the park. Spread on a small valley, the park adapts to the terrain's morphology where the large outdoor stadium “has been carved out of the ground”.

In addition, Utzon illustrates his metaphorical mode of thought: “the balconies of the hall create the illusion of low suspended tent-roofs.” A beech forest was compared with the hall space between columns. The exhibition halls were arranged as a sequence of courtyards embracing the exhibition spaces: “walking through the exhibition area, the visitors get the feeling of going through a forest shady spots are changing into open glades”. The changing level of the roof is compared with the Italian squares: “under the light balconies the stream of visitors passes by like under the white canvas roofs of a shiny market place” and ended with an allusion to the sequence of floating roof: “the white surf and the roofs of the exhibition hall induce the same impression of majestic placidity.”

The proposal awarded with a mention was commented on the *Architect's Journal* by Maxwell Fry: “it represents a point of view and is homogeneous; but it is dreamy and emotional, completely un-vulgar, which is something, but far too resigned to be real”. The Crystal Palace displayed the plastic concerns he developed throughout his career. The Crystal Palace steeped terrace pointed forward Sydney Opera House platform.

The inspiration from Aalto is clearly evident in the design of the auditoriums halls. The Nordic relations continued and expanded through his friendship and work together with Arne Korsmo. Utzon and Korsmo developed a shared “pleasure in spatial perception” and entered in competitions. In addition, Utzon joined as an invited member of the Norwegian section of the CIAM, PAGON, *Progressive Arkitekters Gruppe Oslo Norge*, in which Arne Korsmo, Christian Norberg-Schulz, Geir Grung and Sverre Fehn participated in the early fifties [fig. 7].

The competition for the Central Railway Station in Oslo in 1947 by Utzon and Arne Korsmo raises its toplit halls at the back of a plot in the town centre cleared to open up a square. With the motto “Kontrapunkt” the office tower takes up a corner of the square previously cleared within the dense urban fabric, which allows it to assert its presence in height and volume, creating also an anteroom for the Central Railway Station. The station's large compact volume in whose interior railroad lines end is shaped by a toplit space trans-

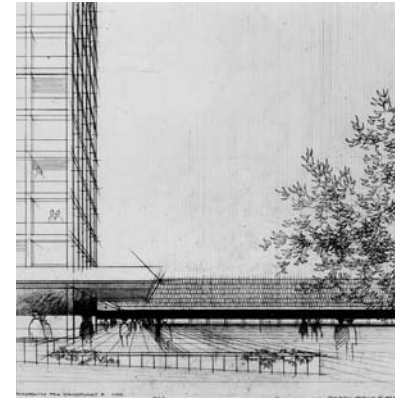


FIG. 7: Utzon and Korsmo. Oslo Central Station competition, 1947. The proposal, which was ruled out by being submitted late, display a compact volume of the station as a counterpoint to the office tower block.



FIG. 8: Utzon and Korsmo. Business School in Göteborg, 1948. The project combines two extremes of typological scale, the tower and the low-rise block on a podium which links the building to the perimeter streets.

versal to the platforms that articulates the activities connecting the esplanade with the train tracks. Despite all the detailed drawings they prepared, his proposal was submitted too late and could not be awarded a prize [fig. 8].

The counterpoint established between the tower and the low-rise block reappeared in 1948 in an entry for a competition for the Business School in Göteborg, Sweden. The tower that houses the teaching department and the seminar rooms rises up over the low-rise block that contains the school's internal facilities developed around a courtyard. With the motto “Le commerce”, the design of an expressive volumetry is achieved by rising an articulated sequence of volumes on a platform from which a tower emerges. The platform was to contain service areas –an organising device which will be developed in Sydney and later projects.

His proposal was exhibited in the Kunstindustrimuseet in Trondheim, Norway in late 1948, but not awarded a prize. Utzon and Korsmo tended to become too involved in competition, and often worked past the submission deadline. His entry for the competition for the development of Vestre Vika in Oslo in 1948 was turned in too late and was excluded from the judging. Utzon explains: “Arne did not come down to me in Copenhagen with the program until the day the proposal was to be turned in, perhaps best illustrates his total absorption in architectonic problems, regardless of whether they could be realized or not” (Utzon, 1986) [fig. 9].

With the motto “Borger-det er din by”, citizen-it's your town, the project serve to complete, stitch and revitalize the urban fabric in the fragmented edges of the urban continuum. The urban renewal in Vestre Vika was con-

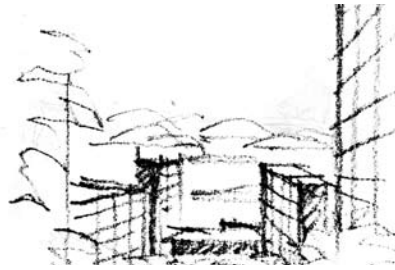


FIG. 9: Utzon and Korsmo. Development for Vestre Vika, 1947. In the fragmented edges of the urban continuum with its pronounced topographical bumps, the proposal pays special attention to the geographical valorisation of the landscape and to the organization of the open spaces, with pedestrian paths and itineraries. Oslo's fjord between the blocks of the intervention.

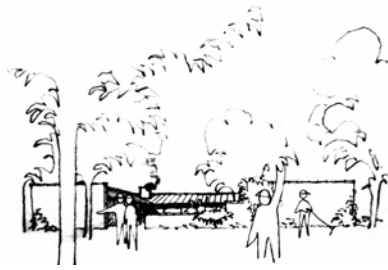


FIG. 10: Jørn Utzon. Low cost housing competition, Skåne, 1953. With the motto 'Private Life' Utzon's first prize winning entry marked the base for the exploration of the courtyard house.

ceived as a development of a strategy: “we based our Vestre Vika project on a slum-clearance principle, and solved the problem by using building units in which the materials, modules and interplay of colours would allow different architects to build on to it in length and if desired, in height.” The emphasis on landscape and process was particularly adapted to the “rising and falling terrain, the rhythm of the Oslo landscape that led to this principle” (Norberg-Schulz, 1986) [fig. 10].

4. DOMESTIC LANDSCAPES

In the early years of Utzon's practice, he collaborated with his Danish friend Tobias Faber. They intervened in various competitions for public buildings and housing complexes whose geographical valorisation extended the proposals on the terrain of the landscapes.

The housing competition in Viborg, Denmark in 1944, which received a mention in the competition, was one of the Utzon's first attempts at large-scale housing development and landscaping. The project combines the urban systematic arrangement of the multi-family blocks and the one-family terraced houses which assume a more intense relationship with the natural area. The project was selected for purchase and the jury wrote: “the proposal show a free solution with a beautiful adaptation of houses in terrain and a characteristic utilization of the slope in the terraced houses. However, southern houses look too unusual” (*Konkurrencem om en Bebyggelsesplan i Viborg*, 1947). Despite the jury's comments, the sequence of residential units in the landscape revealed a concern to anchor the individual home to the terrain and feeling for the landscape.

The characteristic Danish landscape is emphasized in a playful sequence of displacements in his competition entry for a Housing complex in Caro-

line Amalie vej, Lyngby, Denmark in 1945. The proposal impressed Professor Kay Fisker, one of the judges. Utzon's project was awarded as “an interesting attempt to move from the common rigid parcelling planning to create an urban proposal, which in a live form links house and garden seeking to avoid any form of monotony. The project creates a beautiful and natural relation to the green areas. In the project, dwelling and garden design is inextricably linked together and will form a beautiful overall picture.” The proposal was further developed over the many years ahead in a succession of housing projects, developed in the Skånska Hustyper competition (1953) and finally built in Kingo housing complex in Helsingør (1956) and Fredensborg (1959).

In addition, the jury considers the Lyngby house unit as a “beautiful and clear plan, cleverly designed. Each room is in contact with the shielded outdoor space”. This unit built up around a sheltering wall was developed further in the Skånska Hustyper competition for low-cost housing in Skåne, Sweden in 1953. The project, submitted with the motto “Private life”, was developed in collaboration with Ib Møgelvang and was awarded first prize among 74 proposals submitted. The jury committee, composed by the Swedish renowned architect Erik Ahlsén and the Danish architect Nils Koppel, among others, commented on its high level, both as an idea and as well planned architectural project. “The idea, which is to build up every house within its four walls, can develop freely according to different families' needs, presented in a convincing way in a range of options. Both described the project as evidence of a rational approach to an industrial production of the house” (Borg, 1953). Developed on a 20x20 metre square, the dwelling is set up on a 4.5 metre bay around a central patio and unfolds according to family needs [fig 11.].

The competition was promoted to propose low-cost houses and settlement patterns suited to the outskirts of rural towns in the Skåne region characterized by a smooth and windswept landscape. The jury asserts: “there are many opportunities to place this house-type in different environments, either side by side in a suburb, open air or in small independent groups out there in the countryside.” The unit prototype is build up around a courtyard that mediates between the building and its natural surroundings. The patio establishes a private domain in close contact to the nature. The committee also stressed: “with the intimate protective farm, and the calm and character of the outer house may well be inserted in different landscapes. The interest of the proposal is thus that it offers many opportunities for a continued study of a vast number of variations adapted to individual needs. Even from an urban planning the proposal gives the rich opportunities for successful

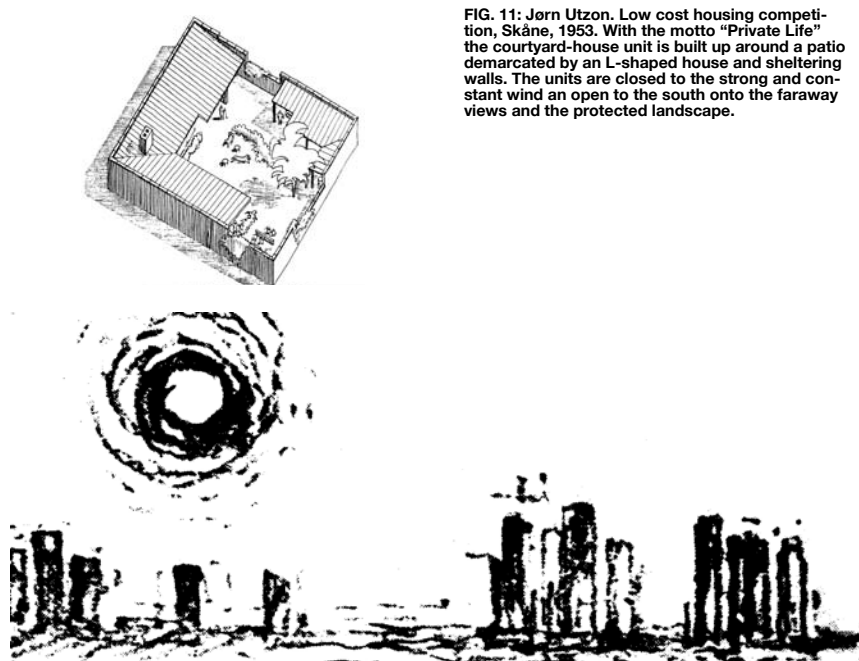


FIG. 11: Jørn Utzon. Low cost housing competition, Skåne, 1953. With the motto "Private Life" the courtyard-house unit is built up around a patio demarcated by an L-shaped house and sheltering walls. The units are closed to the strong and constant wind an open to the south onto the faraway views and the protected landscape.

FIG. 12: Jørn Utzon. Competition proposal for Frederiksberg, 1959. An evocative assemblage of houses compose a line of towers in the landscape accentuated by the sun.

solutions. However, one should avoid the monotony that can occur when a dense plan of the type is developed" (Borg, 1953).

The jury appreciated all the principles of the proposal and its enormous potential for adaptation to different contexts and situations. Nevertheless, despite obtaining first prize, the scheme did not lead to any commission in Sweden, due to which Utzon promoted the development of the model in the Kingo housing complex in Helsingør (1956) and Fredensborg (1959-65) grounding the individual house to the specific place in the landscape and giving the complex a unique singular appearance. Later on, he built the housing complexes in the outskirts of Bjuv (1956) and Lund (1957) both in Sweden. The housing complexes in Helsingør and Fredensborg construct a landscaped composition that responds to the principles established in the early competitions: total separation between conflictive circulations systems, double access to the courtyard house, aggregate units formed by the addition of dwellings, and nature as a continuous central element of the grouping [fig 12].

5. HOUSING LANDMARKS

Utzon's tenacious experimental tradition in the field of housing was developed throughout his long career. In his early competition project for the Bellahøj district of Copenhagen in 1945, carried out in collaboration with his friend Tobias Faber, the isolated volumes located in singular environments and the assemblages of houses will give to the outskirts a certain urban character. When the traditional city grows generating new developments, it is possible to obtain a greater formal and typological freedom using an assemblage of freestanding pieces. In this way, Utzon and Faber have raised a combination of high- and medium-rise blocks disposed to exploit and enhance the landscape. Residential towers make their way into the urban profile, becoming housing landmarks. Nevertheless, their proposal was purchased but not awarded a prize. The winning design, by Mogens Irming and Tage Nielsen, was a multi-storey housing blocks that freed the ground for parks and open areas. However, the judges had praised Utzon and Faber "landscape work" and wrote: "the combination of the high-rise blocks in connection with the low-lying building obtains a living silhouette". Nevertheless, the jury, composed by Frits Schegel and Eske Kristensen, among others, had considered less well placed the multi-family blocks on the lake and also commented on practical criticism: high rise building shall comply correctly specific fire regulations (Kristensen, 1945).

On a hillside of Borås, Sweden, and with views onto a wide landscape, Utzon and Faber have pushed into the slope a stepped sequence of volumes in their next competition for housing in Borås, in 1947. A set of towers of massive appearance and a long and low-lying building compose a peculiar residential complex, whose stepped silhouette evokes the unevenness of the terrain. The proposal called "Kontrapunkt" exemplifies Utzon's early desire to adapt construction to the topography and landscape.

Utzon lyrically describes his proposal: "the dwellings open themselves as flowers towards the sun". The configuration of the plan evokes Alvar Aalto's fan-shaped layout opens toward the landscape. In addition, the party walls become large planes sheltering the deep shade of the balcony as an element to individualise each unit and also taking advantage of the slope to offer a different kind of dwelling at each level.

The jury appreciates its "attempt to find a residential assemblage adapted to the landscape as contrary to the usual rigid forms of residential complexes" and had commended "the proposal, whose author unfortunately ignored part of the program required in the brief, is awarded with a mention" [fig. 13].

In 1954, working in Helsingborg in association with Erik and Henry

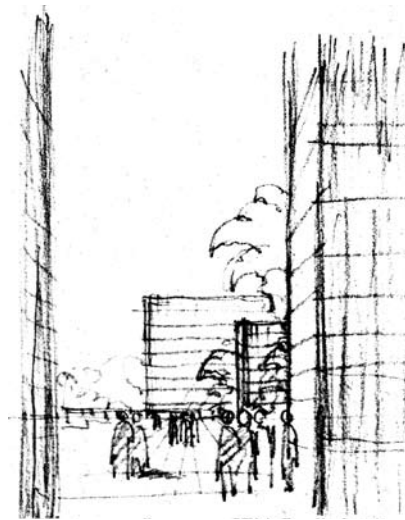


FIG. 13: Jørn Utzon. Competition proposal for Marieberg, 1954. The project competition included the redistribution of the site and the construction of a new administrative centre with an auxiliary archive.

Andersson, Utzon developed the competition for an administration centre and housing complex in Marieberg, Stockholm in 1954. With the motto “Sol”, two guidelines define Utzon’s proposal: to emphasize the landscape, placing special interest on its natural condition, and to intensify its communal character proposing an almost urban density for the administrative facilities.

The proposal pays special attention to the geographical valorisation of the site. In Marieberg, situated on Kungsholmen Island, the excellent views, the presence of water, the proximity with the city centre and the singular character of the site as a rocky promontory were emphasized. In this way, Utzon has raised a sequence of volumes in the bay of Mälaren landscape that contemplates an administrative centre laid out on a series of open blocks and a housing complex which descends across the terrain towards the shore.

The jury emphasized its landscape integration: “the proposed scheme is consistently adapted to the topography and landscape, which gives the proposal a great interest.” The judges Sven M. Backström, Sven Markelius and Nils Tesch, among others, recognized the architectural values of the scheme, despite its not fulfilling all the demands of the programme. Therefore, among 18 proposals submitted to the competition, Utzon’s proposal was purchased and the proposal with the motto “Butterfly” submitted by Ahlström, Bryde and Astrom had won first prize [fig 14].

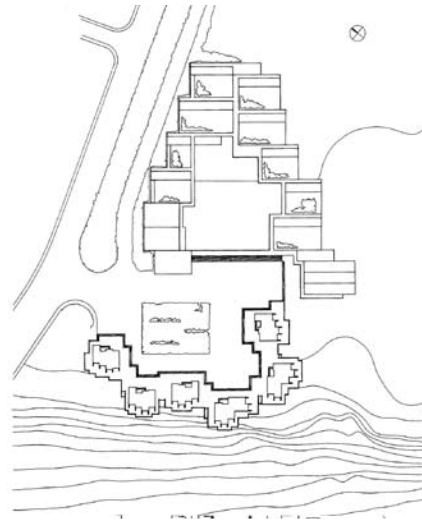


FIG. 14: Jørn Utzon. Competition proposal for Elineberg, 1954. The complex faces the panoramic view of the Øresund and it’s located on the edge of the slope.

His next effort together with the Andersson, in 1954, was a competition for housing in Elineberg, Helsingborg, Sweden. In Helsingborg, facing the Øresund, Utzon has raised six fourteen-storey towers on a continuous platform along the edge of the slope. During the first phase of the competition, the proposal was a 600 meters long building in eight floors. During the second phase of the competition, the project, which avoids blocking the views of the area behind, is fragmented in a sequence of high-rise buildings set out on the slope on top of a podium.

The high-rise towers were designed as incremental aggregates of the individual flats, much as in Borås housing project of 1947, stepping back and forth the units. The setbacks produce spacious terraces and define a singular profile of the complex. Just the same arrangement he had proposed, in Borås (1947) and Marieberg (1954). In addition, the floors are terraced –the higher, the steeper the steps–, designed to make the most of the impressive panoramic views of the Øresund.

The project which was awarded first prize was built by the Andersson, losing all the refinement of the competition project. However, Elineberg residential complex rises as an urban reference on Helsingborg’s waterfront.

Utzon develops the sequence of towers tried out in Bellahøj (1945) and Elineberg (1954) facing the Øresund in 1959 in a large-scale planning design competition for the development of Frederiksberg, Copenhagen which won first prize. With the motto “Manhattan”, Utzon’s Elineberg towers were ranged along the frontage of Copenhagen lakes in Frederiksberg. Arne Jacobsen was one of the judges in the competition. The committee considered: “among the 71 projects submitted, Jørn Utzon’s project was assigned first prize for its undeniable and purely artistic values.” In addition, the jury describes the proposal submitted: “the sketch presented is an abstract composition placed over a dream-like landscape with a concentration of high-rise towers as slim crystal mountain along the lakes (A) with groups of various open blocks in the north area (B), with commercial area in low cubic form along Gammel Kongevej (C) and institutions (D) along the river in a Japanese scenic pastiche that connects the lakes with the channels’ Frederiksberg have” (Skriver, 1959) [fig. 15].

Utzon proposal was typical radically. He proposed to enlarge his ideas beyond the specific area extending a green area into the heart of the city to connect *Frederiksberghave* to the lakes. Utzon described it: “to create a huge, open space limited by the surrounding 5-story building uniform walls. This open area and location in Copenhagen will be able to give real qualities to the citizens as well as local residents and those working in the area. In order to reinforce the green area, a watercourse is proposed, which runs from



FIG. 15: Jørn Utzon. Competition proposal for Frederiksberg, 1959. The jury emphasized its “abstract composition sited in a dream-like landscape”.

Frederiksberghave to the lakes.” The jury responds enthusiastically to Utzon’s proposal: “naturally, the grand gesture which linked the project to *Frederiksberghave*, the municipality’s new centre and lakes in a breathtaking way is a great challenge to the economic and social powerlessness inhibiting urban building everywhere private property is a sacred cow” (Skriver, 1959). Despite obtaining first prize, Utzon’s urban design was not adopted, because the municipality pretended a greater density of building [fig 16].

6. LANDMARKS

Utzon’s imaginative audacity and lyrical finesse achieve a poetic landmark related to the site specific context. In 1953, Utzon entered the competition design for the Langelinie Pavilion in Copenhagen. Starting from the study of the landscape and the history of the place, the main objective of the project was to seamlessly blend to the new building into its site, marked by the imposing presence of the Copenhagen’s baroque fortress. Utzon wrote: “The position of the Langelinie Pavilion is so exceptional that it requires a solution providing a restaurant with a view. [...] The horizontal nature of the Langelinie area would be pleasingly underlined by a tower which –day and night– would acts as a landmark for Copenhagen.”

On the podium, which accommodates all the services, stands the progressively radiating profile of a ten storey circular tower described as a “pagoda-like structure” whose sculptural profile emerges above the landscape in the port area. Circular cantilevered floor plates diminished with height were supported by a central core. The project evokes Frank Lloyd Wright’s tower for the Johnson & Son Company, which Utzon visited on his trip to America in 1949.

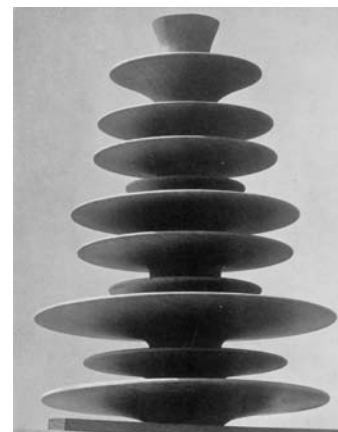


FIG. 16: Jørn Utzon. Competition for the Langelinie Pavilion, 1953. The glass-pagoda pavilion as a landmark in the Copenhagen Harbour. The original turned wooden model.

Nevertheless, among 78 proposals submitted to the competition, Utzon’s proposal was purchased and the proposal submitted by Eva and Nils Koppel had won first prize.

The jury committee composed by Arne Jacobsen and Mogens Lassen, among others, emphasizes: “an imaginative and elegant proposal for a viewing-restaurant, which could become a significant feature in Langelinie landscape. The strong division in height, however, leads to an unfortunate proliferation of premises, and the resulting design of the rooms costs them more suitable for restaurant than to meeting rooms”. The judges had had reservations due to practical criticisms and the expressiveness of the tower. Utzon’s proposal certainly would be

come more expensive and more difficult to use than the others. However, Copenhagen would have had a new landmark (Thomsen, 1954).

From 1942 to 1956 Utzon participated in more than 20 competitions. In 1956, he entered the international competition for Sydney Opera House which had an enormous repercussion, with 233 projects submitted, Utzon’s entry was awarded first prize. He said: “I have won 20 prizes for architectural design before, in Denmark and Sweden, including six first prizes. But this is far and away from the most important” [fig. 17].

Settled over the Bennelong Point peninsula, Utzon’s proposal is conceived as a massive platform crowned by lightweight shells that house the main halls and the areas of relationship with the city and the bay landscape. Utzon asserts: “the architecture emphasizes the character of the Bennelong Point and takes the greatest possible advantage of the view. The approach of the audience is easy and as distinctly pronounced as in Grecian theatres by uncomplicated stairways” (*Nationaloperaen i Sydney*, 1957).

Utzon’s discovery of the experiential potential of the platform was anticipated by the 1953 Langelinie competition project. Located within the Sydney Harbour, the massive nature of the platform alluded to the Mayan Platforms seen in Yucatan and of Chinese temples. Rooted in diverse ancient cultures, the artificial landform becomes the site for the Opera House. Utzon extended the peninsula context with a raised platform. He explained: “I came to the conclusion that I would have to make one architectural unity out of this whole peninsula.” The public platform is conceived as a gathering

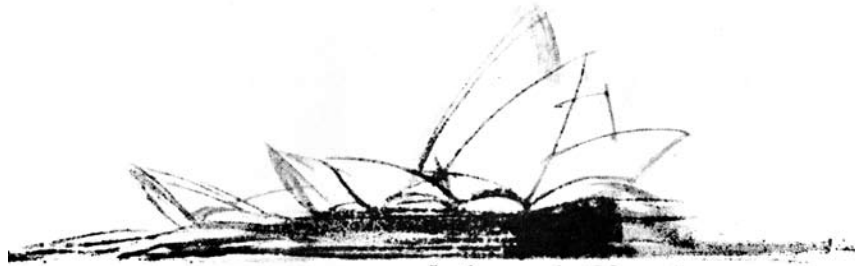


FIG. 17: Jørn Utzon. Competition for the Sydney Opera House, 1957. Elevation sketch present the massive platform that embrace the full width of the peninsula and the light weight shells.

place amid the Opera House and the city. By placing the halls side by side rather end to end, like all other entrants, Utzon produced a processional approach up to the Opera. The platform is at once an outdoor anteroom for the music hall and the restaurant, and the element of connection with the urban fabric overlooking the harbour.

The massive platform containing all the functions contrasts with the visual vibrancy of the weightless shells housing the two auditoria and the restaurant whose sculptural modelling emerges as a landmark on the coastline. Utzon asserts: “light suspended concrete shells accentuate the plateau effect and the character of the staircase construction” (Utzon, 1962). Turned into symbol of a continent, the Sydney Opera House is an extraordinary aesthetic achievement, but also the result of an enormous effort to integrate all the technical and formal aspects of the building.

Utzon’s proposal was the unanimous choice of the jury. The judges were convinced that: “the drawings submitted for this scheme are simple to the point of being diagrammatic. Nevertheless, as we have returned again and again to the study of these drawings, we are convinced that they present a concept of an Opera House which is capable of becoming one of the great buildings of the world. We consider this scheme to be the most original and creative submission. Because of its very originality, it is clearly a controversial design. We are, however, absolutely convinced about its merits” [fig 18].

The jury formed by Leslie Martin, Eero Saarinen, Henry Ingham Ashworth and Cobden Parkes emphasized the massive character of the platform and the iconographic value of the vigorous white shells: “this creates a striking architectural composition admirably suited to Bennelong Point. The white sail-like forms of the shell vaults relate as naturally to the Harbour as the sails of its yachts. It is difficult to think of a better silhouette for this peninsula. The dynamic form of this vaulted shape contrasts with the buildings which form its background and gives a special significance to the project in



FIG. 18: Sydney Opera House competition. The jury committee from left to right, Leslie Martin, Cobden Parkes, Eero Saarinen and Henry Ingham Ashworth.

the total landscape of the Harbour.” The jury committee had been struck by the wide variety among the entries. The bold forms proposed by Alison and Peter Smithson were characterized by the massive concrete core that holds the volume of the halls that jut out over the site covered with white mosaic. The judges wrote: “we have been impressed by the beauty and the exceptional possibilities of the site in relation to the harbour and we are convinced that the silhouette of any proposed building is of the greatest importance.”

Second and third prize certainly differ much from one another, but either shows attentiveness to the site. Awarded the second prize, the proposal conceived by the American partnership of Joseph Marzella emerges as powerful volume on the site. The complex is arranged radially distributing all the premises of the program. The scheme is rounded off by surrounding the new hall with a cylindrical enclosure that manages to dematerialize the building. The jury explained that the project “would form a total mass well suited to its position on Bennelong Point... although the disadvantage of any spiral form of this kind is a possibility of restriction and limitation of plan arrangement.” Third prize was awarded to the British Boissevain and Osmond who opted for two separate buildings for the large and the small hall, and their plan was praised for its “simple arrangement of building designed with human scale and well placed around a pedestrian promenade.” The winning project of the competition was announced in January of 1957, and sixteen years later the building was inaugurated after a long process full of discrepancies that in 1966 had finally drawn the architect away from the country and the work [fig 19].

7. PLATFORMS

The platform motif is a characteristic feature of Utzon’s architecture, and the contrast between the massive plateau and the free curvature of the roof is also distinctive of his talent. Utzon himself related his experiences on platforms: “I may work in the development of my “plateau”-projects that have been created



FIG. 19: Jørn Utzon's sketch of the Maya Land, Yucatán. His trip to the platform complexes built by the Mayans on the Yucatán peninsula, Uxmal and Chichén Itzá, turned into "one of the greatest architectural experiences of my life".

through hard and laborious work and through the experiences of my travels in particular to Mexico, India and China. The goal of this work has been to achieve a traffic-functional architecturally unifying element, for use in architectural schemes of our time, to meet entirely new demands and opportunities. Some of the results had been projects such as Sydney Opera House, the Berlin competition, Højstrup College (first and third prize-proposals), the World Exhibition in Copenhagen and parts of Frederiksberg competition..." The platform became a developing element in many projects and several versions.

In 1957, Utzon entered, jointed with the Anderssons, Peer Abben and Jørgen Michelsen, the international competition for Berlin Hauptstadt, for the reconstruction of the city centre. Among the 149 entries submitted in the competition were proposals by Le Corbusier, Sven Markelius, Hans Scharoun and Alison and Peter Smithson.

Utzon's proposal was conceived as a disintegrated nucleus with a few traces of old Berlin: Friedrichstrasse and Unter den Linden which stretch forth between the natural boundaries of the River Spree and the Landwehrkanal. The institutional program is arranged upon a set of platforms that contain the parking areas. Utzon explained: "the buildings are sited on the upper part of the platform and relate to each other within a composition that would not be disturbed by traffic." Thus a motorway rings the urban centre and connects a number of clusters of office buildings on the periphery [fig. 20].

However, Utzon's proposal was not considered. The jury committee, composed by Alvar Aalto, Cornelis van Eesteren, Otto Bartning and Pierre Vago, among others, awarded first prize the team of Friedrich Spengelin and Hans Scharoun received one of the second prizes and Alison and Peter Smithson one of the third prizes.

Utzon managed to find time to work on other projects besides Sydney Opera House. Following his success in Sydney, Utzon continued to enter competitions as a way to explore ideas. In 1958, he entered the competition for the High School in Højstrup, Helsingør, arranged by the Danish Federation of Trade Unions. Among the many projects submitted in the ideas competition, were two by Utzon. The jury headed by Tobias Faber and Viggo Sten Møller awarded both, first prize and third prize to Utzon's alternative entries (Faber, 1959) [fig 21].



FIG. 20: Jørn Utzon. Competition for Berlin Hauptstadt, 1957. Surrounded by a ring motorway the Government and municipal administration spread in a disintegrated nucleus.



FIG. 21: Jørn Utzon. Competition for Højstrup High School, 1958. Utzon described the contrast of forms: "as is shown in the sketches for the Sydney Opera House and for the High School in Helsingør, the curved forms of the roofs are suspended above or below the plateau".

Utzon's prize winning project developed platform's potential. Raised above the site on a plateau, the project was split either side of an access road connected through a footbridge. At one side a 15-story tower that alludes to the Elineberg project in 1954, rises from a long low block and houses the student flats with panoramic views over the Øresund. At the other side, the program of the school is raised on a square platform centralized around an atrium court and characterized by the lightweight roof of the main auditorium. The second proposal, which was awarded third prize, was raised on a massive plinth and was arranged into a series of courtyards that fluff up the complex to create spaces for interaction. Counteracting the solid and massive external character, the interior spaces were envisaged lightweight and open thanks to the courtyards that modulates its orthogonal grid. Utzon asserts: "the platform in the High School scheme stands in a slightly undulating landscape and emphasizes, through its squareness and straightness, the soft movements of the landscape" (Utzon, 1962).

The slenderness of the tower, which accentuates the geographical area, triggered an intense debate. The controversy and Utzon's work with the Sydney Opera House led to the suspending of the project in 1962. Finally, the second prize winners, Jarl Heger and Ebbe and Karen Clemmensen had built their proposal.

Platforms and floating roof were also developed in a large scale. In 1959, Utzon entered the competition for the Copenhagen World Exhibition in Amager with a proposal conceived as a valley of buildings framing a central gathering place. Utzon explained: "the public gathering place, throughout the exhibition centre, lies in between massive bastions and buildings as a scenic entity on the landscape of Amager. Movements of stairs, and the reflecting water, seen from different heights, will in itself give Amager and Copenhagen's flat city landscape a great architectural experience".

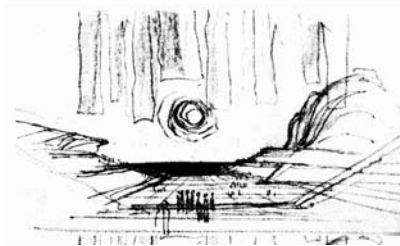


FIG. 22: Jørn Utzon. Copenhagen World Exhibition, 1959. Utzon's sketch shows exhibition buildings framing a central gathering space with views onto the landscape.



FIG. 23: Jørn Utzon. Competition project for Elviria, 1960. Utzon's explorations on platforms and floating roofs for a coastal development at Elviria in southern Spain.

As in Sydney, the halls and rooms are carved out on the platform whose solid facture contrast with the lightness of the shells and the suspended slimness of the folded slabs that gravitate above the platform [fig. 22].

Utzon's dream was "to create a new feature in Copenhagen, as in an exhibition free to act as the new city of today, where nothing of what appears, has been shown before, and where everything appears is in the context of a live city, and does not work exhibited. This last is very important." Utzon envisaged an exhibition to experience the modern industry and technology through arranged events of various countries' products as a whole, merged into each other to obtain a picture of how great a wonderful life the modern person can live. Furthermore, Utzon added several buildings, which he considered necessary to give a global picture of the culture. Utzon explained: "These buildings are at the same time, buildings that are needed in Copenhagen. Such a collection of cultural buildings will provide an environment and an atmosphere that is difficult to overestimate."

The jury committee responds enthusiastically to Utzon's ideas: "the project goes up against the assumption of World Exhibition and proposes instead a new Exhibition, where the host country provides a vast building site available to the invited countries. This idea is interesting described. However, a huge building as proposed would hardly be filled for other purposes after a World Exhibition. Although a part of building complex might in service of cultural institutions, it would not be able to prevent the overall impression to walk in an extinct town. The proposal has interesting and

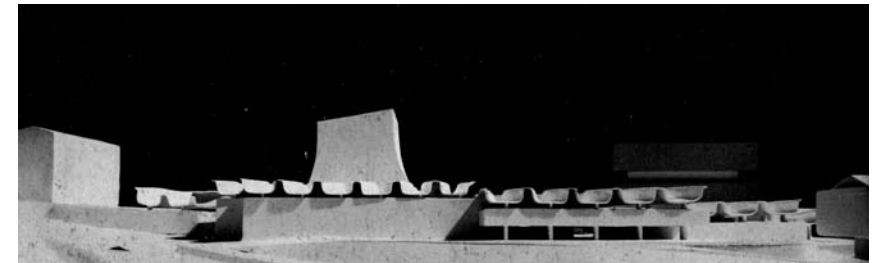


FIG. 24: Jørn Utzon. Competition for the Zurich Theatre, 1964. Utzon's demonstration of the platform idea and the structured roof-shape responding to the urban context.

beautiful architectural details. However, the perspective drawings are misleading." (*Konkurrencen om udformingen af et udstillingsterræn på Vest-Amager*, 1960) Utzon's artificial landscape was commended among the 28 entries submitted to the competition, with a jury composed by Ole Nørgaard, Erik Herløw, Esberjörn Hiort and Poul Erik Skriver, among others, and awarded first prize to Ole Buhl and Knud Svensson.

In 1960, Utzon developed his largest scale platform's competition proposal for the development of Elviria, Málaga, in southern Spain on an unspoiled site with a view to the Mediterranean. Utzon explained: "the sea view must be the dominating motif in the town planning of this district. Every building in this scheme has unspoiled contact with the sea, no matter how far from the beach." A large commercial centre was sited at the point where the mountains and coastal plain met, and further back from the sea high up in the mountains "where some clearly defined plateaux spread out like fingers in a very dramatic way" it placed the humanistic centre consisting of a theatre, museum, library an amphitheatre sited on the mountain and a religious centre. Utzon's proposal for the large coastal development was characterized also by the retained-earth terraces and floating roofs over a sequence of platforms (Utzon, 1962) [fig. 23].

Among the 118 entries submitted in the competition were proposals by Antonio Bonet Castellana, Miguel Fisac or Giancarlo de Carlo. The jury headed by Pierre Vago and Franco Albini did not even commended Utzon's proposal.

In 1964, following his success in Sydney, Utzon was invited to take part in the competition for the Zurich Theatre. The competition was open to Swiss architects and also were invited a reduced number of architects of international repute as Van den Broek and Bakema, Hans Scharoun, Heikki Siren and Jørn Utzon. Among the 97 entries, the jury headed by Sven Markelius, awarded Utzon's proposal and described his winning proposal as a "flat relief-like carpet of buildings with a structured roofshape" [fig. 24].

In the urban context, the platform becomes the extension of the place. A great space, as Utzon explained, "To receive spectators and introduce them



FIG. 25: Jørn Utzon. Competition for the Wolfsburg Theatre, 1965. A vast rectangular platform, crowned by floating roof, is partially buried in the rising ground.

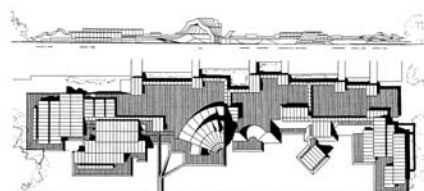


FIG. 26: Jørn Utzon. University centre in Odense, 1966. The major buildings were to be located on a vast podium from which flowed a concatenation of clusters containing faculties and institutes.

into the magical world of theatre.” As in Sydney, the main auditorium is carved into the platform, whose massive structure contrasts with the lightness of the beams. The project was ultimately abandoned (*Teater i Zürich*, 1964).

In 1965, Utzon was also invited to compete in a closed competition for a new city centre and the Wolfsburg Theatre in Germany. The jury award Utzon’s proposal fourth prize and commented: “the model and urban plan showed urban forms is of great interest and of outstanding beauty. Unfortunately, the author set preconditions for the implementation of the project completely unrealistic.” And added: “the proposed settlement between cultural and theatre seems formalistic.” Utzon’s project suggested that the main motorway may be stopped off and diverted to create a precinct flanked by enclosed courtyards of housing. As a part of a larger design strategy, Utzon decided to place the theatre obliquely at the end of a broad avenue and in front of a rectangular square characterized by the pool and the footbridges that connect to the theatre. His theatre design worked with a large platform partially buried into the hillside covered by undulating roof forms and the auditorium also appear to be carved out of the solid mass of the platform. Utzon also conceived a procession down from the entrance level to the foyers that according to the judges, presented “large functional disadvantages” (*Teater i Wolfsburg*, 1966) [fig 25].

First and second prize certainly differ much from one another. Hans Schroun’s winning proposal was spread out over a large area with a sequence of volumes that gradually adapts to the constant unevenness of the site in order to emphasize the natural features of the context. The desire to blend the building into the surrounding landscape, both natural and urban, also becomes the main guideline of Alvar Aalto’s proposal that was awarded second prize. The sculptural mass of the auditorium is the building’s most prominent formal feature closed to his well-known Cultural Centre [fig. 26].

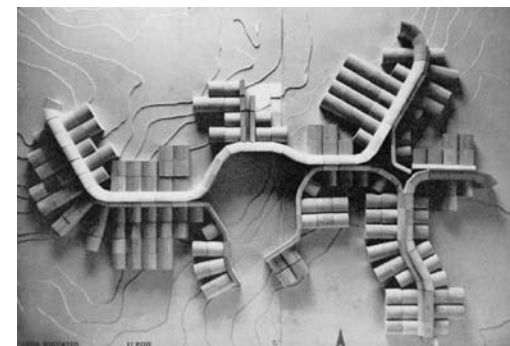


FIG. 27: Jørn Utzon. Competition for Farum town centre, 1966. Inspired by Islamic bazaars, the proposal was designed to grow using an additive system of precast components.

In 1966, the competition for a University centre in Odense, Denmark summed up a period involving massive platforms and floating roofs. Utzon and his friend Peer Abben carried out a proposal conceived as a miniature town in which the concatenation of clusters of courtyard faculties and institutes converge in the main building. University centre is located on a plateau, which on the one side is closely linked to the faculties and institutes, to the other side opens to the surrounding landscape and a lake that accentuates the boldness and severity of the platform. However, the jury committee did not even comment Utzon’s scheme. The judges headed by Nils Ahrbom, C. F. Møller and Ole Nørgård awarded first prize the proposal submitted by Gunnar Krohn & Hartvig Rasmussen and Knud Holscher (Skriver, 1967).

8. ADDITIVE ARCHITECTURE

The challenge of rationalising the construction of the shells of the Opera House from prefabricated segments demonstrated the potential of prefabrication. For Utzon, “Sydney was a testing-place” and at the end of the 1960s, with the “additive architecture”, opened a new period characterised by the synthesis of geometry, modulation and standardised production. He developed the idea of designing kits of parts for houses and larger building through a group of schemes based on additive principle [fig. 27].

In 1966, Utzon developed the power of the additive approach for the competition for Farum town centre in Denmark. He conceived the new urban centre as an addition of different units around a spinal column. Utzon wrote: “The centre is composed of units designed to a geometrical principle so that the components can be prefabricated in a strictly limited number of variants. The units can be combined to form a gently curved bazaar street from which the shops and other premises can be built in stages as required”.

Inspired by Islamic bazaars, the scheme was designed to grow by the addition of a kit of parts capable of generating the structure of the complex to be built using a geometrically flexible system of precast concrete components with the spine vaulted by cantilevered shell structure. Despite Utzon's scheme demonstrated clearly the potential of additive architecture, the jury committee considered too Islamic (Utzon, 1970) [fig. 28].

9. CONCLUSION. UTZON'S UNBUILT COMPETITION PROJECTS

From this brief overview of Utzon's unbuilt competitions projects, it is possible to point out the central elements in his efforts. His continuous participation in competitions, expressed in drawings and models of provocative beauty, helped him to develop his own architectural idea.

The article also illustrates the research process in Utzon's projects and focus on both his competitions projects and his sources of inspiration. A passion for Ancient cultures and an interest in construction shaped the personality of Jørn Utzon. His profound poetic understanding of the culture is analyzed in the section Archetypal images. Utzon's approach is extremely sensitive in assimilating and fusing already existing techniques or formal inventions into his personal synthesis. Utzon filtered the natural forms, structures and detailing derived from vernacular buildings and constructive tradition as sources of inspiration. His poetic metaphors in nature, as sources of creative inspiration, played an important role in Utzon's particular design method.

His approach to architecture site specific and poetic is presented in Domestic landscapes. Utzon's continuous explorations through competitions were designed with a lyrical language that echoes the landscape. Utzon's work emphasizes his appreciation of nature and his capacity to read the context with a respectful insertion in the environment as a result of the awareness of the territory. Vernacular topography of the Kingo houses, with the landscaping intelligence of their courtyards arranged in sequences and the tactile sensibility of their brick masonry summarizes his attitude towards nature.

Housing landmarks tackle Utzon's tenacious experimental tradition in the field of housing, designing building complexes that grow out of their unique landscapes creating, at the same time, landmarks. Most of his projects are conceived from a recognizable section, understanding the buildings as part of the territory, with the characteristic modern ambition of blending architecture and nature. Utzon explored through competitions unconventional possibilities and he realised that the essence of the problem, beyond the specific requests of the competition brief, lay in the unique site.



FIG. 28: Jørn Utzon's sketch: clouds over ocean horizon. The clouds as an archetypal image: "forms against a horizontal line like the sea or the clouds without a single vertical line, nothing constituting a weight, and with forms that are different from all angles."

His unbuilt competition proposals and works show Utzon's masterly re-interpretation of the symbolic past. Utzon's work combines the construction with elements of modernity and the timeless eloquence of anonymous or historic architectures learned in his travels. Utzon materialized the lyrical essence of his architectural research in feats like the platform crowned by a canopy of light roofs. Most of his competition proposals of this period are characterised by large platforms and a determination to define public and symbolic places through floating roofs that engage in dialogue with the landscape.

Additive architecture describes a system of standardised elements enabling any building to be constructed on the basis of repetition of architectural units to achieve dynamic open-ended structures. Utzon's work extrapolates mass production and tectonic industrialization in large scale projects as in Farum town centre.

Utzon's career has been distinguished by the establishment of an innovative and a singular voice whose spirit of his work inspires the work of many contemporary architects. This paper aims to point out Utzon's formal creativity, his intuition as a builder, his sensibility to the quality of materials and his capacity to read the context in his unbuilt competition projects and works.

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Abstract

Keywords

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Architectural Competitions, Post-Industrial Housing and Town Planning

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INTRODUCTION

There are several reasons for using architectural competitions as a starting point for analyzing and discussing the values our contemporary housing and town planning are based upon. An obvious one is that visions of our future town environment are suggested and evaluated in the competition programme, the proposals and jury statement. Another is that the competition form concretely shows us the result of combining entities such as houses, areas and town districts (neighbourhoods). Moreover, the competition tells us something about the people and the daily life the proposed designs should be the material basis for. It is not possible to suggest and draw up or to judge a proposal if you have no idea about the life style the actual living environment should accommodate.

In other words competitions are about suggesting, designing and evaluating proposals for parts of a future town, but also about sketching an imagined future and the presumed identity of the persons who should inhabit and use the environment in question. At the same time as competing architects draw up and design proposals for the different objects and spaces they think should be included in a future town, they depict a vision of life there. They sketch that vision with the help of plans and perspectives but also with descriptive words and accounts that summarize how they think a future life should be in the environment of their proposal.

The aim of this article is to describe, with the help of five project competitions carried out by local counties between 1989 and 2003, some of the social, cultural and material ingredients and relations which distinguish post-industrial town planning. Attention is not primarily focused on the concrete designs, for example form and scale, but towards some of the ideological standpoints that lie behind and influence the designs.

Two issues lie at the basis of the study. My first question concerns the competition process, what happens between the drawing up of the program and the jury statement. It goes: How are houses and town planning con-

cretely designed in an architectural competition? My second question is about the housing and town values expressed in the competition: What are the material, social and cultural conditions and ideals that form our contemporary houses and towns?

The selection has been made to reflect the period known as post-industrial or late modern but also to include different planning situations each of which have revealed different values during the period in question. In other words I am looking for both that which is typical of post-industrial town planning while at the same time I want to look into the scope of this period. These community project competitions were chosen because I want to discuss proposals of such town buildings that are intended to be carried out.¹ The time span of the choices and the varied local prerequisites of the competitions guarantee that a wide range of standpoints are expressed in the chosen examples. However, it is worth pointing out that certain planning aspects, for example those of a technical or economic nature, are dealt with more thoroughly in the process after the competition is finalized.

TRANSLATIONS AND ASSEMBLAGES

Two concepts borrowed from theoretical formulations that follow Michel Foucault's so-called post-structuralism turn, have steered the direction of the above questions and the analysis that follows. The concept "translation" is used by both Bruno Latour, one of the founding figures in what is known as "ANT" (Actor-Network-Theory) and by John Law who is also associated with ANT even if he has criticised this alignment.² Latour speaks of "translations" when describing how the manifestation of a will is passed on and spread to others. With the concept of translation he wants to demonstrate that power does not arise from a point rather from others using someone else's expression for their own behalf. What happens when others "translate" someone's will and carries it further is that it also changes – it is transported to a wider context at the same time as its original significance is displaced.

Where competitions are concerned I use the concept to direct attention to what happens when the programme is transformed into proposals which are then evaluated and judged by a jury. What is translated are the specific wishes communicated in the programme and in the entries and which in the final stage are evaluated by a jury. In competitions though, it is not only the will that is translated but even the representations that will is presented

1. Even if this wasn't the case for the competition Skeppsviken in Uddevalla.
2. See e.g. Law, John, ed. and Hasard, John, ed. 1999. *Actor Network Theory and After*. Oxford: Blackwell.

in. The programme is transformed into plans and drawing perspectives and new words, which the jury's statement evaluates in *even more* words. What is translated and changed is thus both the expression of the will and the manner in which the will is visualized. To avoid the jury evaluating something not required in the programme the thought is that their critical review of the proposal should be based on the will expressed in the programme.

The translations are about how future housing and town districts should look. But what are a house and a town district? Gert Wingårdh and Rasmus Waern have aptly described housing architecture as an enterprise that includes everything from "the way doors are opened to regional planning" (2007:82). To grasp something of the complexity of a town district I use the concept of "assemblages" which is also a key ANT notion. In competitions a number of varied phenomenon come together to create such objects, subjects and spaces which the participants think belong to post-industrial housing and town districts. This could relate to the location's conditions, historical town references, ideas on appropriate structure, scale and material, ideas about service, traffic and green areas and, not least of all, ideas about the people who should live there and the life they should lead in the proposed environment. In the following I am particularly interested in the ideological points of departure that lie behind architects' options when combining a variety of things to form a town district. It is this complex entity composed of material and social relations, represented in plans, perspectives, descriptions and reports that are the object of my study. In the first part of the article I try to partly show what happens during the different phases of the competition, partly describe the essential values that influence the design. In the second part I summarize several of the ideological positions which I believe characterize post-industrial town planning. But first, a short description of the how the competition form expanded and changed over time and a presentation of the competitions I have studied.

HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING COMPETITIONS

Several town planning competitions took place in Sweden already in the 1860s. But only after the turn of the 19th century was the competition form used more systematically for housing development and town planning (Waern 1996). At the same time political and philanthropic interests began to take an active interest in the "housing misery" in the country (Edling 1996, Ramberg 2000). The first competition for housing was backed by Stockholm City and the organization Home in the Country (AB Hem på landet). Another organization which took an active interest in competitions for home conditions during the early 1900s was Swedish Crafts Association (Svenska slöjdföreningen).

Around 1930 the municipal competitions for housing areas were taking place on a more regular basis. A few of the more discussed housing areas designed with the help of competitions are Hjorthagen, Stockholm (1938), Guldheden in Gothenburg (1945) and Rosta in Örebro (1947). Originally the competitions were about flats, especially the interior standard, and later on the design of the residential area. In other words, the competitions reflect the questions and town building ideals of the times. Competitions about function-separated neighbourhoods outside the town's older city centres took place up until the 1970s, even if they later experienced competition from, among other, detached houses. Competitions after the end of the 1980s have been for designing housing and districts even for areas a good way from already existing town buildings. The terms themselves, used by the organizers and participants say a lot about the type of designs and assemblages they want to shape the future with.

As we will see from the first example from 1989, Ladugårdsängen in Örebro, it was the contrast from housing areas built earlier which was decisive for what would become good town building and high quality architecture. Already during the 60s there had been sharp criticism about the million programme large scale suburbs (miljonprogrammet), but this contrast came 20 years later and is still alive in discussions about the design of towns' spatial development. My second example is from Stumholmen in Karlskrona, a competition which took place 1989-1990. Two other values dominated this competition in post-industrial town planning: views over the water and the preservation of older, culturally valuable environments. The historical location was crucial too for Dragonfältet in Umeå 1994. Both the military history argument and reference to the town's historical street grid played an important role in the jury's evaluation of the proposals. This was the same year as the competition for Skeppsviken in Uddevalla. In that competition the proximity to and view over Byfjorden was a central theme, but even the location's shifting and dramatic character was given credit when judging the proposals. The last example is Mariehäll, Stockholm, 2003. There several ideals which characterized the previously mentioned competitions were abandoned; for example close blocks with clear divisions between residential and commercial space, views over the green and blue areas, and the design's relation to the existing places.

This brief sketch shows some of the components and relationships which mark our contemporary town building. In the following I would like to show in more detail how various values are formulated and related to each other. But first I would like to discuss the competition process itself, emphasizing the translation which occurs between the programme and the jury statement.

THE COMPETITION PROCESS

The competition seen as a process of translation is discussed here with the help of the material acquired through my choice of competitions. Another and, in some ways, better and more detailed procedure would be to ethnographically follow what concretely happens between people and materially from the time when the programme is drawn up until the jury makes its statement.³ My choice to nevertheless analyse the written product is tied to wanting to discuss town building values that are valid over a longer period of time, not only those expressed in competitions which take place at the same time as the studies are carried out. Furthermore my interest is more directed towards the town building ideal rather than how competitions work as planning instruments, even if that is an interesting question.

In the 1989 competition for Ladugårdsängen in Örebro the organizers turned away from the previous suburban plans and requested proposals showing how mixed-function neighbourhoods could be created. The programme stated that the organizers would like proposals "that diverged from conventional ones". Other qualities that were emphasized were multiplicity and variation, which was motivated by wishes for "the development to be town-like". But it wasn't the turn-of-the -century bourgeois neighbourhood that should be copied, rather a more socially equal variation. The programme even states that: "Equality: neighbourhoods should be created so that social, age and economic segregation be counteracted" and "Housing democracy: the residents should be able to influence their environment and common interests".

What do the competing architects' translations of the programme's intentions look like? It shows up that the participating architects interpret "town-like" in different ways. All however take their models from the past. Some emphasize the closeness, conglomeration and irregularity of middle-age towns. Other proposals are based on the garden town's merits while others use the neighbourhood street grid. Still others propose solutions that are similar to the "suburb" that the organizers considered too conventional. Competing architects "translate" the programme to suit their respective interests and ideals while at the same time they further promote the programme's intentions. Aspects that were not specifically called for in the programme may be added to these translations or other aspects of the programmes strong intentions may be diminished.

The architects behind the winning proposal *Överbros* do both. In the introductory text they explain that "the idea with the proposal is a park thor-

3. Charlotte Svensson studied the competition process using among other methods case studies (2008).

oughfare that ties together important destinations within and outside of the area". The sketch they submit to the jury describes the green thoroughfare as a room around which the town environment is designed. At the same time it connects the area with the surroundings and to the older Örebro town centre. This was one of the goals expressed in the programme. The town-like feeling is also achieved by the architects behind *Överbro* which they describe in their text: "buildings are arranged on an irregular grid with neighbourhoods and streets." The aim of variation and multiplicity expressed in the programme is achieved partly through the irregularity of the town plan and partly through the architects' recommendation for "many types" of buildings, which they list. Furthermore they wish to achieve this multiplicity by having "many architects work with different neighbourhoods". What makes this development a town is the strict line of division on one side of the neighbourhood between streets and courtyards, between private and public areas, while the other side usually faces the greenery. Houses should lie on the property boundary towards the street otherwise a boundary line is created by constructing walls or fences. The main streets are named and designed as esplanades with planted trees which gives the proposal the appearance of being a green neighbourhood.

But what happened to all of the social ambitions in the programme? When the jury by way of introduction summarized the programme's intentions, the social goals were clearly toned down. Nor did the winning proposal clearly accentuate the social ambitions. If the jury's summary was influenced by the proposal it liked best, or if the summary and the proposal happened to coincide is impossible to say afterwards. What the jury appreciated though is clearly expressed in the verdict summary:

First prize 300,000:- is awarded to *Överbro* for its lively and richly varied neighbourhoods as well as for the use of attractive green thoroughfares, parks and allés as important functions in tying together a town-like new neighbourhood/district.

The winning proposal in Ladugårdsängen was drawn up in 1989 thus mainly from nodes of neighbourhoods and green thoroughfares [fig. 1]. Translations and assemblages in the Ladugårdsängen competition led to a shift in the programme's endeavour from a socially integrated town to a green district/neighbourhood. However, it is not really an ecologically motivated green town but rather an "attractive" green town the architects proposed. The green doesn't concern a changed life-style in the green direction and not in the choice of material or technological solutions but rather the experience



FIG. 1: Urban plan from the winning entry in the 1989 competition for a new residential area in Örebro, a town in the middle of Sweden. This proposal was designed by Arkitektlaget, an architect office in Gothenburg

of and meeting in green spaces. So it is not correct to say the winning proposal completely ignores the programme's social ambitions. Rather, the social ambitions have been redefined. The dense neighbourhoods and green thoroughfare are motivated among other things by facilitating people meeting each other.⁴ Perhaps the shift which occurred between the programme and the winning proposal may be summarized as having gone from striving after a socially and spatially just town to designing environments for spontaneous, voluntary social encounters.

In the winning entry *Överbro* the urban plan drawings are at the heart of the proposal. The pages of text accompanying the plans with adjoining areas include clarifying descriptions that illustrate much of what the programme was seeking. If such an overlapping plan is the major representation then the area's general structure and relations, including the relations to the surroundings, will automatically more or less be in focus. An overlapping plan also includes a bird's-eye-view of the area in question, a perspective that is criticized since it was also used in the 1970s large-scale housing developments (Carlestam 1997). This form of communication, the performance, can be decisive for what a jury takes into consideration when making its judgment. It may have meant that in the Ladugårdsängen example the social questions which the programme sought played a much lesser role in the proposal and the jury statement.

The competition for Stumholmen in Karlskrona appealed to the location's maritime history. Several years after the competition it was upgraded to one of Sweden's World Heritage sites. Stumholmen is located next to Karlskrona's older town centre and, not least, the location provides possibilities to create future living areas with views over the open sea. It was this combination that encouraged the municipality to hold a competition with the theme "Quality life built on maritime heritage". The Stumholmen competition is based on these two main themes, cultural heritage and the possibility of creating housing with sea views. Existing environments are rebuilt

4. The Husarviken competition in Stockholm 1988 expressed the same ideas.

and used for new purposes. That means that the neighbourhood ideal gave way to different preservation ambitions and the drive to offer new housing environments with views over the water. But Stumholmen also has walking thoroughfares and other activities for Karlskrona's residents and tourists. In the Stumholmen competition the town's public life has a prominent position with, among other, green areas, thoroughfares and a new museum. The winning proposal combines summary plans with perspective photos showing the island's possibilities for social life with the views the place has to offer its future residents and casual visitors.

The programme for the Skeppsviken competition in 1994 started with a colour photo of the area on a summer day before the proposed building. In the foreground people are bathing and sunning on a small sandy beach. Behind the beach rise bare cliffs that are so typical for Bohuslän and below the photo the author of the programme writes: "Skeppsviken – for waterfront housing in Uddevalla". Nature, the possibilities offered by the sea, beach and cliffs, are the points of departure for "tomorrow's living and town building" as described by the author in the programme's introductory text. Skeppsviken will be Uddevalla's own "waterfront area".

However, Skeppsviken isn't just beaches and cliffs but Uddevalla's old oil port which should be phased out and developed into a neighborhood. The port area is built on landfill in the gulf on which several oil cisterns stand and earlier activities on the "oil mountain" resulted in "significant interference" in the nature. At the same time the programme author maintains that the mountain provides the possibility for "magnificent views over Byfjorden". Appealing and dramatic nature in combination with proximity to the sea and its possibilities for lookouts, are the positive prerequisites for housing development that the organizer emphasized. And the area being only 1.5 km from the centre of Uddevalla is an additional plus.

The organizer writes as an introduction that the competition not only includes housing but also "town building". The competition's purpose is to get an "illustration of the competition area's prerequisites for a richly varied, well-functioning town district that takes care of its unique location on Byfjorden". Apart from these aims the organizer describes a number of practical conditions and gives an account of the competition area's character, using terms such as "varied and exciting" with the "oil mountain that abruptly descends 20-28 meters" and other parts where it is more gentle and overgrown with conifer and deciduous vegetation". But the programme doesn't give any clear line of direction for the building site other than that the town should be varied. We recognize the wording from Ladugårdsängen in Örebro. Otherwise the competing architects are given rather free hands.

The proposal *Bohus Triptyk -98* was awarded second prize "for a careful and well thought through proposal where the separate conditions of the three sub-areas were considered and used in a skilful way". The proposal's adaptation to the location's shifting character is another important argument for the jury's appreciation of the proposal.

The competing architects began the text with a quotation from Evert Taube, a well-known Swedish artist, and proceeded to describe the questions that led them to the initial work phase. "How do we find harmony between nature and people, between our interference and the original environment? How do we create buildings in harmony with the earth? What qualities should the buildings have to reinforce the joy, charm and character of Bohuslän, of a town by the water – Uddevalla?" They pose some very utopian questions about the planning situation they meet, general questions about people and the environment, but also about ecology, heritage and regional identity. But it is foremost their association with the location and nature, with the landscape that appeals to the jury.

The winning proposal *Cherries and Tar (Körsbär och tjära)* also takes advantage of the location's character, nature and history as a point of departure [fig. 2]. "We wanted to write poetry and romance about what the place has been or is. The maritime life with its work and the smell of tar in the spring, the comfortable life in one's own home with the intense but fragile and fleeting cherry blossoms during a few days in May", write the architects to explain the ideas behind their proposal.

All of the winning proposals start with the distinguishing features and history of the locations. None of the factors we previously considered significant for Ladugårdsängen in Örebro were applied. In the Skeppsviken competition the mountainous and dramatically changing nature lead to "translations" that partly put nature, landscape and the historical location in focus, partly people as well. Even impressions from the oil cisterns are mentioned as "part of our historical heritage". Maybe the drama of the nature and history are the source of the poetic and utopian translations about the life to be led in the proposed environment. In romantic descriptions and pictures nature, history, cherries and tar are all woven together to a node that the jury finds suitable as a point of departure for a future living area in Uddevalla.⁵

When architects wish to communicate housing values for the future environment a perspective drawing is more useful than a flat plan, as we can

5. However, the population of Uddevalla did not agree with this and protested against the building. The proposal was never carried out.

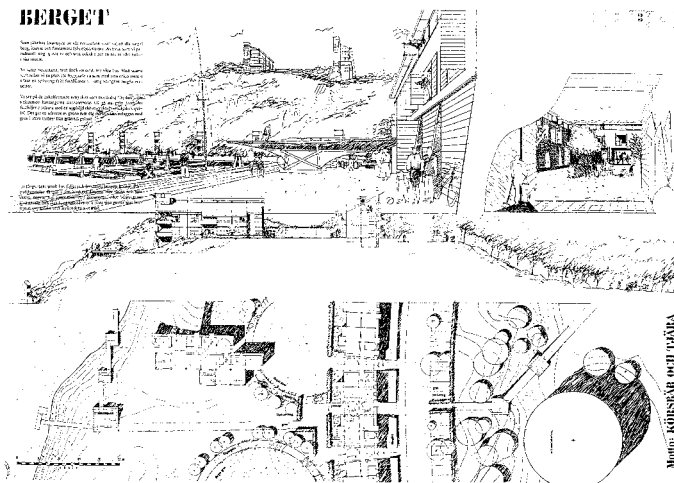


FIG. 2: Urban plan and illustrations from the winning entry in the 1994 competition for a residential area in Uddevalla, a town on the west coast of Sweden. The winner was White Architects.

see from the example below, a fictitious aerial photo over the future environment. Perspective drawings enable the views and the dramatic nature to be captured while sketching the lively activities the architects think should characterize daily life in housing near the water. Translations to more traditional town structures are best depicted by birds'-eye-views but when as with Skeppsviken you wish to portray "waterfronts" and the social life, other forms of communication are better.

The Dragonfält competition in Umeå 1997 is very similar to the competition in Örebro. Dragonfältet is described in the programme as an area "located in the western part of central Umeå". This site description will, as we shall see, be a steering factor in how the proposal will be drawn up and evaluated. The programme is otherwise openly formulated and the values stressed for the future housing environment are described in general terms: "the buildings should have their own strong character" and "their design should awaken curiosity and interest and contribute to raising the attractiveness of the district". The impression of a programme drawn up in general terms is reinforced by the statement: "otherwise it is not the organizers' intentions to limit the architectural design". The general description also applies to the flats which should be "of high quality and enable easy furnishing."

In 1997 ecological considerations played a rather important part in the formulation of the programme. The organizer writes that "the building should be designed and constructed with the aim of favouring development towards a long term ecologically sustainable society", and "natural, sound and well-trying

materials and technology should be used". In addition, the location's historical value should be managed. Buildings within the so-called riding school area (ridhusområdet) "make up ... a valuable cultural, architectural and militarily historical environment" according to the organizer who refers to information from the Swedish National Heritage Board (Riksantikvarieämbetet). But still the municipality is reluctant to preserve the riding school. "Preserving the riding school would require that it be used in its entirety for activities which do not require municipal involvement. The economic requirements will be the decisive factor for the municipality when deciding which position to take on the proposals for preserving this historical environment.

As organizer, Umeå municipality provides prerequisites which are free from constraints. The most specific condition is the scope: the area should include at least 600 flats, even more if the riding school is torn down. The architects should take into consideration various "green" questions: the proposed milieu should favour an ecologically sustainable society and parts of the existing green structure should be preserved. But the jury notes in its introduction that "the competition proposal has a surprisingly limited amount of material which would promote the development of a long term sustainable society". The proposal *TREE (TRÄd)* was awarded second prize for its suggestion for an "eco-cycle adapted living environment" and the proposal *Green and Blue (Grönt o blått)* received honourable mention for "its ecological ambitions". But according to the jury, the winning proposal *Hipp and Accommodation (Hipp och logi)* was not one that seriously considered ecological questions [fig. 3]. It happens systematically that neither the competing architects nor the jury have such high ecological ambitions that other standpoints become secondary.

Instead it was Umeå's historical grid city and the important green park areas, in other words the same as with the Ladugårdsängen competition in 1989, even if it is Umeå's version of the block city that is a model. The winning proposal *Hipp and Accommodation (Hipp och logi)* stems from "Umeå grid city" and maintains that the "town needs to be repaired". Using a fictitious future perspective, an "aerial view from the north-west – a late summer evening in August 2007 ..." the architects show how this grid should be repaired. Dragonfältet's location in central Umeå was crucial for many of the designs as well as the jury's evaluation and the aerial view portrays this ideal.

A list explains the main components to be included in the Stockholm municipality's competition for Mariehäll 2003 which should include – "buildings, thoroughfares, town and landscape rooms, green structure". The programme emphasizes that the proposal should meet the town's demand for the ecological building of houses, work places, services, pre-schools and schools.

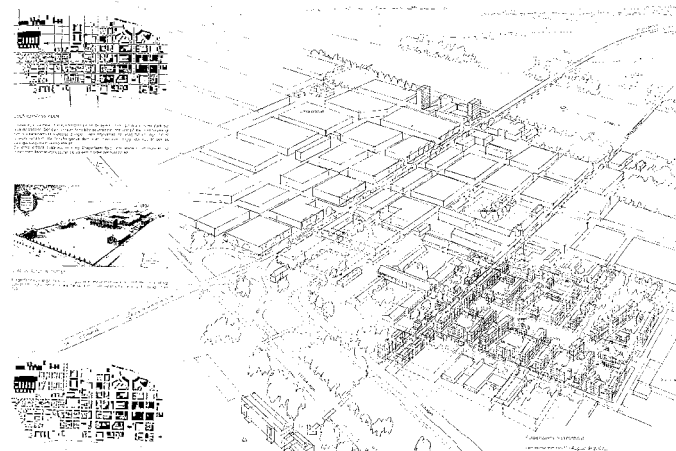


FIG. 3: An urban perspective from the winning entry in the 1997 competition for a new residential area in Umeå, an east coast town in the north of Sweden. The architect office behind the winning design was the FFNS.

The architects translate the programme in various ways. The proposal *Fore* stands out from the others by taking their inspiration from post-war modernism and suggesting tall buildings in a fashioned park environment. The jury found this to be an interesting contribution to the town building discussion but at the same time maintained that it does not suit the location. The winning proposal *7EVENTS (7KAMP)* translates the programme's ambitions almost verbatim and uses the formulation as their own [fig. 4]. They suggest high exploitation with marked blocks around a green area built next to an oak hill which, together with a stream, demarcate the area and is perceived as the locations "genius locus". The Mariehäll competition in Stockholm also included this combination of general site plan and perspective pictures. In this way both the town structure and the future proposed life can be illustrated. In Mariehäll 2003 as in Örebro 1989 and Umeå 1994 the combination neighbourhood district and green room, thoroughfare and views distinguished the winning proposal. What was new in Mariehäll was the initial acceptance of early modernism, visualized by a number of "houses in green spaces" in the winning proposal [fig. 5].

POST-INDUSTRIAL TOWN BUILDING

When the competition architects and jury translate the programme into the proposal, correspondingly the proposal to the judgement, the original intentions of the programme are changed and others are promoted and presented in new forms. When we follow the process we can discern some leading



FIG. 4: Urban plan from the winning entry in the 2003 competition for a new residential area in Mariehäll, outside Stockholm. The winning proposal was designed by Erskine-Tovatt Architects.

themes and relations which will be expressed in these translations.

One such is the relation to the past. The past influences visions of future living environments in a very obvious way. The very recent past, the People's Home (Folkhemmet) design, appears as an antithesis or contrasting picture. This was especially apparent in Örebro 1989 but appears to a large extent in Mariehäll 14 years later, even if this contrasting picture did not need to be so clearly expressed then. This was the initial acceptance of early modernism. But the town building ideal in the early 1970s still constitutes the post-industrial town's antithesis. To build in a central location, "to build from inside, out", can even be looked upon as a contrast to the suburban expansion during the People's Home period. One problem with having an antithesis as a starting point is that our contemporary architects, planners and politicians think in the same terms as the forbearers of the People's Home did. They turned against the dark, out of date and unequal neighbourhoods and instead built the future on light and green environments outside the city centres. Our contemporary architects and planners have turned things around and find all the positive aspects of locations in town centres and the town structures that were predominant until modernism.

The post-industrial town, as portrayed by the competitions studied, were not founded upon some new utopian or visionary town building strategy, rather it looks backwards, towards the medieval towns, garden towns and grid cities. The ideals brought out in the above example, expressed in terms of variation and multiplicity, or being town-like, constitute a contrasting picture to the People's Home design. All of the competitions refer to earlier town planning ideals. It wasn't just the town planning ideals of the 1800s and 1900s that were revived but even older town buildings and environments that remind us of the growth of the industrial era. These have been changed from being "rat-infested slums to historical heritage" worth being preserved (Thompson 1979). As with the Umeå and Karlskrona competitions, historical traces can be given such high esteem that they determine



FIG. 5: Illustration from the winning entry in the 2003 competition for a new residential area in Mariehäll. The building is seen from the seaside this time. Illustrations: Erskine-Tovatt Architects.

the outcome of the competition. The contrast between the ultramodern along with the upgrading of the neighbourhoods' structure and aesthetics including parts of the environment that belong to the industrial era – what Robert Willim calls “Industrial Cool” (Willim 2008) are decisive for how the proposal is drawn up and evaluated.

But not everything belonging to the People's Home planning ideal has been rejected. Modernism strive for light and green lives on and if anything has been reinforced. And we have all seen that it is preferable to build in a location affording a view over the water. That is the most important reason why post-industrial town building differs from the older, darker and densely built-up neighbourhood. The Ladugårdsängen, Dragonfältet and even Mariehäll competitions can be seen as such compromises between neighbourhood block towns and an aspiration towards light rooms and green views. On the one hand you have neighbourhood streets and house facades with distinct boundaries between private and public, on the other, views over green or blue. The Mariehäll competition has succeeded in having views over and passages along water even though the plan area bordered on just a small stream. In the Skeppsviken and Stumholmen competitions the “town-like” factor became secondary to views over the sea, as well as the location's history, nature and character in spite of the organizer's desire to have a “town-like” design.

A third theme which has become crucial to town building over the past decades is how the space or place is experienced. Even here contemporary planners and architects are turning against modernity's spatial concept and instead emphasizing what they call “spirit of place” or “genius loci”. Winning proposals

are said to have found the “spirit of place” and with it the unique value which the future design is founded upon. The jury for the Skeppsviken competition writes for example about the winning proposal *Cherries and Tar* (*Körsbär och tjära*) that “the proposal very cleverly carries out its own goal of ‘capturing the spirit of the place and future housing in one stroke’”. That concept of place rests on Christian Norberg-Schulz's phenomenological interpretation of how the “spirit of place” should be understood (1980, 1992). According to this Heidegger-inspired tradition the place is linked to the home and the feeling of being at home, along with concepts of authenticity and identity (Cresswell 2004). That is why it is not surprising that the expression has played a prominent role when referring to housing and town architecture.

If you claim that a proposal has found and rests on the “spirit of place” you formulate a sort of scientific evidence, a supposed timeless support for what I believe to be feeling frozen in time. Already in 1988 Lars Jadelius criticized Norberg-Schulz' place concept when he asked “in whose interest and on whose behalf does an architect interpret a place's distinctive character. The historical process and social opposition will be hidden by his architecture theory.” As a point of departure for visions, “spirit of place” is an essentialist antithesis to, among others, Doreen Massey's (2005) understanding of place. She maintains that place is something that is continuously under construction, that place is open and rational, ambiguous and also political in character. When architects seek and start from the “spirit of place” the ideological implications of the programme, the proposals and the jury statement become hidden. Instead they assert an essence which is said to apply to all and one, forever. Even architect theorist Catharina Gabrielsson (2006) has in her thesis criticized the concept of “spirit of place” as being a mythological and essentialist concept.

What type of life does the competition proposal communicate? What values are made visible? The value that is most sought after in competitions is attractiveness. Environments and designs must be attractive. Attractive can mean in principle everything from economy and function to beauty. I understand the term to mean the latter above all, that how it looks is the most important impression. It is the look that counts in our contemporary building and this visibility is at least as determinate as modernist understanding of function and need were earlier. But it is not only the look from within the flat or from the area that is given importance but other's looking in, seeing from the outside. There is thus an awareness that a place can be evaluated both from inside and out and that its attractiveness is not only determined by those who use and inhabit it (Olshammar 2002). That housing is more and more looked upon as a competitive and mobile market is due to the attention given to attractiveness and the look from the presumed future occupant.

The professional looks architects rely on are both at rest and in motion – we find the contemplative look over the green and blue room from the window and balcony, but also the passer-by's look and other evaluating eyes looking at the area from outside. Strollers are clear figures in post-industrial town planning. We find them moving at a leisurely pace along the green thoroughfares and areas near the water that are so important in the post-industrial town plan. We have the required café on the square which also reflects the good life in the neighbourhood. Maybe you can say that local public life is designed around green areas, thoroughfares and cafés instead of around buildings for public service and social activities – all of which were the foundation of the post-war People's Home.

Indoor life is mainly invisible except for the importance of the outside view. Even in competitions where solutions for flats are requested it is rather quiet. If plans for furnishing are shown they are very traditional and show few signs of how future technology, work or new life styles have influenced the designs. The open plan design is a sign of the times which is understandable if you consider the increased social importance of cooking and partaking in meals but also from the increased craving for light and air which I emphasized earlier.

What else do we know about those who will use the competition environments? If anything is mentioned it is usually about children and seniors who are thought to need environments different from those desired by the quiet and invisible majority. Safety is another aspect which is often requested in competitions and often solved by clear demarcations between public and private areas, which is another argument for the neighbourhood ideal.

With some exceptions, the plans from the end of the 1980s until the 2000s contain a silent consensus about the people and the lives they lead in the environments proposed in the competitions. What are these assumptions based upon? In the Örebro competition we find a clear dissociation from planning ideals of the People's Home which were based on statistics. There other, more flexible models were sought. But earlier knowledge about people's family lives, being together and working has hardly changed. Instead the recommendation is to "play it by ear" as mentioned in a text from SABO (Swedish Association of Municipal Housing Companies) which draws attention to the lack of knowledge architects and planners have today. And when playing by ear personal preferences often dominate – diversity and complexity disappear.

CONCLUSION

Using architecture competitions as a tool for town planning has advantages not found in other plans. They open the discussion about the values and conditions plans are founded upon, enable an exchange of ideas between different actors and roles that are of decisive importance.⁶ By considering the competition as part of a chain of translations I have tried to draw attention to a few of the displacements that occur between the programme and the jury statement. The jury's summary of the programme's intentions is in itself an interpretation and a selection. Competing architects emphasize various aspects of the programme's intentions, delete others and add new ones of their own. The jury at the end interprets the programme as well as the proposal and translates the proposals into evaluating words.

If architectural quality is seen as something bound in time and situational and not as something that expresses eternal values, such displacements need not be seen as problematic. Instead they can be considered as the result of a process in which the exchange between different representations and actors form a basis for designing new environments. If however you become fixed upon the idea that the jury's judgment should be based solely on what the programme asks for, problems will arise. Because translations in principle always involve changes, which Latour meant, it will be difficult to maintain at the same time that nothing should happen between the programme and the jury statement (Latour 1998, 41-56). A prerequisite for such acknowledgement is recognition that an architect's creation resembles for example that of fashion – that architecture is a value-charged field that holds established truths but also pretenders looking to establish other truths than those that are already approved (Bourdieu 1991).

The concept translations has helped us to view competitions as a process which begins with some basic ideas and finishes with these ideas being modified, changed and related in various representations. But what does this process do? To shed light on what it means concretely to draw up a programme, describe proposals and write a jury statement I have used the concept assemblages. If translations deal with the process, assemblages refers to the results, to the object, the phenomenon and relations which together build an entity we call housing and neighbourhoods.

What I tried to show above was that the ideological assemblages established during the 1980s are still valid a few years on into the 21st century. These as-

6. Competitions open up a dialogue between the participants during the different stages. This doesn't necessarily mean that the competition form takes the citizen's interests into consideration.

semblages are based, among others, on the contrast between the designs of earlier eras, the revival of earlier town building ideals and the emphasis on the cultural heritage which in other contexts characterizes the post-industrial society. To those assemblages belong the view of the place as something essential and given, as well as the description of the post-industrial population as an on-looking stroller seeking visual and symbolic values, values which mainly are shaped inside the neighbourhood or in proximity to water.

If I on the one hand want to emphasize certain advantages of the competition form as such, I am also critical of the values and assemblages expressed in the competitions during this period. To start with the negation of earlier planning ideals is not a good base for building a future which, in itself, should have room for completely different living conditions. Instead this requires visions of a different and better life. To begin with a place concept that doesn't allow for differences, excitement and change is just as bad and at the same time the gap between the suburb as place and the town as the central district is widened. That attractiveness and other visual and symbolic values overshadow other values and conditions, not least of all economical, is not particularly fruitful but rather accentuates the distance between the centre and the periphery. That the people we are currently planning for resemble the middle class that now inhabits the town centres already excludes the major part of today's and tomorrow's population.

What is needed in my opinion is that architecture and planning be recognized as ideological projects. Only when we realize that architecture needs new knowledge and town planning is combined with functioning town and housing politics can architects, planners and politicians achieve a town that instead of creating and strengthening differences between rich and poor and between centre and periphery, reduce the gap in urban environments.

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Abstract

During the last fifteen years there has been a radical change as to what concerns architectural competitions' practice in Switzerland in the collective housing domain. What mainly outlines this change of scenery is the use of competitions in a sector of the construction market that until now has been marked by the private initiative constantly leading to a repetition of well-known typologies and a rather reticent attitude towards young and "inexperienced" professionals.

This situation is being currently modified. An increasing percentage of housing competitions, especially in the German-speaking part of the country, makes part of long-term development schemes regarding urban or suburban areas, schemes related to rehabilitation and densification mechanisms. At the same time the competitions system is being well promoted thanks to a subsequent number of detailed publications. State services and local authorities encourage cooperative constructing societies to act as exemplary promoters, in an effort to affront the housing shortage problem and to adequately qualify the dwelling space, elementary module of the urban environment. Collective housing is no longer considered exclusively in terms of financial conditions and compromises but also in terms of domestic space's quality, given the rapid social changes that define new ways of life and set higher the users' standards.

A therefore increasing number of architects is being offered the opportunity to investigate certain areas of interest that in the past would not comply with the financial priorities of private investors. Innovative ideas and original "images" are being positively evaluated, whether concerning urban forms, housing typology or integration of technological achievements. The article presents four projects issued from recent housing competitions in Switzerland, as study cases that focus on different innovative aspects of the architectural conception.

Keywords

innovation, architectural concept, housing competitions, cooperative societies, quality of housing.

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Collective Housing Competitions in Switzerland: The Parameter of Innovation in Architectural Conception

Antigoni Katsakou

DEFINING THE SIGNIFICANT TERMS

This introduction about recent Swiss architectural competitions of collective housing wishes, first of all, to demonstrate a change of climate in this sector of the construction market. After the severe crisis of the 90's and during the last decade, new ideas are being implemented in housing production. But among the different types of residential architecture, in this essay we are focusing on the production of collective housing. The term collective is used to refer to the kind of residential architecture that presupposes shared areas by the inhabitants, either in the form of inside spaces or as outdoor common arrangements and facilities, especially in horizontal or vertical circulations. And in this sector, the Swiss state, less in the form of the confederation, mostly by means of local administration policy councils and services, is clearly promoting over the last decade new ideas as an answer to the changing social and economical conditions. Besides, in a country where the lack of available surface accentuates the negative effects of the hyper-urbanization of peripheral areas, the need for efficient forms of dense housing is emerging rather pressing.

In this changing scenery architectural competitions play an important role as quality promoters and catalysts for a rather "accelerated" and what should be a "sufficient" housing production; "sufficient" both in quantity and in quality, which becomes also a publicity factor for an investment. State aided clients, such as cooperative societies and other non-profit estate managers, trusting the competition procedure, are serving as an example for private promoters. Architectural concurrence becomes a tool of exploring new living models. The housing market, largely controlled for several decades by the private sector that was opting for more "secure" and mainly "standardised" patterns, is stirred up by a wide variety of propositions, corresponding to the public demand. The term of innovation, either referring to housing types or to urban forms is being integrated to competitions' programs along with affordable house prices, typological variety and a high price / quality ratio as part of the prerequisites of "adequate" solutions.

We will talk about the characteristics of this change referring mostly to the significant terms of innovation, housing quality, non-profit construction managers and housing competitions. Explaining their mutual relations will aid us better comprehend their incidences on the housing market.

INNOVATION AND INVENTION

At this point, it would be useful, in order to better define our area of interest, to emphasize on the important distinction between the terms of innovation and invention. Dehan appeals to the original sense of the term “innovate” (“innover” in French) as defined in the “Robert” dictionary: to innovate means to introduce a novelty to an established thing (Robert, 1976). In the Cambridge Online Dictionary we find: “invent: to design and/or create something which has never been made before”, whereas “innovate: to introduce changes and new ideas” and “innovation: the use of new methods or ideas”. Innovation is therefore naturally related to inventiveness but the basic difference between the two terms, between these two different stages of technical progress (Bullock et al. 1988), remains as Dehan underlines, the fact that innovation does not create something absolutely new but effectuates transformations or new combinations of existing resources, adapting procedures or products to economies and making them accessible to the large public.

“This definition of innovation, as realisation of new combinations between different resources, seems particularly well-adapted to architectural production, where innovation is more frequently based on recycling, re-interpreting and transforming than on pure inventions” (Dehan 1999). In this sense, innovation can be better understood when perceived through its existing milieu. As such and especially in the field of architecture, innovation is measurable in terms of relative rather than absolute performances (Formica 1992). We could therefore say that innovation is a re-evaluation of existing forms and ideas, a new prism under which we can re-examine the existing context.

INNOVATION AND QUALITY

Innovation is generally conceived as an ameliorating plus to certain conditions. Therefore, its objective is always a qualitative one: ameliorating the adaptation of a product to the needs of its users, improving the relation between the quality of the product and its price etc. (Dehan 1999). Innovation is related to quality by the fact that such procedures aim usually to ensuring a longer duration of the project. We are trying to innovate for to react to rigid, almost unmodified through time, conventional housing forms in a period of rapid change of the social scenery. We are innovating for to predict changes and therefore secure also in the future the project’s coherence with its context.

This does not mean though, that the idea of innovation has always been well perceived by clients and contractors, or even some of the profession’s members. To put it in the words of a private investor in the Chriesimatt competition, where the client appointed a jury of distinguished architects in order to encourage the selection of “new ways” among the proposed solutions: “. . . new ways involve the risk that they could not function” (Marti 2004). Innovative operations implicate risks, due to the fact of not correctly estimating either the client’s receptive capacity or the time needed for a new idea to mature through its repeated applications. Often an architect is able to detect, measuring to a certain extent by objective criteria and to another by previous personal experience, the efficiency of a specific solution or of a certain spatial device. But is this in accordance with the users’ habits or with their tolerance regarding possible modifications of fixed routines? To this end, a close collaboration between architecture and other disciplines – sociology, management etc. – is often required.

We can distinguish the following kinds of architectural innovation (Dehan 1999):

- Formal innovations, dealing with transformations of the built objects form (its volumetric mass or aspect).
- Functional ones that can be detected in the evolution of the plan’s organization.
- Programmatic innovations, integrating for instance into the function of collective living certain qualities that would normally be related to other forms of dwelling.
- Urban innovation that is often trying to reconstitute certain liaisons with existing forms of urban space, popular and well-functioning in the past.
- Technological innovation, mainly resumed in the use of new materials or constructing ways. In this last category, we should mention research axes treating the subject of sustainable development and environment-friendly construction.

INNOVATION AND CONSTRUCTION MARKET

We have seen that a construction market is normally rather reticent towards innovative operations. It should nevertheless be said that the implicated risk depends on the desired impact and the context into which the procedure is inscribed. Different types of innovative procedures present an increasing difficulty when they are simultaneously applied on the same project. But the greater the risk, often the bigger is the possibility of a more breaking-through, positive change. On the contrary, limited interventions have the advantage of being more easily integrated because the users can appropriate them more easily.

This rule has been noted to concern rather this portion of residential markets – a slowly changing system themselves – referring to ownership than other forms of tenure. In the first case, there existed, at least until recently, a certain tendency to select what would be concerned as having a more or less “universal”, “long-lasting” value (Dehan 1999). On the contrary, tenants under rented forms of tenure or even members of cooperative associations are more frequently searching new ideas. We could form the hypothesis, yet to be proved, that there lies one of the reasons rendering certain housing markets more susceptible to innovative concepts than others. The desired change is certainly depending on the target-public; competition programmes should be defined in accordance with its aspirations.

Switzerland is, from this point of view, a rather special case presenting a very low percentage of owners; only one third of the Swiss people own their houses, at the same time a rather low percentage of tenants consider themselves obliged by their financial conditions to rent, in which case they perceive negatively their housing conditions (Thalmann and Favarger 2002). If we relate the idea of collective housing with living units occupied in their majority by rented forms of tenure, maybe this feeble ratio of propriety is a reason for a more intensive effort of ameliorating the offered quality in this field of the construction industry.

COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES AND HOUSING QUALITY

The Swiss state, in the course of the last century, has not undertaken social housing policies, the results and typological connotations of which have strongly been questioned during past decades in other European countries (Schmidt 1988). The confederation has not chosen to construct by its own means but has promoted housing construction by non-profit managers, offering them considerable advantages. We will shortly refer to the system of housing cooperatives as related to the promotion of the collective housing notion and of architectural competitions as typically applied procedures for the promotion of new constructions.

Why are cooperative societies important for the current housing production? As owners of housing buildings, they certainly do not represent such a high percentage: according to the federal inventory effectuated in 2000, only the 4.5% of the country’s housing supply belongs to cooperative societies of construction (information from the Federal Statistical Office). But this percentage is not really denotative of their potential, not even of the role they have played in the construction market since their foundation in the end of the 19th c. and that for several reasons (Thalmann and Favarger 2002). Primarily, because in a way, they also represent – through their func-

tioning and the state’s policy concerning them – other forms of associations serving public interests in the construction sector: foundations of public or private right, institutions of professional insurance, pension institutions etc. This group owned in 1990 approximately the 14% of the total housing supply (Cuennet, Favarger et al. 2002). What is more significant is the percentage that cooperative construction societies represent in diverse cantons, often extremely varied: in the cities of Zurich and Basel during the same period this ratio exceeded the 10% only to reach in Zurich the 19% in 2007 (Schmid et al. 2008). What’s more, housing cooperatives have managed to remain active during decline periods of the construction activity establishing a reference standard for the rest of housing investors. This is mostly due to the state’s aid, linked to their system since almost its very birth, and to the fact that they normally provide the lower rent prices while attaining an optimised quality / price ratio.

Because, even if the main objective of cooperative societies is decent housing on a moderate price the quality of the final result is not necessarily compromised. Since their foundation, their primary aim is to ameliorate the housing conditions of the industrial city’s population. The quality criterion remains also current later on, when cooperatives are adopted by different urban systems emerging as solutions to the unnatural rapid growth of the 19th c. cities and the insalubrious living conditions (Loderer and Architektur Forum Zürich 1994) or in relation with the more recent movement of the historic city centres’ rehabilitation and the renovation of their existing residential supply. During the course of the years, the amelioration of the cooperative members’ living conditions rests subsequently a leading priority. This background and the ever-lasting dream of the single-family home – in Switzerland, still 59% of the population considers a single-family house as the ideal home (Thalmann and Favarger 2002) – define a contemporary setting where new solutions seem necessary.

ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITIONS AS A MEANS OF PROMOTING QUALITY AND INNOVATION

A persisting housing shortage, urging for certain groups of the population, either suffering from discriminations (immigrants, monoparental households, invalids) or not in the measure of finding a better home (a certain number of families with increasing financial means have some difficulty in finding a spacious enough housing unit at a reasonable price), heavy rent loads and the principal characteristic of the Swiss housing market, the exceptionally high percentage of rental contracts as a dominant form of tenure, are some innate conditions of the housing market, as stated by the Federal

Commission of Housing Construction in 1999 (Cuennet, Favarger et al. 2002), that still impose the state's financial aid in this sector. Nevertheless, from this date on, the financial aid is to be better framed so that it can serve households who are mostly and genuinely in need. In 1998, the city of Zurich lances the initiative of "10000 flats in 10 years" and later "Housing for all" (2002-2006), planning the production of a certain number of dwellings in a fixed time period. At the same time other cities of equal characteristics follow Zurich's path. These conditions are related to two side phenomena; housing cooperatives and non-profit associations become an easier access to something closer to the ideal home and to one's acquiring more rights on his housing accommodations; a cooperative member finds himself in an intermediate status between a tenant and an owner, with more rights than the first one and less than the other (Thalmann and Favarger 2002). Because of this, even people with relatively fair financial means turn to the solution of housing cooperatives. And in their case the quality factor becomes even more important and above all, affordable. Another significant point concerns a differently qualified part of the population; people with higher intellectual standards turn to housing cooperatives charmed by the myth of a communal and more human model of life.

In this context, a long tradition of architectural competitions, though referring mostly until now to other than housing programmatic uses, is being reactivated. The competitions number held each year in Switzerland, was reported in 1975, between seventy and one hundred (Strong 1976), in 1996 around a hundred and thirty (Strong 1996), while during the period 1985-1998 this number varied between sixty and a hundred and ninety (Meyer-Meierling 1998). Switzerland is thus representing, along with Germany and Austria, one of the European countries holding the higher percentage of competition organizing. But we should as soon underline the difference between the diffusion of the competition system, regarding housing production in Switzerland, compared to other northern countries. In the spirit of the general housing policy, where the state has not engaged itself in the construction but only in the promotion of collective housing, it is not designating competitions as an obligatory condition of the provided financial aid, as goes i.e. in neighbouring Austria (Rebois 1990).

But there are other conditions that together with contemporary social changes facilitate the application of the competitions' system, especially when it has already been tested in the course of the years with satisfactory results: improved living standards create higher demands from more conscientious users; negative past experiences little promoting communal life or "banalizing" the notion of "home", make exploring new solutions and

intermediate living forms an imperative priority. In order to better understand this changing context we should also seek more influential groups that favour the competitions' system within the housing sector. Thus, we should probably speak of professionals who are constantly demonstrating a high interest in competitions, besides the opposed arguments (poor compensation of the effort, sacrifice of time and energy that could be devoted to already assigned projects, etc.) and of decision makers that promote the system for reasons of economy. And in this equation the most important components are the quality / price relation improved by the wide variety of ideas, the guarantee of a better thought answer to a complex problem and the fact that well-adjusted procedures secure a better planned and therefore shorter lasting building process, ensuring the budget and the time frame. To these arguments we should probably add that competitions can distribute the work more evenly to the profession (Strong 1996), not only with respect to the winners if not also to the assessors, and it is as such a tool that they are serving in Switzerland until now. This last point makes nowadays the discussion about competition procedures (open or by invitation) extremely important; it can define the range of opportunities offered to the younger and less "wired" professionals. We should note a final point that has to do with the particularities of the procedure itself: the most important contribution of a competition is the dialogue established between different actors (promoters, participants, the jury and the public) encouraging debate, exploration and research over the complex subject of housing (Strong 1996) through "democratic" standards. Taking into consideration the country's political system, that generally encourages debate, even to what concerns the construction sector, and the publicity that architectural projects receive nowadays in general, we can imagine that competitions serve also as a way of acquiring a kind of "general consensus" based on early discussions and public participation (Strong 1996) that can largely facilitate the scheme.

In the following, we will take a closer look to the different types of architectural innovation that the above setting is stimulating. Every project will be presented from a specific point of view, emphasizing on a particular kind of architectural innovation, in order to give a global idea of what is going on today in this sector of the Swiss construction market. It goes without saying that in the majority of the cases, a project's conceptual value cannot be restrained in so strict a classification, justified only by the purpose of a systematic analysis. It is therefore understood that certain aspects of the following examples could also be studied through the prism of a different type of innovation.

In the first case we will focus on the idea of formal innovation; the authors are reinterpreting the classic urban block, deforming its most marking element, the continuous, uninterrupted fronts. In the second case, the insertion of the single-family house theme to the logic of a collective housing complex is providing an example of programmatic innovation, on the fairly fertile research track of the collective housing units' differentiation and individualisation. The third example will serve us as a paradigm of functional innovation; an unexpected fragmentation of the principal form, reflects the different character attributed through a rich typological variety of housing types to each separate fragment and facilitates the construction in separate stages. The last project presented here offers an example of urban innovation; the wide-spread form of the block ("point house") is being re-examined within the spectrum of the global form that takes up its uniformity also thanks to the complimentary design of its interstitial free spaces.

CONTEMPORARY PARADIGMS OF INNOVATION

RESIDENTIAL COMPLEX VOLTA MITTE - BASEL (2005),
ARCH.: CHRIST & GANTENBEIN (1ST PRIZE)

The competition's site is located close to the French frontier, in an area of the city that is currently going through important transformations. The district of St. Johann was originally developed around the industry placed along the river Rhine and was mainly inhabited by this industry's workers. Today, in the limits of the urban agglomeration, it is the location of the prestigious Novartis Campus of Sciences and particularly charged by traffic loads. The Volta Street that crosses the district connecting the Swiss east tangent highway to the French highway is to become a residential zone, by the underground, in this section, construction of the north tangent highway. Along with this new route, a new suburban underground train station will connect the railway station of St. Johann to the international airport and the city's network. The street's front will be planted; a bicycle and a tram lane will be added.

Given the complex, evolving nature of the area, the competition's organizer (the canton of city of Basel) merely defined housing as the main programmatic function, leaving the invited teams free to propose, depending on their perception of the zone and their knowledge of the market, other compatible uses. For to secure the realization of the project, the city opted for an architects' / investors' competition; every architectural team should be allied to a contractor willing to assume the project's execution. In terms of urban form, the participants were asked to complete an urban block of the existing tissue and to deal with the corresponding issues of the regu-



FIG. 1: Site plan

lar and monotonous street façades, the courtyard's, semi-public space organisation and the connection between the private residential and the public sphere. The proposals would also be judged on the basis of their originality regarding the complex's image projected to the railway station of St. Johann, the quality of the housing typology, the possibility to shelter people coming from mixed social backgrounds and the interest of the investing proposal [fig.1].

Christ and Gantenbein, a relatively young architectural firm, took into consideration the existing

situation, studying the negative conditions imposed by the existing urban type. The fixed shape of the block's envelope and the traditionally static character of the street front presented, along with the northern orientation of the courtyard façade, considerable constraints to a satisfactory design. The radically changing scenery of the former industrial area, also on a social level, could not be adequately expressed through a sterile repetition of the urban form. The authors propose a five-storey high skin, formed by alternated brick and glass bands, which generally follows the block's contour but is drawn back diagonally at its corners to accentuate the openings of the built tissue and the enlargements of the street's space, the two plazas at the block's extremities. While the Volta façade remains relatively calm (but for the distorted balconies) the courtyard's front is strongly deformed. This arrangement serves two principal purposes. Firstly, the extended length of the façade is "decomposed" to give the impression of more than one building volumes. Together with the volume's recessions on the level of the last two floors, this allows for a more user-friendly scale to be restored on the free space of the courtyard. A calmer, residential ambiance can therefore be established. On the other hand, this "unaffected", "relaxed" treatment of the building's frontline secures an even longer, naturally lit, front with the additional advantage of its differently reacting towards the distinct surrounding situations (the rest of the courtyard's existing fronts). Varying views are created for the house units while, at the same time, the disadvantageous orientation conditions for the rooms placed on this side of the building are cancelled [fig. 2].

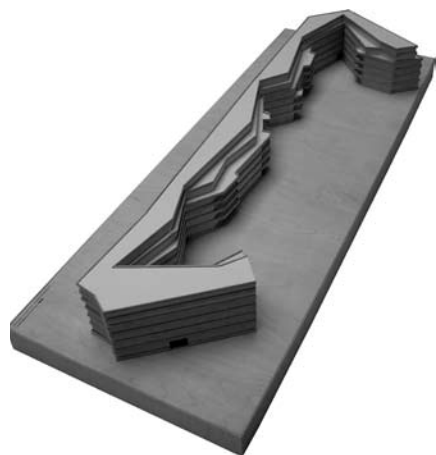


FIG. 2: Photo of the project's wooden model

In total, 96 apartments, the majority of which represents moderately sized dwellings (3 ½ or 4 ½ rooms), are proposed. 22 out of these constitute a boarding house (destined to house employees of the closely situated pharmaceutical company or of the office surfaces on the first floor) whereas four of them are designed as duplex urban attics, placed on the upper floors. No apartment is identical to another. However, they all answer to a kind of free design, with a flowing living space extending from one façade to another and incorporating the entrance area, the kitchen and the living room. As a result of the sculpted courtyard front the building's width varies from 5m to 17m. Too profound units take advantage of an increased room height (2.8 – 2.9m). The extreme typological variety aims to a large, socially varied public, possibly interested by different forms of tenure [fig. 3].

On the ground level, passages allow a connection between the street's universe and the semi-public space of the court. This latter's design, picking up the strong lines determining the façade's transformation, was criticised by the jury in relation with the twisted front. According to the jury report, a calmer arrangement should be sought, reinforcing the desired contrast between the two different levels of social interaction. The jury also thought that the house types should be better studied, especially given the fact that already some of the apartments' exterior spaces (balconies, terraces) do not seem to possess sufficient dimensions. The construction being planned for the current year, it remains yet to be seen how the project will be transformed during its "realization process": "The partly experimental character of the houses should be disciplined; the implicated risk can be decreased by a measured "preservation" of the concept..." (Laedrach and Waltert 2005).

RESIDENTIAL COMPLEX WEISSENSTEIN – BERN (2004),
ARCHITECTS: GRABER & PULVER (2ND PRIZE)

The competition was held by a cooperative society for the site of a disused gravel pit that has also served as dump area in the past. A small river running along the northern border of the terrain and the close proximity of the Weis-

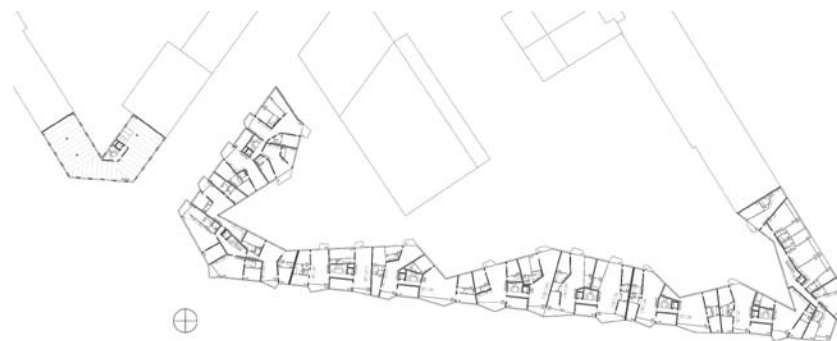


FIG. 3: Typical floor plan

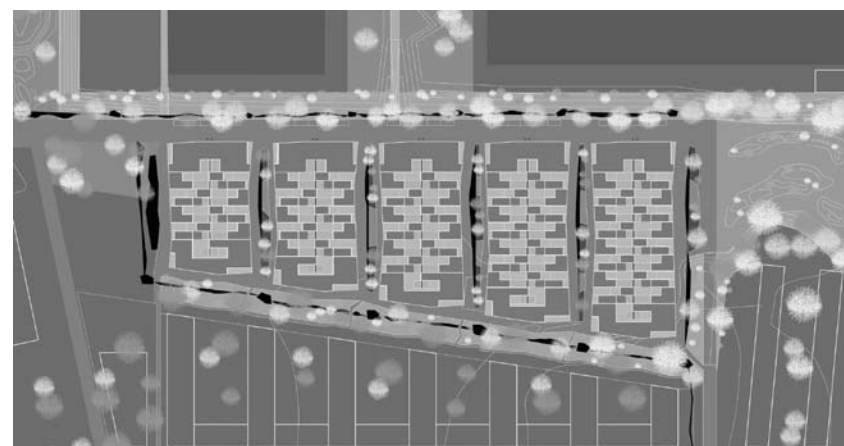


FIG. 4: Site plan

senstein sport ground, of some commercial uses and other complimentary services complete the background scenery of the future residential complex. The client set as a priority the production of reasonably spacious, affordable housing with a certain typological flexibility that would allow it to be adapted to various forms of tenure and to future changes of the households' structure [fig. 4].

The two main characteristics of the project are its compactness and the originality of the proposed house type; it is a contemporary re-interpretation of the medieval urban tissue of Bern, combined with a sensitive reading of the single-family house idea. The authors propose five "housing islands" placed on a distance that allows between them the creation of "green alleys" promoting the collective life. The five fragments are aligned to the northern border of the site, with a kind of homologous growth of their length

corresponding to the biased southern line of the plot. The compactness of the proposition issues from the complex organisation of every island's main body. While its extremities are occupied by flats of one sole level served by separate entrance cores, the rest of the block is filled with row houses, each one of them extending to four different levels and interacting, with an adjacent housing unit, in section and plan. Every "island's" middle space is hollow. It is carved by a sophisticated sequence of private free spaces that creates a unique neighbourhood's atmosphere [fig. 5].

The maisonettes have their own roof gardens, private courtyards or spacious verandas that look onto the "green alleys" between the buildings or onto every building's middle space. They are also served by their own private entrances and parking spaces on ground level, combined usually with spare rooms or storerooms. The halls that enlarge the entrance zones can also be quite handfull for families with children, serving as indoor playing rooms on rainy days or weather protected space for other occasions. In the intermediate levels, night zones are alternated with living spaces that combine kitchen, sitting room and dining. Every level is marked by its own spacious outdoor extension such as a terrace or a loggia, while on the attic a big room that can serve as library, playing or living space is enriched by its direct connection to the roof garden [fig. 6].

The two different house types make the project attractive to many social groups and family structures. The authors create a proposal that could serve as a model project for Bern's housing market presenting a particularly high demand. It offers a contemporary version of two different housing themes: living close to the centre of the city in a neighbourhood of high density but with a quality that mainly reflects living in the country. By reinterpreting the medieval tissue's compactness, the architects provide their residential complex with a strong image, thus also answering to the lack of identity of the surrounding built environment. The history of the place is taken into consideration, not being contradicted by the proposed intervention; the ancient gravel pit is not to be "re-naturalised". The "alleys" between the housing blocks are to be planted where possible but mostly equipped with urban elements coinciding with the existing concrete coverings of the underground dump's air wells. Moderately sized green surfaces are planned. They are destined to form small plazas contributing to the proposed qualitative variety of free spaces. An effort is made to integrate different branches of the existing stream to the alleys' design, combining them with a system directing the rain water to a large basin, placed to the main plaza on the northwest side of the terrain.

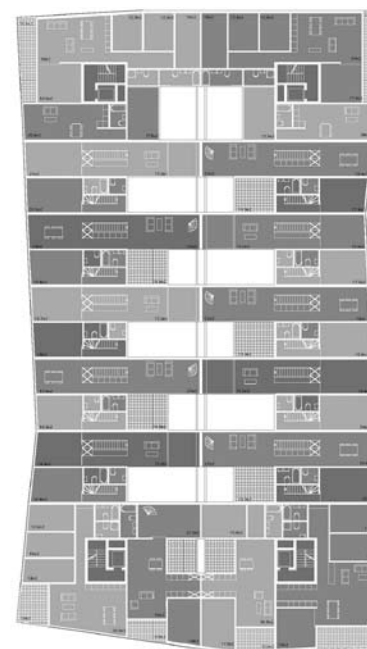


FIG. 5: Second floor plan



FIG. 6: Axonometric plan of the maisonette

RESIDENTIAL COMPLEX CHRIESIMATT – BAAR (2003),
ARCHITECTS: GRABER & PULVER (1ST PRIZE)

This project issued from a private competition aiming to the preservation of the specific area's identity by the construction of a coherent and respectful residential complex. The competition procedure offered the co-proprietors of the terrain a wide range of choices, subsequently an increased chance of finding a rather original solution but most of all a means of reaching a common agreement. The high demand of Baar's housing market and a quite selective public related to it, make innovative solutions quite searched for. The site is located in one of Baar's few areas that have not yet been built. To the west, interesting views have to be searched diagonally through the existing residential buildings; to the east, the settings are dominated by small-scale villas and single-family, detached or row houses; to the south, the terrain reaches the agricultural zone of Baar and the unobstructed view extends as far as the Alps of the Bern region. The clients demanded quality housing, enriched by an appropriate design of collective and private free spaces. Playgrounds and meeting points for the community should promote a vivid social life.

The awarded solution managed to create a special image for the future buildings, taking advantage of the characteristic trapezoidal form of the terrain that is slightly twisted following the soft descending slope of the topography to the south. Above all, the project convinced the jury of its practical, functional approach managing also to attribute to every building an autonomous identity. Two, at first sight, continuous linear constructions follow the terrain's borderlines with light distortions. When examined more closely, they reveal eight distinct slabs, completed in the northern end of the terrain, by a block that forms the finishing point of the whole composition and contains in the ground floor, some small-scale commercial facilities compatible with the residential use. Between the two linear almost continuous buildings, a large free space, opening to the unobstructed view close to the southern border, forms a kind of central, green park for the complex [fig. 7].

The buildings are disposed, according to the underground parking's entrances, into four different groups that make possible diverse options of completing the construction into several stages. Except for the northern group, incorporating the block, each of the resting three contains two separate fragments, characterised by their oblique sides and their bodies' slight changes of direction that create different building widths. Therefore two principal themes are generating distinct house types that create, in a bigger scale, a great variety of public, semi public and private free spaces: the treatment of the building's differentiated width and the way the main, loft-type living space of the apartments is functioning in relation with its exterior extension, be it a loggia, courtyard or terrace.

Short-width parts, such as attic units positioned in retreats of the building's volume, take advantage of spacious terraces and widened views. Middle-width apartments are designed either with a shorter double aspect living space, whose length is completed by a loggia oriented to the east or the west, or with a unilateral living sequence that is naturally lit and ventilated also by an internal patio (attic floor). Duplex apartments follow more or less the same principles, with a type of two-storey loggia, marking their position to the complex's façades and looking onto the unit's private garden. Building parts with exceeding widths acquire a kind of "open room", a spacious, square-shaped loggia. Other than that, the apartments are marked by a slight difference of level between the sitting-room and the kitchen, when a double aspect living space is concerned, a small hall that creates in many cases a transition space for the night zone, and a multi-purpose room that forms frequently an extension for the entrance / kitchen / living room / loggia sequence and is separated from it by means of a wide sliding door [fig. 8+9].

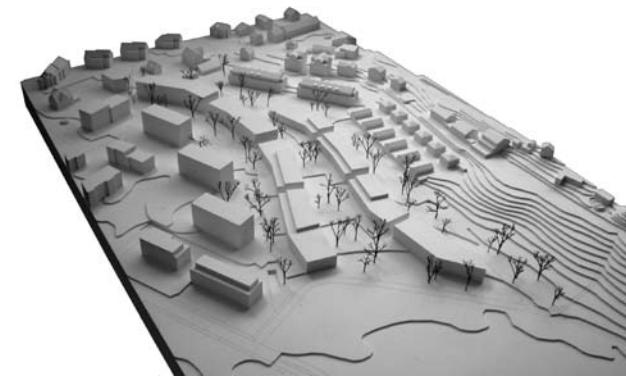


FIG. 7: Photo of the project's model

The architects offered an in-depth analysis of three different fragments that present each, due to their position in the terrain, the combination of housing types in their interiors and their volume sizes, a special residential character. With the treatment of the first fragment that is located to the northern extreme of the complex, they create a version of "urban living in the park"; a three-storey volume, close to the main connection route, is filled with one-level, loft-type apartments. There are no private gardens on the ground level but the common free space is planted with different kinds of trees. The second fragment shelters mostly duplexes, lowering its volume (two stories) when reaching the site's south-western extreme. There, the proximity of the neighbouring slab that blocks the view to the east is amended by a private garden or a terrace asset. The third fragment, situated to the site's south-eastern extreme and liberated from neighbouring buildings, contains large one-level apartments, among which is included a special type located in the southern side and rejoicing of a panoramic view. The treatment of the buildings' skin contributes to the special identity of the whole restoring its unity. Big square openings, corresponding either to windows or to loggias, are arranged in a somewhat fortuitous way in the façades. A discreet earth tone is used for the exterior brick walls. It creates a strong contrast with the shining paintwork of vivid coral tones applied to the loggias' interior surfaces and to the windows' frames.

RESIDENTIAL COMPLEX GUGGACH - ZURICH (2005),
ARCH.: ALTHAMMER & HOCHULI (1ST PRIZE)

In this case the client, the cooperative of Zurich's Tram Workers, has fixed the competition's objectives in accordance with the city's initiative "1000

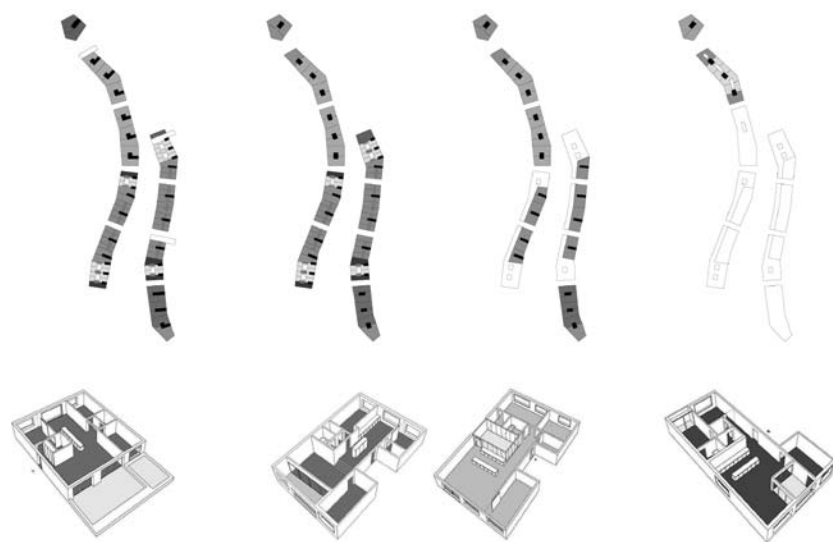


FIG. 8 and 9: Typological diagram of the ground, 1st, 2nd and 3rd floor and axonometric plans of various housing types

flats in 10 years”. Already owning a residential complex with small-sized apartments in this district, the cooperative aimed on providing its members (that have the financial ability to ameliorate their living conditions) with the option of moving into bigger, appropriate for families flats (of 4 ½ and 5 ½ rooms), without completely changing neighbourhood.

The site is located in close proximity of the plaza Buchegg – a turning point in the city’s traffic network – and of the newly constructed – also through a competition won by the architects Mike Guyer and Annette Gignon – residential complex of Brunnenhof. To the west, the terrain is reaching a large recreation area with a natural forest; to the north, the sport installations of Guggach; to the east, it is circumscribed by Hofwiesen Street, a busy road connecting different parts of the city. Thus the traffic noise becomes an issue to be affronted by the participants, as well as the two existing, disused buildings of Zurich’s Electrical Company [fig. 10].

The winning project integrated both these buildings to the new complex. Their “artless”, “casual” emplacement in the site becomes for the authors an organising principle as to what concerns the rest of the composition. Eight compact, moderately sized buildings (3-5 floors high), following the well-known and widely spread, especially in Switzerland, type of housing block, are arranged in the terrain as “carelessly” thrown pebbles. On a second look to the plan, they seem to sketch with their borders the plot’s limits, as if they

were to fill its entire surface. They give the impression of a “built layer” that has been obliquely sliced in order to create openings with interesting perspectives onto the surrounding settings. At the same time the whole composition, through a consistent, well-studied design of exterior spaces, forms in the urban tissue, a passage from the busy route to the forest. By their turning and twisting in relation to one another, the blocks seem to carry progressively the pedestrian to the higher situated, natural scenery. Four platforms, forming distinct plazas, each one of a special character (Magnolienplatz, Brunnenplatz, Turmplatz, Aussenraum UGZ), link through ramps and staircases, Hofwiesen Street to the peripheral calm road of the green surface [fig. 11].

The relatively small scale of the blocks makes them easier integrated to their heterogeneous context. The two longer and finer construction bodies of the group are following the contour of Hofwiesen Street, thus forming, in combination with an adapted housing typology, an unforced barrier to the traffic noise. A tranquil character is established for the rest of the complex and the interstitial collective space, reflecting a domestic identity for the whole set.

A circulation core in the centre of every block, serves three apartments by floor. In the flats, the entrance hall is developed in such a way as to create a transition space between surfaces left to collective use and more intimate zones. Loggias, placed in the buildings’ corners, offer biased differentiated views. A spare room is usually found in direct relation with the main living space, possibly assuming various uses: as a prolongation of the sitting and eating zone, as an office, library or additional bedroom. In the linear buildings of Hofwiesen Street the circulation cores are placed next to the street façade, protecting, along with the elongated sequence of living rooms, bathrooms and spare rooms placed to the east, the private zones of the apartments of the street noise. To the west, the night zone is completed with a balcony stretched along the entire length of the façade.

The project’s strongest point is its double identity; a suitable, user-friendly scale for the separate units and a uniform, strong image of a whole for the group. As pointed out by the authors, the main idea is to establish a continuous spatial flow, produced by the intertwining of two different qualities: a certain openness guaranteeing for the complex’s free spaces and the for the housing units interesting views from varied angles and a compactness, intelligible on the global concept and the choice of the building type [fig. 12].

RECAPITULATING

To review the analysed examples, it is important to clarify two points concerning our particular selection of projects. Firstly, the fact that their majority concerns winning designs, does not reflect a special interest, from



FIG. 10: Site plan



FIG. 11: Ground floor plan

our part, in awarded proposals. Competition projects represent intellectual goods of an undeniable value regardless their materialisation, as well pointed out in the exhibition “Le concours d’architecture est un bien culturel” celebrating the centenary of the foundation of the Swiss Architects’ Federation, on March 2008. In the framework of this short presentation, searching to demonstrate that construction managers do regard innovation with a different eye, we have intentionally opted for primed projects. We have thus showed that housing promoters become in practice willing to “refresh” their existing range of solutions, as part of an effort to remain competitive in a demanding market. Secondly, the term of innovation is used here in full awareness of its various aspects and diverse interpretations, as a classifying criterion for the analysis of projects, studied until now mainly under the prism of a typomorphological method. It serves us therefore mostly as a tool to confirm the interest of specific proposals in an already shaped (using multiple criteria) corpus of case studies.

We should likewise focus on another significant element. Certainly, innovation is a term frequently coming up in competition briefs and can be there perceived in relation with what seems to be, in the housing investment’s domain, an incontestable shift from the quantifiable to the qualifiable. But even though the housing market is changing in a way that the number of square metres reflects no more the primary criterion of an investment decision, construction promoters are not willing to take the risk of innovation without consequent guarantees on their priority interests. In other words, a competition’s objective is to provide the client with a variety of



FIG. 12: Perspective image of the collective free space

solutions, among which he can choose the most appropriate design in terms of function and aesthetics but also, the one most well-studied in terms of its future materialisation. As a consequence, a jury’s decision often stumbles to questions concerning a project’s complying with the program’s quantifiable requirements (number of units, costs, timetable, constructed surface, etc.), especially in relation with additional expenses.

Comparing, for example, the Chriesimatt and Weissenstein projects, coming from the same office of architects, we can see how a detailed typological study in the first case, secured for the proposition the first prize, while in the second case, doubts as to the project’s satisfying certain requisites of the program (the proposed built surface exceeded all other solutions while the number of housing units was not confirmed) classified the project in the second rank. Regarding this remark, we should also bear in mind that more innovative solutions often require an additional amount of energy, effort and time to mature and convince of their efficiency, which is not always possible in a competition’s restricted time frame. For instance, the jury’s comment, mentioned in the case of the most breaking through of all projects presented here, the urban block’s transformation, can also be explained from this point of view; that is to say, as referring to an obligatory adjustment of the solution to a more pragmatic and precise application frame.

Finally, it is important to take into account the fact that housing competitions refer to a common good. They may represent “agons between artists” (Lipstadt 1989) but they also reveal the “inescapably collaborative nature of architectural creation” – in the sense of an architect’s “relative autonomy”

(Lipstadt 2005). Housing competitions refer to a product that interests the public deeply. Any kind of dialogue developed in their framework is quite determining for the architects' relation with the public and consequently, for the definition of the profession's place in the society. The diffusion of innovative, ameliorated patterns by means of an increasing publicity around the housing competitions subject can reinforce the relationship between architects and public. And in this process, the participation of younger professionals is essential. Maintaining an important ratio of open competition procedures means nourishing the profession's hopes; it means reacting against established systems and in several cases, reacting against "elitist" attitudes that alienate architects from the market's principles and functioning codes as well as from the public's needs.

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Abstract

This paper aims to review research findings, as well as questions raised, relating to the centrality of the architectural competition and the handling of its results, and studied as part of entire processes of realization of architectonic visions by Nordic architects and municipal clients in the period 1900-1955. The material of the historiographic study [1994-2000] was Nordic town halls, and to some extent, municipal community centra and cultural centra. The point of this review, however, will be to relate questions and findings of a socio-political nature to a consideration of experience gained from two present-day case studies of public cultural projects in Denmark and Sweden.

A socio-political point of view is warranted in the first place by the given mixed composition of participants in the municipal competition process: the architect's profession, politicians, municipality officials, consultants, diverse laymen. In investigating the achievement of recognized high quality in the ultimate result, the erected public building, a socio-political approach appears to be as expedient as the aesthetic assessment and the architectural evaluation. Such questions would concern the role and significance of the competition to the main protagonists, architects and the client, as well as the competition product – their diverse visions. The role of the competition program as formulated by the municipal client committee turns out to be exceedingly important as a means of communication between all parties—the jury included. An unclear program appears to have ramifications far into the implementation process, not least when these are supported by conditions of a political nature. Therefore conflicting aspects of anonymity versus the issue of responsibility in relation to power, as regards both the selection of the winning project and its realization, need to be further questioned.

An early finding from the historiographic study was that the successful public building is always created and carried out *only* through the good will of the client. One main element is the all-important quality of the interaction between client and architects. However, the issue of architectural quality is markedly relative, just as decisions are dependent on the relational configurations of players involved.

In a historical perspective the evolution of the architectural competition process has been towards a distinctly project-oriented, as well as democratic – or sometimes pseudo-democratic – approach. The anchoring of the competition scenario in issues of much wider societal relevance has been urged lately by the public and the media.

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The Building of Visions and the Municipal Client's Role? Findings from an Investigation Into Architectural Competitions 1900-1955 for Nordic Civic Projects, as Reconsidered in the Present

Gerd Bloxham Zettersten

A REVIEW OF RESEARCH

Based in my doctoral study [1994-2000] of entire processes of realization of architectonic visions for civic buildings by Nordic architects and municipal clients in the period 1900-1955, this paper aims to review findings as well as questions raised relating to the centrality of the architectural competition and the handling of its results. Consequently, the paper has a historiographic basis, but the intention is that it should also reflect on the ways in which the period findings may relate to present-day practice. For that reason, in this review I shall also draw on findings from a subsequent case studies investigation with a distinct socio-political focus, *Political Behaviour and Architectonic Vision: Two Swedish/Danish Processes in Contemporary Public Architecture*, 2007.¹

The study material of the original, historiographic investigation was extant documentary sources including sketches, competition and project drawings for a large selection of Nordic town halls, and to some extent, municipal community centra and cultural centra. In that major research project a principal aim was to examine the critical assimilation of international impulses into a regional context and into Nordic and local norms of conduct. It was towards that end that an examination of the creation of major public buildings in the Nordic countries in that particular historical period became a useful means. The investigation was published in book-form in Swedish in

1. Gerd Bloxham Zettersten, *Political Behaviour and Architectonic Vision: Two Swedish/Danish Processes in Contemporary Public Architecture*, Chalmers publ 2007 [GBZ 2007]; but here used only as a present-day corrective.

2000, as [in Eng. trans.] *Nordic Perspective on Architecture. Critical Regionalization in Nordic Town Halls 1900-1955*.²

One result of the historiographic investigation which had been unexpected at its start, was the realization that a socio-political point of view appears to be not just a useful approach, but also a warranted approach given the mixed composition of participants in the overall municipal processes. It also motivates a socio-political bias in the following review of the competition process.

In this review the client perspective will be in specific focus. Therefore, what will be considered here, using and reviewing relevant findings from the doctoral investigation, is mainly the competition organizer's/the client's role as regards (1) mutual visions, (2) societal ideals and contextual anchoring, and (3) aspects of process, focusing on the competition process in its relation to the implementation of the competition project. However, as a preliminary to a discussion of relevant findings, the evolution of 20th century competitions will be considered briefly in a historical Nordic perspective, since client attitudes naturally relate to the changing status of competitions. Following that, a key will be given to the relevant aspects of the civic architecture material and competitions scenario investigated. This will include an overview over period tendencies, which in its turn will be followed by three different examples of ideas competitions and their results, illustrating a variety of background municipal and site conditions. Central aspects of these conditions for the competition project will have originated with the municipal client's handling of it, but the extent and degree will have differed and the researcher's possibility of fully penetrating the doings will often be elusive.

Finally, a general discussion of relevant issues will be attempted, summing up questions and collating findings that derive from both the historiographic investigation and the present-day case studies. Here a few researcher's comments as to feasibility of aspects of such investigations will be included, adding another vantage point to the review.

PRELIMINARY PERSPECTIVE ON COMPETITIONS

In an overview of the evolution of architectural competition procedures through the study period 1900-1955 and then compared to contemporary

2. Documentary sources are accounted for in Gerd Bloxham Zettersten, *Nordiskt perspektiv på arkitektur. Kritisk regionalisering i nordiska stadshus 1900-1955*, Stockholm: Arkitektur Förlag 2000 [GBZ 2000]. See especially: ch. II and Appendix with a catalogue of projects in DK, FL, NO, SW; Slutord (Epilogue), esp. pp. 497-502; Summary in English, esp. pp 518-523.

practice, it is – of course – clear that competition practice has by now been both developed and regulated in great detail. One might in fact see this development as a specialization that tends to reduce the anchoring in the socio-political context, a reduction of external influence which is at the same time obviously one purpose behind regulation.

Maybe paradoxically, in the first third of the 20th century there appears to be a contradiction in the markedly academic and autonomous, formalistic competition visions typically proposed for major public architecture, and the as yet fairly loosely regulated competition systems in the Nordic countries. The academic style of the proposals was a tradition originally inherited from competitions conducted in the French Écoles (Polytechnique and de Beaux-Arts) and was a particularly distinct survival in Denmark. But from the civic architecture material studied, it becomes clear that rules and results might at times be handled in an arbitrary fashion according to the discretion and needs of the client organizer, and this appears to be true in all the Nordic countries. As late as in 1928 Hakon Ahlberg in Sweden complained in the Swedish architectural journal *Byggmästaren* of a lack of discipline when it came to the respect given to the winning entry and the will towards its implementation.³

It is towards the middle of the 20th century that enthusiasm for guiding principles grows far more pronounced among both organizers and competitors, and there are attempts to clarify and respect a systematic mode of approach. This trend accompanies, as we shall see below, one tendency towards an increasingly abstract analysis of space planning in the solving of competition tasks. At the same time there is also a noticeable ethical commitment, and even joy, expressed in the work of public architecture on the part of both competitors and clients.

The reductive regulation of what I describe tentatively as the socio-political realm of the competition is visible if one compares the competition rules as discussed in 1933 by Gunnar Sundbärg in *Byggmästaren* with research results produced in the last few years by the architectural competitions research group at the School of Architecture and the Built Environment at the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm. Sundbärg and the research group have both conducted comparative analyses of competition practice in the Nordic countries, which may also be compared to the findings from my civic architecture investigation.⁴

3. Hakon Ahlberg, "Allmän tävling", *Byggmästaren* 1928, 5, 17.

4. Gunnar Sundbärg, "Tävlingsreglerna", *Byggmästaren* 1933, 5, 23-28. Publications by the research group at the School of Architecture and the Built Environment, Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, which are relevant here: Reza Kazemian-Magnus

Obviously there are inter-Nordic discrepancies and variables due to local factors between the countries throughout the 20th century. General tendencies have remained the same, however: Efficiency all-round in Denmark, at times followed by Norway, and increasingly dominant in Finland after her independence in 1917 and the great economic and societal set-back imposed by World War II particularly here, and in Norway. Due to the national historic conditions of lack of resources Norway and Finland had the lowest share of competition projects that were carried out within civic architecture in the first half of the century. The proportional share in erected architecture generally has remained the highest in Denmark throughout. Meanwhile Sweden has appeared from the start to lag behind as regards the efficiency of the architectural competition system. But it is in recent times that the rate of implementation of competition results in Sweden has gone down to lowest Nordic level.⁵

In the socio-political view applied here, the principal reasons for the differing development in the Nordic countries appear to be found in concrete conditions in their combination with national/regional/local attitudes and norms of behaviour.

But common to the Nordic countries is still today the question of further regulation of competition rules. It presupposes a further specialization which, on the evidence of the historiographic investigation, constitutes a double-bind that may not be beneficial to the common idealistic endeavour of achieving an innovative and optimal solution to a building proposal. This is when finding such a solution is viewed as an endeavour which embraces *both* the competition *and* the subsequent implementation of the selected project – a complete process. Instead, focus might be placed on the centrality of the efficient competition program in its function as a potential building program, as this centrality within the total scenario has proved to be indisputable.

A KEY TO THE INVESTIGATED CIVIC ARCHITECTURE PROCESS

The Material Studied: Projects for about 60 Nordic regional town halls/municipal administration buildings, sometimes with municipal community or cultural facilities added, in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, were investigated.

Rönn-Charlotte Svensson (2005), *Jämförande analys av arkitektutävlingar. Erfarenheter från tre nordiska länder*, TRITA-ARK-forskningspublikationer 2005:3; the same authors (2007), *Arkitektutävlingar. Erfarenheter från Finland*, Stockholm: Axl Books.

5. This summary of tendencies is primarily based on the research accounted for in GBZ 2000, findings from which have been collated with an overall account given by Sundbärg 1933 and information gained regarding the presentday situation presented by the Royal Institute of Technology research group; see note 4.

Out of these 60 projects, about 45 were sooner or later constructed. But *one overall finding* was that comparatively few projects were carried out even approximately close to the architects' original intention as indicated in their competition entry, and not infrequently by other architects and in a changed version or new proposal. This was often – but not always – accompanied by a protracted projecting period. Out of the 45 built town halls/ municipal administration buildings, roughly *one* in each country in the period reviewed would have been built as according to architect's intention, without externally dictated changes and to the allocated budget.

The Municipal Client: A town hall project committee of representatives, selected by the city council or the governing city board. It would normally include both politicians and administration officials; in this historical period a town or planning architect as employed particularly in larger regional towns would be included.

The Competition Process Incl. The Jury: As is usual in public architecture, a mixed composition of participants characterized the competition process: The architect's profession, politicians, municipality officials, consultants, diverse laymen. Intentionally and very clearly they would contribute differing knowledge and experience, representing distinctly varying viewpoints. The variety of background experience, professional standpoints and political agenda in its turn entails diverse value judgements and sometimes conflicting positionings that were found inevitably to affect both the competition assessment and the decisive handling of the results.⁶ In some instances this could be a central problem which needed further evaluation from a socio-political viewpoint. Here *one principal finding* was that the competence of the participants, *both* as individuals *and* – more significantly – as a collective, would be all-important for the successful completion of the process.

The Competition Program: It was not uncommon that the competition program was formulated in fact as a building program, ie was prescriptive in character, in that the decision to hold a competition had been taken at a later stage. The degree of pre-competition investigation and program study by municipality officials could vary very greatly, often making for an unreliable program which in its turn would make budgeting entirely unrealistic. Post-competition, the program would frequently have been heavily revised and substantially altered before and during the projecting work. In the case of an insufficient process the original artistic vision of all parties involved

6. The Japanese architect Itsuko Hasegawa, having acted as both a juror and a competitor, has also concluded that conflicting value judgements are at the center of the competition and ensuing projecting process. "Public buildings and design competitions", *The Japan Architect* 19, 1995-3, 30-33.

could only be distorted and sometimes mutilated. A *principal finding* was that an unclear program appears to have ramifications far into the implementation process, not least when these are supported by conditions of a political nature.

COMPETITIONS STATUS: OVERVIEW OVER TENDENCIES

1. The early part of this historical period, 1900 to roughly 1916 and the 1920s:
Finding: *More often than not there would be no competition*, particularly in smaller towns or municipalities, but commissioned projects would usually be built, most often after some reworking. Some commissioned projects were never executed; at times, the same architect was engaged to do a new project proposal at a later stage *or*, more notably, won a later competition.
2. The 1930s and the post-war 1940s:
Finding: This is when the option of conducting a competition is chosen more often, especially in Sweden, and quite often following a prior investigative report by a consultant architect. The indication is that the building type town hall/municipal administration building is subjected to rational analysis, in the new functionalist approach. *As evidenced in the competition entries:* The ambition of functional analysis includes, interestingly, the topographical conditions. A characteristic result might be a critical and organic strategy of groupings of building units, following the terrain, in a free-form composition. However, towards the early 1950s, such free-form compositions get imitated and used eclectically irrespective of terrain conditions.
3. The 1950s: Typically, towards *the end of the 1940's* the aim of the competition is more distinctly project-oriented and the invited competition begins to appear. In parallel, competitions may also be repeated. Alternatively, competition projects get revised and reworked. *As evidenced in the competition entries:* Rational processes and industrial building techniques favour abstract solutions that disregard or formalize their spatial context in an abstract plan organization that would require a distinctly conceptual angle.
4. The 1930s to 1955: In ideas competitions for public monumental architecture, aimed to select and/or establish a project concept, the *finding* is: Often an obvious lack of pre-competition program investigation on the part of the client as to both building morphologies and site form. *The question then is:* Does this mean that the client will have been relying on the freedom of invention on the part of the competing architects

to provide the entire project concept, and/or does this simply exemplify deficient program work?

EXAMPLES OF IDEAS COMPETITIONS AND THEIR RESULTS WITHIN THE PERIOD:

As a rule, in the historiographic investigation examples demonstrate *the conditions for the experimental application of current ideas and concepts* in the context of the competitions scenario. This is of course still the case. Then as now this experimental freedom was the most highly valued aspect and an engine of innovation for architectural offices small and large, even though the concrete reasons for competing would diverge.

Below is presented three distinctly different examples illustrating a variety of conditions typical of the period. What specifically becomes clear through this illustration, is that the municipal client's role on and behind the scenes is at one and the same time obvious and elusive to the researcher. This is when lacking documentary material in the way of proceedings of meetings, notes, or contemporary interviews. On the other hand, competition accounts in the national architecture journals may be scrutinized, and recorded historical facts may be further investigated.

EXAMPLE 1:

Illustrating the characteristic experimentation with a typology of internationally derived plan /building forms, *implying* on the part of the client as well as both architects and jury, especially in the early functionalist period, a joint experimentation with form adapted to function. This means that all sides shared in a knowledge construction process through analysis.

5. Local assimilation of international rationalism: *Town hall in Kotka, Finland, two competitions in 1931; erected in reworked and much reduced form in 1933-34.*⁷
 - i. Open ideas competition with 38 entrants, in the spring of 1931. Divided jury: no project meriting a 1st prize; two shared a 2nd prize: Aarne Hytönen-R V Luukkonen, and Erkki Huttonen. A festivity wing-cum-auditorium is included in the competition program, but was abandoned in the implementation phase due to economic recession.
 - ii. Re-competition between the two 2nd prize-winners, with reworked projects, in Dec 1931, when the jury was still divided.

7. GBZ 2000, ch. II, 109-16 and ch. III, 234-50. For the competition account and commentaries in the Finnish architecture journal, see *Arkitekten* (FL) 1931, 160-65 and 1932, 72-73.

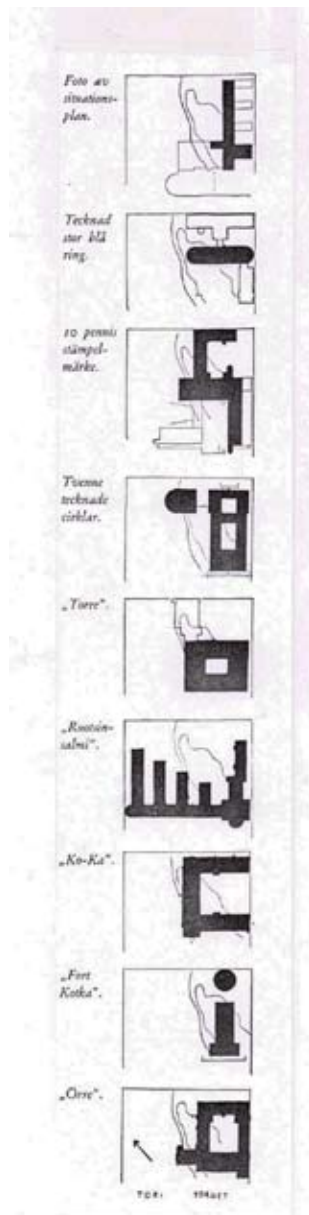


FIG. 1: Series of strongly differing plan forms used in competition projects for a town hall in Kotka, in 1931. (Cf. analysis by Marius af Schultén, *Arkitekten* (FL) 10, 1931)

iii. Client intervention through a personally written “Promemoria” addressed to the town council by the town administrative leader, whereby Huttonen’s project is selected.

Kotka was at the time a proud, young town with a working-class majority and collective culture. Well before the decision was taken to hold a competition, a building committee had been appointed in 1926. They selected a site on a small hill next to a market-place on the advice of two nationally eminent townplanners; to this recommendation was added a specifying requirement of a 3m tall building plinth for it to achieve greater monumentality. The town’s vision was a modern administrative and cultural center. The competition program was written in collaboration with called-in consultant architects of national repute. The jury consisted of three architects selected by the Finnish architectural association, and three representatives from the town leadership who were also members of the building committee. The assessment was divided along the same lines, the two groups claiming, respectively, architectonic quality – in spite of a fragmenting solution of plan and functions—versus representative monumentality in a more compact solution which would be easier and more economical to build. After the first competition a younger architect juror left the jury in protest over the Huttonen prize, but was replaced before the re-competition.

In conclusion the jury gave the architectonic entry priority, hence causing the intervention by the newly appointed town administrative leader—ambitious on account of the new town at a difficult time – through a 9-page rhetorically formulated “Promemoria”

arguing in preference of the second choice. It was presented to the town council vote in March 1932, and stipulated further reworking under “necessary” supervision by an experienced consultant architect; this task was taken on by the Helsinki Parliament architect J.S. Sirén who was also one of the jurors.⁸ The young Huttonen was inexperienced as an architect at this time, and his project, originally with a functionalist flair, was considerably changed in three stages of reworking into a more classicist formulation before being built. In research investigations it has been assumed that not only the fatherly Sirén, but also the established classicist architects Kaarlo Borg and Gunnar Taucher, both jurors and involved with the town of Kotka, had considerably influenced the progress of the projecting work.

EXAMPLES 2 AND 3

Characteristic post-war period competition tasks/ problems to be solved were: the placing of a town hall/municipal centre complex consisting of several units in the given urban spatial context, and/or in relation to a distinct and maybe problematic topography. *This implies*

- on the part of the client: openness to new planning solutions, possibly based on a too complex, built environment and topography which, for differing reasons, one has not been able to give a sufficiently penetrating pre-program analysis;
- on the part of the competing architects: great freedom in solving the grouping of buildings within a complex as one principal plan-form in its relation to an urban spatial context and landscape.

Example 2: City-building and the exploration of spatial groupings in a “hard to master” terrain situation: *Town hall/municipal centre for Solna, Sweden, ideas competition in 1946; not pursued or built. Twelve entrants of whom seven were rewarded, among whom two were 2nd-prize winners.*⁹

The site was in effect one side of a gigantic triangular crossroad at the flat bottom of an otherwise hilly and forested terrain. The idea was to establish an administrative and cultural centerpoint—a town center – for the four spatially separate “village communities” that together were to make up a new township established in 1943, on the north side of Stockholm. The site itself was on a hill facing the west side of the large, triangular open area, projected as a civic piazza [*medborgarplats*], from where four roads radiated in different directions.

8. GBZ 2000, 244; this account in its turn is partly based on an analysis by Helena Komulainen, *Kotkan kaupungintalo*, Pro-gradu thesis, Helsinki University 1988, 27-31 (unpubl.)

9. GBZ 2000, ch. II, 158 and 176-77

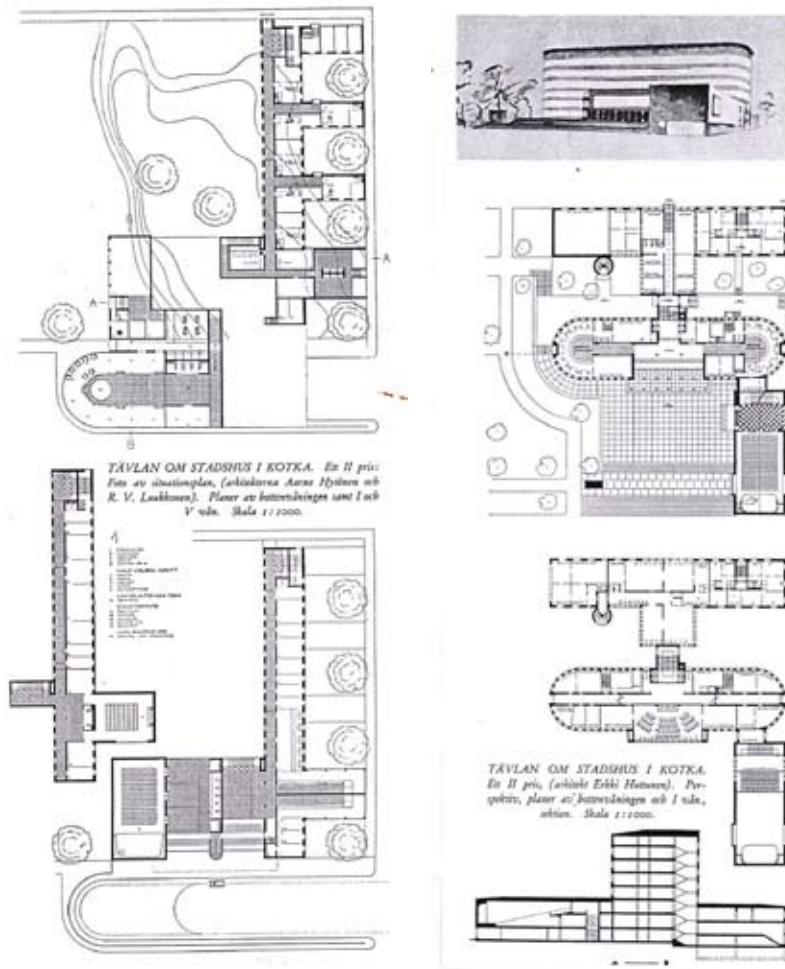


FIG. 2: Town hall in Kotka. The two shared 2nd-prize entries, by Hytönen-Luukkonen and Huttunen, respectively.

The program for the town hall/municipal centre included an auditorium building, and a restaurant. The architect members of the five-man jury included two eminent Swedish modernists, Nils Einar Eriksson and Helge Zimdal.

As to the competitors' varying visions of spatial groupings, apparently the terrain conditions of the site had dictated a similarity of approach as regards the placing out of building elements, but on the other hand architectural forms differed greatly. They varied from rationalist linear volumes

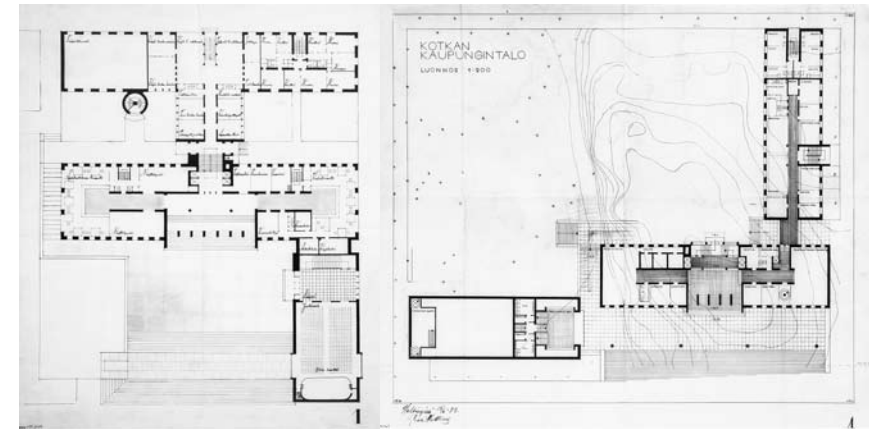


FIG. 3: Erkki Huttunen, the revised competition project 1932 and a further revised version, 16.6.1932; plan ground floor (SRM).

strung together in an asymmetrical or amoeba-like composition (e.g. the winning entry), to highrise towers and the currently favoured “star”-shaped (Y-plan) building concept.

The great variety of conceptual solutions to the complex task merited conscientious statements from the jury. They were also made the subject of a detailed analysis by Hans Brunnberg in *Byggmästaren*, who praised the program for its clarity of description, supposing that this fact had contributed to the large proportion of entries deserving of reward. He had to conclude, however, that this important competition could have been raised to the level of a pure ideas competition, so that competitors had not been so restricted by the difficulties of the given terrain and city planning conditions in combination with a demand for architectonic detailing such as, for example, a large-scale facade study. According to Brunnberg, they had not been given free enough reins to fully explore the potentials of the task.¹⁰

Comment: What Brunnberg indirectly pointed to was a contradiction that post-modern theory was later to identify, the opposition between the autonomous architectonic object and the heteronomous context which in the situation of the competition has become particularly difficult to handle. Placing a vision, or an idea following a specific impulse or model, also becomes more difficult the more one is expected, as a point of departure, to make use of the given particulars in the concrete, local conditions.

Example 3: The political capsizing of a grouped spatial vision planned as “in-fill” in an existing town hall block: *City administration building and city*

10. Hans Brunnberg, “Tävlingen om stadshus m.m.i Solna”, *Byggmästaren* 1946, 9, 148-55

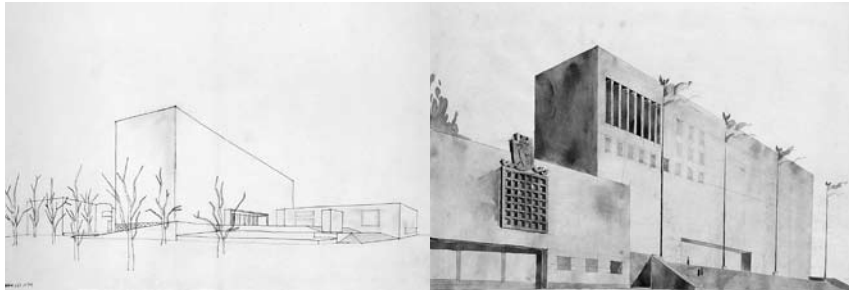


FIG. 4: Erkki Huttunen, the revised competition project 1932 and the further revised proposal; perspective sketch of the main façade and the separate volume of the festivity wing-cum-auditorium (SRM).

great hall in Bergen, Norway, ideas competition in 1951-52; invited re-competition in 1953-54, after which one of two alternatives of the winning project, strongly reduced to one single building element, a slab, is eventually erected in 1971-74.¹¹

- Open ideas competition in 1951-52 with 61 entries, resulting in one equally divided prize between four “winners” and one special mention/purchase; the five-man jury was unanimous in deferring a final decision.
- Invited re-competition in 1953-54 between the five entries that had been singled out, asking for two alternatives, with and without *Manufakturhuset* (1702) which was one of five older buildings in the existing “town hall block” [*Rådhuskvartalet*] that the original program had requested should be retained or, in two cases including this one, reserved until all building units containing requested functions of the new project had been erected, in a phased process. The jury was divided, also regarding the question whether *Manufakturhuset* should be kept, resulting in three different jury statements and two separate winners.

In the final count, the proposal selected to be projected was Alt. I by Erling Viksjø, without *Manufakturhuset*. However, in the final built version reduced to only one autonomous building element (with a low addition to the north) from the original composition of five units, *Manufakturhuset* was in fact retained. During the process an association dedicated to the preservation of ancient monuments had been fighting to get this problem building, strongly debated on the local political scene, put under preservation order. Meanwhile, strong local protest opposed the selection, something which obviously affected the municipal political stance.

In the ideas competition there had been many differing conceptual solu-

11. GBZ 2000, ch. III and particularly pp. 223-32. For the competition account and commentary in the Norwegian architecture journal, see *Byggekunst*, 4, 1952, 60-72 and “Tillegget”, 23; also NAL: *Konkurransen: “Rådhusanlegg i Bergen”*, 1954.



FIG. 5: Kaarlo Borg, the Central School in Kotka, 1929. (Photo 1929; Kymenlaakson maakuntamuseo)

tions as regards the insertion and grouping of new units among the existing buildings on the quadrangular block. A major problem had been the orientation of the new, necessarily voluminous project in relation to the surrounding, small-scale/low-rise town, including an ornamental lake to the south, before which the program-makers had envisioned a festival plaza, and to the north a mountain ridge. This meant that one difficulty was the orientation of the main entrances of the new structure.

Stylistically, the entries – containing many different architectural forms – could be said to divide into two major camps. One was influenced by the current International Style, prevalent at the time in urban environments; the other favoured contextually sensitive expressions, referring to a strong local respect for so called *Bergensarkitektur*—the regional wood and stone architecture of this old harbour and market town. One consideration that played into the jury’s decision was the orientation of an International Style highrise slab—such as Viksjø’s – in such a way that it avoided blocking too much of the mountain view. Interestingly enough, the local director of city planning together with two other local administration officials on the jury favoured the imposing International Style project; here, however, it should be remarked that Viksjø was the author of the new Oslo government building, a similar slab, which was a reworked version of a competition project from 1939-40, in progress at the time (completed in 1959). Meanwhile the two architects appointed by the national association—one of them being Magnus Poulsson, one of the two architects of the Oslo city hall, a double-slab structure—were the ones who favoured a contextual, regional solution.

What is important therefore in consideration of the Bergen program requirements and expectations, was not only the multitude of variables that complicated the task, but also the fact that it constituted a contradiction in



FIG. 6: Erkki Huttunen, town hall in Kotka, the single erected, main volume, 1933-34: east façade towards the park.

terms. The requested grouping model *per se* often referred at this time to traditional building custom, and would therefore more easily respect the preservation of older structures. But the competition program also signalled demands for rational innovation and contemporary efficiency that could be symbolised through the use of up-to-date international architectonic expression. This split in intention was built into the program. It also characterized the municipal program-makers and the jury when instead of the clarity necessitated precisely by the complexity of the task, they resorted to rhetorical formulations in their various statements.

Conclusion With Regard To The Client's Role. The client's direct involvement in the selection of the winning project has been clear in examples (1) and also (3), due to historical facts regarding the connection between certain jury members and the municipality. In examples (2) and (3) the cost to the client of the partial failures was self-imposed through unclear stipulations and/or mixed signals during the jury process. This is besides the effects of the subsumed main participation of the municipal client in the entire work of program-making, or direct client intervention.

A General Conclusion from the three differing examples must be that in every case the competition aim in terms of architectonics and/or a spatial planning solution was insufficiently clear, and lacking in a single concept; in examples (2) and (3) this made for unfinished, unclear and even contradictory program requirements, in their turn complicating the task for competitors and jury alike. In the projecting and implementation phase, this grave complication had to be faced (1) or simply dropped (2), rather than, as is most common, attempted achieved through a severe compromise of vision (3). The very real danger is two-fold, that artistic control of the formulation of the project is lost—in fact to all involved parties – and hence, that the collective knowledge-building process founders.

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF RELEVANT ISSUES

Questions Reflecting The Competitions Scenario From A Socio-Political Point Of View: As a guide-line to a discussion of findings from the historical material



FIG. 7: Urban planning sketch of the Solna site.



FIG. 8: Town hall/municipal centre for Solna. Gunnar Forszén, 1st prize. Photo of site model.

in its entirety that may assist in the formulation of issues of socio-political relevance, it seems helpful to pose a few leading questions. The researcher's replies – my comments as regards pursuing the questions in specific detail—are italicized.

6. The role/ the significance of the competition to the different participants? */Can only be generalized here, as the subject of hypothesis.*
7. The architects' vision: the borrowing of ideas and period-related tools and the strategies selected? */This aspect relating to architectural historiography can only be deduced on the basis of competition entries.*
8. The municipal client's vision pre-competition as against the projecting period, when viewed as political behaviour differing in the different phases of the process? */Can only be documented in case studies.*
9. Conflicting aspects of anonymity versus the issue of responsibility in relation to power as regards both the selection of the winning competition project and its realization? */Can only be generalized here, as the subject of hypothesis, and/or documented in case studies.*

Summing Up Issues Of Relevance, deriving from both the historiographic investigation and the contemporary case studies:

10. The role and significance of the architectural competition for the competing architects: In the context of the present review which focuses on aspects relating to the client's role and involvement, only two principal tendencies will be touched on here:
 - i. as a reallife excuse for experimentation, through the formulation and pursuit of current ideas of an ideological nature, but by means of a solely conceptual solution to the posed competition task – particularly notable in the pre-World War II period.

ii. as against the increasingly more project-oriented approach that is entirely pre-dominant in the present, viewing the competition project – even in the general ideas competition – as a potential (non-invited) application for a job in a period of lesser opportunity.

11. *The role and significance of the architectural competition for the client:*

In this historical period, the client appears to continue to operate in a persistent complex of simultaneous roles. Therefore there are partly conflicting aspects to be considered:

i. *The municipal client's own vision and requirements:* In the client organizer's role as an initiator of the competition and then of the competition program which will in effect function as a medium for the client's own vision and requirements, considering:¹²

11.i.a *The client's need in its relation to the client's own vision/ideas towards a solution:* The built-in discrepancy between on the one hand, what is practicable/economical/safe to be trusted and on the other, what is envisioned, or investment as against risk.

Researcher's comment: In this historical period, due to the lack (as is most normal) of remaining documentary material in written form such as protocols from meetings, it has been almost impossible to ascertain how these aspects have been evaluated, and by whom. This can only be documented in contemporary case studies which include the use of interviews.

Further comments: The selection of the project site, and its approval by the town council might usually be seen as clearly indicative of the municipal client's own vision/ideas; alternatively, the choice of form for the competition – a general ideas competition, *used as a focusing tool*, or an invited competition *aiming for a purchase*—might indicate to what an extent the municipal client has invited free solutions and/or unexpected concepts that can then be further elaborated to agree with the client's own vision as well as concrete needs.

11.i.b *Effective means used by the municipal client to achieve an envisioned result:*

Among a variety of such means, the following methods were found to be evident and predominant:

- through the particular selection of the leader of the town hall committee;
- through the particular selection of the lay jury members;

12. GBZ 2000, Prolog 32-36, ch. II and in particular, pp 89-101, ch. III, all examples, and GBZ 2007, the Malmö library case study.

- through very particular focus and sufficient pre-competition investigation, incl. trips to other objects for orientation; a pre-competition project study by a consultant architect chosen by the client; other information-gathering activity;

- in particular, through the specifying formulation of the competition program;

- post-competition, most commonly, by demanding a re-working of the winning competition project, which maybe then was not used, *and/or* by employing alternative project architects, incl. 2nd-prize winners or Purchase authors or else a 3rd party, *or* by ignoring the competition result, allowing it to “die”.¹³

- *Researcher's comment:* One principal finding of a socio-political nature of both the historical study and the contemporary case studies, was the dilemma of the client's real-life influence over the competition result *and/or* subsequent revisions, through the means of the client's relations with the architects of the competition project selected for implementation. This, however, was a question that could only be evaluated on the basis of remaining documentary material from the historical process.¹⁴

11.i.c *The central role of the competition program:*

Here three notable aspects, all of which originate with the client/organizer, were found to be important, namely that

- the successful competition program derives in particular from the preceding investigation and possibly a program sketch; whereas the non-researched program will invariably be deficient and therefore misleading;
- the formulation and the wording of the program will act as a steering factor in the architects' formulation of the project solution, to meet an imagined client vision and requirement;
- the clarity of the competition program as a means of communication between the parties, both in the competition and in the implementation, when re-worked as a building program, is found to be of decisive importance to the result.

In sum, the *role of the competition program* as formulated by the municipal client committee turns out to be central in the real-life process, as a common frame of reference between all parties—the jury included.

13. GBZ 2000, and see in particular APPENDIX where all investigated examples are listed, specifying details of individual processes.

14. Cf. GBZ 2000 as to both central thesis and findings, and GBZ 2007, the Malmö library case study findings.

ii. *The municipal client committee viewed as political agent:* Throughout the process there are obviously a number of roles and functions in which the client will have been acting, more or less openly depending on context, in a political way. The principal ones are evident:

11.ii.a as the organizer controlling the competition, through initiative, choice of form and program, selection of participating individuals, debatable power over the jury, post-competition handling of the results.

11.ii.b as the client of *a competition project politically approved for implementation*: therefore subsequently instigating revisions of the project, or else additional/alternative project proposals, for it to comply with political needs as well as concrete economic requirements.

Researcher's comment: The client's real-life influence can best be evaluated in an extended case study. It might, in the particular case of a negative process, be inferred as a struggle for power scenario. Generally, it may indeed be said that the municipal client might be seen to operate in effect *as a political agent on a micro as well as a macro level*. This would hold true *both* in relation to competitors for power *within* the municipal political set-up, *and* in relation to the public and the media.¹⁵

Other general comments: There was found to be a dilemma of the client in municipal projects appearing and acting as an anonymous committee who is therefore, too, apparently *without responsibility*; ie who cannot in reality be held responsible. Also, an *apparent* municipal consensus turned out not to be sufficient for completion of the project, but political unity in the city council, on the other hand, would be one decisive factor.

In short, one conclusion would be, that conflicting aspects of anonymity versus the issue of responsibility in relation to power, as regards both the selection of the winning project and its realization, need to be further questioned.

IN CONCLUSION

Principal factors steering the realization process in its entirety, including implementation, were:

- *As a first finding, an obvious one:* The economy of the project always acted as *the decisive factor*, steering both the use of competition visions and the implementation of the project: successful completion of a project would be

15. GBZ 2007, the Malmö library case study findings, and in particular, pp. 29-39.

hindered by underbudgeting on the part of the client as well as the architects! Underbudgeting was found to be the rule, not the exception. It would require the totally determined client to combat the issue of a threatening budgeting scenario involving political measures and public protest.

- *As a second finding, of seminal importance:* The successful public building was always created and carried out *only* through the good will of the client. *One main element* was found to be the all-important quality of the interaction between architects and client, which would require:
 - (a) either, on the client side, a strong and competent leader personality with sufficient insight;
 - (b) or, given the mixed composition of participants in the competition and projecting process, a communality of focus and a balanced collective dialogue between client group and architects.

Hence, investigating competition procedures in their relevance to the completed project, *two principal conclusions from a socio-political point of view*, are:

- *The issue of quality is relative*, just as decisions are dependent on the relational configurations of players involved.
- *The issue of quality is relative*, in that the abstract and formalistic architectonic building projection as it appears in the competition project can no longer be divorced from heterogenous factors and contextual aspects, due to the complexity of present-day projects, if the result strived for is successful public architecture. Due to this, clarity of concept for the proposed building scheme becomes all-important, making it communicable to everyone.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS ON PRESENTDAY RELEVANCE

What may a principal conclusion be from an overview of the historiographic research regarding the anchoring of the competition in the wider context of both pre-program work and implementation of a successful winning project? While it is clear that the competition process itself plays a central role within the entire process of the civic project's evolution from initial idea to completed building, it becomes obvious at the same time that the post-competition stages of change are the result of multiple interventions of a more socio-political nature that may conceivably have been reduced or even avoided, granted a competition program that in absolute terms is sufficiently effective. It would favour the democratic and open exchange among participants in the process of implementation, and not least in their relation to the public. The competition might be approached as a more integral part of a communal discourse and a collective effort.

The completion of the Concert and Congress Building in Uppsala in 2007 might serve as an illustration of a successful collective process which also could be said to be as nearly exemplary as is possible in adverse circumstances. To a large extent it was successful due to the purposeful use of what one might describe as a deliberative procedure—communal deliberation taking the form of an investigative discussion.¹⁶ In May 2008 *Stora Samhällsbyggarpriset 2008* was awarded to the Municipality of Uppsala for the achievement of this public project.

On this basis, when considering changes in competitions regulations, a retreat from system and a broadened anchoring of the competition program in the public consciousness in the pre-competition phase in order to reduce the client's post-competition difficulties, might be seen as a road forward.

One might conclude that when it comes to the successful competition for a public building, and when the aim is *not* to separate out an abstract and formalistic architectonic building projection from heterogenous factors and contextual aspects, there may be a need to ask how the pre-program basis of both ideas and information may be widened? This is besides schooling the client and the potential team which is both essential and a self-evident need. Danish architect Claus C. Simonsen has suggested that forms of competition prior to the composition of the program should be considered.¹⁷ This would also open up for a more experimental process.

16. GBZ 2007, and in particular, pp 40-42.

17. *Arkitekten* DK 2008, 4, "Debat"

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Abstract

The primary objective of this paper is to explore Arne Jacobsen's professional career as an urban planner and landscape architect through his contribution to architectural competitions on urban centers.

After the Second World War (1939-1945) there was a need to control urban growth in Nordic countries and develop a citywide network of railways and arterial roads, or parkways. Most master plans were based on the British 'garden cities', a town planning model introduced by Ebenezer Howard in 1898. They were also influenced by the concept of the so-called 'Die Stadtskrone' city center of German expressionism, put forward by Bruno Taut in 1919. As a result, new cities were characterized by low density residential areas and a democratic urban center surrounded by parks, gardens and public spaces. The new "urban centers" were defined as a new space for the community, organized on the basis of subordinate relationship of public buildings to Nordic landscape. The 'heart of the city' contained all the public services required and the architecture helped to highlight the importance of formally expressing the civic and social values of a modern society and welfare-state.

Architectural competitions were organized to provide new urban centers with public buildings such as town halls, schools, libraries, cultural centers, residences for the elderly, theatres, post offices and police stations. In the beginning, few competitions treated all the buildings as a single entity, or urban center, where the Town Hall was the essential element.

In Denmark, the use of Modern architecture as a metaphor for political and economic transformation was developed through competitions. Arne Jacobsen (1902-1971) became one of the exponents of the Modern architecture or abstract-modernism, and had the opportunity to experiment with several building typologies and urban structures through different competitions. Among the examples of his modern period that are especially significant are the urban centers developed in Søllerød, Glostrup and Landskrona, all awarded a first prize and partially developed. Later on, he competed in international competitions for urban centers.

Keywords

Arne Jacobsen, Modern, urban center, competition

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Competitions on Modern Urban Centers Arne Jacobsen, Architect and Urban Planner

Yolanda Ortega Sanz

INTRODUCTION

Modern architecture and urban planning conceive of the urban center as a democratic nerve center, or core, in which public activities are concentrated and through which the city and its surroundings are organized. During the interwar and post-war period, competitions contributed to developing urban schemes, particularly in Nordic countries, where "the position of the building in the terrain requires a strong sense of and understanding of nature, an ability that allows the architect to emphasize and understand the character of the landscape" (Jacobsen 1945, 360).

This paper stems from a deep interest in Arne Jacobsen's professional career as an urban planner and landscape architect, closely related to his more familiar career as an architect and designer. His works reveals extensive urban research aimed at ordering a building's surrounding spaces as an integral part of it, from the garden of a single family home to residential complex, schools, factories and other large-scale projects. But his main contributions to urban planning were his proposals developed through architectural competitions for urban centers.

The aim of this paper emerged from an attempt to explore Jacobsen's architectural principles and urban elements that were incorporated into his competition proposals for urban centers, which can basically be summarized as: first, the importance of nature and public spaces—gardens, parks, squares and courtyards; second, the representative character of the buildings and their integration into the Nordic landscape or urban context, through horizontal buildings, platforms and plinths, and vertical landmarks, towers or iconic buildings; and finally, the concentration of the program, through enclosed schemes with one multi-functional building, or open configurations which include several buildings, with different public programs, visually connected to form the collective urban center area.

Methodologically, the overall argument will be pursued mainly through analysis of fourteen case studies: Jacobsen's results in open competitions for

urban centers held over a period of thirty years, from 1937 to 1967. Each case study focuses on Jacobsen's ability to create an overall proposal in sympathy with the urban environment, the requirements of the program and the image or character of the urban center considered by the jury in each competition.

The paper is divided into three parts. The first part introduces the main concepts of the urban center and Modern urban planning and their evolution through architectural competitions. The second part introduces Arne Jacobsen's ideas on urban planning through case studies. The final part concludes with a synthesis, discussion and ideas for future research into the relevance of his contributions to the contemporary urban condition.

URBAN CENTERS AND MODERN URBAN PLANNING

After the Second World War, there was a need to control urban growth in Nordic countries and develop a citywide network of railways and arterial roads, or parkways. Most master plans were based on the British 'garden cities', a town planning model introduced by Ebenezer Howard in 1898. They were also influenced by the so-called 'Die Stadtkrone' city center concept of German expressionism put forward by Bruno Taut in 1919. As a result, new cities were characterized by low density residential areas and a democratic urban center surrounded by parks, gardens and public spaces.

The new urban centers were defined as a new space for the community, organized on the basis of a relationship of subordination between public buildings and Nordic landscape. The 'heart of the city' contained all the public services required and the architecture helped to underline the importance of formally expressing the civic and social values of a modern society and welfare-state. Like the ancient agora or forum, the urban center became a meeting point where "public buildings should be integrated into new urban centers which can form a true expression for our epoch" (Giedion, Sert, 1943). Thus, the 'core' anticipated post-war social democratic urban planning, in which the principles of Modern architecture and new urban environments were to become integral parts of public policies.

New ways of democratic expression in architecture were introduced by Giedion and J.L. Sert in 'Nine points of monumentality' in 1943 and one year later by L.I. Kahn in his article 'Monumentality', in which he stated that "the monumental is only the measure of willingness to make an effort to create something that can bring people together" (Kahn 2003, 23). Modern architecture had yet to confront the problem of monumentality. The 8th CIAM took place in 1951. Entitled 'The Heart of the City', it established the basis on which to create Modern urban centers. Nordic architects, such as

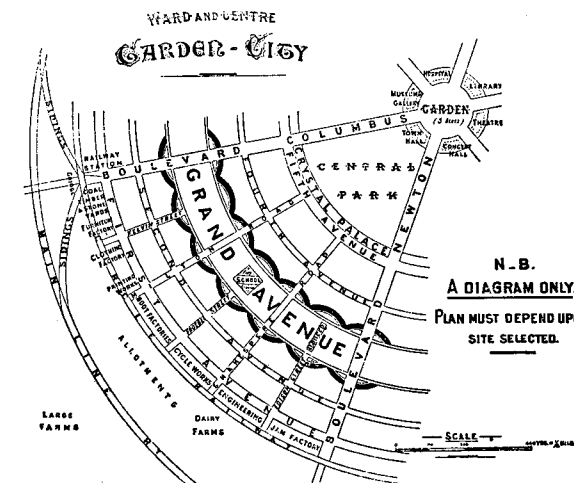


FIG. 1: Ebenezer Howard, 'Garden cities', ward and center, 1898. Urban center: Hospital, library, museum, gallery, town hall, theatre, concert hall around a garden.

the Danish Vilhelm Lauritzen, the Norwegian group PAGON, the Swedish group ACCEPTERA, composed of Sven Markelius, Uno Åhren and Gregor Paulsson; and the Finnish Alvar Aalto, were members of CIAM and took part in some of the sessions.

In Denmark, a group of young architects and planners, among them Steen Eiler Rasmussen and Peter Bredsdorff, were developing the new 'Finger Plan for Greater Copenhagen' in 1947. With the new plans for city extensions, existing villages became new municipalities—like Søllerød, Glostrup and Rødovre—characterized by an urban center (*bycenter*) surrounded by local railway stations, avenues and main streets, or new cities like Albertslund, designed by Viggo Møller Jensen and Knud Svensson in 1963-1968.

In Sweden, the municipal architect Sven Markelius was responsible for the 'Generalplan för Stockholm' in 1950. Markelius introduced the *community center*, and declared in his earlier manifesto: "a relatively concentrated apartment block development could well be made to adjoin a center for shops, social amenities, and community facilities for leisure activities and entertainment. A green belt round this central area should house schools, kindergartens and day nurseries for children, playing fields and sports facilities" (Markelius, 1945). His ideas took form in the urban centers of Vällingby (1953-57) and Årsta.

In Norway, the Oslo master plan was designed by the architect Erick Rolfs. The plan was based on a decentralized model, like the other Nordic capitals, with a set of residential areas connected to 'local centers' around

the city. These new urban areas were characterized by their *vekstsentra*, which concentrated social and public services and schools (Hall, 1991). One of the first cities was Lambertseter, designed in 1950 by Rinne and Colbiørnsen.

In Finland, Alvar Aalto's town planning was not based on extending major cities, but the establishment of a system of connections between existing small, scattered communities devoid of urban identity. Different ways of communicating bring together public services, thereby establishing a possible beginning of an urban center, which may come to focus on public buildings. "Society which is developing now is even more vulnerable than bourgeois society because it represents major human masses, whose sense of citizenship and cultural awareness is closely linked to the proper articulation of public services and institutions" (Aalto, 1997). Aalto developed a careful composition of volumes dominated by the town hall in his urban center in Säynätsalo, the notion of a civic center where people could gather around public buildings built in Seinäjoki, and finally several buildings in Rovaniemi.

COMPETITIONS ON URBAN CENTERS

In Nordic countries, architectural competitions were organized to provide new urban centers with public buildings such as town halls, schools, libraries, cultural centers, residences for the elderly, theatres, post offices and police stations. In the beginning, few competitions treated all the buildings as a single entity or urban center, where the Town Hall was the essential element. The general plan and the relationship of the buildings to public spaces, such as squares and gardens, were envisaged as a collaborative effort between architects, engineers, planners and landscapes architects in an attempt to crystallize the overall proposal. "Anyone who is interested in organizing an urban planning competition and then thinks of solving building projects with another competition is very sensible." (Asplund, 2002).

Urban center competitions were announced by the local municipalities, *Kommune*, and while some of the jury members were politicians, two or three were architects. In small villages, the jury also included representatives of the neighborhood, which provided active citizen participation.

Through competitions, urban centers and town halls developed their character and closely reflected the democratic system. Initially, the administrative buildings were conceived as concentrated, unitary and dignified constructions with a clear symmetry and a monumental appearance. Later on, the town hall type of building was divided into two parts containing two countered spaces. The representative part, with the council chamber and the mayor's other offices, was organized around a hall, and the offices

faced an inner courtyard with gardens. In later competitions, the town hall is conceived as a free composition open to its surroundings, where offices and the representative part are placed in a longitudinal arrangement, with different volumes and heights. Gradually, the administrative building is also separated into different buildings connected by corridors or an underground system of connections. The town hall type loses its predominant position as a single multi-functional building and is complemented by other public facilities, thereby achieving the main purpose of creating an open and democratic 'urban center', which will provide all inhabitants with public spaces and social services.

The Århus University competition, held in 1931 and won by the architects Kay Fisker, C.F. Møller and the landscape architect C.Th. Sørensen, was a precedent for a new type of urban planning with free composition. The university campus was conceived as an entity where buildings rise in isolation and are surrounded by open spaces, parks and gardens, as well as places where meetings could be convened. At the same time, other competitions were held for administrative centers like the Town Hall in Ringsted built by Steen Eiler Rasmussen in 1935, and the Town Hall in Gladsaxe built by Vilhelm Lauritzen in 1936. Public spaces such as *rådhuspladsen* and *rådhushave* were introduced in new competition entries as an integral part of the buildings. The square and the garden become spaces of transition which establish a relationship with the urban fabric and its surroundings. Modern urban centers come to life when these open and public spaces achieve their aim.

The Nordic tradition of organizing a large number of competitions led architects to introduce Modern architecture and urban planning principles in their proposals in international as well as national competitions. As a result, competitions with restricted entries led to Nordic architects Alvar Aalto and Arne Jacobsen being appointed to conceive and develop new urban centers abroad.

ARNE JACOBSEN, MODERN ARCHITECT AND URBAN PLANNER

In Denmark, Arne Jacobsen (1902-1971) became one of the exponents of Modern architecture or abstract-modernism, and took the opportunity to attempt various building typologies through different competitions. Arne Jacobsen belongs to those architects who particularly distinguished themselves in competitions, and some of his most important work is a result of this.

As an urban planner, Jacobsen's deep sense of public service is reflected in the importance he gave to spaces reserved for citizens. The careful treatment given to every single element coming into contact with people reveals the

architect's determination to create public spaces in keeping with his conception of the social domain.

Among the work of Jacobsen's modern period that is especially significant are the Århus Town Hall (1937-42), the *Skitsekonkurrence vedrørende Rådhus*, the *Bibliotek og Biografteater i Søllerød Kommune*, the *Nordisk konkurrence om rådhus, bibliotek og idrætshal i Landskrona*, Sweden, and the *Projektkonkurrence om forslag til et nyt Rådhus i Glostrup*, all awarded first prizes and partially developed.

1. ÅRHUS, 1937. RÅDHUSPARKEN

On April 28th, 1937, the Århus municipality announced the rules of a competition for a new town hall entitled '*Skitsekonkurrence om et nyt Rådhus i Århus*'. For three months Danish architects worked on a proposal that would fulfill all the requirements of the program and which enabled them to reflect the architectural and democratic values of the age that an administrative building should represent.

The site chosen for the building was an ancient graveyard on the edge of the traditional city and near the railway station. The new location replaced the old urban center. The first urban center in Århus was located close to the cathedral in a period when the church was the principal institution. In a democratic period, when buildings were being built for the citizens themselves, it was quite natural that new public buildings—town halls, universities, schools, libraries, etc.—should seek new urban planning structures connected within the city.

At the time, these requirements were taken into consideration by most of the 53 entries submitted for the Århus Town Hall competition. 562 professionals were involved, including architects, engineers, planners and landscape architects.

The first prize went to Arne Jacobsen and Erik Møller's proposal. The plans stressed the practical needs of a municipal administration by first and foremost coming up with a design for an ideal office building. The site plan for the administrative building is extremely intense. The town hall is conceived as part of an urban structure helping to organize its surroundings. The building is aligned to the main street and faces an existing housing complex. Park Allé provides a traffic connection which links the railway station to the city around it. The sequence of volumes defines the transition to the city's urban fabric and composed a staggered façade. The building is a hedge, as from it the image of the traditional city is blurred. It generates a new formal and typological freedom, using isolated volumes around the park, *rådhusparken*.

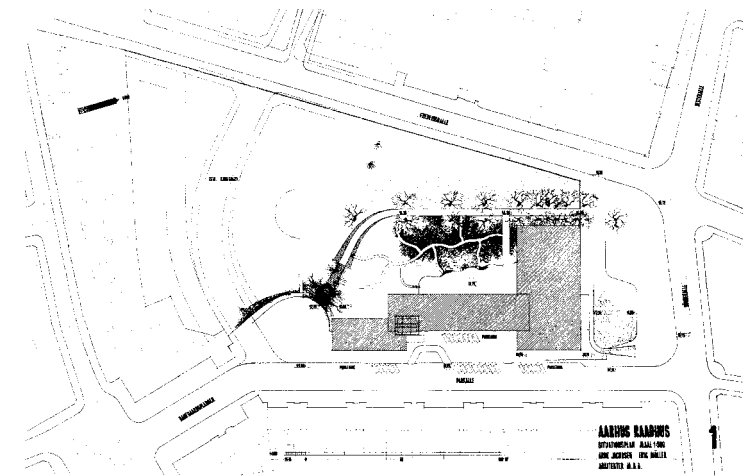


FIG. 2: Arne Jacobsen and Erik Møller. Århus Town Hall, 1937. Site-plan, rådhuspladsen and rådhusparken.

The competition committee, headed by the architect Edvard Thomsen, justified the selection and emphasized the term 'core' to describe the main public space that the proposal included, by stating: "The building, with a relatively small ground area and volume, is placed in such a way that a sizable amount of the park remains intact. A number of trees are preserved and create the core of an attractive design for a New City Hall Park with good access to the streets" (Thomsen 1937, 160).

In accordance with the rules of the competition, the main entrance had already been determined, on the corner of Park Allé and Sønder Allé. All the competitors had to deliver a perspective from that vantage point, from which the town hall should look its most monumental and representative. In Jacobsen's proposal, the main transversal prism faces out from one of the gable-ends to the park through a glass façade, and also configures a new public space: the square. *Rådhuspladsen* is in front of the main entrance and incorporates a ramp, and urban element which extend the building to the perimeter and pointed forward to Jacobsen's future designs.

Two runners-up, the second and fourth prize-winners, share a similar urban approach and also demonstrate attentiveness to the urban environment and a concern for public accessibility. Both groups of architects—Christian Holst, Erik Holst, Aage Holst and Palle Jacobsen, and Ib Martin Jensen and Hans Erling Langkilde—colonize the site with sequences of volumes on the main street, and with the town hall in a corner of the site. The third prize-winner, however, differs greatly from the others. The proposal submitted

by Thomas Havning lays out two elements with an inner courtyard that moves transversally from one to the other. The site plan envisages a duality of public spaces surrounding by a perimeter wall and a secondary access from Park Allé.

Significantly, the Århus Town Hall competition was the second for a large administrative building since the competition for the Copenhagen Town Hall, held in 1888 and won by Martin Nyrop. Some of the proposals submitted represent a transition between classical and Modern architectural values. Several projects incorporate the covered hall and the courtyard which are present in the Copenhagen and Stockholm town halls, although the tower is ignored.

Controversy followed the publication of the Århus Town Hall competition results. Public outcry was that the winning proposal would not be the monumental *center* that was wanted, and people criticized the fact that it lacked the tower that customarily graces such buildings. In architectural terms, the new democratic buildings did not have to be monumental. Arne Jacobsen and Erik Møller did not think of monumentality in the conservative sense of the term. The jury's report summarized the proposal as having "a beautiful, monumental, and festive character that express its function in a natural way" (*Konkurrence om et Raadhus i Aarhus*, 1937). But, finally, the architects had to add the tower in a light structure based on visual transparency.

2. LYNGBY, 1938. TORVET I LYNGBY

Seen from a historical perspective it may be said that Jacobsen's era was the building period of democracy. Year after year, series of competitions were announced for the design of new public buildings, sports facilities and residential complexes. Through his competition entries, Jacobsen shows a greater interest in urban planning and landscape architecture in which public spaces, parks and buildings become one single space. His collaboration with the landscape architect, C.Th. Sørensen, who designed with him some single-family houses with gardens, was very important. Jacobsen submitted competition proposals for the Bellevue coastal baths in 1931, a stadium in Gentofte in 1936 and, for a private consortium, the Bellavista Housing complex between 1931-1934.

One year after the Århus Town Hall competition, a new one was announced for an administrative building in Lyngby. The main purpose was to complete the urban center built after a competition held in 1923. The competition, entitled '*Bebyggelse af Torv i Kongens Lyngby*', was won by Tage Rue, but it was only developed in part.

Arne Jacobsen, as an architectural student, submitted a proposal with the motto '*guld blomst*' (yellow flower) to organize the building complex into an ad-

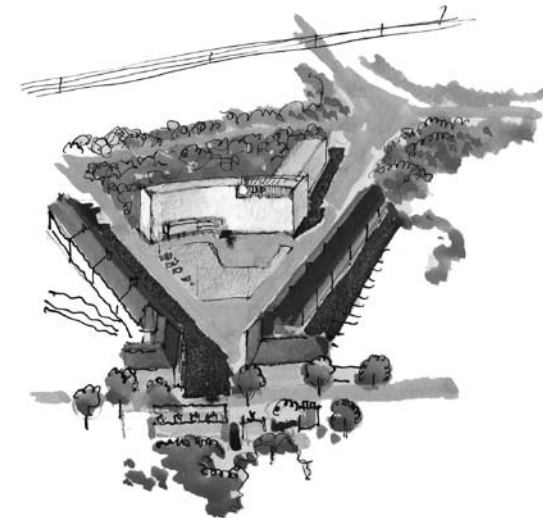


FIG. 3: Arne Jacobsen and F. Lassen. Lyngby Town Hall, 1938. New town hall surrounded by housing blocks built in 1923.

ministrative building or town hall, with a hotel, movie theatre and houses with shops on the ground level. In accordance with the existing urban plan, the public building had to be isolated and the other facilities to form façades lining the perimeter of a triangular-shaped square. Jacobsen delivered two proposals—an administrative building with two floors and one with three—designed according to classical principles as an imposing volume with a sequence of windows. But he introduced a double access instead of a central, symmetrical entrance.

Despite the fact that the town hall was not built after the first competition, it established a precedent for the next competition in 1938, the '*Skitsekonkurrence om et nyt Raadhus i Lyngby*', particularly in terms of the concave building designed by C.F. Møller and John Thorson, which was awarded third prize. After registering for the competition, all the participants had received the program and also nine drawing plans with the site plan and a previous proposal designed by the municipal engineer, J.A.C. Rastrup. According to the rules of the competition, it was not possible to change any space, because Rastrup's distribution was considered the best. However, the results of the competition showed how it was possible to improve it.

The proposal submitted by Hans Erling Lankilde and Ib Martin Jensen was awarded first prize. Unlike the other 44 entries, the architects moved the main entrance, located in the center, to the edge. The town hall has a concave shape, stretching its two bays all the way to the edges of the site and generating at its front a large square that links the complex to the perimeter streets.

Arne Jacobsen and Flemming Lassen, whose proposal was also based on the geometrical solution, explained it as follows: “The administration building, which closes the west side of the square, *torv*, will define the final configuration of the square. Thus, the administrative complex is divided into a main building and a secondary wing, to which the subsequent extension will be connected. The problem of the main building, which is highly visible from the overcrowded main street, is solved with an unbroken and calm façade to widen the square. This small, wedge-shaped square would not be able to withstand a prominent central axis across it because it would make the square appear more enclosed. A building with a straight façade to the square would have some unfortunate, crooked corners. The issue is resolved with a building that has a concave-shaped façade whose center is located in the main entrance to the square, coming from the old part of the city.” (Jacobsen, 1938).

The principal concern of the jury, headed by the architect Vilhelm Lauritzen, was the main façade. Jacobsen and Lassen’s proposal was purchased and the jury wrote that it “provides an interesting and attractive design for the building. But the penthouse, which does not have the same width as the building, stops at a random point and continues with iron bars, through which we can see the sky, which probably introduces a gap in the building” (*Resultatet af Konkurrencen om et Raadhus for Lyngby*, 1938).

First and foremost, the town hall had to be completed with Danish materials in terms of Modern architectural principles. In Århus, the concrete walls were covered with grey Porsgrunn marble, and Jacobsen also proposed Gotland marble for the Lyngby town hall. The Danish building tradition and Danish materials were an important factor in the competitions that followed, in terms of the need to integrate buildings into their existing surroundings.

3. KORSØR, 1939. PLADS

In 1939, Steen Eiler Rasmussen published a long article about the extension of the courthouse in Goteborg, Sweden, built in 1937 by Erik Gunnar Asplund. The proposal was finally completed 24 years after the competition, with major improvements being introduced after such a long period. Rasmussen mentioned Asplund in a quote that summarized one of his purposes: “The architect became certain that the façade of the building should have some connection with its internal structure and also be seen as a result of its own time” (Rasmussen, 1939).

Asplund’s extension is placed in Gustav Adolf square and close to the *Stora Hamnkanalen* canal. The location and its architectural values were a reference for several of the Danish architects who participated in the competition for the new town hall in Kørsør, which is on a site between the urban fabric and the harbor.

The results of ‘*Konkurrencen om Rådhuset i Kørsør*’ were published in May, 1939. Once again, the proposal of Hans Erling Lankilde and Ib Martin Jensen was awarded first prize, but it was never built. Arne Jacobsen submitted an entry with the motto “*Plads for Kørsør*” and explained: “The main purpose of the site plan is the creation of a continuous square as large as possible. The L-shaped building is located in the southwest corner of the site, and thus from the bridge that connects Kørsør with Halskov people have a clear and unbroken view of the building with its main façade facing them. The bridge is the only link with the harbour and it is important for visitors to get a very good first impression.” In addition, from the sloping square citizens “have beautiful views to the harbour.” At the main entrance the two volumes are placed at an angle, and the façades have been accomplished in the same way as at the Asplund Courthouse. The proposal was not awarded a prize, but Jacobsen introduced the square, *plads*, as a receptive and symbolic public space which extols the building complex, seen from a distance.

4. SØLLERØD URBAN CENTER, 1939. SKOV

In 1898, Ebenezer Howard defined the urban center as “a circular space containing about five and a half acres, laid out as a beautiful and well-watered garden; and, surrounding this garden, each standing in its own ample grounds, are the larger public buildings—the town hall, the main concert and lecture hall, the theatre, the library, the museum, the picture gallery and the hospital” (Howard, 1946). Conceived as a meeting point, the building complex determines the articulation of its spaces based on a relationship of proximity with the surroundings and the city.

The ‘*Skitsekonkurrence vedrørende Rådhus, Bibliotek og Biografteater i Søllerød Kommune*’ competition, held in 1939, introduced some of Howard’s ideas. It was the most important opportunity for a Danish architect to design an urban center. The building complex comprised a town hall, a library, a movie theatre and a housekeeper’s residence, surrounded by recreational woods and arable land.

At that time, Søllerød was a suburban township with low-density residential housing based on single-family structures. The site chosen for the new urban center was occupied by a gardening school in a clearing at the edge of a wood, *Geels Skov*, and bounded by two main streets.

The closing date for the competition was 17th July, 1939, and 43 entries were received. Jørn Utzon, Tobias Faber, Mogens Lassen, C.Th. Sørensen and Aage Rafn were among those who submitted proposals. First prize was awarded to Arne Jacobsen and Flemming Lassen’s scheme. In second place came Gunnar Krohn, and the third prize went to Edvard Lorenz, who collaborated with Jacobsen as head builder during the construction of the Søllerød Town Hall.

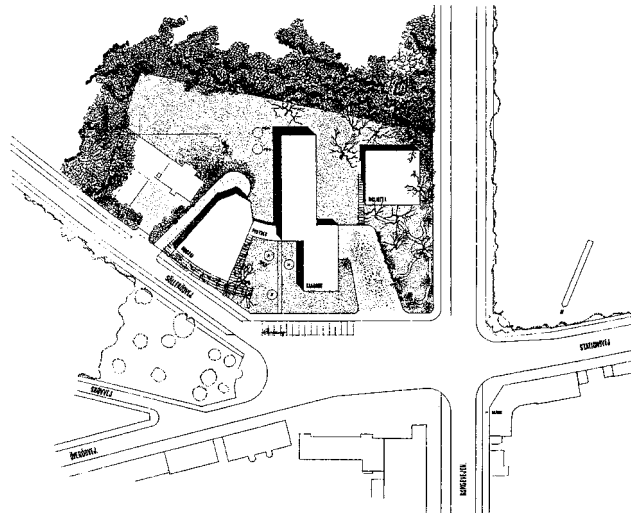


FIG. 4: Arne Jacobsen and F. Lassen. Søllerød urban center, 1939. Town hall, library, movie theatre and housekeeper's residence.

The site plan of the winning proposal bore the motto: 'kryds' (intersection). The area was organized in such a way that the town hall was placed parallel to Kongevejen. The library is an isolated structure in front of the administrative building, and both define the main square, *rådhuspladsen*. They are connected by a system of pergolas. The movie theatre is oriented towards Søllerødvej and linked to the town hall through an arched housekeeper's residence. An extension to the town hall that would remove the old forest steward's residence was also envisaged. The administrative building consists of two blocks, the one jutting out from the other both by length and by breadth, in the same way as the facing blocks in *Radiohuset*, built in 1934-1945 by Vilhelm Lauritzen. In both projects, the two blocks intersect each other at the corner by the main staircase which, as a result, adds half a story to the rear block. Johan Pedersen stated that "the compact buildings look marvelous against the big trees in the wood behind, and the very quiet and moderate use of materials and colors is not dull at all; they harmonize with the powerful nature of the landscape" (Pedersen, 1954).

In the end, only the town hall, the housekeeper's residence and a cycle store were built. The erection of the cinema and library was postponed due to the war and the intense architectural relationship between the elements disappeared. Later on, in 1967, the main building was extended by the same architects, who removed the house for a glass-enclosed corridor connected with a new parallel volume.

5. SKAGEN, 1942. HAVE

Construction of the Århus and Søllerød town halls started during the Second World War (1939-1945) and both were finally completed in 1942 after serious restrictions on materials had been imposed. Competitions announced during this period of shortages required there to be a reduction in iron and other imported materials. Instead of these, brick, wood and traditional Danish buildings methods were suggested. It was within this historical context, accompanied by the need for national expression, that a competition was announced for a new administrative building in the town of Skagen: '*Konkurrence om en administrationsbygning for Skagen købstad*', in April, 1942.

The chosen site lay across the street surrounding the park and the railway station, at the junction between Sct. Laurentivej and Spliidsvej. The urban space in which the new town hall was to be built was occupied by administrative buildings and police headquarters, which had to be preserved, along with some existing trees.

The jury was composed of 14 members, 11 of whom represented the municipal council, and there were 3 architects. After reviewing the 116 entries, the architects Povl C. Stegmann and Aksel Skov chose Arne Jacobsen and Flemming Lassen's proposal, but the third architect, Wilhelm Th. Klemann, professed himself disappointed by it. Finally, it was left to a popular vote among all the jury members, and Ejnar Bjørg's proposal was awarded first prize.

Jacobsen and Lassen conceived their proposal based on the same principles as Korsør. The main purpose was to create an enclosed square for the citizens, where the town hall stood isolated at one corner. The buildings are connected through a pergola and each one is on a different level. A ramp leads from the cobble-stoned square and parking area to the main entrance. The architects have given due respect to the existing city, shaping the façades of the buildings in tune with the urban context and local tradition. The jury added that the proposed town hall has "a serene and timeless character that is a nostalgic evocation of the past. Thus, the charm and simplicity of the proposal offer a happy vision that can be accommodated in a Danish town like Skagen." And it concluded: "Is there anything in the proposal which would remain regardless of the distribution of the program? The distribution may change, but the character and talent that links all the buildings, is everlasting" (Stegmann, 1942).

MODERN ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN PLANNING

Once the Second World War had ended, the demand for housing and public services led to an increase in building projects, which facilitated the shift towards new non-traditional building systems, in particular steel frame con-

struction. Modern materials and new techniques helped to create Modern urban centers, where public buildings succeeded in establishing the true expression of a democratic age. In 1943, Sigfried Giedion and J.L. Sert, in their ‘Nine points on Monumentality’, explained how Modern architects could conceive of new spaces for the community where “architecture and urban planning could attain a new freedom and develop new creative possibilities”. Later, in 1951, at the 8th CIAM entitled ‘The Heart of the City,’ the basis of the new urban centers was developed. “In these new cores or centers, public buildings of different types will be grouped in harmony of form and space; they will be the meeting places of people, community centers where pedestrians will be given preference over traffic and business interests” (Sert, 1951).

6. RØDOVRE, 1952. MODERNE BYCENTER (A MODERN URBAN CENTER)

For more than ten years, Arne Jacobsen continued submitting proposals to different competitions that allowed him to introduce Modern architectural trends. He began to collaborate with the engineer M. Folmer Andersen, who assisted him in developing lighter building structures. In addition, C.Th. Sørensen’s lessons on garden art and his own studies of plants were essential to his conception of natural elements as architectural units to be integrated in his proposals.

In 1952, Arne Jacobsen started the first sketches for a new urban center in Rødovre. At that time, he was building low-cost row houses, *Isevvænge*, and between 1949 and 1952 he was designing the Carlsro housing complex with the architects Mogens Jacobsen, Alex Poulsen, Magnus L. Stephensen and Knud Thorball in the same town. Land on the west side of Carlsro, within a green area bounded by Tårnvej, along Rødovre Parkvej Street to Lake Damhussøen, was the site chosen to create the new ‘core’ of Rødovre. The program included a town hall, technical school, movie theatre, library, police station, fire station, garage, post office, apartment block and public spaces such as a park, gardens and a square.

Initial drafts showed how the location of the Carlsro housing block and its shopping center helped Jacobsen to sketch the overall plan. The composition of the public buildings and the vegetation are displayed on an orthogonal grid. “Trees, plants, water, sun and shade, and all the natural elements friendly to man should be found in such centers, and these elements of nature should harmonize with the buildings and their architectural shapes, sculptural values, and color” (Sert, 1951).

Rødovre Town Hall, completed in 1956, was not the result of a competition, but is a typical example of a Danish Modern building and site plan.

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FIG. 5: Arne Jacobsen. Rødovre bycenter, 1952-1969. Town hall, library, housing block and public spaces.

Later, in 1959, the urban center was completed with an apartment block and then a library in 1969 by Arne Jacobsen, and a cultural center, built by Dissing & Weitling, Jacobsen’s partnership, in 1988.

7. GLOSTRUP, 1953

Public buildings occupying urban centers are for social and cultural programs and are born out of a consensus between architects, politicians and citizens. In Rødovre, Major Gustav Jensen permitted Jacobsen to develop his advanced Modern ideas, but they were not always accepted or built.

October 15th 1953 was the deadline for proposals for the ‘*Projektkonkurrence om forslag til et nyt Rådhus i Glostrup*’. The competition for the town hall was announced 14 years after a previous competition to design the entire urban center, *Torv i Glostrup*, and was won by Vilhelm Lauritzen. Most of the 64 entries followed the guidelines proposed by Lauritzen but the role of the public buildings had been changed.

In Glostrup, residential developments had evolved in an orderly way, without encroaching upon the city center and leaving open spaces like parks, squares, gardens and promenades to play a part in the organization of the urban fabric. The urban center was surrounded by four streets and when the competition was announced a technical school, fire station, police station and a church, on the other side of Roskildevej, were built.

Arne Jacobsen and the engineer M. Folmer Andersen won the first prize. The jury, headed by the architect Tobias Faber, wrote: “The proposal is distinguished by an unusually clear and superior solution to all the major

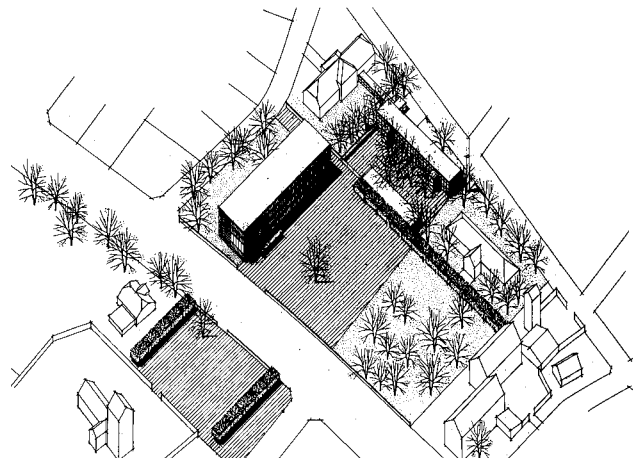


FIG. 6: A. Jacobsen and M.F. Andersen. Glostrup bycenter, 1953. Town hall and the existing technical school, church, fire and police station.

problems in the site plan. The author has managed to use the land on both sides of the highway, and the proposal contains a number of details that could be of great value to the urban landscape. Town Hall location at the end of the global free area with gable against the highway and with main façade turned towards the persuasive passengers. The interaction between the town hall and the church is also valuable. (...) Despite the virtuoso overall proposal, the façades are sober and dry, but the plans form a satisfactory and highly suitable basis for a solution of the task" (*Resultatet af Konkurrencen om et Raadhus i Glostrup*, 1954). In fact, Jacobsen introduced the curtain-wall concept in his design for the Rødovre Town Hall, but in the end it was not accepted by the politicians.

The building was finally completed in 1959. The location of the administrative building remained the same as in the first proposal, but the main entrance faced the opposite side. The planned entrance to the main square, which brought together all the public buildings, was transformed into a park.

8. TÅRNBY, 1954. COURTYARD

Parks, gardens and squares become highly valued public extensions of halls and living rooms in Jacobsen's work, which the architecture blends naturally. Landscape, site and vegetation interplay with buildings to create a visual unity. After the school at Munkegårds, 1948-1957, the courtyard was also added to Jacobsen's repertoire. As an inner space, the 'patio' is an organizing principle in the overall program and links to the exterior. Competition pro-

posals for schools at Åbenrå and Esbjerg in 1949, and Carlsminde (1953-59) and Hansaviertel courtyard houses in 1957, were also based on the organizing principle of the courtyard.

Before 1st February, 1954, Jacobsen submitted a proposal for '*Program for en offentlig konkurrence om et rådhus i Kastrup for Tårnby Kommune*', but it did not win a prize. There were 55 entries for the competition and the first prize went to Halldor Gunnløgsson and Jørn Nielsen.

In Jacobsen's proposal, the program for the new town hall in Tårnby was organized around a courtyard. The low height of the surrounding single-family houses prompted him to separate the administrative building from the main road. The site plan combines two differentiated areas: the town hall, with a square in front and an inner courtyard, and the housekeeper's residence with a garage. The courtyard acts as an outdoor lobby, leading to the public service office. The curtain wall that covers both the exterior façades and the interior courtyard generates a calm atmosphere inside the town hall, with light playing a leading role.

9. LANDSKRONA, SWEDEN, 1956

Trimmed, rectangular-shaped trees that look like buildings blocks or Mediterranean pergolas configure the squares in Tårnby and Rødovre. Longitudinal plantations of trees and low hedges make up different open spaces for the inhabitants to enjoy in Jacobsen's Modern urban centers. The architect once said, "If I have a second life, I want to be a gardener." He entitled his proposal for the new urban center in Landskrona, Sweden, '*Tuktade träd*', or Trimmed trees.

'*Nordisk konkurrence om rådhus, bibliotek og idretshal i Landskrona*' encouraged Nordic architects to develop a building complex with a town hall, library and sports hall. The site was located in a central area, called *Kasernplan*, surrounded by the *Slottspark*, a fortified park, and two military barracks, both notable buildings. The Commission received 65 proposals, and the outcome of the competition was first prize to the architects Arne Jacobsen and Hans Dissing.

The jury was composed of Nordic architects, among them the Danish architect Johan Pedersen. He wrote about the winning entry: "The proposal shows a very firm and clear site plan. *Kasernplan* has been designed as a popular square (*torgplats*) of a monumental nature, which is naturally shaped in order to relocate the town hall between the two historical buildings. The orthogonal grid is underlined by the discipline of trees. The town hall is designed as a pure office with module of a meter. From an aesthetic point of view, the light glass façade makes an effective contrast with the older buildings' heavier walls" (*Nordisk konkurrence om rådhus, bibliotek og idretshal i Landskrona*, 1958). The sports hall is located behind the town hall

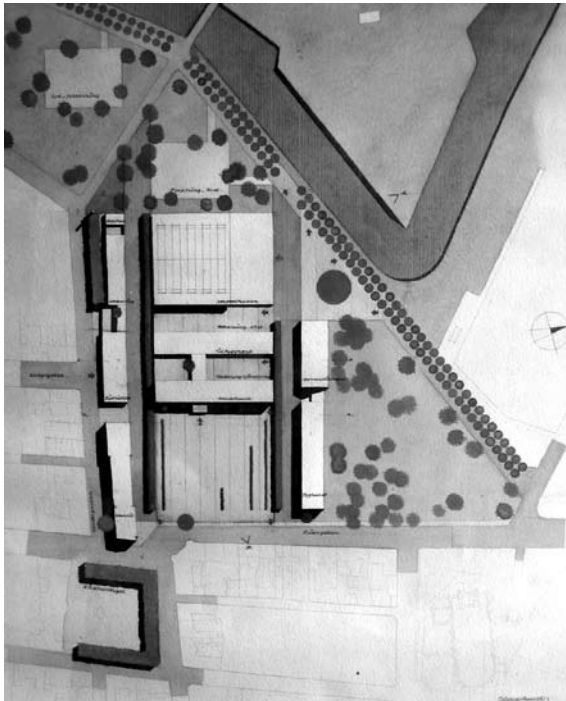


FIG. 7: A.Jacobsen and Hans Dissing. Landskrona, Sweden, 1956. Town hall, library and sport hall in Kasernplan.

and connected to the building complex through an east-west green belt. The library is placed with its entrance at the junction between *Slottsgatan* and *Kungsgatan*.

The sports hall was eventually built between 1957 and 1964 in a different area. During this time Jacobsen also developed several urban plans in Landskrona, and in 1964 he designed a new town hall. The administrative building was built on the competition site, and consisted of an isolated massive volume with a covered inner hall.

DIE STADTKRONE. URBAN CENTERS IN GERMANY

The new urban planning, introduced by Ebenezer Howard, established the basis for new garden cities, in particular in England, Germany and the Nordic countries. In 1902, Raymond Unwin and Barry Parker built *Letchworth*, considered the first garden city, and in 1919 Louis de Soissons built *Welwyn*. These new ‘social cities’ were provided with an urban center, or a grid of local centers with public buildings surrounded by nature.

In 1919, the German architect Bruno Taut analyzed Howard’s principles in his article ‘*Die Stadtkrone*’ (The Crown of the City.) Taut considered that amidst their low-rise areas of single-family houses in which public buildings were spread out, new cities sought an urban center as a visible symbolic landmark and an expression of the new democratic values: “If there is something that can crown the city, it is the expression of the idea of democracy and socialism. The Center, the Crown of the city itself, reveals itself as a building complex representative of social trends which are necessary for the purposes of art and entertainment in a city of this size. Four major buildings, forming a cross strictly oriented towards the sun, crown the center: an opera hall, a theatre, a large town hall and another smaller hall (...) then in the exterior plaza are the museum and the central library” (Taut, 1997).

During the post-war period, Germany tried to restore some of the urban centers destroyed during the war, and proposed new representative centers through international and national competitions in which Taut’s ideas were taken into account.

10. MARL, 1957. COUNTERPOINT

After the ‘Interbau 1957’ international housing exhibition held in Berlin, Arne Jacobsen was invited to take part in a closed competition to design the new town hall in Marl. By then his prestige as an architect was high, and his German-speaking collaborator Otto Weitling helped him to understand the German context.

According to the competition brief, the municipality of Marl wanted to have a town hall that would make a powerful contribution in the image of the city. Of the twelve architects invited to take part, nine were from Germany, including Hans Scharoun, G. Conle, G. Marschall, Kramer and Engelberger. There were three foreign entries—Alvar Aalto’s from Finland, Van den Broek and Bakema’s from the Netherlands, and Arne Jacobsen’s from Denmark. The only foreign jury member was the architect Merkelbach from Amsterdam.

The competition (*Konkurrence om et rådhus i Marl*) was won by the remarkably talented architects van der Broek & Bakema with a proposal described by the jury as follows: “The site plan is an excellent solution. The building complex, which can be characterized as a massive solution in the administration of each specific tower, shows a clear differentiation of each building volume and provides a particularly valuable contribution to the existing basis” (*Indbudt konkurrence om et rådhus i Marl*, 1958).

With regard to the Nordic architects, Alvar Aalto submitted a proposal which was an attempt to resolve a representation problem

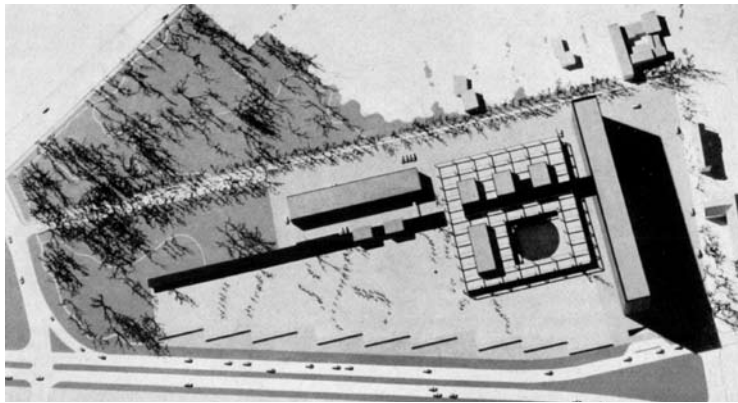


FIG. 8: Arne Jacobsen. Marl urban center, Germany, 1957. Town hall, offices, restaurant and police station.

through formal organization. Aalto planned individual buildings around an open plaza or forum dominated by the town hall. His entry was not awarded a prize because it was decided the distance between the administrative buildings was not large enough.

Jacobsen proposed a single high administrative building with offices connected, through light structures and longitudinal walls, with low buildings that included a representative program, council chamber, restaurant, police station and garages. The jury wrote that “the site plan is clear and orderly and contains an abundance of attractive ideas.” In the end, the proposal was accepted, although the jury said, “. . .but one can criticize the administration building’s length of 140 m, because it does not fit in with Marl’s open building arrangement” (*Indbudt konkurrence om et rådhus i Marl*, 1958).

11. ESSEN, 1962. LANDMARK

When high administration towers or blocks make their way into the urban profile, they often become exhibitionist landmarks. The counterpoint or breakdown between low-rise buildings and a high building was a strategy that appears in several Jacobsen projects, such as Hotel SAS, 1955-60, the administrative building proposal for the general plan in *Novo Industrie* in Bagsværd, 1957-69; the *Onderlige* office building proposal in the Netherlands in 1959; and the office building in Hamburg built in 1962.

Citizens might have found a reference point in the cityscape of Essen if any of the proposals submitted for the new town hall had been built. The competition program for the new urban center required a parking area, shopping center, town hall, administrative offices and a public square. The site chosen was a huge area bisected by a highway and surrounded by streets.

Almost all of the proposals solved the task by introducing a plateau above the highway and raising an administrative tower. The winning proposal, designed by the architect Theodor J. Seifert, was conceived as a platform containing the shopping center, and above it, a low building with a representative program and two towers with administrative offices.

Arne Jacobsen, in collaboration with the architects Otto Weitling and Knud Munk and with the engineer Mogens Folmer Andersen delivered a proposal which was purchased. Jacobsen made a thorough examination of the site, which presented a difference of levels between the perimeter streets, and proposed a terraced platform. Below the public square are located the parking area and shopping center, and above it a two-story plinth houses the council members’ offices and the council chamber. Finally, a 35-story tower building accommodates all the remaining offices. Located on the edge of the plot, it takes on its public and institutional function in a compact, expressive structure that aims to be timeless, as a vestige of the past that looks over a city that is old and modern at the same time.

The jury set out in detail the considerations that had influenced their decision and wrote about Jacobsen’s proposal that the sketch and construction of the multi-storey building were clearly and consistently developed. The first section, which was limited only to the flat under-body, did not correspond to the requirements of the program. The remaining sections were operationally possible. However, they criticized the extraordinary height of the above-ground construction. The variant of covering the existing porch with a plateau, which was shown in the layout plan, was an interesting suggestion. A public square lay on the highway and connects with the urban fabric.

12. CASTROP-RAUXEL, 1965. BYMIDTPUNKT

The ancient agora and forum were planned as public spaces and neuralgic-centers for citizens. Both of them are timeless strategies for public spaces in urban planning which appear in Modern and contemporary architecture. The agora appears as an urban space that has emerged from the interrelationships of autonomous areas that make their individual contributions. All public buildings are coordinated with each other through a complex network of visual relationships, without having to conform to geometrical discipline or a set of laws. The agora is defined as an open structure, without precise boundaries, which incorporates the surrounding landscape and provides an intensive dialogue with nature. However, the forum is proposed as an enclosed and restricted space, in which the architectural elements are juxtaposed, losing part of their relative autonomy, to form a continuous, all-embracing artificial scenario which represents the urban as an ‘internal’

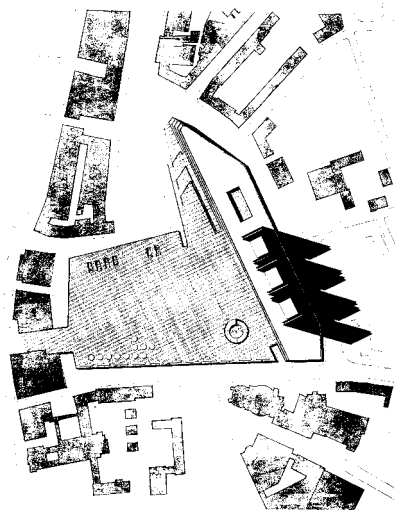


FIG. 9: Arne Jacobsen. Essen urban center, Germany, 1962. Town hall, offices, shopping center and public space.

space clearly delinked from the 'exterior' countryside and landscape. Nordic architects like Arne Jacobsen and Alvar Aalto learnt about the main purpose of these spaces in their travels to Greece and Italy, and applied them in their proposals for urban centers.

The Castrop-Rauxel municipality was formed by uniting ten administrative communities. The municipal authorities had worked since the 1930s to create a unitary center (*Bycenter Castrop-Rauxel*, 1978). In 1964, the city council adopted a plan for an urban center which would contain, besides a town hall, buildings to house a health center, sports hall, restaurant, and a hall for exhibitions, theatre performances and festivals. One year later, five architectural firms were invited to take part in a closed competition to design the 'core'. Three studios were from Germany, headed by the architects Egon Eiermann, Fr. W. Kraemer and Paul Schneider-Esleben, and two were from Nordic countries, Alvar Aalto and Arne Jacobsen.

The site chosen for the new Castrop Rauxel urban center was located between the original old towns in an existing green belt. The required public buildings would meet the challenge of becoming a meeting point for citizens seeking a certain degree of social interaction in administrative, cultural and sports activities. The complex would define the center amidst the low-density buildings that surrounded it.

When the competition was announced, Alvar Aalto had already developed

several urban centers in Finland, such as Seinäjoki between 1952 and 1969, Helsinki in 1959-1964, Rovaniemi in 1963, Jyväskylä in 1964 and Wolfsburg, Germany, in 1959. The program included a town hall, library, theater, cultural center, police headquarters, church and parish center. His proposals all have in common a square at a higher level enclosed by public buildings. Aalto proposed for Castrop-Rauxel a longitudinal, multifunctional building in which one of the edges forms one side of a public square, which opens onto the main roadway. A second enclosed square, which opens onto the sports center and the stadium, has the character of a broad avenue. It is formed mainly by the sports hall and the public health center (Fleig, 1999).

The jury unanimously awarded first prize to the proposal submitted by Arne Jacobsen and Otto Weitling and adopted it as the basis for an urban plan which it was proposed to be developed in stages. The main focus was on the design of two parallel, facing boundaries of covered buildings, which included the required program and liberated a central square (*Bycenter Castrop-Rauxel*, 1978). The buildings are assembled on either side of an oblong 'piazza' which opens up at both ends towards the green belt, so that continuity of the latter is maintained, both visually and functionally. The constructions themselves form two high walls, from which the large halls project towards the center of the square. The public spaces, which are to be kept free of traffic, are planted with trees and shrubs and are suitable for holding exhibitions or similar events.

The diversity of buildings is held together by a common design, which gives the center its unity. But at the same time a sculptural variation is achieved that makes the urban center an architectural landmark, which is greatly needed in a random and formless urban structure.

13. MAINZ, 1968

Jacobsen was always confronted by urban and natural environments, city and landscape. His proposals addressed the existing urban fabric and the green areas around sites. Public spaces and buildings are configured according to abstract and geometrical principles which establish an entity based on urban planning. The platform, plinth and delimited raised square characterized Jacobsen's architecture during the last period of his professional career. These architectural elements are situated and adapted to the site plan to define the perimeter, like a fortress, where the massive volumes are located. In 1964, a light raised square comprises the building complex for the competition entry to *Industrienshus*, house of Industry and building for an *A/S De Forende Bryggerier*, Administrative center. The library in Rødovre, built between 1960 and 1969, is completely closed to the outside and a dark wall of Norwegian Solvåg stone surrounds its perimeter. Only the main hall stands out over the

low building. In the National Banks in Copenhagen, 1961-1978, and Kuwait, 1966-1976, the perimeter is defined with a continuous plinth of Norwegian Porsgrunn marble. The office building is solved with blind panels and specific openings. When in 1968 the competition for the new urban center in Mainz was announced, Arne Jacobsen used the same urban and architectural ideas.

The competition for a town hall, shopping center and urban plan was divided into two sections. The first required a new town hall and the re-development of the *Halleplatz*, located on the Rhine waterfront. The second competition section was the creation of a shopping center in the Brand area, situated in the inner city across the *Rheinstrasse*. A common feature of both sections was the task of submitting proposals for the urban re-development of the entire area, in order to connect both sites through public spaces and pedestrian ways.

Arne Jacobsen and Otto Weitling submitted the proposal, which was awarded first prize. Two second and third prizes went to German architects. Jacobsen and Weitling conceived a sequence of public spaces connecting the commercial area and the administrative building. A pedestrian bridge over the *Rheinstrasse* links the two raised platforms. The strategy solves the traffic problems and opens up spaces for citizens, in particular an end-point with a terrace with views over the river.

The shopping center consisted of a massive volume broken up into different buildings through lineal and diagonal pedestrian ways. The jury stated: "The proposed diagonal access and the diagonal orientation of the buildings represent a unique contribution which has the effect of matching and renewing the structure of the mediaeval city" (*Rådhus og butikskenter i Mainz*, 1969). The Town Hall is also diagonally located, on one of the edges of the platform, close to the river. The main façade is orientated towards the old city and the new square to avoid a direct clash with the larger *Rheingoldhalle*. The administrative building is divided into a folded office block, which encloses a courtyard, and the council chamber. This latter representative space remains in a corner connected with the edges of the offices.

Seen from the river, the characteristic skyline dominated by the cathedral is thus preserved. The height of all the planned buildings is equalized and subordinated to the dominating mass of the cathedral (*Rådhus og butikskenter i Mainz*, 1969). Every building has a covering of the same Porsgrunn marble, and thus they become part of the whole even though they remain identifiable as autonomous pieces. In the end, only the town hall, the pedestrian bridge and a tower-museum were built under the direction of Otto Weitling. Despite the fact that the whole area was not completed, the main purpose of the project remains: creating a public space with a visual and attractive link between the city and the river.

14. AMSTERDAM, 1967

Arne Jacobsen planned and built several projects in Germany. Apart from urban centers in four different countries, he worked intensively on other public buildings. In 1964, he built a foyer and planned an advanced cantilevered restaurant in Hannover. He built a Baltic vacation center in Fehmarn, 1965, and the Gymnasium Christianeum in Hamburg, 1966. But the urban center in Mainz, characterized by a prestigious waterfront, was his last work in Germany.

An international competition for a new town hall in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, was announced between 1967 and 1968, and this was also defined by the presence of water. The program required a large town hall including administrative offices, reception rooms for 40, 50 and 200 people, a music hall, a council chamber, members' offices, a town hall square, a parking area and cycle routes. The site chosen comprised a square area, the *Waterlooplein*, surrounded to the west by a canal system, south by the Amstel river, on the east side by the main street and on the north side by the urban fabric of the inner city.

The Amsterdam competition's brief was challenging, not only because of the spectacular waterfront site but also because of the fact that building would take place in a historic city. The competition secretary received more than 2,500 registrations from architects all over the world. By November 30th, 1967, the not inconsiderable number of 804 proposals had been submitted. Among others, Spanish architects such as Rafael Moneo, Antonio Fernández-Alba and Alfons Soldevila, and Danish architects such as Halldor Gunnløgsson, Jørn Nielsen, Paul Niepoort, Jørn Utzon and Arne Jacobsen participated.

In contrast to previous competitions, the jury was only composed of architects, and politicians were excluded. The Dutchmen H.A. Maaskant and F.J. van Gool, the Swiss J. Shader, the British Robert H. Matthew and the Danish Nils Ole-Lund, as a deputy member, were responsible for selecting the winning proposal. The jury members spent days intensively reviewing the projects, and after two preliminary examinations, they selected 67 proposals. In a third round only 20, including Jacobsen's proposal, obtained a pass mark, and they were requested to deliver a model. In February, 1968, the jury selected 7 projects to take part in a closed competition, in which Wilhelm Holzbauer's from Vienna was the winning proposal.

During the process, the jury also visited the future building site in order to draw up some general criteria to evaluate the proposals. In particular they noted: "The building will have to be, both in its entirety and its constituent parts, an inviting building, and reflect the character of a town hall

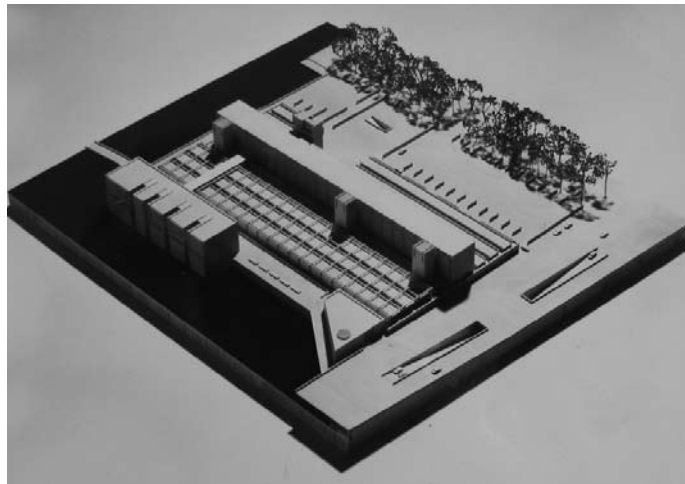


FIG. 10: Arne Jacobsen. Amsterdam Town Hall, Netherlands, 1967. Town hall, offices, reception halls and public space.

in its role as the citizens' meeting place". Once again, the participants had to reflect on the modern 'monumentality' of administrative buildings. Some of the proposals emphasized the notion of local government with a tall, powerful construction, but most of them considered the town hall only as one more administrative building, in scale and proportion with the surrounding buildings and accessible to inhabitants. Danish architects, including Arne Jacobsen, were included in the last phase of consideration.

Jacobsen conceived his proposal in terms of distributing the project in four frames facing the river. The town hall public square creates an open space between the urban fabric and the administrative building, where the main entrance and ramps to the parking area are located. A common plinth marks the ground floor, which connects with a tall administrative block in the square, reception halls in the middle and five linked volumes to the waterfront. Once again, Jacobsen introduces the plinth and low perimeter building, where above it the main buildings are placed. The council offices are located in the building, split into five areas, which include the council chamber, meeting rooms and mayor's office. The three programmatic frames are surrounded by cycle and pedestrian routes, and a bridge connects offices directly with council chambers. Finally, a protected second square is situated between a small reception entrance building and the cantilevered areas which seem to float on the river.

CONCLUSION

A selection of fourteen competition proposals for urban centers show how Arne Jacobsen contributed to the development of such new centers by integrating architecture, urban planning and landscape architecture.

Arne Jacobsen created schemes for all the national and international competitions of importance, the consequence of which was a variety of important tasks quite unusual for a contemporary architect. Aside from the Rødovre urban center, the Århus, Søllerød, Glostrup, Castrop-Rauxel and Mainz administrative centers were all completed. The others were either purchased or came second, except two which were not awarded a prize. Jacobsen also delivered proposals for other competitions to rebuild urban centers or design town hall extensions.

In 1963, Arne Jacobsen said: "When I spoke about the conservation of our countryside and our cities, I referred to the important field of urbanism. In the future, this field should be entrusted to a large extent to the architects, although, regrettably, the politicians have tended of late to prefer engineers. I think this is a mistake. Aesthetics, which for us as architects is fundamental, must not be neglected in the planning of cities and the landscape" (Jacobsen 1997, 130).

Through these competitions, Arne Jacobsen introduced Modern architectural trends and urban structures. During a first period, which comprised the urban centers designed between 1937 and 1942, he developed his proposals by emphasizing and integrating public spaces such as *rådhusparken* (town hall parks), *rådhuspladsen*, *torv* or *plads* (town hall squares), *skov* (forests), *have*, (the domestic Danish garden) using architectural principles influenced by International functionalism and the so-called *Functional Tradition* (Faber 1968, 10). After the war, in a second period, 1947-1957, Jacobsen was influenced by the International Style and his proposals established open configurations based on Nordic landscapes, with glass façade buildings, courtyards and garden art. His last period, 1957-1967, was characterized by a closed configuration, in which he introduced the platform or plinth, with blind facade buildings. From this overview of Jacobsen's urban centers it is possible to see the central purposes running through his thoughts and urban ideas. Nowadays, architects are sceptical about urban planning, but Jacobsen's proposals demonstrate how the form that the city and its surroundings takes is certainly more important than single, isolated buildings.

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Abstract

By using the concepts of Pierre Bourdieu: field, capital, and strategy, together with the anthropologist Clifford Geertz' and the cultural historian Johan Huizinga's ideas on the play- element, I analyse the architecture competition as a system. With system I refer to a complex whole of parts that are related to one another. The purpose of this paper is to examine in short, important instances and mechanisms of the competition system, as well as its logic.

In the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s, a number of competitions were from the architects' point of view, arranged without regard to their demands. This undermined the architects' trust in the competitions, and thereby the relevance of the competition instrument. The different strategies of the architectural community in regaining control of the competition illuminate the structure and dynamics of the system.

The legitimacy of the competition depended on the confidence in the competition that the architects possessed and which needed to be renewed. Without this confidence, the competition results were compromised and accordingly, the distinction effectuated by the jury's decision and report, was hollowed out. The differentiation and the distinction, which the jury's report brought about, meant that the winning architect was ascribed symbolic capital, which by repeated successful competition results could be accumulated. Another condition of the competition system was constituted by the architects' priority of interpretation of the expertise that defined the professional role and the professional identity of the architects, expertise which was used and manifested in a competition. Hereby, it was possible for the architectural community to define themselves in contrast to organizers, other professions and the public.

Keywords

Bourdieu, system, distinction, identity

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The Competition System

Stina Hagelqvist

PROLOGUE

There are reasons to ask oneself if the praxis that is currently applied when organising and assessing competitions, on the whole gives the possibility of an objective review of the different entries. I no doubt answer this question by a no! This is by no means intended as an attack at the juries, whose good will must be regarded as being beyond all doubt. Instead it is the routine-like system that has evolved during the past years that is at fault and that should be reformed. If not at its worst the competition instrument will take on the character of the burlesque without any deeper significance.¹

It is the year 1929, and the words are of the 29-year old architect Mogens Mogensen, who shed these critical remarks at the Swedish architectural competitions in *Byggmästaren*, (The Builder), which at that time was the organ of the Swedish architectural community. This quotation is noteworthy. Mogensen identified a major weakness of the competitions from the architects' point of view: very many competitions being conducted in an untrustworthy manner. In Mogensen's opinion the competitions were scarred by serious problems and were characterized by an unacceptable praxis based on self-interest and subjectivity, rather than objectivity and matter of fact. He was worried that the arbitrariness of how the competitions were conducted would undermine the confidence in the competition concept and ultimately trivialize its importance and meaning. In his article he compared the competitions with the burlesque with low subject content and lacking any deeper significance. As a suggestion of how to solve this problem, Mogensen proposed a thorough reform of the rules, praxis and moral content (Mogensen

1. "Man kan [...] fråga sig, om den praxis, som tillämpas vid tävlingars anordnande och bedömande, över huvud taget ger möjlighet till ett sakligt bedömande av de olika förslagen. Jag tvekar ej att besvara frågan med ett nej! Detta avser ingalunda att vara något angrepp mot prisnämnderna, vilkas goda vilja måste anses höjd över varje tvivel. Det är istället det slentrianmässiga system, som under årens lopp småningom utbildats, som är felaktigt och som måste reformeras, om ej *i bästa fall* hela arkitekttävlinginstitutionen skall antaga karaktären av folklustspel utan djupare innebörd" (Mogensen 1929, 69).

1929, 69). The situation however, had evolved over a period of time and it would take some years before the architects' community could look back at any satisfactory development. As late as 1933, during an ongoing revision of the competition regulations from 1916, the competitions were still thought of as being defective. Gunnar Sundbärg, Mogensen's fellow student from the Royal Technical College fuelled the debate. He compared the Swedish regulations with the regulations of some other European countries and especially the German ones:

Without any real exaggeration the conditions in Sweden can be regarded as completely chaotic. The Swedish Architects' Association have of course some old "regulations for architectural competitions", but have not stipulated any kind of reservations with regard to its standpoint in cases when these regulations are not respected, and must thereby accept they are only respected to the degree that those directly involved decide. A comparison with other countries is even more disheartening for us. The undersigned considers himself qualified to ascertain that the existing system we have is among the worst in existence (Sundbärg 1933, 23).

Sundbärg was distressed by the results, which showed a disheartening picture of the Swedish competitions. The Swedish regulations were lacking in many respects, such as an obligatory respect for the rules, influence regarding the jury's constitution, a specific body responsible for the compliance of the rules and implementing the competitions, the possibility of excluding relatives and the staff of the jury members, guaranteeing the competitors' anonymity etc. Nor were there any possibilities of preventing the organisers or competitors, through unawareness or other causes, from ignoring the regulations, he continued. Sundbärg's criticism was not only directed towards the organisers, but also pointed at the architects. By comparing the Swedish regulations with those of Germany, France, Switzerland, Norway and Denmark, Sundbärg reinforced the seriousness and legitimized his demand for reform (Sundbärg 1933, 23).

Moreover, another colleague of Mogensen and Sundbärg, Gunnar Hoving, identified when characterising the jury for the competitions of the Concert Hall in Gothenburg in 1931, an important undermining factor of the competition institution: "[...] a jury that in no way whatsoever is respected by the currently active generation of architects and where the mutual tension between jury members can in no way can be said to

promote good collaboration."² Homogeneity and consensus were lacking in the above-mentioned competition and harmed the trust for the jury in which the respected architects Carl Bergsten and Sigfrid Ericson took part. From Hoving's perspective both of them had vested interests in Götaplatsen, the building site for the new concert hall, since they had designed two neighbouring buildings of the competition object. A situation of this kind with jury members being accused of having self-interests in the competition because of their experience, knowledge and opinions about the competition area, had previously not caused any serious offence. The partiality of the jury members could, in Hoving's opinion, be detrimental for the result. The assessment would not be unbiased and therefore not reliable (Hoving 1931, 2). Apart from the logic of impartiality, objectivity and trust, the article also throws light on a generation gap between Hoving and his fellows born around 1900, and the generation of Bergsten and Ericson, born in the 1870s-80s, and that dominated the juries at that time. The younger generation sympathised with the idea of architecture founded on rational grounds and depicted themselves in this context as reformers and radicals in contrast to the nostalgic and subjective older generation.

Mogensen's, Sundbärg's and Hoving's articles and a number of similar ones inform us that in the years around 1930 there was widespread opposition to how the competitions were conducted and most of all how the competition entries were assessed. When combined they portray a competition institution in decay, and this constitutes a strong narrative in the competition discourse at the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s. The theme of decay is contrasted against the picture of the young and radical architects eager to reform rules, praxis and morale.

CRISIS AND CONFLICTS

The competitions not only seem to articulate opposition among generations and between radical and traditional positions - disagreements that were evident during the 1920s and 1930s. The criticism also exposes, on the one hand, a conflict of interest between organiser and architects, which is revealed by the architects' claims for independency from the client. On the other, that the competition instrument itself was an object for negotiation. This negotiation touched upon the competition as a utilitarian and economic instrument or as an agency for higher goals such as architecture itself, the competition spirit

2. "[...] En prisnämnd som inte i något som helst avseende har den nu livskraftiga arkitektgenerationens förtroende och där den inbördes spänningen ledamöter emellan absolut inte kan anses befordra ett gott samarbete" (Hoving 1931, 2).

and/or the public welfare. The negotiation became manifest in the compliance with or the resistance to rules and praxis and is thus possible to analyse and interpret. Accordingly, competitions occurred where their significance was diluted due to shortcomings with regard to rules and praxis, as Mogensen's comparison with the burlesque indicates, as well as other competitions being correctly executed from the architects' point of view. The latter ones were ascribed greater importance. The architectural competition had since the turn of the century been increasingly arranged under well-organized conditions, its forms had been codified through rules and institutionalised due to the management of the Swedish architectural community and a praxis had been established. Not least, several buildings resulting from competitions in the first two decades of the century were already ascribed as *époque-making*. Mogensen consequently defined the competition as an institution as well as a system and anchored it as a method, historically and institutionally.

In keeping with Mogensen, my point of departure is the competition as a system. According to the Swedish National Encyclopaedia, a system can be defined as: a totality composed by parts in certain relations to each other, which follows certain principles and is regularly used for attaining certain results.³ According to Rasmus Wærn, the Swedish competition system was brought into "lasting balance" during the 1910s.⁴ The very many critical remarks and the narrative of decay, however, indicate that already by the end of the 1920-ies the competition system had become unbalanced. Thus, at the same time as the competitions resulted in prominent buildings, the method or the system was criticised for its arbitrariness. It is possible to conclude that the younger generation regarded the state of the competition system as being in crisis, had detected flaws in the system and regarded the competitions as not fulfilling their ultimate ends in a correct manner.

PURPOSE, METHOD AND THEORY

There are two purposes of this article. Firstly, what kind of system are we dealing with and why was it of such concern for the architects? After all, in spite of relative unemployment among architects, the number of commissions and appointments increased with the advent of the welfare society and from the organisers' perspective the competition was a relatively economic and effective opportunity to get many alternative projects to choose from. Secondly, where did the system go wrong, how could the flaws be rectified, the crises forestalled and the competition reformed?

3. Nationalencyklopedins dictionary: entries system and method.
4. "bestående balans" (Wærn 1996, 67).

To answer these questions, in light of the situation outlined above, I should like to analyse the system of the 1920s, its instances and logic. How was the system constituted? What agents and mechanisms made possible, supported and forwarded the system? And, what principles ruled its dynamics? The present text makes a summary of my coming PhD dissertation on the conceptions of the Swedish architectural competition and the competition as an enactment in 1925-1950.⁵

This analysis is solely based on texts and as my point of departure I take articles from the architects' journal *Byggmästaren* and documentation from the Swedish architectural associations, such as minutes from meetings archived at the Riksarkivet (The National Archives). I attach great importance to the competition debate and the negotiations of the architectural association in formulating new and nationally anchored regulations during the late 1920s and early 1930s. One for my research significant, but overlooked perspective in Swedish architectural history writing, consists of a sociological and anthropological view on the profession and especially on the competition system. This research horizon, mainly the theories and concepts of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, contributes with viewpoints that elucidate the structure and logic of the competition system. I use the concepts of *field*, *capital* and *strategy*, which Bourdieu developed in *La Distinction. Critique sociale du jugement* of 1979 and *Les règles de l'art* from 1992, for understanding the competition system as the sum of the effects of instances and mechanisms rather than consisting of individuals, institutions and artefacts. The competition system is to be understood in relational terms in accordance with the field theory of Bourdieu. The competition practice, the competition system and the field of architecture are interrelated and the system is not a passive one, but one that influences the field of architecture and the competition practice as much as it is influenced by the field and the competitions carried out.

In addition to Bourdieu's theories, the cultural historian Johan Hiuzinga's and the anthropologist Clifford Geertz' analyses of the game and the "deep play" in *Homo Ludens* of 1949 respectively *The Interpretation of Culture*, published in 1973, indicate aspects of the competition practice that give it a more profound meaning than has been previously acknowledged. The competition practice is hereby given a multidimensional significance, including primary and secondary functions and values. In accordance with the philosophy of language, as formulated by John Langshaw Austin in *How to*

5. *Arkitekttävlingen som föreställning. Iscensättning, manifestation och distinktion i svenska arkitekttävlingar 1925-1950*. The disputation is planned to spring 2010.

Do Things with Words from 1962, I also regard the competition documents and statements as “performative” speech acts and reliant upon the competition system. One key component or mechanism in the system consists of the speech acts of the jury’s decision and formal report.

SELECTION AND DIFFERENTIATION

“The architectural competition is a way of finding the optimum combination of form, function and economy and at the same time *select* the best architect”, the Swedish Association of Architects today writes and continues: “the competition is a way of *selecting* concept and design and/or the architect that proves having the best idea or the most feasible approach to the project in question”.⁶ The Swedish Association of Architects hereby focuses on the competition from the organiser’s point of view, the possibility of using the competition in selecting one project out of many that responds to the problem as formulated in the programme. The italics above are mine and are intended to emphasise the key words “select” and “selecting” as well as the opportunity to exclusively pick one (or more) of the preferred draft(s). This can be regarded as the competition’s primary function historically. Also Mogensen in his disapproving article of 1929 called attention to this selection opportunity: “The competition can be looked upon [...] as an instrument of the organiser, as to gain fine ideas and the opportunity to sift among the best to his own advantage”.⁷

The selection presupposes a multitude of competition entries among which a winner will be identified and selected. During the jury’s assessment, the jury members consider the advantages and disadvantages of each draft. The jury evaluates the project not only in relation to the demands of the programme but also in relation to their own respective competence and experiences of different assessment criteria. A differentiation takes place between the projects in how they live up to spoken and unspoken requirements. This differentiation takes place on the basis of discernable distinctive features that are associated with the concept of the draft along with technical, material, social, economic and aesthetic values. Furthermore, the projects are evaluated as to what extent they are innovate and feasible, in addition the author’s manner and the execution of plans and drawings.

6. ”Arkitekttävlingen är ett sätt att finna den optimala föreningen av form, funktion och ekonomi och samtidigt *välja* den bästa arkitekten” respectively “[t]ävlingens formen är ett sätt att *välja* koncept och utformning och/eller den arkitekt som visar sig ha den bästa idén eller det mest framkomliga förhållningssättet för just det aktuella projektet” (Sveriges Arkitekter 2008, 5).

7. ”Tävlingsförfarandet kan betraktas [...] som ett medel för utlysaren av tävlingen att erhålla goda uppslag och möjlighet att *sovra* ut det bästa till sin egen fördel” (Mogensen 1929, 69).

The opportunity of and the need for selection, point towards the historical context of the competition practice, its link to and origin in a liberal mass society during which the service of the architect reminded of a market commodity intended for retail. Both Wærn and Anna Östnäs present the function of the competition in their respective dissertations as an interface of new and unbiased business relations in the late 19th century bourgeois society.⁸ This point of view does not however sufficiently explain the significance of the competition from the architects’ perspective and moreover, does not include the function of the competition in relation to the architects’ potential position in the welfare society that was underway in the 1920s and 1930s, a society in which the professional role of the architect, his tasks and responsibilities were changing. The architects aimed in rivalry with other professions, mainly the engineers, at a key role as the trustee of the client.

DISTINCTION

The primary function of the competition is thus its ability to differentiate, to distinguish between the proposals and thereby between competitors. Or, with Bourdieuan terminology, the competition constitutes an opportunity of *distinction*. By differentiating and in the end nominating a winner also follows that one particular draft is distinguished from the mass, like the young inexperienced architect winning his first 1st prize has his break through. The distinguished draft is placed first in the assessment. Here, distinction refers not only to differentiation in objective terms but also to honour in normative terms. In the following text, I use the concept of distinction in its second sense to discriminate between the different mechanisms of the competition system. Distinction in architectural competitions also implies reputation, status, honour and prestige. This honour, according to Bourdieu, constitutes a most desirable symbolic capital in an autonomous cultural field of production. In this present analysis a field of architecture is taken for granted despite architecture’s dependency on power and economics, and is used as a point of departure. This stand is supported by the character of the competition as a relatively independent practice in relation to the client. It is the authority to define the foundations of this symbolic capital that the struggle of the field is all about. The authority is in the possession of the instances of the field. The competition jury can be regarded as one and it is as an instance that the jury possesses the option to bestow symbolic capital on the winning competitor. The project that is selected and highlighted is officially recognized and prestige is assigned to the author of the draft. The report

8. Wærn 1996, 96; Östnäs 1984, 150-151.

and decision of the jury is hereby regarded rather as a “performative” speech act with the intention of transforming the status of the field of architecture, than a “constative” or confirmation of the results. It is the distinction in this sense that Hans Åkerlind refers to in his résumé of his time as architect in Stockholm of the 1950s:

The architectural competition was to the architect most of all labour, for the most part hard labour. And one that was offered free in the hope of, winning a prize and thereby fame, the size of the prize was irrelevant [...]. The important thing was the fame, the reputation in the eyes of ones colleagues.⁹

Åkerlind does not make mention of the prize money or the commission, but the esteem, the fame that followed winning a competition. He thus illuminates a phenomenon that follows the logic of an autonomous field of cultural production, the overturned economy and the world upside down. The time-consuming and costly work that the architects participating in competitions put into their proposals corresponds neither to the prize money, the limited winning options nor the eventual commission. Still today, this trope is repeated in legitimizing the competition and its regulations (Sveriges Arkitekter 2008, 9). The quotation demonstrates how winning and prestige constitute important symbolic capital amongst architects, being regarded at least as much as worldly profits, such as prize money or commissions. Åkerlind’s testimony also informs us about the prestige aspect, which was mainly operative in relation to architect colleagues. Repeated prize awards can be seen as accumulating symbolic capital, that is, esteem is renewed and enhanced. The competition system can thus from my perspective be compared to a strategy of attaining recognition and prestige. This strategy can be regarded as a secondary function of the competition practice. In compliance with the world turned upside down and a symbolic hierarchy of values operating in the competition system, certain competition objects were perceived as being more interesting and challenging than others. Åkerlind again, contributes with an illuminating declaration:

Churches were [...] objects where other aspects were considered more important than mere function and economy. It was the only commis-

9. ”Arkitektävlandet var för arkitekten i allt väsentligt ett arbete, ett mestadels enormt arbete. Och det bjöd man på gratis i förhoppningen att på detta sätt vinna pris och därmed berömmelse, prisets storlek var ovidkommande [...], det var berömmelsen, aktningen i kollegors ögon som var det viktiga” (Åkerlind 2006, 53).

sion under which Architecture with a capital A came into its proper right. Not as most other competitions where economics in our eyes were allowed to dominate at the expense of other, non-measurable values.¹⁰

Åkerlind writes in terms of ‘us’. This implies that the concept of the church as Architecture with a capital A was relatively widespread a phenomenon. Also, by referring to “other, non-measurable values” in relation to the church as an architect’s brief, Åkerlind implies the symbolic significance associated with sacral and artistic qualities. The quotation reports of an order of rank applicable to the different building briefs, possibly analogous to the holdings of symbolic capital. Tasks associated with artistic qualities and symbolic values were given higher regard than tasks of more pragmatic character. In this respect, it is significant that certain objects, such as factories are absent from the competitions, while others repeatedly became competitions, like city halls, churches, museums and other public buildings. During the 1920s and 1930s housing estates, associated with the planned and awaited welfare society, were included among the competition objects and underwent a change in the order of rank. The denial of worldly success, the appraisal of esteem and prestige and the hierarchy of building objects, contributed to the competition spirit as well as the logic of the competition system. And like the logic of the “deep play” explained and analysed by Geertz, the importance of the competition becomes greater through interesting competition programmes, such as churches and museums, as well as by the correct management of the competitions. As a result the competition spirit was strengthened.

MANIFESTATION

It was not just any esteem that followed the distinction in competitions, but a symbolic capital directly associated with what had been made clear in the competition drafts and manifested in the plans, elevations and perspectives of the proposals. It was the architect’s expertise and competence that was at play, the ability to conceptualise, elaborate and design a solution of the problem as presented in the programme. This ability was mainly practised with pen in hand, by sketching and step by step elaborating the concept which subsequently took shape in the final drawings (Lundequist 1990, 157-159).

10. ”Kyrkor var [...] objekt där även annat än enbart funktion och ekonomi var betydelsefullt. Det var det enda område där Arkitektur med stort A fick komma till sin fulla rätt tyckte vi. Inte som i de flesta andra tävlingar där ekonomin ofta i våra ögon fick dominera i alltför hög grad på bekostnad av andra, icke mätbara värden” (Åkerlind 2006, 53).

Nils Sterner conveys the process in-part in his essay *En dag som arkitekt* (*One day as an architect*) published in 1944. He relates his and his colleague Yngve Ahlbohm's work with their proposal for the competition of a combined city hall, city hotel and public baths in Halmstad in 1935:

A competition period is a period of hope and disappointment. Before you get the hold of and master the brief, the work is tardy. You don't get the hang of anything. In one day you think you found an overall idea. The day after, you dismiss it. You start all over again, keep some aspects, supplement and rework. The time haunts you. You sleep badly at nights. The brain is working. You are lying awake and think, find new solutions that the following day turn out to be useless. The sketches pile up.¹¹

Sterner describes the developing of a concept as a gradual process under which ideas are drawn up, cultivated, dismissed or saved. The "sketches pile up" in the quotation also informs us that the development of a concept comes about by the successive testing of different ideas. The text clarifies that the most fundamental aspect of the competition is the working out of the proposal, the conceptualisation and the development of the draft rather than the final execution of the drawings. This is illuminated by Sterner who calls in assistants for carrying out the last drawings, doing the perspectives and making a model out of his and Ahlbom's sketches.

The sociologist Niels Albertsen has in using the theories of Bourdieu defined this ability to conceptualise as the *habitus* of the architect, that is an embodied capital, a way of thinking, being and acting, a role that is acculturated during the architect student's work in the design studio (Albertsen 1998, 387). In the competition review the architect's ability is scrutinised, a 1st prize proves his capacity and acknowledges the architect as an Architect. The situation reminds one of the tutor's review of the student's work in the design studio, which has been interpreted as an important symbolic ritual in which the students present and acculturate the *habitus* of an architect (Webster 2005, 26). Thus, considerable and critical values are at stake in an architectural competition, apart from prestige and the commission. The contribution to the production of the *habitus* of the architect can be interpreted as a further function of the competition.

11. "En tävlingstid är en tid av hopp och besvikelse. Innan man trängt in i uppgiften och behärskar den går det trögt. Man får inte grepp om någonting. Man tror sig ena dagen ha funnit en lösning. Dagen därpå förkastar man den. Man börjar om på nytt, bibehåller något av de första idéer, kompletterar och arbetar om. Tiden jagar en. Man sover dåligt på nätterna. Vaknar mitt i natten. Hjärnan arbetar. Man blir liggande vaken och tänker, finner nya lösningar, som följande dag blott visar sig värdelösa. Skisserna hopar sig" (Sterner 1944, 11).

DISTRIBUTION

Ragnar Uppman's description of the distinction as a mechanism emphasizes the active "performative" element in and the effect of the decision and report of the jury: "In every competition, prestige is distributed upwards and downwards".¹² The verb "distribute" indicates that the prestige was spread in wider circles. Despite the passive voice an agent is to be found, the jury, which ascribes and distributes the prestige. Nevertheless, the competition results were intended for other groups. Through public exhibitions and publications in the daily press, clients and the public were notified of the jury report and prizewinners. Their interest and involvement in the competition make them agents of the system.

Ever since the first competition regulations were established in 1877, the making public of the results has been dictated. This has been explained in pedagogic and democratic terms. The publication and distribution of the results became more and more important during the first half of the 20th century and in 1956 the Association of Swedish Architects initiated a competition leaflet with results and winning projects. Not solely pedagogic and democratic reasons, for which the leaflet was motivated, however, underlie its objectives. Deeper functions are to be found. The distribution constitutes an indispensable mechanism to forward the competition system and its operations, since the architect like the artist is not in the position to acknowledge himself but is dependent upon others to recognize him and his capabilities. Without an audience, neither recognition nor prestige. The relation between prestige as symbolic capital, the competition system and the audience of the competition is reciprocal. The mechanism of distribution deepens the significance the architects have ascribed to exhibiting and publishing the results. Through the distribution, prestige is produced and consumed. Through the architects' control of the distribution, a chance to sanction a competition or not, was introduced.

DELINEATION

I would like to describe, one additional strategy of the architectural competition, the one of delineation. By this I interpret as the architects' community claiming control of the competition practice, to specify the architect's relationship to society and not the least to define the architect's identity and professional role. This strategy is exposed by the architects' demand for majority in the jury and the priority of interpretation. Mogensen writes in the above-mentioned article of 1929:

12. "I varje tävling fördelas prestige uppåt och nedåt" (Uppman 2006, 171).

A tendency so clear that it is no longer possible to ignore it has increased lately. I refer to the growing numbers of laymen in the juries. [...] As far as professionals and specialists within the confines of the competition are concerned, nothing else but good is to be said, but when these laymen – often politicians without any professional experience – with illusory knowledge, have opinions about aesthetic and architectural matters you have to react. It would not be a day too soon that the public at large was brought to the insight that the architect is and must be regarded as an expert within his area of interest.¹³

The statement reveals an aspect of the identity and self-image of the architect – the architect “is” an expert and seeks to position himself as such in contrast to the public and the organisers who were regarded as amateurs. Rhetorically the architects here represented by Mogensen, point out their superiority in building and planning matters, which disassociates them from the clients, professional politicians and civil servants. With a derogatory attitude, implied by the terms “these laymen” and “illusory knowledge”, the architects try to distance and characterize themselves as professionals in contrast to the politicians. At the same time, the “must be regarded” makes clear that the architects did not always interpret that they were regarded as experts by the public. There is thus a discrepancy between the architects’ self-image and the role that they pictured the client, public and society ascribed to them. This discrepancy needed to be corrected. Above all, the experience and knowledge of the politicians and civil servants were not thought of as valid in comparison with that of the competence of the architects. The definition of politicians as laymen with one from architects differing status, can be illuminated by the profession’s historic connection to the guild of master masons. The concept is even important in this context given its original content denoting someone not initiated. The architects’ community from this point of view can be interpreted as a kind of priesthood or guild that seeks to maintain a certain mystique around their practice by keeping its professional skills hidden. Hereby, the architects made possible preserving their autonomy and mo-

13. ”En tendens så tydlig att den ej längre kan bortförklaras har på senare tid framträtt. Jag syftar på det alltmera tilltagande lekmannainslaget i prisnämnderna. [...] Så länge det rör sig om fackmän och specialister inom av tävlingen berörda branscher är naturligtvis härom ej annat än gott att säga, men då det hela tenderar däråt att dessa lekmän – oftast yrkespolitiker helt utan fackligt vetande – med trodd sakkunskap vilka yttra sig i estetiska och arkitektoniska frågor måste man reagera. Det vore verkligen ej en dag för tidigt, att den stora allmänheten bringades till insikt om att arkitekten är och *måste* betraktas som en expert inom sitt fack” (Mogensen 1929, 69-70).

nopoly in defining, interpreting and recognising what the symbolic capital was comprised of. To win a competition from this point of view is to be initiated into the profession.

The means to define the architect’s identity and professional role in relation to other professional groups is to specify the unique knowledge and skills of the architect. This distinctive competence could also be used as a forcible means by making it exclusive and inaccessible. Mogensen was outspoken in what the architect’s competence and expertise was comprised of: “aesthetic and architectural matters”. The knowledge and skills of the architect were put into operation both in executing proposals and in assessing the competition entries and moreover were manifested in the drawings and the written motivation. The jury constituted the battle zone in which the negotiations and definition of the knowledge and skills took place and in which the battle over the authority to define crucial matters for the architects came into being, as well as what entry that best fulfilled the competition programme. Hence the great emphasis the architects put into governing the jury.

The balance that Wærn referred to above can rather be thought of as a strategic acceptance of the clients’ hegemonic position and the architects subordinating to the patrons’ economic power. In the context of the competition, the subordination is revealed in the architects’ limited influence over the programme’s content, the constitution of the jury and over the assessment of the entries, as well as the absence of means to avert the organisers of and the participants in competitions who neither obeyed the regulations nor followed the praxis. In the professional role that the architects ascribed themselves – a key role in the planning and the building up of the welfare society, there was no room for this subordination. Instead the architects strived for equality with the clients, which the expert role facilitated. During the 1920s the “aesthetic and architectural matters” that Mogensen referred to, increasingly adopted abstract and seemingly objective and impersonal forms as a consequence of functionalism’s theoretical approach to building orientation, light and air, functionality and standardisation - knowledge independent of personal fancies, and claiming generality and formality. The scientific approach became an important strategy in the struggle for autonomy and supremacy.

ENACTMENT

On the one hand, the scientific aspect of the architects’ skills and knowledge was exploited for defining and delineating the architectural community’s counter to clients and the public, a strategy that was manifested publicly in both the daily and the professional press.

On the other hand, Mogensen argued for the architect's aesthetic aptitude. Owing to the architectural competition as an enactment of a time-space in which the architect governed, another strategy of delineation is clarified: one that articulates the logic of the competition system and the logic of an autonomous field of cultural production.

Lennart Holm makes clear in the article, "Varför tävlar arkitekterna?" ("Why do the architects compete?") from 1957, the enactment as a mechanism in the competition system. He articulates the competition as an opportunity for the architect to test and develop his creative ability:

But the [young architects] apparently have also the inclination, independent of the chance of winning, to test their creative ability on tasks outside the daily slave labour in the architect's office. The architecture is, despite the increasing influence of the trade union, still driven by individual creative ambitions.¹⁴

The chance of winning is depreciated, and to Holm this does not make up the driving force behind architects competing. Instead, it was the opportunity for artistic creation that was the decisive fact. "Creative ability" and "individual, creative ambitions" indicate that the lure of the architectural competition in part was due to the likelihood of taking care of one's own artistic faculty and creativity without considering the office manager, client, economy or bureaucracy. In contrast to the positively charged concepts of creation and creativity, Holm posed "slave labour", understood in the negative terms of forced labour, restrictions, control, monotony and uneasiness. The inclination that Holm refers to with its positive synonyms such as want, desire and satisfaction, and which he associates with creation and artistry, supplies the competition spirit with a deep human explanation.

The concept of freedom appears as a core of the ideal professional role that is crystallized, as the antithesis of the forced labourer and the "drawing slave" and by the criticism of a number of competition programmes around 1930. Several programmes were thought of as restricting the competitors from developing their entries freely and unprejudiced. The ideal role that was associated with the profession and that especially Hakon Ahlberg articulated was the free practitioner, by which he meant the consulting architect. In the article "Arkitekt – Yrkesman eller ämbetsman?" ("Architect – Prac-

14. "Men de [unga arkitekterna] har uppenbarligen också lusten att, ganska oberoende av vinstchanserna, pröva sin skaparförmåga på uppgifter utanför det dagliga slavgöret på ritkontoren. Arkitekturen drivs, trots tilltagande fackföreningstänkande, dock ännu framåt av individuella, konstnärliga ambitioner" (Holm 1957).

itioner or civil servant?") of 1944 he poses the architect employed in the public sector against the consulting architect:

[...] Because it is not merely of technical and economic, but also of artistic concern, because the progress of architecture demands hard training in different areas before of the architect can turn into a specialist, because only as a free practitioner the architect freely competes with his professional brothers and the freedom of the competition may be the principal force of the architectural progress.¹⁵

The citation is interesting from several points of view. Firstly, the variants of "free", "freely" and "freedom" intensify the significance of freedom in competition and for the professional role of the architect. Ahlberg associated the creative work with freedom that, with its historical, social and political connotations, had immense positive subtexts. Secondly, Ahlberg refers to the informal competition and competition spirit. It is not the organised formal competition he had in mind but the relationship between free practitioners, which was characterized by informal competition. Not only progress in architecture is dependent upon this informal competition, but all progress, according to Ahlberg.

By addressing aesthetic knowledge as Mogensen, creation like Holm and freedom as Ahlberg, a professional identity is defined in relation to the engineers, builders and contractors. An identity that is dependent upon the creative aspects of the architects' work, one that is given a greater vent in the competition situation than in the daily practice as a "drawing slave". The architecture competition, by which I mean the open competition, from this point of view constitutes an enacted ideal time-space in which principles and logic correspond to values different from ordinary project development. This ideal time-space is secured by the competition rules but what is evident from the crises and conflicts around 1930, constitutes an object of negotiation. It is disengaged from structural limitations such as economy and legislation, independent of client, patron and competition organiser. In the ideal time-space the architect is set *free of* limitation (except from that of the programme) and is *free to* conceptualize and design the task, develop his architectural abilities and manifest his architectural competence. The open competition can

15. "[...] Därför att det icke blott är av teknisk och ekonomisk utan även av konstnärlig art, därför att en utveckling av arkitekturen kräver en hård träning av arkitekten på skilda områden, innan specialiseringen sätter in, därför att endast som fri yrkesman tävlar arkitekten fritt med sina yrkesbröder, och endast denna fria tävlan är kanske den främsta pådrivande kraften för arkitekturens utveckling" (Ahlberg 1944, 473-474).

hereby be interpreted as an enactment of an artistic position in the field of architecture, a position that articulates freedom, creation, artistry and not least desire. The competition can be regarded as an ideal time-space in which the architect may be Architect, have an opportunity to become recognized as such and a time-space in which architecture may be at its most autonomous. Or, as the Swedish Association of Architects today write: “The competition makes maximum space to the creative process [...]”.¹⁶

To a large extent the architectural competition reminds one of what Huizinga in *Homo Ludens* defines as a game or a play. As the game, the competition is separated in time and space from ordinary practice, it is voluntary, done in free time, enjoyable and desirable, has its own rules and creates its own logic. Excitement, as is insecurity, is always at hand. Taking part is always in earnest and about serious and crucial matters as the identity and *habitus* of the architect. All participants are aware of the otherness of the competition, play or game. The worry of Mogensen that the competition was to be hollowed out and turned into the burlesque is motivated and founded in the logic of the game. As the game can lose in significance and symbolic value the competition can be undermined, wasted and lose its deeper functions and values. If the competition practise is being abused, the operations of the competition system are destabilized. This was the case in the late 1920s and early 1930s. And conversely, if the competitions were well conducted and principally sustained the deeper their significance. As Huizinga writes: “All play means something” (Huizinga 1949, 1). What was then demanded of the competition practice and what conveyed the competition system and deepened its significance?

LEGITIMACY

The architects’ distrust did not only undermine the system, its operations and significance but also the legitimacy of the competition in relation to the community/society. One urgent measure of the architects’ community was to ward off the current crises, re-create the trust in and the legitimacy of the competition as a complementary practice to normal procurement and project development. This legitimacy was reclaimed partly by invoking the competition as an instrument of progress, partly by modernising the competition by a thorough inspection and revision of the competition regulations.

In spite of the remarks Mogensen, Sundbärg and Ahlberg among others, had against the conduct of the competitions, they never questioned the concept or idea of the competition as such. In his article, “Allmän tävlan”

16. ”Tävlingen ger maximalt utrymme för en kreativ process” (Sveriges Arkitekter 2008, 5).

(“Open competition”) of 1928, Ahlberg refers to the successful pioneering competitions, fresh enough in memory from his point of view to legitimize competitions: the guildhall-competition 1903-06, which resulted in the Stockholm City Hall, inaugurated in 1923, and the competition for the Woodland Cemetery in 1914. Ahlberg also pointed out the many school competitions of the time as being important. In his article he propagates for the open competition:

Do we believe that architectural competitions will not be proper in these areas? Are the tasks too complicated? No, because the tasks that in a blissful way were solved by competitions have often been far more complex? Are the tasks too trivial? No, certainly not. Because right at these buildings, whose practical function is clear and noticeable, there also is the greatest opportunity to create a sound, new living form without any artificiality. And is it not those tasks that the architects of today are yearning for.¹⁷

As is apparent from the text, Ahlberg intends to apply the competition instrument on buildings types that up to then were not thought of as prestigious or ascribed any great status. This is in contrast to civic buildings or buildings like Åkerlind describes as Architecture with capital A, which historically had been the subject of architectural competitions. In the article, Ahlberg refers to building types such as hospitals and schools, buildings that played an important function in the construction of the democratic welfare society with care and education for all citizens. In the late 1920s these tasks were appraised at the same time as the first competitions for housing estates were introduced in Sweden: the competition for Fredhäll and Kristineberg 1927 and the competition for Ladugårdsgårde 1929, both in Stockholm.

The concept of the competition as an instrument for progress is a strong and fundamental belief within the architectural community, comparable with the Bourdieuan concept of *doxa*. That is to say a concept not possible to question, since it constitutes a matter of course beyond dispute. The concept has an extraordinary power of impact, a strong continuity and is as old as the architectural competition itself. Héléne Lipstad derives it to Giorgio Vasaris’

17. ”Tror man, att arkitektävlingar icke passa på dessa områden? Äro uppgifterna för svåra? Nej, ty de uppgifter, som på ett lyckligt sätt lösts genom tävlingar, ha ofta varit långt mera komplicerade. Äro de för triviala? Nej, sannerligen icke. Ty just hos dessa byggnader, vars praktiska ändamål är påtagligt och klart, där finns också den största möjligheten att skapa sund, levande, ny form utan förkonstling. Och är det icke sådana uppgifter arkitekterna idag längta efter” (Ahlberg 1928, 17).

account in *Le Vite* from 1550 of the competition for the bronze doors of the Baptistery of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence 150 years earlier. The competition was thought of as the “break through” for both the Renaissance and the young architects and sculptors Lorenzo Ghiberti and Filippo Brunelleschi (Lipstadt 2003, 404). This theme can be followed in a Swedish context. In 1909 Otar Hökerberg writes in *Tidskrift för Arkitektur och Dekorativ Konst (Newsletter for Architecture and Decorative Arts)*: “[...] in the [competition] an opportunity is given to vent ideas and inspiration that we ordinarily do not have use for. Interest in competitions is a safe guarantee for a progressive architecture”.¹⁸ In 1955, when Erik Thealus raised the matter, a retrospective viewpoint is evident in contrast to Hökerberg’s statement: “[...] it can be said that a thorough investigation of the competition results of last decades would convincingly demonstrate the role the competitions played in the creation of the more important monuments of this period.”¹⁹

This concept is still operating. When the Swedish Association of Architect today points out the advantages of the architectural competition it quotes Bengt Lindroos who states “the competition is the seed potatoes of architecture”.²⁰ By using a citation of Lindroos, the Swedish Association of Architect legitimizes the competition twofold. Lindroos is one of the current Swedish icons in architecture, most renowned and with several well-known and appreciated building in his curriculum vitae, as well as numerous first prizes in competitions and commissions as a jury member. His words carry weight. When Hökerberg, Thealus and Lindroos refer to the successful history of the competitions, the competitions are made both necessary and legitimate. Creativity and being ground-breaking are given an intrinsic value within the field of architecture, a characteristic that it shares with the field of art and a standpoint that originates from the *doxa* of the field.

If the possibilities of the competition to promote architectural progress have been continuously used for legitimizing during the Twentieth Century, the reformation of the regulations between 1929 and 1934 constitutes a time specific effort. As early as 1921, the architects’ professional organisation of that time appointed a committee to revise the competition regulations. The initiative was induced by a discussion over the competition form for the Concert Hall in Stockholm between Ärland Noréen and Gunnar Asplund.

18. “[...] i dem [tävlingarna] gifves tillfälle att vädra de idéer och uppslag, som man vanligtvis ej så ofta har användning för. Tävlingsintresse är en säker garanti för en utvecklingskraftig byggnadskonst” (Hökerberg 1909, 60).
19. “[...] det kan sägas att en noggrann genomgång av de senaste decenniernas tävlingresultat övertygande skulle visa vilken roll arkitektävlingarna spelat för tillkomsten av de mer betydande byggnadsverken under denna tid” (Thealus 1955, 37).
20. “[a]rkitektävlingen är arkitekturens sätpotatis” (Sveriges Arkitekter 2008, 5).

The competition was organised as a combined competition with both invited architects and others. Noréen thought of this as being unfair, since the first group would have better chances to develop their concepts than the other competitors. Asplund, on the other hand, wished that the organisers would have invited more architects and primarily younger ones.²¹

Already there arises a matter of legitimisation, the equal conditions for all participants in a competition. The work of the committee did not result in anything and a new committee was appointed in 1929 by the Swedish Architects’ Association located in Stockholm. This time with new committee members: Asplund, Wolter Gahn, Sven Markelius and Eskil Sundahl, who all were affiliated with the functionalist avant-garde.²² Worth noticing is the absence of the older generation, which at the time dominated the juries. Everyone on the committee was born between 1885 and 1890 and made their debut around 1915. Asplund and Markelius had relatively extensive competition experience by 1929. Both of them had won several competitions. Nobody on the committee, however, had functioned as jury members. All of them though were closely connected to or part of the board of the Swedish Architects’ Association, which more or less automatically gave the revision of the regulations a certain degree of reliability.

The new regulations, launched in 1934, had considerably greater authority, credibility and impact than previous ones, because of the national support the regulations received and their concrete character. Each paragraph was studied separately and was complemented by detailed comments. The different regional architects’ associations in Scania and Gothenburg supported the regulations. They were given the opportunity to suggest alterations and the three associations discussed the regulations before coming to a mutual agreement at a joint annual meeting in Helsingborg in 1934.²³ Moreover, at this joint meeting a competition board with regional representatives was constituted, which replaced the older one of the Stockholm association. The board was made responsible for supervising the competition activities. It was supposed to inform organisers about regulations and praxis, give advice, help out with queries about jury members and rectify the conduct of

21. *RA. Svenska Teknologföreningens Arkiv (The National Archives. Archive of The Swedish Society of Engineers). Fackavdelningarnas protokoll (The Section’s protocols). Avdelningen för husbyggnadskonst. (The Builders’ Section) Protokoll 21/3 1921. § 3.*
22. *Svenska Teknologföreningens Handlingar 268. Meddelanden från Svenska Teknologföreningen. Förslag till Regler för svenska arkitektur- och stadsplanetävlingar jämte kommentarer därtill. (Proceedings of The Swedish Society of Engineers Nr. 268).*
23. *RA. Svenska Teknologföreningens Arkiv. Fackavdelningarnas protokoll. Avdelningen för husbyggnadskonst. Protokoll 28/5 1935. § 6. (The National Archives. Archive of The Swedish Society of Engineers. The Section’s protocols. The Swedish Architect’s Association. Protocol 28/5 1935. §6).*

organisers and competitors that did not live up to the praxis approved of by the architects' community. This was done by announcements in *Byggmästaren*. Hereby members could be advised against participating in competitions not approved of. This could work as a deterrent against illegitimate competitions and organisers who did not follow the regulations. During the discussions about the new regulations within the Swedish Architects' Association it was also proposed to exclude members who did not comply with the rules and praxis. Solidarity with the board and the Association was of great importance.²⁴

Principally the 1934-regulations did not differ from earlier rules, but through their level of detailing in the commentaries a clear praxis was specified intended to establish equal, fair and impartial working conditions between the competitors. The competitors' and the jury members' rights, obligations and responsibilities were clarified to avoid blatant disqualifications, strengthen the competitors' anonymity and bring about objective and trustworthy reviews and decisions.

The decisive factor was however not the regulations per se as Sundbärg asserted in 1933. He maintained that as long as no individual was prepared to do without personal winnings and follow the regulations, it was not possible to establish orderly competition conditions. Instead he pointed out the importance of the right individual at the right place. Primarily it was the jury members who were the weak link of the chain. Sundbärg noted:

[...] it is not enough to claim professional majority, it also requires some influence on the appointment of the jury members, and the notion of the specialist needs to be thoroughly defined. [...] And if we don't want professors in art history as specialists in a competition about traffic planning and slum clearance of a town, we need to properly clarify the notion of the specialist.²⁵

Most likely Sundbärg was referring to the competition about the planning of a city square and neighbourhood in the city of Lund the year before in

24. *RA.* Svenska Teknologföreningens Arkiv. Fackavdelningarnas protokoll. Avdelningen för husbyggnadskonst. Protokoll 22/11 1934. § 8. (*The National Archives*. Archive of The Swedish Society of Engineers. The Section's protocols. The Swedish Architect's Association. Protocol 22/11 1934. § 8).

25. "det räcker inte med att fordra fackmannamajoritet, det måste också fordras något inflytande på utseendet av fackmännen, och begreppet fackmän måste väl definieras. [...] Och om vi inte vill ha professorer i konsthistoria som fackmän i en tävling om trafikregleringar och saneringar i centrum av en stad, så måste vi ordentligt definiera begreppet fackman" (Sundbärg 1933, 26).

which a professor of art history, Ragnar Josephson, functioned as a jury member. Several competitions were thought of as compromised by traditional or subjective jury members or jury members without proper qualifications regarding the competition brief. This could result in conflicts among the jury members, which in turn affected the cooperation within the jury, as Hoving pointed out with reference to the above mentioned competition of the Concert Hall in Gothenburg in 1931.²⁶

THE ASSOCIATION OF SWEDISH ARCHITECTS

The 1934-regulations clarified the qualifications for the jury's specialists. Their competences were to correspond to the character of the competition. A degree of specialisation was necessary if a commission as a jury member was to be in question. Knowledge about the competition area or the problem presented did not necessarily mean that an architect was suitable for the task if we are to believe Hoving (Hoving 1931, 2). This could be a potential burden. Instead the members of the jury were to be equal before the assignment, unbiased and unprejudiced.

Moreover, and here a decisive characteristic of the jury member appears, the competitors ought to have confidence in the jury member who should "be possessed of the competitors' trust".²⁷ Thus the jury member ought to be relatively well-known and already acknowledged by the architects. It was not sufficient with a majority of any architects on the jury. The architectural community, represented by the Association of Swedish Architects (established in 1936), required that they should take part in the appointment of the jury and themselves recommend individual architects for the commission. It was to become the competition board to administer this duty and find and propose suitable representatives. By the "performative" act of proposing architects for the jury, through its competition board the Association of Swedish Architects declared and acknowledged which architects that were to be part of the jury. Functioning as a jury member constituted an honourable commission and resulted in an accumulation of symbolic capital. This appointment is, as is winning 1st prizes, a form of distinction that presupposes a communicated consensus about which architects were acknowledged and regarded as being qualified. It was a necessity that this recognition of both

26. Branzell, Gahn, William-Olsson et al. 1929, 160-165; Mogensen 1929, 69; Bergström 1930, 45-46; Hoving 1931, 2.

27. "äga förtroende hos de tävlande". Regler för Svenska Arkitektur- och Stadsplanetävlingar jämte kommentarer därtill. Svenska Teknologföreningens Handlingar. 1945. § 5. (Regulations of the Swedish Architecture and Town Planning Competitions besides commentaries. Proceedings of The Swedish Society of Engineers).

the architect jury member and the winner of the competition took place in public, for reason of transparency and due to the reciprocal character of the competition system. The fact that commissions as jury members and prize winning are important to architects, is illuminated by their presence in numerous lists of qualifications as in biographical and professional monographs. The latter are not seldom ended by lists of prize winning projects, jury commissions and other honourable commissions, posts and appointments and of course buildings erected.

The Swedish Architect's Association, and from 1936 the Association of Swedish Architects', involvement in individual competitions through the competition board and eventually the competition secretary, constituted a guarantee that the organiser complied with the regulations and praxis, that programmes, competition periods, prizes and so forth lived up to defined demands and maintained a certain quality. Consensus and unity within the architects' community are fundamental to the trust in both the competition board and the jury and needed if the mechanism of distinction is to function. When, in 1936, the Association of Swedish Architects was established, it contributed to the architects' continued confidence in the competitions. Later on there was to be found an unbroken chain of instances in the competition system. All instances were acknowledged and possessed the power to acknowledge: the Association of Swedish Architects as the crucial one, the competition board and a jury in part constituted by the architects recognised by the association. These contributed to the correct implementation of the competition regulations and praxis as well as the operation of the distinction mechanism within the competition system as long as the confidence in the Association of Swedish Architects was immaculate. And by controlling the distribution through the ownership of the professional organ *Byggmästaren* as well as the appointed editors, the architects were to a certain extent able to prevent abuse of the competition instrument. In 1950 the Association of Swedish Architects could with satisfaction look back at a successful period of competition activity:

The chief concentrated contribution as Swedish architects have made to promote the progress of architecture is without doubt the great efforts that are put into the competitions annually. SAR helps organising these and has during the past years contributed by giving the competitions substance.²⁸

28. "Den största koncentrerade insatsen, som den svenska arkitektkåren gjort för att främja byggnadskonstens utveckling, är utan tvekan det stora arbete, som årligen läggs ned på arkitekttävlingarna. SAR hjälper till med att organisera dessa och har under de senaste årens lopp bidragit att ge tävlingsformen stadga (*SAR Matrikel* 1950, 13)".

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RIKSARKIVET

Svenska Teknologföreningens arkiv.

Svenska Arkitektföreningen (A I:1) Protokoll

Svenska Teknologföreningens handlingar 268.

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arkitektur- och stadsplanetävlingar jämte kommentarer därtill*

Abstract

Discourses on architectural design competitions are about the form, expression, name and controversies about the results. I think it also important to discuss the epistemological meaning. In my opinion, architectural design competitions have a major role as systems for the development of architectural quality and for the improvement of professional design knowledge. In this paper, I will present a case study, where architects at the architect's office of Lahdelma & Mahlamäki produce proposals for a design competition. I will also give a short presentation of the competition system in Finland and the evaluation processes. My understanding is based on participant observation, combined with interviews with both the architects and with some of the jurors. I use the field theory of Pierre Bourdieu as a framework for my interpretations, but I would also like to stress the importance of the picture created by the empirical material from the process. Mature cultural fields constitute systems for taking positions and competition for success, and simultaneously, the leading agents are allowed to decide what good quality is and what it is not. One conclusion is that successful competitors are good at creating innovative solutions, within the framework that the sub-field provides. They know the future of the field – what counts as innovative, convincing and suitably provocative. The competition system in Finland is a robust system for the development of new architecture. The results of design competitions are controversial, but seem attractive to both old and young architects. One interesting aspect is that it is a system where very little of the qualities are defined by words. It is the drawings, the building and the selection of objects that indicate what is worth knowing – something architects study, visit and evaluate in their development of design knowledge. Obviously, this is a very different epistemological perspective, whilst also being a rather undemocratic one, but it seems important that we determine what design epistemology is about and articulate design knowledge from many different processes, concentrating particularly on perspectives that are important in our society.

Keywords

Architectural design competition, case study, field theory, design knowledge, design quality

Contact

The Winner Takes It All

Leif Östman

INTRODUCTION

Discourses on architectural design competitions are about the form, expression, name and controversies about the results. I think it also important to discuss the epistemological meaning. In my opinion, architectural design competitions have a major role as systems for the development of architectural quality and for the development of design knowledge.

In this paper, I will present a case study where the architects at the Finnish architects' office Lahdelma & Mahlamäki produce proposals for a design competition, a new library in Lohja. I will also give a short presentation of the evaluation process by the jury. My understanding is based on participant observation, combined with interviews with both the architects and with some of the jurors. I use the field theory of Pierre Bourdieu as a framework for my interpretations, but I would also like to stress the importance of the picture created by the empirical. Mature cultural fields constitute systems for taking positions and competition for success, according to Bourdieu, and simultaneously, the leading agents have the right to select new members (consecrate), the new elite of the field - to decide what is good quality and what is not (2000, 1998, 1984). I see this as an expression of design quality and of what counts as good knowledge among designers, in this case architects. My epistemic position is of course not purely positivistic, but I accept knowledge that it is socially determined and where its validity is limited to a certain local or temporal situation.

One conclusion is that successful competitors are good at creating innovative solutions, within the framework that a given sub-field provides. The competition system in Finland is a robust system for not only the development of new architecture, but also for new ways of thinking about architecture. One interesting aspect of this system is that it functions without spelling out the qualities in words. It is the selection as such, the pictures and the buildings, that explicate what is worth knowing – what other architects read about, visit and evaluate as part of their own professional development. According to Bourdieu's field theory, it is clear that there are competing visions in regards to what is worth knowing, but what we see in the competitions is what the artistic current avant-garde of the architectural field sees

as important (avant-garde is written here in the sense that Bourdieu sees it and is not to be confused with the general Anglo-American interpretation, denoting early Modernist architects). In my broad epistemic perspective, it is important to notice the difference between different forms of knowledge. I take it that socially constructed knowledge is important, but this doesn't mean that anything goes. Furthermore, I think that it is important that architectural research is capable of articulating expressions of knowledge in a systematic and consistent manner, allowing analysis and criticism. We need ways in not only making these expressions explicit, but also to try to make them understandable to the broader community of research. I think that it is necessary that the field develops its internal epistemic understanding, in order to be able to defend important issues in architectural competence.

COMPETITIONS

Architectural design competitions and their results are sometimes seen as controversial in Finland, but the system as such has long had a strong appeal on both young and old architects. Architectural design competitions in Finland constitute a well-established system, which are continuously discussed but based on rather long standing rules.

Among the participants, there are successful offices, professors, students and individual architects and offices. In a randomly chosen sample of three open competitions from 2007, the number of participants varied from 23 to 109.

According to Kazemian, Rönn och Svensson (2007, 37), a large number of the competition results in Finland are realised and constructed, which, of course, make them more attractive. Prize winning competition entries are also seen as a key aspect in the evaluation of candidates for positions as professors. Currently, approx. 80% of all professors in Finland are appointed on the basis of artistic merits (Vuosikirja-Årsbok 2008). I assume that professors not holding a PhD are appointed on artistic merits, and competition successes are generally seen as important artistic merits. Further, I also assume, based on the frequency of published competition success that about 50% of all professors continue to participate in design competitions. Many professors have a rather large architect's practice alongside their teaching tasks. One of my main agents in the case study, Raineri Mahlamäki, is currently the chairman of the Finnish Architects Association (SAFA) and has also been the chairman of the prestigious competition committee.

According to Albertsen, the competitions can be seen as something which Bourdieu calls "illusio", and they constitute an arena "for the celebration of architectural design" and "a shortcut to becoming famous". It is,

however, not only the architects that participate in this game, but also the clients (1998). Competition results are important in professional journals, but also in such media that is directed towards the broader public. Albertsen also notes that "the architects place a great emphasis on the relationship to painting and plastic art" (Ibid.).

The municipalities are often the organisers behind open competitions, whereas private companies tend to invite a limited number of offices to the competitions. The Finnish Architects Association has issued competition rules that are mandatory for the members of the association. They also blacklist competitions that they don't accept, i.e. the organisers won't get any submissions.

THE CASE STUDY

In this case, it is Lohja, a small rural town, which initiates a design competition for a new library on a central but problematic site. Prior to the start of the competition, there are some internal political discussions on alternative sites. Lohja also has some conflicting ideas about jurors in the communication with the SAFA, but these conflicts can be settled. The main problem is that the requirements for professional jurors don't allow all of the members proposed by Lohja to count as professional jurors and the necessary majority of professional jurors is not initially reached (architects and the head of the library count, but not the head of the town planning office, an engineer who has a long record in town planning). The Architects Association selects two jurors, one senior, Erkki Partanen, and one junior architect, Markku Kivistö. The latter is young but also has several merits from design competitions. He has participated in many competitions and expresses a great deal of interest in competitions in the following interview.

This is a rich case study, based on participant observation, interviews with central agents, published and unpublished material and drawings. My approach is explorative, where theory development is the central aim. Here, it is the context of the case study and its design theoretical framework that are given and due to the explorative approach; the results develop during the study and the following analysis. Dewey's pragmatist philosophy and Bourdieu's field theory constitute the basic theoretical framework. The design processes have been studied in short periods, in combination with interviews. The interviews with the jurors were conducted after the winning entry was selected.

During the competition, the architects at the architect's office of Lahdelma & Mahlamäki produced a total number of seven proposals. This office has a tradition of competition, in which both the owners and the staff

participate. They are not very secretive about their proposals and most of the architects are available for discussions and interrogation. The architects Lahdelma and Mahlamäki see it as a form of education and the personnel sees it as training and a possible first prize as a possibility to establish an architect's office. In this case, three of the proposals are created on behalf of the office and the rest are private proposals by individuals or by co-operating architects on the staff, developing it in their spare time. These different parties also exchange ideas about the program and certain solutions. During this period, they have a heavy workload and cannot spend much time on the proposals. The visualisations and models for the office proposals are created by an external consultant.

Both architects, Lahdelma and Mahlamäki, work on individual proposals. The one by Lahdelma is drawn up according to his sketches, whilst Mahlamäki co-operates with a student about different ideas. Lahdelma's solution comes as a simple and straight-forward design process. In order to conceptualise an overall design idea for the entry, he starts with a few simple sketches and private reflections, after which he is ready to produce sketches that can be used for delegating the task to others, who study the detailed solutions and prepare the drawings. I notice a similar straight-forward process, when he is explaining their third proposal to two employees, who are going to prepare drawings for the third proposal. Mahlamäki's proposal, on the other hand, grows out of a struggle with different ideas and experimental studies. He has a position in Oulu as professor of Modern architecture and stays away from the office during the week, and meets up with the student at the end of the week. During the last, Lahdelma and Mahlamäki create a third entry, out of an idea about the possibility of a solution which is different from any of the ideas present within their office.

The result of the jury's evaluation is that Lahdelma's entry receives the first prize. The third prize goes to one of the staff, Petri Saarelainen, an architect student. Mahlamäki gets a purchase. It is as grand slam when the office picks up three prizes among 190 entries. They call it their "fishing method", with so many entries (hooks), but they do get a good catch with about 50% of their entries winning a prize (one of the seven proposals is not submitted to the competition). Furthermore, the JKMM office receives the second prize, and among them were architects that previously worked and competed for Lahdelma & Mahlamäki. In total, only approximately 5% of the entries receive a prize in this competition.

The jury had 11 members, but the professional members did the major evaluation work (the architects and the head of the library), which met up to sort and classify the entries during a few initial meetings. The work is led

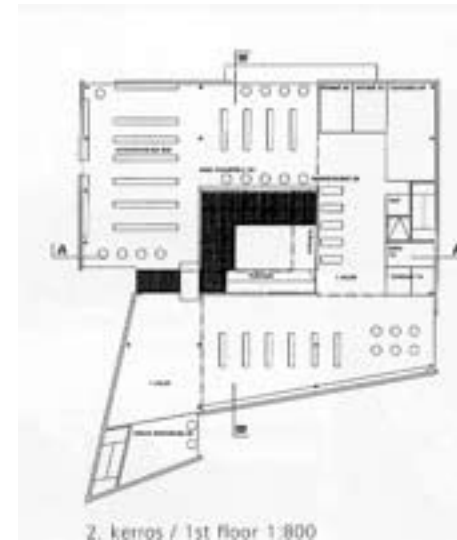


FIG. 1: Saarelainen's proposal (plan).

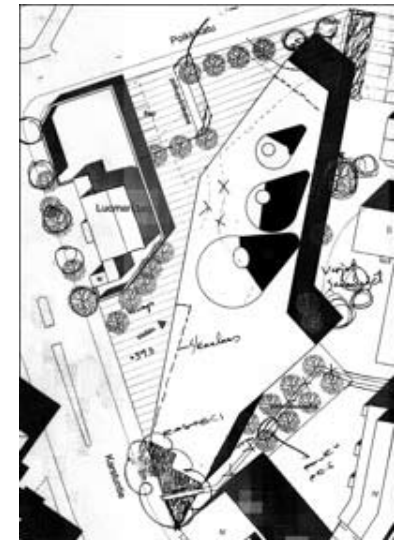


FIG. 2: Lahdelma's proposal with architect's corrections (site plan).

by the jurors appointed by SAFA. According to my informants, the evaluation work runs smoothly. The greatest conflict arises between functional issues addressed by the head of the library and the SAFA jurors who put the emphasis on architectural quality. The SAFA jurors claim that functional and technical problems can be solved, but it is impossible to create good architecture if it is not found in the selected entries. At the final stage, the classification, with representative exemplars from each class, is presented to the other jurors, without providing any winning proposal. At this stage, they make some shifting movements between the upper classes, but by and large, they agree on the classification and the selection of entries for the premier class. At a final meeting, they easily agree on Lahdelma's entry "Johdanto" for first prize. The chairman of the jury, lay juror and president of the town council, Siltassari expresses his satisfaction with this entry, later in an interview. He saw it as the best one, too. The explanations of the jury stress the value of the adaptation to the site and the public character of the building, with well balanced elevations and an inviting entrance. The explanations are brief and one finds most of the qualities by looking at the drawings and the illustrations, and by comparing it with the other entries. The text doesn't explicate the differences in quality. A great deal is based on an agreement in the jury, mainly explicated in the selection and in the ranking of the entries, and rather little is expressed through words. The competition is finished in 2002 and the library is ready for the public in 2006.

THE FIELD THEORY OF BOURDIEU.

What grounds are decisive in architectural design competitions? Which skills and competencies are necessary in order to distinguish vital qualities? These are of course very difficult questions, for which we cannot provide the right answers here, maybe not at all in any complete manner. Obviously, it is not enough with pure facts and true statements, i.e. traditional positivistic analysis won't provide the answers. I think that Bourdieu's interpretations of mature cultural fields provide a suitable vocabulary. This field theory can be seen as a tool that allows us to come closer to the quality issues in architectural design, interpreted as epistemological issues. To start with, I will explain a few concepts and try to describe common mechanisms in the field of architecture, and how they contribute to the development of architecture, how new ideas develop and how top design competence is sustained.

Central to Bourdieu's field theory is the tension between the commercial and the symbolic powers (2000, 215ff). The agents within the architectural field take up different positions and act accordingly. The position can be close to the commercial pole, where it is important to respond to the client and his interest. A different position is taken when the major interest is directed towards gaining respect among peers - a major interest in artistic design, which can produce symbolic gains.

Another central idea is that we believe in architecture, as some kind of common good, a belief called *illusio* by Bourdieu (2000, 330ff). We agree that there is something like good architecture and that it is worth fighting for it. The agents are not fixed to any given position but act from a taken position and the field provides possibilities (Ibid, 334ff). With a strong position close to the commercial pole, we can also gain commercial success with the possibilities offered by this position.

The cultural fields function as arenas where we seek to gain power and influence. Newcomers must struggle to gain a good position (Bourdieu 339ff). Architecture is a market, both commercially and symbolically, and we must occupy positions and defend them, because those with good positions prefer to stay in the position and benefit from its possibilities. *Illusio* is an important concept with explanative power. Architecture, like all mature cultural fields, has a history and a tradition. These sustain our central ideas and beliefs and constitute an important frame of reference. This is a stable structure, yet not static. It changes over time, due to new ideas and influences. Most values are stable, but there is always a risk that somebody will introduce new ways of thinking. These new ways of thinking can impose revolutions and force established agents out of their leading position.

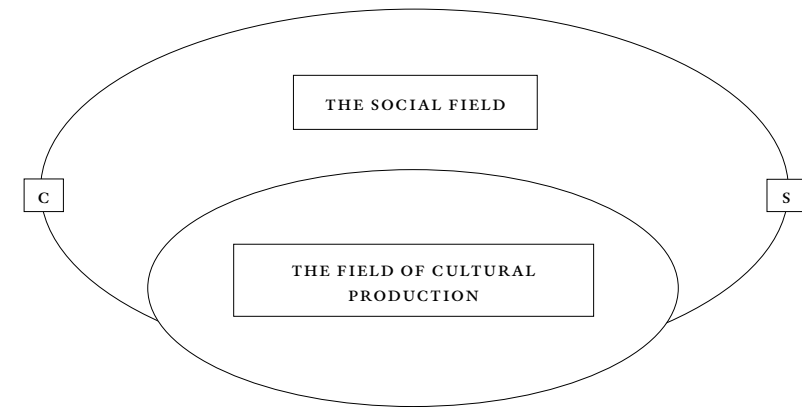


FIG. 3: The distribution of various powers and fields within the social field. The poles S and C stand for the distribution of commercial power (C) and symbolic power (S). The latter is the area of the artistic establishment. Together, they are enclosed within the field of power.

Within all mature cultural fields, the agreement about what counts as good quality is an internal affair. Architecture is a field, where outsiders have few opportunities to make designers change their minds on what counts as good architecture. Internally, the opinions vary and there is a lot of disagreement, but it is this internal debate that regulates what is accepted as good architecture. According to Bourdieu, it is the well-established with a strong symbolic power that hold the legitimacy and right to decide what is good architecture (2000, 252).

I draw the conclusion, based on Bourdieu's field theory and my study of the field of Finnish architectural design that architectural design competitions can be seen as an arena where the architects compete for symbolic power. Here, we find new artistic ideas and it is here that we, the larger professional public, first notice young architects. It is a common jury practice to award the first prize to an artistically acceptable entry that can be realised, too, whereas the remainder of the prizes are given to different interesting solutions, which means that the second best need not be the second best in realistic terms, but it is selected due to its interesting design (second best might be similar to the winning entry but is of less artistic interest due to its similarity). This is particularly the case among purchased entries.

The winning entry is important, but the others are also important due to their display of interesting ideas, which are of interest in a system for the production of ideas and beliefs. Several of the jurors that I have interviewed mention this trading of ideas and their repeated occurrence in later competitions as typical for design competitions. You adopt new forms and

let them influence your on-going design. The fact that you can find well-known architects among the participants, strengthens the credibility and legitimacy. For these well-known architects, the anonymity of the competitions safeguards their position. Nobody will know if they aren't successful. The competition system seems robust as it functions today, as it manages to keep the competitions attractive to important architects; it functions as an arena for trading ideas and the architects can claim sovereignty to their field's central values.

There is a strong connection between the competition merits and the education, as most professors are appointed according to published artistic merits. Due to the fact that many winning competition entries are realised in Finland (Kazemian et al, 2007), it seems clear that we can draw the conclusion that the major clients have to accept this selection process and will see no way of escaping this idea of architectural quality (I have no proof here, but one can imagine that some clients would prefer a different architecture, but the town planning officials and building permit negotiations tend to seem easier if the client accepts a well-known architect as their designer, i.e. the system of architectural values is not limited to design competitions). Large private companies tend to favour invited competitions, but it is also clear that they favour architect's offices which are artistically successful. Here, they can pick and test some favoured partner along with the well-known architects, and also escape the danger of getting a small office or a student as a winner. Large companies pick large offices that can manage large projects and have the capacity for it, though it seems that the size need not have any great influence on artistic innovation during the early design stage, as a competition is, with young students winning the competitions.

What type of knowledge generation do we have here? What qualities are important to know in architectural design? The selection process is based on seeing and discussing qualities – discussions mainly led by architects. The expressions found in the evaluation protocol are strongly tied to the situation and the solutions are discussed and express very few general rules for design quality. In the Lohja case, I found the following conclusions about the winning entry: “The entry takes up the site successfully”, “The scheme works as an individual object in the townscape, yet responds to the context with the subtle aspects of its orientation” or “The facades of the building create a dialogue with its surroundings” (Arkkitehtuurikilpailuja 2003). The explanations cannot be read intelligibly without access to the material, and the wording doesn't clarify definitely why this entry would be the best. The concluding decision is based on both discussions and looking at the drawings, and these two cannot be separated. The written evaluation protocol

doesn't articulate the discussions very closely, as it is written later on by the two SAFA jurors. If we want to reach some insights, we have to do the same, study the posters, explanations and put it together to a private conclusion. The qualities are closely attached to the whole design solution and they are not expressed by the means of words, but in a few drawings, perspectives and in this case, a model. This is also the central process for learning about design, alongside the real design processes, where one takes part and develops various solutions. For most of the architects, the reading of the winning entry is limited to a few drawings published on a smaller scale, potentially combined with an excursion to the final building. Please note here that I assume that the winning entry *Johdanto* has reached a basic level of acceptance as an exemplar of good architecture by the evaluation and selection process.

I claim here that the competitions produce new architecture, new solutions and qualities, by means of a competition process, the following evaluation process and the publication of the results. I think that this must be seen as expressions of knowledge which are brought forward within the field and incorporated within the teaching and learning traditions. This type of knowledge is hallmarked as good, valuable on a market devoted to symbolic qualities. If you have access to this knowledge, you will reach a position where there are artistically interesting projects and you can potentially become a teacher, training future generations of architects in what counts as good knowledge.

If we take a closer look at the cultural fields and the inherent processes that Bourdieu sketches, we note that there is no democracy here. The field has a hierarchical structure, where certain agents receive a lot of power and where the successful can also receive profitable contracts in the long run, according to Bourdieu (1992, 142). There is no relevant decision making here on a popular or democratic level. It is artistic and professional elitism that reigns. There are democratically elected jurors in the evaluation process of my case study, but they do not contribute with any considerable impact to the top level discussions on architectural qualities. The lay chairman also expresses his view that he will trust the competence of the professional jurors, as he would in any case of professional competence. Among architects, there is a tendency to claim to defend the common man. Spector thinks that the architect today has a task that is loaded with a responsibility of defending public interests (2001, 19). In reality, there is a difference between popular taste and top level artistic interests. They seldom come together in any kind of simple agreement. The elite dominate the processes that lead to new expressions in architecture, which might be fruitful for society but seldom go easily with popular taste. It will inevitably lead to alienation in society, when confronted with new avant-garde architecture. This is also part

of the ideas in Bourdieu's field theory. If there are too many that sympathise with an artistic idea, the avant-garde and the connoisseurs will look for new ways of expressing their taste, distancing themselves from the broader public (Bourdieu 1998, 9). There is, however, also something to know in the ideas of the public, too. If you know what the public likes, you have access to mass markets. This is of interest to those who design for this market, but very little of the production belongs to this category, because the common man seldom buys architecture (compared to the purchase of cell phones or cars etc.).

Commerciality is opposite to the symbolic interests that produce cultural goods. Complementary to the knowledge generated in the design competitions, there is another type of knowledge in the field of architecture, the type of design and architectural knowledge that commercial design offices require. They do know the exegetics of the symbolic powers and mimic these, but they also know how to design and meet the demand from commercial interests. Peculiarly enough, the commercial elite and the elite of the society in particular, tend to take a special interest in high rank cultural (architectural) production, which might also lead them to contracts with avant-garde architects. Simply put, commercially interested clients make money by being commercially efficient, but have a tendency to spend their gains on products with a great symbolic value.

There is another obvious form of social value that seems important in architectural design, which also influences design and knowledge standards in the field of architecture. These stem from professional values. It is easier to exemplify them than to define them. One distinctive criterion is the emphasis on process and product quality, compared to the emphasis on artistic expression among avant-garde architects. This professional value stems from the clients' demand for reliable and robust processes and products. The design process and the design management must work properly, and the client won't accept any larger misfits in use or construction. This sub-field constitutes a different market where skilled architects can be successful and make money, though it has little immediate connection to artistic merit. Typically, these professionally competent offices design hospitals and other demanding buildings where artistic skill cannot compensate for professional excellence. These projects also differ from mass market projects, like housing, where money and low costs are important criteria. Still, the development of skill is learnt through the same type of practising processes. Offices only get access to this market segment if they have previous experience of similar contracts – have experience from design processes of a similar kind. I refer here to comments on the papers by Albertsen (1995, 2002), who claim that competition interests and professional competence belong to the same

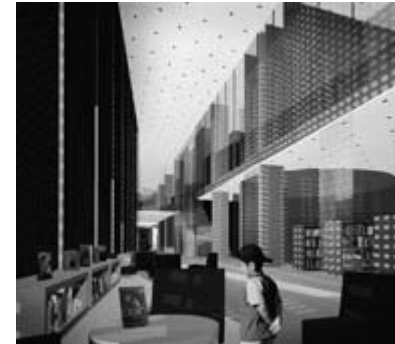


FIG. 4: Interior from winning entry.



FIG. 5: Lohja library entry, Johdanto, street front as proposed by Lahdelma.

symbolic power position. I think that it is important to make a distinction between these two. Artistic design has a higher symbolic rank than a devotion to good professional standards. You gain more symbolic power among architects by winning artistic design competitions than by designing complex and demanding projects.

I take these examples as a model for socially constructed knowledge. Knowledge is vital, but varies depending on how we position ourselves within the field of architecture. There are similarities between the sub-fields, but the differences make it difficult to step into a different market.

DESIGN KNOWLEDGE AND THE SCIENCE OF DESIGN

There is a multitude of ideas occurring within current post-modern epistemology, a philosophy of science. The basic approach is based on the criticism of traditional positivist ideas and the focus on value free and objective truth – with its major philosophical interest in finding internal logical rules on how to clarify when something is really true. Feminist theory has often criticised this perspective, claiming that it also objectifies man and that this is already a value position about how to understand reality. Complementary to this sociology of science has showed that scientific research cannot escape cultural influences combined with social interpretations.

In contrast, the American pragmatism has focused on knowledge development, utility and joy, and put less emphasis on the search for truth. Verification is important, but joy and utility are important results according to John Dewey's pragmatist epistemological ideas. He accepts the methods of science and logical reasoning as important tools for research, but theoretical truth is not the central aim for Dewey (1958, 121ff, 1938, 81ff). Theory is instead just a tool, when working with ideas and testing them logically, and necessary for communication.

In the aftermath of Kuhn's ideas about scientific revolutions and paradigms, we have received a broad set of ideas about knowledge as something socially constructed (see for example Kuhn 1962, Remedios 2003 or Goldman 1938). They generally take a historic perspective here, on how claims about reality develop and gain acceptance, and on what counts as being important to know. There is no definitive paradigmatic idea emerging from this, except a larger acceptance that knowledge is not only about objective truth, but also about socially accepted practices and values.

I take a pragmatic and liberal interpretation of knowledge here, where vague and tacit knowledge is also accepted, which I think is a beneficial and necessary interpretation when studying design knowledge. My aim is to explain and clarify different types of design knowledge. Basically, I think that Bourdieu's field theory offers a model which allows us to classify design and architectural knowledge, depending on in which subculture they have their centre. Knowledge is temporal and tied to the context of a cultural sub-field. It is also tied to the context of the design situation, both regarding process and the materials. Based on Bourdieu's field theory and my research (Östman 2005, 2001), I distinguish a matrix for the interpretation of design knowledge, based on what type of values are the dominating ones. This matrix is divided into different dominating value patterns, which define what good and correct knowledge is. The sub-fields are:

- Competition fields with a strong emphasis on artistic values
- Sub-fields of popular culture
- Sub-fields, where professional values are central
- Commercial sub-fields
- The sub-fields of mass markets

This matrix doesn't constitute a model with isolated categories, but the designers cross the borders between these fields and you can find similar values in all of the sub-fields. It is the distinction in emphasis that makes the difference. Within the competition sub-fields, they focus on artistic values. In the sub-fields of popular culture, it is difficult to find a simple denominator, but a typical example would be architecture that pose a response to the demand from private clients and try to produce architecture that realise individual interests with little connection to elite ideals, but rather to middle class ideals. The knowledge of professional design subcultures are spread on a variety of special fields, for example hospital design, power plant design and the design of industrial plants. Here, a professional performance with less emphasis on avant-garde solutions is central. The commercial category

is mostly characterised by the clients' demand for cost-efficiency and the architects' willingness to accept this. Typical design fields are housing and commercial buildings. The sub-field of mass markets is a small one in architecture, mainly consisting of prefabricated housing units for private clients, but we are close to commercial interests here. We detect the difference between mass market categories and commercial sub-fields, by how far they are willing to respond to the clients or the consumers' interests. In real commercial projects, it is the contractor who has the final say, whereas in mass markets, it is the consumer.

I think architectural research must find ways to articulate such epistemological differences, and in a systematic and scholarly manner. First of all, it is necessary that we, in our research, find ways to articulate such differences and open the design knowledge for scrutiny. This articulation is also necessary if we are to specify what goes on in the design processes. It will not produce generalised knowledge, but rather temporal and contextual knowledge, and the accuracy is comparably greater. Still, there is a need to create verified statements about phenomena. We have to meet the criteria of a different social sub-field, namely those of the scientific community and their ways of dealing with knowledge. Here, the pragmatist perspective, with its emphasis on a connection to reality (articulating and describing what goes on, and its underlining of learning to understand phenomena by experimenting with the situation, offer a accessible way regarding the difficulty of studying design knowledge). An appropriate way for this seems to be to study design processes, and see them as intelligent processes where knowledge is used (including teaching and criticising design, too). We primarily find the experimental aspect by looking at different situations in similar design processes. The aim doesn't have to be to verify similarities, but also to try to articulate differences. Truly experimental situations seem even more difficult to organise in the case of design competitions. It is really difficult to organise real design competitions with successful architects and make them think it is a real design situation, without a real competition at hand. For that reason and with the aim of eliciting an understanding of how successful designers design, I think that case studies are a good starting point but we have to get more material and compare the findings, and try to formulate propositions that can be tested, later on.

What I am trying to clarify here is that we have different types of epistemological perspectives. We can see design knowledge as interpreted by my Bourdieuvian matrix, largely based on a value matrix, but with the aim of systematically articulating and verifying design knowledge. A quite different epistemological perspective is common. When one takes a positivist

approach and attempts to articulate design knowledge as decontextualised and general and as value free statements. Complementary to these two, we can also study design knowledge aiming at immediate improvement, accepting that all thinking must not be articulated as long as we can manage the improvements. Donald Schön proposed this type of design research, using reflection and a closely associated researcher, or the designer himself as a researcher and reflecting on what goes on (1983).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The winner takes it all is an architectural design competition in Finland. Normally, he receives a contract and can continue with the design, he gets the prize money and he will receive verification that his knowledge is appropriate for this task. Fairly often, architects question the relationship between investments and pay in design competitions, seeing that most architects don't get any money. The truth is that there is much more at stake here. There are symbolic advantages to win and also access to learning. The learning is more efficient if one participates, compared to the situation where one would be reading the published results. The symbolic gains can later support business and they are, of course, very important in the eyes of colleague architects. The knowledge that we develop in design competitions is mostly tacit and cannot be taken as a true statement. Still, there is important knowledge at use in design competitions, important and meaningful to the field of architecture and its development. The knowledge changes and there is a great deal of artistic knowledge development. It is also important to note that it is a knowledge structure in continuous flux, new ideas and innovative approaches are sought, found and published.

This knowledge is perhaps subjective in the beginning, starting from the individual, but when successful, it turns into collective and social knowledge. It can be objectified, by means of articulation, but there is the danger of an all too strong decontextualisation, where most of its value is lost. Design knowledge is primarily cultural and tied to a context, its interpretation is valid in this situation, here and now, and it is tied to the understanding and development of architectural qualities.

Most of this knowledge, we see only in its application. It is difficult to explain it conceptually. It is the combination of selection, the selection of qualities and the drawings, models and the architecture that produces the knowledge. Theory can only catch a fragmentary and reduced picture. Still, as in science, it is not enough to have knowledge; it must also be published and accepted by peers.

Finally, I think that I should provide some proposals for further research. Surprisingly, there is very little research on design competitions, despite their importance within the field of architecture and architectural education. I also see it as important to develop our understanding of design knowledge, the epistemological perspective and what it means in regards to design and design research. Despite my interest here in design competitions, I also think that it is important to study sub-fields that don't attract that much interest, for example, what kind of knowledge we have, if we aim for professionalism and most emphasis is placed on functionality, or on sustainability. How to develop architecture for a broader civic society and their expectations and is it socially sustainable?

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Abstract

Spain, and also Madrid, went through a wealthy period concerning housing building market. For some years, more than the total amount of U.K, France and Germany houses, all together, were built in Spain. Now it is over. ¿Is this the moment to go abroad and get commissions outside? How is the European market growing? Is the European Union diaphanous enough nowadays to allow this exchange of professionals? How can ideas competitions influence our politicians?

OCAM stands for Oficina de Concursos de Arquitectura de Madrid (Office of Architectural Competitions of Madrid). It is linked to Colegio Oficial de arquitectos de Madrid (Association of Madrid Architects) and supports the promotion and spreading of a more insight culture about ideas competitions as a way to find solutions to all kind of problems regarding urbanism, cities and their inhabitants. There are more examples like MAAK! promoted by Architecture Institute of Rotterdam and *find/use and architect* run by Royal Institute of British Architects, to consider. Apart from promoting ideas competitions, OCAM reports irregularities related to competitions announced by public either private institutions, undertaking the responsibility of architects towards society.

The duty of reporting shameful interventions must be taken into account in order to avoid and embrace the transparency and equanimity everywhere. There is a must to open our particular “black boxes” and bring citizens closer to architects with regard to competitions, joining forces with local authorities and neighborhood associations to improve our societies and our lives, claiming the role of architects as surgeons of the cities, finding out how architecture can be really helpful, by means of becoming a tool to rethink the world.

Keywords

Housing market, crisis, competitions, AIR Rotterdam, RIBA London, OCAM Madrid, Campus Justicia, transparency, equanimity, society demands, professional exchange through the European Union.

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Competitions for a Better World

Beatriz Villanueva Cajide

Francisco Javier Casas Cobo

FOREWORD: REAL STATE MARKET

Spain has just ended an economic cycle during which construction was one of the engines of its development. Significant investments in infrastructures, many funded by the European Union, as well as, the primary residence and summer home markets (with considerable foreign investment) have been heavily financed by real estate speculators. Our research will try to link this wealthy period with the architect's attitude then and now starting in an analysis of the different stages from the second half of the past century onwards.

The tourist boom that began in the 60s and 70s, shortly before the transition from the dictatorship to the current parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy, was followed by a decade of sharp increases in the cost of housing in the 80s, a crisis in the 90s, following the Olympic Games in Barcelona and the World Fair in Seville in 1992, and finally, the relentless rise and double digit increase of the cost of all types of housing. Despite the increase in large infrastructure and government projects, national and foreign investors and professional and upstart real estate developers began developing a largely unprofessional market throughout Spain, depleting coastal areas and resources in Murcia, Málaga, Almería, Valencia, and even in the north in Galicia and to a lesser extent in Asturias, as well as, the outskirts of large cities, like Madrid and Barcelona, whose metropolitan area has grown, absorbing nearby districts and forming a continuous fabric in the suburbs of these cities.

Currently, we face a crisis that will last hopefully at least two or three years. During this time, the housing surplus must be absorbed and prices reduced so the supply meets the demand of families that cannot afford housing. Spain has one of the greatest percentages of home ownership, in comparison with the extended rental market in the rest of Europe, and also one of the highest averages of mortgage debt for families.



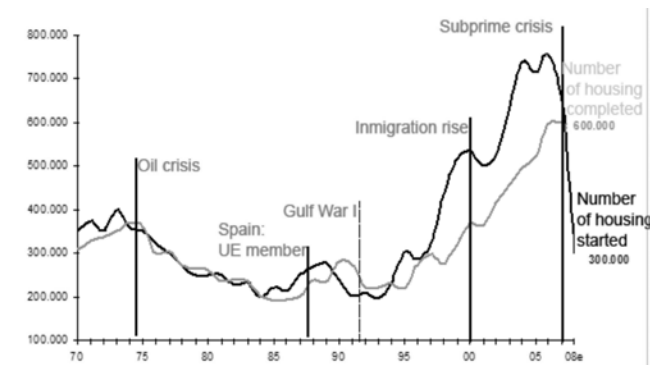
COMPETITIONS AS A COMMITMENT TO SOCIETY EUROPEAN ARCHITECTS AND REAL OPPORTUNITIES

Architecture is an art with a distinct social component that architects must not forget. Aside from the chance to receive assignments or jobs, many of great relevance and interest, design competitions depend upon the time, money and effort of professionals, and can often result in great disappointment, or can possibly represent “an opportunity or an enormous environmentally detrimental effort, which comes down to many hours invested for nothing, except in the case of the winner. But when we see it as an opportunity, competitions can represent a collective training for all architects, which makes us aware of the needs or demands of society, which is fantastic.” (Luís Moreno Mansilla. Mansilla+Tuñón Arquitectos. Interview in Diseñart magazine, 2008).

Specifically, in Spain, the number of architects has multiplied in the last few years, reaching some thirty thousand. This means that there is approximately one architect per one thousand five hundred inhabitants, a little more than in Sweden (one architect per 1655 inhabitants), but half of the number in Denmark for example (1/887), France (1/697) or Italy (1/516).

The increase in the number of professionals has been sustained by a significant increase in the work offered by the booming Spanish market, which is a result of the proliferation of architecture schools, which currently include more than thirty public and private institutions, twenty more than fifteen years ago, and also the access the Spanish baby boom generation of the 70s and 80s has had to higher education over the past twenty years.

As shown in the graph, the increase of the birth rate in the 70s was accompanied by an expansion in construction, similar to that of the previous decade, which mostly affected the coastal and tourist areas, a budding market that has experienced continuous growth since then.

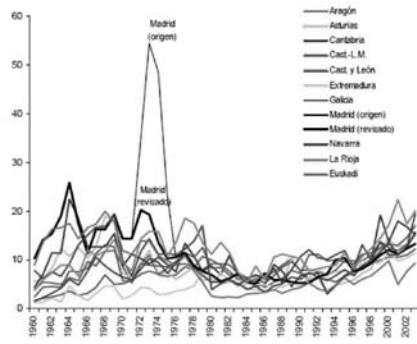


However, the market conditions have changed rapidly and there is not enough work for so many architects. Traditionally, architects from countries that are much smaller than Spain have found work in the international market. Why haven't Spanish architects? Is now the time to compete in the global market? Holland has an average of one architect per two thousand inhabitants, much like Great Britain, which has a much stronger national market given its size and surface area. Dutch and British firms work freely throughout central Europe, the Middle East and Asia. This is not the case for Spanish firms that rarely build outside of Spain, with the exception of a few internationally renowned architects who work abroad.

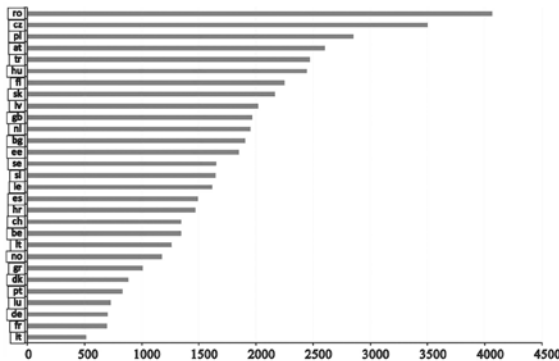
THE ARCHITECT IN A DECLINING NATIONAL REAL ESTATE MARKET

It is possible that Spanish architects have not participated in international competitions because of the enormous increase in national bids and ideas competitions in recent years, aside from our historic reluctance to learn English (a result of being one of the few European countries that dubs everything in film and on television). Some obsolete formulas are still in effect, mostly in terms of project and building work bids, in which the architect must create a temporary merger with a construction company to participate. The architect is responsible for the project and the company for the works. This contracting system has been highly criticized and almost abolished by the Contract Law of the Public Sector and the Administration, which practically invalidated this type of bid, limiting its authority to emergency situations. This situation has been exploited by the local administrations that continue using this antiquated formula that does not offer sufficient guarantees for the architects, who must formalize their proposal in conjunction with a construction company or else be directly excluded from the bid; or

Total amount of housing (visa) during 1960-2004, in the different areas of Spain



Number of inhabitants per architect in Europe



society, whose needs are unattended given that the proposal is at the outset contaminated by an economic component, the highest bid for the contract budget, which is the element most valued by the jury and therefore, favors inferior solutions to be viewed favorably if bids are withdrawn.

Fortunately, in design competitions, the economic bid is not taken into account, although some administrations see this as a problem due to the discrepancies that arise when the cost is quoted and even more so when the works are executed.

We would also like to note the excellent Erasmus and Leonardo European Union programs that have favored an invaluable exchange of students and professionals from many fields in Europe. The training that students and

professionals receive through underpaid internship programs should be considered a valuable opportunity because they afford the advantages of real exchange and an international atmosphere that can result in job opportunities abroad. One of our proposals for the OCAM administration competition highlighted this opportunity as a resource to be promoted, even from the office, where the hiring of Erasmus interns that could work on international competition presentations and translations for Spanish architects, since the rules are not always translated into English from the language of the country of origin. Through our own positive experience with the Leonardo grant that we enjoyed last year in Rotterdam, we will analyze the following three examples of institutions that organize competitions in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Spain, trying to find out what is good and what is wrong according to us and the general understanding of well carried out competitions.

AIR FOUNDATION – ROTTERDAM

The Architecture Institute of Rotterdam is a small organization in terms of human and technical resources in comparison with the OCAM. A team of seven people lead by Patrick van der Klooster, the director of the institute, has organized three editions of MAAK! (presently, we cannot confirm that the fourth edition, which had been announced previously, has been decided), which have represented a great opportunity for young firms in the city. MAAK is the imperative of the verb ‘to make’ in Dutch. Rotterdam is a city with a large population of young architects and students that revolves around the OMA (Office for Metropolitan Architecture) and to a lesser degree other important offices such as, MVRDV, Neutelings&Riedjik and Mecanoo, which is fourteen miles away in the city of Delft. The proliferation of new firms formed by the former employees or the architect interns of important firms, as well as, the celebration of the International Architecture Biennale of Rotterdam, which features many activities housed in the Netherlands Architecture Institute (NAI), and postgraduate courses offered by the Berlage Institute, is significant.

The official announcement and development of the different editions of MAAK! still has practices that could be improved. Discussing MAAK! 2.0, the director of AIR explained that the team selection (up to ten) had been done through CVs, although he didn’t specify if an independent jury had participated in the selection or if it was based strictly on the criteria of AIR. Finally, only three from that group of ten would draw up proposals for the private developer. Said proposals will be awarded an amount to cover the production expenses, which is positive, considering that this is one of the

problems that architects face when they participate in competitions, and not receiving an incentive can be detrimental to the economic future of a small or mid-sized firm. Therefore, it is not surprising that after reaching a certain status, position or recognition, many important firms choose not to participate in open competitions, limiting themselves to those that offer economic rewards from the outset. As for the proposal submissions phase of MAAK!, uncomfortable and unequal situations arise given that parameters are not set, and the format and extension of the proposal is not specified. Each of the three teams develops a proposal with the means they deem adequate or are simply available to them. Thus, some choose to present a draft, others a few three-dimensional images, a video or a model, or any combination of these.

Despite these more or less evident shortcomings, MAAK! is undoubtedly a worthwhile initiative that provides young firms that do not have a long-standing client list access to work, and the Madrid OCAM, for example, recognizes the difficulty of steering a private developer to a competition office, since often it is impossible to convey the benefit of having several proposals, rather than one, and receiving technical and professional advice from a selection committee or a jury. Once again, the initial financial expense is one of the limitations that dissuade private clients from organizing competitions.

RIBA – LONDON: FIND AN ARCHITECT

Another renowned architectural competition is organized by an architectural institution within the Royal Institute of British Architects. Under the title “find an architect,” the RIBA offers the possibility of contracting an architect from a shortlist given to the client, so that they may schedule interviews with the different teams and choose the most appropriate. Aside from this formula, there is the possibility of the RIBA organizing a competition for a private developer, which ensures that many firms will participate since the competition is sponsored by the RIBA. In the last four years, more than sixty competitions have been held, and according to the institution’s webpage, in 2005, there were fifteen competitions, in 2006, there were fourteen, last year there were twenty and this year, twenty competitions have been decided and there are another thirteen scheduled or in development.

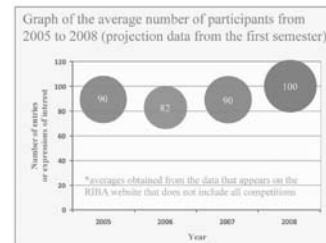
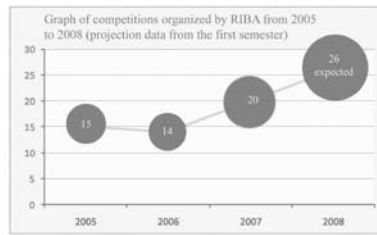
The usual format of the competitions is to present an on-line proposal of the outline so that the interested teams can respond, expressing their interest by signing up and providing information regarding the proposal or ideas for the competition, and also regarding the work volume from previous years, in quantitative and financial terms, types of work and experience related to similar projects, and also about contacts, affiliations, staff, insurance, environmental responsibility, etc. This poses an obstacle for young professionals who



want to gain experience in projects that they have not had the chance to participate in. Thus, this procedure, which is intended as an expression of interest and is viewed by a committee or jury that chooses the team, seems very restrictive. It could be based on a pyramid graph of actual experience (which in some European countries is even necessary to obtain an architecture degree), similar to the somewhat rudimentary and not entirely positive structure used by an artisan

to train an apprentice over time. All of this covered by laws less inclined to promote competition as those in Spain, which hold an architecture degree as a guarantee for all types of work, regardless of age or experience. Once again this principle is not applied when developers choose to demand experience based on similar projects or work volume, as well as technical means, in accordance with the project that they wish to contract.

Also missing is the publication of the jury notes, which would facilitate a greater understanding of the development and the decision, given that these contain valuable information regarding the deliberation of the jury. Even though data for every competition held is unavailable, press releases distributed to participants by the RIBA are also presented for most competitions. Beginning in 2005, the number of participants averaged between 35 and 90, except in one case where 230 entries were received, despite the fact that the competition consisted of only one phase, unlike other competitions, where the first phase resulted in a selection of six teams that participated in the final phase in which they presented their proposals to the client. Despite the fact that most of the competitions are open and international, only three of the fifteen competitions had winners from outside of the United Kingdom, specifically from France, the United States and Australia. In a standard competition, most of the participating firms are British, as well as Danish, Dutch, Swedish and American firms with a personal testimonial from each country. There is also no information regarding the compensation received for participating, as a result of the initial selection in the first phase that leads to the shortlist in the final phase, although in some cases it is stated that finalists share approximately fifteen to twenty thousand pounds (20-27 thousand Euros) or between two and three thousand pounds per team (3-4 thousand Euros). Nevertheless, it is also stated that the construction budgets range from 40 to 50 million pounds (60-75 million Euros).



In 2006, a similar number of competitions were held as the year before (fourteen compared to fifteen), which followed the same selection format in the first phase of no more than six finalists. There is no indication that any open competitions were held since most competitions were restricted or by invitation, although these are less frequent. The number of participants in each of the competitions (as stated online) ranged from 21 to 82, which represents a slight decrease in participation. In terms of winners, there were two that did not have a firm in the United Kingdom, although one from Holland participated alongside a British firm, and one winner, from Italy, won the competition with the highest budget (360 million dollars or 240 million Euros) to build a University center in Nigeria.

Of the twenty competitions organized last year by the RIBA, only one was won by a firm not located in the United Kingdom, but from Switzerland. The number of entries ranged from 27 to 90, with a slight increase from the year before. Practically all the competitions were held in two phases, selecting a maximum of six finalists, except in two cases. On the one hand, a triple competition was held, and four finalists were selected for each location. On the other hand, a unique competition, resembling a Spanish competition, was held in which the architects and designers participated alongside a development company, and therefore with viability plan that supported the economic investment of the architectural proposal. There were a total of 26 locations, but only 20 proposals were presented, and all won, therefore, every team was awarded a plot. This format, although unusual, seems innovative since, despite the range of the proposal, it does not decrease the quality of the architectural ideas, given that these must be mutually advantageous and are evaluated by the jury.

Throughout this year, thirteen competitions have been held and an equal number are underway, either scheduled or in phase two (shortlist), as mentioned previously, which could mean a record number of competitions for the RIBA with approximately thirty competitions. The participation is very high and except for a single case, where only fourteen entries were regis-

tered, the number of participants ranges from thirty to one hundred, with no foreign teams among the winners. This year, a competition was held that was decided by popular vote in the final phase, a format that is common in some European countries but not in Spain, where a recent precedent resulted in the invalidation of the votes due to manipulation and interferences from family members and friends of the participants.

According to Torsten Schmiedeknecht and our own research, the same names appear repeatedly throughout the years in different competitions which means there is no real chance for everyone but only for a few and selected group of architects who, due to their experience and former background are selected to participate in invited/restricted competitions, in a process that feeds this repetition by increasing the differences in curriculum selecting the same offices again and again.

OCAM – MADRID

The Office of Architectural Competitions of Madrid was created at the end of 2003 at the behest of the Official Association of Architects of Madrid (COAM). After five years, the Office has followed up on the competitions held by the local, regional and national administrations. Said follow-up has resulted in dozens of interventions in the first two years, which has increased to approximately one hundred interventions annually, including letters, allegations, appeals and other actions. The percentage of successes often varies depending on the good faith of the council member or politician responsible for contracting. This is, as well as increasing the number of architects represented on the jury, one of the points of contention that the architects, represented by the OCAM, hopes to resolve for the good of society; therefore, it seems legitimate to demand that the administrations respond with the sufficient resources and staff to meet these demands.

OCAM AND THE INSTITUTIONS

An analysis of the interventions carried out by the OCAM illustrates the following results: on the one hand, the activity in favor of greater transparency and equity in the competitions has increased year after year. The basis for intervention is almost always legal, based on a profound understanding of the context and the character of the competition. The understanding of the administrative context sheds light on unjustified elements that oppose competitiveness, and affect above all professionals that due to age, experience or work volume cannot prove financial or technical solvency that the context requires. Any administration competition announced through this procedure is almost always impugned through an appeal. When the orga-



technical and professional solvency obstacles, which the Competency Law almost completed eradicated, and requiring simply a valid degree to carry out the work in question.

It is also usual that deadlines are insufficient, often only a couple of weeks or a month after the competition is officially announced. These insufficient timeframes are usually based on a biased interpretation of the project and works competition regulations that simply seek to expedite urgent situations. But is building a public school, a new hospital, a retirement center an emergency? Politicians would like to believe so and justify these urgent deadlines.

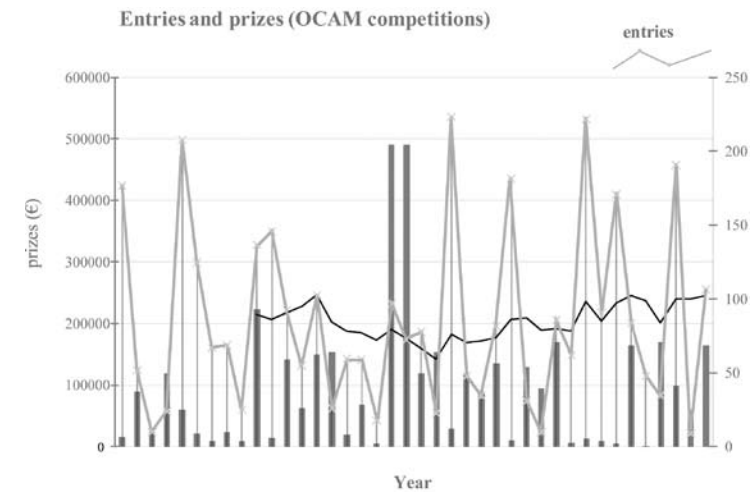
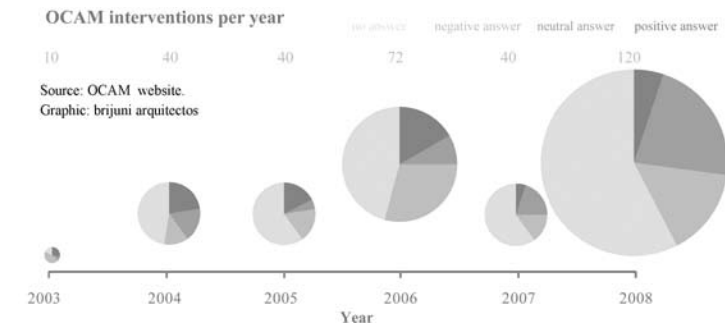
As for the results obtained by the OCAM, we can say that in general they are better in Madrid than in the rest of Spain, as a result not only of proximity and possible geographic influence, but also because of the access and awareness that local and regional offices have regarding this office and of the architectural association that sponsors it.

In terms of years, 2003 was the beginning of a period of activity that resulted in more than ten interventions in the first trimester, including reports, drafts, letters, appeals and litigation. The result, still testimonial, was encouraging with three positive responses and one considering the allegations presented.

The following year, 2004, produced work resulting from almost forty competitions held throughout Spain. Nine positive responses were received, seven considerations, and only five negative responses. Despite this, we must take into account that a considerable number of letters and appeals were not answered, either negatively or affirmatively, therefore, the competitions continued without any modifications and can be considered failed interventions.

Also in 2004, there was strong opposition to the announcement of twelve projects and works competitions by IVIMA (Madrid Housing Institute), which depends on the regional government, and twelve appeals were presented that resulted in a sentence that required the demolition of one thousand seventy homes built in successive years. The courts agreed with the Official Association of Architects of Madrid and set a precedent against

nizer is a private institution, the law is less clear since it is not bound by the Public Administration Contract Law, and it is not subject to selection or solvency standards. In these cases, an appeal letter or report, which suggests context changes that result in a fair and equal formula for all professionals, is sent in hopes of removing



this type of competition (in fact, bids), which does not generate quality social architecture and solely looks to save time and money. The association threatened to enforce the sentence, which would mean the demolition of more than one thousand homes if IVIMA did not rectify and began a period of public housing competitions that would guarantee a level of quality not limited by costs and deadlines. Currently, the homes are still occupied by their owners and the association continues to demand that IVIMA adopt a more responsible and lawful attitude.

In 2005, similar results were registered. Approximately forty competitions were intervened through twelve letters, twenty-two appeals, two written statements and one telephone conversation, all reported on the OCAM website. There were seven positive, seven negative and two neutral responses, taking into account that a non-response could also be considered a negative response.

In 2006, running at full speed, OCAM intervened with twenty-six letters and forty-six appeals with only twelve positive, six neutral and twenty-one negative responses, not including the non-responses. The same year, twelve appeals against IVIMA resulted in favorable sentences, as explained previously.

The last year and half, the proportion has been inverted with more than seventy letters sent and fewer than thirty appeals presented against competitions. Of these, only four have received a positive response, seventeen have resulted in the allegations being taken into account, and twelve have generated negative responses.

COMPETITIONS ORGANIZED BY THE OCAM

One of the facets that the OCAM is working on is the organization of competitions. The need arose as a result of the events that took place in the first few months of operation, when it was decided that it was not enough to impugn the contests announced in an ambiguous manner without sufficient guarantees or unlawfully, rather the Official Association of Architects (COAM) thought it would be necessary to be proactive, rather than watching from the sidelines, and therefore making the organization and announcement of competitions the office's reason for being, which generated pride and satisfaction from most of the COAM's members in Madrid.

In the last two and a half years, the OCAM has organized approximately forty competitions and the prospects for the first semester of 2008 forecast that more than fifty will be held in only three years since 2006. The office webpage organizes each competition systematically and methodically so it is easy to follow. The administrative data is clearly presented on one side, and the technical data is shown on the other. The latter usually contains significant graphic information, including not only location plans, but also photographs and general regulations regarding the site related to the competition. Aside from the administrative basis, the prizes awarded, the dates, deadlines and documentation required are specified. Finally, a section is reserved for inquiries and another showcases updated news regarding the development of the competition.

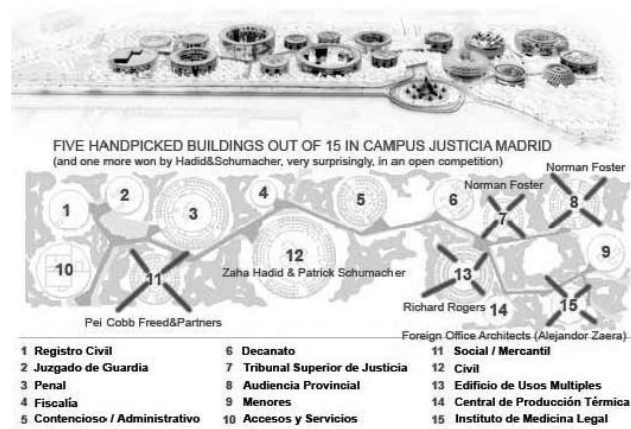
The fact that the information is organized in a structured manner is helpful for those interested in participating. Also, the accessibility of the information saves members, who previously had to check official publications, an enormous amount of time, given that now they can simply check the website periodically. The effect will be greater participation, as well as, other aforementioned results that have been obtained in the past few years.

By analyzing each of the past years, 2006 resulted in ten competitions, all open, with a single phase and often international, except in rare instances

when students and architects with less than two years of experience were convened. Since the entire process is documented and registered, we can observe that 646 proposals were presented for the nine individual competitions and an average of ten for the multiple competitions with seven options that was organized for seven different companies that wanted a stand for a fair.

The number of participants ranged from the eight for the one of the stands to 208, with an average of seventy participants. First, second and third prizes are almost always awarded, along with a few consolation prizes (no more than three) and several honorable mentions without any monetary compensation. It would be evident to think that the greater the number of prizes, the more teams will participate. Many times the first prize awards an amount, as an advance, which will be deducted from the fees received after the project is completed. Not counting these advances, six hundred thousand Euros in prizes were awarded that year, which is an average of sixty thousand per competition or almost nine hundred Euros per proposal presented. For 2006, there is no indication that any foreign teams won any of the prizes in any of the competitions.

In 2007, the number of competitions doubled, reaching twenty. The participation ranged from 23 and 264 with a total of 1,631 proposals for twenty-five competitions, several multiple, which meant an average of sixty-five participants in each. Interestingly, the most popular competition, which was open and international for which 264 architects or teams presented proposals, was declared void, and afterwards contested in court by a group of participants, who sustain that the jury's notes reflect the contempt of the jury for the work, which was not analyzed with rigor, attention and time, of the immense majority of the participants. As a result, the participation in subsequent competitions was noticeably inferior, and never reached more than a hundred, with an average of fifty per competition. Despite this, in 2007, a total of 10,169,000 Euros or more than six thousand per proposal presented were awarded (including those prizes that are advances for future projects). During this year, several competitions are held in two phases, a formula used extensively for the different buildings that compose the Justice Campus in Madrid. In the second phase, between five and ten teams presented their proposals to the jury, along with in many cases a model, and an amount between 15 and 30 thousand Euros was awarded to all the finalists. Throughout this year, two consolation prizes were awarded to English teams, and three first prizes were awarded to a Dutch team, an English team and another Dutch team (led by a Spanish architect based in Rotterdam). 2007 was the year when the most foreign teams won awards in Spain, perhaps encouraged by the considerable awards and contracts at stake.

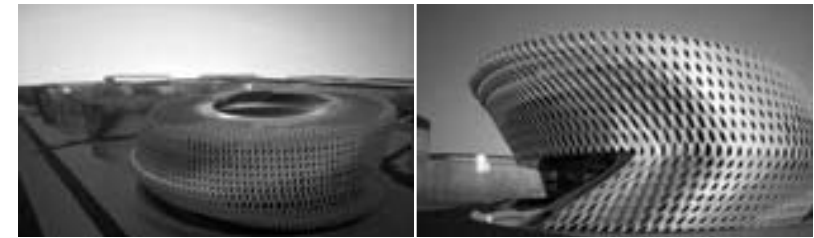


This year, as shown in the data of the first semester, eight competitions have been held with prizes valued in 629,500 Euros and 949 participants have registered, which means an average of almost 120 entries per competition and 663 Euros on average for each of the proposals presented. There is no doubt that the institution has increased its prestige and trustworthiness, yet unquestionably the enormous participation registered in these months is related to the decrease in construction and the stalled real estate market. As for the winners, a consolation prize was awarded to a French team, another to a Dutch team (formed by two Spanish architects based in Rotterdam) and a first prize to a Portuguese team, which means that currently, as is the case in most of Europe, the Spanish market is closed off to foreign participation, and the participation and success beyond one's borders is symbolic and reserved to large firms, thus barring access by professionals and small and mid-sized teams.

Other architect associations from different parts of Spain have been interested in the competition model of the OCAM to create similar structures in other associations. The Lugo Association is one of the most active in this sense.

SHAMEFUL EXAMPLES I: THE JUSTICE CAMPUS

At this point, we want to focus on one specific example that has been long delayed, the collaboration between the OCAM and a private developer, who nevertheless depends on public funding. It is the Justice Campus of Madrid sponsored by the Council of the Presidency, Justice and Interior of the Community of Madrid since 2003. Two years later, an international competition was held, which received 197 proposals (following 345 initial entries) from 37 countries from five continents, to determine the Master Plan that would



ZAHA Hadid's winning proposal in competition for the Civil Courts building at Campus Justicia Madrid.

establish the subsequent urban planning in two phases that include seven and eleven buildings each. The competition was won by Spanish team. None of the foreign teams were awarded any of the prizes, which confirms the protection of national markets. Three years after the decision in this first development competition, the names of the architects that will oversee the fifteen buildings were announced. Unfortunately, not all of them were announced in open competitions, and specifically five of them, were commissioned directly to Norman Foster (two different buildings), Pei Cobb Freed & Partners, Alejandro Zaera (Foreign Office Architecture -FOA-) and Richard Rogers and Partners. Also, it was highly unusual that a firm as important as Zaha Hadid's, which like others of its stature does not participate in open competitions, rather only in restricted competitions by invitation only with set prizes, whether they win or not, won the two phases competition to build the Civil Courts building.

This strange occurrence and the five handpicked winners, along with the fact that one of the winning teams included a member of the jury that decided several previous campus buildings, have diminished the credibility of the institution, as has been stated by representatives of several architect associations, who have regretted that a public institution has violated the Public Administrations Contract Law and contracted directly, specifically four British firms, to carry out five emblematic projects in the Justice Campus. Perhaps for this reason, the final competition held only registered 35 teams, when previous registration had reached 84 teams.

Moreover, this discrimination between star-system architects who were handpicked without previous ideas competition has led to a new stage. Alejandro Zaera has refused to complete the building his office was commissioned to design and build: Legal Medicine Institute. He claimed for a raise in the building's budget that was pretty much lower than Norman Foster's or Zaha Hadid's, which doubled FOA's one. Local government did not accept this overhead and thus Alejandro Zaera-Polo quit the work in progress with only the structure finished. As we see, it means problems arise not only because the non-subtle habit of direct commissions but also within them. Zaera-Polo has finally been sued.



FOREIGN Office Architecture winning proposal for Legal Medicine Institute at Campus Justicia Madrid. WORKS in progress when Alejandro Zaera-Polo refused to keep on directing it due to the low budget. December 2008.

SHAMEFUL EXAMPLES II: THE OLYMPIC VILLAGE

The OCAM, in an effort to encourage participation, has never organized a competition that required a fee to receive documentation or register, although lately, under pressure from organizing institutions, it has accepted formulas that have required participants to demonstrate previous experience through construction certifications or financial documentation regarding billing, in clear violation of the Competition Law. The EU Qualifications Directive 2005/36/EC could extend and specify the competences of different professionals in the European Union, regulating them.

As a result of Madrid's new candidacy for the 2016 Olympic Games, several non-binding competitions have been announced, to develop the portfolio that the Olympic Committee evaluates to vote on and select the new location.

Once again, as was the case with the Justice Campus, it is an institution that depends on an administration, created specifically to promote and to support the Olympic candidacy of Madrid. Therefore, we believe the Contract Law should be a guarantee and an example for others. Just as a private developer cannot be forced to contract according to a law that does not affect them, an apparently private and autonomous institution, although dependent on the Madrid City Council, such as the Municipal Housing and Land Company of Madrid would construct the building if Madrid is chosen, and it is also supported by the Community of Madrid regional government and the state, and therefore should not be exempt from obeying the law.

Hence, despite the efforts of the OCAM, Spain still depends on an incompetent political power that makes decisions based on political interests rather than advice and criticism from the association, the school and other architects. The good work of the OCAM, in spite of everything, has resulted

in the creation of similar offices in other associations, for example in Galicia, and has encouraged the organization of clean competitions in all of Spain, as well as in private sectors.

SOME CONCLUSIONS FOR A BETTER WORLD

The conclusions we have reached after analyzing and discussing three competition offices in three different European countries, a small but sufficiently significant sample, are several. The first is apparent: the lack of access to foreign markets depicted in the low number of foreign architects winning outside their countries. Despite treaties, such as the Schengen treaty, the work of the European Union in eliminating borders to improve professional mobility and globalization, the interest of foreign firms in participating in competitions outside of their countries is insignificant. The exceptions or causes were mentioned at the beginning. In the case of Holland, a small market distinguished for its lack of land, as well as, a longstanding trade tradition and a vision of Europe as a land of opportunity, has historically forced architects to build beyond their borders. In the case of Spain, considerable linguistic limitations and forty years of near political isolation in the previous century, along with a buoyant real estate market and expansion periods unknown in the rest of Europe, except perhaps Ireland, have pushed Spanish architecture firms into a self-imposed isolation that has resulted in limited participation in international competitions.

Going back to the specific requirements to entry a competition, and despite advances in telecommunications and the internet, it is difficult to understand the demand that proposals be presented in model form, especially in the initial stages of the competition. Little by little, presentations are being accepted via e-mail in digital form, or are printed in a suitable size, weight and quality to be studied physically.

According to the graphs related to OCAM competition shown, there is no significant relationship between prizes and number of entries. On the contrary, it seems that architects do not care very much about that, but still, sometimes happens that big rewards get more applications. Another fact is starting to be relevant. It is the number of architects in the jury, which architects appreciate in the way "the more, the better" since their works will be understood properly.

A better world –another power- was the title of an exhibition that was shown in the Netherlands Institute of Architecture last year as part of the third International Biennale of Architecture in Rotterdam, titled suggestively and energetically, *Power*. We believe that that is the purpose of our work and our responsibility to society, and what we should defend as a group. Beyond

the hypocrisy, we want a better world for all, and that should be reflected in transparent architecture competitions that offer work possibilities to architects, which should result in buildings, spaces, actions and cities that are better than those we have inherited. We are not ashamed to wave that flag and our proposals for the competition for the Director of the Oficina de Concursos de Arquitectura de Madrid (Office of Architect Competitions of Madrid) defended that idea.

First of all, society should be involved in this effort, or as the French sociologist Bruno Latour wrote in his book of essays *Pandora's Hope*, the black boxes of science should be opened, to expand the concepts of one of his previous work "Science in action" from 1987:

[...]the way scientific and technical work is made invisible by its own success. When a machine runs efficiently, when a matter of fact is settled, one need focus only on its inputs and outputs and not on its internal complexity. Thus, paradoxically, the more science and technology succeed the more opaque and obscure they become (Latour 1999).

In this sense, we find it interesting that competitions should serve to link architects and the rest of society. The language of architects has become very opaque, and occasionally incomprehensible for the rest of the population, which cannot enjoy architecture, nor criticize or understand it. Without trivializing the architectural debate or the intellectual and project processes, it would be interesting to bring architecture closer to people so they can take part in the process, given that we are all bystanders, enjoying or suffering the decisions of architects in buildings or cities.

Following with Bruno Latour's quote, we think architecture should not be an opaque and obscure science and it might happen when it comes to experience instead of just knowledge which is something people can not achieve easily without having a degree in architecture perhaps. But experience is just about having some elements to let people think, feel and see architecture as a part of people's lives. There is no need for skills but the debate should blossom if we make it interesting for everyone to participate.

To achieve this, we proposed a communication effort. First of all, the announcement of competitions could take place online and in other written publications, convening a conference where the basis of the competition is explained, not only to the architects, but also to the members of the community, so that a debate or exchange could take place beyond the private space of each firm. Current systems allow any act to be announced via internet.

Our proposal included the example of the Berlage Institute de Rotterdam, which broadcasts all classes and conferences via internet, including the revisions and corrections each semester. This first measure could undoubtedly transcend the closed circle we inhabit with limited effort.

Expanding on the idea of communicating our debates and internal processes, it is necessary to explain the results through complete minutes that reflect on the different proposals of the competition, exhaustively and adequately in terms of means and time. There still seems to be a parsimony that seems suspicious when it comes to explaining how the winner was chosen. The minutes should be public and complete, and should also be discussed and debated in an open conference.

Architects and society must walk together. There are some remarkable initiatives to be taken into account in the future. We will just mention a couple of significant samples in Spain. The first one is *Fundación Arquitectura y Sociedad* (Foundation Architecture and Society) who leads spanish architect Francisco Mangado in order to look for a more deep comprehension of our profession and, the other way around, a closer approach of ourselves towards society. The board includes not only architects but philosophers, sociologists, artists and others to expand the limits of the discussion beyond the close circle of architects. The second one might seem anecdotic but still, it is quite sharp. Its name is *Arquitectura para peques* (Architecture for children) and its work is presented in a weblog which includes several videos of architects speaking with children. It is a starting point and nothing better than making an effort from the very beginning.

As far as what we can do to open ourselves to the world, there is fertile ground that could yield positive results by collaborating with architecture associations or competition offices, and the neighbourhood associations. On the street is where we find a breeding ground of ideas and where architects can propose solutions to real problems that are familiar to all those involved. This would encourage horizontal communication, which could transcend vertically to the administrations that should be the ones to support these initiatives and respond, as a part of the community, by providing the economic means to carry them out. It is worth the reward.

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Abstract

Keywords

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Between Church and State The Competition for the Romanian Patriarchal Cathedral, Bucharest, 2002

Andreea Mihalache

The Romanian Orthodox Church ultimately cancelled the results of the 2002 architectural competition for the Patriarchal Cathedral in Bucharest, the final one of a series whose outcome is still uncertain due to the changing politics of visibility orchestrated by political and ecclesiastical forces. The idea of a national cathedral has a history of more than one hundred thirty years and emerged at the end of the nineteenth century as a means to celebrate the state independence in 1877 and the new Romanian Kingdom founded in 1881. The project was reiterated throughout the first half of the twentieth century in order to embody a much discussed national identity and emphasize the status of the Orthodox Church as the leading Christian denomination in Romania. As all their previous attempts, the post-communist 1999 and 2002 competitions were eventually shelved and the national Orthodox cathedral became a battlefield of ideas between politicians, clergy, architects and civil society.

This paper argues that, reflecting the changing balance of power between Church and political forces, the patriarchal cathedral becomes the instrument operated by both the Orthodox hierarchy and the political establishment in order to mutually legitimize their authority. Capitalizing on the high ranking of the Orthodox Church in polls, different governments endorse the idea of building a national cathedral as part of electoral propaganda, whereas the Church counts on political alliances to support its projects.¹ Having the starting point in this case study, the paper will investigate the association of church architecture with national identity, and the relation between political and ecclesiastical powers.

The narrative of the Romanian cathedral opens multiple directions of inquiry and this paper will address some of these issues. Beyond the local relevance of this case study, the investigation of the Romanian Patriarchal Church has a broader scope. First, it revisits the larger theme of associating

1. According to a survey accomplished by the Audience and Opinion Research Department of the Open Media Research Institute and published in *Transition*, 2 (5 April 1996), 29 there are two institutions that Romanians credit most highly: the Church and the armed forces (Gallagher 1987, 43).

architectural monumentality with power. In an editorial published in 1997 the political analyst Bogdan Ghiu articulates one aspect of this relationship: “The need for monuments is the need for identity. Urban and architectural monumentality can ambiguously imply either a confident or an uncertain identity” (Ghiu 1997, 24-30). Building upon this idea, the cathedral has been interpreted as a mark of national identity whose origins go back to the nineteenth-century quest for architectural nationalism (Ioan 1999, 15-46; Popescu 2004). However, contemporary examples, such as Richard Meier’s Jubilee Church in Rome – a relatively small parochial church – redefine the terms of this relation in a new “power of the powerless” approach (Havel 1985). The Romanian cathedral provides an unprecedented opportunity to question and re-interpret conventional links between authority and architectural monumentality.

Second, and perhaps more importantly, this story reveals the moral price of this political game. The major forces involved – the Church, the architects and the political body – lack the moral authority to conduct and support its completion. Although the Orthodox Church ranks very high in polls, its controversial position during the communist regime casts a shadow of doubt over its architectural ambitions. Architects, on the other hand, are generally blamed for not reacting to the mutilation of Romanian cities and villages by the socialist administration. As for political parties and public institutions, studies demonstrate that their repeated failures to fulfill people’s expectations have led to a climate of distrust and suspicion.

BUILDING ROMANIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY

In an article discussing Romanian nationalism and identity issues after the fall of communism Katherine Verdery interprets the post-socialist society as a fragmented body attempting to build its identity by means of opposition with “the other” (Verdery 1993). Whereas “the other”, “the enemy” used to be identified with the communist party, “them” being opposed to “us”, its dissolution left behind a void that was substituted by the emergence of forces defining themselves in confrontational terms. Verdery describes the categories of “we” and “they” within the socialist world as being “elastic” because their inhabitants could change sides, but the split nevertheless persisted (Verdery 1993, 193). Verdery argues that after the fall of communism “the enemy became “the *other* others” – other nationalities who existed in greater or smaller numbers in every one of these states” and it is around them that new definitions of national identities will coagulate (Verdery 1993, 193). The quest for defining Romanian identity has also been echoed, as Romanian architectural critics Augustin Ioan and Carmen Popescu main-

tain, in the history of the patriarchal cathedral (Ioan 1999 and Popescu 2004). The nineteenth century nationalist ideologies generated the imperative to build an original Neo-Romanian style in architecture, endeavor that informed professionals’ imagination throughout the first half of the twentieth century. In this context, designing new Orthodox churches, including a cathedral in the capital city, was part of a strategy to shape Romanian identity, and after a fifty year communist hiatus, similar ideas are revisited in the recent controversies over the patriarchal cathedral.

This paper builds upon and nuances these different arguments. “The others” are not only “other nationalities”, but also different interests groups within the same mosaic. The 2002 architectural competition with the array of heated arguments, public debates, and mutual incriminations that accompanies it reveals the dynamics of alliances among the main players. Based on momentary interests, these temporary coalitions are defined, even if not explicitly as such, in ambiguous terms of “us – the good” and “them – the evil.” However, this polarization is more complex since the notions of “good” and “evil” are, in practice, interchangeable. The relevance of the 2002 competition is manifold. As the first site-specific architectural response to a one hundred years history of perpetual postponements, it confronted the reality of the capital with larger issues that encompass the reevaluation of the city center and contemporary architectural strategies to define national identity. It initiated a public debate with broader implications for the future of the city, since decision making factors such as members of the clergy, politicians, and intellectuals were compelled to articulate their positions and engage into civic actions.

A HISTORY OF MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

For over a century, the idea of a major church in the capital of the country has been a recurrent theme associated with nationalistic and political ideals, but it has constantly failed to come to completion. Based on centuries-long tradition of Romanian kings and princes dedicating churches in the aftermath of battles, martyrdoms or radical political changes, the Orthodox Church resorts to custom as the main argument in favor of building a national church,² maintaining that several major uncelebrated episodes in modern history justify the foundation of a patriarchal cathedral.³

The first event that posited this initiative is the union of the two Romanian principalities of Valachia and Moldavia under Alexandru Ioan Cuza in

2. See, for instance, the official site of the Romanian Orthodox Church, <http://www.patriarhia.ro/Site/Administratia/CMN/cmn.html>

3. Stefan cel Mare (1437-1504), Neagoe Basarab (?-1521), Mihai Viteazul (1558-1601) are some of the most celebrated Romanian rulers known for the churches they founded.

1859 which creates the premises for the modern Romanian state. After being appointed king of the new state in 1866, the German prince Carol of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen leads the independence war against the Ottoman Empire in 1877-1878. As the country is declared a freestanding kingdom in 1881, on March 1st the Metropolitan of Bucharest invites the key political figures to an open discussion on the necessity of building a representative church in the capital city. When the Romanian Orthodox Church becomes autocephalous in 1885, a national cathedral is now a matter of celebrating both the new Romanian kingdom and its independent Church. A tentative to organize an architectural competition for “the cathedral of the nation” takes place in 1891, but it never comes to completion (Popescu 2004, 193). In 1900, a conservative government passes the entire responsibility of the project to the Orthodox Church, which raises the protests of the ecclesiastical hierarchy who claims support from the state in compensation for the expropriations initiated by Alexandru Ioan Cuza who had put the Church under governmental control (Lavinia and Turcescu 2000, 1467).

No progress is made in the next twenty years, but the end of the First World War, with the geographical and demographical transformations of the Romanian state, opens unprecedented perspectives. Following the Trianon treaty, Romania acquires Transylvania and two-thirds of the Banat from Hungary, Bukovina from Austria, Bessarabia from Russia, and consequently its land mass and population doubles (Gallagher 2005, 29; Verdery 1991, 43). According to a 1930 census, 29.1% of the population consists of minorities, which confronts a former ethnically uniform country with new identity issues (Scurtu and Buzatu 1996, 22 quoted in Gallagher 2005, 29). Against this backdrop, on May 10th 1920, the Saint Synod, in response to a royal letter, proposes to form a patronage committee (which apparently never functioned) to support what is now called “The Cathedral for the Redemption of the Nation.”⁴ The shift from “Christ’s Resurrection” as the cathedral’s dedication (as stated in 1881 by the Association for the Construction of the Bucharest Cathedral), to the “Cathedral of the Nation” for the 1891 competition, and the “Cathedral for the Redemption of the Nation” in 1920 implies a new awareness of Orthodoxy as an identifier of the Romanian nation.⁵ In the aftermath of the First World War, the changes in the

4. The official denomination of the future cathedral still raises numerous questions. Is redemption an individual or a national matter? Could a consecration to a desirable event replace traditional Orthodox modes of dedicating the church to a saint, or the Holy Cross or a biblical episode? To avoid these controversies, the text will refer to this church as the Patriarchal Cathedral, appellation that reflects its main programmatic function.

5. For additional comments, see Popescu 2004.

ethnicity and, consequently, the religious beliefs of the population have contributed to certain tensions between minorities and a majority that defines itself primarily as Orthodox. Despite a sense of urgency, it takes the creation of the Romanian Patriarchate in 1925 to reiterate the issue of a, this time, Patriarchal Cathedral. Between 1925 and 1929 over twelve possible locations are investigated, and on May 11th 1929 a cross is placed at the bottom of the Dealul Mitropoliei (Metropolitan Church Hill) to mark the site for the future cathedral. The international economic crisis and different local priorities will hamper the development of the project and one more attempt is made in 1940, when a proposal for a cathedral of the nation, signed by architect C. Joja, is exhibited during the “Legionary Work in Art” show.⁶

The idea is revived only after the fall of communism, when two architectural competitions are held in 1999 and 2002, respectively. From an ecclesiastical perspective, given the controversial history of the project, this endeavor is no longer a matter of tradition, but it has the aura of a moral debt. The cathedral embodies the symbolic meaning of a necessary expiatory gesture meant to restore the Orthodox faith of the Romanian people after communism, redeem the sins of those dark years, and construct the image of a renewed country (Popescu 2004, 189).

Invoking the Byzantine tradition of intertwining religious and secular powers, the Church expects the same governmental support whose recipient it has been until the end of the Second World War.⁷ Building a representative church becomes imminent when the first Christian committed administration comes to power in 1996 and the following year, three major periodicals⁸ cover the issue of the cathedral.

In 1999, disregarding the recommendations provided by architects, environmental experts and engineers, the Church officials, supported by political forces (the Town Hall and the Ministry of Public Works), organize a competition in Piata Unirii (Union Square) – one of the lowest areas of the city, with problematical traffic and a high risk of flooding. Without having a very specific agenda, the competition demands for rather unclear urban and architectural proposals, and is therefore received by professionals with a great deal of skepticism. Although it seems to address primarily urban design concerns such as traffic solutions and the optimal location of the cathedral in Piata

6. The Legion of the Archangel Michael, also known as the Iron Guard, was a nationalistic, anti-Semitic political movement that emerged in Romania in the first half of the twentieth century following the model of European fascism. It exalted Orthodoxy and traditionalism as the major features of the Romanian people.

7. See the website of the Romanian Orthodox Church <http://www.patriarhia.ro/Site/Administratia/CMN/cmn.html>

8. These periodicals are 22, *Privirea* and *Dilema*.

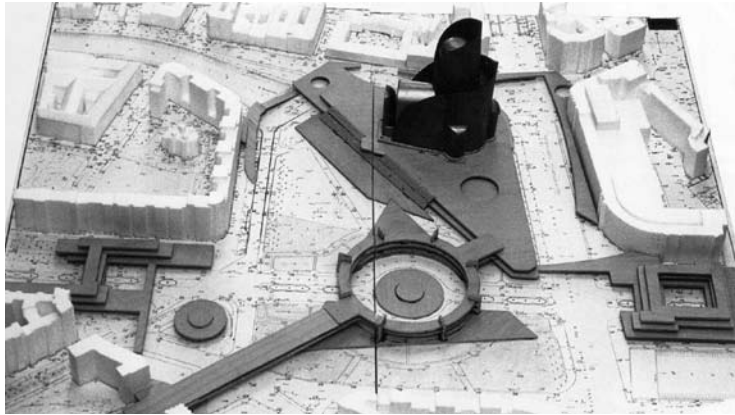


FIG. 1: Competition for the Romanian Patriarchal Cathedral, Bucharest, 1999.

Unirii, it also requires the visualization of the church at a scale that, unfortunately, does not allow a good understanding of the architectural approach. A predominantly architectural jury⁹ does not award the first prize explaining that none of the entries has responded to the requirements of the theme (Ciocan 1999), and therefore there will be no future development of the project (figures 1-4). The support provided by the Christian Democrat party has been criticized as a last attempt to gain electoral sympathy since its tenure ended up in a fiasco despite the initial zeal of the population.

Toward the end of the 2000-2004 term of a different government, whose reserve vis-à-vis religious matters is well known, the Prime Minister Adrian Nastase nevertheless endorses the aspirations of the Orthodox Church, and a second architectural competition is launched in March 2002, on a different site, on the Bulevardul Unirii (Union Avenue), between Piata Unirii (The Union Square) and Piata Alba Iulia (The Alba Iulia Square), facing the Parliament building.¹⁰ With specific requirements regarding location, traffic, alignments, parking lots, size and program, this competition is fo-

9. The seven members of the jury were the Metropolitan of Moldavia and Bukovina Daniel, the Minister of Public Works Theodor Serban Antonescu, the Rector of the Ion Mincu University of Architecture Alexandru Sandu, the Vice President of the Romanian Union of Architects Stefan Lungu, the Architect in Chief of Bucharest Adrian Bold, the principal of the Rostrada architectural firm Crisan Popescu, the director of the Museum of the Romanian Peasant Horia Bernea (Ioan 2004, 5).

10. The current Parliament building was formerly known as the House of the People and its construction began during the communist regime. Designed to fulfill the megalomaniac ambitions of the rulers, it has the reputation of being the second largest building in the world after the Pentagon and it was meant to accommodate the political and administrative structures of the socialist power.

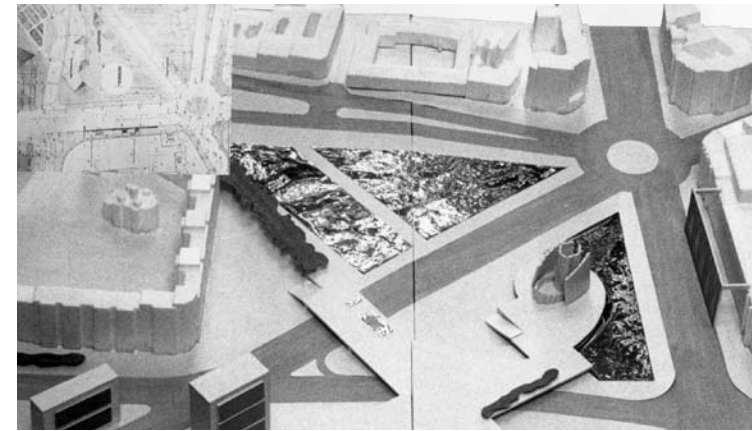


FIG. 2: Competition for the Romanian Patriarchal Cathedral, Bucharest, 1999.

cused on the architectural complex of the patriarchal cathedral. Although the site still does not fulfill the consensus of professionals, a better participation is registered. Whereas the supporters of this location interpret the vicinity of the Parliament building as an opportunity to symbolically counterbalance the communist evils (Popescu 2004), the very same proximity implies, for its opponents, an ironic tandem between a contested religious power and the detested communist authority. From this latter vantage point, both forms of monumentality are seen as instruments of control and manipulation. The jury comprises architects and members of the clergy: Metropolitan Teofan, Metropolitan Bartolomeu, art historian Virgil Candea, professor architect Cristian Moiescu, architect Gheorghe Patrascu, professor architect Emil Barbu Popescu, architect Viorel Hurduc, and architect Ioan Andreescu. The winning entry authored by architect Augustin Ioan (figures 5-6) will be shelved a few months later, the Church officials revisiting again their position regarding the site. It is difficult to estimate the real reasons for this shift of the Orthodox Church since no official explanations have been provided. However, media have suggested that the high market value of the land in the area makes it desirable for a more lucrative program, such as a business center, already envisioned in the master plan for the capital (Evenimentul Zilei, 14 July 2004).

Throughout the 2004 presidential campaign, Traian Basescu, the democrat mayor of Bucharest at that time, has reiterated his already manifested enthusiasm for the project. As part of his political agenda, he anticipated that the cathedral would eventually become an incentive for the develop-

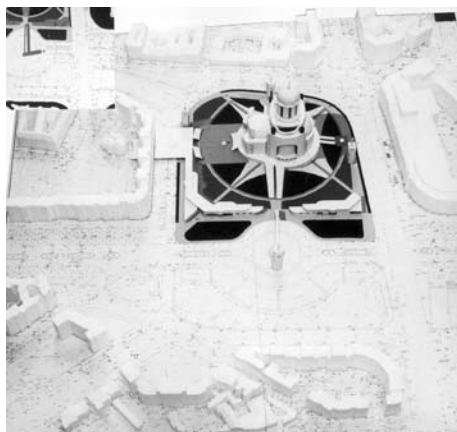


FIG. 3: Competition for the Romanian Patriarchal Cathedral, Bucharest, 1999

ment of the city center.¹¹ Politicians, however, are not the only disciples of the idea. Regardless of their political orientation, an important number of cultural figures invoke the right of the Orthodox Church as a private institution to raise a representative building for its mission. Among the prominent cultural figures that publicly expressed their support for the Patriarchal Cathedral are doctor Constantin Balaceanu Stolnici (interview published in *Dilema*, 248, 24-30 Oct. 1997), philosopher and art historian Virgil Candea (interview published in *Dilema*, 248, 24-30 Oct. 1997), architectural critic Carmen Popescu (“Du pouvoir et de l’identité: une cathédrale pour la rédemption de la Roumanie”).

CRITICISM

The opponents to the idea of a national cathedral resort to arguments that revolve primarily around two concerns: on the one hand, the most appropriate use of financial resources in a country that still faces economic challenges might not be a monumental church; on the other hand, the moral status of the parties involved, including the Orthodox Church, whose links with the former communist regime are unclear, raises numerous questions on the legitimacy of the project. These counter-arguments point to other priorities that the Church should focus on before committing to such a heroic task: build smaller parochial abodes to supply the needs of the large-scale urban communities, restore run-down churches and re-construct some of the architectural monuments destroyed by the communist bulldozers.

11. Interview with Traian Basescu, published in 22, Year XIV (739), 4-10 May 2004.

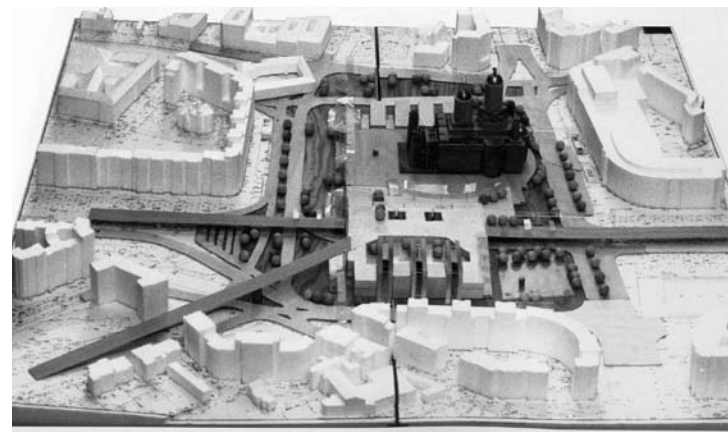


FIG. 4: Competition for the Romanian Patriarchal Cathedral, Bucharest, 1999

The architects have been divided between those who consider the claim of the Orthodox Church for a cathedral as legitimate, and a majority who opposes the project on different grounds: architectural counter-arguments emphasized the traditional “small church” typology as more appropriate for the spirit of Orthodoxy than large scale buildings. (However, one could argue that Saint Sophia in Constantinople – the culmination of Eastern Christianity thought – masterly embodies ideals of Orthodoxy in a monumental architecture.) Based on social and historic arguments, the need for a multitude of restoration and even re-construction projects is often considered more important than building one single large-scale church. Constantin Enache, professor, architect and member of the jury for the international urban planning competition “Bucharest 2000” and Alexandru Beldiman, architect and former president of the Romanian College of Architects, support the reconstruction of the Vacaresti Monastery, classified as architectural monument, built between 1716 and 1736, and demolished in 1986.¹²

Associating identity issues with monumental architecture is, however, a debatable matter since recent examples show a new propensity for under-sized churches as more humble, yet more compelling testimonies of faith. One of the most celebrated churches of the past years is the Jubilee Church in Rome designed by Richard Meier – a small parochial abode raised in a marginal sub-urban community. The Rome Vicariate chose to mark the anniversary of 2000 years of Christianity with a modest gesture instead of a

12. Interview with Constantin Enache in (Iosa 2006, 143) and the interview with Alexandru Beldiman published in *Dilema*, 248, 24-30 Oct. 1997.

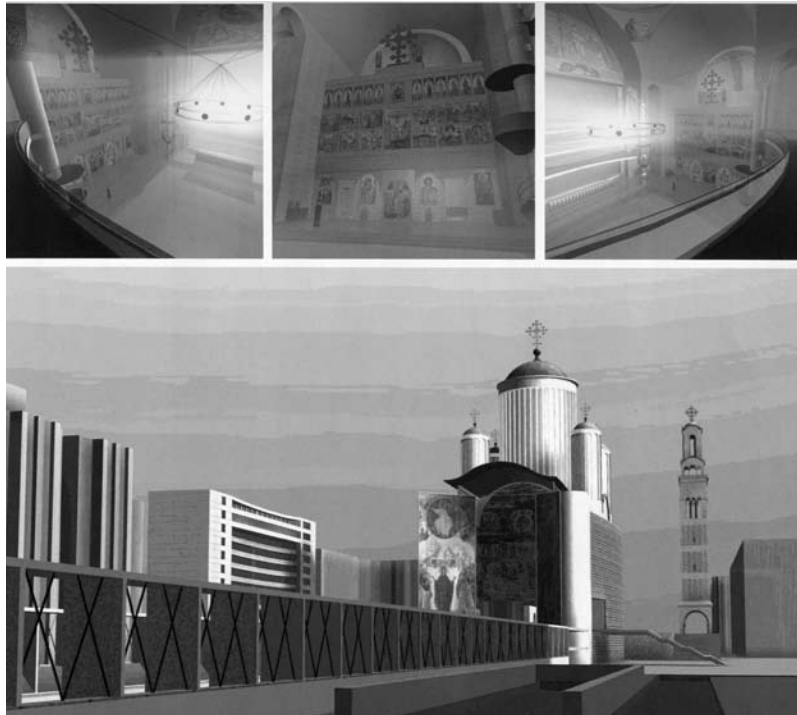


FIG. 5: Winning entry, competition for the Romanian Patriarchal Cathedral, Bucharest, 2002 (architect Augustin Ioan).

grandiose enterprise. In this context, the Romanian ecclesiastical hierarchy is invited to revisit its triumphal mission, focus on the quality of the clergy (Tudor Popescu 2004; Petre 2006) and design the cathedral as a public service catering to people in need and possibly located in one of the “black holes” of the city (Matei 2005).

A major criticism questions the moral status of the Romanian Orthodox Church whose position during communism is still ambiguous due to its non-interventional strategies in moments of crisis or even to a tacit collaboration with the establishment. Its officials never protested against any of the dictatorial measures of the regime, not even when twenty churches have been erased in Bucharest and other eight displaced from their original locations during the massive destruction of the Romanian capital in the 1980s. Therefore a gigantic representative church appears today as an unqualified claim. In the former Eastern European bloc, the Russian Orthodox Church faces the same moral controversies, but the recent re-construction of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior in Moscow (originally completed in 1860,



FIG. 6: The latest site for the national church, located behind the Parliament building (picture taken from the Parliament building.)

dynamited in 1931, and rebuilt in the 1990s) has been interpreted as an act of repentance of past communist sins (Chibireva 2002, 76).

Some of the contemporary debates on national identity build upon pre-war polemics polarized between the advocates of westernization and Latinity as a means of development and growth versus those of traditionalism and Orthodoxy. Comparing the Protestant doctrine with the Orthodox one, philosopher Catalin Avramescu considers Orthodoxy an obstacle against progress and emancipation, which implicitly undermines the idea of building a patriarchal cathedral as a symbol of national identity (Avramescu 2006).

As controversial as the project itself it has been the question of its location. Since the cathedral has “migrated” on many sites throughout the city, some particular locations have raised a strong opposition of the public opinion. One of them, publicly announced as the final one in 2004, is Parcul Carol (Carol Park), listed as historic monument since 1992. Already envisioned as an option in 1997, it was discarded at the time based on the argument that any construction of the size of the cathedral would irreparably damage the value of the venue. As the most vehemently contested site in the history of the patriarchal cathedral, the Carol Park raised the awareness of the civil society in a way that few other episodes in recent history have succeeded. Designed by the French landscape architect Edouard Redont¹³ for the 1906 International Exposition, the park also features the signatures of several celebrated Romanian architects, such as Ion D. Berindei, St. Burcus, V. Stefanescu, S. Petculescu, H. Maicu, and N.Cucu. The major controversies erupt

13. The Carol Park is one of the very few projects designed by Edouard Redont in Romania. He has also authored the urban planning for the Icoanei Park neighborhood in Bucharest and the Bibescu Park in Craiova.

when, without consulting any professional forum, the government issues a law that wipes part of the park off the list of protected monuments in order to facilitate the building of the cathedral. Pointing to the un-constitutional character of the decision, the civil society sanctions this abuse, protests are organized on the site, and the debate turns into a political dispute. 2004 was an electoral year and since the failure of the current administration was notorious, the political body has been criticized for trying to gain electoral sympathy by endorsing the projects of the Orthodox Church.

PUBLIC VISIBILITY AND THE STRUGGLE FOR MEANING

The history of the cathedral is also the narrative of the numerous sites identified as potential locations for the national church. When the liberal government made the first steps toward the construction of the cathedral in 1884, the site envisioned, located on the current Ion C. Bratianu Boulevard, would have required extensive expropriations and urban interventions. Therefore, when the issue was revisited in 1898 a new location was suggested, on the site of the former Sarindari Monastery (today the Military Circle). A commission in charge with the development of the project proposed the demolition of the 1656 metropolitan church to create room for a larger cathedral, suggestion that was fortunately rejected by the Metropolitan Iosif Gheorghian (Vasilescu 1998, 73-76). Later on, in 1927 after King Ferdinand's death, the Patriarch Miron Cristea, appointed Regent, demanded the City Hall to indicate the best site for the patriarchal cathedral. Different locations have been publicly discussed during the following two years, and in 1929 a committee assessed twelve sites and made the final recommendations.¹⁴ Three sites were discarded from the very beginning¹⁵ and other six were later rejected based on lack of favorable views or massive expropriations required.¹⁶ The committee suggested three potential locations: the intersection of Ion C. Bratianu and Carol Boulevards (today the National Theatre and the Intercontinental Hotel), Dealul Mihai Voda (the Mihai Voda Hill), replacing the Arsenal building, and the bottom of the Patriarchal Hill, extending down to the Central Market. The Patriarch decided in favor of the latter, where no expropriations were required, and only the existing vegetable market had to be relocated. Following the Orthodox tradition of consecrating the location of a future

14. The members of the committee were architect Petre Antonescu, architect Roger Bolomey, architect State Ciortan, engineer Gheorghe Bals, the Minister of Religious Affairs Aurel Vlad, and Dem Dobrescu, the mayor of Bucharest (Vasilescu 1998, 76).

15. Piata Romana, Dealul Schitu Magureanu, Dealul Patriarhiei (Vasilescu 1998, 76).

16. Sos. Kiseleff, near Piata Victoriei, Gradina Cismigiu, near the Medical School, the Carol Park, near Vama Postei, the Sf. Gheorghe Nou Church and the houses surrounding it (Vasilescu 1998, 76).

church, on May 11th 1929 a religious service, attended by politicians, members of the clergy, Army representatives, and Christian believers was held on the site, and a cross was placed to mark the site (Vasilescu 1998, 76).

Neither of the two locations proposed for the post-communist competitions entirely fulfilled the expectations of the parties involved. The one in Piata Unirii (Union Square) was dismissed on both symbolic and practical grounds: in addition to traffic constraints and potential floods, a low area such as Piata Unirii was considered inappropriate for the most representative sacred space of the nation. The site of the second competition, located on Bulevardul Unirii (Union Avenue) was ultimately discharged probably in order to allow more economically profitable programs to be developed in the future.

The same debate is likely to be continued in relation to the latest location proposed in 2005: Dealul Arsenalului (The Arsenal Hill) (figure 7), a vast vacant site in the close proximity of the same Parliament building. After the death of Patriarch Teoctist on July 30th 2007, it was unclear what the future of the project will be. However, on November 29th 2007, the new Patriarch Daniel, supported by President Traian Basescu and government officials, laid the corner stone of the potential church on this very site. Currently, no other competitions are envisioned in the near future, and the procedure to commission the project is very ambiguous.

The "migration" of the cathedral along so many different settings in the past one hundred fifty years raises fundamental questions on the nature of a sacred place. According to Mircea Eliade's ontological theories, the sacred nature of a place is an inherent quality that humans can only discover, but not establish (Eliade 1959). Contemporary scholars in the study of the sacred, such as Edward Linenthal or David Chidester among others, propose a vision of sacrality that resides in the contested character of the site, in controversial incidents such as battles, riots, heroic deaths or sacrifices that generate and inscribe meaning (Chidester 1995). In other words, a sacred site is a site that celebrates an event. Recent examples confirm this archival character of sacred spaces. The Cathedral of Christ the Savior in Moscow is the reconstruction on the same site of the church consecrated in 1883 and later demolished during the communist regime. In Belgrade, another capital with an Orthodox population, the Saint Sava Cathedral was finished in 2004, on the site where the bones of Saint Sava are supposed to have been burned by the Ottoman Turks in 1595. Even Rafael Moneo's recently completed lavish and sumptuous Catholic Cathedral in Los Angeles replaced a smaller church located on the same site. What happens, then, when no particular setting is privileged among others? The case in point is the narrative of the Romanian

patriarchal cathedral whose unsuccessful history is partly determined by the arbitrariness of the locations considered. Ironically, the politics of visibility that the clergy and different governments have orchestrated are ultimately sabotaged by the fundamental lack of meaning of all these different sites.

These ongoing debates reinforce Verdery's study of the split between indistinct "us" and "them" in post-socialist societies, reflecting at the same time strategies of reciprocal legitimization of secular and religious powers. Political decisions have always shaped the destinies of the cities, and the recent urban history of Bucharest parallels the evolution of its administration from a rigid authoritative structure under communism to the *laissez faire* post-socialist governments. During the socialist era, the brutal erasure of entire districts was followed by the imposition of a new rigid urban grid, whereas the post-communist liberalization of the market generated the rampant construction effervescence manifested in the last seventeen years. The dissolution of one single absolutist rule spawned new politics of visibility in the public realm that aim to affirm the identity and power of institutions formerly marginalized or quasi absent in the socialist regime: banks, churches, commercial and business centers. As part of this broader phenomenon, the ongoing saga of the Romanian patriarchal cathedral provides the opportunity to delve into the relations between Church and state and their impact on the development of the city. Undermined by decades of communist propaganda, the Orthodox Church sees unstated political alliances as beneficial for its projects that unfold from retrieving expropriated lands, to building new worship spaces. Conversely, counting on the respectability of the Church as an institution, different political parties have loudly promoted its initiatives, particularly during electoral times, as an attempt to consolidate a meager civil endorsement.

Weakened by its communist legacy, the Romanian society calls for a new political class expected to be honorable and trustworthy, and therefore clergy and politicians invested a huge price in a national church seen as a vehicle employed to construct the integrity of a traumatized society. The Romanian case offers the opportunity to reflect upon the potential of architecture to act as a healing agent, and the role of decision making factors that negotiate the politics of visibility in the public sphere. While presenting an opportunity to re-evaluate the architectural manifestations of power, it reveals the grounds of political games whose strategies, reflected in the cityscape, aim to secure an image of probity and morality.

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Figures 1-5: Ioan, Augustin (ed.). *Concursuri pentru Catedrala Patriarhală Ortodoxă / Competitions for the Patriarchal Orthodox Cathedral*. București: Noi Media Print, 2004.

Figure 6: Andreea Mihalache

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Abstract

Keywords

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The Rhetoric of the Interwar Period The Competition for a New Office Building for the Norwegian Shipowners' Association

Birgitte Sauge

The exclusive competition for *Norges Rederforbund* – the Norwegian Shipowners' Association's – new office building at Rådhusgata 23 in Oslo got under way in the fall of 1930. The task was to create a building which would represent one of Norway's oldest and most significant enterprises: shipping. The site was one of Oslo's most attractive, in close proximity to the waterfront, Oslo City Hall, Akershus Fortress and the popular restaurant Skansen. The competition became an arena where modernist ideas broke with older and more traditional perceptions through the use of written and graphic arguments in a rhetorical contest. Hopefully, this article can contribute to our understanding of the architectural competition as an exercise in rhetoric.¹

Rhetoric is traditionally associated with the speech. The primary objective of rhetoric is to convince and evoke emotions in the listener. Contemporary research has applied rhetoric in order to understand other kinds of expressions, first texts and later on different visual expressions and media.

1. The article is based on a portion of my doctoral dissertation, Sauge, 2003. The dissertation was a study of architectural drawings from different views in order to discuss the value and meaning of the drawings. The classical analysis of architectural drawings as aesthetical objects is "Architectural Drawing and Draughtsmen" by Reginald Blomfield (1912). A field of research was not constituted until the 1970's. Royal Institute of British Architects, Cooper Hewitt Museum, New York, Deutsches Architektur Museum, Frankfurt, Canadian Center for Architecture, Montreal, Drawing Center, New York and Architektursammlung Technische Universität München were leading contributors, together with some of the architectural journals. Some of the scholars from these institutions especially focused on architectural competitions. The catalogue published for the inauguration of the CCA in 1989 contained an article by Hélène Lipstadt on architectural publications, competitions and exhibitions (Blau and Kaufmann, ed. 1989). The same year she edited the anthology "The experimental tradition" where Berry Bergdoll introduced the distinction "academia" and "marketplace" for the understanding of the two different arenas or types of architectural competitions (Lipstadt, ed. 1989, 21-25). Academia is a pedagogical and ideal competition developed within the Art academy tradition. While the marketplace is the concrete and public competition developed within the architect's business. Interesting in this context is also the thesis on architectural competitions in Great Britain (Harper, 1983 and Bassin, 1984), Germany (Becker, 1992), Sweden (Wærn, 1996) and Norway (Tostrup, 1996).

Based on classical rhetoric, this article demonstrates via the competition of Norwegian Shipowners' Association how the overall notion of a rhetorical context and concepts from rhetoric such as "docere", "delectare", "movere" can be applied in order to understand architectural competitions, i.e. why one entry is chosen over another as the winner. Additional concepts developed by recent scholars will also be included in this analysis in order to understand what kind of arguments the architects applied in order to succeed with their entry, how the program was described and how the entries were received by the jury and the client.

It is the archival material documenting the competition's program, the submissions and the jury's assessment, in addition to material from the subsequent planning process, which provide for rhetorical analyses of both the written descriptions from the architects' hands and the jury's considerations, along with the competition presentation boards. This implies that the field of research (data) of this article is the drawings and the archives, not the erected building. In order to make such a rhetorical analysis of graphic expressions, original drawings are necessary. The exceptionally rich holdings of the Norwegian Shipowners' Association's archives contain an almost complete set of all six submissions, in addition to the written material.² The reason for choosing the NSA's competition for this analysis was therefore the qualities of the archives and not the architectonic qualities of the erected building. Nevertheless it ought to be emphasized that it was Norway's leading architects who participated in this competition.³ Furthermore the years around 1930 represent a period of upheaval when many diverse views of contemporary architecture flourished. The Norwegian architectural competitions reflected this variety, and thus the interwar period is particularly suited to a demonstration of the architectural competition as rhetorical practice.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND PRECONDITIONS

In order to describe how the architectural competition can be categorized as an arena for rhetoric, where different participants consciously used written or graphic arguments in order to win, the article will first detail the historical context of the competition. This will consist of a short presentation of the competition program and the requirements concerning the office build-

2. The perspective renderings were originals, but the orthographic drawings were copies.
3. Head of the jury Harald Aars often represented NAL in competition juries. There were recurring figures on the prize lists as well. The leading Norwegian competition architect around 1900 was Holger Sinding-Larsen. Towards 1920 Andreas Bjerke and Georg Eliasen were most prominent, while Gudolf Blakstad and Herman Munthe-Kaas emerged as leading figures in the 1920's, along with certain other younger architects. Blakstad and Munthe-Kaas continued their winning streak in the first half of the 1930's. Sauge (2003).

ing and the execution of the presentations boards, the client, the jury and its members and finally the entries and their authors. The overall context is the commercial architectural competition as an institution, the division of labor in an architectural office and contemporary graphic presentation methods and the use of conventions in competition designs. Together these constitute what we can call general framework conditions. By revealing these preconditions, the individual features of the single entry will appear, features that may be read as rhetorical arguments.

The institutionalization of the architectural competition implies many aspects,⁴ but relevant in this study was the development of the competition drawing as a genre in itself, distinguished by common graphic conventions for the drafting of a particular drawing. As precondition to this point of view is that architectural drawings are to be considered as a conventional expression of an imaginative three dimensional reality projected on a two dimensional surface. In earlier research descriptions of the competition genre's style can be found, in addition to the prevailing classicism, romanticism or modernism.⁵ In the concept of style there lies a notion of affinity between form and content, that is to say that sketches which depict a building in a classicizing formal language are conveyed through classicizing graphical conventions, etc. Contemporary researchers (as well as contemporary architects) have not been particularly concerned with this aspect of architectural competitions, while the contemporary literature indicates that interwar period architects were conscious of this.⁶

Both the concrete programs and the relevant conventions encouraged the homogeneous quality of the entries, and thus preserved the architects' anonymity in a given competition. Yet within the framework conditions for competitions there was an appeal to break precisely with the anonymity principle.

4. Approximately 200 public architectural competitions are known from their presentation in contemporary periodicals to have occurred during the period 1884-1940. The first period in the Norwegian architectural competition history can be described as a time of experimentation and testing. There is much to suggest that the competition process functioned satisfactorily for the sponsoring clients, but that the architects were displeased. Only after 1874, when the Norwegian architects established their own trade organization, did competitions acquire a more fixed form. *Teknisk Ugeblad*, the trade journal, publicized the first formally accepted competition regulations in 1907. The rules established that the specific program had to clarify the nature of the announced competition, contain information about the site conditions and state terms related to the building's materials, construction and spatial design. All in all, the Norwegian architectural competition system functioned, from 1907, as a controlled system between the clients and the architects for entering into project contracts. The professional architectural competition as it was practiced abroad, thus became a fact in Norway. Sauge (2003).
5. See, for example, Burges (1861) 15, Spiers (1892) 46, Crook (1981) 61-62.
6. In their book from 1931 (66-70) Farey and Edvards explicitly stated that competition entries must not reflect individual styles.

This had to do with the fact that presenting the project in the best possible way was entirely essential to winning the competition. My review of Norwegian, competition drawings up through 1940, confirmed that Norwegian architects also placed great emphasis on graphic presentation, for example through fashionable use of color and perspective, or by even employing special hallmarks or drawing styles to garner attention. We will now take a closer look at the client and the jury, the program and the architects and their final entries.

A REPRESENTATIVE MEETING PLACE IN THE CAPITAL⁷

For several years the Norwegian Shipowners' Association (hereafter also: NSA) had worked on plans for constructing its own headquarters in Oslo with its preferred architect Holger Sinding-Larsen. In the end the chosen site was *Sjømannshjemmet* (the sailors' residence) which was located at the top of *Rådhusgaten* (City Hall Street) near the restaurant Skansen by *Kontraskjæret* (the open area adjacent to Akershus Fortress). After the association's board decided to hold an architectural competition, a building committee and lay jury were appointed. The committee advocated arranging an exclusive design competition, and the following architects were invited: Arnstein Arneberg, Gudolf Blakstad and Herman Munthe-Kaas, Andreas Bjercke and Georg Eliassen, Egill Reimers, Finn Berner and Holger Sinding-Larsen. The jury also wanted Lars Backer to participate, but he died unexpectedly that spring; the competition thus lost one of the era's and the capital's youngest and most renowned modern architects.

THE PROGRAM

City architect Harald Aars was the jury's professional representative and had responsibility for both the program and the concluding assessment. Instead of defining an independent aesthetic criterion for the building, the program stated that "the headquarters shall provide a representative character as a meeting place in the capital for the country's shipping professionals."⁸ – Yet what exactly did "representative" here signify? The program gave no clear account, but referred to other precedent-setting buildings. In particular, proximity to the soon-to-be City Hall (on which construction began in 1931) in *Pipervika* (the name of central Oslo's waterfront area) under the direction of Arneberg and Poulsson was cited, and *Hannevigården* in *Rådhusgaten* designed by Henrik Bull – and to not

7. Source material is preserved in the NSA's archives.

8. The competition program, page 1, from the NSA's archives. Unpublished, dated 19.7.1930, signed H.M.Wrangell, the building committee's foreman.

forget the Oslo fjord itself, shippers' own element. Notably absent from the cited buildings were the neighbouring fortress complex at Akershus and the newly-opened restaurant Skansen on *Kontraskjæret* designed by Lars Backer. With this in mind it is tempting to view the Norwegian Shipowners' Association as a conservative and self-conscious organization that wanted a functional and conspicuous office building in the cityscape, one which related to the classicizing tradition.

The program guidelines called for, briefly, rental offices in the first through fourth floors, while the NSA would be located on the fifth and sixth floors with offices, conference rooms for the executive and managing boards of directors, dining hall, lobby and possibly a reception hall. It was presumed that the new building would be as tall as possible, with the main cornice at the same height as the adjacent building, *Hannevigården*.

The program also defined the format, subject matter and scale of the drawings.⁹ The orthographic drawings were to be executed in black and white, although pencil and ozalid copies could also be used, as well as brushed washes in shades of grey. Perspective renderings should be based on a scale of 1:100 and have the picture plane in the building's nearest corner. Treatment of the perspective was unrestricted. In addition to the drawings, a concise description was to be submitted as well, with indications of materials and the like. The program for the competition was approved by The National Association of Norwegian Architects and was thus in accordance with standard competition practices in Norway at the time.¹⁰

The submissions

What characterized the proposals from the six firms? What kinds of office buildings were put forward, and how were the individual proposals presented? In order to provide a basis for the subsequent rhetorical analyses, I will give a short description of each of the entries subjects and architectonic concepts and the varying modes of graphic presentation that were employed.

9. The practice of holding public architectural competitions developed simultaneously in western nations in the second half of the 1800s. This "institutionalization" of the architectural competition meant that the execution of individual competitions was regulated by fixed rules which secured both the client's and the architects' rights. The principle of the participants to be judged by architects according to equal standards was crucial. Another principle that was crucial, was the anonymity of the participants. In practice it was maintained by the use of a slogan instead of signatures and instructions with clear criteria for the graphic execution of a specific drawing. (Lipstadt, 1989).
10. The plans for the competition and the program were dispatched to the board of the *Oslo Arkitektforenings* program committee for approval. The committee determined that the program was in accordance with the accepted competition rules and NAL's general assembly gave its approval, dated 15 august, 1930.

NR. 1: GUDOLF BLAKSTAD & HERMAN MUNTHE-KAAS.

MOTTO: "LEIV ERIKSSON".

The proposal depicts a functionalistic office building of six regular stories, capped by a higher seventh floor. The main entrance is asymmetrically placed on the facade towards *Rådhusgaten*, and the *Voldgaten* facade is stepped. The building's construction is envisioned as a right-angled system, and in the plan the rooms are organized around a large hall rising through all the floors. The archival material consists of ten presentation boards in total. All of the orthographic drawings are carried out with ruled lines in pen and ink.¹¹

NR. 2: ARNSTEIN ARNEBERG.

MOTTO: "LINJEFART" (LINER SERVICE)

The proposal shows a modernistic office building with classicistic features in both the elevations and the plans. The main structure consists of five stories and a sixth with extended height, over which a tower rises another six stories. The plans consist of two parallel wings with offices connected to a third wing towards *Rådhusgaten*, housing a foyer with stairs and elevators. The archival material contains six presentation boards. The orthographic drawings are executed with ruled lines most likely in black ink, while the perspective rendering is most likely a combination of ruled lines and freehand drawing, primarily in black ink, and perhaps with an element of charcoal.¹²

NR. 3: EGILL REIMERS.

MOTTO: "ET TERNINGKAST" (A THROW OF THE DICE)

This submission proposes a traditional office building of six-plus-two stories with neoclassical volumes and decor. The plan is U-shaped, and the symmetrically placed main entrance on *Rådhusgaten* leads into a grand central hall

11. The archived material consists of ten presentation boards. Only the perspective is original, the remaining boards exist only as photocopies: five plans (1st floor with location, 3rd-4th floors with alternative stairwell, 5th, 6th and 7th floors. In all of the plans the rooms are labeled and the square footage is stated. Furnishings are drawn in on the 6th and 7th floors, two sections (north-south and west-east) are not indicated on the plan. Street level, trees, cars and figures, two facades/elevations (*Rådhusgaten* and *Øvre Voldgaten*), neighboring buildings indicated. One perspective (in NAM's archive there is a preliminary sketch for the original perspective in the NSA's collection; aside from this exception, no sketches exist). No scale ratio is specified, but all are executed in 1:200 scale.
12. The original presentation boards have not been saved, but there are many sketches in NAM's archive for plans, elevations and perspectives, and three documents regarding the competition program. Six boards are known from photocopies in the NSA's possession. 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 6th floors + alternative B of the 1st-4th floors and reception floor. Furnishings are specified in the 5th and 6th floors. In all the plans the rooms are labeled and the square footage is specified. Long section with two construction periods indicated and short (not indicated on the plan). Trees and figures are drawn in. Two elevations facing *Øvre Voldgate* and *Rådhusgaten*.

with galleries. The office wings are somewhat displaced in relation to *Øvre Voldgate*. In the written description the construction materials are specified as reinforced concrete and brick and the facade material as finely hewn white granite. The drawings consist of six presentation boards. The boards seem to be drawn with ruled lines in black ink with some washes added in the plans, sections and elevations. The perspective rendering is done freehand in pen and black ink on tracing paper.¹³

NR. 4: ANDREAS BJERKE AND GEORG ELIASSEN

MOTTO: "SEIL, DAMP, MOTOR" (SAIL, DAMP, MOTOR)

The drawings detail a six-story office building in a careful functionalistic style, crowned with an extended seventh floor. The unifying theme of the *Rådhusgaten* facade is a continuous glass area with a tower-like finish placed asymmetrically on the facade. The plan is L-shaped, built around a large open space, and the vertical axis of communication is demonstrated in the facade's glass area. In the architects' description the envisioned construction is described as a supporting skeleton of iron girders both in pillars and beams and facades clad in brick and partly in natural stone. The entry consisted of a total of six presentation boards. It appears as though all of the orthographic drawings were done with ruled lines in pen and black washes. The perspective was laid out in pencil with ruled lines and subsequently finished off freehand in a combination of soft pencil, charcoal and colored oil pastel on tracing paper.¹⁴

NR. 5: FINN BERNER.

MOTTO: "SOM MAN REDER..." (AS ONE WOULD SAIL...)

The facades in the sketch suggest a five-story office building in a simple neoclassical tone with a stepped-back tower of two stories and with a hipped roof. The main facade is symmetrical with a centrally placed entrance and a higher first floor. In the perspective on the other hand the building takes on a more medieval quality. The plan is L-shaped, with a middle corridor in the wing towards *Voldgaten*. The archived drawing material contains seven

13. Only the perspective is original; the remaining presentation boards exist as photocopies. 1st – 8th floors. Alternative entrance indicated in the plans for 1st-4th floors. Furnishings are drawn in the plans for the 7th and 8th floors. Square footage is indicated, but the labeling of individual rooms is scant. Sections X-Y and Z-Ø are both noted on the plan. Elevations toward *Øvre Voldgate* and *Rådhusgaten*, with shading.
14. Basement, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th floors and roof plan. Furnishings are specified in the plan for the 7th floor. Rooms are labeled but square footage is not specified. A-A (indicated on 7th floor plan), B-B (indicated on 2nd floor plan) and C-C (indicated on 3rd, 4th, 5th floor plans) + a small facade. Figures in the sections. *Voldgaten* elevation, shading or reflections in the windows.



NR. 1: Gudolf Blakstad & Herman Munthe-Kaas. Motto: "Leiv Eriksson".



NR. 2: Arnstein Arneberg. Motto: "Linjefart" (Liner service).



NR. 3: Egill Reimers. Motto: "Et terningkast" (A throw of the dice).



NR. 4: Andreas Bjerke and Georg Eliassen. Motto: "Seil, Damp, Motor" (Sail, Damp, Motor).



NR. 5: Finn Berner. Motto: "Som man reder..." (As one would sail...).



NR. 6: Holger Sinding Larsen. Motto: "Fram" (Onwards).

presentation boards in total. The two elevation drawings on the original board are photographic reproductions, and they appear to have been drawn in pencil with ruled lines and laid out in pen and black ink with washed shadows. The areas surrounding the facades are possibly in pencil or charcoal. The perspective was carried out freehand in red chalk on paper, in an extremely sketch-like manner in comparison with the others.¹⁵

NR. 6: HOLGER SINDING LARSEN

MOTTO: "FRAM" (ONWARDS)

The submission depicts a modernistic office building of six stories, with an extended seventh floor. The long rows of windows give the building its particular character, along with its rounded corner construction. The rooms are organized around a small interior courtyard directly accessible from *Voldgaten*. The main entrance is situated to the right on the main façade. The archives contain a total of four presentation boards. All of the orthographic drawings appear to have been done with ruled lines in pen and black ink. Reflection in the windows may have been done in washes. The perspective was rendered in a combination of ruled lines and freehand drawing in medium-hard pencil, in a combination of strokes and values, probably on tracing paper.¹⁶

TREND, COMPETITION STYLE OR INDIVIDUAL STYLE?

All of the six submissions to the Norwegian Shipowners' Association competition follow the instructions fixed by the program concerning use of a motto and the size and categories of graphic representations, scale etc. As to the graphic conventions and the architectonic expression, they cover a broad spectrum in terms of both, and thus they create a complex portrait of the Norwegian architectural milieu around 1930.

As I intimated earlier, from an aesthetic perspective it is natural to associate common features, whether they be graphic or architectonic, with the use of conventions pertaining to relevant styles; in this context that means con-

15. Two original presentation boards exist: two elevations and one perspective. All of the boards exist in photocopied form. 1st, 2nd, 3rd-5th, 6th, 7th floors + alternative plans for the 1st- 5th floors (moved rear stairwell). Furnishings specified on 7th floor. Only the rooms on the 6th and 7th floors are labeled, and no square footage indications are provided. None of them are labeled or indicated in plan. *Rådhusgaten* and *Øvre Vollgate* elevations, shading, figures, cars and sky are drawn.

16. Only the perspective is original, the remaining presentation boards exist only as photocopies. 1st - 7th floors + plan of the tower. Alternative placement of secondary stairwell is not included. The rooms are only partly labeled, but square footage is consistently indicated. Section A-A and B-B, both are indicated on plan for 7th floor. *Rådhusgaten* and *Øvre Voldgate* elevations. Shading and reflections in windows as well as the neighboring building's cornice lines and a tree are drawn.

ventions within classicism, romanticism and modernism, or within the genre of competition drawing. Yet the material shows great freedom in relation to the conventions as they are described in the literature; from the descriptions we see that the classical, the two modernistic and the three derivations all employed related conventions in the orthographic projections. Especially striking are the few elements of a modernistic quality. Moreover a number of variations appear in particular submissions and in each drawing.

That Norwegian architects did not consistently follow the competition style such as it was described in the literature probably relates to the fact that the style was an ideal description. From an aesthetic standpoint one can also possibly explain the many differences with the concept of "individual style", but I will not elaborate on that here.¹⁷ Instead I will point out that my analyses indicate that what was in the submissions was a certain connection between architectural expression and choice of conventions, and between the type of building and use of conventions. Likewise the analyses point out that different conventions were utilized in different genres of architectural drawing. These results thus substantiate the assumption that architects in the first decades of the 1900s chose conventions and architectonic vernacular rather freely in relation to the concrete construction project, and that they consciously chose to break with or mix conventions in order to win a competition. With the aid of a rhetorical perspective I will now go deeper into this thesis.

"MODERN CLASSICISM"

Rhetorical perspective means here a shift of focus from the competition submissions themselves to the viewer or the user of the entries. My hypothesis is thus that the six entries' architectonic expression and graphic mode of presentation can be read as the architect's strategic adaptations to the client, represented here by the jury. In order to carry out this kind of reception analysis a view of the persons who comprised the jury and the relationships they had to architecture have to be established. We will first look at the professional jury member and how his opinions on architecture can be inferred from the recommendation report. Subsequently we shall look at the building committee and their treatment, as noted in the minutes of the committee's meetings.

Professional juryman Harald Aars (1875-1945)¹⁸ was trained as an architect in Kristiania and London. Before Aars established his own practice in 1904 he worked as an assistant to Sinding-Larsen for two years. At the time when the

17. The concept individual style is used in the meaning unconscious characteristics to be found in a series of different works executed by the same artist. Giovanni Morelli was the first to use this method based on the concept.

18. Based on information in the *Norsk Kunstnerleksikon*.

Norwegian Shipowners' Association competition was arranged, Aars was the official municipal architect for Oslo, a position he held for 20 years. Aars is described as a proponent of the national romantic approach to the profession. Aars also had central roles in *NAL* and *Oslo Byes Vel*, and he participated on the juries of a number of architectural competitions. In the NSA competition Aars represented the professional weight, the person with both practical and organizational experience and familiarity with Oslo's architecture. Aars was of course also skilled at reading all types of architectural drawings.

Aars' assessment of the six entries can be summed up in the four criteria: realism, economy, functionality and aesthetics¹⁹. In the first criterion, realism, Aars looked at the relation between the respective submissions and the relevant building laws and local codes in the form of construction lines and heights. Aars pointed out that two of the entries did not conform to the regulation building lines and that four of the six diverged so greatly from the regulation building height that their credibility as realistic construction projects was weakened. For the recommended winning submission Aars himself proposed a way to correct the divergence such that a building permit could still be obtained. In the second criterion, economy, the relation between the entries developed surfaces, useable square footage, construction, use of materials and estimated costs were considered. Positive and negative aspects were here distributed evenly between the different entries. In the third criterion, functionality, Aars considered the entries' "practical utility for the purpose". Here the functional aspect of the proposed buildings was judged. Aars place particular emphasis on the development of the horizontal and vertical channels of communication, the lighting conditions and the NSA's offices and other representative spaces. His mention for the recommended entry is the only predominantly positive one. The final criterion, aesthetics, concerned judgment of the proposed buildings' architectonic qualities. Yet rather than consider the aesthetic in and of itself, Aars focused on how the building's «representative character» came to be expressed in the given submission, and consequently how the building's function as a symbol of the shipowners was expressed in the architecture. As good examples of representative spaces, Aars mentioned the central hall, but more importantly the conference rooms and reception areas, in terms of their placement within the building, their interior fixtures and expression in the facades. Aars considered the meeting rooms in entry nr. 1 to be good. In describing the facades in entries 2, 3, 5 and 6, Aars used positive words

19. The account of Aars' assessment is a summary of his own, based on pages 4-9 in the unpublished report, 1930.

such as solidity, strength, monumentality, beautiful proportions, accommodation and notable underscoring of the representative elements. Negative statements include pointing out that the representative parts were poorly expressed in the modern facades of entries nr. 1 and 6, and that the proposed height of the building in nr. 2 would result in it competing with the City Hall. Concerning Aars' preferred submission, the placement of the meeting and reception rooms were commended and not least the vertical window section for both facilitating the transition with the lower part of the building which bordered *Hanneviggården* and expressing the building's objective. Aars also suggested that the lighting in this window would provide a good impression of the harbor view at night. He further praised the brick facades for their calm, well-proportioned, dignified and monumental character.

Harald Aars' final conclusion was to award nr. 2, motto 'Sail, Steam, Motor', author Bjercke and Eliassen.²⁰ His evaluation is a good example of a rhetorical text, insofar as it is built up around arguments that reinforce Bjercke and Eliassen's submission. In his evaluation Aars placed great emphasis on arguing in favor of precisely this entry's possibilities for being realized and its functional merits, while at the same balancing between professional integrity, municipal obligations and the task of satisfying the Norwegian Shipowners' Association's needs as a client. Most interesting is the rhetoric surrounding the concept of architectonic quality. I read Aars' interpretation of the NSA's desire for a representative office building by emphasizing the facades' first floor, the main entrance and the NSA's conference rooms, as traditional office buildings were designed. It was implicit that the two modernistic buildings were unsuitable for expressing this representativeness. Following this logic, submissions nr. 2, 3 and 5 should on the other hand be sufficient expressions of a representative office building. A natural conclusion is thus that entry nr. 4, as a mix of traditional and modern architecture, only partly fulfilled the NSA's requirements. When Aars recommends Bjercke and Eliassen's submission, he does so by downplaying its modern features. On the one hand he refrains from mentioning a number of modernistic features and on the other hand those that are mentioned are described as "harmonic design" and "expressive of the building's purpose", i.e., qualities usually associated with traditional architecture.

"CLASSICAL OFFICE BUILDING"

The building committee for the Norwegian Shipowners' Association comprised the lay jury and was superior to the professional jury. The committee

20. Aars, unpublished report, (1930) 12. NSA's archives.

consisted of leading members of the NSA itself. The head of the committee was the president of the NSA, Hakon Magne Wrangell (1859-1942). The majority of the building committee's members had previously been clients of and collaborated with some of the participating competing architects. Nevertheless we can presume that the members of the building committee had limited training in reading orthographic architectural drawings, and that it was really the rendered perspectives and accompanying descriptions that served as the basis for their comprehension of the projects. A bit of a simplification perhaps, but not surprisingly one can say that the building committee represented traditional attitudes to architecture.

As a representative of posterity's historians, I would have preferred more detailed minutes of the meetings, but the protocols that remain provide a glimpse into the discussions about the submissions. The building committee especially stressed two circumstances, namely functionality of the office locations and the exterior's aesthetics. The presentation on the architectonic expression is rather vaguely formulated, insofar as it is only expressed in the desire for a representative building that compliments its neighbor, *Hanneviggården*, which the NSA specifically stressed as a good example of a representative office building. Viewed in connection with the image of the individual members, we can thus presume that the committee associated "representativeness" with the way classicizing architecture conveyed a building's functions. As we recall, Aars overemphasized the representative qualities of the recommended entry, but one committee member, Anton Fredrik Klaveness, was not convinced. He stated that "none of the submitted entries satisfies the requirement that the building provide a representative and characteristic expression of the shipping industry. Nor is the arrangement of the offices satisfying." Nevertheless, the committee resolved to support Aars' nomination. As did the NSA's executive board, after some discussion, and on condition that the winning entry was revised and adapted.²¹ Their primary objection was that "the monumental character that one can expect to find in a building will through the ages come to represent in its capital city Norway's revered and innately natural industry, shipping" is lacking. The notion of the monumental is further elaborated on inasmuch as "the building shall manifest itself as the junction for significant industry and as a meeting place for a powerful organization. The building must not be inferior to similar institutions' buildings abroad." The executive board's arguments were primarily about the building's symbolic function, but in the end the aesthetic aspects of the submission were also touched on. In fact the

21. Meeting minutes dated 25.2.1931.

executive board put forth a concrete suggestion for changes that would increase the building's monumentality. Anti-monumental elements that they would eliminate included the vertical glass area, the closed corner section and the restaurant on the first floor. In addition the dimensions of the main stairs ought to be increased "in order to stress that the building is rather more than the usual commercial building", the facades ought to have fewer windows and the corner ought to open towards the west, first and foremost to strengthen the impression of the building as seen from *Piperviken* and the new *Rådhusplassen*. Overall the entry is perceived as too functionalistic and fashionable, a direction "that scarcely will suffice for anything other than a factory or office building in the strictest sense."

DOCERE, DELECTARE, MOVERE

Despite the objections, NSA decided to give Andreas Bjercke and Georg Eliassen the task of developing the project on condition that the winning submission would be adapted and further developed in consultation with the building committee. As we saw, the credit for this can, to a great extent, be ascribed to Aars and his brilliant rhetorical skills. Yet perhaps the NSA's decision can also be attributed to another rhetorical aspect of the competition genre, namely that Bjercke and Eliassen's victory had to do with the way their submission was presented? That the architects therefore, with the aid of graphic arguments, or by the exclusion of graphic elements, succeeded in presenting a proposal in such a way that the jury found it to be the best? Through such a rhetorical approach I will first illustrate how the application of the principles of rhetoric can inform our comprehension of architectural drawings in general and the submissions to the NSA competition in particular. Because no equivalent rhetorical analysis of this type of architectural representation has been done before, it is also appropriate to clarify how classical rhetorical concepts can be applied to architectural drawings in general.²²

The primary objective of rhetoric is to convince and evoke emotions in the listener. In practice this happens in three ways, inasmuch as the speech teaches (*docere*), delights (*delectare*) and moves (*movere*) the listener. In rhetoric the first two effects are considered preconditions for the third.²³ When we apply rhetoric to architectural drawings, it is natural to connect these three principles with different genres of architectural drawing and their respective functions. That is to say, the primary function of construction drawings can be per-

22. Tostrup's thesis (1996) is a reference work on rhetorical analysis based on texts and published entries. The perspective in my thesis is an attempt to extend that.

23. . Vickers (1988) 63.

ceived as teaching the user or, in other words, providing instructions as to how the building should be concretely erected, with detailed specifications for the building's scale, materials and construction. By contrast, the primary function of competition submissions is to delight and move a potential client, that is to say, to persuade the jury that a particular idea is the best by means of simplified and stunning presentations. In this way one can explain why the graphic presentation of different genres of architectural drawing varies and that particular emphasis is placed on presentation when it comes to competition entries.

Another possibility is to view rhetoric's three functions in relation to architectural drawings' various representation methods. This means that the didactic function is related to orthographic projections, while the delightful and moving corresponds to the perspective.²⁴ Seen in relation to the NSA's competition entry this means that the orthographic projections, which are formulated on the basis of their didactic or instructive function, communicated with the professional jury, i.e., Aars. Because Aars understood the abstract conventions in plans, sections and elevations, he could evaluate the realistic, economic and functional aspects of the entries. From his evaluation we see that Aars was also concerned with the submissions' aesthetic qualities, i.e., the pleasing and persuasive elements of the drawings. The assessment shows that aesthetic consideration was not exclusively in connection with the perspective renderings, but also with plans and elevations. This can explain the use of perspectives and naturalistic elements in the orthographic projections. These were conventions that, because they were universally recognizable, first and foremost communicated with the lay jury. Expressed in rhetorical terms this means that in order to convince the building committee, the competition entries utilized elements that were delightful and moving.

RHETORICAL STYLE OR *MODUS*

In order to understand how the instructive, delightful and moving functions came to be expressed in the six concrete competition entries I will refer to a notion in classical rhetoric which is used regarding the formal aspect of artistic expression, namely *modus* (mode).²⁵ Originally the speech's mode was divided into three: the high, middle and low style, as suited the situation, time period and audience.²⁶ Later, mode also acquired a moralistic meaning insofar as the choice of style was adapted to the speech's topic; that is to say, the low style was utilized for insignificant topics, the middle style for

24. In this mode of consideration the axonometric projections are seen as a mix of instructive, pleasing and moving elements.

25. . Bialostocki (1981) 12-42.

26. . Cicero. Ibid. 16.

valuable ones, and high style for essential themes. During the Renaissance, Alberti made the connection between rhetoric's three modes and the classical orders: Doric as high style, Corinthian as low style and Ionic as the middle style.²⁷ Ideal Beaux-Arts conventions as in student's works' can be seen as an expression of the high style, while the low style is represented by construction drawings.

Another way of understanding architectural drawings in light of the *modus* notion is to view the choice of style in relation to the type of building. In a kind of extension of Alberti's rules for use of the orders, classical architects utilized different architectonic language, or *modus*, for different buildings, in keeping with the buildings' significance to society. In this way the conventions for the development of particular types of buildings evolved.²⁸ When it comes to the *modus* of office buildings, historically, by the end of the 1800s many styles, for example, Venetian palace style, neo-Gothic, Beaux-Arts classicism and neo-Baroque, were employed. By about 1900 modernistic tendencies could also be seen. In his book about building types Nikolaus Pevsner points out that it took a long time before international modernism, with its characteristic horizontal bands of windows, became the common style for office buildings.²⁹ This corresponds with the impression the NSA competition provides of the conventions for Norwegian office buildings. The variations among the submitted entries also indicate that the architects of the 1920s had great freedom of choice with respect to architectonic formal language. Expressed in *modi*, one can say that only Reimers, with his neoclassical entry, chose the high style, in keeping with the NSA's comprehension of a representative office building. Arneberg, Bjercke and Eliassen and Berner took the middle route. And the two modernist submissions from Blakstad and Munthe-Kaas and Sinding-Larsen can in this connection be seen as representative of the low *modus*. It is not unlikely that because of the choice of the low mode Blakstad and Munthe-Kaas and Sinding-Larsen compromised their chances of winning the competition. Modernism in itself, as a universal architectonic vernacular for all types of buildings, broke entirely for that matter with the classical distinction in *modus*.

27. At the end of the 1700s corresponding established rules could be found for the formal development of a painting, consolidated in the notion of «decorum». Decorum was divided into four areas: proportions, drawing or the execution of line, expression and composition. D. Bardon's description from 1765 names six types of contour lines that correspond to six different types of subject matter, depending upon the subject's value. Ibid. 29.

28. Pevsner describes how the conventions for an office building evolved since the first modern office building saw the light of day in London in 1819. Pevsner (1976) 213-224.

29. Ibid. 222.

“OBJECTIVE” AND “SUBJECTIVE” ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS

A third way rhetoric's use of *modus* can provide insight into the development of the competition entries is by applying the terms “objective”³⁰ and “subjective”³¹. I will not go into detail, but in the literature these two terms are related to the development of a given drawing and to the architect's intentions with the drawing. In the literature both construction drawings as a genre and orthographic drawings as a method of representation are described as objective, nearly uninfluenced by the architect. Related to the NSA's competition, this confirms that the orthographic drawings communicated best to the professional jury (i.e., Aars) by means of his ability to read abstracted architectural drawings. When it comes to the genres of competition submission and student work and the perspective as a representational method, these drawings are described in the literature as the architect's subjective expression made to influence the drawing's intended audience, in our instance the building committee. My perception is conversely that the objective and the subjective are not characteristics of the drawings, but rather that the viewer, via the conventions of graphic representation, perceives certain drawings as objective and others as subjective. In rhetorical terms, this implies that a given drawing can either teach, delight or move, depending on the situation for which it is used. What is perceived as instructive and delightful depends on the conventions and the users of the architectural drawings.

OBJECTIVE MODI

In a historical perspective, objective projections have been employed as fact and characterized by certain formal conventions: objective drawings belong to a drafting tradition where the line is essential to being able to fulfill the demands for accuracy, unambiguousness and clarity.³² Other features that are associated with objectivity are abstraction through striving for an anonymous expression, absence of shading and emphasis on the surface. Within classicism, objective qualities were associated with orthographic projections, and related conventions became, as we have seen, a hallmark of modernism. All of the NSA's orthographic drawings can be set in the objective tradition, on the basis of their execution in outline with ink and ruled lines, without

30. . Synonyms for “objectivity” found in the literature: diagrammatic, explanatory, alluding, practical, explicit, scientific, feasible, draftsmanlike, conceptual, analytical, anonymous, sober and mechanical.

31. . Synonyms for “subjectivity” found in the literature: pictorial, representational, illusionistic, artistic, ornamental, aesthetic, suggestive, intentional, painterly and perceptual.

32. . Burges in Crook (1981) 63, 66 and Blomfield (1912) 5-7.

color and to scale.³³ Use of realistic elements such as neighboring structures, sky, shadows, reflections in windows, trees, cars, people and furniture, on the other hand, relates to the subjective tradition.

SUBJECTIVE MODI

In the literature the opposite of objective projections is the subjective, characterized by the fact that their development is not determined by strict rules.³⁴ There are nevertheless some features associated with subjective drawings: they are illusionistic and painterly developed with color and shade. Lines are carried out freehand and are so-called emotional and tentative. All of which are conventions associated with the romantic. The horizon line and vanishing point (or points) in the perspective are also called subjective elements.³⁵ The program of the NSA's competition gave the architects free rein with respect to the execution of the perspectives themselves, and what is striking is the great variation in choice of media and materials. Bjercke and Eliassen come closest to the romantic, with naturalistic differentiation of materials and surroundings through realistic use of color and shading. The expressive line contributes to stressing the tactile qualities of the architecture. Precisely the use of these subjective conventions is an example of rhetorical use of graphic devices, and probably one of the reasons that Bjercke and Eliassen won the competition. The other extreme is represented by Blakstad's and Munthe-Kaas' perspective rendering. Here the building is depicted in an abstracted and monochromatic presentation carried out with ruled lines, absent personal lines or brushstrokes and with even lighting. In combination with the low *modus* the drawing techniques of anonymous expression and conventions taken from orthographic projects are here employed to underscore a pared-down architecture without tactile qualities. Sinding-Larsen's perspective also utilizes primarily objective conventions, yet the expression is toned somewhat down inasmuch as the surroundings are presented in a freer and less meticulous line than the building.

TRADITION AND MODERNITY

Elisabeth Tostrup's thesis on Norwegian architectural competitions of the postwar era is the only work I am familiar with that has undertaken rhetorical analyses of the graphic development of the competition entries.³⁶ Tostrup does not utilize the classical rhetorical terms that I have just related

33. . This is the traditional formulation of orthogonal drawing, introduced by Palladio in the 1500s. Lever in Rochon & Linton (1989) 12.

34. . Adshead (1907) 486.

35. . Blomfield (1912) 9.

36. Tostrup (1996).

here in her analyses; rather she characterizes different graphic techniques as rhetorical arguments. Regarding perspective renderings, Tostrup names architectonic drafting, contrasts of light and shade, realism as opposed to abstraction and collage-like sketches. In plans and sections Tostrup finds these rhetorical arguments: line weight, filled or unfilled sections, contour or shading and raster. Other arguments are exaggeration, under-emphasis or omission of elements.

As I read Tostrup, her overriding objective is to provide insight into the era's attitudes to architecture – to the relation between tradition and modernity – and to map out each individual architect's use of arguments in relation to a particular jury. She subsequently organizes the analysis in three parts: new constructions in relation to existing surroundings, the facades and the relationship between exterior and interior, and finally, varying spatial conceptions. As we see, these three points in fact correspond with the NSA's desire for an office building developed in relation to the surroundings, the facades' materials and the development and planning of the association's own meeting areas. In my thesis, I therefore sought to apply Tostrup's method to the NSA's material and additionally I introduced formal, composition-related features derived from the picture analysis such as point of view, minimizing, enlargement, line, shading, embellishment and dividing into layers. In short, one can say that all three classicizing entries (Arneberg, Berner and Reimers) utilized graphic effects to present the new construction in contrast to the surroundings (i.e., modernistic), though both the plans and elevations were traditional. The winning submission by Bjerke and Eliassen on the other hand, presented a building that suited the surroundings (i.e., traditional) in addition to the fact that the plans and elevations combined tradition and modernity. Even the two modernistic entries (Blakstad & Munthe-Kaas and Sinding-Larsen) were related to the surroundings in their graphic rhetoric, at the same time as modernistic features such as the surface and horizontality were stressed.

This form of rhetorical analysis thus clearly illustrates that the architects presented their projects in different ways and that they consciously used or refrained from using graphic effects. Everything was done with the intention of presenting the submission in the best possible way, such that it was to the jury's liking. From this point of view it is understandable that precisely the way that what in art historical terminology is called conventions were combined meant that Bjerke and Eliassen's entry emerged such that Aars and the building committee could agree on it. Thus the missing correspondence between form and content also emerges not as a negative aspect of the submission, but on the contrary as an intentional rhetorical means in the competition.

CONCLUSION

As we know, Bjerke and Eliassen's entry, in careful functionalism, emerged victorious from the competition, despite the NSA's skepticism. The rhetorical analysis underscored in this connection that the architects of the 1930s also consciously utilized various conventions and graphic presentation methods to further their entries in the competition. For the same reasons we can presume that the differences between modernism and traditionalism were not so distinct around 1930 as they became in the postwar era's architecture. In the individual entries this came for example to be expressed inasmuch as formal language associated with traditional architectonic qualities as combined with modernisms', and vice versa. This is a relationship that can be ascribed to the especially traditional client of this particular competition, and thus also illustrated my example of the architects' accommodations to and dependence upon the client or sponsor. In this way the rhetorical perspective also pointed out that 1920s architects did not necessarily have a consistent attitude to architecture, but that they rather adapted to the particular situation.

The competition entries' variations, self-contradictions and breaches of convention can be explained as strategic expressions with a rhetorical function, as the architect's attempt to gain ground in the competition. Even though considerations relating to the conveyance of information appear in all genres of architectural drawing, there is reason to believe that the rhetorical perspective is especially suited to studies of competition entries.

Lars Backer's plea from 1925 concludes with the following:

“On paper it ought to be easy to show that we are attentive and awake to currents in time. What comes shall be better; we simply have not had means or opportunity to carry it out. No, unfortunately! Despite the colossal participation and many in and of themselves clever and modern realized projects, the prize-winning and purchased submissions present as chaotic an impression as the realized buildings themselves. Exhibitions of the competitions show that everything is represented, from the newest to the most old-fashioned, with awards going to a submission in every genre, something to suit everyone's taste.”³⁷

The questions that become natural to ask are thus whether a corresponding rhetorical play occurs in today's architectural competitions and whether the rhetorical perspective indicates that the development of all types of architectural drawings is imbued with the architect's considerations.

37. Lars Backer (1925) 174.

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- NSA's archives; Meeting minutes dated, the jury's evaluation and competition entries.
- Archives in the collection of The Foundation of the Museum of Norwegian Architecture; The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design,

- Oslo, Norway
The archives of Egill Reimers and Finn Berner, The Municipal Archive of Bergen
The archive of Holger Sinding-Larsen, National Library in Norway

Abstract

“What is contemporary architecture?” This question may have been the most important preoccupation of the modernist pioneers at the start of the 20th century. The importance of an architecture that is “true to our time” still lingers today. This text demonstrates how the meaning of this notion changes with time. The focus of the study is three years, 1927, 1964 and 2002: Three points in time, represented by three architectural competitions. Today, the idea of modern-day architecture no longer corresponds with the original meaning of the term. What could be a new definition for an architecture that is truly contemporary?

Keywords

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What is Contemporary Architecture? Changes in Architectural Competitions and Architectural Discourse

Reidunn Rustad

INTRODUCTION

In 1927, at the Oslo Architectural Society, Johan Ellefsen gave a lecture concerning choice of building style and which type of architecture that was right for the modern epoch. This lecture was later printed as an article in the Norwegian architectural periodical *Byggekunst* with the title “What is contemporary architecture?” (Ellefsen 1927). This was an article that, in retrospective, has been called the Norwegian Manifesto of Modernism (Norberg-Schulz 1986). According to Ellefsen, a new style, or a new architectural language, should borrow its expression from technology.

For Ellefsen it was important that Norwegian architecture connected with the “central stream” of history. This flow, according to Ellefsen, was very strong and based on the galloping development of technology. The art of engineering should show architecture its way forward. The industrial buildings and machines like the airplanes, the steam liners and the automobiles were symbols of the modern world and should therefore be regarded as the signature forms of the time. In 1927, technology constituted the ultimate art form; it was seen as the most developed area of society. The art of engineering stood as an ideal for the rest of the world through its emphasis on pure meaning and function.

This paper is in large parts based on my thesis named *What is Contemporary Architecture? - A Study of the Discursive Framework of Architecture, through Three Architectural Competitions and Three Points in Time* (Rustad 2009). This thesis is a study of the ideals and values that at given times have been leading within the architectural discourse. The starting point is the belief in the importance of a contemporary architecture, a belief that seems to lie in the background of all architectural practice and public debate over the last 80 years.

The main question I aim to discuss in this text is the same as the title: what is contemporary architecture? In search of the answer to this question, the focus of the study has been on the most typical ways to design buildings the three given years, and on the theoretical meaning given to the contemporary

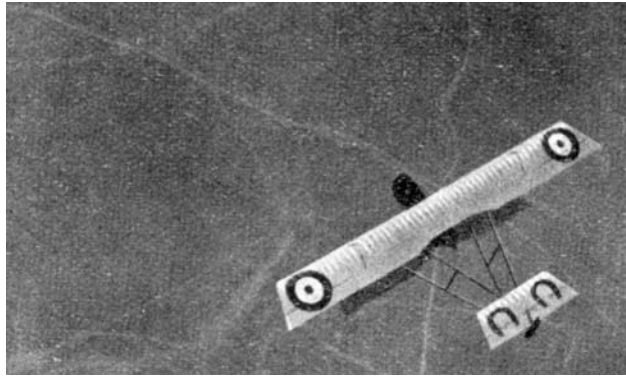


FIG. 1: Picture shown in article in *Byggekunst*, written by Johan Ellefsen. This and most of the illustrations in the article were borrowed from Le Corbusier's book *Vers une architecture*. Figures 1-4 taken from *Byggekunst*, December 1927 and the archives of Trondhjem Art Museum.

notion of architecture. In this paper I will describe changes in the architectural discourse as seen in architectural competitions in Norway through three cases spanning over nearly 80 years, and further discuss “contemporary architecture” as a key concept when it comes to a general understanding of architecture.

CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURAL DESIGNS, 1927, 1964 AND 2002

The main objects of study are three Norwegian architectural competitions, from three chosen years. Competitions are in general exceptional sources of information, both because of their central position in the overall architectural discourse, as well as the use of both text and drawing as communicators of what is considered good architecture (or not). The objects of study are more precisely the competitions concerning *Trondhjem Art Society in 1927*, *Rana Town Hall, Community Centre and Movie Theatre in 1964* and the *Vestbane-competition* held in Oslo in 2002. They may all be seen as combinations of building design and urban form. The given competitions show how architecture, through texts and drawings, reflects sets of ideals and values, and how these both change and stay the same over time.

CASE 1: 1927

The architectural competition in 1927, concerning the new gallery for the *Trondhjem Art Society*, also included the design of the terrain belonging to the cathedral Nidarosdomen. The competition program requested building plans that should be equally beautiful and practical. The result was shared first price, won by C.J. Moe and D. Hofflund. Both of the winning proposals showed neo-classical building types.

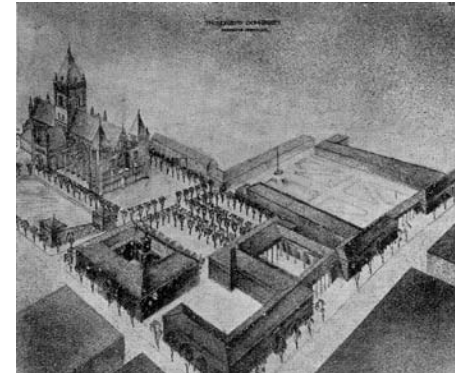


FIG. 2: The project of one of the first price winners, C.J.Moe. The proposed gallery building is to the left on the illustration, towards the street “Bispegata”.

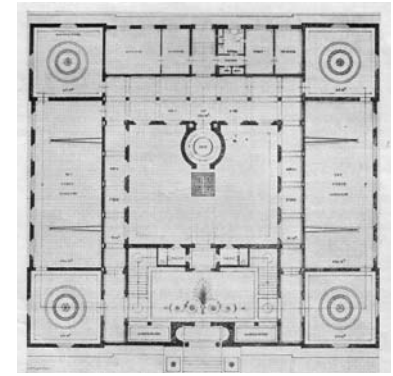


FIG. 3: First floor plan. C.J. Moe.

The designs emphasize things such as axes and central motives, large doorway and grandiose stairways. At the same time the gallery building plays a supporting role in relation to the nearby cathedral. The main issue is that the area is depicted as an agreeable whole, a coming together of buildings and plazas. Foremost among the traits in the drawings is symmetry, the designs also reflect brick heaviness, solidness and stability. All proposals in the competition have the same quadratic building form. Embellishment, in the form of light ornamentation of structural elements, walls and other surfaces, comes through as an indispensable thing when it comes to communicating the building function and role. The inner organization is based on stringent floor plans and symmetry in organization, with rooms mirroring, “enfilade” and strictly defined spaces.

The designs and the jury’s claims and statements show that values such as *monumentalism, harmony, tradition, order* and *beauty* were predominant in 1927, and represented what was considered good architecture. Classicism, mostly in the form of neo-classicism, was the architectural language the most common in 1927. This is an assertion that is supported by other competitions and the Nordic architectural periodicals of this year. Modernism as an architectural style was given some attention, but was depicted as something yet strange and unfamiliar. There was a clear difference between the common or typical way to design buildings and the rhetoric concerning the modern style. The material show how the existing architectural tradition is represented by a quite neutral rhetoric and mainly referring to itself, while Ellefsen in his article “What is contemporary architecture?” uses strong words and discourse outside architecture to make his point and convince other architects that there was a need for change.

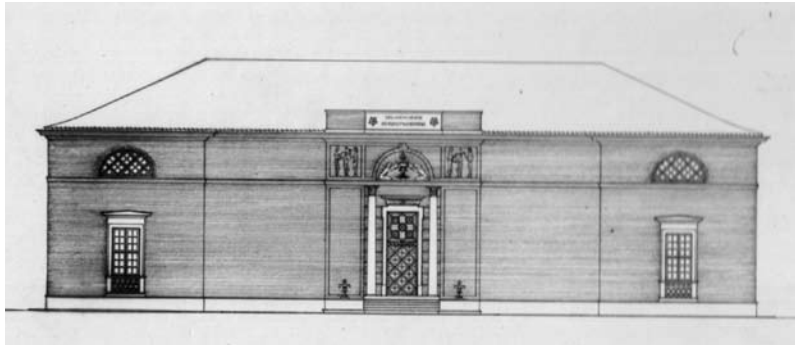


FIG. 4: The façade towards "Bispegata", by C.J. Moe

We know today that Ellefsens request for change was fulfilled and that the lack of a modern style was solved through, as Ellefsen expressed, a contemporary architecture that borrowed its expression from technology. The actual change in Norwegian architecture may be said to have taken place in the years 1929 and 1930. In the period of these two years, almost all architects began designing building in the new and modern looking style. The architectural writer and historian H. Aars writes in an article in *Byggekunst* in 1931: "it was like a shell had fallen from our eyes" and further:

We have finally arrived at the stage where also Norway joins in this titanic orchestra that gives the 20. Century its wonderful rhythm, melody, color and form in stone, glass, concrete and steel. The foundation is laid and so is the path forward. Because this foundation is so pure and true, we can not go back to our old ways (Aars 1931 [my trans.]).

CASE 2:1964

Modernism came through as a well-established architectural practice in 1964, this is apparent both when we look at the architectural periodicals and the competition of *Rana Town Hall, Community Centre and Movie Theatre*. The Rana-competition was won by three young architects, A. Telje, F. Torp and K. Aasen. They were later to form one of the most influential architectural studios in Norway.

The winning design shows an emphasis on the terrain and town structure. The different building functions are placed around an Italian inspired plaza. This plaza is positioned at the end of the central town axes that goes up from the harbor and passes the down town area. The plaza is pictured as an open space for all people, a ground of commonality. None of the existing, old

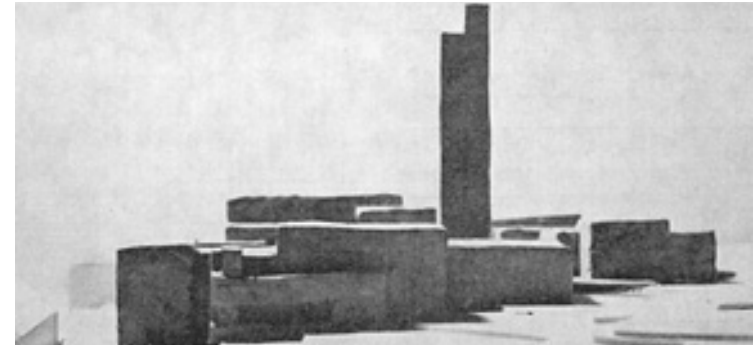


FIG. 5: Winner project, model in clay, architects A. Telje, F. Torp and K. Aasen. Figures 5-7 taken from *Norske arkitektkonkurranser*, 1965.

buildings are given any weight, and the new and quite massive structure is something clearly different than the rest of the town's lighter buildings.

The jury wanted a structure that was economic and rational. The architectural expression reveals the use of industrialized materials and constructions; raw concrete is displayed and used as an aesthetic expression in its own right. The building shapes stands as the communicators of role and function, and the use of divided volumes reveals a resolve to break down dimensions and create variation in the experience of the new buildings.

The interior design depicts a new sense of space, it emphasizes open floor plans and variation in rooms and constellations. The larger rooms function as mediators between the office cells and the outdoor area.

The values shown in the Rana-competition may be said to be *regionalism, new times, industrialized building processes and form* (as a means to show the building's function and role). These ideals are the same as those shown in the Nordic architectural periodicals of that year; they played a prominent role in the architectural discourse. The same may be said for the new ideal of *humanity*, that architects should take sociological and psychological aspects into account when designing new buildings. Together, the competition and the periodicals show an increased emphasis on good urban environments and architecture as symbol for cultural meaning.

The architecture of 1964 stands for an almost total change compared to the neo-classicism of 1927, but may be said to be based on the principles put forward in Ellefsens article the same year. One could say, as Ellefsen in 1927, that the architectural design of the competition and periodicals of 1964 was founded on a dominating belief in technology as means to solve all problems. In 1964, all architects strived to make up to date architecture, appropriate for modern society, by exploiting the present day technology.

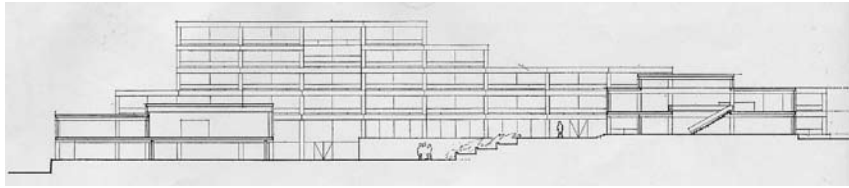


FIG. 6: Section and façade towards the plaza, winner project.

The theoretical idea of a contemporary architecture might be said to have melted together with and given expression to the typical architecture of the day. The term contemporary architecture was now truly linked to industrialized building processes and functional forms. The emphasis was on the modern times and the future.

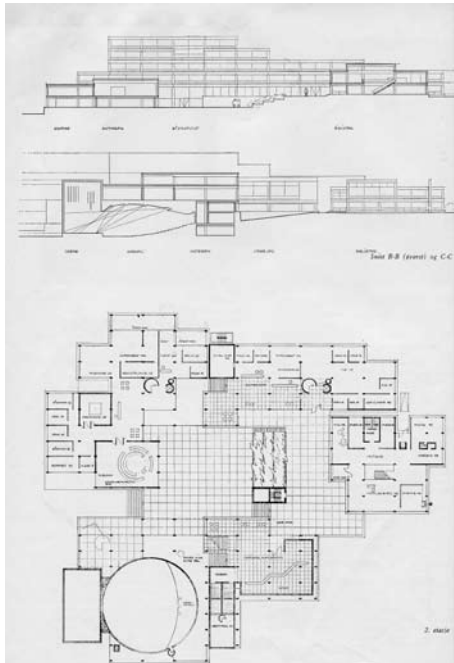


FIG. 7: Main floor plan, Telje-Torp-Aasen.

CASE 3: 2002

The *Vestbane-competition* held in Oslo in 2002 was one of the biggest competitions ever in Norway, and held a widely multifunctional program where public library and shopping were central functions. Unlike the competitions in 1927 and 1964 that were restricted to Norwegian architects, this competition had international participation. The winner-proposal was created by the Dutch star architect studio *OMA*, in collaboration with a Norwegian studio *Space Group*.

The program of the competition stated that the new building complex should be an attraction in its own right; the buildings should show such originality and architectural qualities that they would catch international attention. Looking at the designs, the winning project's approach towards existing buildings seems to have changed compared to that of 1964; the scales and shapes of the new building forms interact with present modern building typologies in the neighborhood. However, when it comes to the old neo-

classicist railway station-buildings, *Vestbanen*, the choice of the winner proposal is to detach itself from these buildings. The old buildings seem isolated from the rest, and a new high rising tower leaves the *Vestbane*-buildings somewhat desolated, or more like shredded (surplus) culisses.

The buildings' expressions are made up of modern materials; surfaces dominated by glass and technological advanced constructions. The overall impression is that of contrast and dynamics, with the mixture of building forms and the middle "tube" stretching out to the surrounding streets. The buildings' shapes are, like in the *Rana*-competition, the main communicator of role and function. Known building types are used for the hotel, apartments and offices. In between these lays the free formed "tube", containing the unrestricted and shared areas and important public functions.

The most significant architectural values conveyed in the *Vestbane-competition* were *innovation*, *interaction* (with the existing buildings and urban environment), *contemporaneity* and *form* (to show the building's function and role). These ideals seemed to be very much in accordance with the ideals the Nordic architectural periodicals of the year 2002 reflected. In addition, the competition showed an emphasis on the *commercial* aspects, an emphasis that was not so common in the architectural discourse.

The result of the *Vestbane-competition* led to an extensive debate both in the newspapers and in the architectural periodicals. The majority of architects showed a general agreement on what the most important ideals were, but not on what they really meant or how to achieve them. That is to say how one should build in accordance to these values. The belief in the importance of a contemporary architecture remained, though now it was portrayed as an ideal in itself and not in connection with some program of development. The notion of contemporary architecture seemed to be linked to a certain type of esthetic design, a modernistic language of architecture, based on the modern materials and constructions made possible by the latest technological development.

CHANGES IN DESIGN

The cases show that the ideals and designs in architecture had undoubtedly changed between 1927, 1964 and 2002, but not in the same degree. Some of the most important similarities and differences in the way to draw and talk about architecture, in the design and what was emphasized in the competitions' texts, will be discussed in the following. I start off by discussing the changes in relation to urban context, then concerning architectural expression and further inner organization. Lastly, I discuss briefly changes in the competitions' form and documents.

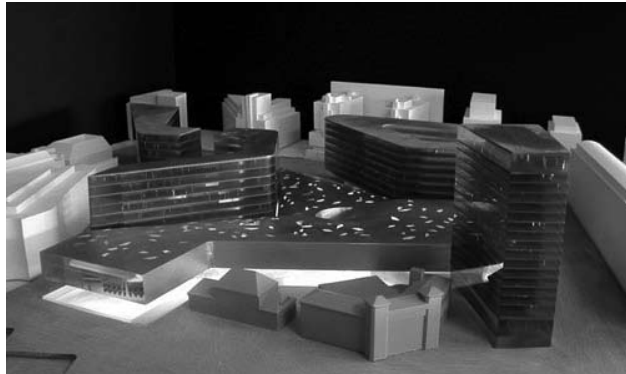


FIG. 8: Model of the winner project and its nearby surroundings, OMA. Figures 8-9 provided by Statsbygg.

URBAN CONTEXT

A common trait for the three competitions was an adaption to, and a development of, the classical urban structure. The site plan of the 1927 competition, Trondhjem Art Society, was an adaptation to and a further development of an existing classical grid structure. In 1964 the new community center was placed in the end of an axis that started down by the fjord. This axis was part of a more recent, post-war urban structure, but could be called classical because of its strict use of axis and blocks. The grid was also the main principle for the structuring of the Vestbanen-site in Oslo in 2002, with one exception; the center building, the “tube”, was displayed as an important structure precisely through its break with the prevailing urban structure. The interpretation of how to relate to the existing structure changed somehow, but the use of the classical urban structure shows no-the-less an remarkable sustain bearing in mind how rest of building art had changed, and the visions of the future town that were made in the mid-war period.

The relationship to the existing old buildings had, on the other hand, changed dramatically. Whilst, in 1927, there were only the building of some monumentality and glorious past that mattered, in the 1964-competition no older buildings were given any attention at all. In 2002, however, the relationship to the existing environment and building came through as exceedingly important. Any kind of old buildings had relevance as historical objects and tellers of identity. One apparent common trait between 1964 and 2002 was, however, the demand to build in a modern and contemporary style, nostalgia and copying (classical) building was seen as not desirable.

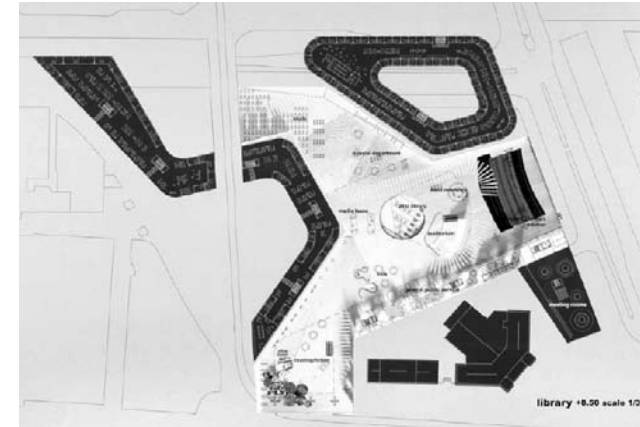


FIG. 9: First floor plan, the shopping area.

ARCHITECTURAL EXPRESSION

The contrast between the architecture of 1927 on one hand, and that of 1964 and 2002 on the other, is quite striking and shows that the architectural tradition had changed a lot when it came to the design of buildings. The architectonical expression changes, from static, monumental and traditional in 1927, to dynamic, it becomes an expression of movement and change, in 1964 and 2002.

In 1927, the building shape was more or less already decided on; it seemed presupposed to be plain and square. Symmetry dominated the composition of the façades' openings and ornaments. The adornments purpose was to give people an idea about the building's function and role, as well as embellishment. In 1964, it was the plastic composition, the shape of the building itself, that came through as the most important and reflected the buildings use and importance. There was no ornamentation, instead the industrialized building techniques and the use of modern materials was exhibited. The use of volumes as the basic design principle was apparent also in 2002. The shape itself came across as dynamic through the use of asymmetry, long curved lines and big spans. The general use of modern material and construction seemed important, but unlike 1964, the choice of specific construction and materials was not showed; these selections were supposed to wait till the next phase in planning.

In general one might say that the expression changes from that of craftsmanship and traditional materials in 1927, to that of modern materials and constructions in 1964 and 2002. One might say that showing of modern and industrialized building processes, new technology or the supremacy of the art of engineering, becomes an important principle in it self after 1927.

INNER ORGANIZATION

When it comes to interior solutions there are clear differences between 1927 and 1964, while the floor plans of 1964 and 2002 show many similarities. One goes from separated rooms bound together in straight alignment as shown in the competition of Trondhjem Art Society, to an emphasis on openness and movement in the Rana competition and the Vestbane competition. The rooms in 1964 and 2002 are not strictly organized; the flow of free interior spaces seems of major importance.

In 1927, the hall with the stairways was the most magnificent and important of all the rooms, and the central meeting point for all communications both horizontally and vertically. In the Rana competition the flow of space was quite different; the smaller rooms connected to a larger space, a main room where all communication to and from was to take place. The floor plans revealed a sense of openness and spaciousness, which is also very clear in the winner proposal of the Vestbane-competition; the main floor of the “tube” was shown as an enormous open area, and where furniture and other installations was the only thing that helped define more intimate zones or “islands”. Glass was used in an extensive degree, first and foremost to accentuate the relationship between the outdoors and the interior, and help create the essential free flow of space.

FORM AND DOCUMENTS

In addition to the changes in design, there are also some main differences (and likenesses) in the structure and documents of the competition, that is to say the competitions’ invitations and programs, the presentations of the designs and the jury judgments. These changes can primarily be said point to a professionalization of the architectural practice.

One major change was the concerning who was allowed to participate in the competitions. In the 1927 competition, all Norwegian architects, no matter educational background, or lack of such, was invited to partake. In 1964, partaking was restricted to architects living in Norway, but also to those who were members of the official Norwegian association of architects, something that made necessary higher architectural education. In 2002, the Vestbane-competition allowed international participation, partly according to new European standards, which made it possible for the international acclaimed “star-architects” to participate.

We can also see changes in the competition program; in 1927 and 1964 the programs were simple in form, with basic information of place, functions and goals, while in 2002 the program had grown in length and substance, giving much weight to site, historical background and architectural ambitions.

The documentation and presentation of the participant’s designs changed too. Here, again, there are similarities between the material of 1927 and that of 1964. The basis these years are simple black and white drawings; black pen on white paper, with one or two outdoor perspectives. In 2002, under the influence of computer layout tools, the posters shone of color and advanced graphic design. The modern emphasis on the use of volumes, the plastic form of the building, is evident by the demand for a three-dimensional model; in 1927 this was not considered necessary, while a model was a natural and central part of the presentation in 1964 and 2002.

While both program and presentation of designs had changed, the form of the jury judgment stayed very much the same between 1927, 1964 and 2002. A not so pronounced change was the emphasis on practical solutions in 1964, whilst one in 1927 and 2002 seemed more focused of architectonical preferences and esthetic solutions.

DISCUSSION

“Contemporary Architecture” is a key concept in the architectural discourse and may be understood in two different ways, that is to say both theoretical and empirical. The theoretical understanding means that the notion itself is seen as a construction. This construction is both historical and social, that is to say formed by architects as a result of debate, group effort and communication over time. The importance of a contemporary architecture has its roots in the belief in a “Zeitgeist”, a spirit of the time that is expressed in the architecture and other art forms of the period. The empirical interpretation takes its basis in the case studies and discusses how this key concept reveals itself through the architectural competitions.

THEORETICAL MEANING

This theoretical answer to the main question posed, “What is contemporary architecture?” is that the notion in itself is a social construction. The idea of a natural relationship between time and architectonic style, established itself in the architectural discourse during the 19th century. The belief in the need for a unique, “true” style for the modern epoch was a basic condition for modernism as style and for its dominance during the last part of the mid-war period. The first architects of modernism claimed that a contemporary building design was one that borrowed its expression from technology. The art of engineering was thus the starting point and the source for inspiration as the architectonical discourse went through an extensive inner adjustment of values, and the architects started designing buildings in a completely new way.

The meaning of the notion of contemporary architecture was originally seen in relation to a metaphysical being, the “Zeitgeist” (after the German philosopher Hegel) or spirit of the time, which gave the provisions for the artistic idioms of the day. The modern pioneer’s main criteria for architectural quality were that it was in accordance with the epochs “Zeitgeist”. Hence, as Ellefsen declared in 1927, a building should be a true reflection of the modern and technological based era.

In 1964 however, this theoretical meaning of the notion was beginning to dissolve, or was given additional connotations. Architecture should still reflect modern times (in general), but the emphasis had shifted slightly, more to the daily needs of people. As the architectural theoretician C. Norberg-Schulz, wrote in an article in *Byggekunst* in 1964:

There was not much fresh blood transferred into modern architecture, before those who are young today, under the pressure of fundamental questions, gave progress new speed. It is first and foremost the need for a richer and more human minded environment that is development’s new force (Norberg-Schulz 1964).

In 2002 contemporary architecture may be said to have multiple significances: The expression was used to characterize everything from too fashionable building designs, to those with qualities so great as to have a lasting impact upon architectural discourse. The term in its more practical meaning, that is to say design wise, was (as we have seen) linked to a building’s visual appearance. The Danish architect and historian E. Nygaard stated that the whole of the social side of architecture has been substituted with, or changed into, aesthetics (Nygaard 1995).

EMPIRICAL MEANING

I put forward two alternative definitions of contemporary architecture as a notion. These definitions follow from the findings in the studies of the given years and competitions:

The first definition suggested could to be seen in relationship to a given profession or a *paradigm* inspired by Thomas Kuhn’s book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. The paradigm gives the framework for architectural designs, and general guidelines that are more or less permanent. The analysis of the three competitions has shown very few common traits between the architecture in 1927 and that of 1964, while there were equally many between 1964 and 2002. Among the likenesses between designs in 1964 and 2002 were the emphases on so-called modern materials and construc-

tions, the buildings shape as the communicator of role and function, and the use of volumes and open floor plans. These traits may be said to have their background in a fundamental belief in technology as our era’s salvation, a belief already stated in 1927 by Ellefsen in his earlier mentioned article. A paradigm is characterized by the presence of something holding it together (in the case of modernism the belief in technology), at the same time as it is also always changing. A paradigm could in principle, according to Kuhn, be upheld and developed as long as it does not meet a problem that cannot be solved within the given framework for a professional practice.

The second definition I suggest may be seen in relation to the need of *interdiscourse*.¹ A contemporary architecture is then an architecture that to a large degree relates to society, and to other professions and discourses. The analyses have shown that the degree of interdiscourse, or the contact between the architectural discourse and the rest of the society, has varied. In the competition of *Trondhjem Art Society*, the discourse came through as relatively closed. Still, in the architectural periodicals of 1927, one could trace a sort of curiosity and anticipation of change. In 1964, the architectural discourse seemed relatively open and in relationship to the general development of society. This is true both of the competition of *Rana Town Hall, Community Centre and Movie Theatre*, and the architectural periodicals. The architecture of this year shows how a paradigm can make a well-defined framework for practice, and still be in accordance with the rest of the world. In 2002, the architectural discourse came through as relatively closed. Both the competition about *Vestbanen* in Oslo and the debate that surfaced after, show this. With few exceptions, the sources from this year give the impression of a debate much dominated by so-called truisms, matters of course or *objectivities*, values that all agree upon as important, but of which one has forgotten the original meaning. These truisms blocked the possibilities for a good and constructive architectural debate.

What is contemporary architecture, today? In the search for the answer to this question, a combination of the two proposed definitions above seems to be the best. Professional practice within the framework of a given profession, tradition or paradigm is necessary to ensure quality, constructive critiques and development according to commonly defined goals. Problems could be expected though, when the profession loses connection with important traits in societal development. As Ellefsen showed in 1927, the essential for answering the question “what is contemporary architecture?” is a basic attention to what is going on in society, combined with a will to think “outside the box”.

1. In the understanding of Norman Fairclough, see Fairclough 1992; 2003.

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Abstract

We view design competitions as significant decision-making procedures towards the built environment. They do not only open up towards alternative prospects of the sites they concern, they also act as “sorting machines” for those future scenarios.

But how does a design competition work? How does this socio-technological device of intertwining techniques and materials of communication, representation and discourses drawn from diverse fields of society produce its outcome?

In order to deal with this question we suggest a “qualculative” approach, that is a combination of qualitative in-depth analyses of ongoing competitions (“following their human and non-human actors”) and a quantitative analysis of a large number of completed competitions that aims at tracing the topology of relations between the “populations” of competitions.

Finally we try to elucidate how the findings of the “qualculative” process can be used to speculate about the generic pattern of an urban design competition.

Keywords

Design Competition, Complexity, Folding, Actor-Network Theory (ANT), Assemblage theory

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A “Qualculative” Inquiry into Urban Design Competitions

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INTRODUCTION

Generally speaking, urban design competitions first produce a variety of suggestions (its broadness depending on the competition’s programme and the participating architects) for the future of the sites they concern and then “sort out” all of these future scenarios except one, which is going to constitute the future of the site. In this sense completed design competitions provide entry-points for tracing the morphogenesis of our cities. They display what was favoured and what was dismissed, which suggestions were chosen and built and which were decided to remain un-built. They even (if well documented) provide jury statements illustrating these decisions. They complement every built solution resulting from them with once competing suggestions and therefore contrast (parts of) the actual form of our cities with their un-built forms. By offering access to reservoirs of unrealised ideas (to the history of the un-built) and to the arguments for or against them respectively, completed design competitions elucidate why our cities look like they do and how they could as well look like.

Urban design competitions can be considered as laboratory situations regarding the morphogenesis of our cities in two senses: Every single design competition concentrates discourses drawn from the diverse fields of society and various suggestions concerning the further development of our cities, the different ways they are presented as well as the ways they are decided upon. In this sense an ongoing design competition displays the actual making of a decision that is all the involved materials and expressions and the ways they manipulate the crystallization process of a decision. On the other hand, a population of completed design competitions can be regarded as data, which can be interpreted in order to discover relations between the posed problems, the chosen procedures, the networks of persons coming in use and the found solutions.

So at this point two questions arise. The first one is: “how do design competitions work in the sense of processes unfold?” (which is a form of an ethnographic question). The second one is: “how can we trace the invari-

ant aspects (or singularities) within a population of design competitions?” (which is a form of a statistical or topological question).

1. A CONTINUUM OF INFORMATION

Following Callon and Law (2003) “we can think in the same terms about (quantitative) calculations and (qualitative) judgements” for they are both “about arraying and manipulating entities in a space in order to achieve an outcome, a conclusion” (Callon and Law 2003, 3). This space might range from “a sheet of paper to a caddy at the supermarket, from a simple slate to the input band of a Turing machine” (Callon and Law 2003, 3). While the term “calculation” usually stands for enumeration and sizeable quantities, the term “qualculation” elucidates that “things have to qualify before they can enter a process of qualculation” (Callon and Law 2003, 3) which, to stress this again, can be done in a countless number of ways, “with an endless range of mechanisms and devices” (Callon and Law 2003, 3).

Now what we propose is to deal with the two questions posed above by forming a “continuum of information” between two “qualculative” processes calculating the same issue (in a very rough sense) within totally different spatio-temporal frames. To use a metaphor: The idea is to create a circular movement of information or questions between the in-depth analysis of one ongoing process of crystallization (or an ethnographic in-depth study of only a few ongoing competitions) and the analysis of a multitude of fully developed crystals (or a topological-statistical study of a large number of completed competitions). Despite the fact that a participatory field study and a statistical / topological analysis array and manipulate different objects (e.g. a sketch of a seating arrangement of a jury session versus the number of jury members) in different spaces (e. g. a field journal versus a composition of tabulations), we argue that both could benefit from each other¹. As for instance, the relations, patterns or regularities that are found within the analyses of a population of design competitions might be used as hints within the participatory field study of an ongoing design competition guiding attention when tracing the various human and non-human actors. Or, on the other hand, the findings of the in-depth field study might be used as questions when searching for patterns within the population. In fact the assumptions leading to the discovery of relations between the component parts of a population often depend on the experience gained from a participatory in-depth field study.

1. The benefit will not be limited to a simple win-win situation; rather our overall conception will issue specific entry-points in the research tracks in order to be fuelled by the other track, respectively, see section 4.

So what is the common ground on which these two processes of “qualculation” can meet? What do they need in order to engage with each other instead of simply walking side by side?

2. ASSEMBLAGE THEORY (DELANDA) AS CONCEPTUAL BASIS

We conceptualise one single, particular design competition and a population of design competitions as assemblages operating on different spatio-temporal “scales”. As we will see, on the basis of assemblage theory² we can do both: we can trace the relations between the component parts of a single, particular design competition with the help of ANT principles / methods and also those between the component parts of a population of design competitions with the help of statistical and topological tools.

So let us first provide a very brief outline of assemblage theory’s basic conceptions: Firstly, assemblage theory replaces relations of interiority with relations of exteriority. While relations of interiority imply that “the component parts are constituted by the very relations they have to other parts in the whole” and the whole in turn “possesses an inextricable unity in which there is a strict reciprocal determination between parts” (DeLanda 2006, 9), the exteriority of relations implies “a certain autonomy for the terms they relate, or as Deleuze puts it, it implies that ‘a relation may change without the terms changing’” (DeLanda 2006, 11). Hence, a part detached from a whole represented by relations of interiority “ceases to be what it is, since being this particular part is one of its constitutive properties” (DeLanda 2006, 9), whereas, in contradiction, a component part of a whole characterized by relations of exteriority (in an assemblage) “may be detached from it and plugged into a different assemblage in which its interactions are different” (DeLanda 2006, 10). Furthermore, following DeLanda (2006), relations of exteriority imply that the properties of a whole are not the result of an aggregation of the components’ own properties, but the actual exercise of the components’ capacities to interact with each other. Although a component’s capacities to interact depend on its properties they cannot be reduced to the latter since they always involve reference to the properties of other interacting components. Thus, the concept of the exteriority of relations guarantees that a whole may be analysed into separate parts while simultaneously allowing that it may have irreducible properties, which emerge from the interaction between its parts.

2. For the empirical application of assemblage theory see Hillier & Van Wezemael, 2008a, 2008b; Van Wezemael, 2008a, 2008b.

Secondly, in order to analyse assemblages, assemblage theory draws on two analytical “axis”. The first axis defines the “variable roles that an assemblage’s components may play, from a purely material role at one extreme of the axis, to a purely expressive role at the other extreme. These roles are variable and may occur in mixtures, that is, a given component may play a mixture of material and expressive roles by exercising different sets of capacities” (DeLanda 2006, 12). However, expressivity – in assemblage theory – cannot be reduced to language and symbols, there are also bodily or behavioural forms of expression. The second analytic axis in assemblage theory concerns “variable processes in which these components become involved: processes either stabilizing or destabilizing the identity of an assemblage” (DeLanda 2006, 12). The former are referred to as processes of (re-)territorialization, the latter as processes of deterritorialization. Processes of (re-)territorialization increase an assemblage’s degree of internal homogeneity or the degree of sharpness of its boundaries. By contrast, processes of deterritorialization either destabilize an assemblage’s boundaries or increase its internal heterogeneity. In fact, “one and the same assemblage can have components working to stabilize its identity as well as components forcing it to change or even transforming it into a different assemblage” and “one and the same component may participate in both processes by exercising different sets of capacities” (DeLanda 2006, 12).

Thirdly, the identity of any assemblage at any level of scale is always the product of a historical process, with the term “historical” referring to cosmological and evolutionary history in addition to human history. This implies that the identity of an assemblage, large or small, is always precarious, since processes of deterritorialization or decoding can destabilize it. Therefore, the ontological status of assemblages of any size “is always that of unique, singular individuals. In other words, unlike taxonomic essentialism in which genus, species and individual are separate ontological categories, the ontology of assemblages is flat” (DeLanda 2006, 28). Every single design competition as an assemblage is a unique entity with its own history and trajectories. The population of design competitions e.g. in Switzerland has its own history and trajectories. It therefore is also viewed as an assemblage.

And fourthly, we must describe assemblages not only as an actual formation but also as a virtual one. In addition to the roles and processes yet described, an assemblage is “characterized by what Deleuze refers to as a diagram, a set of universal singularities [...], that would structure the space of possibilities associated with the assemblage” (DeLanda 2006, 30). To put it very roughly, “analysis in assemblage theory is not conceptual but causal,

concerned with the discovery of the actual mechanisms operating at a given spatial scale” whereas “the topological structure defining the diagram of an assemblage is not actual but virtual and mechanism-independent, capable of being realized in a variety of actual mechanisms, so it demands a different form of analysis” (DeLanda 2006, 31). As we have already mentioned, we will try to speculate about this issue in the last section of this chapter, but for now let us get back to the “actual” problem:

3. HOW TO DISCOVER RELATIONS WITHIN YET UNCONNECTED HEAPS OF DATA?

After elucidating that the two processes of “qualculation” interact to achieve a “thick description” of urban design competitions, let us now take a look at the difficulties they face (these are roughly the same), how they exactly proceed (which is where they quite differ) and if they already discovered findings which can be used to trigger the flow of information or questions between them.

Let us start with the difficulties: Both “qualculation processes” are faced with an enormous amount of data. One with a large amount of files of completed design competitions, drawn from magazines and databases, the other the overflowing information which the actors of an ongoing design competition produce. In other words: Both “qualculation processes” are faced with an enormous amount of un-interpreted data (that is “radically thinned descriptions”). The data the first one faces is nothing but chronologically arranged heaps of data drawn from literature or other sources. The data the second one faces appears also not in the form of meaningfully connected clusters but as an unsorted mass of useful and useless information. Therefore, both processes are faced with the challenge of discovering relations in yet unconnected heaps of information.

Since the method part, that is the different ways of investigation (participatory observation and interviews) and the different ways of arraying and manipulating entities (taking notices, drawing sketches, creating montages etc.) is quite clear in the case of the participatory field study, let us directly describe some first findings. Just a last remark: As the different ways of arraying and manipulating entities (especially “creating montages”) indicate, the aim of the field study is not to collect as much data as possible – it is not about setting up bugging devices or security cameras – but to interpret data, that is to discover relations between entities. To be more precise, the aim is to discover connections between the human and material objects constituting the observed design competition and how these objects use those connections to move the process of the design competition to certain directions. “It is not worth it, as Thoreau said, to go round the world and count the cats in Zanzibar” (Geertz 1975, 16).

Observing a design competition, one key issue seems to be the formulation of the problem, that is the requirements the future construction has to meet. Obviously these requirements should also act as criteria of evaluation of the contributions. Now the question is not only how narrow or open they are formulated but also how precise or vague they are used. In other words: How obligatory are the postulated requirements and how well do they illustrate what the initiators of the competition have in mind? Do they include all the criteria the jury’s decision is based on or does the jury exclude or downgrade contributions for reasons not formulated in the bill of requirements? Do the postulated requirements allow propositions that have not been imagined by the initiators while formulating the programme of requirements? Or are they too vague (or open), so they do not help to achieve comparability, which is the key essence of competitions? In the observed case (see Fig. 1 below), for instance, while formulating the bill of requirements, there was a strong discussion about how many specifications should be added concerning the design of the transition between public and private spaces. While a few jury members argued for strict guidelines instructing the participating architects exactly how these transition spaces have to be designed, others argued that it is not the jury’s job to design (conceptualize) these spaces, but to formulate that the design of these spaces is one key criteria of the competition. Now this discussion is one example, which directly found its way (in the form of an assumption or question) into the analysis of the population of completed design competitions, as the relational diagram (see Fig. 2) will show.

Location	Metropolitan Region Zurich
Year of Announcement	2008
Problem Type	Apartment complex (100 flats) encouraging its inhabitants to encounter
No. of Applications	159
No. of Applicants invited to Competition	12 (+2)
Jury Composition	Independent architects, independent sociologist and representatives of the city, the future inhabitants of the complex and the owner of the site

FIG. 1: Key facts of the observed design competition

Contrary to the participatory field study, the method part in the case of the “quantitative” analysis really needs some elaboration. In this case, in order to tackle the overflow of information, we orient more explicitly towards complexity theory.³ Urban design competitions can be described and modelled as complex systems: They are systems of rapid change (they are dynamic processes), composed by an important number of elements and submitted to a constant flow of matter, energy and information from the “environment” (they are open processes), so that the relations of components are not linear but are able to change even without the components changing. According to DeLanda (1993) “once a continuous flow of matter-energy is included in the model, a wider range of possible forms of dynamic equilibria becomes possible”. This new type of “non-linear dynamics” stability describes a given population pinned down to a semi-stable, yet inherently variable, dynamical state. These new forms of stability are called “attractors” and the transitions, which transform one type of attractor into another, are named “bifurcations”.

Modelling design competitions as complex systems enables us to predict and control the behaviour of these systems (from a scientific perspective) and – from a more general philosophical perspective – to understand these systems better. However, as DeLanda puts it, “as with any model there is a trade-off here: we exchange the complexity of the object’s changes of state for the complexity of the modelling space” (DeLanda 2002, 14).

Moreover, modelling design competitions as complex systems also provides us with a profound foundation for tracing relations between component parts, for on that basis, new scientific resources from mathematics and topology can be introduced. As we mentioned before, measurement (sizeable entities) are central to every process of calculation (whether arithmetical in form or not) and this is especially true when it comes to a mathematical expression of an empirical observation.

According to Callon and Muniesa (2002) calculation can be understood as a three stage process: Firstly, the relevant entities or groups (set of entities) are sorted out, detached, and displayed within a single, flat, space. In the following relational diagram we can see the detached components of a population of design competitions.⁴

3. Assemblage theory deals with a philosophical conception of social complexity. In its conception it draws on an analytical reading of Deleuze and Deleuze & Guattari’s body of work. However, it adds a number of conceptions that originate in what DeLanda calls “intensive science” and which he elaborates in his 2002 book *Intensive Science and Virtual Philosophy*.
4. Up to now 25 competitions drawn from Hypathie II (Archives de la construction Moderne, EPFL Lausanne, Institut Français d’ Architecture, Paris) have been taken into consideration.

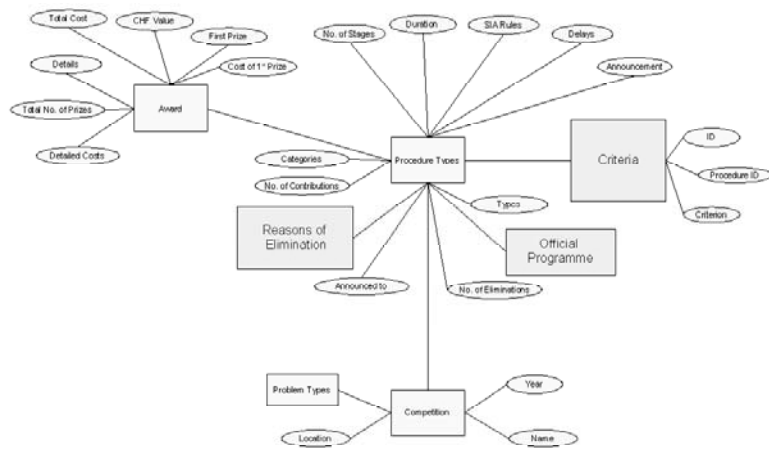


FIG. 2: Relational Diagram

Secondly, relations are created between these entities summing up the empirical evidence: various data from different sources (databases, magazines, articles on the internet, etc.) is organized ... and important / recurrent relations between the components are traced. For the tracing of these relations statistics are used. Statistics can collectively describe the relationships between the populations of components of competitions and they can provide the collection and interpretation of data from actual situations of competitions and at the same time the formulation of information that is closer to a generic rule: as Trummer (forthcoming) puts it, averages are not actual data, but “merely statistical abstractions”. Besides statistics, DeLanda (2002) proposes topological resources to analyse certain features of complex systems: features that determine recurrent or typical behaviour common to many different models of complex systems. Topology can illustrate the properties, which remain invariant under deforming transformations: topology describes how a space is assembled and can be used to abstract the inherent connectivity of objects while ignoring their detailed form.

Thirdly, concluding a calculation process, a result is extracted: a ranking, a sum or a decision. For this interpretation “phase space”⁵ is going to

5. According to DeLanda (2002, 13; 14; 19; 28) state or phase space is an abstract space; a space of possible states. It is a continuous yet heterogeneous space, woven by topological invariants (attractors, bifurcations). DeLanda proposes firstly to determine the number of relevant ways a system may change (degrees of freedom) and then relate those changes to one another by using the differential calculus. Next, one maps each degree of freedom into one of the dimensions of a manifold. After this mapping operation, the state of the object at any given instant of time becomes a single point in the manifold, which is now called a state space. In addition we can capture in this model

be used. The topological patterns can be illustrated by phase space, which can represent every parameter of degree of freedom of a system as an axis of a multidimensional space. The state of a system corresponds to a certain distribution of points in phase space. These points can be plotted into the multidimensional space and the plot is called phase portrait. Thus, the behaviour of the system, the evolving trajectories or patterns, and the invariant moments, the long-term tendencies of the system, the attractors or singularities can be elucidated.

4. PUTTING THE TRACES ON THE MAP

To conclude this discussion chapter we would like to show that assemblage theory enables us to make a further step that is methodologically challenging and conceptually intriguing. We refer to Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) metaphor of “putting the traces back on the map” (1987). They use the example of a wasp and an orchid that together form an assemblage, and they show that in order to grasp the becoming of the true nature of the assemblage it is not sufficient to trace either the wasp, or the orchid, or both, but that one needs to put the traces back on a map of becoming. The becoming of wasp-orchid is not only the combination of the wasp and the orchid, but a new assemblage that transcends the sum of the parts. Meaning: Becoming is a mutual de-/re-territorialization, producing new assemblages ceaselessly. What is real is “the becoming itself, the block of becoming, not the supposedly fixed terms through which that which becomes passes” (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 238). What does this mean for a “qualculative” inquiry into urban design competitions?

Both, the singularities as illustrated in the topological analysis and the actor-networks that give rise to the agency in unfolding competitions generate potential spaces of becoming. Whereas these spaces are referred to as phase space in the topological analysis, in the case of our ethnographic study they should be considered as a multitude of sets of scripts that are rendered possible by the alliances of what we referred to as human and non-human actors (see also Latour 2005).

As outlined above we view design competitions as dynamic, open processes and therefore consider assemblages as virtual-actual formations. In order to enable our study to “put the traces back on the map” we take advantage of the fact that both qualculative traces of research operate on successive levels of emergence. We thus can put the respective traces (findings) that we found

an object’s change of state if we allow the representative point to move in this abstract space describing a curve or trajectory.

on different spatio-temporal scales onto the maps of the respectively other study. In concrete cases findings from the topological analysis are considered as properties that tend to emerge from the interplay of those components that are analysed on the “lower” scale of single, unfolding competitions. If we follow DeLanda’s argument that an assemblage is generated as an effect of the interrelations of its components, then, the strategic relation of both qualculative research processes literally means putting the traces back on the map.

The same argument applies to the introduction of the “lower scale” findings into the population analysis. In addition this means that the blind spots of both tracks are not only made explicit, but that they are used as entry-points for relating the traces and the map.

5. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have shown how two differently “scaled” processes of qualculation on the issue of urban design competitions can – on the basis of assemblage theory – be used to generate a continuum of information between them. However, in order to achieve this flow of information, the combination of the two differently “scaled” processes of qualculation has to be considered as an assemblage in its own right and not as a sum of two components. At the actual stage of our research, we have developed several hypotheses – as for instance the (mentioned) relation between the formulation of the problem (the requirements), the way the jury ranks the competitors and the soundness of the competition procedure or the (not mentioned) soundness of the competition procedure and the quality of the outcome of the competition – which we are able (and going) to test via “putting the traces on the map”.

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Abstract

The study is targeted to analyze the essence of design and design methodology and the communicability of quality judgment process of urban design competitions. The aim is to provide a political argument which supports organizational and procedural reforms of the entire cycle of competition, from judgment to selection and implementation of a prize-winning architectural design. The study is searching to provide some principle definitions of the concepts of design methodology and design competition and is keen to find out a new model of competing system which provides better interactivity and communication among wider sections of designers, jurors, clients and end-users. We need to know to what extents design qualities and visions can be judged rectified and realized by relying on the solutions favoured and selected by few experts. What are the essential quality criteria that are being prioritized by jury members? What are the roles and positions of key players, especially end users, in quality judgment processes? How are different needs, values, and visions being met after the implemented prize-awarded urban design projects? How can the processes of an urban design competition be reformed, new communication channels be created and a higher standard of quality judgment and fairness of the system be maintained?

Keywords

Design Methodology, Urban Design Competition, Design Essence, Design Policy, Design Philosophy, Design Interactivity, Communicative Quality Judgment.

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Urban Design Competition versus Design Interactivity and Communicative Quality Judgment

Reza Kazemian

THINKING AND PERFORMING DESIGNERLY

One of the most concise and comprehensive definitions of the concept of design as a verb is presented by Terry Winograd and Fernando Flores (1986) where they see design as the “interaction between understanding and creation.” Design can also be seen as a “reflection-*in-action*,” an incessant and dynamic *learning by making* and *making by learning* process, a “reflective conversation with the situation” (Schön 1983; 1993).

By its nature, a great portion of design practice takes place from several sources of knowledge that are not always known explicitly; through tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1962) and in dialogue with feasibility, viability, and availability of design tools, information, requirements, methods, theories, and practical skills. In other words, design is an interaction with intangibly situated problems. Design is an orchestrated art of *making* (Dunin-Woyseth 2001) out of complexity, uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value-conflicts (Schön 1983).

Along the reciprocal course of design practice, a repertoire of accumulated knowledge and experience compels its presence and transform turmoil of choices towards order and in all probability to a useful and appreciated artefact. During the design processes, designers constantly oscillate between *chaos* [disorder], *logos* [idea], *oratio* [speech, thought] and *ratio* [text, image, reflection, product]. Design is targeted to tackle wicked problems, to resolve value conflicts and add to the quality of life often in ill-defined and ill-structured situations (Cross, 1984).

Herbert Simon (1996) in his seminal work, *The Sciences of the Artificial*, gives a broad definition of design concept. He asserts that all practitioners are designers because they produce artefacts of one kind or another. Practitioners produce artefacts like buildings, urban patterns or industrial products. They also produce artefacts like legal arguments, strategic business plans, educational curricula, medical diagnoses and so forth. Simon further declares that, “everyone designs who devises courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones. The intellectual activity

that produces material artefacts is no different fundamentally from the one that prescribes remedies for sick patient or the one that devises a new sales plan for a company or a social welfare policy for a state. Design, so constructed, is the core of all professional training; it is the principle mark that distinguishes the professions from the sciences” (Simon 1996, 111).

In line with such broad perspective, Thomas Mitchell for the preface of the second edition of John Chris Jones’ influential work, *Design Methods* (Jones 1992) summarizes more far-reaching definitions of Jones’ design perception. The definitions are considered through different angles, clustered into at least five different categories that are:

- *Design as participation*, the involvement of the public in the decision-making process.
- *Designing as the process of devising*, not individual products but whole systems or environments such as city, airport, transportation, hypermarkets, educational curricula, broadcasting schedules, welfare schemes, banking systems, computer networks.
- *Design as creativity*, which is supposed to be potentially present in everyone.
- *Design as an educational discipline*, that unites arts and science and perhaps can go further than either.
- *Designing without a product*, as a process or way of living in itself.

The essential question arises here is how design competitions can cover, judge, and address these multifaceted categories of design. The anonymity aspect of architectural competition and its vast reliance on and confidence in professional knowledge can impose many players to stay outside the playground and just watch what a few creative designers suggest *the best* architecture or urban design project to them. The main issue is how a few expert jurors can appropriately influence a massively complex of cultural, social, and societal system which is extremely difficult to understand and of which only a very small fraction of it can be controlled.

Donald Schön (1983) in *The Reflective Practitioners* expresses his serious concerns on the crises of professional confidence.

Indeed, some of the solutions by professional experts were seen as having created problems as bad as or worse than those they had been designed to solve. Just as urban renewal had emerged in the early sixties as a destroyer of neighbourhoods, its unexpected consequences attributed by critics like William Alonso to the weakness of its under-

lying theory, so in fields as diverse as housing, criminal justice, social services, welfare, and transportation, the most promising solutions, painstakingly worked out and advocated by the experts, came to be seen as problematic” (Schön 1983, 10).

Yet the status protection and confidence of profession is a quite resistible force among those who are involved in competition enterprise. For instance, Hossbach and Lehmhaus (2006) in *The Architecture of Competitions 1998-2005*, vividly illustrate such attitude where they address the competition through its profitability dimension. They write, “Architectural competition contributes to a building profitability in exceptional ways because it prioritizes superior architectural quality and therefore tends to produce results that enjoy a higher level of acceptance by both the general public and the architectural community” (Hossbach 2006, 38). Unfortunately, neither the *building profitability* nor the *exceptional way* nor *superior architectural quality*, and not even a *higher level of acceptance* are clearly defined in their claim.

In some countries like Finland, the awareness of uncertainty, confidentiality, complexity, instability, and value conflict in architectural competition is seriously felt and some solutions are under consideration. It is leading to the emergence of some reforms in the legal and procedural structure of their competition system, towards giving some possibilities to younger architects and urban designers as well as towards involving citizens in the decision-making process. However, still the existing professional confidence and prestige are there as barriers that should be flattened by legal and procedural reforms. A new scientific ground of professional knowledge and consciousness through research, education, and practice is needed to sort out: how much experts really know and how ought they to act? And, as Winograd and Flores convey, designers need to establish a theoretical basis for looking at what artefacts *do*, not just how they *operate* (Winograd 1986).

THE QUESTION OF URBAN DESIGN QUALITY

Design as a verb has been a continuous value-adding struggle along the history. Design is a specific type of value creation and quality management of products aiming towards finding a tamed, ethical-aesthetical solution to a conflicting reality. A design process takes place through (re)organising existing structures, spaces, functions, meanings, norms, processes, objectives, systems and subsystems.

In order to understand the phenomena governing the creation of a cityscape as an artefact, our concerns should not be restricted only to the function of city and the methodology of urban design; we need to elaborate the

question of design impacts in relation to the long term quality aspects. We should see it in a wider oscillating dimension, through the broad question of how a society engenders and conceives new values and norms that their existence in turn may alter the quality of life of the society.

In order to develop such a comprehensive political-theoretical basis for quality judgment Winograd and Flores (1986) argue that, “we must step back and examine the implicit understanding of design that guides [societal and] technological development within our existing tradition of thought. Only by unconcealing that tradition and making explicit its assumptions can we open ourselves to alternatives,” to new design methodology, new design theory, and new design policy that flow from those alternatives.

We therefore have to illustrate the kind of queries we have in mind by seriously asking ourselves what is quality and how is it associated with artefact? The first thing to recognize is that different answers grow from the concerns of different preferences, different knowledge, different interests, different experiences, and different values. These given answers and reflections might all be perfectly valid, arising in particular domains to which the theories of design and quality are concerned (Winograd 1986). However, the most significance of a design innovation, a creative piece of work, or a new artefact lies on its impacts in a long term; on how it fits into and changes our thoughts, our ways of life, our communities, our environments, our networks, and the political systems and social behaviours. Again, the prior challenge should be to consider what artefacts *do*, not just how they *operate*. With this question we may release ourselves “from the tyranny of imposed ideas and enable each to contribute to and act upon the best everyone is capable of imagining and doing” (Jones 1992). And with this question we may take our prime and essential steps towards a democratic, safe, and sustainable society.

As the use of a new artefact, a new building, and a new built environment changes our practices, our norms, our concepts, and our understanding; that new way in turn creates changes the world we construct. In order to become aware of the impacts architectural design have on society we must reveal and review the implicit understanding, changes of our values and our thought, our work organisation, our innovation culture, our understanding of quality, and our concepts that serves as philosophical background for the future developments of our society (Winograd 1986). This provides a challenging task to every one of us; an immense responsibility that forces architects and urban designers as well as the architectural competition organisations to be particularly concerned with the impacts of their judgements and the effects of the dominating *system* on the *lifeworld*. (Habermas, 1987) It requires re-

viewing the essence of our tasks and limitations in our professional knowledge; to constantly develop and exercise new theories and methods based on proactivity, interactivity, transparency, and intensive dialogue.

EPISTEMOLOGY OF PRACTICE - DESIGN METHODOLOGY

Design methodology even known as the “science of design” is a relatively new discipline in academia. It is barely a half century old. The first international conference on Design Methods held in London in 1962, can perhaps be regarded as the formal way to give a birth certificate to the design methodology movement (Cross 1984). The first insightful works in design methodology appeared during the early 1960s and the 1980s by many pioneer figures among them Herbert Simon, Morris Asimow, Christopher Alexander, John Chris Jones, S. Gregory, Leonard Archer, Bryan Lawson, O. Akin, L. J. March, Donald Schön, Nigel Cross, Geoffrey Broadbent, and Peter Rowe.

Design methodology deals with the systematic reflection-*on*-action of a design course which is increasingly becoming an integral part in creative processes of all design family. Design methodology is a highly practice-based research enterprise working towards a research-based design practice. By suggesting an appropriate design method, designers can be able to select, nurture, and build up a design idea at its early stages, to better structure and manage a design process, to understand the users, to identify apt approaching plans and to create the right conditions for their use and impacts. With a fitting design method, practitioners can better manage their design organization and better deploy their internal and external communicability and interactivity. It can even make easier to work with openness and share the viewpoints across and beyond their design teams.

S. Gregory in *The Design Method* (1966), describes design methodology as the science of design which is concerned: “[...] with the study, investigation and accumulation of knowledge about the design process and its constituent operations. It aims to collect, organize and improve those aspects of thought and information which are available concerning design, and to specify and carry out research in those areas of design which are likely to be of value to practical designers and design organizations” (Gregory 1966, 34).

Nigel Cross (1984) defines design methodology as “[...] the study of the principle of practices and procedures of design in a rather broad and general sense. Its central concern is with how designing both *is* and *might be* conducted” (Cross 1984, vii).

Cross outlines the territorial tasks of the design methodology in the following areas that are (Cross 1984):

- the study of designers work and think

- the foundation of appropriate structures for the design process
- the development and application of new design methods, techniques, and procedures
- reflection on the nature and extent of design knowledge and its application to design problems
- innovative design research methods

According to a group of design researchers, there is no need of design until different values or tendencies disagree with each other. Designers manage to cope with the conflicting values by (re)arranging and getting control of the organisation of relationships that can prevent value clashes (March 1976; Alexander 1976). One who wants to design an artefact has to acquire sufficient knowledge about very possibilities and limitations in solving a specific design problem including the long term behavioural impacts and social acceptance of artefacts. A conscious design process requires a methodology, a designerly way of thinking and performing, and an insight into the particularities hidden in different socio-cultural settings. It is essential for a designer to meticulously recognize the context, the conflicting principles and “all” implications of design in that culture.

In fact, considering what design *is*, is a prime step and necessary ground for explaining and understanding what design *does*; We should clarify first *what design is* (Lundequist 2005) in order to understand *what design does* prior of arbitrating and scrutinizing *why, where, when, and/or for whom?*

URBAN DESIGN QUALITY

– AN ESSENTIALLY CONTESTED CONCEPT

Building cities belong to the polysystem¹ domain of designerly thinking where

1. Polysystem theory is developed by scholars from different disciplines among them researchers in literature, architecture, art, design and artificial intelligence. The term *polysystem* denotes a stratified conglomerate of dissimilar but interconnected elements or networks, which transforms as these networks or elements interact with each other. In polysystem theory a creative work (an artifact) is not studied in isolation but as part of a complex system, as an entity of networks within networks, as a part of social, cultural and historical framework. A creative work as a polysystem can be influenced by and affect on other creative works in a reciprocal manner. It is to say, the artifacts which is being imported to a country can influence the native taste, norms, values and outlook and vice versa. According to one of the influential figures in polysystem theory, Itamar Even-Zohar (1990), polysystem theory “makes explicit the conception of a system as dynamic and heterogeneous in opposition to the synchronistic approach. It thus emphasizes the multiplicity of intersections and hence the greater complexity of structuredness involved. Also, it stresses that in order for a system to function, uniformity need not be postulated. Once the historical nature of a system is recognized (a great merit from the point of view of constructing models closer to ‘the real world’), the transformation of historical objects into a series of uncorrelated ahistorical occurrences is prevented” (Even-Zohar 1990).

several repertoires of heterogeneous ideas, processes, contexts and texts correlate with each other and shape complexes of our socio-spatial entities.

Cities are the most sensitive recipients and the leading carriers of values and norms of civilizations. They are the vital ideological, cultural, political, economic, social, and technological indicators of societies. Cities take shape through different cumulated values and when those (often tensional) values alter, the meanings, forms, contents, norms identities and functions of cities will be affected as well. These constantly transformational oscillations should be conceived as reciprocal spirals where cities also generate and inaugurate new concepts, new texts, new meanings, new norms, new values, and new knowledge into our life. Cities are the hubs of communication networks; where people constantly processing information to knowledge and knowledge to new values and virtues.

In the fields of social sciences, political philosophy and political epistemology many conceptual disputes and confusions arises in the nature of knowledge, processes, presuppositions, foundations, extent and validity of particular notions. Walter B. Gallie (1964) classes these specific types of conceptual problems as *essentially contested concepts* where there are tangible and prevalent agreement on the abstract and principle core of a particular *perception* itself but, at the same time, there are continuous disagreements and quarrels going on about what might be the best *property*, instance and recognition of that notion. According to Gallie essentially contested concepts “[...] inevitably involves endless disputes about their proper uses” and these disputes “cannot be settled by appeal to empirical evidence, linguistic usage, or the canons of logic alone.” Typical examples are concepts such as *democracy, culture, people, law, justice, ideology, religion*, and, among the others, *urban quality*. In order to minimize disparities among opponents and surface the path for the development of the essentially contested concepts, Gallie suggests a series of democratic conditions and criteria for evaluating the contentedness of such terminologies.

In fact Gallie’s theoretical framework seems sensible and valid, that is borrowed, extended and applied to new domains of study such as arts, aesthetics, design, and quality. Obviously, the way Gallie presents his arguments shows containing potentiality that breaks down the old frames of conventional understanding of design quality and takes it from design offices out and elevates it as a matter of political concern to be discussed openly in different philosophical and political arenas.

In this sense urban design is a highly interrelated *making by learning* and *learning by making* discipline through which we explore and support different ideas, theories, and methods to identify socio-spatial value conflicts, to

confront environmental challenges, to create or redeploy models, to gain foresights, to articulate scenarios, to visualize possible solutions of a future, and to shape the world around us.

Urban design belongs to extremely complex and responsive decision-making process often in ill-defined, ill-structured, unstable and uncertain situations. In order to minimize uncertainties, to reduce present and future social tensions, to prevent environmental pitfalls and complications, to promote living quality and standard, and to safeguard overall sustainability aspects in cities and their hinterlands, urban design needs to be studied meticulously and has to be strategically examined through cross-disciplinary perceptions.

Urban design is a field of study deals with a wide range of aspects, factors and policies of the built environments in cities. It is mainly directed towards activities providing comprehensive plans and formulating guidelines, policies and strategies to meet the social, economic, and physical needs of communities.

Urban designers do analyze social and technical issues; scrutinize the existing conditions and future transformational trends in urban settings. They create foundation and outlines for a wide range of activities in cities including land-use control, economic development, elevation of social prosperity, protection of cultural and natural resources, development of infrasystems, population control, employment opportunities, health-care, social integration, public housing, transportation system, energy efficiency, crime prevention, socio-environmental safety.

Urban designers are dedicated to resolve socio-spatial value conflicts usually through creating objective and firm artefacts in urban settings and urban features. They are mainly concerned with the tangible textures, geometrical arrangements, physical appearance and functionality of towns and cities. They deal with shaping socio-spatial interactions and communications that take place among people in buildings, in neighbourhoods, and in cities. They attempt to use and invent building technologies and visualize expressive meanings with new materials in order to create a physical world rich in diversity and experience. Urban designers have to be aware of sustainability issues in their professional endeavours. They have to deal with the aesthetical and functional organisation of practical realities in the city contexts. They should particularly work with translation and resolution of value conflicts through crystallising new design ideals and artistic visions when creating urban public spaces and urban architectures or when revitalizing valuable historical and cultural heritages of built textures in cities.

THE ESSENCE OF DESIGN COMPETITION

Understanding the conceptual and contextual disparities of reflection-*in*-action and considering the consequences of value differences of quality criteria and preferences in an urban design project are among the fundamental moments for creation of a successful urban environment. Among the most objectives of a quality-rich urban design project is its high level of interactivity, transparency and acceptance; a project that can be confidently received, conceived and appreciated by different actors, different interest groups and specially different end-users. It is widely accepted that these interactivity aspects of the design project can minimize insecurity, instability, and the risk factors. It can establish a valuable scheme to create superior socio-spatial standard, enjoyable environments and rich experiences.

Along the history, urban design competition is recognized as an efficient and leading assessment system to promote, assure, lead and appreciate spatial qualities in cities. Urban design competition is considered as one of the most prevalent means in the creative processes of major public and private urban development projects. It has been deployed as a reliable bridge-making instrument and communicative channel among experts and their clients. Indeed, urban design competition can provide partaking opportunity to talented urban designers to exhibit the best of their professional skills and ideals in the real world and supports them to be fairly judged and rewarded publicly.

The knowledge obtained in conjunction with our recent study of architectural competition system in Europe indicates that urban design competition is a professionally respected but quite closed evaluation enterprise; although was thought to be built upon impartiality and democratic premises (Kazemian et al. 2007). However, by its nature, the embedded confidentiality of the judgment processes keep the system away from gifted young designers with limited resources and possibility of capital investment, from public opinion and their often valuable contributions. This dualistic character of urban design competition can ground a real thread to democratic foundation of society, to public interests, cultural capital, socio-economic structure, and sustainability as large.

Astonishing enough, despite several serious shortcomings in the competition system, the professional organisations are rather silent and protective. Research on potentiality to reform such an important professional institution – the competition system – towards more openness and better communication with broader spectrum of designers and public stakeholders is very scarce, insignificant and limited. Studies to find out ways to involve talented architects and urban designers in public requirements and interests in competition processes are needed. Guidelines on connectability and

interactivity of values, meanings, preferences and attitudes of citizens and local inhabitants with urban designers, developers and competition jurors are needed. Through investigating the plausible connectability among different perspectives in prize-winning urban design projects we should know to what extents the complex societal impacts of a prize-awarded urban design project can be judged, rectified and realized while relying only on the outcomes of a few professional jurors at competition committees. What are the essential quality criteria that are being prioritized by citizens and jury members? How is possible to promote the role and position of the end-users in such judgment processes? How are the end-users' needs, values, skills and visions being met by the prize-awarded design solutions? How can the cycles of a quality judgment and selection process of an urban design project be opened to public while maintaining and stimulating the integrity, efficiency and fairness of the competition system?

The most recent information in the structure and procedure of architecture and urban design competitions are derived from a multidisciplinary study at the School of Architecture and the Built Environment of the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) in Stockholm.² The group is consisted of scholars with cross-disciplinary background committed to intellectually support, inspire, discover and sustain capabilities to bring about a higher level of efficiency in architectural competition system. As the core of its philosophy the group endeavours to bridge between the methods and theories of *making processes* and *making artefacts* in order to grasp, manage, and promote a holistic development of urban design based on the utmost desired quality criteria and standards.

The studies introduce detailed comparisons on traditions, organizations, judgment processes and quality criteria set up by the organizers of competition. Generally saying, in spite of many similarities in the competition cultures in the European countries, they still have several significant differences in their orientation, regulation and procedure. For instance, while a large portion of competitions is ordered by private sector in some countries, but different ranks of governmental institutions and public sector are visible as the major clients in other countries.

Responding to our questionnaire about the main responsibility and mission of the jury, the absolute majority of the informants (architect jurors)

2. Some parts of the findings are published in the *International journal of Building Research and Information* (Kazemian et al., 2009), in *Arkitektutävlingar [Architectural Competitions]* (Kazemian, et al., 2007), and in *Jämförande analys av arkitektutävlingar: erfarenheter från tre nordiska länder [Comparative Analysis of Architectural Competitions: Experiences from Three Nordic Countries]* (Kazemian et al., 2005).

have seen the client's or sponsor's interests as their foremost task. The informants assumed they are not obliged to follow the project to its end because their mission will come to the end immediately after announcing a prize-winning project. (Kazemian 2007; 2009) Communication and dialogue with society is not prioritized and the evaluation process takes place in an environment of high secrecy. Communication with public is very limited and often takes place via short announces in official competition journals or newspapers. It is mainly at the latter phases of competition process when winners will be introduced to public and their works will be publicized in often formal ceremonies and exhibitions.

A need for comprehensive development of the scope of such studies and an in-depth investigation on the values and opinions of citizens who are receiving and experiencing these prize-winning projects as well as the level of the post-occupancy acceptance of such implemented projects are felt throughout our study.

Currently, however, we are witnessing an emerging dynamism in generating new knowledge in theories, processes and concepts of communicative urban design competition as well as in the related research methodologies to advance urban design competition processes in sync with fairness, transparency and interactivity that attempts to assure distributive justice, better urban qualities, higher performing standards, less uncertainty and vulnerability.

In 2008, a post-graduate study, *Arkitektutävlingar: om konsten att hitta en vinnare* [Architectural competitions, the art of finding a winner], is published by Charlotte Svensson at the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm. The study provides a close-up framework from a series of jury meetings and the process of judgment and selection of the winning projects. Still, the study lacks users' opinions as a research objective.

Pertti Solla (1992) in the article, *Architectural Competitions in Finland*, gives a brief overall historical view of the development of design competitions in Finland for the period 1860-1990. He introduces some monumental prize-winning projects and the role of the Finnish Architects Association (SAFA) in arranging competitions but the depth of his inquiries and reasoning on public acceptance remains insignificant.

Leif Östman (2005) in his PhD dissertation presents a critical view towards the Finnish competition tradition, its functions and its impacts on the design quality of built environment. He takes up the competition process of a major library project in Lohja town from 2002. He opposes the system for its lack of concerns towards the end-users values and quality judgment. Östman's study confronts the expert-oriented design competition with users' interactivity and acceptance.

Hélène Lipstadt (1989) in an anthology, *The Experimental Tradition*, considers the years 1920s to 1980s as a period of shaping the modern American architecture and urban design heritages through deploying series of design competitions. She notifies that during the 1960s many competitions in the USA were carried out in open type. But, since the 1980s, the trend gradually moved towards the invited type of competitions.

Winning by Design by Judith Strong (1996) provides valuable information on the rules and procedural aspects of architectural competition in Europe. She approaches the competition system from both sponsors and professionals point of views.

Jack L. Nasar (1999) in his work, *Design by Competition: Making Design Competition Work*, favours the established culture of competition in Europe in comparison with North America due to the vitality in terms of quantity of arrangement as well as their quality and clarity of rules and procedures. He remains however critical to the expert-oriented structure of the competitions. This view can be supported by the extracted data from Europe. In Germany, about 500 architecture and urban design competitions were carried out in 1979 (Wynne 1981) and since then they are kept at this level each year (Kähler 2001). Since the 1980 Germany has got a federal act that requests all public buildings to be designed and built by competition. A similar act has been introduced in France in 1986 which as a result created a tremendous growth in competition activities in the country with about 2000 provisions per year (Nasar 1999) Further, architectural competition in Europe is supported by the Directive of 1994 (Directive 2004/18/EC). The Directive is a major step towards harmonization and effective management of competition and public procurement in the EU. While the Directive sustains the intercultural exchange of experiences in Europe although it does not offer much solution in making the competition process open to public appraisal. The directive, however, provides a climate to further investigate the competition cultures in Europe, to analyze and compare the existing similarities and differences in terms of their structural, legal and procedural aspects. It calls for a need to develop a common conceptual system in order to be able to better understand and depict architectural competitions in their cultural, social and political contexts.

Journal of Architectural and Planning Research has two special issues (1990:2 and 1987:1) on architectural and urban design competitions. In one of these issues, Ernst R Alexander (1987) presents an interesting project based on the analyses of 51 competitions in the USA from 1978 to 1984. Alexander shows that the type of management and organization of competitions are substantial for the successful selection of prize-winning entries. He sees the

time consuming process as a major factor that affects the openness of the procedure and thereby the performance quality of competition.

To sum up, literature on urban design competition and the performance quality of design-winning projects seems to be very rare and sporadic especially from the end-users perspectives. As Nasar concludes, “[...] although many people have written about competitions, none of them critically and systematically evaluate how well the winning solution works for the consumer – the building inhabitants and passerby” (Nasar 1999, 23).

CONCLUSION

The process of generating socio-spatial changes, resolving societal value conflicts and mounting the quality of life is among the ultimate objectives of every urban design actions. However, the embedded complexity, uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value conflicts in urban design can make the best solutions vulnerable to inappropriateness and mismatch in societies. Inapt urban designs can, therefore, be very detrimental for community, encumbering for economy, hazardous for environment, and in a word unsustainable.

Urban design competition is a recognized system aiming to judge and assure the quality of best practices. It is an instrument for experienced and well-practised experts to select prize-winning projects in a rather closed decision making system while was thought to be built upon fairness and democratic premises. This dualistic character of urban-design competition can make the outcomes insecure, the aspects of quality contested, and the appropriateness of a built environment unpredictable.

The study is keen to provide a political argument about the essence of the urban design competition and find out a solution to the organizational and procedural aspects of competition that can promote the quality criteria of design through an increased communication and participation of key players especially the end users in the whole cycle of the scheme. In fact, the demand for openness and revival of the existing rules and procedures that augment the influence of actors is felt as a vital dimension in just urban design competitions.

How can we improve the quality criteria of the prize-winning urban projects in a reciprocal manner, while maintaining the efficiency, fairness and anonymity of the competition system? Can we defuse the best practices in urban design and avoid unpredicted economic, social, cultural, and environmental pitfalls through more communication and interactivity? What are the essential quality criteria considered by competition expert jury? How can the needs, values and visions of citizens be met by the prize-winning design solutions? How are the users’ feedback considered on the performance and quality of a built environment from initial concept to post occupancy?

The competition organisations have to be prepared for a thorough transformation in terms of their procedural, structural and legal compositions in order to achieve the targeted quality criteria with more interactive and communicative character. It is not impossible to reformulate the mission of jury committee and extend the whole quality judgment processes from competition program, implementation, to post-occupancy stages with regard to reciprocal transmission of experiences and knowledge among designers, jurors, clients and end-users. These are among the very vital issues remain to be addressed that can reward all parties.

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Part Three

Abstract

The Vietnam War, 1959-75, was the longest and most divisive in American experience. 58,000 American soldiers died, 140,000 were wounded. Vietnamese casualties were far higher. The war caused permanent transformations in American society and culture. In 1979 Jan Scruggs, a Vietnam veteran, conceived the idea of a memorial to the memory of the American dead and, by implication, the veterans who had served. His further hope was that the memorial would reconcile the war's veterans with the many Americans who had opposed the war. The memorial was to be sited in a place of honor on the Mall in Washington DC. It was to be privately funded as a citizen initiative, the federal government contributing the site. To undertake this effort a sponsor organization was created, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF), its board members including West Point and Naval Academy graduates. Legislation to authorize a memorial, guided by Senators Charles McC. Mathias Jr. and John W. Warner, was passed by the U.S. Congress in May 1980 and signed into law by President Jimmy Carter in July. All public design projects in Washington are subject to intensive scrutiny, especially memorials. Three federal agencies, responsible for approving the design in all its aspects, were closely involved throughout the effort. Discussions concerning a design competition for the memorial had begun in May. Competition planning began in July. The formal competition process was concluded ten months later, in May 1981. The 1,432 designs submitted in the competition, a then record number, were judged by an eight-person jury, all professionals representing the principal design disciplines. The competition was won by a 21-year-old student at Yale University, Maya Ying Lin. The memorial was built and dedicated in November 1982, with a statue group and flagpole addition dedicated in November 1984, the latter the result of sometimes bitter controversy regarding the basic Lin design. The memorial became and remains one of the most visited in the U.S., having become a virtual icon. Much has been written about the design and the designer, and much attention was given to the controversy. Little has been written about the competition process itself, a process based on the highest standards for conducting design competitions. This paper focuses on that process, its context and its conduct.

Keywords

design process, design competition, evaluating architecture, jury deliberation

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The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Design Competition Washington DC, 1980-81

Paul D Spreiregen

PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

My experience with competitions began in architectural school, where they are integral to the architectural design studio. Following school, studying and working in Italy and Sweden, 1954-56, my interest grew. In Italy I also became interested in contemporary memorials due to two examples related to WW II, both the products of competitions — the Ardeatine Caves near Rome and the Monument to the Deported in Milan. In Scandinavia that interest was broadened through studying the work of Gunnar Asplund, Sven Markelius, Alvar Aalto, and Arne Jacobsen — much of their work also the product of design competitions.

In 1955, on a visit to Sweden, I saw an exhibit of the competition entries for a proposed government center for Gothenburg. The winning entry was the work of Alvar Aalto. I was impressed by the simplicity and directness of Aalto's drawings. His design, in my view among his most brilliant, was code named "Curia" in reference to a building in the Roman Forum. His submission was drawn in pencil on ordinary tracing paper. It included perhaps two or three constructed perspectives and photos of a massing model. The rest of his presentation consisted of plans, elevations and sections. Although this project was never realized the memory of the exhibit and the directness of Aalto's drawings served as a guide in competitions that I later managed.

This general interest developed into the gradual realization that frequent and well-managed design competitions are a vital source for advancing creative design ideas. They are its exploratory test grounds. As important, they heighten the public's interest and elevate public expectations of design, thereby establishing a vital environment for nurturing architectural creativity.

From 1966-70 I served as the first Director of Architecture and Design Programs at the then newly established National Endowment for the Arts, an opportunity that I used to try to promote the improvement and wider use of competitions in the U.S. In doing so I undertook an extensive study of competitions, historical and recent. I solicited the experience of architects

from the US and abroad regarding their competition experience. I obtained and analyzed competition codes, mostly European and Scandinavian, but also the AIA code (destined to be withdrawn for legal reasons). Two products of my research were the book *Design Competitions* (McGraw Hill 1978) and, subsequently, the *Handbook of Architectural Design Competitions* (American Institute of Architects, 1981).

Unlike most European and Scandinavian countries, where the conduct of design competitions has been carefully regulated, in the US it has not. Although the federal government has held invited competitions for certain “high profile” public buildings in recent years, in 1980 neither by the federal government, the constituent states, nor, least of all the AIA (the professional design organization of American architects), had any established and mandatory procedure for conducting design competitions. That condition has not basically changed. Conducting design competitions in the U.S. remains voluntary, entirely dependent on the sensibilities and skills of a project sponsor and the people enlisted to assist in it.

A sponsor of the requisite sensibilities proved to be the VVMF, who contacted the AIA for professional help. Since I was chairing the AIA’s committee on competitions at the time, developing the *AIA Handbook*, I was recommended to the VVMF as professional adviser. My first discussions with them were in May 1980. My work began in July, the same month that full authorization for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was procured. I worked directly with the VVMF Board and staff, but most closely with Robert Doubek, a West Point graduate and attorney.

MEMORIALS AND COMPETITIONS IN WASHINGTON

Washington’s monumental character is the product of its 1791 baroque city plan and its largely neoclassic public buildings. That style also originates from the late 18th century. The earliest public buildings and monuments were products of design competitions — the U.S. Capitol, the White House, and the Washington Monument. Architect and later President Thomas Jefferson submitted seminal designs for the first two. Later works produced by design competitions include the Library of Congress, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Pan American Union. Inspired by Washington’s example, many of our individual states and municipalities utilized design competitions for their public buildings. One would think, then, that design competitions would be the norm for Washington, but that has not been the case.

In Washington, unfortunately, the practice became problematical. In the 1930s a design competition for a new Smithsonian museum, the winning



FIG. 1: The Gateway Arch, St Louis.

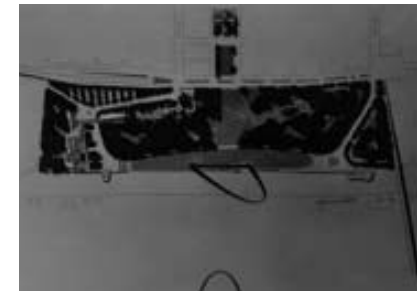


FIG. 2: Gateway Arch competition drawing.



FIG. 3: Battle ship Arizona Memorial, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.



FIG. 4: FDR Memorial design, Washington DC

design authored by Eiel Saarinen, had failed. The original effort to create a memorial to President Franklin D Roosevelt (FDR) through a design competition in the late 1950s had also failed. Other than recent memorials in Washington included the WW II Iwo Jima Memorial, a memorial to Senator Robert Taft, and the John F Kennedy Memorial. None were the result of design competitions. Beyond Washington there had been several recent and successful contemporary American memorial efforts, procured through open design competitions, the results much esteemed by the general public. Among them were the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St Louis Missouri designed by Eero Saarinen, and the Battleship Arizona Memorial in Pearl Harbor Hawaii designed by Alfred Preis. Apart from the inherent difficulty of creating memorials in Washington, competitions aside, an equally grave reality was that after 1975 the American public was trying to put the Vietnam War in the past, in effect to forget it. The veterans and their families could not. Thus, while the idea of a memorial to our Vietnam Veterans was most deserving, considering both the difficulty of making memorials in Washington and the critical factor of public support, there was little reason for optimism on our part.

FEDERAL DESIGN APPROVAL AGENCIES

Three century-old Federal agencies are responsible for the approval for the design of public architecture in Washington. To create a memorial in Washington it is essential to coordinate carefully with them. The agencies are: the National Park Service (NPS), which manages public park lands and virtually all of Washington's memorials; the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), which approves land use and design; and the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA), which approves design. I had worked with all three. Their staffs were colleagues and friends. I knew their roles and responsibilities. Without compromising our work these agencies were involved on a working basis, mainly informational, from the inception of our effort.

SOURCE OF THE DESIGN COMPETITION METHODOLOGY

A popular characterization of the predominant public architecture of Washington, most of it of classically inspired, is to refer to it as “beaux arts style”. In France, where the Institute of Fine Arts was founded centuries ago (*l'Academie des Beaux Arts*), and which included a school of architecture (*l'École d'Architecture*) the term “beaux arts style” has no meaning. They would refer to Greek or Roman neoclassic precedents. Jefferson had introduced the idea of classical architecture to the U.S., inspired by his travels in France. From the 1870s until the depression of the 1930s many of America's leading architects had studied at the *École*. Because of the *Ecole's* emphasis on neoclassicism and because so much American public architecture was neoclassic, the term “beaux arts” became an identifying style, a “brand”. This unfortunate misuse of the term obscures more significant aspects of the *Ecole* and its teaching methods.

The *École* is remembered for its extraordinary students drawings. Normally expressed with great graphic virtuosity the drawings were, foremost, exercises in developing a student's design knowledge and facility, utilizing the most refined design palette of the western world. But Greek and Roman classicism were by no means all that they explored. Students also made detailed construction drawings. And they made designs for sites and climates far from the Mediterranean, even as far as Alaska, and so as different in architectural expression as the climates. Such exercises were far from neoclassic in motif. The *Ecole* was much more than a copybook of styles.

The *École* was a school for learning how to design real and complex buildings. In the course of the nineteenth century France evolved into a Republic, and the *Ecole's* students explored the possibilities for many novel types of buildings — schools, hospitals, and courthouses were typical subjects. Representative example design accommodated many complex functions into a coherent workable form. The designs were depicted in plan, elevation, and cross

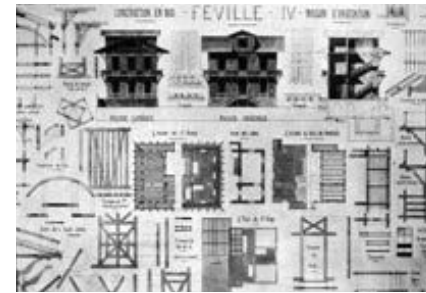


FIG. 5: Construction drawing, *l'École d'Architecture*.



FIG. 6: Project in Alaska, *l'École d'Architecture*.



FIG. 7: Looking southward into the memorial site.



FIG. 8: Looking eastward from the memorial site to the Washington Monument.

section. Rarely did the students do perspective drawings. Their drawings, consisting of the three-part plan-section-elevation depiction system, had to be analyzed by the viewer for all their implications — appearance, function, structure, circulation, construction feasibility, spatial experience and hierarchy, visual emphasis, light, ventilation, etc. The artistic virtuosity demonstrated in the drawings can obscure the underlying purpose of architectural depiction in plan-section-elevation. Unlike perspective renderings, whose purpose is largely to allure, the purpose of depiction in plan-section-elevation is to inform. In order to be understood such drawings must be examined analytically, like a physician analyzing an x-ray. Thus the concomitant to this method of depiction is that it requires expert and experienced eyes to evaluate. It requires jurors of long experience and extensive expertise. In a large array of designs, as in a competition, the normal condition in the *École*, jurors had to be capable of evaluating a design rapidly, to see the essence of an idea at a glance. Plan-section-elevation depiction also puts all design submissions, as in a competition, on an equal basis of comparison, one design with another. Thus, the cornerstone of an effective design exercise and its proper evaluation, certainly for a competition, was and remains clear and fully informative depiction on the one hand and evaluation by expert jurors on the other.

The *École's* depiction method was disseminated world-wide, wherever competitions were held, and it persisted after the demise of the *Ecole* in the 1960s. It continues today. It has persisted because it is a very good idea. Not surprising, then, are Eero Saarinen's original competition drawings for the St Louis Gateway arch — plan-section-elevation — the same technique used in the *École*. True, Saarinen included a widely published perspective, but that was an accompaniment. The St Louis competition brief required the traditional and proven depiction triad.

THE MEMORIAL SITE

The site for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, chosen with the guidance of NPS, was a small and quite inconsequential western corner of Washington's central Mall, its monumental core. The selection of this site had been made by July 1980 when I was engaged as professional adviser. I concurred fully with the choice, feeling that if it were not possible to make a suitable memorial there it would not be possible to make one anywhere.

The site was a two-acre (0.8 hectare) area, a rough circle in form, 1000 feet (300 m) northeast of the Lincoln Memorial. To its east was an artificial pond called Constitution Gardens. To its north stood a row of neoclassic buildings of modest scale. The site itself was a quiet tree-lined meadow. Its special character, however, derived less from its interior, even less from what one saw looking into it, as what one saw looking out of it — looking from it. From the site one could see, principally, a striking view of the 555 foot high (169 m) Washington Monument 0.7 miles (1,120 m) to the east. To the southwest was a view of the Lincoln Memorial. The Washington Monument vista, unobstructed by trees, was clear throughout the year. The Lincoln Memorial vista is fully clear only in winter, when it is not obscured. Lesser vistas were of the US Capitol dome and several Smithsonian Institute landmark buildings on the Mall. But the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial were the main vistas, giving the site its special value.

COMPETITION PLANNING AND EXECUTION

Like any complex undertaking, a competition process has to be planned in complete detail, a sequence of coordinated actions all leading to an end product. The end product, the objective, was a realizable design concept that could earn the approval of the responsible agencies in Washington and, equally, the public.

A useful planning technique is to plan in reverse, to start with the end objective and work backwards to the beginning, identifying all the steps between. To plan, mount, and hold a design competition requires from nine



FIG. 9: Hangar #3, Andrews AFB, Maryland.



FIG. 10: Exhibition plan for the 1,432 design panels.



FIG. 11: Jury, L to R: Weese, Hunt, Eckbo, Rosati, Nivola, Clay, Sasaki, Belluschi, Spreiregen (Prof Adv).



FIG. 12: The jury deliberating.

months to a year, preferably less than a year. This allows adequate time without dissipating interest. A competition schedule must take into account the normal events of the year, such as holidays. Starting as we did in July 1980, we set May 1981 as the target date for having the competition design in hand. The component phases were:

First, the planning phase, preparing an overall schedule for the entire process, preparing the various documents, the competition rules, the jury selection, the budget, prizes, logistics, etc. The essentials were substantially completed by the end of September, two months after starting.

Second, the competition announcement phase, in which the competition was announced in the general media, the professional press, publications of all the design societies, and all schools of design. As soon as the competition announcement was made we began to receive inquiries. In response we sent a booklet describing the competition — site, rules, schedule, jurors, prizes, and the contractual relationship with the winner. We allowed three months for this second phase, ending at the end of December 1980, the registration deadline.

Third, the design phase, which began in early January 1981 by mailing the competition brief to all registered competitors and continuing for three

months. We allowed a month for competitors to ask questions regarding the brief. We studied their questions, the same question often asked by several competitors, and sent all competitors a question-and-answer document. The designs were due at the end of March 1981.

Fourth, the receiving and processing phase involved preparing the design submissions for review by the design jury. We received 1,432 designs, a then record. They were unwrapped, each assigned a code number, each checked for compliance, each photographed for a record, and all transferred to an airplane hangar for jury examination. This phase occupied three weeks, starting in early April.

Fifth, the jury phase, during which the jury examined all the designs, made their selection, and reported their recommendation to the VVMF. This occurred over a one-week period, beginning on Sunday, April 26 and continuing to the following Friday, May 1, when the jury reported to the VVMF.

Sixth, the design announcement phase, occupied the following week. It required the preparation of a press information packet and press conference. At the end of the week there was a public display of all 1,432 design submissions. Less than ten months had elapsed from initial competition planning to the public presentation of the design.

Seventh, the post-competition phase, entailed three critical and simultaneous tasks. The first was to obtain preliminary official approval for the design by the approval agencies. Second was to compose a design team to develop the design. To do this an experienced and reputable local design firm (Cooper Lecky) and an experienced builder (Gilbaine Building Company) were paired with the winning designer. Third was a fund raising program. The U.S. government was to contribute the site. The memorial itself was funded by public subscription, including donations by more than 275,000 individuals. By early August 1981, two months after the conclusion of the competition, all three were accomplished or initiated.

COMPETITION WORKING DOCUMENTS

There were five principal working documents. They were:

The *first document* was related to the competition announcement, the “launch”. Along with press releases to the general and professional press and to the principal American professional design associations (architects, landscape architects, sculptors, planners) we prepared and sent an announcement poster to every school of design in the U.S. (architecture, landscape architecture, planning, and art). The announcement was an invitation to inquire about and receive information regarding the competition. Internet use at this time was virtually non-existent.

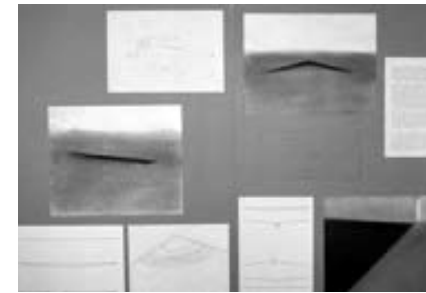


FIG. 13: Maya Lin's two submission panels.

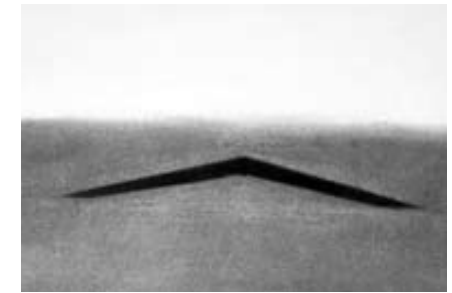


FIG. 14: Lin's concept of the memorial in the landscape.



FIG. 15: Concept of the vista to the Washington Monument.

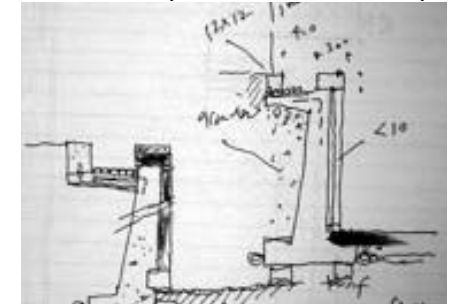


FIG. 16: Weese's construction sketch.

The *second document*, an illustrated booklet, was sent to anyone who inquired about the competition, which was open to any American citizen 18 years of age. This booklet described the purpose of the competition, identified its site, presented the rules, identified the eight-person jury, described the intended contractual relationship between the winning designer and the sponsor, and listed the prizes for the competition winner and runners-up. This booklet contained registration forms. Competitors could compete as individuals or teams. It was sent out immediately upon receipt of an inquiry. About 5200 inquiries were received in the fall of 1980, a rather assuring response.

The *third document*, also an illustrated booklet and site maps, was the competition brief. It was sent to all registered competitors, altogether about 2,600 individuals or teams, half the number of those who had inquired. It included plans of the entire mall and the site. The latter was illustrated in detail, showing topography, trees, benches, paths, and lighting. The brief was, for the most part, a description of the site. This booklet also enumerated the design requirements. We sought a design that was reflective and contemplative, that would be harmonious with its setting, that would not constitute a political statement regarding the war, that could be visited at any time or season, and that would

not prove a maintenance burden. A further and essential requirement was that the memorial display the names of the 58,000 service men and women (eight nurses), who died or who were missing in action. This booklet also included the presentation requirements. Each design had to be presented on not more than two vertical panels each 30"x40" (76.2 cm x 101.6 cm). The design submission had to include a plan, section, and elevation, all at the same scale, the same scale as the site plan. A one-page written description was encouraged. All lettering had to be by hand, non-mechanical. Models would not be considered, although photographs of models were allowed. The competitors were free to add anything else, explanatory sketches, perspectives, etc. All drawing media were allowed. CAD was not in general use at the time. The booklet also described the requirements for wrapping and delivering the designs, as well as identifying the sender on the outer wrapping and having a sealed envelope on the rear of each panel, also identifying the designer or team.

The *fourth document* was the question-and-answer document.

The *fifth document* was a report on the competition results, sent to all the individuals or teams who had submitted designs, 1,432 in total. The 1,432 submissions were the work of 730 teams and 2,550 individuals. A total of 3,843 designers participated.

PROCESSING AND DISPLAYING THE DESIGNS

At the outset of this undertaking we realized that we might find ourselves in an atmosphere of opposition, possibly hostility, regarding the creation of a memorial related to the Vietnam War. As regards official Washington we were entirely wrong. The misgivings certainly persisted, but there was no lack of respect for the soldiers who had fought the war and who had died serving their country, the "rightness" or "wrongness" of the war aside. That manifested itself in the extraordinary degree of cooperation extended to us for conducting the competition.

The designs were received and processed in a large private mail-handling warehouse east of Washington. We needed such a facility for about three weeks. Here the designs were unwrapped, number-coded, photographed for the record, and prepared for display nearby. The use of the warehouse space had been donated, an example of the support the VVMF experienced throughout the competition process.

To display the designs for the selection jury we were generously offered the use of Hangar #3 at Andrews Air Force Base. The hangar had an unobstructed interior area of over an acre (0.4 hectare). We needed all of it. And the military security was a great help. We had to be prepared for possible anti-war protests. But none occurred.



FIG. 17: Second place design.

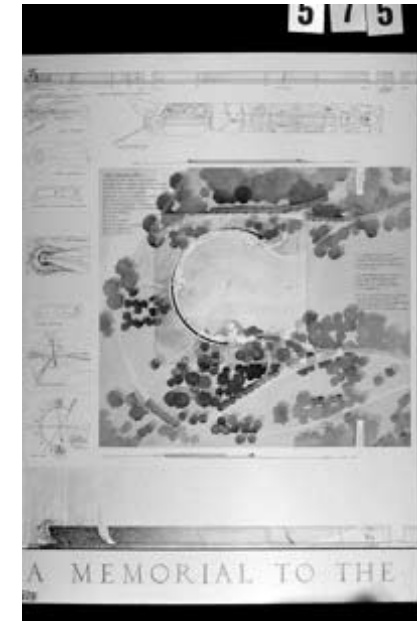


FIG. 18: Third place design.

We drafted a plan for displaying all 1,432 submissions, a linear 1-1/3 miles (2 km) of exhibit. I calculated that 3-1/2 hours were needed to walk by the entire design display, viewing each design slowly and without pausing. In the receiving warehouse I had examined all the designs for rules compliance and to grade them very roughly into four categories of design merit — "highly promising", "possible", "unlikely", and "ineligible". I rated 191 designs in the two top categories. The exhibit arrangement, parallel isles, was such that jurors would pass from one "category" to another without being at all aware of that and without becoming influenced in any way, the two top category designs being in the more central aisles. The grading and arrangement was done to gauge how much time the jury would need and to facilitate repositioning the designs as the selection and elimination process proceeded. The finalists would end up being examined in a small court central to the main display.

THE JURY

None of the members of the VVMF were designers or artists. Thus it became my responsibility to recommend the jury members. I did so by drafting a long list of candidates, designers I knew or knew of. The final list was drawn from those I was able to contact and who expressed interest in serving. I rec-

ommended that the VVMF interview each of the potential jurors individually. I excused myself from the interviews, preferring that the VVMF officers assess the potential jurors without my possible influence. All were accepted. In the case of sculptors I had recommended three, intending that two would be engaged. I recommended three because unlike architects or landscape architects the work of individual sculptors tends to be stylistically more identifiable. That might influence sculptor-competitors. But the VVMF liked all three and so three sculptors it was. The result was an eight-person jury, an even rather than the normally preferred odd-numbered jury.

In soliciting the American design community we wanted to appeal to designers of all types and predilections, professional and amateur alike. For that reason the jury represented the principal design disciplines. The selection jury was composed of two landscape architects, Hideo Sasaki and Garret Eckbo; two architects, Pietro Belluschi and Harry Weese; three sculptors, Costantino Nivola, Richard Hunt, and James Rosati; and one environmental design journalist, Grady Clay. All were highly seasoned and accomplished professionals. All were widely respected. Many had worked together, some in Washington. They were also most collegial, people who might deliberate intensely but were not at all likely to argue or posture. Four were veterans of other wars, but none were Vietnam veterans. That was intentional. In the initial planning phase the sponsor expressed interest in having one Vietnam veteran on the jury. I made no comment about this at the time, although I believed it was a bad idea. Such a juror-veteran might, I felt, skew the jury's discussion with emotional argument. And which single veteran would be appropriate? ... an officer or an enlisted man, an infantryman or an airman, someone who had served at the outset of the war or someone who had served at the end, someone who had been wounded or someone who had not? Fortunately the problem disappeared. One day the VVMF simply informed me that they had decided against the idea. There would be no Vietnam veteran on the jury.

The jurors started on their first morning by visiting the site together. They then went to Hangar #3 at Andrews AFB, and convened in a small meeting room alongside the hangar's voluminous main space to discuss the program. Having done that they chose Grady Clay as jury chairman, and then went into the hangar to see all 1,432 designs — individually. Each juror saw all the designs. As mentioned earlier I had calculated that a minimum of 3-1/2 hours was needed to view all the designs. The eldest juror, Pietro Belluschi, took a full day. By the end of the first afternoon one of the jurors, Harry Weese, came back to our impromptu conference room in the hangar and told me, "Paul, there are two designs out there that could do it". One was to become the winning design.

Each juror, working individually, noted any design that appeared plausible to him. By the middle of the second day, Tuesday, 232 designs were noted by individual jurors. That was 41 more designs than I had designated in my top two categories, confirming to me that my screening and arrangement had not been prejudicial. Of these 232 designs 162 had received one juror vote each, 53 designs had received two votes, 10 designs had received three votes, and 7 designs had received four votes. The jury then viewed the exhibit collectively, pausing to discuss each of the 232 noted designs. Through discussion they cut the field to 90, then 39. As they did so they made remarks that clarified and defined the qualities that they felt were appropriate to the memorial. The final decision was made by early afternoon of the fourth day, Thursday. All the while one of the jurors, Grady Clay, a journalist, had been noting the remarks made by his fellow jurors in the course of the winnowing process. The selection made, Clay and I composed a report and explanation to the sponsor, based on Clay's notes, to be presented the next day Friday noon, May 1, 1980.

Among the comments made by jury members as they reviewed the many designs, and noted by Clay, the following proved particularly cogent:

"I see something horizontal, not vertical."

"Memorials that rely on symbols don't work for a diverse culture."

"In a city of white memorials rising this will be a dark memorial receding."

"Many people will not comprehend this memorial until they experience it."

"Most of the memorial is already there. It's the site, and the vistas from it."

"The design is like a Chinese vase — you bring to it what you are able to bring; you take away what you are able to take away."

"A great work of art doesn't tell you what to think, it makes you think."

"You always experience a great work of art in different ways."

"It will be a better memorial if it's not entirely understood at first."

"Confused times need simple forms."

The jury deliberations were the most thorough and probing discussion I have ever experienced for any design, and I have participated in many. For example, Weese made several sketches showing how the design could be constructed. Weese's sketches showed a concrete retaining wall supporting a finished stone face, a drainage system, and a small "stumbling curb" on the high ground above and behind the wall. Its purpose was to prevent people from inadvertently walking over the edge. At the time of the competition the "post modernist" movement was at its peak, and many of the submissions were of that inclination. They depended on allusion and symbol, a predilection that the jury found severely wanting.

The selected design was the work of Maya Ying Lin, a then 21-year-old student at Yale University. Not only was the design far from the norm of Washington memorials, or indeed memorials anywhere, its depiction in pastel crayon was almost childish in character. Only a jury of the perspicacity of that eight-person panel could have found that winning design. A lay jury would certainly have overlooked it. A part-lay part-professional jury might well have become deadlocked over it, going instead to a more “acceptable” compromise design.

The jury’s recommendation to the VVMF not only had to be clear, it had to be convincing. It had to be understandable to a group of non-designers.

I called the VVMF office late Thursday to tell them that the jury was prepared to meet with them, that they had a recommendation to make. We would be ready at noon the next day. At noon that May 1 Friday about thirty people, VVMF and staff, arranged themselves in a large circle in front of the display of finalists, Lin’s design at the center, concealed under a cloth. That was lifted after a brief explanation of the jury process, followed by an explanation of the jury’s recommendation and reasoning, drawing on Clay’s notes. The presentation took 25 minutes. When it was concluded there was a brief silence, a matter of seconds. All looked to Jan Scruggs as originator of the memorial project to comment first. He rose from his chair, paused, strode forward, and in a calm and deliberate voice said, “Well, I like it.” The immediate reaction of all the others was to leap to their feet, clapping, cheering, and embracing one another. They understood it. At that moment my earlier misgivings receded. This memorial could become a reality. A new horizon came into view.

MAYA LIN’S DESIGN

Maya Lin’s two panels showed, as required, a plan, a section and an elevation — plus supplementary drawings and a hand-written explanation. Altogether she had portrayed a fully convincing concept. One of Lin’s explanatory perspective sketches nearly said it all. It showed the view of the Washington Monument, looking eastward along the east wall of her memorial design. It confirmed what her plan-section-elevation-drawings suggested. One might speculate on the effectiveness of Lin’s seemingly naive drawings had she then had greater graphic abilities. Could she have been as clear? She may have been preoccupied with drawing to the detriment of thinking, as happens with presentation drawings. Her drawings served as a means, not an end. Lin proposed that the names of the 58,000 war dead be arranged chronologically, in order of death, not alphabetically. The names would commence at the apex joint of two memorial walls and conclude at the joint base — full circle. They would disappear into the ground to the east and resume at the west.



FIG. 19: Model of Lin’s design, made for the press conference.



FIG. 20: Lin with the model.



FIG. 21: Dedication of the Thiepval memorial, 1931.

She also showed how the design’s two-wall form derived from the utilization of the two principal vistas. The second place design also used the key vistas very well, but it was not as direct as Lin’s. It was more elaborate, while offering nothing more. In the final deliberations one juror commented, “This is how we might do it if it were for WW II”. Its designers, Marvin Krosinsky and Victor Ochakovsky, were two recent Russian immigrants. The third place design was the work of four landscape architects, Joseph Brown, Sheila Brady, Douglas Hays and Michael Vergason, with sculptor Frederick Hart. Its use of the vistas was good but not optimal. The vistas were to the Washington Monument and the less visible Capital dome, not the more immediate and more visible Lincoln Memorial. Again, a juror commented, “This is how me might have done it for WW I. The design we’re coming to (i.e. the Lin design) is a design of our times”.

In addition to the first, second and third prizes 15 honorable mentions were awarded. The teams or individuals who comprised these consisted of 23 architects, nine landscape architects, four sculptors, four students, and two artist-designers. The youngest was 18, the oldest 66. The average age was 38.

Lin's design submission was the convincing portrayal of a raw idea. The jury saw in it the essence of what the memorial should be. They also realized that, as in all initial designs, much developmental refinement would be necessary. As it was, Lin's topographical indications were somewhat muddled and the wall area she had shown was inadequate for displaying the 58,000 names. But these were minor shortcomings, easy to correct. It was the concept that was important.

In final form, and as built, the memorial is 246.75 feet long (75.2 m) and 10.1 feet high at the vertex (3 m). The two walls meet at an angle of 125 degrees. The two walls are composed of 70 inscribed panels. Carla Corbin was principal staff architect for the "architects of record", the Cooper-Lecky Partnership. She worked most closely with Maya Lin.

GENESIS OF MAYA LIN'S DESIGN

What were the origins of Lin's design? The primary influence was indirect, less a specific precedent than a way of thinking about memorials to a war's dead. The influence was the motivating idea behind the design for a memorial in Thiepval, about eighty miles northwest of Paris, a memorial to over 73,000 British soldiers "missing in action" in the WW I Battle of the Somme. Their bodies were never recovered, having been blown to bits or drowned in mud. The memorial was the work of the noted British architect Edwin Lutyens, and was a major departure from the glorifying memorials of his time, certainly of the 19th century. Lutyens was a master of irony. He was revolted at the slaughter of WW I. The Thiepval memorial, at first sight seeming to be a traditional and glorifying arch of triumph, is transformed in the visitor's comprehension to become, instead, the jaws of death. It has almost no flags flapping in the wind. Real flags would be a token of life. Flags are carved in stone. They, too, are dead. From inside its many arches the outward vistas are of the former battlefields, the killing fields, now rolling pastures and farms, but once the landscape of death. Those rolling and fertile fields add a further sense of irony, the pointlessness of the sacrifice of young men to war. The arch surfaces are covered not with the expected referential and glorifying motifs but rather the thousands and thousands of names of the dead. Only that.

How did Thiepval idea influence Lin? There had been an exhibit of the British WW I memorials in Scotland a few years prior to the Vietnam competition. One of its curators, Gavin Stamp, was invited to lecture at Yale by architects Anne McCallum and Andrus Burr. Burr was the instructor of Maya Lin's studio class, and assigned the Vietnam Memorial as one of four class projects. Lin learned about Thiepval at a lecture by Vincent Scully, a



FIG. 22: Public exhibit of the designs, May 1981.



fig. 23: Memorial dedication, November 1982.



FIG. 24: Early on a winter morning.



FIG. 25: In early spring.

popular architectural historian then at Yale. Scully had learned of Thiepval from Stamp, and was subsequently credited for introducing it. Lin adapted Lutyens' ironic attitude, first producing a pun of her own. There is also a memorial building at Yale, a student center, with the names of Yale alumni who died in all the nations' wars inscribed on the interior walls of its main entrance. But Lutyens' corrupted icon was the more significant source of Lin's inspiration — with some coaching.

In the fall of 1980, when the competition was announced but before the brief was issued, Burr assigned four studio projects for his undergraduate studio class. One was the Vietnam Memorial. The class visited the site for the memorial that fall. At the time other scholars were exploring the subject of funerary architecture, the architecture of death. Lin completed three of the four projects, including the Vietnam Memorial. Her first design was a twisted human figure. Burr urged her to go beyond that. With the irony of Thiepval in mind she then did a pun on the once prevalent "domino theory", the idea that if Vietnam were to fall to communism Southeast Asia would follow, hence a prevailing rationale for the Vietnam War. Lin's initial design, her pun, was an array of large black gravestone-like slabs falling into a coffin, itself sinking into the ground with one corner protruding. It was the domino theory gone awry. A review of the studio work was held in the

fall in which two New York City architects, Carl Pucci and Ross Anderson, participated. In the course of reviewing Lin's "domino theory" design she was advised to delete the slabs, leaving just the protruding coffin corner. Another suggestion was that she put the 58,000 names on the visible coffin corner surfaces, starting at one corner of the coffin, disappearing into the ground and resuming on the other side. Lin listened to these suggestions. When the brief was issued in early January Lin made a refined design based on these ideas, drew them up quite privately and submitted her design in the competition. She had listened, learned and refined particularly well.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

The jury had made their decision on Friday May 1, 1981. A press conference and public announcement was scheduled for Wednesday May 6, five days after the sponsor accepted the design from the jury. It was obvious that Lin's drawings would be insufficient, particularly for newspaper publication or TV broadcast. On the very same Friday I proposed that we needed to have two explanatory models illustrating the design. One was a simple model of the entire Mall, showing the visual relationship between the memorial wall positions, the Washington Monument, and the Lincoln Memorial. The other was a model of the design itself, showing topography, trees, and human figures to indicate scale. Weese, having a branch office in Washington, offered the help of his staff to make the models. I prepared drawings with minor topographical corrections and from that the models were built. Meanwhile, Lin was contacted in New Haven and told that some members of the VVMF would come to New Haven to confer with her. She hadn't been told that she had won the competition. In New Haven the next day, Saturday May 2, she was informed that she had won, but that she had to keep this news completely confidential. Lin, accompanied by two VVMF staff, arrived in Washington about noon. At Weese's office the models were by then well under way, the topography and wall positions in place. Lin noticed the slight adjustments, and although I explained that the model was only for the press conference, the public announcement, and for initial informational photographs she was somewhat disconcerted. Her first remark was, "You changed my design". I tried to persuade her that the design would likely "change" anyway in the course of its refinement, as indeed it did. Unfortunately, this encounter, though minor, was to foretell many ensuing difficulties, some of them severe, between Lin and the VVMF in the next months. But there were immediate needs to attend to.

Our objective at that moment was the press conference and announcement a few days later. The models had to be completed by Sunday so that they could be photographed for informational use as enclosures in a press



FIG. 26: Eastward vista to the Washington Monument.



FIG. 27: Southwest vista to the Lincoln Memorial.



FIG. 28: The names and background reflection.



FIG. 29: A commemorative anniversary.

kit, an information package, to be distributed at the press conference. Upon meeting Lin we knew that the story would concern not just the memorial design but, as newsworthy, the designer as much and possibly more.

On Wednesday May 6 the Boardroom of the Headquarters of the American Institute of Architects was filled with reporters, TV cameras and cables covering the floor. The announcement would be national news. We composed the announcement presentation with the greatest care. Our press kits were ready, complete with the photographs that we felt would convey the memorial design effectively. The models were in place, covered. We knew, also, that the impact of the presentation had to be "love at first sight", that the design had to win immediate public acceptance — through the press reports to be sure — or the project was dead. We had to do it exactly right.

Our presentation plan was centered on the design and on Lin as the winner of the competition, having her explain her design. Scruggs and Doubek were to make brief introductory remarks. I was to follow, describing the competition process and design selection, also speaking briefly. This background information was, of course, necessary. Its larger purpose was to heighten the press audience's anticipation for the design and its author. We wanted maximum impact.

Lin was young, diminutive, and Asian. She wore a pork pie hat. She might easily stand out in a room full of reporters. She might be spotted, lessening the surprise. To avoid that we arranged for Lin and my wife and long-time assistant Rose-Helene to arrive at the press conference shortly after the preparations started. The two were to carry reporter's notebooks and quietly seat themselves in the rear of the room, blending into the frenzy. So they did.

Scruggs made the opening remarks. Doubek made further introductory remarks. I followed, describing the competition process — the jury, the number of entries. In concluding, my words slowing, I said, “I would now like to introduce to you the winner of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Design Competition . . . Maya Ying Lin”. This was her cue. Following our plan she counted slowly to ten, rose, and then walked slowly from the rear of the room to the podium. She then presented her design. The presentation, carefully rehearsed, consisted of slides of her drawings interspersed with actual views of the site, blending reality with possibility. Her accompanying narrative was, simply, a reading of her hand-written design description, the narrative she had included on her presentation panels. The whole presentation took about thirty minutes.

The response could not have been more positive. Photos were made of Lin and Scruggs holding the model. The story went out immediately on all the major wire services. It was feature news on evening TV. Many more news stories were to follow. Many editorials were written, overwhelmingly favorable. There were many laudatory “letters to the editor” of the major newspapers.

Following the press conference and public announcement we made a second presentation to members and staff of the U.S. Congress on Capitol Hill, including the memorial's patrons, Senators Mathias and Warner. CFA, NPS and NCPC staff were also present.

AFTER THE COMPETITION

All of Washington's memorials were subjects of controversy in their time. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial was no exception. In all cases the controversies caused the realization of the past memorials to be delayed — the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial both a half century. The controversy that ensued over the Vietnam Veterans Memorial has been amply described in the book *To Heal a Nation* by Jan Scruggs and Joel Swerdlow, as well as a more recent book, *The Wall: 25 Years of Healing and Education* by Kim Murphy. Fortunately, I was not directly involved in the controversy, though I remained close to Scruggs, Doubek and the VVMF. My role had ended with the conclusion of the competition and the formal approval of

the design by the CFA, NPS, and NCPC by August 1980. The controversy became vicious and the tactics quite underhanded. To my deep regret that controversy became another slur against competitions, even though controversy can and often does occur as often with commissioned work. When a problem arises the competition process gets blamed; the commission process does not. Through all this Lin performed admirably, standing up to an onslaught of harsh criticism. She never wavered, and she and her design prevailed. But Lin had her limits and in time resigned her role as design consultant. The design survived the controversy and the memorial was built, dedicated only 28 months after competition planning started, 18 months after the design was first presented. Final permission to build the memorial was granted by then Secretary of the Interior James Watt when the VVMF agreed to add a flag and, of greater impact, a statue group representing Vietnam soldiers on patrol. This compromise was reached through the critical intervention of Senators Mathias and Warner, and through negotiations with the CFA, NCPC, and NPS. The procedures of these agencies can be credited with protecting the original design. They assured that the placement of the flag and the statues would not compromise Lin's basic concept.

On Saturday May 9, three days after the public announcement, we had an open house exhibit at Andrews. All 1,432 designs were displayed. The hangar was filled. The memorial dedication took place on Nov 11, 1982. That was the first of two dedications, the second being two years later for the soldier sculptures and flag. Then President Ronald Reagan did not attend the first dedication. Vietnam was still too politically sensitive an issue. But he attended the second, for the statue and flag. By then the memorial had succeeded in surmounting the divisive scars of the war. Its creation had far surpassed Scruggs's original hopes. It had indeed become an act of tribute as well as reconciliation. Almost immediately it became an American icon.

AFTERTHOUGHTS

Although these events took place over a quarter century ago they remain vivid in memory, aided of course by my log books and papers. There are several thoughts and recollections that I would like to add.

When I began my work as professional adviser I made a personal pledge that this competition would stand as one of the best ever conducted. I wanted to establish, or more modestly, reestablish a model process. I thought, too, that it would be a miracle if we were able to get any memorial at all built, but if we did we might open a Pandora's box, that there would be many more memorial efforts to follow and that these, regrettably in my view, would be predominately war related. My first hope, that this competition as a model

procedure would set an example, was not realized, although competitions came into wider use as a result of our success. The second, that there would be many war related memorials, was.

In the entire course of the work none of the members of the VVMF, all veterans, ever asked me my personal views regarding the war itself. Nor did they ever discuss theirs. I believe we were of similar minds.

The public exhibit at Hangar #3 on Saturday May 9 also stands out. The broad public interest in the memorial effort and the competition can only be described as spectacular. I met many of the competitors then, most of the winners among them. Especially memorable were two recent Russian immigrants who had won second place, Krosinsky and Ochakovsky, who smothered me with great bear hugs and proclaimed, "This is democratic architecture!"

Coloring these recollections are the inspiring words of the Swedish architect Ragnar Östberg, written in his 1929 book about the Stockholm Town Hall, for which he had won the design competition held from 1902-05.

At the office days lagged on in grey monotony, from time to time relieved by the frequent competitions, sometimes resulting in a prize, though usually not, or by the week-ends, which afforded opportunities for architectural studies in various parts of my own country...
...but I was still kept waiting for the great chance...

Ragnar Östberg received the Gold Medal of the American Institute of Architects in 1933.

Abstract

The competition in 2007 for an extension to Gunnar Asplund's library in Stockholm from 1928 was unique in its very open execution. Not only was all the material available for everyone through the web. The proposals, with accurate names, were also made available for everyone at an open website (www.arkitekt.se/asplund). The extensive material of 1170 entries is a seminal source that answers to numerous questions. This paper discusses the relationship between the proposals selected by the jury and the proposals delivered by architects of some international reputation. The selection, as well as the judgement, expresses a personal opinion of the author. With this reservation, the investigation reveals at least one proposal ("Terraces" by David Chipperfield) that, according to the author, should have qualified for further development. Apart from this, few if any of the proposals submitted from acknowledged professionals did provide convincing solutions to the task. These facts raise two questions: First, was the problem that the architects were to solve properly prepared, or were the program and the area incomprehensible? Second, must not the organisation of open competitions on controversial subjects consider the fact that very large number of entries sub optimizes the public debate?

Keywords

Competitions, Stockholm, library, Asplund.

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The Outcome of the Stockholm City Library Competition: A Study of Entries From Internationally Renowned Architects

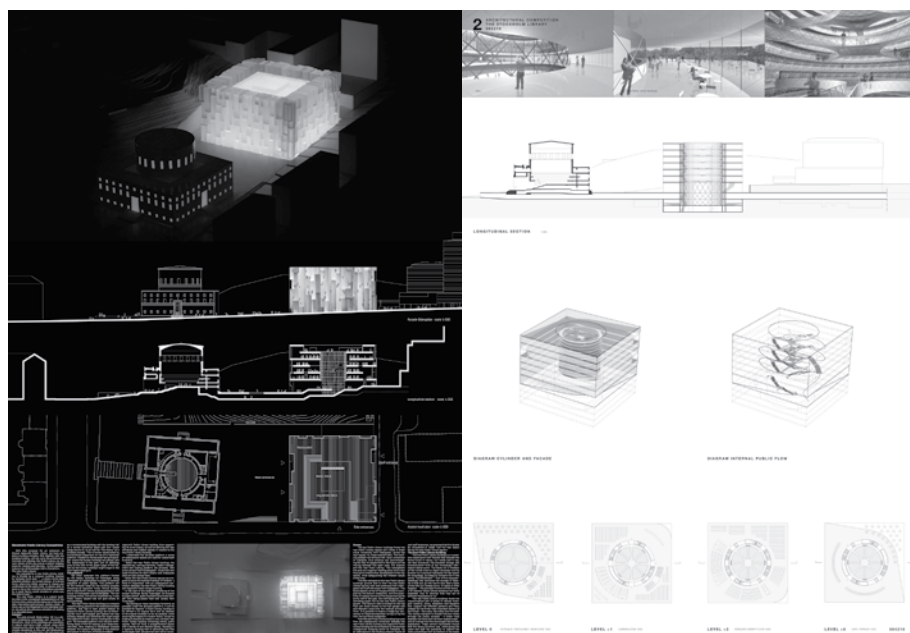
Rasmus Wærn

The launch of the competition for the extension of the city library in Stockholm was spectacular. The association of Swedish architects who arranged the competition talked about a competition of a lifetime and the open access to the material through the web discharged a flood of interest: About 6000 architects from 120 countries registered for participation and a total of 1170 entries was assessed by the jury. This makes the competition one of the largest in the world.

Competitions have a long and successful history in Sweden, but the open competitions have been considerably less during the last decade, as the prequalification process has expanded. Today even relatively small projects as visitor centres are being executed through prequalification. Other kinds of invitation processes, such as parallel commissions, have also expanded. The decision and consequences to announce this competition as open, without any special invitations, shall be understood in this light.

The competition was divided in two moments. Six entries, representing six different approaches, were selected for further development. The vast amount of entries was paradoxically counterproductive for a vivid debate. Ten minutes of studies of every proposal makes 200 hours of work. It was not until the six finalists were announced that a public discussion was possible, even if none of these was received with great acclaim. Nor was the winning proposal applauded in parity with the huge arrangement.

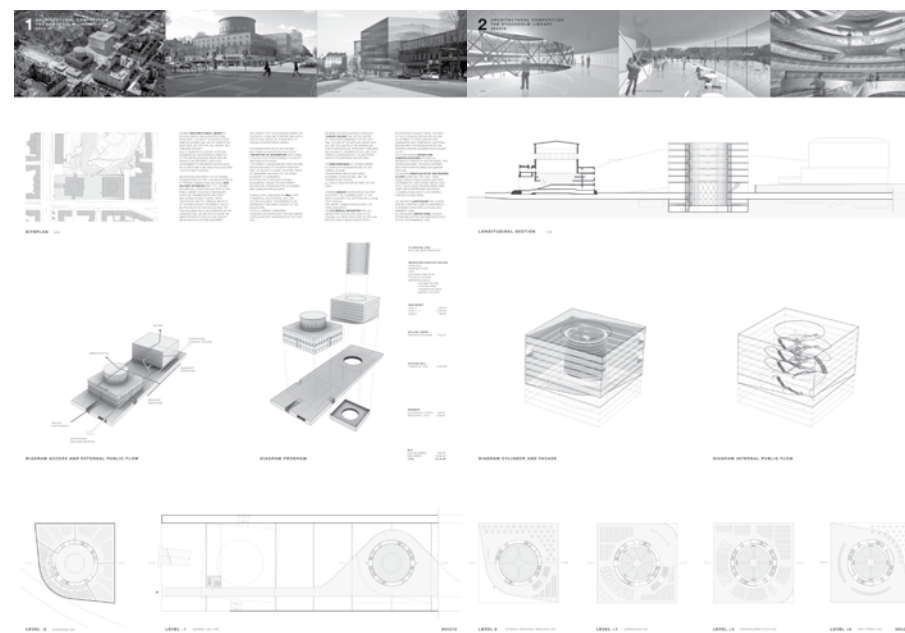
The study aims at investigating the proposals from well-established architects (Swedish entries have been abandoned in order to avoid conflicts of interest). The entries are described in alphabetic order after their motto, with the three entries of Pekka Helin together with two supplementary proposals in the end.



1001

KIM UTZON [FIG.1]

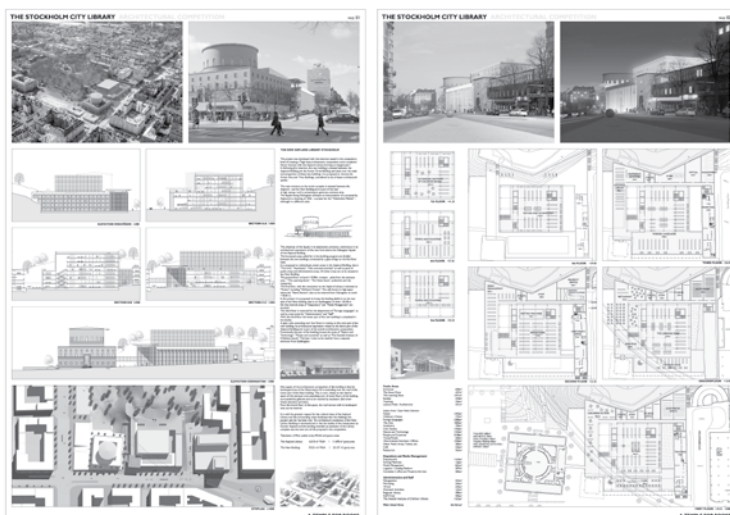
Kim Utzon's proposal most remarkable feature is its striking façade. Everything is collected within one single cube, in its solid shape alluding to Asplund's geometry. It is slightly larger in plan, but keeps its height on level with the eave of the rotunda. In line with the orthogonal grid of the city, it emphasises the twist of Asplund's building and leaves it untouched except for a connection underground. The simple cube is enriched by an "erosion" that has fragmented façades, plans and sections. The relatively small yard is enlarged by larger and smaller holes adding a greater complexity. All the lamellas are removed. The physical connection with the existing library is weak, but the mental connection is strong, even if the statement is as opposition.



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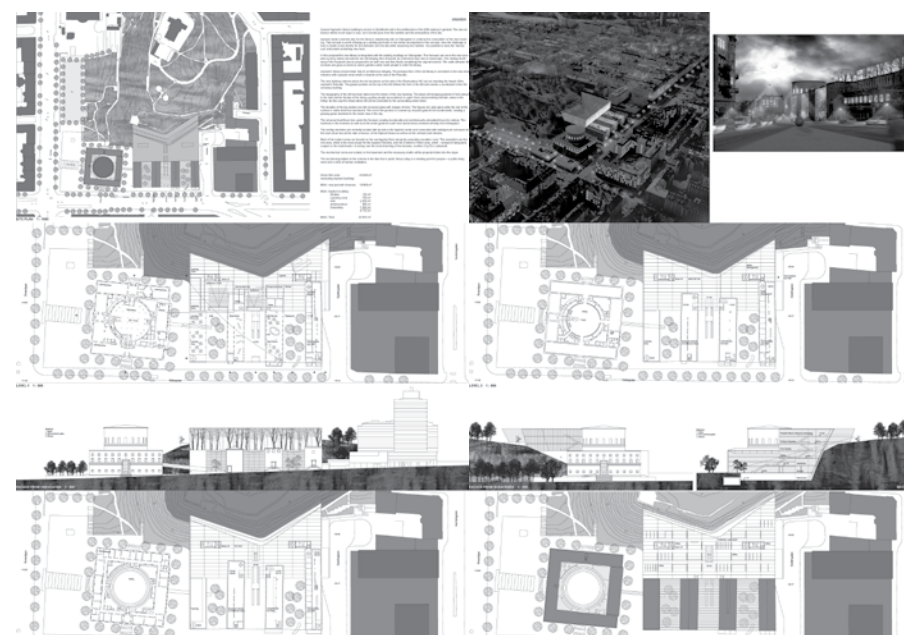
OSKAR LEO KAUFMANN/ALBERT RŪF [FIG.2]

Kaufmann/Rűf makes a similar analysis as Utzon. A cube close to Gyldén-gatan reflects Asplund's geometry. The measures are similar to Utzon's as well, but the most remarkable feature is rather the interior, where a large void is bridged by narrow crossings into a spectacular and sensual space. As all the stairs are placed next to this drum, the spatial connection to Asplund is even clearer. The physical connection is also in this proposal arranged in a culvert. The proposal removes all the lamellas. The intellectual relation to the existing library is strong and would be evident even if built on a different location.



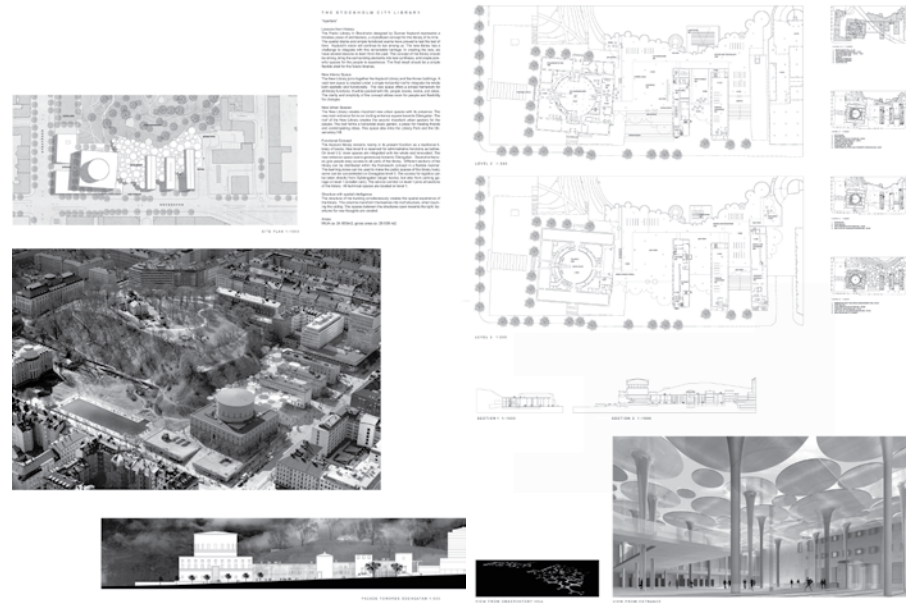
A TEMPLE FOR BOOKS WILHELM HOLZBAUER [FIG.3]

The Austrian architect Holzbauer's proposal is placed between the fourth annex and the main building. A colonnade toward Odengatan refers to Asplund's idea of a market hall in this position, but the size of the building dominates over the environment in a problematic way. The plan and the volume are competently solved, even if somewhat weak in character. The proposal keeps one lamella. A simple regularity subordinates the building to the existing.



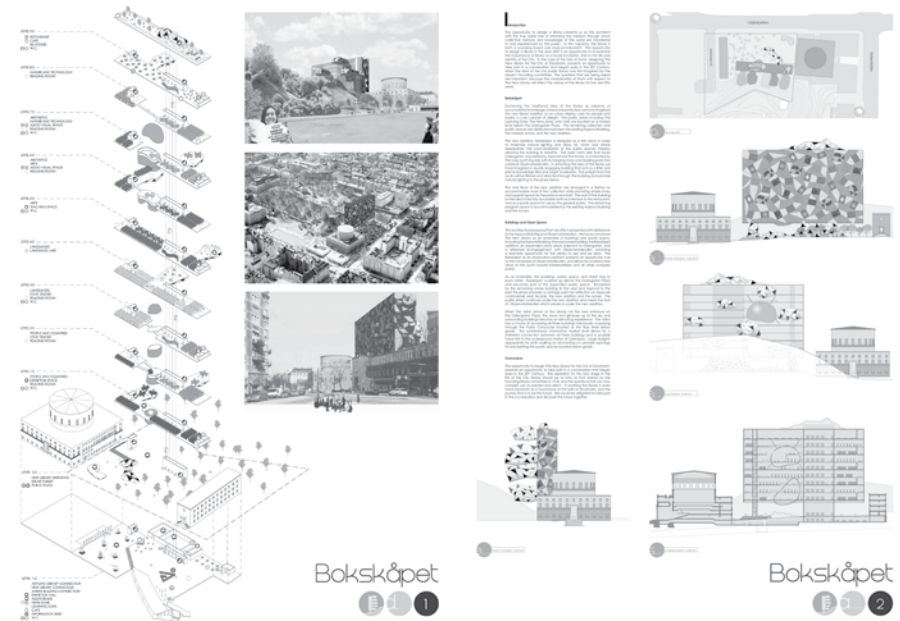
ANIARA HEIKKINEN + KOMONEN [FIG.4]

The proposal from Finnish architects Heikkinen and Komonen preserves all the annex buildings and completes the suite with a fourth. The interspaces are transformed to winter gardens with a café and a restaurant. The addition is mainly above and behind these. A glass box is resting on the back of the annexes and rises up on the hill to the limits of the competition area. The height is in level with the roof of the rotunda, but the large volume creates a wall toward the park on the rim of the hill. The preserved lamellas create problems for the plan and the disposition have long internal distances. Even if the proposal preserves all the existing lamellas, it does not create any intense relations to Asplund's architecture.



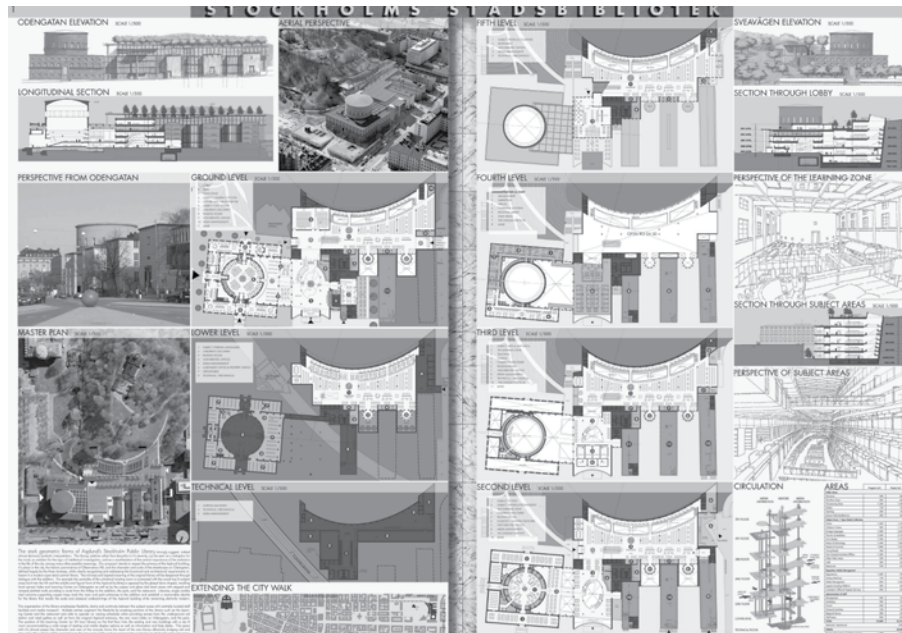
APERTURE JKMM [FIG.5]

Similar to the proposal from Heikkinen and Komonen, their fellow countrymen JKMM fill the spaces between the existing lamellas with a glass roof. Instead of a fourth lamella Spelbomskans torg is transformed into a plaza and entrance. Slim mushroom pillars supporting the horizontal glass roof characterize the proposal. The proposal is kept within the height of the annex buildings, thanks to excavation into the ridge and in to the ground. All lamellas are preserved in the proposal that connects to the main library with a playful and strong architecture. It creates relatively well-connected and flexible areas.



BOKSKÅPET WILLIAM ALSOP [FIG.6]

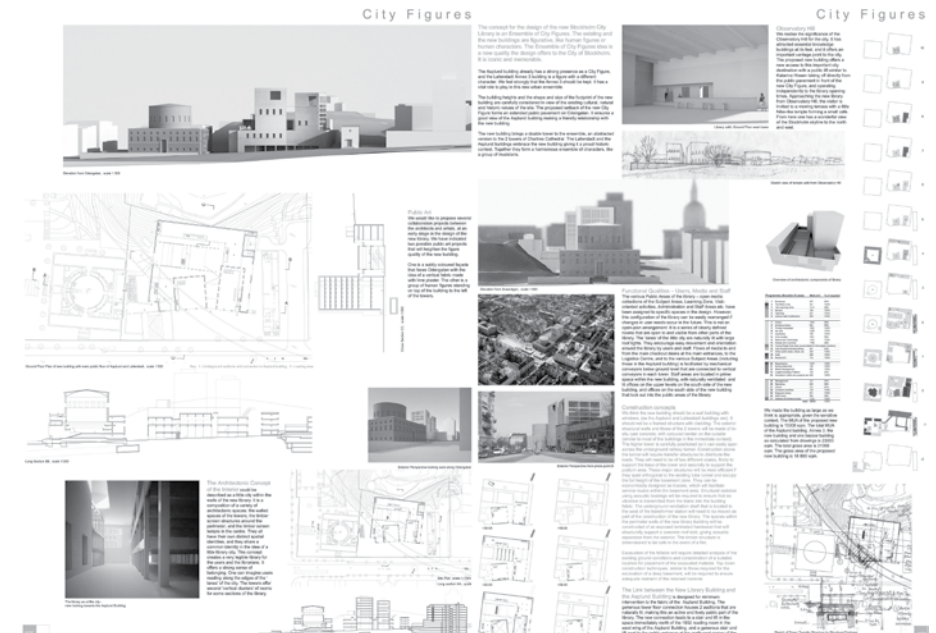
The forceful proposal opposes all the existing buildings in height, form and colour. The slim slab parallel to Odengatan creates a large, but shady space toward the street. Even more provocative are the reading rooms that seem to grow out of the south side of the block. There is no relationship between the main building or to the preserved lamella and the description states the proposal rather as a statement than an answer. The proposal preserves one lamella, but is not concerned with any kind of relationship to history. Its strong expression emphasises the dominance of the new building rather than a dialogue between old and new.



BÅGEN

MICHAEL GRAVES [FIG.7]

Graves symbolic interpretation of the task creates a large exedra on the hill. The bow shape refers to the spine of a book according to the author. The intention to interpret the geometry of Asplund in new forms is not convincing, and the bow does not create any major urban qualities either. Most interesting is the demolition of the library's modernistic west wing, which creates a day lit learning zone next to the rotunda. The proposal preserves the three lamellas and connects to Asplund's library in the basement. A rather heavy concentration.



CITY FIGURES

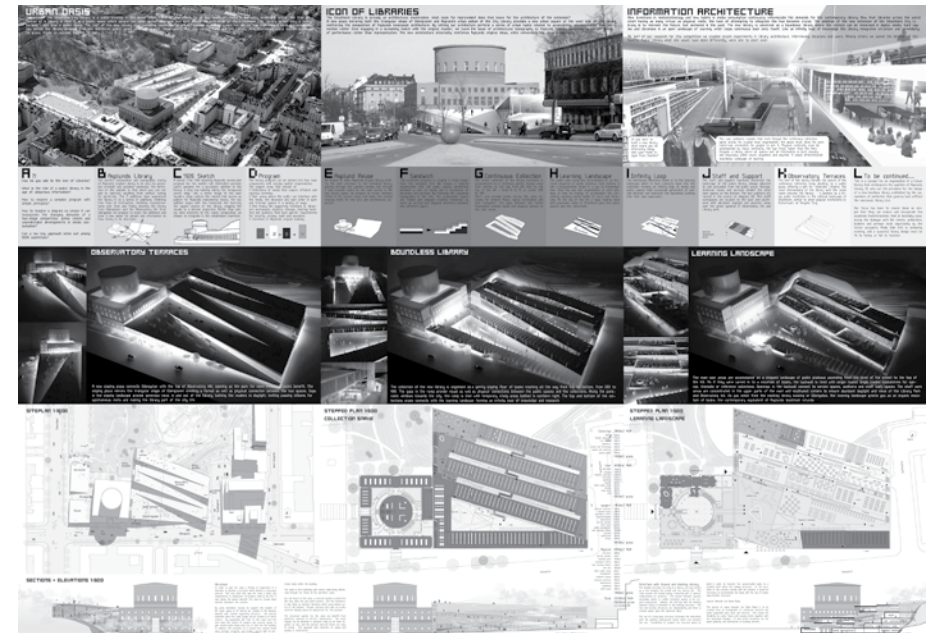
FLORIAN BEIGEL [FIG.8]

The idea behind the proposal is to create a complex and urban settlement between the third lamella and the main library. The retracted complex creates a large plaza in front of it. The authors have placed as large building the site could take according to them, i.e. 18.000 sqm. The new and the old are connected with a culvert; the idea is to emphasise the individuality of each building and their mutual relations in the cityscape. That is why the new parts are designed as plastered masonry. The proposal has an "untidy" geometry that emphasises the solemn atmosphere of the existing library. However, the diversion into multiple structures and two towers alienate the departments and causes long internal distances.



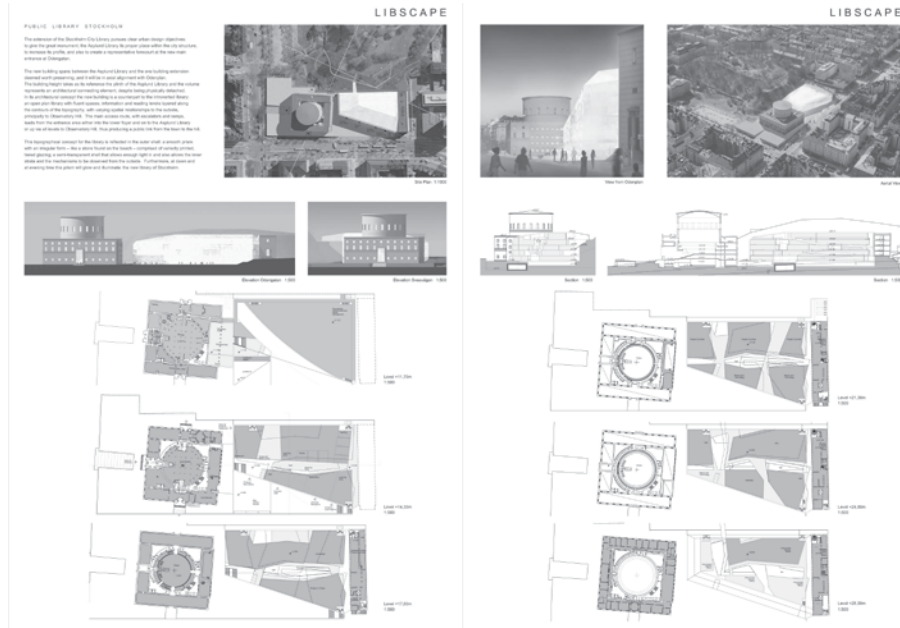
IHT₃₁₇
MANUEL AIRES MATEUS [FIG.9]

The great spatial artist Aires Mateus has chosen to place the entire volume within the ridge, in a large top lit cube. Only the rooms for administration at the very top have conventional lighting and view. Aires Mateus removes all lamellas in order to expose the ridge and Asplund's building. The addition connects to the existing library in the most accessible point and the condensed volume has good functionality. The proposal is among the most advanced in terms of architecture and mirrors a vivid interpretation of Asplund.



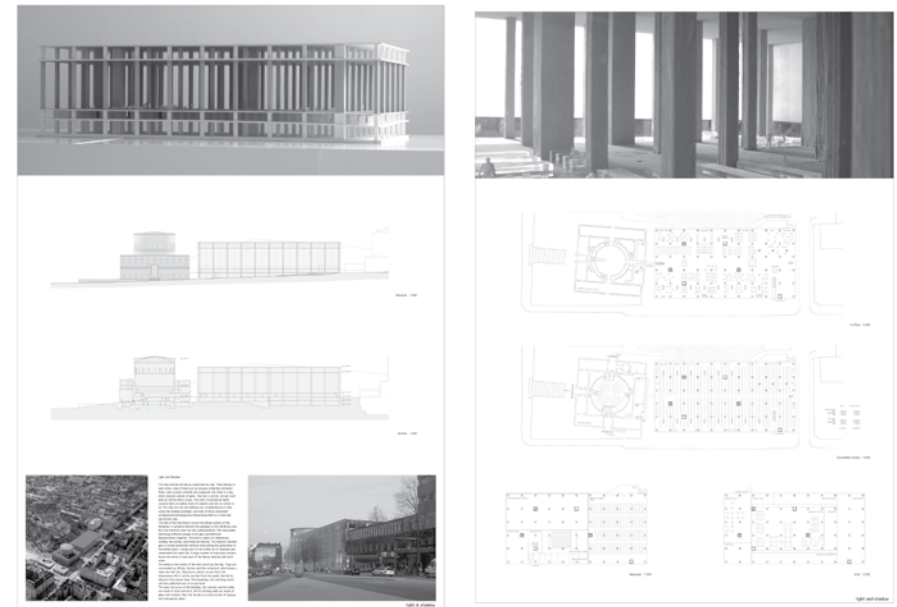
INFINITY LOOP
BJARKE INGELS GROUP [FIG.10]

Big develops the structure of the Seattle library, i.e. a building with a large open storage. As a consequence of this, and of the fact that the program was twice as large as the site, they created a landscape of ramps with an increasingly deeper building under it. Contrary to the selected "Book hill" (Jaja architects), Big claims to preserve the main entrance toward Sveavägen. Despite this, a new entrance toward Odengatan opens to a large lobby, as the walk from Sveavägen demands ascending to the rotunda and then down. Big connects the extension with the existing building in almost the entire width, where Jaja connected at the rotunda level (+18). This is the major difference between the two proposals. Big's solution is the more conceptual, and Jaja's the more contextual. The proposal removes all lamellas and dramatizes the relation to the existing library.



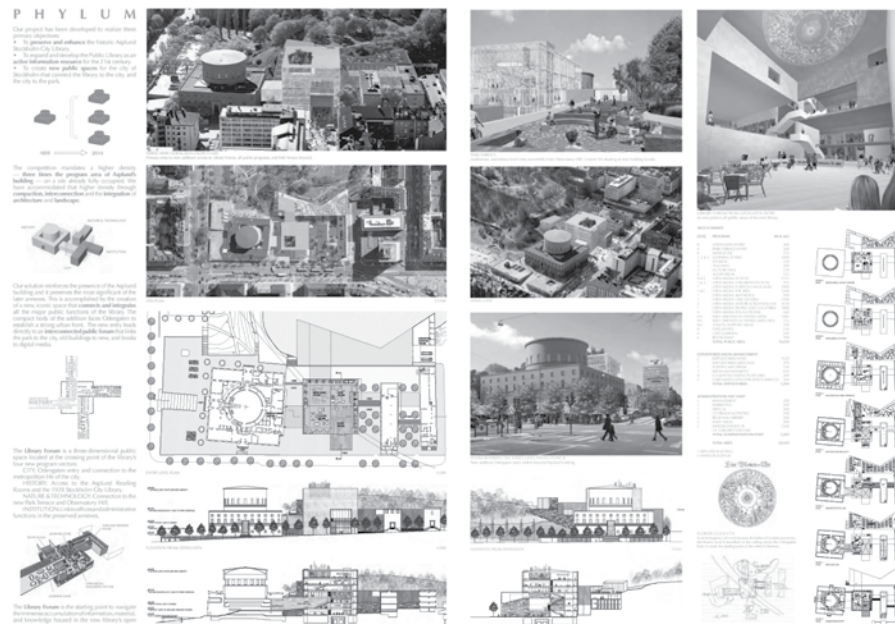
LIBSCAPE
ORTNER+ORTNER [FIG.11]

Parallel to the additions to MuseumsQuartier in Vienna, Ortner+Ortner solves the task with a large monolith. Placed between the third lamella and the library (and an underground connection) the proposal exposes the existing library with a diagonal cut that exposes the entire rotunda from Odenplan. All lamellas except one are removed. The proposal do not express any relation to the existing architecture.



LIGHT AND SHADOW
CHRISTIAN KEREZ [FIG.12]

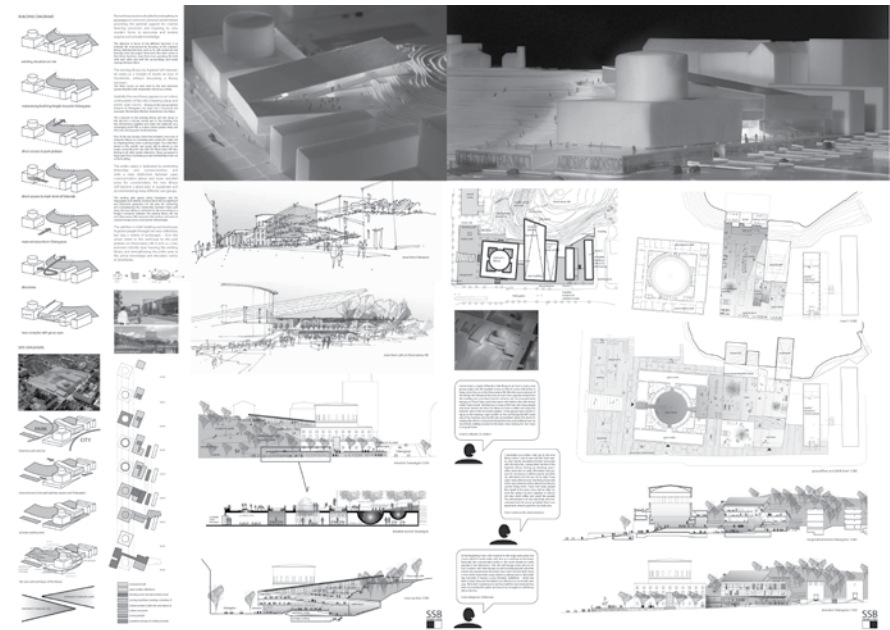
The proposal of Swiss architect Kerez shall, according to the description, act complementary to Asplund’s building. The argument does not leave the paper, as the large box has nothing but a devastating effect on the existing library. The proposal removes all lamellas but does add neither qualities nor nuances.



PHYLUM

STAN ALLEN [FIG.13]

American architect Stan Allen chooses to replace the youngest lamella with a cube, serving as a connecting space for the tentacles stretching sideward and backwards to the structure on the ridge. The connection to the library is on the level of the rotunda (+18) and the lamella buildings are connected with links above the ground. The large room in the centre of the cube has spatial potential but the functional connection remains weak. The proposal preserves two lamellas but the dominant cube transforms Asplund's building into an annex.



SSB INSIDE AND OUT

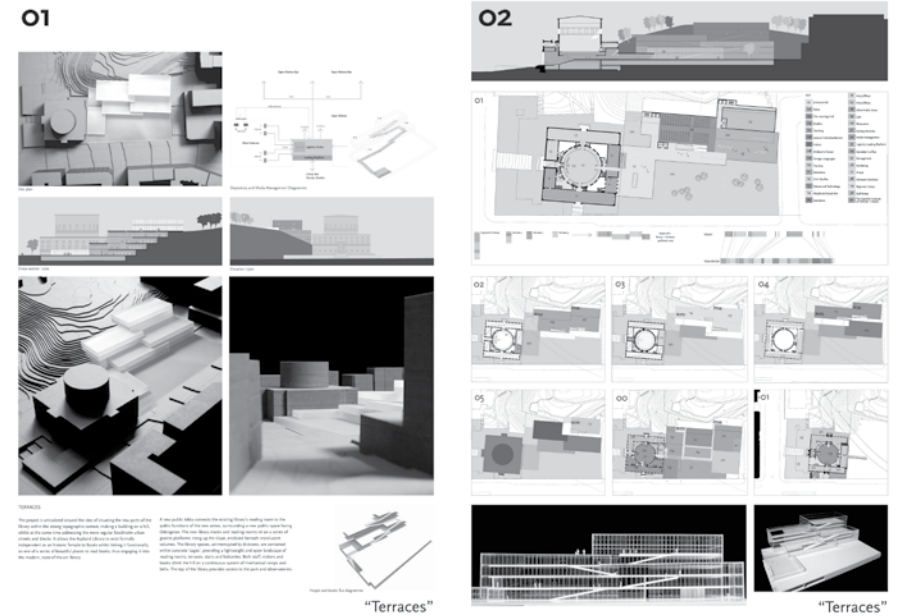
HENNING LARSEN [FIG.14]

The office of Henning Larsen (thru long term collaborator and partner Troels Troelsen and others) replaces the third lamella with a deep building. Long roofs connect the building to the ridge. The concept is entirely independent to Asplund; the connection to the existing building is wide and tall, but with few elaborated qualities. The long sloping roofs enables interesting sections, something the proposal does not develop any further. The proposal preserves the two older lamellas, but does not develop the relationship to them, nor to Asplund's building.



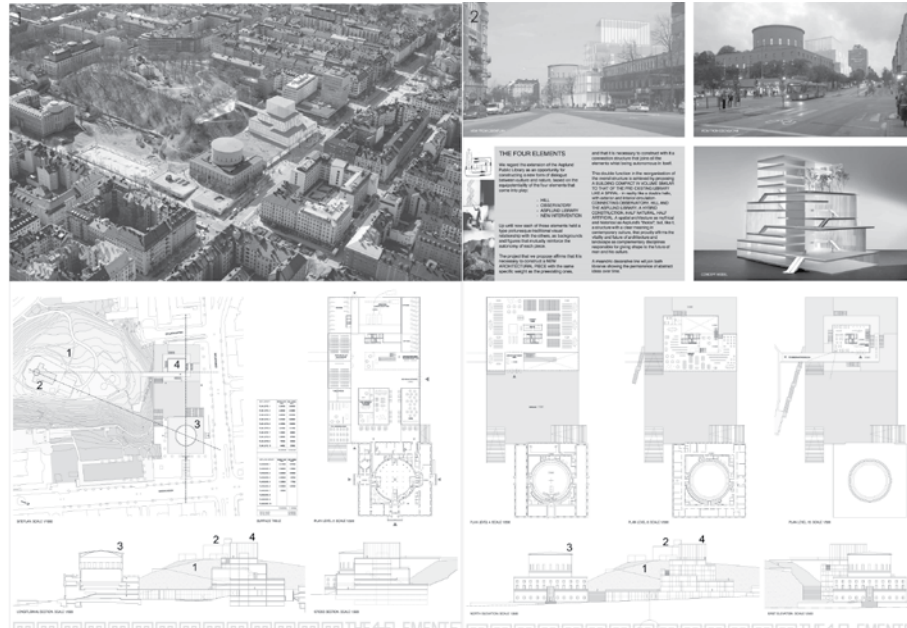
STOCKHOLM'S GARDEN LIBRARY JULIEN DE SMEDT [FIG.15]

Bjarke Ingels former companion develops the ideas of their mutual proposal for a house of culture in Stavanger. Like a mountain with ramps and terraces the building elevates from the ground next to the library and ends six levels higher, considerably higher than Ingels' and Jaja's proposal in the same genre. On the other hand, do the proposal show a larger complexity and more spiritual playfulness than the other two. Despite the tall and conceptual approach, the proposal has a clear approach to the main building. Unfortunately, the relationship is literary backwards, as the steep terraces monumentalize, and cover, the back of the building. All the lamellas are removed in the proposal. The weakness in the proposal – the oversized volume – could be able to transform.



TERRACES DAVID CHIPPERFIELD [FIG.16]

Chipperfield's proposal is one of the most beautiful in shape and volume and gives evidence of the possibility to solve the program within a distinct form. The Miesian proposal resembles the monument over Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Libknecht from 1926. It has strong connections to the modernism of the library and communicates well in functions as well as in form. The proposal takes advantage of the existing terraces and makes the ridge accessible without great gestures. The extinction of the proposal in the competition was a loss. All the lamellas are removed in order to gain a large square, which demanded further studies.



THE 4 ELEMENTS

ÁBALOS + HERREROS [FIG.17]

The architects develop a scheme similar to the one in other projects, such as the library in Useda, Madrid. It is a distinct volume, in this case reduced as a stepping pyramid, with striped façades in a free manner. The qualities are mainly internal; like the double helix of the DNA spiral, the inner and outer circulations are connected. The relation to Asplund's building can rather be expressed as competitive than collaborative. The proposal is established over the entire area between Gyldéngatan and the existing library. A large base connects the buildings.



THE FLOATING LIBRARY

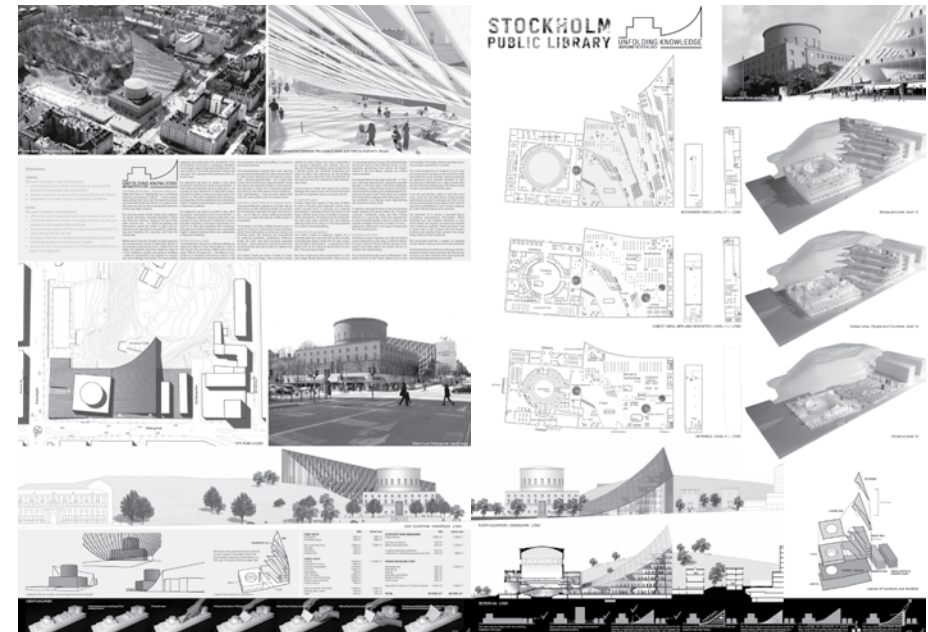
NOX/LARS SPUYBROEK [FIG.18]

The proposal refrains from any kind of adaptation, neutrality or distance in favour of a sovereign addition aiming to “invert Asplund”. As the architecture purposely avoids to interpret the vicinities but do instead add an alien species to the trunk. The focus on large floating spaces is only partly in line with the program, asking for a more functional connection between served and servant spaces. All the lamellas are to be removed in order to host the surprisingly large volume.



TO READ IN THE SKIES ITZUKO HASEGAWA [FIG.19]

Hasegawa, a very narrative architect with semantic signals in her architecture, creates a cloud in top of the lamellas. The proposal does have some similarities with Spuybroek's, as it purposely avoids every reference to Asplund. On the other hand, the environment under "the cloud" is more or less preserved. The problems with the proposal are rather more functional than technical. With the main areas placed far above the roof level of the existing library, the two buildings will have severe problems to coordinate, even if a new, intermediate lamella were to be built. The building would most likely submit bright and sunny reading rooms, but the ambitions of a library in the urban maelstrom would be contradicted. The lamellas are preserved and completed with a forth, but their gracious character would be demolished by the large volume on top.

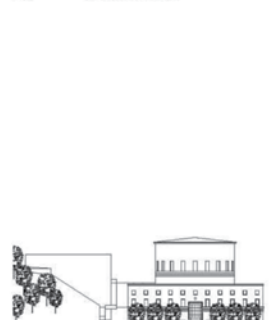


UNFOLDING KNOWLEDGE 3XNIELSEN [FIG.20]

The concept is expressed as a leaf, cut from the ground and lifted up. Under the continuous glass roof, a hill with terraces toward Asplund's building would be created. The idea to monumentalize the west façade would have been more relevant if the modernistic addition would have been removed at the same time and the rotunda exposed in its entire height. Now, a large dominating volume with great similarities with the proposal from de Smedt is created. In order to fulfil the concept, the complex rises with long vertical connections as a result. The result gets over dramatized as the volume is squeezed between the Asplund building and the second lamella. The proposal connects to the library in its entire width. Two lamellas are preserved, but their relation to the library is broken.

ANIARA

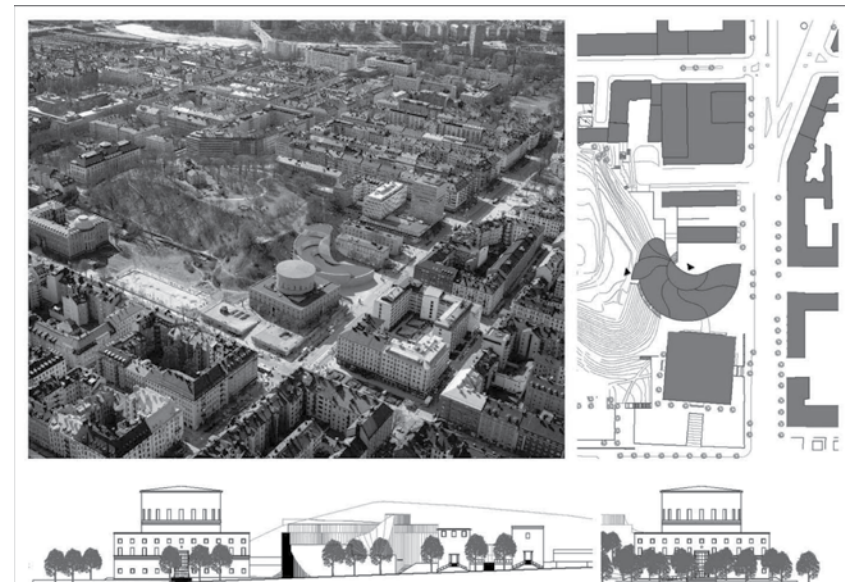
Engaging, substantial, good readability of collective knowledge, accumulation of people and ideas are the foundations of the library as a structure in the landscape. In the final solution, the building is a complex of interconnected volumes, adjusting the scale to the existing urban fabric. The new volume is designed as a sequence of volumes, each with its own character, but all contributing to a single programmatic whole. The new volume is designed as a sequence of volumes, each with its own character, but all contributing to a single programmatic whole. The new volume is designed as a sequence of volumes, each with its own character, but all contributing to a single programmatic whole.



ANIARA

PEKKA HELIN [FIG.21]

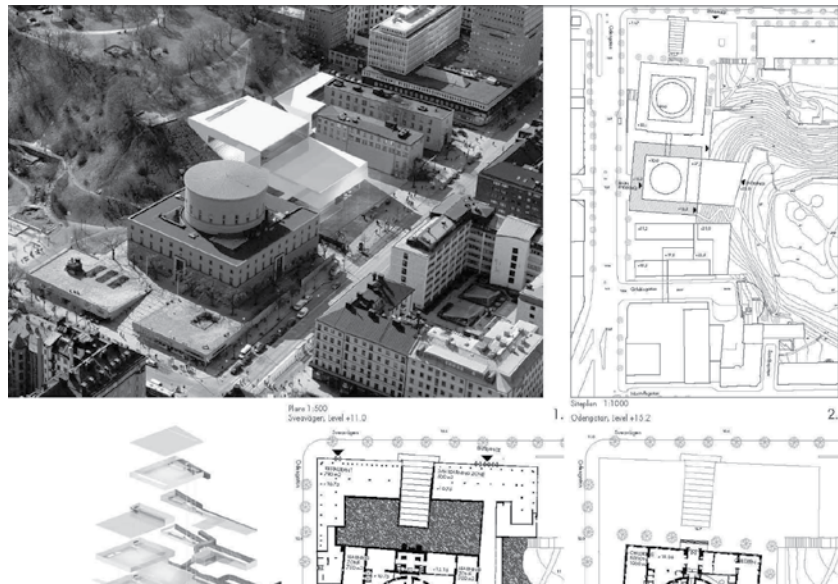
Aniara is a careful proposal where the only visible part to Odengatan is a new lamella, slightly paraphrasing the others. Helin connects all the existing lamellas in the back with an unnoticeable extension toward the ridge.



CORONA

PEKKA HELIN [FIG.22]

“Corona” by the same architect is a more dominant proposal than Aniara. A semicircular shape twists like a spiral up on the hill. The author claims a position opposing the one in “Aniara”: “After eighty years it [the library] tolerates – and needs – a company of equally strong architecture of our times...” Compared to other “independent” proposals in this survey, “Corona” turns the back to Asplund. It makes the juxtaposition of the elementary forms more obvious, and creates a plaza in front of the second of the two preserved lamellas.



LIBRA

PEKKA HELIN [FIG.23]

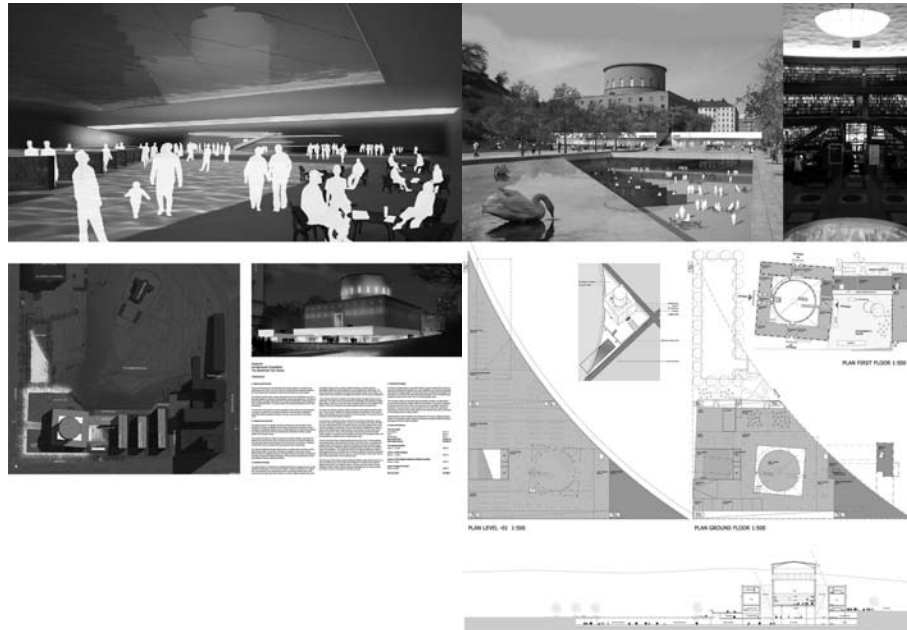
The third proposal from Helin expresses yet another approach. He proposes a modern interpretation of Asplund's plan, with three wings and a central drum. The shape is not visible in the rather conventional exterior, where an outdoor auditorium under a large roof is the most remarkable feature. The proposal preserves two lamellas, without involving them in the composition.



LENIN 42F

JULIE SNOW [FIG.24]

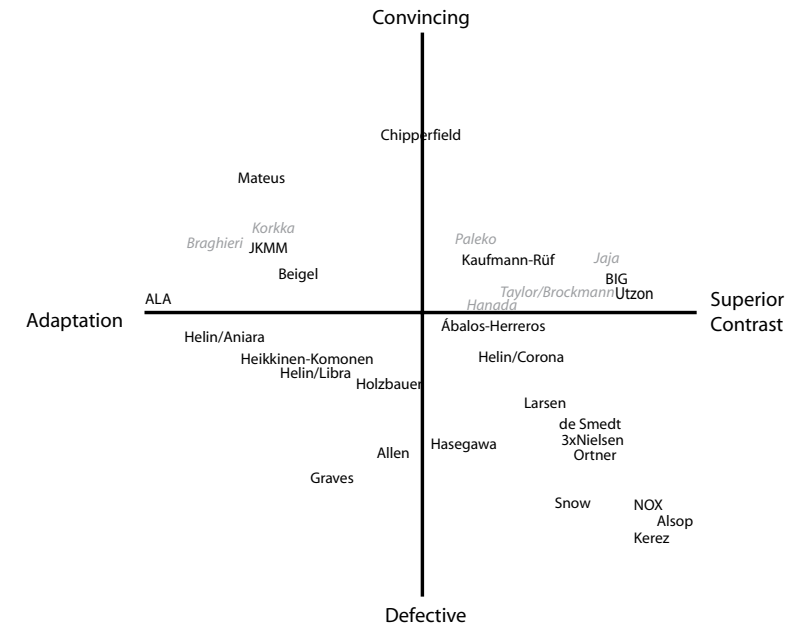
The proposal from the US architect Julie Snow follows the same principle as Heike Hanada's winning entry, but with a more heavy impact on the old building. The architecture does heavily rely on the qualities of a glass facade which in reality makes it a heavy counterpart to Asplund. Snow, renowned for her rural buildings, has not presented a convincing dialogue between old and new in this setting.



NANGIJALA

ALA ARCHITECTS [FIG.25]

The young Finnish office, renowned for their winning entry in the competition for the concert hall in Kristiansand, have proposed an almost invisible structure underground. The proposal goes far beyond the limits set in the program. It establishes all the new facilities in the triangle limited by the subway/Sveavägen/Odengatan. The construction with daylight taken from a ceiling which also is the bottom of the pool, is daring but rises many questions regarding security, insulation, tidiness etc. Finally, complicated arrangements for loading and unloading trucks disqualified the imaginative and humble proposal.



THE SELECTION OF THE JURY

In order to compare the proposals the jury selected for further studies, these have been placed in the diagram under the same criteria as the proposals above. For further comments on *Delfinium* by Heike Hanada, *Cut* by Paleko arch studija, *Dikthörnan* by Mauri Korkka, *Blanket* by Stephen Taylor and Dirk Brockmann, *The book hill* by Jaja architects and *Nosce te ipsum* by Nicola Braghieri, I refer to my articles in *Architectural Review* (April 2007 and January 2008).

CONCLUSIONS

The proposals from the offices of some international reputation, of which no more than one forth are among the well known, expresses a wide range of approaches with a tendency toward contrast rather than continuity in the architectural expression. Two proposals have exceptional qualities: Manuel Aires Mateus underground solution and David Chipperfield's boxes in the slope. The consequences of Mateus' solution are difficult to overview, but Chipperfield's proposal is buildable, functional, intellectual and architectural convincing. The fact that it did not continue to the second step of the competition raises questions on the evaluation process. Even if the proposals from these acclaimed architects represent a superior selection, only a few are

able to win a wider acceptance. The fact that at least one proposal is within this range claims that the process in this respect could have been counterproductive. Chipperfields proven experience in dealing with problems of old and new emphasizes this. For the client it was most likely a loss, even if the size of the program still could be disputed.

The spread among the horizontal axis (adaptation/conformity versus superior/contrast in relation to Asplund) are wider than the vertical spread. This is understandable, as the selected ought to be among the better in the field. The fact that the proposals in the scheme describe liaisons between convincing – adaptation and defective – superior, underlines the difficulties in creating an addition with both integrity and respect.

The method of the investigation is in conflict with the scientific postulate that every researcher starting with the same material shall come to the same solution. However, critical studies of competitions are not possible without an element of evaluation. With reservation for the subjective method, the proposals have been evaluated according to their intelligence, temper and moral. Intelligence in their planning and function, temper as an expression of their character and moral in their relation to Asplund and to the city; in principal the same criteria the jury judged in the first phase. A consensus on these evaluations is impossible; the dispute on the jury's selection did show that the method does not guarantee harmony.

The study aims at pointing out consequences of the chosen process. The fact that the few well acclaimed architects who joined the competition in general did not succeed better, together with the fact that at least one proposal may have been competitive amongst the finalists, rises two conclusions. The first one is old: Program and form shall not be solved in the same competition. The fact that so very few could present convincing schemes for the large program proves problems in the formulation of the task; the program was too large. The cancellation of the process in the fall of 2009 confirms the disproportions. The second one is new: More than one thousand entries make a qualified critique impossible, and create problems in the evaluation process. How can the amount of entries in public competitions be kept on a level that makes everyone convinced the winner was the best?

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Architecture Competitions from a German Viewpoint

Ragnar Uppman

Abstract

Architecture competitions are more usual and the professional standards of the procedures higher in Germany than in Sweden. Furthermore the whole process including the jury's deliberations is public, according to the author who describes the German system and compares it with our own.

“Wenn jemand eine Reise tut, so kann er was erzählen”. This worn out phrase from school German seems appropriate after several visits to Germany. The purpose of the trips was a jury assignment for an invited architecture competition in Berlin for a mega-project: a flat area of 150-200,000 m² for a teleport facility in a very complicated town planning situation.

What I learned in Germany about the way they dealt with their competitions has encouraged me to question how we work in the Nordic countries. Of course I know that our competition rules are a sacred part of the profession's heritage. But anyway! I will try to motivate why I suggest that our procedure is not as good as the German one which I will describe. My examples are taken from my own experience of the Berlin competition which I found to be typical when I compared it with several other competition documents I have studied.

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THE COMPETITION PROGRAMME

The competition programme (“Die Ausschreibung”) is often drawn up by a consultant, for example an architect bureau. Their document is not unlike our competition programme outlining all of the programme wishes. Before being approved, the draft is thoroughly scrutinized during the special seminar meeting (“Preisgerichtskolloquium”) when the jury carefully examines the grounds for the competition.

In my example there were an unusually high number of participants invited, as many as twelve architect bureaus: eight German and four foreign. The competitors took part in conjunction with a competition inquiry colloquium (“Rückfragekolloquium”), at which the program is discussed with the competition exhibitors, experts and competition jury; then the jury decides on adjustments to the program, both concerning the programme specifications and its execution. Having been active a while, you may have experience others might want to take advantage of.

When the competition proposal is submitted, the programme consultant, aided by his experts, immediately begins a several-week long thorough examination of the proposals which are scrutinized and compared with the programme specifications. A detailed protocol is drawn up. In our example it became an impressive 200-page document where nothing escaped the Argus eyes of this pre-qualification examination (“Vorprüfung”).

JURY MEETING IN PUBLIC

When this preliminary document is completed there is a meeting of the jury, composed of two categories of judges: Architectural experts (“Fach- und Sachrichter”), judges from the profession appointed by the Architecture Association in Germany (“Architektenkammer”) and laymen appointed by the municipality and the interested parties. We were eleven judges in all, of which six were from the architect corps. The jury meetings were conducted in public before an audience of responsible politicians, administrators, and specialists who participated in the program and the judging work. The jury worked intensively for

several days, most of the time with an audience of about thirty outside persons attentively listening. The jury work followed a strict procedure. After the presentations and individual reviews, there was a quick elimination of several of the proposals which none of the judges considered suitable for further consideration. Then a second review of the remaining proposals was made weighing their merits and weaknesses. Next, several more proposals were eliminated by majority decision, until five finally remained. A written summary of the criticism of each proposal was made before the final judging. It was drawn up by judges in smaller groups, discussed by the whole group and then approved.

In Berlin, which was a two-stage competition with five finalists at the end of the first stage, a decision had to be made as to how many should continue to the second stage. Three were decided upon and the two eliminated were given their prize money for encouragement. This result of stage one was anticipated and provided for in the programme.

JUDGES ORDEAL BY FIRE

There were keen and engaging arguments during the final negotiations. I understood from my German colleagues that this was really a judge's ordeal by fire. The procedure progresses all the time by the process of elimination. You can change your mind about a proposal that has already been rejected but only if the entire jury agrees to take it up again. In our case after a few days we reached the anticipated results: of the eleven proposals three were chosen to go on to the second stage.

At the end of the first stage there is a discussion about the programme for the continuation of the jury's work. The jury decided to recommend the municipality and the promoter to arrange a seminar after completing the normal treatment of the competition results attained thus far, to discuss any desirable changes in the programme. In Berlin, as in so many other competitions, there were too many unsolved problems with, as it showed up, unrealistic expectations that all should be solved without conflict.

The proposals are discussed by the municipal administration and political authority before stage two begins. The exploitation rate, traffic solutions, area boundaries, height limitations, mixed functions – in short the programme's different details – are reviewed in light of the accumulated competition information. The programme seminar is a concluding summary of the process, attended by the participating architects, after which the programme for their work is fixed. In the ongoing second stage, basically the same procedure will be followed as for stage one. The programme architect, aided by experts, will make a thorough review of the final proposals. With a work programme and timetable the jury should be able to reach a final decision within a few days.

IMPORTANT DIFFERENCES

Following this description of a normal German procedure for a two-stage competition I would like to discuss a few important differences as compared to how we proceed in Sweden and the Nordic countries.

First, perhaps it is worth repeating that the Germans, and this applies to all of the EU, use competition negotiations also for procurement of architecture services for public building and urban design issues. In this context competition refers to quality competition. The result is many competitions organized by the regional section of the Architecture Association in Germany ("Architektenkammer"). According to the latest information there have been 300-400 competitions yearly as compared with a dozen in Sweden.

GERMAN OPENNESS

The major difference in principle is the open attitude towards competition procedure. In Sweden the procedure is a closed one whereas in Germany it is completely open. If you compare a German competition with the Swedish procurement negotiations model the contrast would be devastating for us regarding public aspects. It is easy to speculate that the Germans do everything possible to guard impartiality in their procedure while we, with our long democratic traditions, make valuable evaluations behind closed doors.

My personal impression is that the programme discussions have been very fruitful. How many unnecessary competition hours could have been saved for Swedish architects if our competition programme had been subject to deepened discussions and not limited to clarifications as answers to the competition question?

The custom of using a qualified consultant to be in charge of the programme work, lead the programme seminars and carry out the extensive expert review has many advantages. The programme is carried out by or under the supervision of a professionally qualified consultant/architect, which is a reasonable guarantee that the programme information, requested documents and the reviews are competently managed. The review statement gives the competition jury an impartial foundation to work on.

LIVING URBAN BUILDING DEBATE

For professionals and interested spectators the public jury meeting was a strong experience. A concentrated discussion of important standpoints took place here. It was the strength and relevance of the arguments that were weighed against each other. For us foreigners it was clear that the discussions flowed from a lively debate in society about the direction of urban building. The number of competitions handled with public openness naturally awakens such a debate.

The jury's work went very fast. In a few days everything was over. Afterwards I started to review how we worked and in spite of serious efforts I could only conclude that the right decision was made. In German competitions the judging takes only half the time allotted to the competitors to work out their proposals. Here it is the opposite; judging takes twice the time as the competitors are given to make their proposals. This is due to the difficulties in putting together a jury. In the German time frame the judging date is already stated in the competition programme and it continues until it is finished, after which the results are immediately made public.

The time plan for our two-stage competition in Berlin included the whole course of events from the invitation to the final decision 16 months later. This plan includes the political preparations such as exhibits etc. And so far, one year later, the schedule is being kept.

If I should sum up the German model as compared to ours, their openness promotes a democratic interplay between political and other interests. Furthermore, their competition procedure in all phases, from programme to final decision, is more professional than ours. It is also reasonable to conclude that the results are more professional, which must be the goal.

*The papers in Part Two of this book
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