FORUM A+P 7

Periodik Shkencor për Arkitekturën dhe Planifikimin Urban

2011

AESOP Meeting in Tirana

Knowledge Exchange in Planning: Research, Mobility, Creativity, Innovation

Heads of Schools Meeting 2011
- Background Information / Besnik Aliaj
- Planning Education. Issues No.1 & 2 / AESOP

Rien ne va Plus
- Texts on the economic crisis and its intricate relation to architecture
  Edited by Powerhouse Company

Unfinished Modernisations
- The case of Yugoslavia / Balkanology Network

Planning & Contruction in Albania
- Research by Co-PLAN / Polis University

The City's Uncertain Future
- Matrix City / Impakt Festival Utrecht

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2011 AESOP BUSINESS AND HOS MEETINGS POLIS UNIVERSITY, TIRANA*

Knowledge Exchange in Planning: Research, Mobility, Creativity, Innovation.

Besnik Aliaj

An Unpredictable World and Unknown Future! Planning under Pressure in a Globalizing World!

It is clear that the world has entered a new era! The signs either for good or bad are already there: Globalization, technological and communication progress; Rapid population increase and dramatic urbanization rates; Global warming, natural disasters and environmental pollution; Emerging awareness towards human rights, gender/racial balance and thirst for freedom; Global economic crisis, raise of prices, end of fossil energy era; Growing poverty, criminality, terrorism, and national/religious conflicts; and so on... But despite the fact that the world is more unpredictable while the future is becoming less known, there is still belief and hope! So also in the "old/new" continent of Europe we need to reflect under these circumstances. We need to do some analysis, projection and a debate; but above all we need the drive for action to move ahead in setting up some directions that might help to guide students and planning educators to tackle with courage the "unknowns" of the future.

The growth of population and urbanization has been for quite some times an intensive worldwide dominant phenomenon. Such exiting and drastic change brings to the world a very complex problematique, which in a way will determine even the fate of future development of the world. The World Urban Forum (WUF) underlines that present time, the cities cover only 2% of the total earth's surface, but they spend 75% of the material and financial resources, and produce 75% of its own pollution. Meanwhile a growing percentile of rural population is leaving rural areas and small towns, and is directed towards the main cities. Also considerable numbers of emigrants from the poor regions of the world are heading to the most 'prosperous' parts of globe. But often such move confronts them with unknown urban realities. The result is that 1 billion

Hosting Institutions:

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International School of Architecture and Urban Development Policies

Co-PLAN

ASSOCIATION OF EUROPEAN SCHOOLS OF PLANNING
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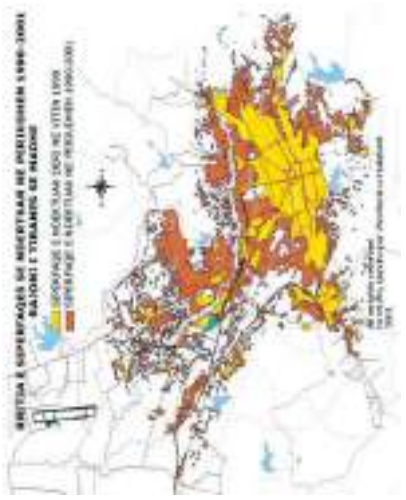
Under the auspices of AESOP

* *Heads of Schools Meeting - 05-08 May 2011, Tirana Albania*
AESOP, Association of European Schools of Planning

Map of Albania



Tirana's growth 1990-2001 (Source Co-PLAN)

people in the world nowadays live in under-standard conditions, not mentioning extralegal improvised settlements. UN Habitat Program states that within 2030 this number will be doubled. Indeed the rush of migratory influxes nowadays is determined not only by the dynamism of cities.

Even the Europeans, that have relatively more stable models of demographic development, they see such move as concerning projections. The concept that cities like London, Paris, Moscow, Prague, Athens, Belgrade or Tirana... might be doubled is enough to create such a feeling. But of course the growth will not be the same for all. The problem, in the so called "transitional" Europe, is that people move towards cities not because they expect a better life and secure jobs, but because they can not survive anymore by exploiting agricultural land, while the "grey" economy is becoming significant! Under these circumstances the first conclusion is that the future European population growth will be coming mainly from the countries of the transitional economies!

The recent global economic crisis and failures of the real estate and banking industry have complicated further the situation. According to UN, 1 in 4 people of transitional economies classifies as poor or low income. But while development experts are usually concerned mainly on rural poverty, the truth is that in the last decades urban poverty has grown much more. Unfortunately, the unfair situation often goes in favor of social and political unrest. At this point the analysis becomes delicate. Here lays the second conclusion: the desperate *status quo* in which many people live can create favorable conditions for radical/criminal groups aiming to manipulate the situation. This is why the society needs to act quickly! And that is why planners and authorities have their own important role to plan, develop and improve cities and neighborhoods not only for those doing well, but also for those in need!

But the serious urban problems are not limited only in the developing and transitional world. Even metropolises in most of developed countries, today must confront effects of deindustrialization-the shift from industrial economy towards the tertiary sector of services. They have to solve also several problems, including: the issue of cities abandonment in favor of sub-urban peripheries; the concern of increasing traffic and traffic jams; the phenomena of growing costs of real estates and the related market crisis with serious impact on financial institutions; the increasing segregation and cultural tensions in the cities; emigration waves at threatening limits, etc. From the other side the effects of globalization established today by the rules of "those doing better", has reached at such point that cannot be supported anymore by "those in need". This might go even against the logic of many international development organizations, which often maintain a reverse position, according which international trade and globalization in most of the cases functions. Indeed, despite problems of physical and social nature, urbanization and globalization in most of societies are still perceived as "exiting celebrative" processes,

and signs of "general progress". However, the crisis of agricultural/food shortage, as in the case of grains, actually also used for industrial and energy purposes; the crisis of fossil energy sources in itself; the global warming and climate change; the collapse of 'real estate bubble'; the deepening of regional and urban-rural disparities, etc; create serious shadows and question marks over both world/Europe's future as well as the role of planning in itself.

Secondary Cities
A light at the end of the tunnel?

At this point becomes clear also the third conclusion: the main task of global society - not talking here for the inherited or existing urban issues - is to guide, plan and build every week an equivalent city of 1.3 million people, 1 million out of whom are in developing and transitional countries. However, the issue it is not only the population growth, but also the radical change of human settlements nature, too, as well as the role of planners and authorities in cooping with it. The situation is going to put under extraordinary pressure most of urban centers, where unfortunately local professional planning and governance capacities are usually modest. Worst, the global community is seriously limited to undertake a sustainable transition of situation, while it must confront other crucial challenges like: securing affordable housing; job creation and employment; management of water resources and urban solid waste; public transport and control of pollution; and many other critical issues. To make it short - the world is moving! There are exactly the cities that make it move! It is also from here where ideas and recommendations on resources and financial solutions, as well as planning inspirations must come from!

The second half of the last century was the time of big cities like London, New Nork and Tokio, places connecting fortune, fame, economy, national politics and future. According to UN this is true as the number of megacities over 10 million inhabitants grew from 2 in 20, because famous names like Rio, Mexico or Mumbai were added in the list. However, such "Hollywood-type" scenario has ended, as typical rhythms of population increase in megacities has paced down from 8% by 80-s, in almost 4% in the last 5-10 years. UN experts say that by 2025 their number will be the same. It looks that years to come belong to the settlements of more human scale known as *Secondary Cities*, because of their smaller scale of urban relations. Following this logic, despite that 21st century will be an urban century for most of the world, there exists also a growing tendency of diminishing over-populated urban centers. Today almost half of inhabitants of the world live in metropolitan secondary cities, referring to WUF. Such human settlements are experiencing an economic and demographic boom; transforming from neglected, peripheral settlements towards focal points of regional-administrative, economic and recreational urban centers. UN experts claim that between 2000-2015 it is expected that the smaller cities of the world up to 500 thousand people will grow by 23% of population; while those of 1-5 million will grow by 27%. This has to do most probably with growing international

Tirana Center 2011

FAP 7 Summary:

This is a special edition of the periodical journal of POLIS University: Forum A+P, inspired by the annual meeting of AESOP (Association of European Schools of Planning) which was organized by U-POLIS on 5-8 of May 2011 in Tirana.

Initially we have tried to put together a background atmosphere of the global planning and development panorama. Than a summary picture of the Albania and Tirana region is given as introduction. We believe this is a good start for further informative materials which hopefully contribute to better understanding of the local and Balkan context.

Indeed FAP 7 starts with a re-documentation of the "Planning Education" periodical brochure, issue No.1 and 2 of AESOP. This is important for the memory of AESOP and creates also a good foundation for more discussions during HSM (Heads of Schools Meeting) 2011 in Tirana. The main debate of such documents has to do with the context AESOP was founded, and the position of such institution towards the evolving of planning education in Europe. In

emigration; competitive transport prices; new technologies; the sophistication of real estate market; and retirement of the "baby boom" generation especially in western countries, etc.

From the other side, all "mother-cities" beyond 750 thousand people (excluding for special national circumstances Moscow and London), will grow at less extend than their adjacent "secondary -cities". Some illustrations for that are the growing urban competitors of capital cities like: Tolusa (France), Munich (Germany), Las Vegas (USA), Florianopolis (Brasil), or Durres (Albania), etc. But again this typology of cities is concentrated mostly in developing countries and transitional economies. UNDP says that out of 150 fastest growing secondary cities in the world, most of them are in China, Indonesia, India and Eastern-Europe; while the developed countries are at the end of list. Out of the last category, the American secondary cities grow quicker than those of EU and Japan. For example, USA and China's secondary cities grow by 2% per annum, while EU by 0.5%. This is because the national population of EU countries are often diminishing.

Why secondary cities do grow?! It seems the advantage of secondary cities is that they appear to offer better livelihood and entertainment; more competitive prices; easier communication and traffic; cheaper real estate; etc; compared to the almost "fenced mega-cities". The last ones developed based on their own wealth of "knowledge and technology": (financial markets, banking, electronic communication mediums, etc); which unfortunately are becoming very expensive in those living centers. For example, according to the transport authorities, the American and EU metropolitan regions doubled their average traveling time at 90 minutes in the last 15 years. On the other side, to certain secondary cities also remain still problematic provision of services during all year. The question than is why some so-called secondary cities experience the boom of economic and demographic growth, while some others fail? The answer probably stays in the capability of those cities to attract the energy of people, and to exploit factors that push businesses out of megacities. It seems that the "key" stays at ensuring a quick and qualitative transport, especially to main market places and inter-urban connection stations; which yet do not have the right attention of planners and authorities. Connection with high-speed trains and low-cost airlines has given life to many provincial urban centers. According to UN, real estate agents estimate that each new airline connection in a certain city influences immediately the increase of property prices, in some cases up to 30%.

Another positive factor to secondary cities seems the decentralization of work, encouraged to a wide extend by new technologies. Nowadays, most of the growing service industry deals might be reached at London and New York; but the real work of banking, entertainment and high technology is often implemented in cities like Dubai, Las Vegas, Talin, Delian apo Cape Town, according to WUF. These cities are often defined by experts as "growing stars". They are seriously investing in internet infrastructure; industrial and technological parks or qualitative

universities; in order to attract talents and sustain the growth of local industries based on their own local resources and capacities. On the other side emigrants are also playing a crucial role. By time, most of them are shifting from poverty and cheap labor force, towards a social strata of normal income. According to the Metropolitan Research Institute (MRI) Budapest, emigrants from Eastern Europe during the last two decades helped to revive and integrate many neighborhoods of the main cities and coastal regions of EU, where there is a desperate thirst for workers in agriculture, construction and services of second level. In return emigrants are investing their incomes for their own "retirement houses" in the countries of origin, and they don't necessarily do it in the capitals: Prague, Warsaw or Tirana; but most likely in the secondary cities like Brno, Krakow or Durres. MRI estimates that in a few years over 60 secondary cities in Eastern Europe will be growing above 500 thousands of inhabitants, and will be quite attractive not only to people, but also to private companies and investors.

Secondary cities seem also to offer better environmental and sustainable alternatives for local tourism. In addition, decentralization and democratization of decision-making as a worldwide tendency has created chances for secondary cities to better plan and build independently their future. It seems to be the century of secondary cities! So we all hope that they will not waste such a historic chance, because threats stay together with opportunities. Indeed there exist also dangers! As an illustration, one of them will be the inefficient distribution of living settlements without having a certain center, like in the case of New Jersey USA. Furthermore, it looks like when cities overpass a certain size, their own productivity and success from economic point of view start to decline. Therefore in countries of a big population, such limit seems to be approximately 6 million people, while in small countries the limit might be just above half million inhabitants, claims MRI. After that, the costs of goods, real estates, transport; and the generated chaos all together create a situation where city centers might be "wonderful" but mainly for elites; as the rest of neighborhoods often become more difficult to work and live in. A typical case is Paris France or other EU cities captured surprised by the revolts of the poor and the emigrants. Therefore, the fifth conclusion is: Secondary Cities are offering hope just because of their better human scale. In these conditions one of the strongest cards against the danger of dehumanization, segregation and social unrest remains planning that blends local "taste" with other necessary elements of living settlements; which could be learnt from the international experiences.

Planning Schools of the XXI Century!

The new demands on Planning show that the territory is in a situation of negligence, and Planning itself is in search for new references in an atmosphere of insecurity. So in order to be able to make a good interpretation of Planning we must be able to revise the history of previous negligence of the society; including forms of negligence manifestation, reaction towards

addition we have also documented a very interesting research which successfully put lights over the relation between on the global economic crisis and the crisis of the real estate development policies, undertaken by the Powerhouse Company. This is also completed further on by some of the main outcomes of the events of "Utrecht Festival" in Holland, summarized thanks to the publication of "Matrix City" newspaper.

Furthermore FAP 7 continues with the documentation of the local perspectives on actual processes of urban and planning developments in the region of Balkans. For that reason selected research work is picked up from the research institute of POLIS: Co-PLAN, aiming to describe the status of planning in Albania. Meanwhile "Stealth.Unlimited" studio tries to give an outsiders/Dutch understanding of such urban developments of West Balkan region. At the same time "the Balkanlogy Network" continues to document the historical circumstances under which during the centralized economy the so called "Unfinished Modernity Project" of former communist Albania and Yugoslavia exercised certain architectural and planning policies, which still have strong impact over the present day's developments. We thank all partner organizations for making possible to publish such valid materials. Hope you enjoy that!

Images of Tirana's Center - Periphery Discrapancy

new challenges, and further consequences. Indeed Planners are always confronted with new demands and situations, for which the history can not suggest easily solution. For example, history was not able to suggest anything valuable to the industrial society which has always been on the move regarding its new ways of living since the beginning of 20th Century! However most of the developments of this period transformed themselves throughout the history, and deserve a deep and critical reflection. In any case the main concern for the world and Europe today or tomorrow is not simply the size of the problem, rather than the fact that most of the cities are not yet prepared for the challenge of being confronted with an unknown future. Often their planning sensibility as well as the local resources and capacities are limited. Unfortunately such negative correlation in these cases has to do with the fact that local Planning Schools too, are either inexistent or professionally outdated. But given such a situation; cities must not give up in despair! In contrary, there are also enough encouraging signals, which take essential meaning towards alternative solutions of planning, education and development. In fact there is a crucial role to be played by Planning Schools and specialized Planning Research Institutions, not simply in terms of capacity building but especially in offering concrete practical and professional feedbacks. Let's not forget that some decades ago, planning as a profession and science was really marginalized; almost not existent and physically oriented; often mixed-up or replaced by other professions. Now that we know more, it is time to act! Act to switch from routine ways of thinking and taboos! Act to project with courage the future, and offer tangible solutions to the society! Act to give birth to the "Planning of 21st Century"!

Indeed some lessons could already be drawn, including:

- First: Planning must continue to democratize its own processes parallel with the decision-making of the authorities; in order that they become more responsible, meaningful and reactive towards the citizens.
- Second: Planning must affiliate with technology in order to improve essentially the way of living and working in the cities. It might look exacerbated, but it is true as it is already proven in several countries, and it is worth!
- Third: Planning must not offer simply "consoling" alternatives, but above all sustainable and economic long-term solutions to the people and the entire society. Furthermore, solutions must be concrete and efficient.
- Fourth: Planning itself can generate creative productivity and capacities that can bring people out of the existing 'status quo'. The challenge is exactly to help the people use such creativity and energy.
- Fifth: Planners and authorities must exactly build using the advantage of the endless initiative and creative energy of people. In a paradoxical way one of the 'keys' seems to be the informal sector. So, the progressive inclusion of the informal economy within the official economy makes

the "excluded" really contribute for economic development of the cities and the respective countries in general.

- Sixth: Thus the way planning is taught and implemented is to be urgently reformed too, as local and global circumstances change continuously and radically. So, planners must be aware that staying the same will make things worse!

* * *

The Context of HSM Meeting: Albania - the Last Secret of Europe!

Somehow Europe, Balkan and Albania meet in this meeting via AESOP to discuss about planning and its educational institutions in Tirana through the Heads of Schools Meeting, an annual event rotating every year around Europe

Albania is located in the Balkan Peninsula of Europe, as part of Mediterranean South-East European region. Its neighbor countries are Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Kosovo and Macedonia. Albania counts 3.5 million inhabitants and 1 million emigrants in EU countries and North America, not mentioning the Albanian speaking communities in adjacent countries. Its total surface has about 28,000 square kilometers (comparable somehow in size to Holland).

The capital city - **Tirana** - counts 700,000 inhabitants, while Tirana-Durres Metropolitan Region hosts beyond 1 million inhabitants. Albania has quite an interesting and ancient history. It is famous how Muslim, Orthodox, Catholic and other religious communities coexist in harmony for centuries. Its language is unique and considered as one of the roots of Indo-European languages. The country is rich of natural and cultural resources, including several UNESCO world protected sites and areas. The soft-warm climate, dramatic landscape and mountains, and almost 400 kilometers unknown coasts and beaches, support a growing tourism in spring-autumn time. Albania is one of the ten fastest growing economies in tourism together with countries like China, Croatia, Montenegro, etc. During the last decade the economy in total grows at an average of 4-6%, while inflation is by average 3%. People are open, and very friendly with foreigners. They speak several foreign languages, with dominance of English and Italian, and to less extend Russian, French, Greek and German too.

Although nowadays it's open and easily accessible, because of its past, Albania remains still unknown for most of the people and professionals, as the last "mysterious" destination of Europe, worth to visit and explore... Why this "mystery"? A former part of Roman, Slavic, Ottoman and Centralized Economy rule, Albania experienced during the second half of the 20th Century a harsh regime of several decades of nonsense self-isolation from the rest of world. Private property, religion and freedom of movement were practically denied. This was neither "communist" nor "capitalist", but instead a pseudo "no-east no-west" almost feudal system ending up by the end of 80-s at the brink of a national humanitarian collapse. Since than Albania

Images of Urban Projects from International Competitions in Tirana (Source: Municipality of Tirana).

Touristic Albania: Durrës, Apolonia Fier, Berat

became parliamentary republic committed to democracy and market economy. After a volatile start during 90-s, since 2000 the economy is stable and leading in the region. The authorities are working with a wide support from the public for the full integration of the country in the European Union and NATO. Thus the country itself inherits a rich set of social, economic and political features/experiences throughout the history, which makes it a highly interesting subject for exploration either from simple visitors, tourists and business people; or planning professionals, policy- and decision-makers.

Tirana - A Planning Laboratory

From one of the most rural societies in Europe (20% by late 40-s; and 35% by late 80-s) applying strict anti-urban policies, Albania transformed aggressively in less than two decades in an urban society of 60% urban population. According to National Institute of Statistics (INSTAT), the urbanization and migration rates in the capital, Tirana, emerged dramatically by early 90-s at 7-9% per annum, while unequipped authorities have been caught surprised by enormous pressure coming from individual initiatives. The capital Tirana nowadays has at least doubled in surface, and the population at least tripled. Furthermore, the capital tents to form a metropolitan expansion together with the country's main port-city Durres, as well as the newly informally developed peripheries. Imagine a former strictly-planned society which suddenly explodes towards a mentality where there is almost no space for planning. So, despite the boom of formal investments, also more than 500 thousands extralegal properties and businesses mushroomed in the country, mostly in the capital region. (In the capital Belgrade of Serbia, authorities speak also for 200 thousands extralegal properties. Such tendency is also noticed in Kosovo or Montenegro). According to the Albanian Government and UNDP, they are worthwhile almost 13 billion Euros, which is 4 times more than international aid given to Albania during transition, 9 times more than foreign direct investments, and 9 times more than national reserves minus gold. Indeed Albanian metropolitan region accumulates 1/3rd of country's population. Co-PLAN claims that if continuing so, probably by 15-20 years it will end up by accommodating probably 2/3rd of national population at the costs of the society and environment. In fact, Tirana is struggling hard in such situation! It represents nowadays not only the most vibrant city of the Albanian speaking territories, but also one of the most emerging urban economies and construction booming in the Balkans. It represents an extremely interesting planning "laboratory" in itself.

Albania has indeed many progresses in several directions, but still tries to address inherited restitutions problems of historic owners; setting up sustainable information systems; reforming urban and environmental planning systems; fighting up corruption and informality; etc. However it has all undergone unbelievable changes, and exactly because of such tremendous, fast and furious features, Albania and its capital Tirana

offers a unique perspective for urban planning and development. It holds an enormous energy within, which deserves to be explored, analyzed and studied... Tirana is a city where the glorious-crazy urban "dreams" of a local Monarch and of a dictator like Mussolini, meet with those of an authoritarian communist leader. It blends together both planning from the perspective of centralized and market economy; and reflects planning in chaos, order and freedom; as well as planning top-down and bottom-up. It is a city where formal and informal planning coexists and competes seriously. A city with a formerly "forbidden" neighborhood serving at that time only to communist authorities; which suddenly transformed in a lousy hot-spot business and entertainment downtown center of 24-hour life. They are all there: mixed together with the enthusiasm of present; inspired by freedom of movement and private initiative within an almost drunk-able "urban cocktail". One can say that 'love' and 'hate' for planning lives in Tirana, while society and authorities are struggling to cope with them. But Tirana is also well-known for its creative and charismatic municipal governance. It is famous for the project of painting main building facades, as part of a city beautification process and its international "Art Biennale". It also known for its latest international planning and architectural competitions Not occasionally the Municipality and Mayor of Tirana received several international awards and acknowledgements, including "Mayorship of the World" by UN for the improvement of life in the city.

Organizing Institutions: U_POLIS and Co-PLAN

After 2 decades of almost total "freedom" that came immediately and suddenly after 4-5 decades of authoritarian regime, there is a clear need for a new concept of realistic planning in Albania! And that is the space elaborated by Co-PLAN and U_POLIS. During these years U_POLIS is the leading university in Albania and further in the field of Planning. Such curricula is outdated and almost do not exist at other schools because of the lack of capacities and research. This renders U_POLIS, albeit a young university, in a leading position. U-POLIS aims to respond to the educational and research needs in Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro and Macedonia, and in a second phase to Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia. These countries lack quality education in the field of Planning. U_POLIS wishes to contribute to national and regional development, by offering education and research in Planning and Architecture through international exchange.

Thus POLIS University, International School of Architecture and Urban Development Policies (www.universitetipolis.edu.al) was established as an answer to the failing existing higher education provided by State educational institutes in Albania and Balkans. Indeed the legitimacy of U_POLIS starts by early 90-s with the establishment and values of Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development (www.co-plan.org), a successful civic non-for-profit structure that has been in the forefront of the research and practice in the field of experimental urban planning and development in Albania and Kosovo

POLIS University, Tirana

(see attached Annual Reports). It received support from various local communities, authorities and international donors while developing several pioneering urban projects in Albania and Kosovo. Among others, Co-PLAN received international recognitions and awards, including World Bank and UNDP Best Practices. In 2003 Co-PLAN and Municipality of Tirana organized the European Conference of Housing and Urban Development "Making Cities Work", on behalf of ENHR, European Network of Housing Research, not mentioning numerous national and regional workshops, seminars and sensibilization campaigns. In 2005 Co-PLAN submitted to the Albanian Parliament a Platform with recommendations for reforming the National Planning System, including formalization of informal settlements, The Platform is considerably adapted by the Albanian authorities, including several legislative actions. Actually, Co-PLAN has joined U-POLIS research arm.

U_POLIS is governed by the Senate, Rectorate, Chancellor and Administration, as well as independent bodies like the Council of Professors, Students Association, and Board of Quality & Ethics. The University grows 100 students/ annum with a maximal population of 5-6 hundred students and 150 internal-external academic and research staff. Students come mainly from Albania, but also from neighboring countries: Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro. The academic staff is local and international. Both Albanian and English are official languages. U_POLIS academic program includes Bachelor and Master Degree courses according to international quality standards and European "Bologna Quality System". Fields of specialization are Planning, Environment & Management, and Design & Architecture. The University received the evaluation and licensing as well as accreditation from the Albanian Authorities. According to Albanian law the institutional accreditation is monitored every 6 years. The University has three main units: 2 Schools and 1 Research Institute (School of Planning, Environment & Management; School of Architecture & Applied Design; and IKSH_POLIS, Institute for Scientific Research). The last one includes: i) Co-PLAN Institute for Habitat Development; ii) Metro-POLIS Design Studio; iii) Publication & Communication Unit; and iv) Scientific Committee & PhD Program.

We sincerely wish AESOP HSM 2001 Meeting success in Tirana!

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Viewpoint

AESOP at twenty: introduction

The founding of the Association of European Planning Schools (AESOP) in 1987 was part of a critical decade in the institutionalisation and the internationalisation of the planning academy (Stiftel and Watson, 2005). The moves towards change can be seen as combinations of three main threads: first, the growing strength of the social science intake of staff in planning schools over against those trained and practised in the more traditional design professions; secondly, a desire for the recognition of the separate academic identity of 'planning' and hence of the 'planning school' over against the approach of offering a specialist planning option in a related discipline; and, thirdly, a reaching out to engage with other national and academic planning cultures beyond interests of the long-established personal membership and more professionally identified associations.

Things were, of course, more complex than a mere conjunction of the three elements: there were – and still are – contests; there was a certain Anglophone/Anglo-Saxon lead and elements of national and regional emulation and rejection; there was also an underplayed academy vs professional/practitioner element in the discourse. Some national and international contexts were more conducive and welcoming to change than others; some existing institutional strengths could be built on, while other fragmented and more polarised interests remained detached and uninvolved. Elsewhere, existing alternative structures and distinctive traditions continued and even strengthened. It is important also to recognise that the social science perspective is one among a number of alternative approaches and has its own tendencies towards hegemony, that a research-driven planning academy needs to recognise and nourish policy and practice (without being co-opted by either), and that national and local cultural identities are essential and valid in planning scholarship and practice, not hills and valleys to be made plane in pursuit of a reductionist internationalism.

Town Planning Review recognised the beginnings of change in 1984, in an 'Editorial Note' remarking on how over 250 academics from planning schools throughout the US had assembled in San Francisco the previous October at the third, more independently organised annual conference of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) and what a positive occasion it had been. The transformation of the Association's *Bulletin* into the more ambitious *Journal of Planning Education and Research* was also noticed. In a more modern version of 'transatlantic crossings', the Note went on to float the idea of a British initiative along similar lines strongly linked to the need

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to improve the research capacity, strength and role of the planning schools. That was too narrow a national vision to be taken up (although the more recent annual UK 'Planning Research Conference' suggests that it had some currency), and it needed further transatlantic crossings to subsequent ACSP conferences to widen the scope to the European scale for action to take place.

This 'Viewpoint' provides an opportunity to look back to and reflect on the consequences of that widening of scale in the formation of AESOP in 1987 and its development over the next twenty years and then to take stock of the Association in 2007 and look ahead to some future interests and issues. The first of these two specially commissioned 'Viewpoints', 'European integration and the planning academy: reflections on the AESOP project', is contributed by Patsy Healey, and the second, 'AESOP – an ambitious "TWEN"', is provided by Peter Ache.

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STIFTEL, B. and WATSON, V. (2005), 'Building global integration in planning scholarship', in B. Stiftel and V. Watson (eds), *Dialogues in Urban and Regional Planning 1*, London and New York, Routledge, 1–14. Stiftel and Watson not only cover the 1980s, discussing parallel moves to establish scholarly institutions for planning in Canada, Brazil and France, but also the subsequent emergence of wider regional associations (adding to the international alphabet soup for planning academics) and the first World Planning School Congress in Shanghai in 2001 and the first meeting of the Global Planning Education Association Network (GPEAN) in Volos in 2002.

European integration and the planning academy: reflections on the AESOP project

Patsy Healey

In the mid-1980s, the planning academy in Europe consisted of a range of planning schools with different intellectual traditions, as well as specialist options in courses of architecture, engineering and economics (Rodriguez-Bachiller, 1988). The academics teaching within them were influenced primarily by their national cultures in education and research, as well as by a variety of intellectual traditions. For many, planning was a practice craft rather than a scholarly endeavour. Some published in the academic literature, primarily in economics and geography, but many acted as consultants to government and private bodies. International networks existed, but mainly within separate language communities. Student movement between countries during their educational programme was unusual.

It was in this context that AESOP was born. Of course, the wider project of European integration was a major influence and opportunity, but for many of those who gathered for a snowy weekend in Schloss Cappenberg in January 1987 (Fig. 1), invited by Klaus Kunzmann of Dortmund University, the motivation to create an Association of European Schools of Planning was to widen horizons for staff and students, to promote a more international outlook, and, in particular, to advocate a social scientific underpinning for understanding and developing the theory and practice of planning activity. For me, certainly, coming from one of the larger EU countries, I felt that the academic planning community in my country was too small, and its intellectual traditions as yet too weak, to sustain a vigorous community of critical inquiry. Both Klaus and I had experienced the energy of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning Congresses of the 1980s, and appreciated the way in which the *Journal of Planning Education and Research* had been developed. But we also felt that a European association should have distinctly European qualities.

This European quality was very evident at the founding Congress held in Amsterdam in the autumn of 1987. Many of those who became research collaborators in the 1990s met there for the first time. We astonished each other with our different practices. Forthright Scandinavians encountered the elegant rhetorics of Italians. Pragmatic, managerial Britons struggled to accommodate the desire for conceptual clarity among French and German participants. And we all found diffi-

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Figure 1 AESOP's founders, Schloss Cappenberg, Germany, January 1987.
Photo courtesy Sébastien Piantoni, AESOP website administrator.

culty in communicating, not just because planning academics in most parts of Europe at that time had not been trained with English as a second language, but because our intellectual traditions, the positions of our planning education programmes and the vocabularies we used to talk about planning were so diverse, as Dick Williams highlighted later in his book on European spatial planning (1996). Yet what was also evident was a strong commitment to coming together into an Association.

In the first few years, creating a community of planning academics across Europe involved intense debate about all kinds of matters as we got to know each other and developed the practices of the Association. Some, particularly those already well networked in the fields of urban and regional development studies, argued that AESOP's focus should primarily be on education issues and the promotion of exchange of students and lecturing staff. Others, of whom I was one, believed that an Association without a strong focus on enhancing the quality of research and scholarship would not carry the intellectual weight to involve significant numbers of academics across Europe. Then there were debates about membership. The principle was that membership was open to schools of planning. But what *is* a school of planning? The classes of 'membership' now recognised by AESOP developed out of this debate. In the early days, every application was scrutinised to ensure that programmes in architecture, engineering and economics which merely had planning options were not allowed to become full members. There were also difficult debates about where

'Europe' ended and how far into the Middle East it stretched, as well as how AESOP should approach the 'language' question. This last was and is a particularly difficult issue for the planning field, which combines an openness to international ideas with a commitment to interactive relations with planning practices, where one of the key qualities of local specificities lies in local languages. Some people argued that AESOP, too, should operate in a multi-lingual way. UK people abstained when voting on this last issue, which resulted in English being adopted as AESOP's language. We perhaps should have insisted on 'Euro-English' as the language, as some UK participants still fail to realise that their peculiar way of speaking English is not readily understandable to non-first-language English speakers! Meanwhile, a younger generation of planning academics in Europe are much more skilled in communication in international English.

In time, these early debates faded into the background, as the AESOP project developed its institutional infrastructures. Of these, by far the most important are the Annual Congresses. It is in the Congress arena that we have developed the academic art of scholarly presentation of research material, and progressively built up transnational exchange of ideas and inspirations across a range of subject areas with a relevance to the planning field. In the early days, we had a hard time listening to each other, not just because of differences in capacity in English, but because of the different intellectual traditions and different performative practices noted above. The contrast with recent AESOP Congresses is striking. Now a new generation of academics engages with the Congress presentation format with an ease and a seriousness which make for very stimulating experiences. Those meeting in Amsterdam in 1987 would have been astonished at the range and quality of the material presented and the smooth, professional organisation of the 2007 Congress in Naples. They would also have been proud that the Congress now attracts participants not just from across Europe, but from North America and Asia as well.

If the Congress is where AESOP has its most influential presence in European planning academia, there are also many other arenas of encounter which have been important in 'integrating' the planning academy in Europe. One has been the Association's basic governance mechanisms – the Council of Representatives (COREP) and the Executive Committee (EXCO). These have been not only sites for debate and the development of initiatives but important opportunities for regular meetings where education and research collaborations of various kinds have developed. Among the special initiatives has been the PhD Workshop, running now for nearly fifteen years, in which many current planning academics have participated. Then there have been the special commissions – on planning research and on planning education, the journal, *European Planning Studies*, and the AESOP Newsletter (now superseded by the website, www.aesop-planning.com) and the institution of prizes for best paper in a planning journal published in Europe, for teaching innovation and for best Congress paper.

Meanwhile, membership of AESOP has spread eastwards, although some difficulties in engaging participation in some western European countries, notably Spain, are still encountered.

What is striking about these different AESOP activities is not just their existence. Most organisations have similar programmes. What has been more important is their role in the creation and spreading of networks among planning academics in Europe which could be mobilised to take advantage of Europe-wide initiatives and, particularly, EU opportunities. AESOP arrived just in time to take advantage of the EU's ERASMUS/SOCRATES programme, which promoted the interchange of staff and students. Large numbers of planning students, from undergraduates to doctoral students, have been able to spend a semester in a planning school outside their own countries. And the networking opportunities of AESOP have been invaluable in developing the links needed to put together the trans-national research networks demanded by EU projects funded under the structural funds and by the succession of EU Research Framework Initiatives. One outcome has been the appearance of much more comparative research in the planning literature, and an increasing understanding of the differences which different practice cultures and institutional contexts make to how planning is practised. These experiences have in turn helped to make planning academics valued resources for national, regional and local governments seeking to learn more about practices in other countries and how, or how far, these might be transferred into specific local contexts.

Looking back twenty years, the project we embarked on seems to have grown into something larger and much more vigorous than we could have imagined at the time. This is not just because of the energy and commitment of a few people – in particular Louis Albrechts, Goran Cars, Klaus Kunzmann, David Massey, Alain Motte and the late R. H. (Dick) Williams – who helped to build AESOP and develop the relations between AESOP and national planning education arenas, although this was very important. What was also important was the moment of opportunity, when, in each of our national communities, we were waking up to the significance and opportunity of the project of European integration for our subject matter – urban and regional development, environmental improvement, urban design, and place-making in all its forms, and for educational development and academic endeavour. The formation of AESOP helped to create or reinvigorate national associations of planning academics in several countries.[1] Overall, AESOP has played a major role in generating the intellectual energy which has made European contributions to our

1 In France, the organisation of planning academics, APERAU, created in 1983–84, was very keen to develop links with the emerging AESOP. In the UK, AESOP came to replace what had been the Education for Planning Association (which generously donated the residue of its funds to AESOP), but helped to stimulate a new arena for UK planning academics, the Planning Research Conference, sponsored by the professional institute, the Royal Town Planning Institute.

field so stimulating in recent years. It has helped many to become skilled 'travellers', not just between different practice contexts, but among different disciplines and traditions of addressing particular subject matters.

These days, I have less contact with the inner workings of AESOP or with the networking that goes into sustaining student exchange and transnational research projects. But some of us 'founding fathers and mothers' of the AESOP 'movement' have been wondering lately whether perhaps AESOP has become too much focused on the research dimension of the planning academy and too little on the development of teaching programmes. We also wonder if the focus of attention on developing research and scholarship in the planning academy may be pulling against a commitment to an interchange between research and practice, especially when practice cultures and exchange of ideas necessarily take place in local languages. There is a danger in the current emphasis across much of European academia on 'research output' as evaluated by peers, rather than on contributions to developing practices in different places. Committed academics have of course always done both, but it is not easy to meet both demands as funding pressures build up on universities across the continent. Yet surely, the contribution of the planning field intellectually and in research lies in its tradition of grounding its scholarship in engagement, in all kinds of ways, with practices and of recognising that knowledge development is not some kind of linear translation from abstract theories to 'applied' practices, but a continual interaction between the purposes and experimentation of the practical world and the practices of academic reflection, inquiry, critique and the generation of potentially useful ideas, concepts and vocabularies.

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AESOP – an ambitious 'TWEN'

Peter Ache

On its twentieth anniversary, the Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP) has become so to say a 'grown-up' institution, with the ambition of contributing to the development of both the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the European Research Area (ERA). Our twenty-first conference was held in Naples this year, with about 600 participants coming from 40 countries inside and outside Europe. More than 400 presentations were given in 14 tracks dealing with a diverse range of topics from 'planning education' to 'planning theory' and subsumed under the main conference theme of 'the risk society'.

Obviously, AESOP has grown strong over its twenty years of existence – and, taking into account the fact that nine presidents of our sister organisations were also present in Naples to discuss and work with us, it now has a global audience. At the time of writing, AESOP has 108 full institutional members and 40 associate members – that is, schools that share our ideas about planning education and meet our standards for a proper planning education in Europe. This is a huge international structure which until now has operated on an entirely voluntary basis.

Recently it has become clear that we have reached the limits of this organisational model. The Council of Representatives has therefore made the very positive decision to raise the membership fee in order to provide a full secretarial support to the Secretary General, the holder of the office which keeps AESOP together. This step is also very positive with respect to the more immediate challenges which the planning community has to address, related to educational questions, to research and to the position of planning in the professional field.

In education terms, AESOP has provided a first report on the progress of the Bologna process. We now have an exploratory (though not comprehensive) picture of the current situation in our member schools, showing us that many schools have already prepared for the two-cycle model. Clearly, more research is needed and we have also asked our members to continuously update this information. In the course of this, we have recently established a new feature in our routines, i.e. the Heads of Schools meeting. The first meeting was held in Bratislava (Slovakia) in 2006, followed by one in Leuven (Belgium) in 2007.[1] The 2008 meeting will be held in Łódź (Poland). The Heads of Schools meeting will hopefully become a regular exchange and discus-

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1 Reports on both meetings can be found on the AESOP website, www.aesop-planning.com.

sion platform for all those colleagues at the various schools who are responsible for education and curriculum development. As was seen this year, the discussion may also be related to matters such as accreditation and general quality assurance. The aspect of accreditation, the scrutiny of programmes (at both levels in the two-cycle system), is a function with which AESOP should be much more closely and proactively involved in the future. The development of proper European Masters[2] and PhD programmes under the umbrella of AESOP is clearly desirable.

Education has been and continues to be one of our main concerns and I should therefore mention a recommendation, formulated by past and current presidents of AESOP in April 2007, to reaffirm this mission:

> AESOP sees the 'art and science' of planning as a complex expertise. To develop this, a strong relation with planning practice is indispensable for planning education. As an academic field, planning clearly has an applied science character, providing a particular stimulus due to its multi-disciplinary approach bringing together different intellectual traditions and concepts. In planning education we therefore need to make sure that students can learn in practice situations at an early stage. As a scientific endeavour, we need to work towards innovative new solutions in cooperation with day-to-day planning practice.[3]

Since the WPC conference in Shanghai in 2001 AESOP and other planning associations have formed the global education planning association network (GPEAN). Here we come together to discuss matters of common concern and to plan further world conferences,[4] but also to publish at regular intervals the 'Dialogues in Urban and Regional Planning' (Stiftel, Watson and Ascelrad, 2006), giving an overview of actual research themes and topics.

The research aspect is vital for AESOP. The planning academy, despite the centenary to be celebrated in Liverpool in 2009,[5] is still rather young and experiences constant changes in terms of a modern understanding of planning as the complex task of creating good quality spaces and sustainable territories – or, to express it in accordance with the 'risk society' topic of the Naples conference, avoiding risks

2 In 2007, some AESOP members prepared joint applications for the 'Erasmus Mundus' programme; for example, the University of Reims (France), the Technical University of Bratislava (Slovakia) and the Royal Institute for Technology in Stockholm (Sweden) have applied for a joint programme on European Planning in the context of globalisation (EuroPlan).

3 The reference to 'art and science' relates to the well-known notion used by RTPI.

4 The first World Planning Schools Conference was held in Shanghai in 2001, the second in Mexico City in 2006; the next one is scheduled for 2011/12, with the venue being still open.

5 The point of reference here is the appointment in 1909 of Stanley Adshead as the first Lever Professor of Civic Design and also founder of *Town Planning Review* in the University of Liverpool's Department of Civic Design, marking the start of a formal planning education before it was introduced in other parts of Europe and the USA.

and mitigating hazards. Research is important as it helps us to reflect on practice, to develop theories (or concepts), and to systematise our knowledge as an academic discipline to make it available for practice.

Our community has a rich record of research and development of research themes. This richness becomes visible in the many thematic groups initiated by individuals or groups of colleagues, using AESOP as an umbrella to regularly discuss and work on actual topics, feeding this into the conference tracks or round-tables. This research is also indispensable with respect to new requirements coming from the institutional environment, as universities increasingly use statistics relating to contract research or scientific publications to assess our quality as academics or the success of departments. All who are involved in this know that at times such an approach generates strange results or is straightforwardly inappropriate for the discipline. AESOP developed an initiative to establish more appropriate criteria to assess our research quality as against the currently dominant practices. A first report[6] and suggestions have been put together, providing information about actual practice in countries where AESOP is present. This report came with a list of more than forty journals, which AESOP uses in part to select the winners of the prize for best published paper, but which might also be used as a manual for universities which are looking for appropriate material to assess the research quality of planning schools or departments. This is definitely something AESOP will promote in the near future.

We also have our own associated journals and quite a number of our individual members founded journals or sit on journal editorial boards. *European Planning Studies* started as a means to communicate our planning debates and agendas, addressing a global audience. Currently AESOP is reviewing the situation and considering whether to establish an additional instrument for communication which would bear an AESOP quality mark and would reach the full range of our members. One important aspect of this is the language option(s) available. New models have been discussed, such as the possibility of formally embracing a journal as the official AESOP journal, with subscription linked to membership fees and operating as a direct means of communication with our members. However, this discussion is still ongoing and needs careful thought.

The planning profession has recently entered a discussion regarding professional standards, initiated by the European Council of Town Planners and the International Society of City and Regional Planners, representing professional practice interests. AESOP is taking an active role here as well. We have established a relationship with the European Commission (EC) in order to investigate whether a regulation should be expected at the level of the European Union. Thankfully, no immediate regulation is intended by the EC and it is up to professional and educational bodies to

6 For an outline, see the presentation by A. Balducci, available from http://www.aesop-planning.com/Bratislava_ppt/Alessandro_HOD_Marcho6.pdf.

come up with proposals in case of, for example, barriers preventing market access for planners in Europe. This issue was discussed extensively at the Heads of Schools meeting in Leuven (April 2007). AESOP and the professional associations have agreed to cooperate closely in any future activity, for example towards the creation of a common platform. As the field of planning changes rapidly, we have to respond to these changes and make sure that the educational institutions have a say in this context. As the EU is enlarged (and possibly reinforced with a new treaty), professional mobility and recognition of planners is crucial for our future. The schools organised in AESOP are, to put it simply, the producers of future generations of professionals. Our research at its best identifies current changes and future challenges. Who else is better positioned to reflect on qualification requirements?

Whereas the early years of AESOP were clearly much more concerned with establishing a communal spirit and enabling networking, very well described by Patsy Healey above, we now are in a situation where we have to face up to the importance of AESOP as an institution in very practical terms: AESOP is the only representative body which brings together the planning schools of Europe. Given this unique position AESOP has to strengthen its profile as a professional body. AESOP has to mobilise its resources, taking a leading role and lending its expertise to ongoing debates and initiatives regarding planning education and planning qualifications of future professionals. AESOP has to promote its agenda with politicians and all other key stakeholders (or actors) in place development and management across Europe. From this threefold objective it follows that our voluntary structure brings us to the limits of our capacity. To safeguard past work and sustain it in the future, AESOP intends – as noted above – to establish a permanent office to support the work of the Secretary General and the President. As described above, at our last meeting in Naples (July 2007) the Council of Representatives gave its support to this ambitious agenda and agreed to raise the membership fee structure in order to provide the urgently needed resources. A further review of the membership fee is planned for 2010 and with that, the next steps towards a more professional structure will also be reviewed. The Executive Committee will provide and present a report on options regarding office operations and representation. This is a very important discussion ahead of us; one result could be that AESOP will decide to have a permanent address, establishing a headquarters somewhere in Europe and being clearly and permanently visible as an association with a proper business address.

In its first twenty years AESOP has grown to become truly representative of European planning, and has developed a conscious vision of planning. AESOP's commitment to the issues of planning education is facing new challenges which bring new items to our agenda. In the field of research, AESOP has grown from a spontaneous facilitator to a proactive stakeholder. In the context of globalisation, AESOP supports the worldwide debate on planning with its sister institutions and in GPEAN. Our ambition as a TWEN[ty something] for the next twenty years is definitely to mature and sustain our level of activities, services and functions as the only body representing planning schools in Europe.

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AESOP perspective: Strengthening our member schools in the changing landscape of Planning

Peter Ache
AESOP President

This short paper brings together in writing the introductory statement, which I provided for the Heads of Schools Meeting in Leuven, and some of the major conclusions of the Leuven meeting which AESOP will include further on in its agenda. The final part of this paper documents the recommendations which the past and current presidents of AESOP agreed upon in their meeting advancing the Heads of Schools meeting.

Before going into the matter I think it is safe to say that this second meeting of Heads of Schools was very successful: the intensive discussions in the working groups have clearly shown that the schools are not only highly aware of the immediate challenges resulting from discussions about professional standards, but that there are also many ideas on how to respond in our main task, the education of future planning professionals.

AESOP will provide a forum for the further development of these ideas, will act on quality assurance, accreditation and professional standards and will provide further active support to its member schools.

Our action points therefore include,

- setting up a working party (preferably jointly with ECTP and ISOCARP);
- defining a policy regarding quality assurance, accreditation, and professional standards;
- continuing our internal debate on before items; and
- continuing the preparatory work which was done on the Bologna-Theme and on Research Assessment.

✓ The Changing Landscape of Planning

The topic of the Leuven meeting, towards professional recognition for the planning discipline in Europe, has several dimensions: In Bratislava (2006) we provided the first results regarding the Bologna-Process and the adaptation of schools towards the two cycle system. Our concern here lies with quality assurance – a perspective which looks towards the inside of our schools and the education. One aspect which followed on from the discussions in Bratislava related to accreditation and the role AESOP can play in this respect, e.g. providing orientation for the elaboration of programmes or defining core qualifications which need to be achieved in individual programmes [1]. With the new topic of professional regulation the perspective now widens to the external environment and includes also other actors, in particular other professions in the same field. All these elements and perspectives need to be integrated in a proper discussion.

[1] But also including the theme of research assessment and the assurance of quality output in research terms. The need of an AESOP quality mark e.g. for journals, or in fact a closer and direct cooperation with individual journals is one important point of our discussions. See also further down.

However, all these perspectives are embedded in an environment, which poses several additional challenges to planning

- it is an increasingly competitive environment, demanding a proliferation of products;
- the market[2] clearly changes;
- an indication of the quality of the commodity becomes important;
- potentially, the market will be regulated, and
- AESOP needs to define a position – whether our schools want to act as the middleman, the assembly line or the innovator?

We now understand the "products" we are delivering in a better way because of the investigation AESOP has done in the Bologna Survey[3]. From the sample which was collected, it appears that the larger part of the planning schools is 'on track' with the implementation of the Bologna process. However, some questions can be asked which revolve around issues of academic traditions and diversity. The first one being that education should not simply be understood as a product which is placed in a competitive environment. In his vicious critique regarding the 'knowledge society' Konrad Liessmann[4] at one point comments on the trend to turn universities into efficiently managed production sites of human capital for the knowledge society as follows: "It is not the worker who becomes the scientist, it is rather the scientist becoming the worker. If it was different, one would turn businesses into universities and not universities into businesses." How can we maintain cultures and different traditions but also avoid ossification? Planning, understood as a practice which is to achieve spatial quality, and planners, understood as having the capacity to situate and contextualise, develop and manage planning projects in an appropriate way and to achieve and realise satisfactory solutions in participative processes (Conclusions, Presidents Meeting, Leuven), can not be achieved by an overly harmonized education.

Regarding the demand side the potential 'markets' change, too. In a report on the importance of metropolitan regions the OECD (2006)[5] formulated the following view on planning: "The role of planning is not to dictate what goes where, rather, when linked to expenditure on infrastructure and to policies and programmes for SMEs, housing, education, health and the like, flexible spatial planning strategies can help to leverage private investment and civic involvement. These challenges however are difficult, given the inherited professional specialisations in the public and private sectors that deliver space-based services and goods … ." The OECD calls for more flexible and strategic versions of planning, including e.g. 'public visioning under market conditions' as actually a positive venture. First of all, this quote tells us much about the still existing perception of planning in the minds of free market promoters. Secondly however, it informs us about expectations for future professional performance as a planner which we need to prepare our graduates for: strategic thinking, visioning, multi-disciplinary teams and services. Part of this is already good practice in the education.

The quality of the product is actually difficult to measure in a generally applicable way. There is an inherited professionalism of planning practice and research in different countries. We all know the yard sticks applied to various aspects of the production system, on institutional as well as on individual level – evaluation, benchmarking, rankings in research, teaching and in terms of services to society (a more

[2] The market terminology is deliberately chosen in order to further emphasise the dominating character of these changes and to induce discussion. Personally, I do not share this approach towards a 'commodification' of education.

[3] AESOP (2006). Implications of the Bologna Process for Planning Eduction in Europe. Results of the 2006 survey. (Authors: Davoudi/Ellison).

[4] Liessmann, K. (2006). Theorie der Unbildung. Wien, Zsolnay. Liessman uses the German term 'Wissender' (more knowing) but for our discussion the 'scientist' might be more appropriate.

[5] OECD (2006). Competitive cities in the global economy - horizontal synthesis report. Bilbao.

recent element). AESOP needs to learn more about the application of these instruments from member schools and exchange this knowledge. A particular new field here is that of accreditation experiences. The member schools make their first (or repeated) experiences here and as it was clearly expressed in Bratislava, AESOP is asked to play a more active but also critical role in such endeavours – not to leave it entirely to professional consultants earning considerable amounts of money with the process. As said before, one element regards research assessment and in particular the identification of journals which are important for our profession – up to the point of embracing journals as official AESOP journals (as TCPA, RTPI and other bodies have already). Preferably and ideally, AESOP finds a multi-lingual journal – to make sure that our various languages do not lose definitional power over important societal developments in the face of an all too dominant anglo-american publication sector.

In the opening of the Leuven meeting we discussed the potential threat (or opportunity) of a coming market regulation for the planning profession. The definition of standards, procedures, representation rights is for sure an important issue. As we learnt, the issue is less dramatic as thought for a moment[6]. However, AESOP should not slacken on the issue.

In terms of accreditation and related activities, AESOP can take on different roles:

- Coordination of planning curricula;
- Facilitation, support and promotion of exchange;
- Quality assurance;
- Elaboration of standards;
- External evaluation in accreditation processes;
- Setting admission criteria (international students); and
- Seeking active involvement as professional body in coming EC Regulation Processes.

Each of these points is very valid, but some of them need a wider debate in order to determine what AESOP should do. One thing is certain: AESOP needs to take a very clear standpoint on these issues. AESOP ideally takes the position of the innovator and promoter of planning and is not content with a position as mediator or manager of an 'assembly line'.

✓ Conclusions and AESOP agenda

To resume the challenges for AESOP, I first would like to recall some of the criteria which have been defined in our charter. Planners should develop an attitude i.e. a feeling for planning: being oriented towards solving the needs of society within a framework of sustainable development; the cultural embeddedness of the man-made environment; the value dimension of planning; and the ethical implications of planning. These are still valid points which we apply to our members in the application process and which direct our efforts to establish and promote a European planning profession. However there is the need to discuss and up-date these and other criteria to better reflect some of the changes which have been identified before, potentially culminating in an 'AESOP declaration' of planning.

A certain number of recommendations concerning the future of AESOP, in the light of the challenges developed above, can be formulated:

AESOP needs to develop a strategy or a policy which helps strengthening the profile of planning, communicating the value of planning, and preparing a common platform.

[6] See the presentation of Anna Geppert, *EU regulations on the recognition of professional qualifications*

AESOP should also attempt to define core (minimum) requirements for planners, but in a non-cumulative way (referring to excessive lists of qualifications).

As said at the outset, the president together with the ExCo and CoRep will closer cooperate with bodies like ECTP and ISOCARP on the common platform issue, will set up various working parties on the relevant matters, and will continue the ground work (continuing the Bologna survey and research assessment).

✓ Recommendation

In their Leuven meeting on the invitation of Professor Louis Albrechts, the group of AESOP past and current presidents came to the following conclusions and recommendations:

1. AESOP is the only representational body which brings together the planning schools in Europe. Given this unique position AESOP needs to strengthen its profile as a professional body. AESOP needs to mobilize its resources taking a leading role and entering its expertise into ongoing debates and initiatives regarding planning education and planning qualification of future professionals. AESOP needs to promote this agenda with politicians and all other key stakeholders (and actors) in place development and management across Europe.
2. AESOP sees planning as an indispensable profession for the development of spatial quality and sustainable territories in Europe. AESOP needs to promote and communicate the value of its profession in the public realm. AESOP intends to improve the spatial literacy of citizens and politicians alike, to better understand the spatiality of daily life and achieve visionary and transformative action.
3. AESOP is much concerned about how to achieve spatial quality and sustainable territories. AESOP needs to emphasise these aspects at the various levels and arenas concerned, from the local, city, regional, national, to finally the European and trans-European level.
4. AESOP stresses the diversity of the planning profession and therefore sees the attempts towards a harmonization of planning education in the course of the Bologna-Process as having positive and negative effects at the same time. AESOP welcomes the opportunities of enhanced mobility and a better comparison of programmes. AESOP's main concern however is the quality of the education. AESOP sees as a core qualification of planners the application of their knowledge about place quality and sustainable territories to situate and contextualise, develop and manage planning projects in a responsible way and to achieve and realise appropriate and satisfactory solutions in participative processes.
5. AESOP sees the 'art and science'[7] of planning as a complex expertise. To develop this, a strong relation with planning practice is indispensable for planning education. As an academic field, planning clearly has an applied science character, providing a particular stimulus due to its multi-disciplinary approach bringing together different intellectual traditions and concepts. In planning education we therefore need to make sure that students can learn in practice situations at an early stage. As a scientific endeavour, we need to work towards innovative new solutions in cooperation with day to day planning practice.

[7] Referring to definition of planning by the Royal Town Planning Institute.

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ECTP perspective: A common plateform of professional standards for Planners in 2010?

Jan Vogelij
President of the European Council of Spatial Planners (ECTP)

ECTP regroups the national associations of spatial planning professionals in the countries of the Council of Europe. It has 27 members, but does not completely cover the EU. However, grossly ECTP can be seen as representing the national professional organisations of spatial planners in the EU. ECTP is the connection point for the spatial planning professionals with the European Commission and the EU. It organises every two years the European Urban and Regional Planning awards, the Biennials for Towns and Town planners (supporting the permanent international working party) and other events and conferences.(sometimes at the request of the Commission)

The ECTP is in contact with DGMarket about establishing the common platform for planners since 2003. During that period, confusion about definitions of "regulation" and what the Commission wants took a lot of time. Also within ECTP, personal changes formed a handicap in terms of time. A first thing we did was to find out what the EU exactly meant by regulation, and to see what the situation in the different countries is.

The common platforms have been introduced by the EU in the General Services Directive (DGMarket) as an instrument to enable the free movement of professionals throughout Europe. Even though the urgency in terms of time pressure of a common platform for the planning profession may be relative[8], we should not underestimate the amount of work that has to be put into it. For that reason, it is important to act now.

Besides its positive effects for professional mobility, a common platform will be very important to reinforce the planning profession. A characteristic of planning in Europe (in comparison with other professions) is its fragmentation because of different national legislation, cultures of governance, institutional contexts and situations concerning planning practice as well as education. A common platform will be helpful to make planning more recognisable (as an illustration: spatial planning has many different names in different countries of the EU, unlike, for example, architecture).

The question whether we want to be regulated is another one. Planning is not regulated at the European level, there is no 'sectoral regulation' such as for architecture or medical professions. The European Commission has decided not to regulate other sectors in that way anymore. The spatial planning profession as a result, is falling under the General Services Directive.

Spatial planning is regulated in different ways in a certain number of countries. This is important, because the European Commission takes the national regulation as a starting point. They do not want to impose their regulation. As a result, the situation is very complicated and fragmented.

But as I said, the question of the common platform goes beyond the question of regulation. By working on a common platform, we can specify what planning is, and what constitutes its common core throughout the different European countries. This will allow us to reinforce the profession. As such, the process of working on the common platform is probably more important than its direct outcomes.

[8] See presentation of Anna Geppert, *EU regulations on the recognition of professional qualifications*

Background Information

In order to work towards a common framework, a necessary first step is to refresh the actual criteria for the planning profession. The current criteria date from 1995, and it has taken ECTP a long time to elaborate and agree upon them. Several universities refer nowadays to that Common Core of the profession and for instance the regulation office for the spatial planners in France applies the criteria.

Since 1995 society and the planning profession have evolved a lot. Therefore the ECTP initiated a large discussion among the European planning associations about planning policy objectives and planning principles in order to meet the requirements of the city of the XXIst century. The resulting 'New Charter of Athens 2003', the ECTP's vision for cities of the XXIst century, promoting the concept of "the Connected City, has been agreed upon in October 2003. For this new document, the reference to the 'classical' Charter of Athens was used to illustrate that this 'new' charter is a real break with the past. The ideas of what planning should be in the current society are very different from the ones on which the 'classical' Charter of Athens was built (then mainly by architects). There now is a new and fundamentally different charter underlying the activity of spatial planning.

This New Charter of Athens 2003 is a good starting point for the AESOP action to refresh the criteria which define the profession of spatial planning, because it has been unanimously approved and adopted by all the national associations of planning professionals.

In order to proceed with the platform, the ECTP is investigating the existence of barriers between countries. A first survey has been carried out. The outcomes of this survey, which need to be refined, will be taken further in order to provide evidence of the existence of barriers for mobility of planners between European countries. DGMarket has explicitly asked us to provide them with an assessment of the actual situation with regard to the free movement of professionals. ECTP has already agreed upon the definition of what a spatial planner is (spring 2006), one of the other requirements of the EC DGMarket

But these are only first steps, and we should really not underestimate the work that is required for the elaboration of a common platform for the planning profession. The fragmentation mentioned above really is an important handicap.

What AESOP can do in that respect is to provide, from the planning education point of view, a reflection upon what planning is and establish what the minimum requirements are (the common core of the actually extremely different educations in planning).

On top of that it is necessary to analyze which extra requirements the topical planning practice, according to the New Charter of Athens 2003, sets for educating planners. The documents Dominique Lancrenon prepared for the common platform contain a first formulation, which resulted from work in the ECTP done by Robin Thompson and Paulo Correia. The requirements should be formulated in terms of competences of planners, as outcomes of the education and not in terms of input.

The results of such an exercise, which we hope AESOP might provide on the basis of an investigation among its members, can be an important input for the platform. Then efforts can concentrate upon establishing the compensating measures for working in a country different from the country of one's education. These activities can very well coincide with the ones which AESOP envisages for its quality assessment.

ECTP really wants to take this further and thinks that it is very important to do this in collaboration with AESOP.

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APERAU perspective: A twenty years experience in quality assessment of Planning curricula in France

Didier Paris
Institut d'Aménagement et d'Urbanisme de Lille (IAUL), Université Lille 1

For those who speak French, you know that the name APERAU, which is the name of a very serious association, refers also to a joke, because it sounds like "APERO", the moment of pleasure, in France, when you have a drink just before the dinner: the guys who founded APERAU, and found the name, were very funny… Each time we have to explain what APERAU is, to people not involved in planning, we spend five minutes with the joke: so, now that is done, and we can speak seriously. The name is now fairly well known by the professionals, we have kept it, and we assume totally this funny side of the name, as a sort of French touch of humour.

✓ The foundation:

APERAU was founded in 1984. It gathers together 17 schools and curricula of urban planning, town and country planning in France: 6 in Paris (IUP, IFU, Sc.Po, Paris-Sorbonne 1 et 4, Ecole nationale de Ponts et Chaussées), Lyon, Grenoble, Aix-en-Provence, Toulouse, Bordeaux, Nantes, Rennes, Reims, Lille.

In the middle of the 90's, the French association decided to open up towards the French-speaking curricula and schools outside France, thus becoming an international association: Schools in Brussels, Montreal, Laval, Quebec, Tunis, Rabat, Beyrouth joined the network.

In France, except IUP and IFU, in Paris, founded in the first half of the twentieth century, the curriculua in planning mainly appeared in the 70's and the 80's. This period corresponds, in France, to the new interest of the universities in professional curriculua, in opposition to the traditional approach founded on a scientific field, without regards to the labour market for the students.

In our field, the words used to name these curriculua, more or less corresponding to "planning" in English, are, in French, « *Aménagement* », « *Aménagement du territoire* », « Environnement », « *urbanisme* », « *développement des territoires* », the latter in a different meaning from the English word « Development », or a mix of all these terms.

✓ Why was this association created ? What is APERAU aiming at?

One of the reasons for the foundation of APERAU was to identify these new curricula, and the old ones (IFU, IUP) who joined the movement.

Often, at the beginning, these curricula appeared parallel to those in Geography, classical Geography, the main vocation of which was to prepare the students to become teachers in geography and history, and not to be planners, even if a lot became planners in the 60's.

But some academics, often geographers, but also biologists, sociologists or lawyers, thought that it was possible to create new curricula, gathering different fields and proposing new academic practices in specific programmes. In the 70's, proposals from the State of new diplomas, such as the "Maîtrise de

Sciences et Technologies" (4 years after the Bac), and the D.E.S.S. in the 80's (5 years after the Bac), offered to the universities the opportunity to create these new programmes in planning. Of course, these new curricula were not created against traditional fields, for instance Geography, but to offer diplomas adapted to the expected skill in planning. For instance in Lille, our planning department, IAUL, has been created inside the faculty of Geography and Planning. Sometime, a few local conflicts occurred in the 70's, but they are now over.

Relationships were developed by these academics with professionals, and specifically with the ministry of planning and urban development (Ministère de l'Equipement in French), who wanted to promote the education of new professionals, using good practices in the specific field of planning. It was all the more necessary, because in the 80's in France, the decentralisation process gave a lot of new power to the local authorities to create a lot of jobs for young professionals. The university had the opportunity to form these young professionals.

But the professionals, and above all the ministry, required a guarantee in the way of teaching, linking theory and practical approach. So, the second reason for the foundation of APERAU was to provide this guarantee, thanks to a charter which aimed at creating a framework for the programmes with several principles.

✓ The charter and the principles.

This charter was written after consultation with the professionals, who use it to define the required skill for the new professionals. For instance, a body, the office for qualification of urban planners (OPQU), uses the principles of APERAU to qualify the new planners. And the French representatives in the European Council of Planners can refer to our principles to contribute to the definition of the required skills of planners in Europe.

The members share, as the **basic elements** of the Charter:

- the use of French in teaching
- a common philosophy for academic choices
- the concern of linking research and teaching.

The evaluation: furthermore, APERAU manages a process of evaluation of the programmes, to control the application of the charter. In order to be a full member, evaluation is required; if not the schools are associate members. For instance, this is the case for the schools in North African countries. Now in France, all the members are full-members, and very recently a new applicant, in Rennes, has joined APERAU.

Because of the implementation of the Bologna process, now totally implemented in France, we had to adapt the charter and stop for a period the process of evaluation. Since 2006, the process has started again. Each year two or three schools are visited.

The principles :

1. Quality and coherence of teaching:

2. Promotion of the identity of the field of planning, especially concerning the name of the academic programmes.

3. Promotion of common knowledge (culture) and multidisciplinary studies throughout the different curricula.

4. To implement programmes with:

- a multidisciplinary approach to teaching
- a collective workshop, if possible on topics proposed by professional and/or political bodies: a real study, not a subject given by the professors.
- an internship (training period) in private or public sector, but with a real mission
- the production of a dissertation – often linked with the subject of the mission of the internship

5- A staff composed of academics from different fields (geography, economy, sociology, law, political studies, history, engineer…), and especially from planning, AND professional planners. Professionals are not part of the permanent staff. Sometimes the permanent staff can be reduced and complemented with external professors and professionals.

6. At the level of the master, especially in the last year, we emphasise the recruitment of students coming from different fields such as : planning, of course, architecture, geography, political sciences, economy, sociology… because the job of a planner has many facets and needs different backgrounds, due to the variety of the missions : economic planning, neighbourhood policies, urban design…

7. To promote the research in the field of planning as an aim to enrich teaching.

✓ Brief approach of the methodology of evaluation trough a few criteria concerning the masters level:

The programmes are organised with credits (ECTS : One year = 60 ECTS).

These credits, attained by the students, correspond to a varied way of teaching and practices: lessons, applied works, seminars, workshops, internship, field trips, individual thesis, collective thesis…

The credits correspond to four great categories of courses

- credits for courses concerning general (cultural) knowledge applied for planning, such as urban history, urban geography, urban sociology.
- credits for courses concerning specific knowledge of planning, for example urban policies, neighbourhood and social development, urban design, analysis of the stakeholders of planning…

a minimum of 30 credits out of 120 is required for these two categories

- credits for courses concerning professional skills specific to planning, for instance management of urban project, elaboration of diagnostics, implementation of the documents of planning…
- credits for courses concerning tools used in the professional field, such as G.I.S., methodology of social enquiry, infography…

a minimum of 60 credits out of 120 is required for these two categories (often corresponding to the workshop and internship)

The last 30 credits (/120) depend on the needs of each school.

The evaluation is done by a team of three individuals, two academics and one professional. The team spends generally one day or, more often, one and half day, in the school. It meets the staff, the students, and analyses a report prepared by the school with all the necessary information (official documents sent to the ministry to be appointed by the state, description of the programmes…).

It has to verify the existence of the academic practices recommended in the charter, specifically the workshop and the internship, which must be of a minimum of three months. Furthermore, it verifies the balanced repartition of credits (ECTS) between the different categories of teaching, as we previously saw.

If the programme is conceived on a basis of 120 credits (2 years), a student can be admitted in the last year (given that he already has 60 credits from a relevant background such as architecture, urban geography or political sciences (with a background in urban policies)…

✓ The lessons from the APERAU Experiment.

More than 20 years of existence.

Certainly, in the French university system, APERAU is a unique example of organisation and self evaluation of an academic field.

A collective improvement of academic practices due to the exchange between the schools and their individual projects exists.

There is a coherent approach to practices and programmes, even if each school can develop its own identity

The students benefit from a Common label to enter the labour market, recognised by the profession.

APERAU is also a scientific network, answering to proposals of research coming from different bodies, such as recently the DIACT (formerly DATAR).

Lastly APERAU is an intermediate between the French schools of planning and AESOP: the fees for AESOP are collected by APERAU, in addition to its own fees, and are paid globally to AESOP. Our representatives can diffuse the information from AESOP in the APERAU network.

ACSP[9] perspective: Preparing professional standards in education from a US perspective

Simin Davoudi
AESOP past President

Some time ago, ACSP held its annual "administrators' conference", which is the ACSP equivalent of AESOP's HoD meeting. Simin Davoudi was invited to talk about the Bologna Survey[10]. On this occasion, there was very interesting feedback from the Americans on the Bologna process. Some key points of their remarks:

- The Bologna process is important because it has induced an important intellectual debate on curricula and so on.
- The process is interesting because it is a step towards harmonisation of the planning discipline.
- The process will probably enhance students and staff mobility in Europe and even outside. The fact that there are more and more English language courses everywhere is considered by ACSP as a positive evolution, and as a sign of this increasing international exchange.
- The Bologna process is considered to improve "cross-national learning" between European countries (leading maybe to an insularisation of the US planning discipline).

The issue of accreditation and of professional recognition of the planning profession was addressed in a parallel session at the conference. In addition, there was a very interesting discussion of a procedure which is being developed in the US to measure the performance of planning schools. The planning schools united in ACSP have decided to take on this quality assessment by themselves, in order to do it on their own terms.

The planning school assessment programme they are putting into place aims at assessing "the faculty" (academic staff), the students, and the reputation of the schools. It concerns all the accredited planning programmes. It should provide an objective view of the quality of all these programmes. One of its central aims is to give a stronger position to the planning schools in their universities. It is equally aimed at improving the image of planning in general, among others in order to attract more good students.

In order to do this, the performance of academic staff will be measured. The objective is to develop some new criteria for that. The information that comes out of the assessment has to be publicly available and can then be used for comparison of schools.

The data sources that are going to be used include for example:

- Nationally collected data (numbers of students, etc.)
- Databases on academic staffs performance (citation Index and the like)
- Data from ACSP's own accreditation service
- Data on scholarships etc.

[9] ACSP: Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (North America).

[10] The powerpoint presentation used on this occasion can be downloaded at the AESOP website.

POLIS University (Photo Sonja Jojić)

This generally available data is completed by two surveys (questionnaires):

- Among Heads of Schools: Basic data about facts and figures, location of the planning discipline in the universities hierarchy, "location data" (where do students come from, where do they go), …
- Among the academic staff: Questions concerning activities of staff (not only publications but also activities outside university such as membership of associations, other professional activities, etc.).

A problem which is signalled is the difficulty of conducting a balanced and objective comparison of schools that takes into account their diversity. The solution that is found is to avoid aggregating the information and giving scores. The information that is gathered will be collected and presented in a disaggregate way. It is then up to the potential student or staff to make their own decision. However, this does not completely take away all the negative aspects of this kind of performance measurement. These negative elements concern for example unhealthy competition between schools. Also, given that the assessment is not compulsory, schools can decide simply not to take part.

There are however a number of positive points in the ACSP experience. These are related to a growing awareness of the quality of the planning education and of ways in which to obtain a high quality, and to the diversity of sources that is used to measure the performance of the schools.

ACSP's experience will provide a valuable source for AESOP's attempts to measure excellence amongst its member schools.

EU regulation on the recognition of professional qualifications: state of the art, issues at stake

Anna Geppert
AESOP vice Secretary General

The origin of this presentation lies in the fact that some time ago, the rumour went that there would be a European directive which would define the planning profession, which was planned for 2010. This appeared not to be true, so there is no immediate necessity to engage in the elaboration of such a directive.

Because planning is not a regulated profession at the European level, it is up to us to decide whether we want to, and on which terms we want to engage in such a process. Initially, the directive mentioned a deadline for this procedure (October 20th, 2007).

Today, it appears that this deadline is no longer binding. However, working on a process of recognition of the planning profession at the European level may appear as a great opportunity to strengthen the value both of the profession and our diplomas. My presentation will enlighten:

1. The context: what are the European rules for professional recognition?
2. The procedure to follow if planners want to engage in a process of recognition
3. Pros and cons: some reflections on constraints benefits of such a process

✓ The context : European rules for professional recognition

The European directive « Bolkenstein » (*DIRECTIVE 2005/36/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of September 7th 2005* on the recognition of professional qualifications aims at:

Improving mobility of European workers (freedom of establishment):

(3) The guarantee conferred by this Directive on persons having acquired their professional qualifications in a Member State to have access to the same profession and pursue it in another Member State with the same rights as nationals is without prejudice to compliance by the migrant professional with any non-discriminatory conditions of pursuit which might be laid down by the latter Member State, provided that these are objectively justified and proportionate.

Facilitating crossborder service provision:

> (4)
>
> In order to facilitate the free provision of services, there should be specific rules aimed at extending the possibility of pursuing professional activities under the original professional title. In the case of information society services provided at a distance, the provisions of Directive 2000/31/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 8 June 2000 on certain legal aspects of information society services, in particular electronic commerce, in the Internal Market (4), should also apply.

For this purpose, regulated professions may establish a general system of recognition of qualifications :

> (11)
>
> In the case of the professions covered by the general system for the recognition of qualifications, hereinafter referred to as 'the general system', Member States should retain the right to lay down the minimum level of qualification required to ensure the quality of the services provided on their territory. However, pursuant to Articles 10, 39 and 43 of the Treaty, they should not require a national of a Member State to obtain qualifications, which they generally lay down only in terms of the diplomas awarded under their national educational system, where the person concerned has already obtained all or part of those qualifications in another Member State. As a result, it should be laid down that any host Member State in which a profession is regulated must take account of the qualifications obtained in another Member State and assess whether they correspond to those which it requires. The general system for recognition, however, does not prevent a Member State from making any person pursuing a profession on its territory subject to specific requirements due to the application of professional rules justified by the general public interest. Rules of this kind relate, for example, to organisation of the profession, professional standards, including those concerning ethics, and supervision and liability. Lastly, this Directive is not intended to interfere with Member States' legitimate interest in preventing any of their citizens from evading enforcement of the national law relating to professions.

The planning profession is a **regulated profession** in several member states. Therefore it may be considered relevant to the Directive. However, in many other member states, planners are not reglemented. Therefore, by today, no official work has been undertaken at the European level in order to establish a recognition of the qualification of Planner.

✓ The procedure for a possible recognition:

The European Community has no wish or competence to harmonise or standardise a profession. Its only concern is to see whether there are legal barriers, preventing people to work in other countries. As a result, a first thing to do if we want to engage in European harmonisation, is to prove that there are barriers between the countries hampering mobility. If this cannot be proved, the issue of professional recognition is not part of the competencies of the EU.

If such barriers exist, stakeholders (professional organisations of any kind, for example ECTP or AESOP) can come to the Commission with the proposal for a "common platform".

Such a common platform consists of two things:

- Minimum standards (core requirements): what should a planner have to be entitled to work as a planner in Europe. These minimum standards list items such as the minimum level of education, professional experience, etc.
- Compensatory measures: more demanding countries are allowed to ask more than the minimum standards. Compensatory measures list these additional competencies that a person coming from another country has to fulfil to work as a planner in such a country. This concerns things such as additional education, …

It is important to bear in mind that minimum standards and compensatory measures cannot be "made up". They have to be the actual pre-requisits in at least 2/3 of the member states (18 countries). There is no place to develop an "ideological", or even ideal, definition of what the planning profession should be. The approach is necessarily pragmatic and evidence-based. Therefore, our state of knowledge based on recent surveys of AESOP and ECTP is not sufficient and would have to be completed in order to elaborate such a platform.

In next stages, a proposal of a common platform has to be:

- Completed in cooperation with the European Commission (DG Internal market);
- Sent to all member states, where it is assessed by national experts (so if we engage into this procedure, it is strategic to be prepared to provide national experts).
- Negotiated by the European Commission and the member states.
- Formally approved through the EU decision making procedure (co-decision, involving a proposal by the Commission and a doubble approval of European Parlament and Council of Ministers).

The whole procedure takes circa three years.

When a common platform has been established, it becomes mandatory in all member states. This means that it has strong effects both on the profession and on the educational systems which have to take on board these concerns. As a comparison, it might be good to keep in mind that the Bologna statement was only a recommendation, and thus was not mandatory (yet was quite efficient in producing effects...).

ECTP is willing to engage these works towards a recognition of Planners at the European level and considers AESOP as a major partner for such a challenge.

✓ Should we go for it? Some reflections on pros and cons:

My personal opinion is that pros are much more numerous and significant than cons. Actually, there is only one “con” - meaning both “contra” and “condition”: taking this path does mean an important commitment and a real work. The pros are on two levels. The first is “lobbying”, in the sense of taking an active role in the recognition of the role of planners. The second is to deepen our own knowledge of European planning education (deepening works which already have been started in AESOP), in order to be able to promote planning education and role of planners.

On the “lobbying” side, this question has provided an opportunity to establish a very positive contact with the European Commission : let's not loose it. Although there is no urgent necessity to work towards a common platform, we must keep in mind that the process is open to all representative bodies. If we do not do it, others might do and AESOP would loose the initiative. Therefore, it seems appropriate to keep on track in order to “keep the lead”.

At the same time, the contact with the European Commission may provide us support in putting down the barriers planners experience in some countries – such as the reservation of some activities of our field to engineers, for instance in Italy or in several eastern European countries. As a matter of fact, it is necessary to work at the European level to overcome national barriers. The reason is that the European Union has no right to intervene in the definition of a profession for itself (this is a national competence). BUT, if the national frames create unjustified barriers hampering the mobility of professionals from one member state to another, the the European Commission is entitled to act, including to sue the case at the European court of Justice.

As an example, if a French planner who wants to work in Italy is refused because he is not an architect, that decision can be challenged in the European court. A positive decision of the court would then have the same consequences for Italian planners – and increase the value of our diplomas.

Engaging this process also leads to improve our knowledge of European regulations and of European planning education.

First, it is of interest to mention that the sketch of a common platform (combination of minimum standards and compensatory measures) is likely to fit the situation of planning practice and education in Europe, because it does leave sufficient place for the diversity of the profession, to which AESOP is attached. So the vehicle is a good one for taking further the work already done by AESOP.

The necessary complementary work that has to be done in order to elaborate a common platform would lead to develop an in-depth knowledge of professional accreditation rules in the member states and education systems (duration and contents of studies). This knowledge is necessary for a formal recognition of planners at the European level.

However, the same knowledge may also be used for other purposes:

- promoting our common values, for instance by setting an AESOP “label”. Today, new members are assessed according to AESOP's core requirements defined in 1995. The example of APERAU[11] shows that a label policy may have very strong positive impacts when carried on.
- providing us with a set of criteria (refreshing and getting further into details of the core requirements of 1995) if AESOP intends to take an active role in accreditation / assessment of planning programs (as RTPI does successfully in the UK).

To make a short conclusion, I would like to mention the example of the European Federation of National Engineering Associations (FEANI). This association went through the all the steps of elaborating a common platform. At the end of the process, a legal recognition did not appear useful. Instead, FEANI used the works done to create a strong label, of European dimension.

The Eur Ing title delivered by FEANI is designed as a guarantee of competence for professional engineers, in order :

[11] See the presentation of APERAU representative Didier Paris at the AESOP HoD meeting on 14-04-07 in Leuven.

- to facilitate the movement of practicing engineers within and outside the geographical area represented by FEANI's member countries and to establish a framework of mutual recognition of qualifications in order to enable engineers who wish to practice outside their own country to carry with them a guarantee of competence
- to provide information about the various education systems of individual engineers for the benefit of prospective employers
- to encourage the continuous improvement of the quality of engineers by setting, monitoring and reviewing standards

It would not have been possible to establish this label without the in-depth analysis realised when working towards European recognition. Although at the end of the process this formal recognition was not asked, the European Commission still quotes FEANI as an example of a strong methodological approach and good practice. Moreover, the European Commission has recognized the FEANI Register and the EUR ING title as valuable tools for the recognition of national diplomas among Member States (see below).

In my view, the time has come for planners to work for a European recognition and AESOP, together with professional bodies, are our very best tools for this.

Statement from the European Commission on FEANI

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3429/93 by Christian Rovsing (PPE) to the Commission (2 December 1993 - 94/C 268/72)

Question:

FEANI, The European Federation of National Engineering Associations has set up a 'Register of EUR ING' with the aim of facilitating free movement of engineers by means of mutual recognition of professional qualifications. The minimum requirements for admission to the register are:

- Full secondary education,

- Training extended over 7 years, including at least 3 years' theoretical education at university level in an establishment recognized by FEANI and two years of assessed engineering professional experience.

The requirements are thus higher than the requirements laid down in the general Directive. Applicants for registration must be recommended by their National Association and accepted by the European Monitoring Committee before obtaining the FEANI title EUR ING (European Engineer). More than 16.000 engineers have (October 1993) received the title EUR ING.

Does the Commission feel that this kind of initiative, the only one so far among the professions concerned in the general directive, may facilitate the free circulation of professionals in the EEC countries, and to what extent could the FEANI title facilitate the recognition of national diplomas among Member States?

Answer:

given by Mr. Vanni d'Archirafi on behalf of the Commission (10 march 1994)

The Commission has followed the work of the FEANI (The European Federation of European Engineering Associations) and in particular, its creation of the EUR ING register with great interest over the years. The Commission considers that the FEANI scheme is an excellent example of self-regulation by a profession at European level and it provides a model for othe r professional groups in the technical and scientific sector, such as chemists and physicists.

The FEANI register recognizes and builds upon the diversity of forms of engineering education, which exist in the Community and can adapt to any changes, which may be decided upon at national level. The procedures for dealing with applications for registration also provide a good respective expertise.

Although the EUR ING title cannot itself be considered as a 'diploma' within the meaning of Article 1(a) of Council Directive 89/48/EEC of 21 December 1988 on a general system for the recognition of higher education diplomas (1), it may nevertheless be of assistance to the competent national authorities when they examine a request for recognition under Article 3 of the Directive. Registration on the FEANI register indicates that, whatever the duration or content of his or her initial training, the engineer has reached a certain level of professional competence, certified by his or her peers both at national and European level. Bearing in mind that Member States are required by the caselaw of the Court (2) to take post -diploma professional experience (3) into consideration, when reaching their decision on recognition, the Commission considers that an engineer who has obtained the title of EUR INGs should not normally be required to undertake an adaptation period or sit an aptitude test, as provided for in Article 4 of Directive 89/48/EEC.

(1) OJ No. L 19 du 24. 1. 1989.

(2) Cf. Case C-340/89, Vlassopoulou (1989), ECR -I-2357.

(3) Cf. reply to Written Question No. 2790/93, Official Journal of the European Communities - Information and Notices -C 268 Volume 37 / No. C 268/38 / English edition

Planning Education

Quality Issues in a changing European Higher Education Area

Edited by Anna Geppert & Giancarlo Cotella

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Editorial: Quality Issues in a Consolidating European Higher Education Area

Anna Geppert[1] & Giancarlo Cotella[2]

On the 12th of March 2010, at their meeting of Budapest and Vienna, Ministers Responsible for Higher Education in the countries participating in the Bologna Process officially launched the European Higher Education Area as envisaged in the Bologna Declaration of 1999. During this decade, changes have been impressive. In ten years, the perimeter has enlarged from the 29 signatories of the Bologna Declaration up to 47 signatories in Vienna, all parties at the European Cultural Convention. This definition of Europe concurs with the perimeter of our Association, where Planning institutes from all countries belonging to the Council of Europe may apply for full membership. And defining a perimeter goes together with defining a vision, in this case the vision of a broader Europe.

At the same time, the Bologna Process has developed and produced important effects. From the start, the reform had three overarching objectives. Firstly, the introduction of the three-cycle system (bachelor/master/doctorate). By today, almost all European countries have adopted a three-cycle differentiation of their curricula, although there is still no consensus as to a single model in terms of duration of these cycles. In the field of Planning, the debate remains vivid, as have demonstrated the “Bologna surveys” of 2006 (Davoudi and Ellison, 2006) and 2009 (Ache and Jarenko, 2010).

The second objective, related to students and workers mobility, was the recognition of qualifications and periods of study. Here things appears to be more complex and, whereas instruments such as the ECTS and Diploma Supplement have widely spread on the continent, there is still a long way to go in terms of recognition of qualifications. In 2007, AESOP has dedicated it's 2nd Heads of Schools meeting (Leuven, Belgium – 2007) to the question of the European recognition of the Planning profession, and the first issue of Planning Education (Geppert and Verhage, 2008) echoed our works.

The third objective of the Bologna reform was the development of quality assurance in the field of Higher Education and Research. Again, also in this concern we are witnessing dramatic changes. Two models still co-exist. The first, more supervisory, where quality assessment goes together with the accreditation of higher education institutions or teaching programs. The second, more advisory, where quality assessment is more oriented towards improvement of programs, where accreditation procedures may exist but are not done by the same organisations. Frontiers between these models are moving. For example France, where quality assessment used to be embedded in the accreditation process, has established in 2007 an independent agency responsible for quality assessment of higher education and research (Agence d'Evaluation de la Recherche et de l'Enseignement Supérieur, AERES). As the previous two – and perhaps even more – this issue lies at the very heart of AESOP that, as stated in its motto, pursue the mission of ‘promoting excellence in planning education and research’.

In terms of procedures, methodology and criteria, Quality Assessment is undergoing radical transformation. In this context, the Planning field is sometimes challenged, due to its interdisciplinarity and to the structure of Planning Institutes themselves, characterized by a relatively small size and a strong and tight relation between education and practice. These questions have been the topic of the AESOP 3rd Heads of Schools meeting (Łódź, Poland – 2008) dedicated to Quality Assessment, and of the AESOP 4th Heads of Schools meeting (Lille, France – 2009) which brought new developments into this field and linked it to the question of the identity of the Planning discipline.

The present issue of Planning Education builds on the results of these two meetings, providing the reader with a restitution of the main issue that were at stake, complemented by a series of interesting insights. Altogether, it illustrates the state of the art of the debate around Quality Issues in relation to planning education in Europe, as it has evolved within the AESOP environment in the last years. At the same time, it introduces the role AESOP intends to play in this concern within the future consolidation of the European Higher Education Area. The publication is organized in three sections. Section 1, “The Evolving Landscape for European Planning Schools”, provides the context for the following discussion, through the presentation of a report from the “Second Bologna Survey” about the adaptation of the planning education field to the Bologna process, by Peter Ache and Karoliina Jarenko. Section 2, “Planning between Interdisciplinarity, Sovereignty and Loss of Identity”, examines the position of our discipline in the academic field. Simin Davoudi shows how interdisciplinarity may be our strength, while domestic examples are provided by Didier Paris (France) and Izabela Mironowicz (Central-Eastern Europe). Giancarlo Cotella reports from the workshop held in Łódź about the situation of Central-European Schools. Section 3, “The Role of AESOP in the Promotion of Quality in Planning Education”, presents the evolution of the Association's policy. The establishment of an AESOP Quality insurance policy, presented by Willem Salet and Maros Finka, is documented by the reports of the workshops in Łódź (Anna Geppert) and in Lille (Giancarlo Cotella) where these elements have been discussed extensively in participatory workshops. The question of developing further AESOP's vision of Quality in Planning Education included in our 1995 Core curriculum, in particular with respect to the three-cycle differentiation, is then analysed by Roelof Verhage, and supported by a workshop report jointly produced with Beata Banachowicz. Finally, Anna Geppert analyses the Dublin descriptors of academic quality, that were also debated in Lille, as reported by Andrea Frank.

Planning Education itself is in the process of improving its quality. Papers gathered in Planning Education 1 have been collected with the humble design of providing our community with a trace of our exchanges and debates, justified by the importance of the questions at stake. Its audience widely surpassed our expectations – since it has been made available on our website, in autumn 2008, the electronic version of Planning Education 1 has been downloaded over 2000 times. From then, convinced that a journal dedicated to Educational questions is of interest to the community, we worked hard intending to improve its editorial quality. For the current issue, the editorial work has been accomplished by Giancarlo Cotella, responsible for this edition. Following the 5th Heads of School Meetings (Istanbul, Turkey – April 2010), Planning Education 3 will focus on “Planning Education and Practice”. However, the 5th Heads of Schools meeting will not be the solely source of contributions. An open call for papers and a peer-review process will be launched in order to further improve the quality of our publication.

May Planning Education 2 be interesting and useful to the reader!

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The Adaptation of European Planning Schools to the Bologna Process

Peter Ache & Karoliina Jarenko [3]

AESOP realized a survey mapping the experiences member schools had had with the implementation of the Bologna Process in 2006. The following year, results were discussed at Leuven's Heads of Schools Seminar and a report published on AESOP website. The survey was conducted by the former president of the association, Professor Simin Davoudi from the University of Newcastle. An update of this survey was conducted in the beginning of 2008. The survey was kept relatively similar for comparison. Some minor changes were made, mainly related to the format: the first survey was conducted as a paper questionnaire and the update via internet using "w-poll" software. Some questions were formulated slightly differently in order to make use of the software's analysis tools.

Later on in the year the survey was sent out again, this time combined with a short questionnaire tracking course supply and focus of substance in planning schools for the UN-HABITAT 2009 Global Report in Human Settlements. The second round attempted to increase the sample for mutual benefit. Contact information of addressees was gathered from the AESOP members' and UN-Habitat schools' database. Respondents were encouraged to participate even though they had already responded in the beginning of the year. In this case they were asked to only answer the questions added on UN-Habitat's request.

This report presents results of both surveys realized in 2008 and compares them briefly with the first survey of 2006. Format of presentation has been adapted from the report of 2006 to some extent: respondents are listed at the end and results presented at school level. This was also requested for by a respondent of the first round of 2008. The surveys realized in 2008 including the report at hand were conducted by former president of AESOP, Professor Peter Ache and Karoliina Jarenko, who has drafted the main elements of this report. The work has been financially supported by AESOP.

Summary

This report maps the development of the Bologna Process in AESOP member schools until the year 2008. It simultaneously enhances the commensurability of European education through distributing information to institutions providing planning education.

All apart from one of the respondent schools had adopted the two-respectively three-cycle system and 75% used ECTS. Most commonly in use was a 3+2+3 cycle format. Advantages of the new system seem clearer to respondents than two years ago, when the first Bologna Survey was conducted. Many responses now describe challenges of the adoption with a note to the temporality of them: difficulties mainly relate to the transition itself and to the unfamiliarity of the new degree. Full stability requires adoption from the part of national accreditation practices and labour markets, making the process slow. The peak in stress to schools, teaching staff and students, however, ought to be behind now that curricula have been restructured and new courses running.

A widely reported advantage of the process had been the need to rethink curricula. Restructure had resulted in clarity, logicality and often also a wider repertoire of courses for students to choose from. A direct result of the Bologna Process itself had been the internationalization of curricula. This had had various positive effects such as the increased mobility of students and staff, ability to use highest international benchmarks in further development of education, better selection of (master) students and indeed also increase in the national status of planning education. The process had in some cases also resulted in the development of quality assessment systems altogether and linking the state's financial support to performance.

The negative effect that bothered respondents most was the removal of the national/cultural dimension from education. This weakness was seen crucial for the very practically oriented planning education. Other negative effects mentioned were the shorter cycles resulting in immaturity and un-readiness for work-life of students and higher fragmentation in learning competencies. The latter is especially the case for master students, who now often have different backgrounds (scientific but cultural, too). Shorter cycles, on the other hand, had increased the attractiveness of university studies. In the same spirit it was noted, that the BSc degree had brought an academic degree available to larger population.

A central question in the process has been the distinct natures the bachelor and the master degrees will have. Respondents of this survey described requirements for bachelors in the following way: basic learning, elementary skills, understanding simple realities, analytical orientation, ability to system decomposition, understanding of the planning systems, basic methods and instruments, a generic capacity of sharing a working prompt experience, preparedness to work as a team member, capability to identification of problems and management of simple planning processes. Masters should fulfil the following expectations: specialized learning, high skills, understanding complex realities, more creative planning orientation, synthetic and creative thinking, a specific capacity of leading a working group activity, preparedness to work as a highly qualified professional with specializations and of whom coordination and creativity is expected of, ability to manage planning processes and to develop methods and instruments, research orientation.

Outlooks on the employability of masters were very good, but concern for bachelors was widely reported. The national labour market situation effected outlooks greatly: where the need for planners was urgent, professional bodies and employers were more willing to accept "lower professionals" as competent planners. Other issues that concerned respondents were continuous change causing stress to staff and students and disability to concentrate on research, the ever-increasing budget constraints in universities and the lack of support from national professional bodies influencing national restrictions of education, that might nullify the advantages of the new system.

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Responses to the surveys

An invitation to take the first round of the survey was sent to 68 persons via e-mail in February 2008. Twenty (20) responses were received during a month's period making the response rate slightly below 30%. The invitation for the second round was sent to 177 persons in August 2008. 45 of these had received the invitation to participate on the first round. 25 schools left a response making the rate 14%. Five schools and persons provided answers for the new part and also added to their previous responses: Karel Maier from the Czech Technical University in Prague (Czech Republic), Massimo Bricocoli from the Polytechnic of Milan (Italy), Umberto Janin Rivolin from the Polytechnic of Turin (Italy), Dejan Djordjevic from the University of Belgrad (Serbia), and Göran Cars from the Royal Institute of Technology (Sweden). We thank these persons for the extra effort. In case responses of the second round differed from those of the first round, the more recent response was taken into account. Mostly responses simply gave more information providing a more thorough picture of the situation.

After two rounds responses were gathered from 40 schools in total. About a third (16) of the schools had participated in the study of 2006. These responses are marked with grey shading in the first tables. The number of AESOP member schools varies largely from country to country. Thus responses represent a different portion of the country's situation.

Table 1 : Schools respondent to the first round of Survey.

Country	Number of AESOP members in country	Name of university/City	Name of unit, department or school	Annual no. of UG students	Annual no. of PG students	Annual no. of PhD students	Staff (FTE) teaching	Student/ staff ratio
Belgium	3	Ghent University	Centre for Mobility and Spatial Planning	0	20	3	5	4,60
Bulgaria	1	Univ. of Architecture Civil Engineering and Geodesy Sofia	Urban Planning Dep.	30	16	4	28	1,79
Czech Republic	3	Czech Tech. University / Prague	Fac. of Architecture	No response				
Denmark	2	Aalborg University	Dep. of Development and Planning, and Dep. of Architecture and Design	15	85	approx 15 plus external PhD students	55	2,09
Greece	3	Univ. of Thessaly / Volos	Dep. of Planning and Regional Development	No response				
Italy	15	Politecnico di Milano	Facoltà di Architettura e Società	100	100	12	56	3,79
		Polytech. of Turin	School of Architecture 1	500	100	15	8	76,88
The Netherlands	11	Utrecht University	Dep. of Human Geography and Planning, Fac. of Geosciences	60	45	7	6	18,67
		Wageningen University	land use planning chair group	50	25	2	4,75	16,21
Poland	7	Cracow University of Economics	Chair of Regional Sciences	80	80		20	8,00
Romania	2	Univ. of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest	Town Planning School	90	60	6	70	2,23
Serbia	1	Univ. of Belgrade	Fac. of Geography/Dep. of Spatial Planning	60	10		30	2,33
Slovakia	1	Slovak Univ. of Technology / Bratislava	Institute of Management	90	40	15		
Sweden	7	Royal Institute of Technology / Stockholm	Urban Planning & the Environment	60	50	35	60	2,42
		Swedish Univ. of Agricultural Sciences / Uppsala	Unit of Landscape Architecture, Dep. of Urban and Rural Development	100	20	5	5	25,00
Switzerland	2	Univ. of Applied Sciences Rapperswil	Dep. of Spatial Planning	30	10	0	12	3,33
Turkey	7	Yildiz Tech. University / Istanbul	Dep. of City and Regional Planning	370	50	20	36	12,22
		Middle East Tech. University / Ankara	Dep. of City and Regional Planning	No response				
United Kingdom	27	Heriot Watt / Edinburgh	School of Built Environment	50	80	3	12	11,08
		Heriot-Watt University / Edinburgh						

Source: Authors'own elaboration

Table 2 : Schools respondent to the second round of Survey.

Country	Number of AESOP members in country	Name of university/City	Name of unit, department or school	Annual no. of UG students	Annual no. of PG studens	Annual no. of PhD students	Staff (FTE) of teaching	Student/ Staff ratio
Austria	4	Vienna Univ. of Eco. and Business Administration	Inst. of Regional and Environmental Economy	0	40	10	6	8,33
Czech Republic	3	Brno Univ. of Technology	Fac. of Architecture	90	80	20	15	12,67
		Czech Technical Univ. in Prague	Inst. of Spatial Planning, Fac. of Architecture	300	250	47	10,1	59,11
Denmark	2	Aarhus School of Architecture	Dep. of landscape and urbanism	83	43	3	10	12,90
Germany	15	Technische Universität Dortmund	School of Spatial Planning	160	20	50	55	4,18
		Univ. of Kassel	School of Architecture, Urban Planning & Landscape Planning	700	130	63	50	17,86
		Technische Universität Berlin	Institut für Stadt- und Regionalplanung	50	40	10	17	5,88
Italy	15	Univ. of Napoli "Federico II"	Dept. of Urban Design and Planning	700	60	6	26	29,46
		Univ. Iuav of Venice	Fac. of Planning	60	40	10	32	3,44
		Politecnico di Torino	Dipartimento Interateneo Territorio	500	100	15	8	76,88
		Politecnico di Milano	Dip. di Architettura e Pianificazione	300	170	42	80	6,40
The Netherlands	11	Delft Univ. of Technology	Fac. of Architecture		60-70		65	1,00
		International Inst. for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation/Ensched	Dep. of Urban and Regional Planning and Geo-information Management		40	20	10	6,00
Norway	7	Univ. of Tromsø	Dept. of Planning and Community Studies	25	25	15	8	8,13
Poland	7	Wrocław Univ. of Technology	Fac. of Architecture	45	70	4	60	1,98
		Adam Mickiewicz Univ./ Poznań	Inst. of socio-economic geography and sp. management	180	120	7	75	4,09
Portugal	8	Univ. of the Azores/Angra do Heroísmo	Agriculture and Environment Department	100	15	5	5	24,00
Serbia	1	Univ. of Belgrade	Fac. of Geography Dep. for Sp. Planning	200	20		14	15,71
Sweden	7	Royal Inst. of Technology/Stockholm	Urban Planning & the Enviroment	20	40	48	13	8,31
		Luleå Univ. of Technology	Dep. of Civil, Mining and Env. Engineering	12	2	2	4	4,00
United Kingdom	27	Univ. of Liverpool	Civic Design	35	40	5	9,5	8,42
		Univ. of Westminster/London	Dep. of Urban Development and Regeneration		90	6	7,5	12,80
		Univ. of Cambridge	Dep. of Land Economy	60	100	60	30	7,33
		Univ. of Glasgow	Urban Studies		20-30	3to6	9	3,28
		Univ. of Reading	Centre for Planning studies, School of Real Estate & Planning	40	45	3	10	8,80

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Figure 2 : Compositions of cycles in respondent schools.

4+1	***3+2***
Technische Universität Dortmund, Germany	Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration, Austria
University of Liverpool, U.K	Czech Technical University in Prague, the Czech Republic
University of Glasgow, U.K	Aalborg University, Denmark
Heriot-Watt University, U.K	Polytechnic of Milan, Italy
Brno University of Technology, Czech Republic	Polytechnic of Turin, Italy
University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest, Romania	University of Napoli "Federico II", Italy
Yildiz Technical University,Turkey	University Iuav of Venice, Italy
Middle East Technical University, Turkey (4+2; 3)	Delft University of Technology, TheNetherlands
University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy, Bulgaria (4+1,5)	Wageningen University, The Netherlands
	University of Tromso, Norway
3+1	Cracow University of Economics, Poland
University of Kassel, Germany	University of the Azores, Portugal
University of Reading, U.K.	University of Belgrad, Serbia
Utrecht University, the Netherlands	Slovak University of Technology, Slovakia
University of Applied Sciences Rapperswil, Switzerland (3+1,5)	Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden
	Swedish Univ. of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden
	Wrocław University of Technology, Poland (3,5+2)

Source: Authors'own elaboration

The duration of PhD studies, which was not inquired of in 2006, varied mostly between three and four years in schools. In terms of PhD programmes, the majority of schools (19 of 29) offer a cycle of 3 years in addition to the Master programmes.

3 years PhD (19)

University of Architecture Civil Engineering and Geodesy Sofia, Bulgaria
Brno University of Technology, Czech Republic
Czech Technical University in Prague, Czech Republic
Aalborg University, Denmark
Aarhus School of Architecture, Denmark
Polytechnic of Milan, Italy
Polytechnic of Turin, Italy
University of Napoli "Federico II", Italy
University Iuav of Venice, Italy
University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest, Romania
University of Belgrade, Serbia
Slovak University of Technology, Slovakia
Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden
Yildiz Technical University, Turkey
Heriot-Watt University, United Kingdom
University of Reading, United Kingdom
University of Glasgow, United Kingdom (3 or 4)
University of the Azores, Portugal (3+)
Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration, Austria (3+)

Respondent schools are remarkably different in size. The University of Luleå (Sweden) educates 16 new students yearly while the University of Kassel (Germany) has an 893-student intake. Also the number of students in each cycle varies widely. Some schools educate most students up to the master level while some schools have a large number of undergraduate students of whom only a small portion continues with master studies. The case was the same with PhD students: in some schools there are only very few doctoral students, but in some the amount was almost the same as at master level. The University of Applied Sciences in Rapperswil (Switzerland), the International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation (the Netherlands) and the Cracow University of Economics (Poland) do not provide doctoral studies at all. The Ghent University (Belgium) reported no undergraduate students at all.

The number of full-time teaching staff is likewise variant. The Polytechnic of Milan (Italy) employs 56 persons while Luleå only has 4 persons working full-time. More enlightening is the student/staff ratio: how many students are there per teaching staff member. The median in respondent schools was 8, but variation wide: staff members of the Polytechnic of Turin (Italy) handle 77 students while the TU Delft (the Netherlands) has a ratio of exactly one. Also the Wroclaw University of Technology (Poland) and the University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy in Sofia (Bulgaria) have a ratio of below 2. Given the still quite low response rates, all following figures and statements have to be seen as indications only. However, they provide another stepping stone towards a better understanding of the current situation of the Bologna process within AESOP.

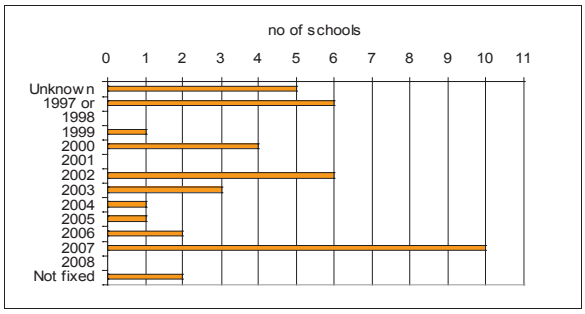
The two respectively three degree cycle system

Adoption of the new system

All but one respondent school had adopted the new system. The University of Liverpool in U.K. had not fixed the date of adoption. The Middle East Technical University in Ankara (Turkey) had not adopted the new system for the part of the city and regional planning department, but the rest of the school had made the transition already in 1962 (report of 2006). For most of the respondents, the adoption had taken place in the beginning of the millennium or before. Another peak had been in the year 2007, when 10 schools had adopted the new system. Almost all the schools of the latter peak participated in the second round of the survey.

In 2006 about four fifths of the respondent schools had adopted the new system and a fifth indicated they were on track to adopt by 2006/2007. Although the schools that participated in these surveys are not exactly the same, is seems this trend has been realized.

Figure 1 : Adoption of the new system in AESOP member schools.



Source: Authors'own elaboration.

The composition of the cycles

Most commonly (25/40) the undergraduate cycle takes 3 years and the postgraduate cycle 2 years. In some schools the undergraduate cycle lasts 4 years and in some schools the master education is pulled through in only 1 year. A more intensive master education was, however, not systematically combined with a longer undergraduate cycle: 4+2 and 3+1 cycle-formats were also in use. The 3+2 format was most common in the survey of 2006, too. It was then noted, that the 4+2 format was popular in Eastern Europe; this seems to remain the case. The Heriot-Watt University in the U.K. has apparently changed from 3+1 to 4+1 format between the two surveys.

4 years PhD (9)
Ghent University, Belgium
Utrecht University, The Netherlands
Wageningen University, The Netherlands
Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands
International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation, The Netherlands
University of Tromsø, Norway
Wrocław University of Technology, Poland
Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden

6 years PhD
Middle East Technical University, Turkey

Key changes in the structure of the curriculum as result of the Bologna Process

Out of the 36 schools that provided information for this question, 17 had restructured the planning curriculum as result of the Bologna Process. Most changes had been taken as positive.

The modular organization of the curriculum was considered more logical (the University of Agricultural Sciences (Sweden), the University of Kassel (Germany), the Technische Universität Berlin (Germany)) and giving students a more integrated comprehension on specific problems and themes (the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest (Romania), the Polytechnic of Milan (Italy), the Utrecht University (the Netherlands), the University of Napoli "Federico II" (Italy)). The bachelor studies are now more pragmatically oriented whereas master studies develop especially capabilities in research (the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest (Romania), the Utrecht University (the Netherlands), the Aarhus School of Architecture (Denmark), the Polytechnic of Milan (Italy), the Wrocław University of Technology (Poland)). Master studies have made it possible for students to individualize their curriculum through optional courses and the thesis (the Ghent University (Belgium), the Polytechnic of Milan (Italy), the University of architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest (Romania), the Technische Universität Dortmund (Germany)). In some schools, master studies are now offered in English language (the Ghent University (Belgium), the Polytechnic of Milan (Italy), the University Iuav of Venice (Italy)).

As negative effects of the process, restructuring of the modules according to international exemplars has removed the national/cultural dimension from the education (the Wageningen University (the Netherlands)), but in some schools the new international aspect was seen as “opening windows” both cognitively and in terms of working possibilities in Europe (the University Iuav of Venice (Italy), the Polytechnic of Milan (Italy)).

Changes noted in 2006 were very similar to those presented above. Respondents of 2006 had also brought up the new status of the planning degree as separate of that of architecture in this connection. This had resulted in national reforms of professional bodies in some countries. This will be discussed later on. It seems, that complaints on neutralizing the cultural aspect of planning education as result of the internationalization of the curriculum have grown stronger since the first survey of 2006. This may be due to several factors. Respondents have in fact more experience on the new system and its outcomes, but also may be noted, that cultural issues have become more and more popular in all societal spheres resulting in a stronger focus on them.

Challenges of the adoption

By far the most often mentioned practical problem in the adoption of the new system had been the reorganizing of courses from new basis and with new objectives (the Polytechnic of Milan (Italy), the Utrecht University (the Netherlands), the Cracow University of Economics (Poland), the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest (Romania), the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (Sweden), the Aarhus School of Architecture (Denmark), the Technische Universität Dortmund (Germany), the University of Kassel (Germany), the Technische Universität Berlin (Germany), the Delft University of Technology (the Netherlands), the Wrocław University of Technology (Poland)). Most named the organizing it self, especially the concern for finding balance between the cycles, courses and modules and not treating students in transition in an unfair way. Some also brought up weaknesses in the way the organizing had been realized.

Most other challenges named were in tight connection with this. Switching the language had been difficult in practical terms (the Wageningen University (the Netherlands), the Delft University of Technology (the Netherlands)), as had been accompanying students along the change (the Polytechnic of Milan (Italy), the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (Sweden)). The incompatibility of modules between universities during the transition period had produced barriers for students to go abroad (the Technische Universität Berlin (Germany)). The shortage of staff (the Ghent University (Belgium), the University of Kassel (Germany)) and problems with school administration (the University of Architecture Civil Engineering and Geodesy Sofia (Bulgaria), the Technische Universität Berlin (Germany)), let alone the opposition among staff and professionals (the Wrocław University of Technology (Poland)) had also put strain on those responsible for the realization in schools. Some had also had problems in getting professional associations acknowledge the new system (the Polytechnic of Turin (Italy)) or in introducing a new state exam at the baccalaureate stage all together (the Czech Technical University in Prague (the Czech Republic)). Troublesome had also been recruiting students to the BSc degree (the University of Tromsø (Norway)).

Most (21/30) thought that these problems are not been specific to the planning degree. Those who did often referred to the status of the planning profession and the tension between the planning and architecture degrees of which the latter one is held more prestigious (the University of Architecture Civil Engineering and Geodesy Sofia (Bulgaria), the Polytechnic of Turin (Italy), the University of Napoli "Federico II" (Italy)). The practical nature of the planning degree was seen a challenge also when there was no tension between the two professions/degrees (the Technische Universität Dortmund (Germany)). For example, very young people rarely see themselves as planners making recruitment for the UG degree difficult (the University of Tromsø (Norway)). A very practically oriented degree also has more pressure to continuous change according to the requirements of the professional world (the Utrecht University (the Netherlands). The practical orientation has also led curricula to be more nationally oriented making the international aspect more difficult to integrate (the Wageningen University (the Netherlands), the Middle East Technical University (Turkey), the Aalborg University (Denmark), the Technische Universität Berlin (Germany), the University of Napoli "Federico II" (Italy)).

The most often mentioned challenge in the adoption of the Bologna Process that was specific to the planning degree was the multidisciplinarity. This was especially the case at the Master level, where students after the Bologna Process often have different backgrounds (the Ghent University (Belgium), the Polytechnic of Turin (Italy), the University of Tromsø (Norway), the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest (Romania)). Language issues were seen more from the dark side when teachers had been used to using national cases (written in original language) in problem based learning and could not do so anymore (the Aalborg University (Denmark)). The positive side of the English language was also brought up in terms of new possibilities in development projects and partnerships worldwide (the Polytechnic of Milan (Italy), the Royal Institute of Technology (Sweden)).

Often mentioned were also more practical issues relating to the transition: implementing the new Master degree and running the courses that need to be suitable for both old and new students (the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (Sweden)) and especially when there were no Bachelor students from one's own faculty (the Aarhus School of Architecture (Denmark)), gaining acceptance of the new degree by professionals (the Technische Universität Berlin (Germany), the University of Napoli "Federico II" (Italy), the Adam Mickiewicz University (Poland), the University of Architecture Civil Engineering and Geodesy Sofia (Bulgaria)) and by students and staff (the Aarhus School of Architecture (Denmark), the Adam Mickiewicz University (Poland), the Polytechnic of Turin (Italy), the Wageningen University (the Netherlands) and the University of Belgrade (Serbia)).

All these challenges were identified also in 2006. Back then a slight majority considered the problems to be planning specific. Problems caused by multidisciplinarity and the wide scope of planning studies was on the agenda then, too.

Advantages of the new system

To the quality of planning education

Advantages to the quality of education were seen especially in the comparability of courses between countries that then had resulted in improving courses according to highest international benchmarks (the University of Architecture Civil Engineering and Geodesy Sofia (Bulgaria), the Wageningen University (the Netherlands), the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest (Romania), the Royal Institute of Technology (Sweden), and the Middle East Technical University (Turkey)).

The structure of the degree had resulted in a broader selection of planning courses that 1) open perspectives to deepen students' insight in planning (the Ghent University (Belgium)), 2) allow specializations (the Adam Mickiewicz University (Poland), the University Iuav of Venice (Italy), the Polytechnic of Milan (Italy), the Cracow University of Economics (Poland), the Yildiz Technical University (Turkey)), 3) allow international exchange (the Polytechnic of Milan (Italy), the Slovak University of Technology (Slovakia), the Royal Institute of Technology (Sweden), the Delft University of Technology (the Netherlands)) and 4) provide flexibility in general (the Utrecht University (the Netherlands), the Cracow University of Economics (Poland)). The multidisciplinarity of MSc students was also seen as having improved the education (the Polytechnic of Milan (Italy), the Slovak University of Technology (Slovakia), the Royal Institute of Technology (Sweden)). The improvement in education and the better structure with its positive effects had then resulted in a better selection of students (the University of Architecture Civil Engineering and Geodesy Sofia (Bulgaria), the Heriot-Watt University (the U.K.), the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration (Austria)). Pleased respondents were also for the better structured and articulated curriculum (the Aarhus School of Architecture (Denmark), the Polytechnic of Milan (Italy), the Slovak University of Technology (Slovakia), the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (Sweden), the University of Reading (the U.K.)).

The respondent of the University of Cambridge brought up the effects of the Bologna Process to the acknowledgement of the planning profession in Europe regarding both European (and national) characteristics and improving the status of the profession.

Issues noted in 2006 reflect those presented above. A couple of differences may be stated. Firstly, the improvement in the selection of students as result of a more attractive curriculum was not mentioned in 2006. Secondly, in 2006 several brought up a more practical orientation of teaching. In the follow-up, education is mentioned to provide more flexibility and possibilities for specialization.

To the acceptance of the new BSc/MSc qualifications (in social and cultural terms)

As advantages of the new system respondents mentioned the general acknowledgement of a master degree (the Ghent University (Belgium), the Polytechnic of Turin (Italy), the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest (Romania), the University of Napoli "Federico II" (Italy)) - also internationally (the Polytechnic of Milan (Italy), the Wageningen University (the Netherlands)).

The two-cycle structure had brought several advantages. First was the clarity of different levels in general (the Aarhus School of Architecture (Denmark)). The two degree levels was seen a way to bring an academic degree (BSc) accessible to a wider population (the Wroclaw University of Technology (Poland)). In the U.K., where the master level is commonly 1 year long in respondent schools, the intensity has cut down the cost of education making the MSc degree more attractive to students from different socio-economic backgrounds (the Heriot-Watt University (the U.K.)). The bachelor degree has made graduation easier for weaker students – on the other hand some pitied loosing good students after the first cycle (the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (Sweden)). The second cycle of the system was also seen as a possibility to offer supplementary education to professionals (the Yildiz Technical University (Turkey)).

The Bologna Process was used as an opportunity to rethink and restructure both the education and the practice systems in Romania. Thus it played for the advantage of the acceptance of the new qualifications but also eased out the employability of new graduates (the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest (Romania)).

Respondents of 2006 made frequent note of the fact that the BSc degree has not been fully accepted and students tend to continue with the MSc also when not necessary in light of their future aims. This aspect was not brought up in 2008 under this question, but is, however, present elsewhere in the responses (see e.g. next section on employability). The point of view concerns students that are aiming for an academic degree irrespective of the duration. A new observation is the effect the two cycle system has had on the overall popularity of education: the more intense cycles and the BSc degree have made it possible to new socio-economic groups to pursue an academic degree at all.

To the employability of new BSc or MSc graduates

Not many had experience on the employability yet. Outlooks were very good especially for the MSc graduates. Some concern for the acceptance of BSc's was expressed (the Polytechnic of Turin (Italy), the Wageningen University (the Netherlands), the Cracow University of Economics (Poland), the Czech Technical University in Prague (Czech Republic), the University Iuav of Venice (Italy). The new system is

expected to produce a reconfiguration of the labor market (the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest (Romania). The national labor-market situation effected outlooks remarkably. In Sweden, where there is great demand for planners, the schools were more worried about attracting students to stay for the second cycle (the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences). Schools in the U.K. with the history of changing the duration of the second cycle from 2 to 1 year had found no problems in the acceptance of the new shorter MSc (Heriot-Watt University, University of Liverpool). The labour demand had a positive effect on this, too (University of Liverpool). Outlooks for the BSc in the U.K. were also good because of the current demand in mid-level professionals in industry (University of Cambridge). The international job market had opened up for MSc's in some countries as result of the new system (University Iuav of Venice, the Polytechnic of Milan (Italy), the Delft University of Technology, the University of Reading).

The national labour-market situation effected responses respectively in 2006. Sweden gathered then, that BSc students might find employment as trainees whereas in 2008 respondents believed employment would be found as full professionals. The situation in Romania seems to have changed too: two years ago it was presumed, that harsh competition would result in students requiring the MSc degree anyway whereas in 2008 a restructure of the labor market was in sight. Outlooks for MSc students were not inquired in 2006.

Other issues of concern

Other advantages of the new system mentioned were more on the negative side. The Wageningen University in the Netherlands was concerned that continuous change in the curriculum would begin to undermine the degree. Another concern was the ever-increasing budget constraints in universities (the Utrecht University (the Netherlands)).

Disadvantages of the new system

To the quality of planning education

Students in Belgium used to have to have a full master degree before entering the planning program. Changing into a normal master program has decreased the maturity of students (the Ghent University). In Turkey, changing the bachelor cycle from four to three years was seen in the same way: students would not be mature enough for the Master level (the Yildiz Technical University). Concern for BSc's not being capable to fulfil the requirements of the job was expressed in Germany (the Technische Universität Dortmund). The two years for the master studies was considered very short for teaching students all needed skills (the Delft University of Technology (the Netherlands)). Language issues were also brought up in this connection: not being able to use cases written in other language than English was considered to lower the quality of education – at least in providing understanding of national/cultural characteristic of the profession (the Aalborg University).

Concerns were also expressed for the master courses becoming too specific (the Polytechnic of Turin (Italy)) and for higher fragmentation in learning competencies (the University Iuav of Venice (Italy)). On the other hand, decrease in freedom (the Polytechnic of Milan (Italy), the Adam Mickiewicz University (Poland)) and the system forcing students on certain 'tracks' (the Utrecht University (the Netherlands)) were also brought up. A challenge of fairness and comparability was to find suitable requirements for knowledge for external students (the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences). These concerns were brought up by the previous survey as well. Especially challenging was mentioned the challenge to find a balance between academic and professional aims of the MSc education.

To the acceptance of the new BSc or MSc qualifications

Almost all respondents expressed concern for the acceptance of the new qualifications, but none saw it as a lasting phenomenon. It was the unfamiliarity of the new degrees that caused trouble and this would be taken care of in time. This result is very encouraging, as in 2006 the acceptance of the first cycle degree was considered much more problematic. It seems indeed, that the two cycle system is beginning to stabilize itself in different countries and along with it the advantages the new system are becoming more apparent.

To the employability of new BSc or MSc graduates

Respondents from almost all countries are expecting a period of difficulties in employment for the new BSc graduates (the Polytechnic of Turin (Italy), the Wageningen University (the Netherlands), the Cracow University of Economics (Poland), the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, the Yildiz Technical University (Turkey), the University of Reading (the U.K.), the Aalborg University (Denmark), the University Iuav of Venice (Italy)). A respondent from the U.K., where the master studies had changed from a two year long to a one year long degree, expected employers to accept the new graduates fairly well, especially if

provided with suitable work experience (the Heriot-Watt University). As noted above, it is very encouraging that respondents now conceive the nature of the situation as temporary. Difficulties relate to the unfamiliarity of the new system and will dissolve as national institutions adapt to it.

Other issues of concern

As advantages of the two-cycle system have become widely identified, respondents were concerned that they might be nullified through national restrictions. For example, the national legislation limits Master level education possibilities of students from different fields and working possibilities of staff from different backgrounds in Bulgaria (the University of Architecture Civil Engineering and Geodesy Sofia). In Romania the professional bodies want to lay down the rules and play a too big a role in the restructuring of the planning education (the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest).

European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)

25 out of 33 (75%) respondent schools had adopted the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). Two years earlier a half of the respondent schools had adopted ECTS and 15% were soon to adopt. The European credit system seems to become the standard fairly quickly. An exception to this is the United Kingdom that uses the CAPs scheme and seems to be satisfied with it. The CAPs system is, however, not very different from the ECTS.

The key issue that obviously had needed to be addressed was comparability with the old system (the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration (Austria), the Aarhus School of Architecture (Denmark), the Technische Universität Dortmund (Germany), the Yildiz Technical University (Turkey)). One agenda had also been gaining acceptance and understanding from partner institutes that had not adopted the new credit system (the International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation (the Netherlands), the Polytechnic of Turin (Italy)), from other degrees in one's own institutes outside the new system (the University of the Azores (Portugal)), and explaining new educational profiles to employers (the University of Belgrade (Serbia)). The workload to teachers and staff had worried some (the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences). There had also been incomparability with ECTS and the old system resulting in exchange students having to take a high number of courses per semester in order to meet the 30 ECTS requirement (the Yildiz Technical University (Turkey)). Worth mentioning is also a note made in the survey of 2006 by the Université Pierre Mendés-France: standardized credits will not eliminate the possibility of differences in the individual validation of courses by schools.

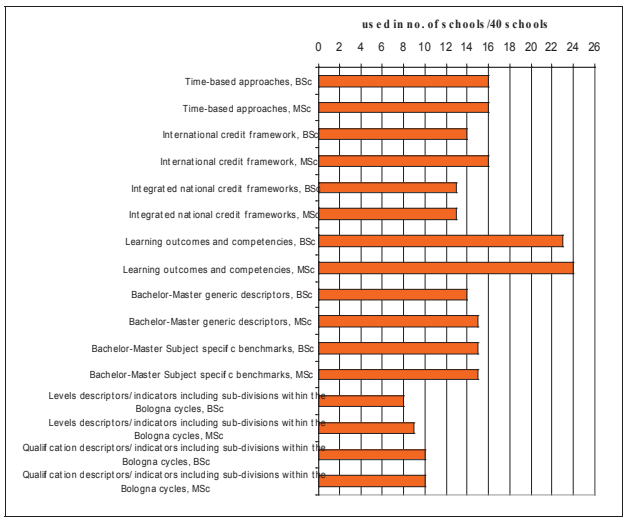
In general, the adoption seemed not to have produced very much trouble (the International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation (the Netherlands), the Polytechnic of Milan (Italy), the Slovak University of Technology (Slovakia)). Some of the respondent institutes had in fact had a fairly similar system before making the transition smoother (the Aalborg University (Denmark), the Wageningen University (the Netherlands).

Degree qualification structures

One of the central questions in the adoption of the new system has been the distinction between the BSc and the MSc education. Some differences have already been brought up in the previous pages. Although the Bologna Process aims for commensurable education in Europe, the examination of qualifications reveals a wide variety of approaches to the distinction between the two degrees. National conventions in the accreditation of professionals play a key-role in defining aims for the degrees. It does seem, however, that approaches in different countries are slowly becoming more similar. Responses given in 2006 are more diverse and also seem to concentrate more on technical issues such as subjects addressed in education. Responses given in 2008 offer more mature insights on the distinct natures of the two degrees. The next section presents these views through the topics of required learning outcomes, professional qualifications and the accreditation of professionals. First are presented methods of classification.

The most popular methods of classification were learning outcomes and competencies, time-based approaches, subject specific benchmarks, generic descriptors and the international credit framework. Subject specific benchmarks were not as popular in 2006 but otherwise the list remained the same in the two surveys. Least in use were levels descriptors and indicators. There is no remarkable difference between the classifications of the two degrees. A larger number of methods were in use for the master degree: Learning outcomes were widely in use for the bachelor degree, and when reaching the master level, other qualification methods were added to the repertoire. Although most respondent schools have adopted the ECTS, a national credit framework was still almost as popular as the international one.

Figure 3 : Methods used to classify qualifications.



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Respondents were then asked to explain used criteria in a few words. Some inconsistence was found, however: the University of Liverpool (the U.K.) reports a 4+1 cycle format while describing a three-year duration for the classification of BSc studies.

To explain the international credit framework, some referred to ECTS in general, and some gave a number of credits required. The number of credits required in different schools varies to some extent especially within BSc studies. The bachelor degree consists of 180 credits in the Adam Mickiewitcz University (Poland), in the Polytechnic of Turin (Italy), and in the Slovak University of Technology while total of 240 ECTS is required in Romania (the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest). Master studies require 118 ECTS in the International Institute of Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation (the Netherlands), 120 credits in the Polytechnic of Turin (Italy), the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest (Romania) and in the Slovak University of Technology.

Some explained integrated national credit frameworks with reference to ECTS (the Adam Mickiewicz University (Poland), the University of the Azores (Portugal), the Polytechnic of Turin (Italy)). The University of Naples in Italy has "a classes of bachelors' and masters' system" and a Regional Comission addresses degree benchmarks. QAA is used for subject benchmarking in Scotland and in the University of Liverpool. Heriot-Watt uses SCQF as level descriptors. The University of Reading uses university-based descriptors and RTPI/CIC for learning outcomes. In Slovakia, the credit framework is based on descriptions of "core knowledge" of specific study fields described by the ministry, and in Serbia, on knowledge requirements stated by the Serbian Chamber if Engineers (distinct for second level professionals (BSc) and for licensed planners (MSc)).

These knowledge requirements in Serbia also produce the requirements for learning outcomes. The University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy Sofia (Bulgaria) uses AESOP and ECTP to classify learning outcomes for bachelors and RTPI for masters. The Bloom's taxonomy is in use in Denmark (the Aalborg University). The Polytechnic of Turin has defined learning outcomes as "basic learning" for bachelors and "specialized learning" for masters. This same spirit in present in many following explications concerning learning outcomes, generic descriptors, subject specific benchmarks and levels and qualification descriptors: the Heriot-Watt University in Scotland expects "knowledge and understanding" from bachelors and "critical knowledge and understanding" from masters, the University of the Azores (Portugal) expects "understanding simple realities" from bachelors and "understanding complex realities" from masters. The Adam Mickiewitcz University (Poland) demands "elementary skills" from bachelors and "high skills" from masters. The Slovak University of Technology expects an "analytical orientation" from bachelors and a "more creative planning orientation" from masters. This is further defined in connection to

generic descriptors: bachelors are expected to handle “analytical thinking, ability to system decomposition, understanding of the planning systems, basic methods (and) instruments (...)” while masters are required of “synthetical (and) creative thinking”.

In addition to cognitive skills, under evaluation is often also the role of the graduate in a team and the type of work addressed. The University of Iuav in Venice (Italy) expects “a generic capacity of sharing a working prompt experience” from bachelors whereas “a specific capacity of leading a working group activity” is required of masters. In Romania bachelors are expected to work as team members whereas masters are “highly qualified professionals (..) (with) specializations and of whom “coordination and creativity” is expected of. Masters are also more research oriented. Bachelors are addressed with “identification of problems and management of simple planning processes” in Slovakia, while masters manage planning processes and are able to develop methods and instruments.

Time-based approaches: the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom. International credit framework: Bulgaria, Italy, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Germany, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Sweden, United Kingdom. Integrated national credit frameworks: Italy, the Netherlands, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom. Learning outcomes and competencies: Bulgaria, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Turkey, United Kingdom, Germany, Poland, Portugal, Sweden. Bachelor-Master generic descriptors: the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Turkey, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Serbia, Sweden, United Kingdom. Bachelor-Master Subject Specific benchmarks: Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Turkey, Germany, Portugal, Serbia, Sweden, United Kingdom). Level descriptors/indicators including subdivisions within the Bologna cycles: the Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Italy, Portugal, Serbia, Sweden, United Kingdom. Qualification descriptors/indicators including sub-divisions within the Bologna cycles: the Netherlands, Slovakia, Turkey, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Sweden.

Changes in classifying qualifications and their implications

The Bologna Process had changed the methods in classifying qualifications in many schools. Most respondents stated these changes as positive. Reviewing the curriculum as a whole had produced a better orientation and clarity in courses and contents (the University Iuav of Venice (Italy), the Polytechnic of Milan (Italy), the Wageningen University (the Netherlands), the University of Reading (U.K)). The Bologna guidelines had clarified the classifications system, too (the Wrocław University of Technology (Poland)). Adopting the BSc had resulted in quicker production of professionals (the University of Belgrad (Serbia), the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest (Romania)) although some concerns for the preparedness of bachelors for work-life were expressed. The respondent from the University of the Azores (Portugal) felt that changes have forced students to be more responsible and that the whole process is now more creative. Negative implications stated often concerned the working environment (the Wageningen University (the Netherlands), the Slovak University of Technology (Slovakia), the University of Architecture Civil Engineering and Geodesy Sofia (Bulgaria)). Stability and calm were demanded in order to restore energy and the wellbeing of staff, but also the quality of research. The University Iuav of Venice (Italy) was concerned about not having assessed the previous educational system: some intrinsic values and effects might have been lost without notice. The University of the Azores (Portugal) assumed, that dealing with uninterested students might now be more difficult.

Better structure and balance, and transparency of the qualification system were identified as positive implications of changes in 2006, too. In addition to the stress caused by the changes to staff, respondents of the previous survey also brought up stress to students caused by the more intensive education.

Professional qualifications

It was previously stated, that national conventions in the accreditation of professionals play a key-role in defining aims for the two degrees. The following section focuses on the role of national professional bodies in the regulation of education and the accreditation process, but also the role these bodies have taken in the Bologna process.

Regulation/accreditation of the planning courses by professional bodies

Most respondent schools (27/36) have their planning courses regulated/accredited by a professional body or bodies. These bodies are often associations, professional chambers or ministries. Forms of regulation vary from the use of formal standards in course and curriculum planning to the accreditation of graduates as planners. 25% report no course accreditation/regulation. In the survey of 2006, only a fourth of respondents reported regulation and/or accreditation by professional bodies.

Formal accreditation is the case in Italy, where graduates are required to take an exam in order to access the position of a junior (BSc) or full (MSc) planner. This exam is conducted in collaboration of the school and professional bodies (Polytechnic of Turin). In Bulgaria, the Chamber of Bulgarian Architects accredits full recognition and access to planning jobs after master studies and again after two years of practice (University of Architecture Civil Engineering and Geodesy Sofia). The Flemish Ministry of Spatial Planning accredits graduates as "spatial planners" in Belgium (the Ghent University). The Romanian Planners Registry awards graduates with "a right of signature". This right may be awarded to graduates of the planning degree after 5 study years, but also to other bachelors: architects, engineers, sociologists, etc., after a 2 year master programme in planning (the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest).

The Ministry of Education in Italy accredits the planning programme, through assessing indicators concerning programme design, research, internationalization, and service delivery (the University Iuav of Venice). In the Netherlands, programmes are evaluated and accredited every second year by the Netherlands-Flemish Accreditation Organisation (the Delft University of Technology). Dutch, German, Austrian, Danish, Hungarian, and Swedish schools have established co-operation for a conception of a joint MSc (the Wageningen University). This co-operation is formalized in a network called the Euroleague Spatial Planning Initiative. The network aims at having a common qualification system for the courses/MSc qualifications. In Romania all educational programmes are submitted to authorization by a national board 3 years after creation and from then on, once every five years (the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest). This national board takes into account the opinion of the professional organization R.U.R that regulates the right to signature. The assessment concerns widely all aspects of education from the physical environment of studying to the quality of staff and libraries, processes of learning and results in research. Programs and curricula are assessed and accredited also in Slovakia (by the national Accreditation Committee) (the Slovak University of Technology), in Germany (AQAS) (the University of Kassel), in Poland (the Adam Mickiewicz University), in the United Kingdom (by RTPI and RICS) (the University of Liverpool, University of Westminster, the University of Glasgow, the University of Reading, the Heriot-Watt University) and in the Czech Republic (the Czech Chamber of Architects) (Czech Technical University in Prague). Standards of programmes and courses are used in Austria (EQUIS standards) (the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration).

Changes in criteria and/or the procedures for accreditation

Only a third (12/34) of respondent schools had had changes in the criteria and/or the procedures of accreditation by professional bodies. Most did not indicate whether these changes had been positive or negative. Out of those who did, 8 out of 10 stated these changes had been for the good. Negative issues mentioned were mostly related to the workload and "the artificial and unneeded unification of formal features of education" (the University of Belgrad (Serbia)). Transparency was an often-recognized positive result (Politecnico di Milan (Italy), the International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation (the Netherlands), the Slovak University of Technology (Slovakia)). Closely related were notes on an internationally comparable system (Politecnico di Milan (Italy), the University of the Azores (Portugal)) and increase in attractiveness that had resulted from the international aspect (the International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation (the Netherlands)). Positive had also been giving more weight on learning outcomes and traineeship experiences (the University Iuav of Venice (Italy)), introducing the possibility of changing one's field of speciality after BSc (the Adam Mickiewicz University (Poland)) and the introducing of an accreditation system altogether (Technische Universität Dortmund (Germany)).

Key professional bodies for planning in respective countries

Respondents were asked to identify the key professional body/bodies for planning in their country. Most identified several bodies. 9 of the 16 respondent countries identified a national body specific to the planning profession. These countries were Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Sweden, Turkey, and United Kingdom. National bodies associated with another professional discipline such as architecture or engineering where named by 8 countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Portugal, Slovakia, Serbia, Slovakia, and Germany. Belgium and Turkey named public authorities.

In the report of 2006 Italy was taken as an example of how the Bologna Process has been instrumental in the recognition of the planning profession as separate from architecture. This recognition manifested itself also in the division of the former Professional Body of Architects into a body of architects, planners, landscape designers and heritage experts. By 2008 two new bodies had evolved: a national institute of planners (Istituto Nazionale di Urbanistica) and a national society for planners (Società Italiana degli Urbanisti).

The support of professional bodies in adopting the Bologna Process

About a half (13/25) of respondent schools felt national professional bodies had been helpful in the adoption of the Bologna Process. The ways of help had included close work with universities (no further specification: the Polytechnic of Milan (Italy), the Cracow University of Economics (Poland)) in planning a well-functioning system of education that fulfils both international and national requirements (the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest (Romania), the University of Liverpool (United Kingdom)), in discussing the impacts of the process on national level (the Yildiz Technical University (Turkey)) to adjusting their own activity accordingly (the Polytechnic of Turin (Italy), the University of the Azores (Portugal)), and giving "mental support" (the Royal Institute of Technology (Sweden)).

Reasons for not being helpful given were the inertia between professions and actors resulted from the acknowledgement of the planning profession as separate from that of architecture (the University Iuav of Venice (Italy), the Wroclaw University of Technology (Poland), the University of Architecture Civil Engineering and Geodesy Sofia (Bulgaria), the University of Belgrade (Serbia), the Slovak University of Technology (Slovakia)) and simply the lack of interest and/or resources (the Utrecht University (the Netherlands), the Adam Mickiewicz University (Poland), the Ghent University (Belgium)).

Reasons for the lack of support given in the survey of 2006 were similar to those above. The inertia between architects and planners complicates the situation in many countries and reluctance to participate and help the process in many cases results from insecurity in one's own status. Some development may, however, be seen: Support from professional bodies had increased from the previous survey results. Back then only a fifth reported receiving help and support from professional bodies in their country. It was identified, that professional bodies "wait and see" how the transition proceeds before participating (the University Pierre Mendès-France). This may indicate that the process is slowly stabilizing itself and that many central obstacles have been passed.

Other changes resulting from the Bologna Process

Planning schools were asked to identify any other changes in planning education triggered by the Bologna Process that had not been addressed in the questionnaire. Respondents were asked whether these changes had been positive or negative. Although changes identified as negative were also reported, all respondents chose the option 'positive' for the average.

Several schools noted improvements to education. Internationalization was the most often mentioned one. Exchange programs have become facilitated by the recognition of credits (Polytechnic of Milan (Italy), the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Yildiz Technical University (Turkey)) and joint degree agreements have been signed (Polytechnic of Milan (Italy)). Increased mobility of staff was also recognized (Yildiz Technical University (Turkey)). Enabling comparison between different countries had increased competition (Royal Institute of Technology (Sweden)), but also brought more attention to comparative planning issues (the University of Reading (United Kingdom)). The modular structure of the curriculum was considered an improvement in Romania, where education had formerly been based on a weekly schedule. The rethinking of the whole curriculum had improved education in general in the Technische Universität Dortmund (Germany). The Bologna Process had also triggered the development of quality assessment systems and linked the state's financial support to performances (the University Iuav of Venice (Italy)).

Many saw planning education having higher status after the Bologna Process. Clarifying what planning in fact is had increased the profession's importance in the U.K. and Italy (the University of Cambridge, the Polytechnic of Turin). In the same spirit, planning education had received larger popularity in Poland (the Adam Mickiewicz University). In the Netherlands, acknowledgement of merits had focused on the Ph.D. trajectory through a debate on the differentiation between academic Ph.D's and professional ones (the Wageningen University). Research orientation had become stronger in Romania, too (the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest). An interesting idea has emerged in the Czech Republic: BSc programs are used as supplementary education to basic level planning administrators. Over time they are planned to replace re-training courses.

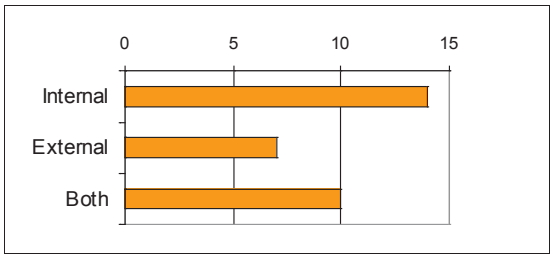
Not all changes were merely positive. Having new students with different backgrounds for the second cycle was an issue itself (the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences). The position of admission students is difficult in Romania. The number of state financed PG places is remarkably lower than the number of UG graduates, but the European Council of Spatial Planners (CEU, former ECTP) requires a minimum of 5 years of studies from professionals (the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest). Other negative changes noted were the increase in procedural issues (The University Iuav of Venice (Italy)) and bureaucracy (Technische Universität Berlin (Germany)) through quality assessment and international partnerships.

Research assessment

Research assessment was not directly addressed in the survey of 2006. Many respondents, however, had made note of an increase in international comparison of schools through evaluation of various performance. This comparison has been taken as positive apart from the possible stress improvements and changes cause to staff. The following section reports methods in use for research assessment.

Almost all (34/37) of respondent schools had procedures to assess research or scientific productivity. Exceptions were the Yildiz Technical University in Turkey, the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences and the University of Belgrad in Serbia. Responses are found in table 14. The popularity of different methods is portrayed below in figure 4. All schools use a variety of benchmarks in assessment.

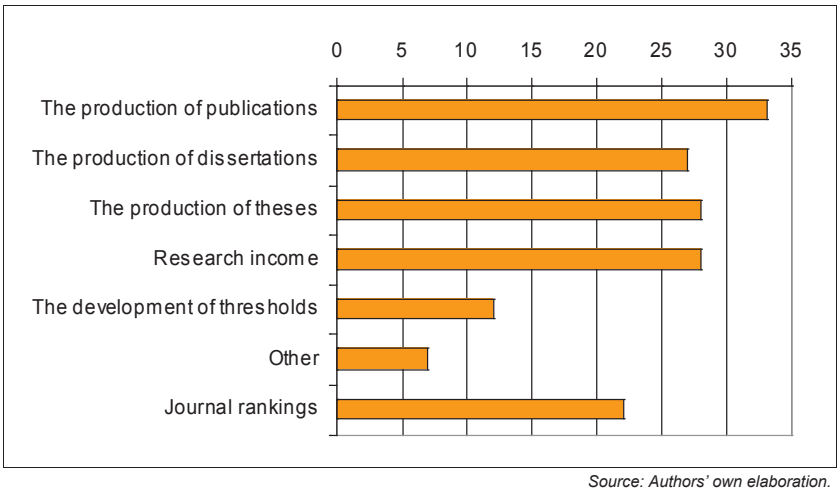
Figure 4 : Most commonly research assessment is conducted internally.



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Research assessment is more commonly internal than external, but many – 27% - schools use both an internal and an external evaluation. Formal criteria are clearly more commonly in use. Only the University of Tromsø (Norway) uses a free format evaluation. Evaluations most commonly (25/37) take place annually. Three, four and five-year cycles were also named. From different performance benchmarks, the production of publications was most commonly followed. Three out of four schools followed also the production of theses and dissertations as well as research income. Well over half of the schools kept an eye on journal rankings as well. The Aalborg University (Denmark) was about to join this group of schools but hadn't finished listing relevant journals at time of responding. The development of thresholds was the least followed given benchmark.

Figure 5 : Research performance methods in use



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

The production of publications: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom. The production of dissertations: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom. The production of theses: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom. Research income: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom. The development of thresholds: Czech Republic, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden . Other: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, United Kingdom. Journal rankings: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Turkey, United Kingdom. The Bologna Process had resulted in a need of changes in research assessment in the Wageningen University (the Netherlands) as the former system was based on bibliometric criteria and did not befit the idiosyncrasies of the research tradition in planning and architecture.

Positive examples of research assessment practices

Schools were asked, whether they are aware of a research assessment practice that they held especially positive. Very few named an exemplar. The University Iuav of Venice (Italy) reported a compatriot: the Polytechnic of Milan. The Polytechnic of Turin (Italy) and the University of Dortmund (Germany) were proud of their own systems, but did not describe these. The University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest (Romania) felt they could contribute: the Planning School “develops a research component within the national supported framework and provides advanced counselling to ministries and other bodies at national level. The research is used for policy design and for linkages between national spatial planning and EU level. The University has an inner system of research assessment and contribution to research which is a criterion for academic career.”

The potential role for AESOP in the future

Planning schools were finally asked if they saw AESOP having a role in the quality assurance process and/or in the professional qualifications process or in the research assessment process of its member schools. It seems member schools are open to and even expect a job enlargement from the association. Almost all (27/30) felt that AESOP could have a role in the quality assurance process and/or in the professional qualifications process and two thirds (20/30) of respondents saw a possible role for AESOP in the research assessment process.

The quality assurance process and the professional qualifications process

AESOP taking a larger role was seen especially beneficial for smaller countries with limited resources for accreditation (University of Architecture Civil Engineering and Geodesy Sofia). Most often was proposed, that AESOP would provide an international alignment on minimum content of planning courses/requirements for professional education (the Ghent University (Belgium), Politecnico di Milano (Italy), the Utrecht University (the Netherlands), the Wageningen University (the Netherlands), the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest (Romania), the Czech Technical University (Czech Republic), the Adam Mickiewicz University (Poland)) or a framework for the quality assurance (the Wroclaw University of Technology (Poland)). If all-European professional qualifications were to be developed, AESOP would be the natural agent to do this (the Polytechnic of Turin (Italy)) as there exists no other international quarter that might take this role (the Yildiz Technical University (Turkey)) and be qualified to compare the qualities and structures of the study programmes (the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (Sweden)). A similar role to that of UNESCO-UIA, that has established a system of international validation of architecture schools, was suggested (the University of Architecture and Ubranism Ion Muncu Bucharest (Romania)). A cemented content for planning courses/degree requirements was not recommended, however, because of the diverse needs and traditions in various countries (the Wageningen University (The Netherlands), the Czech Technical University (Czech Republic)). Possibly, then, collaboration with national professional bodies would be best (the Slovak University of Technology (Slovakia), the Wroclaw University of Technology (Poland), the University of Cambridge (United Kingdom), the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration (Austria)). AESOP could, for example, ratify national qualification processes and propose changes to qualifications (the University of the Azores (Portugal)) or harmonize systems in member countries (the Royal Institute of Technology (Sweden)) through providing strategic guidance and monitoring (the University of Reading (United Kingdom)).

The role of providing and facilitating the exchange of information on planning education was seen very important, too (the Wageningen University (the Netherlands), the Cracow University of Economics (Poland), the Heriot-Watt University (United Kingdom), the Royal Institute of Technology (Sweden), the Middle East Technical University (Turkey), the Delft University of Technology (the Netherlands)). Issues mentioned explicitly were the mapping of the outcomes of the Bologna Process (the University of Napoli "Federico II" (Italy)), updating the geography of core curricula of the planning schools in Europe, monitoring the dynamics of planners' labor market in Europe, defining strategic axes/domains of research, assessing the evolution of European planning systems and cultures (the University Iuav of Venice (Italy)), and providing contact information (the Wageningen University (The Netherlands)). Organizing conferences was seen valuable too. A topic suggested for a conference was the problems on planning education (the Cracow University of Economics (Poland)).

Proposed was also, that AESOP would support academic mobility through coordinating lecture visits (the University of Architecture Civil Engineering and Geodesy Sofia (Bulgaria)) thus contributing to staff development or playing a role in study exchange programs (the Adam Mickiewicz University (Poland)). A job enlargement towards politics was also suggested (the University Iuav of Venice (Italy)): AESOP could act as a reference body for EU institutions, making their attention alive and aware on needs and planning related problems (Polytechnic of Turin (Italy)). Planning schools provided numerous ideas for future roles for AESOP in 2006, too. Ideas were very close to the ones given in 2008. A new one was the role of a link between planning schools and EU institutions.

Research assessment

Few offered AESOP a direct role in the assessment process of research. The respondents from the Royal Institute of Technology (Sweden) and the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration (Austria) suggested that AESOP would take up quality assessment and accreditation and the Middle East Technical University (Turkey) felt AESOP could act as the controlling and coordinating body in assessment.

Others saw AESOP's role relating more to providing information concerning assessment. AESOP could, for example, trigger discussion about a review system that would do justice to the planning discipline and provide benchmarks (the University of Wageningen (The Netherlands)). Or it could provide suitable criteria in terms of societal effects of academic productivity (the University of the Azores (Portugal)), and provide a list of international experts who are qualified and prepared to do review tasks (the Wageningen University (The Netherlands)).

Facilitating research partnerships[4] (the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest (Romania)), identifying strategic research domains (the University Iuav of Venice (Italy)), revising the diversities of national education processes (the Brno University of Technology (Czech Republic)), distributing research programs (the Utrecht University (the Netherlands)) and keeping a list of running research projects (the Wroclaw University of Technology (Poland)), and holding seminars for exchange of experience (the Luleå University of Technology (Sweden), the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest (Romania)) would help through providing comparison and setting strategic priorities. It was suggested, that AESOP could publish annual reports on schools' scientific productivity according to international indicators (the Polytechnic of Turin (Italy)) or have its own AESOP Research Journal (the Wroclaw University of Technology (Poland)).

Some felt AESOP should contribute to research assessment only indirectly through helping members improve their substance competence. Means mentioned were existing initiatives, publications and awards (the University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy Sofia (Bulgaria)), seminars (the Wroclaw University of Technology (Poland), the University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy Sofia (Bulgaria)), establishing guidelines on course content (the University of Cambridge (United Kingdom)), and facilitating co-operation in application on European research funds (the Wroclaw University of Technology (Poland)).

Possible roles in quality assurance and/or professional qualification process:

- Describing minimum requirements for professional qualifications/course content
- Participation in national processes
- Providing quality assurance framework
- Providing a system of validation of schools
- Providing information
- Possible roles for research assessment:
- Quality assessment and accreditation
- Providing information concerning assessment
- Help through providing comparison and setting strategic priorities
- Contribution to research assessment only indirectly through helping members improve their substance competence.
- Other roles:
- Facilitating personnel and student mobility
- Being active towards EU institutions

[4] "particularly in the areas of (1) assessment of current trends in urban development within our countries (2) articulation of a both open and articulate system to favor the inter schools dialogue, (3) exchange of data and programme / projects experiences between different countries" (University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest).

Planning and Interdisciplinarity

Simin Davoudi[5]

A fundamental question for planning education and practice is: what is planners' unique competence that no other professions can legitimately claim as theirs? What distinguishes planners from geographers, architects, environmental scientists or professional mediators? There is no easy answer to this question, partly because "planning has not developed as an intellectual discipline in its own right" (Grant, 1999, p. 4). Instead it has drawn on other foundation disciplines. Given that the relative importance of these in planning education is fluctuating all the time, "the intellectual basis of planning is exceptionally flexible and fluid" (op cit p. 5). While some consider this 'interdisciplinary' basis as a weakness - making it difficult for planners to know exactly what belongs to planning- others see it as a key strength. Indeed, interdisciplinarity is now regarded as a virtue despite the fact- or may be because- it is rare, operationally demanding and intellectually challenging. A discussion on interdisciplinarity needs to start with an understanding of what constitutes disciplinary knowledge.

What is a discipline?

The rise of mono-disciplines, since the 18th century, has been due partly to the orientation of western cultures towards analysis rather than synthesis. Therefore, "modern scholarship lays inordinate emphasis on specialisation – which in modern university attests, implies and entails the segregation of knowledge into distinct 'disciplines'…" (Baigent et al, 1982). Disciplines are therefore social constructs that have evolved through historical processes. They involve both objects and methods of study. When we speak of an academic discipline we imply not just a particular subject matter, but also a system with a number of social and functional dimensions (Harriss, 2002). Functionally, disciplines provide a set of rules for: what constitute a 'problem', what counts as evidence, or what is considered as acceptable methods by which knowledge is produced, evaluated and transferred? Socially, disciplines provide shared languages, concepts and tools; they create identities, peers, careers, and even 'professional refuge' for activities that otherwise might not be valued (Petts et al, 2008). Through such social and functional dimensions, disciplines perform important roles in verifying knowledge claims. They become deeply structured to the extent that there is a danger of 'disciplinary tribalism'. Hence, disciplinary structuring is so deep that it is difficult to overcome just by good intentions. Nevertheless, there is a value to be gained from moving beyond disciplinary boundaries; not least because complex societal challenges do not respect disciplinary boundaries.

Multi-disciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary?

In the literature as well as our daily conversations we tend to come across a confusing set of terms, such as multi-disciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary. They are often used interchangeably despite conveying different meanings (See Sillitoe, 2004). Multi-disciplinary approach involves a number of disciplines coming together but each working independently and primarily with their own frame of reference and methods. Hunt and Shackley (1999) call this the 'science of interaction' whereby disciplines can co-exist in a particular context but retains their boundaries. When it works well, it is productive and allows problems to be looked at from different perspectives. So, as Petts el al (2008:596) suggest "it should not be seen as failed interdisciplinarity. Interdisciplinarity involves occupying the spaces between disciples to build new knowledge (Sands, 1993). It is a synthesis of knowledge whereby our understanding is modified in the interplay with other perspective. Hunt and Shackley (1999) call this the 'science of integration' whereby coherence between the knowledges that are produced by different disciplines is sought (Lau and Pasquni, 2008). Transdisciplinarity (or pluridisciplinarity) creates a cross-road in which different disciplines intersect, problematise and challenge each other (Sands, 1993). It transcends, re-negotiates and re-draws traditional disciplinary boundaries (Petts et al, 2008). Hunt and Shackley (1999) call it the 'science of hybridisation'. Trans-disciplinary approaches involve organisation of knowledge around complex subjects, or real world problems, rather than disciplines. Such approaches are more likely to produce outcomes which are more than the sum of different parts. One of its positive by-products is a greater awareness and reflection on one's own particular disciplinary knowledge.

A continuum!

In practice, however, there exists a continuum of approaches rather than neatly separated categories that I outlined above. For example, at their weakest, these approaches may be no more than cooperation, while at their strongest they can be transformative and capable of recasting disciplines. In general, interdisciplinarity occupies the broadest position on the continuum which also explains its wider usage than the other two. However, even here, it is possible to distinguish between two different types: 'cognate interdisciplinarity' and 'radical interdisciplinarity'. The former happens within natural or physical, or social sciences while the latter takes lace between them (Evans & Marvin, 2006) spanning the natural and the social. It is important to note that such categorisation doesn't necessarily suggest superiority of one type over the others; it basically highlights the fundamental differences between the often interchangeably-used terminologies.

Epistemological challenges and institutional barriers to interdisciplinarity

As mentioned earlier, working across disciplines is hard. Firstly, there are a number of epistemological challenges, notably the persisting disciplinary silos with regard to: the understanding of what constitutes knowledge and what is seen as legitimate methods for producing new knowledge; the intellectual traditions; and, problem definitions. As Baigent et al (1982) argue, disciplinary "'experts' tend generally to regard fields other than their own with considerable suspicion – spurious at worst, at best irrelevant. And, 'interdisciplinary' research is often actively discouraged as being, among other things, too speculative". Secondly, there are several institutional barriers to interdisciplinary working, such as: research and educational funding mechanisms, institutional practices, research assessment exercises, journals' publication strategies, refereeing processes, and so on.

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Despite these barriers, interdisciplinary perspectives provide a useful means of dealing with complex or 'wicked problems' which cannot be addressed satisfactorily by a single discipline. In the real world, some of the interesting and complex questions are left at the interfaces between disciplines. Addressing these requires synthetic and integrative approaches. It is this need for integration which puts spatial planning in a position of strength.

To make interdisciplinary work, certain conditions have to be met. These include for example: mutual trust and respect among participants; confidence in one's own discipline but without being defensive; space and time for sharing of knowledge, different framing of problems and construction of methods; acknowledging that the aim is problem setting and problem solving rather than doing interdisciplinary work for its own sake; and, availability of intermediaries which are not necessarily people but can also be processes.

The challenge for planning

Addressing the problems and opportunities of our contemporary interconnected world needs new forms and patterns of intellectual inquiry that challenge existing disciplinary and institutional boundaries. Spatial planning with its roots in multiple disciplines and its focus on integration has the potential to play a major role here. However, so far the emphasis in planning as elsewhere has been primarily on the instrumental rationale for interdisciplinary working. To move forward, there should be more emphasis on its intellectual challenges. The questions are:

- Does planning education involve picking and mixing from multiple disciplines, or does it involve redrawing the disciplinary maps in an attempt to understand and explain complex phenomena?
- Does it involve a 'science of hybridisation' or 'integration' of different forms of knowledge or is it just about 'interaction' between them?

The aim of this brief contribution has been to reflect on the notion of interdisciplinarity and planning, but there is another significant aspect of planning which has not been touched upon due to limited space here. That is the interrelationship between disciplinary and experiential knowledge (Davoudi, 2006). Indeed, it is in the infusion of these disciplinary and experiential knowledge that planning has carved out a distinctive place for itself in the family of social sciences. Indeed, the answer to the questions posed at the outset of this paper lies here. What distinguishes planners from geographers, for example, is that planners are engaged in 'doing'. It is about not only understanding space and place, but also aspiring to change them. It is about not only 'critical thinking about space and place' but also using this knowledge as the basis of 'action and interaction' (RTPI, 2003:1).

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Interdisciplinarity and Planning in France

Didier Paris[6]

The aim of this short contribution is – thanks to a concrete example at a national level (France) – to emphasize how an epistemological issue can be approached through the specific history of a discipline, and can also have an institutional dimension, both influencing the way we do our job as academics. We won't insist here on the epistemological dimension of the debate relative to interdisciplinarity in planning, as this issue has been discussed extensively in the previous chapter, and we just underline that interdisciplinarity is broadly consubstantial to the nature of planning, an intellectual field which has the ambition to focus on complexity – and action – in cities and territories.

The notion of academic discipline in France

In France, academic disciplines also have an institutional dimension. This can be explained by the existence of the C.N.U., the "Comité National des Universités". The C.N.U. is an administrative body under the authority of the Ministry of Higher Education. Half the members are elected, half are appointed by the ministry. The C.N.U. has two main missions. Firstly, the C.N.U. grants the new doctors a national "qualification" which allows them to apply for the "Maître de Conférences" status (lecturer – UK – or associate professor – US). They also grant the "Maître de Conférences" another "qualification", after they have passed their "Habilitation à Diriger des Recherches" (more or less after 10 years of practice), which allows them to apply for "Professeur des Universités" status (Reader – UK – or Professor – US). It is possible to grant the "qualification" to become "Maître de Conférences" or "Professeur" to those, in our field, who carry out a scientific activity, through the production of articles, reviews, or books, even if they do not have a Ph.D or "habilitation". Such people are often practitioners in planning. Due to their own experience, they can be "qualified" to become a full time academic (if they are recruited, after the "qualification" step).

Secondly, the C.N.U. also manages carriers. The academic staff can get a promotion (with a positive impact on the person's income) after individual evaluation by the C.N.U. (half the promotions are proposed at this national level) or by the Scientific Council of each university (half are proposed at the local level). The C.N.U. can also grant a sabbatical period requested by colleagues (half the periods are proposed at this national level), and the Scientific Council of each university can do so as well (half are proposed at the local level).

The C.N.U. is divided between 74 "sections", so 74 disciplines. For instance, n° 21 is ancient and medieval history ; n° 22 is modern and contemporary history ; n° 23 is geography ; n° 24 is urban and regional planning etc. Often, especially for the "qualification", the debates within the urban and regional planning section concern the boundaries of the field: is this historian, this geographer, this economist, this architect, this political scientist, this lawyer, this sociologist etc. part or not of the field? Of "our" field? So, the question is to know whether planning is a discipline or a field, in which multiple disciplines can bring different things, especially their own concepts.

The need for interdisciplinarity in French planning schools

In the planning field, the words used to name the curricula – more or less the equivalent of "planning" in English – are, in French, "Aménagement", "Aménagement du territoire", "Environnement", "urbanisme", "développement des territories", or a mix of all these terms. One of the reasons for the foundation of the Association pour la Promotion de l'Enseignement et de la Recherche en Aménagement-Urbanisme (APERAU) in 1984 was to identify these curricula, mainly implemented in the 1970s and 1980s. The older institutions (Institut Français d'Urbanisme, Institut d'Urbanisme de Paris) joined the movement.

In the beginning (1960s), these curricula often seemed to parallel those in Geography. The main vocation of classical Geography was to prepare students to become geography and history teachers, and not to be planners, even if many students became planners in the 1960s. But some academics, often geographers, but also biologists, sociologists or lawyers, thought that it was possible to create new curricula, gathering different fields and offering new academic practices in a specific planning program.

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The schools of planning have academic staff from several disciplines, or can draw on the skills of the different departments in their own university. Better yet, due to the varied origins of academics in the 24th section (urban and regional planning), planning schools have resources inside this section: planner and economist, planner and geographer, planner and architect etc. For example, in the last ten years, the members of the 24th section in Lille came from geography, history, architecture, civil engineering, political science, and economy (now retired). The schools of planning can work with schools of architecture to teach urban design or the history of architecture. In France, the schools of architecture are not part of the university. Of course, planning schools can recruit practitioners to teach these subjects.

APERAU has adopted a quality charter for teaching, and the members are evaluated. Several principles of the charter are oriented towards interdisciplinarity:

- Quality and consistency of teaching.
- Promote the identity of the field of planning, especially regarding the names of the academic programmes.
- Promote common knowledge (culture) and multidisciplinary studies throughout the various curricula.
- Implement programmes with:
  - a multidisciplinary approach to teaching;
  - a collective workshop, when possible on topics suggested by professional and/or political bodies: a genuine study, not a topic imposed by teachers;
  - internships in the private or public sector, but with a genuine mission;
  - the production of a master's thesis – often related to the profile of the internship.
- A staff made of academics from different fields (geography, economy, sociology, law, political studies, history, engineering…), and especially from planning, AND professional planners. Professionals are not part of the permanent staff. Sometimes the permanent staff can be reduced and complemented by external teachers and professionals.
- At master's level, particularly for the second year, we emphasise the recruitment of students coming from different fields such as planning (of course), architecture, geography, political science, economy, sociology… because the job of a planner has many facets and requires different backgrounds, due to the variety of missions: economic planning, neighbourhood policies, urban design…
- Promote research in the field of planning so as to enrich teaching.

Interdisciplinarity is therefore at the heart of practices French schools. But it is also interesting to consider that the field of planning, as compared to other academic disciplines, is more oriented towards "implementation". Planning would then be a science of action, implementation, management of processes, "the way to do", through a holistic approach of complexity in cities and territories, while geography, economy, sociology, etc. would be disciplines mobilised for specific descriptions, explanations, analyses (landscape, economic law, society…). Architecture would be a practice at the same time, but could be also include an historical and esthetical approach.

This has an impact on the way French "planners" do their job, as compared to other disciplines, for instance through the relationships they can have with those who are in charge of public – or private – decisions: politicians, practitioners, developers etc. Academic planners can be hired as consultants, they are solicited for public debates. The topics for the workshops of planning students students are often suggested by these actors. So obviously, the way planners do their our job is different from a pure sociologist, geographer, or even economist. The danger is to lose the necessary distance between action and the analysis of action. This is the specificity of planning, and the reason why planning is so fascinating.

Interdisciplinarity and planning, interdisciplinarity in planning: advantages and disadvantages

Izabela Mironowicz

There are two ways of setting up a new scientific discipline. The first and probably the most usual is based on division; it happens when within the field of study some specialization has grown up after developing its own methods and defining a separate object of research. In this way climatology and oceanography come from Earth sciences, zoology comes from biology and archaeology comes from history. But there is another way of defining a new scientific discipline. The foundation of this method is interdisciplinarity. Autonomy of planning does not come from specialization, on the contrary its new value emerges at the 'crossroads' of many disciplines, originating from different methods and notions. Not only planning is set up this way – there are many examples of this kind of 'creative mixture': biotechnology, computer sciences, 'cosmic' sciences. It is to say that interdisciplinarity is not accidental nor artificial. Neither it is temporary. Interdisciplinarity is an effect of rising challenges and naturally generated problems. Nobody could claim that there is no 'intellectual independence' or 'quality' within a discipline having a tradition from Aristotle's 'Politics' and Vitruvius' 'Da Architectura'.

Actually, interdisciplinarity is the essence of planning. We all – as planning schools – do appreciate this richness of planning. We all consider this variety as the main advantage of our discipline. What is a disadvantage of interdisciplinarity is a form – arrangement, structure and layout of institutions and organisations which are not relevant to this complex essence. In fact the most difficult task we – planning schools – have to face is how to join essence and form. This task is difficult across European universities but probably Central and Eastern European countries have a bit longer way ahead comparing with their Western European partners.

There are phenomena which have grown from the interdisciplinar roots of planning we notice across the continent. The first is 'edge position' of planning schools (or whatever they are called) within the universities. Edge position is only an euphemism for 'weak position'. This is true about every 'interdisciplinar' faculty, institute or department because of being far from decision centres, tending rather to cooperate with other universities than to reinforce the position within 'Alma Mater'. Planning is not in 'core disciplines' of social sciences, nor technical sciences, nor environmental sciences, nor fundamental sciences being based on all of them and because of a very specific object of study (shared with all of them) – space.

The second is not clearly defined career prospects because of coming from different disciplines. Institutional framework in not well prepared for this. At my university – which is university of technology – one of researches obtained Masters in math and PhD in spatial economy (presenting a thesis on computer simulations on spatial development) conferred by university of technology. A very practical question is – where does this person have to apply for a habilitation degree? Where is the official body joining the knowledge from fundamental sciences and technical sciences? Being 'torn' between different institutions we are getting lost with our scientific careers or we have to 'prove' our value in front of scientific councils of institutes of Building Environment, Architecture, Geography, Social Sciences… There are very few specialized 'planning' (or 'urban planning' or 'regional planning') schools. Institutional framework doesn't stimulate interdisciplinarity.

Planning is a discipline deeply involved in practice. Of course there are many other disciplines having strong links with 'practice' – from medicine to economics, from computer sciences to climatology, but research-practice relationship in planning is more essential. What describes it probably in the best way is comparison between internists and surgeons (Schulman, 2002) – internists make a diagnosis in order to act, surgeons act in order to make a diagnosis. Planners need to work both like internists and surgeon: they have to understand in order to act but in the same time they have to act in order to understand. It is to say that it is not enough to use 'classical' analysis or synthesis to deal with spatial problems, sometimes we need to use some kind of 'black box' and simply perform. For years and centuries it has been the only method in planning. For the last century planning has been developing wide theoretical background (in order to act) but there are still many study areas which need to be 'tested' in practice to get the ultimate answer. What is optimistic about practice is that it involves full spectrum of interdisciplinarity of planning. Practice brings together specialists from urban design to urban management, from social sciences to transport modelling and from environmental engineering to economics. We planners have to act together. This creates specific challenges for planning schools which need to stay 'in touch' with practice. It doesn't

mean that they are practice-depended but they need to carry on link with practice which allow planning schools to 'act in order to make diagnosis'. This leads us to the last but not least question.

There are professional bodies across Europe. Their position within legal system and professional involvement differs between particular places. Sometimes they are professional societies focused on quality of planning profession and professional standards, sometimes they are corporational chambers gathering practicing planners. What differs them is the influence on planning schools as well. Professional bodies are or want to be involved in education process. There has been a long or even endless debate how to teach for practice. Answers from professional bodies usually emphasis 'skills' rather than 'theory' whereas universities tend to focus on advancing knowledge. This is not a fundamental opposition, the difference comes from different perspectives and express natural distinction between research and its implementation into the practice. A dialogue between universities and professional bodies is reasonable and undoubtedly needed. In European countries this 'conversation' takes many different forms – from monologue to instruction. There are countries where 'professional' accreditation for planning courses is more important than any other quality assessment and there are countries where professional bodies apart from informal personal links are completely excluded from teaching process. But everywhere there is a link (or tension?) between those who teach planners and those who 'use' them as a product of this teaching process. It is to say that in planning schools there is an essential need for cooperation with professional bodies and defining the way of this cooperation.

Interdisciplinarity in East European countries

Twenty years of transformation have been long enough to share a few problems concerning interdisciplinarity in planning across Europe but not long enough to get rid of a few specific East European problems.

The first reason why we – East European planning schools – have been experiencing deeper transformation than our Western European partners are massive changes: social, economic, legal, political. All of them have influenced universities in many ways – from fund rising to new forms of employment, from organizational structure to traditional directions of cooperation. Maybe it would be enough to remind that in 1992 – only 18 years ago – the Red Army still had its forces in many East European countries. This is the way we have walked through.

One of the most significant aspects of this massive change is increasing number of students. In academic year 1990/91 in Poland there were 403.800 students comparing with 1.937.400 in academic year 2007/08. In Czech Republic in academic year 1991/92 there were 111.900 students and in 2007/08 – 344.000; number of Estonian students increased from 25.064 in 1993/94 to 68.168 in 2007/08. On the one hand we should be pleased with this enormous 'educational shift', on the other hand teaching conditions have become more difficult. The number of academic staff hasn't been tripled or quadrupled as well as the number of lecture rooms. As a consequence the academic landscape of the East European countries has changed.

Most notable was the 'private sector educational revolution'. As public (or state-run) universities couldn't supply the 'education demand' – Eastern European countries decided to allow private tertiary education institutions. This change has to be seen in the context of institutional framework.

Eastern European higher education institutions in a few countries had a strong tradition of autonomy and self-governance (i.e. Poland, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Hungary), but during the communist period 1945-1989 a Soviet style model of higher education was implemented. In this system a set of centralised, state-run, public institutions was established providing specialized education in broad fields like engineering, medical sciences, humanities. As a result, the landscape of higher education is and remains to this date characterised by a multitude of highly specialised institutions: universities for the humanities, natural sciences or formal sciences, technical universities and colleges of applied technology (or 'polytechnics'), medical universities, agricultural universities, universities of economics, pedagogical universities and art academies. Tertiary education institutions mostly followed the traditional European model of 4-5 year long qualifications leading directly to MA or MSc degree.

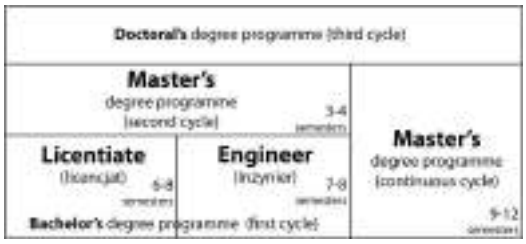
However, the most significant change in higher education in recent history was initiated when Poland became a signatory of the Bologna Declaration and thereby agreed to implement comparable degree structures organised into three consecutive cycles (Bachelor-Master-Doctorate) which meant that institutions had to transform their long continuous programmes into a two-cycle system (undergraduate and Master studies) with an added third cycle representing doctoral studies. In addition, all study units (courses) have to be assigned credits that conform to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) to facilitate the mobility of students. Three-cycle programmes and ECTS have been introduced very efficiently in Eastern

Europe. In Poland traditional long programmes (9-12 semesters) are only retained for specific study areas such as medicine or pharmacy.

What is interesting about studies in planning, interdisciplinarity and this new institutional framework is that planning schools are within many different structures. One can find studies in planning within universities of technology (i.e. Wrocław, Prague, Brno, Ostrava, Bratislava, Warsaw, Dresden, Cottbus, Riga, Buchrest, Belgrad, Ljubljana) where they have been traditionally run at Faculties of Architecture; within universities at departments/faculties of geography (i.e. Poznań, Belgrad, Gdańsk) or social sciences (Łódź, Warsaw); within universities of economics (i.e. Cracow, Warsaw); within agricultural universities or so-called universities of life sciences (i.e. Tallin, Warsaw, Wrocław). Planning schools are not only within 'old traditional' public universities but also within new market-responding private universities. The picture seems to be pretty interdisciplinar, doesn't it? This new model has produced – especially in bigger countries (i.e. Poland) – a few more difficulties.

The first, already mentioned as a trans-European, concerns cooperation. The most notable problem with it concerns the final degree. In Poland Bachelor/undergraduate degree requirements vary depending on the conferring institution. At non-technical universities a minimum of 6 semesters of study (3 years) and 180 ECTS are required, leading to a professional title of 'licentiate' (BA/licencjat). At universities of technology, a bachelor requires a minimum of 7 semesters (3,5 years) and 210 ECTS leading to the professional title of 'engineer' (inżynier). For the Master's degree a minimum of 4 semesters (2 years) and 120 ECTS for those who hold a Bachelor's degree from a non-technical university are required. For those who hold a professional title of 'engineer' the legal framework wants only 3 semesters (1,5 years) and 90 ECTS. Graduate programmes in planning are open to students with a non-planning background as long as they have completed 60% of all compulsory courses of an undergraduate planning degree. This is relatively easy to achieve for students in environmental studies, geography or architecture. This framework doesn't make students' mobility easy. Universities have to deal with this structure with all their good will, but 'the form' is definitely not prepare to contain 'the essence'.

Figure 6 : General Degree structures in Higher Education in Poland.



Source: Author's own elaboration.

Secondly, the traditional division of tertiary education institutions influenced many new-established bodies. A good example is the State Accreditation Committee – the only statutory body entrusted with the responsibility of evaluating the quality of higher education. Its opinions and resolutions have a legally binding effect: the Committee has a power to stop the studies which don't meet defined criteria or give them only provisional (one year) permission to 'upgrade' standards. The Committee is divided into 'sections' relating to particular kind of studies. There are accreditation sections for technical universities, for universities of economics, for universities and for medical universities… but nobody could review planning schools across different kind of universities. A structure of the State Accreditation Committee relates to the post-war division of universities and interdisciplinarity is not within its main goals. As a result different commissions are responsible for the same studies in planning being able to evaluating only few of them run by 'their' respective kind of tertiary education institution. Again 'the form' has missed 'the essence'.

Thirdly, in Eastern Europe there is a strong tradition of 'technical' approach to planning. After WWII, with new territorial borders of many countries, Eastern Europe was faced with the task of rebuilding its largely destroyed cities, infrastructure and devastated economy. Under Soviet influence, communist governments rejected participation in the Marshall plan and reconstruction followed new socialist economic rules. This meant that all important political, social and economic decisions were made by the communist party, reducing planning practice to a technocratic design task. Plans did not require wide social acceptance nor studying economic results. It was enough that they were accepted by an executive and political authority.

Background Information

With no urban planning studies as a separate track in existence, urban planning became a professional specialisation for graduates of architecture or engineering. As a result the Eastern European practice has been still 'learning' interdisciplinarity.

On the contrary planning research in Eastern Europe is often based on interdisciplinarity. In many countries there is a tradition of 'Academy of Sciences' – state-run institution with high scientific rank gathering researchers to discuss different problems. Usually 'academy' doesn't focus on teaching, but members are often academics from different universities. It explains why cooperation in planning research and teaching between universities is not only actually possible but often even flourishing. For example in Poland in 1958 the Polish Academy of Sciences established the Committee on Spatial Economy and Regional Planning (CSERP) with the objective 'to inspire and define new studies in spatial economy and planning in Poland'. The committee, by drawing on academics from different universities and professions, not only established a multidisciplinary approach to planning, but also fostered discussions of planning-related research, and initiated the development of planning researchers and institutions. And, in 1991, based on the initiative of members from the CSERP the first guidelines for planning education and the first two 5-year long continuous programmes in planning were established at Adam Mickiewicz University Poznań (Faculty of Geography) and Wrocław University of Technology (Faculty of Architecture). Owing to turbulent conditions at the time, the programmes were recognised and confirmed retrospectively by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education in 1992 a year after their initial implementation. Being experienced in acting together Polish academics were deeply involved in preparing guidelines in planning education. In Poland Ministry of Science and Higher Education defines organizational and scientific requirements for institutions to be fulfilled in order to provide degree programmes in a specific area and level of study, including the minimum number of academic teachers. There is also state level guidance and standards for each of the 118 state recognised fields of study. The latest guidelines for planning education were completed and ratified in July 2007. These guidelines are the effect of sufficient cooperation of almost all planning schools in Poland in order to ensure interdisciplinarity.

What is the main challenge is how to implement intedisciplinary-taught young planners into the practice. This process is still not efficient enough comparing with Western European countries. Market demands designers prepared to work on local plans rather than 'urban mediators' or 'spatial managers'. But this gap is being more and more narrow.

Conclusion

Interdisciplinarity is our great advantage and big disadvantage. Within the discipline it gives us a wide perspective, opens new fields of study and opportunity to use new methods and tools but within the institutional framework interdisciplinarity produces a few problems which should be discussed and resolved. Eastern European countries seem to share the main challenges with Western European partners but they additionally need to overcome a few institutional difficulties coming both from TEI's structure and planning practice. But generally the process of integration and harmonisation have certainly positively influenced planning schools both in Eastern and Western European countries.

FORUM A+P
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Towards a System of Quality Assurance for Planning Schools: The Policy of AESOP

Willem Salet[7] *& Maros Finka*[8]

Introduction

The enhancement of the scientific and professional quality of European planning schools is in the heart of AESOPs mission. The leading motto for the quality assurance is to "promote excellence in learning, education and research". The fulfillment of this motto is pursued via a wide range of activities, including the annual conferences and head of school meetings, the thematic groups, the active group of Young Academics, the AESOP prizes for academic papers and teaching performance of planning schools, the recently started AESOP publication series on Planning Education, and a large amount of specific initiatives to collect and disseminate information concerning the quality assurance methods, instruments and procedures, to promote the internationalization of staff and students and to assure a high scientific and professional quality of education and research.

In this paper, we first briefly discuss the unique object of planning studies and the characteristic challenge of double valorization: both in the professional practices and in the domain of science. The policy initiatives of AESOP towards the quality assurance of planning studies have to address both worlds and they have to pay account to the requirements of their different context. Next, an indicative list of ongoing policy issues is given with respect to the quality assurance policies. Finally, we will discuss the backgrounds and the detailed conditions for the establishment of a unique new AESOP facility: the 'quality assurance experts advice' to local planning schools which will be provided via a new European wide Pool of Experts.

Planning studies: A tale of two masters

Planning studies face the challenge of valorisation both in practice and in science. A basic reference for the quality assurance of planning studies is the core curriculum for planning schools. Since 1995, the core curriculum (designed by AESOPs working group on planning education) has been a crucial reference for AESOPs quality assurance policies and it is still understood as a guideline for member schools, providing a wide definition of planning, basic processual and substantive competences included in the planning curricula. The core curriculum is used as a reference basis for reviewing the applications for the admission of new member schools into the AESOP. As a result, the planning schools themselves consider the AESOP membership as recognition of 'belonging to the domain of the planning discipline'. The core curriculum reflects the wide regional differentiation of planning systems and practices of the planning schools over Europe. The 'spatial planning intervention' is considered as the quintessential object of planning studies in this core curriculum.

The spatial planning intervention is context bounded, it is heading towards a better future of spatial organization, it mobilizes knowledge and action in line of this aspiration and its eventual impact will be tested in new practices of spatial organization. So, the characteristic object of planning is in all its facets directly related to experiences in practice (the intentions, the methods of knowledge and action and the outcomes). The experiences in practice are quintessential substance for this type of scientific activity, it is not exaggerating to say that planning studies are rooted in practice. The basic ingredients of the spatial planning intervention are evident for practitioners of planning but they are not at all evident for scientific researchers. Scientific planning schools do not intervene in practice. Planning schools educate the planning practitioners of the future, however, AESOP as the representative body of planning schools does not represent the practitioners of planning: it represents the 'scholars' of planning. Planning studies take a distanced scientific attitude towards the practices of planning. The distanced position, however, is not detached from practical meaning. The specific rationale of planning education and research is searching for ways to improve the ongoing practices of planning. The challenge is to find better ways for organizing

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collective spatial action in a legitimate and effective way (including all sorts of private and public sector initiatives, and manifold combinations). Planning education and research must make sense in practice. Even in the most fundamental or critical explorations, scientific planning knowledge must make sense in practice. At the same time, it is not pragmatic intervention it self, it is distanced scientific activity and must pay account to all established norms of scientific education and research.

The consequences of this doubly based identity are immense. Planning studies are highly interrelated with practices. Planning education involves practitioners, planning research is often organized in collaboration with professional networks in practices. The valorization and the dissemination of scientific findings take place in practices. At the same time, but according to completely different norms and methods, the scientific performances have to be valorized in the scientific domain. It requires that the same output of planning studies has to be valuated in two completely different forums, including different criteria of quality measurement, different languages and different platforms of dissemination. There is no third way allowing a 'sui generis' valorization of planning knowledge because of the interweaving of planning studies with various scientific studies. The increasing multi disciplinary and interdisciplinary organization of local schools has both advantages and disadvantages. The new multi actor governance context of planning schools offers many opportunities for the enriching of planning knowledge. Also, there is a certain risk of loosing autonomy of the planning discipline in current processes of academic regrouping and rescaling. The best remedy to the increasing uncertainty of external positioning of planning studies seems to invest in the own meaning of planning knowledge and from this self-confident position to keep an open mind for opportunities of enrichment via external relationships. This requires that planning knowledge meets all academic standards enabling open contacts in larger academic configurations.

New policy issues of quality assurance

The double position of planning studies requires a double strategy by AESOP in order to optimally facilitate the quality assurance systems for local planning schools. On the one hand effective cooperation with associations of planning professionals will be needed in order to enhance the interrelationships between planning schools and the professional practices of planning. With this regards, it must be mentioned that AESOP recently has joined the initiative by the European Council of Spatial Planners (ECTP) to form a Europe wide platform consisting of the representative professional planning associations (such as ECTP, ISOCARP, IFHP, CAMONA) and the representative association of European planning schools (AESOP) in order to promote the social and political position of the planning profession in European countries and in order to strengthen the mutual interrelationships. Various operational policies may be expected from this recently established platform of cooperation between European and global planning associations. AESOP is also planning specific meetings with the aim to promote further contacts between professional and scholar fields of planning, such as the 2010 Head of School meeting on the professionalization of planning studies in Istanbul which is organized in direct cooperation with ISOCARP. Also the Young Academics organize various joint activities and ateliers with young ISOCARP professionals. On the other hand, the scientific position of local schools has to be enhanced in the academic context. AESOP may help to deepen the understanding of the unique object of planning knowledge and create better conditions to enhance the scientific quality of this characteristic planning knowledge. With this regards, a process has started to improve the quality of the annual planning conferences and the thematic networks (getting more and more scientifically well based conference papers and promoting the quality of the research methodology). With regards to dissemination of scientific papers, AESOP will discuss with editors the characteristic disciplinary basis of planning journals and it will take efforts to promote the rating of planning journals and book publications.

Further development of the AESOP initiatives in this field we can see in the integration of the broad scale of AESOP activities supporting the quality development into the specific quality assurance (QA) support system for planning schools using the institutional structure of the AESOP. This should provide efficient platform for comprehensive quality support, competitiveness improvement and safeguarding the quality of education and scientific work reflecting the changing requirements concerning the learning processes, professional performance and schools of planning management. The aim is to develop a specific on planning schools oriented system of quality assurance support reflecting specifics of spatial planning as interdisciplinary study and research field and prospective creative activity with high societal responsibility and strong links to societal practice and spatially differing planning cultures. Definition of joint quality standards reflecting the diversity of European planning cultures, introduction of joint assessment processes, joint curricula development and exchange among planning schools and professionals is crucial for recognition and free movement of planning professionals as well.

Important part of the activities integrated in the QA support system is the development of the healthy competition and cooperation among spatial planning schools via strengthening the quality standards for all AESOP activities and providing open European platforms for competition and mutual exchange in education, research and management. This is a precondition for future quality development not only at the schools of planning, but in the planning practice too, as the quality of outputs from planning schools (planning professionals, know how, expertise, etc.), their transfer and implementation into the planning practice are important preconditions for efficient spatial development management, safeguarding its sustainability, territorial cohesion, optimal environment for European knowledge based society development and competitiveness, reflecting diversity and multiculturalism as required in the Lisbon Strategy.

As the European schools of planning are integrated part of European Higher Education Area (EHEA) one of the aims of the AESOP activities in the field of quality development and assurance is to promote involvement of European planning schools in QA activities in EHEA providing comprehensive information about the QA issues, assessment criteria, activities of international institutions and their relevance for the planning schools. This should be supported via establishment and activities of the Quality Assurance Pool of Expertise (QAPE). The main aims of the QAPE is to cumulate knowledge and create reference basis for benchmarking and innovations, to deepen joint understanding the different European planning cultures and QAS specifics, to support QA activities of the European planning schools by providing independent expertise offered by international experts representing the QAPE. This should be understood as a user friendly reflection following own interests of the schools to improve their quality in the life long planning education, research and management.

The role of QAPE should overstep the border of academic environment by providing information about the best practices, problems, models, methods and specific experiences from planning environment in order to deepen joint understanding the different European planning cultures and quality assurance specifics in collaboration with leading European professional organizations. This collaboration can be supportive for the transformation of good examples and best practice experiences to the differentiated parameterized quality indicators, incl. principles of equality and inclusion used in the assessment processes.

The establishment of AESOP Pool of Experts

The successive Head of School meetings of Leuven 2007, Lodz 2008 and Lille 2009 held intensive and very fruitful debates on alternative options to extend the AESOP facilities of quality assessment on top of the regular recognition of planning schools according to the indicators of the core curriculum. Such different and ambitious options have been explored, as the possible introduction of a special AESOP 'vignette of excellent performance', or to define 'standard quality indicators' that should enable the comparable measurement of local performances, or even new procedures for a full accreditation by AESOP. Finally, all deliberation has resulted in the unequivocal conclusion that only light institutionalization of quality assessment will be feasible in a European wide association with many different local cultures and - even more important - that local schools prefer information and experts advice by international experts above a new round of accountability. With respect to quality assessment, the role of AESOP is complementary to the role of the other European institutions in the field of the higher education system and - within this framework – to the national systems of accreditation. Complementary to European university institutions, such as the European University Association (EUA) or the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQUA), AESOP has outstanding potential to promote specific quality support with respect to the education and research in the field of spatial planning. The specific contribution by AESOP to the already existing national and international procedures of quality assessment is not to formally assess, to accredit or to certificate the local schools of planning but to create the platform for comprehensive quality support via specialized communication & information and via additional services on a voluntary base, such as advices to local schools via the AESOP pool of international experts. AESOP intends to collect and to provide relevant information and models of good practice to its members, including the following:

- comprehensive information about the quality assessment criteria and procedures, about the methods and instruments of quality assurance, different quality assessment procedures of international institutions, their activities and relevance for the planning schools;
- the benchmarking reference basis collecting the information about good practice in teaching, and deliberate performance in research and planning practice, about the inspiring practice in the management of planning schools;
- the transforming of good examples and best practice experiences to the (differentiated) parameterized quality indicators (for local uses of benchmarking).

In this way a sound data basis will be developed on behalf of the improvement of the competitiveness of the local planning schools in different cultures and a continuous process of safeguarding the quality of the education and the scientific work under changing conditions (in particular the changing output requirements).

In addition to this trajectory of information and communication, a new and unique instrument will be developed in order to provide an interactive and reflective assessment of local schools (in the role of 'critical friends') via the establishment of an international QA Pool of Experts. This interactive and reflective assessment will be organized as a unique instrument. The present statement marks the transition of the stage of exploring different potential uses of the AESOP Pool of Experts to the stage of implementation and defines the goals, the terms of the product and the way of organization of the new reflective assessment facility. The new facility will be organized as a process of mutual learning, on the one hand giving advice to and reflecting with the local schools but on the other hand also enhancing the learning process at AESOP wide level about the different contexts and challenges of local schools: the different environment of the activities, the different planning cultures, the planning systems and the specific societal contexts of the planning policies. AESOP will use the information for gradually developing differentiated sets of quality indicators which might be useful for local bench marking.

Quality Assurance Expertise Pool

Goals

The QA Expertise Pool is proposed to be one of the crucial instruments in the quality assurance policy of AESOP. The establishment of the QA Pool of Experts aims at mobilising informed advice by international experts on behalf of local planning schools. The QA Expertise Pool embarks on a trajectory of 'learning by experience', learning not only about different performances but also about the consequences for European wide standards of quality. The process of learning via local experiences has to be organized explicitly in order to enable progress of central (AESOP wide) quality assurance policies. This pool should integrate the materialised expertise and the human potential of outstanding experts form the AESOP member schools and cooperating professional organisations. The function of the AESOP QA Expertise Pool is to carry international experience to local schools. When local schools develop new planning curricula or research programs, or when they face more specific problems with respect to quality of education, research, or the management of both, they might learn form the materialised expertise collected in the pool or appreciate advice by AESOP experts about international experiences and international quality standards. The advices are meant for local use (confidential) but by providing this service the group of experts may deepen the expertise on the differentiated spectrum of local conditions and problems.

The main role of the expertise pool is:

- to provide independent expertise offered by the international experts knowing the regional or local specifics of existence and educational process of AESOP member schools;
- to provide the outside, user friendly reflection following own interests of the schools to improve their quality based on own problem definition and self-analyses of the schools;
- to launch specific activities supporting the competitiveness of the AESOP member schools
- to inform AESOP about the differentiated local experiences in order to deepen the understanding of differentiated quality indicators.

The uniqueness of this new QU facility of AESOP lies in the following points:

- the mobilisation of the prestige and cumulative international expertise of AESOP to local schools;
- the independent character of expertise offered by experienced participants knowing the regional or local specifics of existence and educational process of AESOP wide member schools;
- the outside view and user friendly interaction and reflection, following the own interests of the schools to improve their quality on the basis of own problem definition and self-analyses of the schools;
- offering the support for developing own quality assurance system development by focusing more in depth on quality issues and problem solutions instead of formal assessment.

Product

The QA Pool of experts offers a reflective and interactive assessment of performances of local schools. This regards both the three cycles of planning education, the research and the management:

- curriculum bachelor planning education;
- curriculum master planning education;
- curriculum PhD education;
- Research plan planning school;
- Management of planning school.

The qualitative assessment is at request and at costs of the local school. The local school may decide which parts of the above mentioned options will be addressed. In order to enable a qualitative assessment by outside experts, the applying schools are required to produce a SWOT analysis of the substantive matters which they like to have assessed. Furthermore, in order to enable a really reflective advice on future performance, the schools are required to define the dilemmas on the future of their school on the selected substantive matters. The coordinator of the Pool of Experts deliberates with local school about the intensity of the assessment (only written advice, or also visit to school, duration of visit, etc.).

Organization

The coordination of the QA Pool of Experts will be arranged in a structural way. Every outgoing President of AESOP will act for a period of two years as the coordinator of the Pool of Experts, to be succeeded after two years by the next outgoing president. Peter Ache will be the first coordinator from July 2009 until July 2011. The coordinator will act as the responsible contact person for the outside world, applications of schools will be addressed to the coordinator. The coordinator will closely deliberate on all relevant policy issues with the Quality Officer of EXCO AESOP (presently Maros Finka). The coordinator may or may not be assisted with some experienced colleagues in a core group in order to support the process of implementation (according to his own preferences) but only the coordinator will be responsible for the implementation of the facility and will act as the visible contact person for local schools: (s)he will nominate the experts and the ad hoc groups of experts for local assessment for respective tasks and activities, (s)he prepares and signs the contracts with local applicants, etc. The ad hoc selected groups of experts will implement the advice to local schools resulting in a (confidential) written report on behalf of the local school and the coordinator. The coordinator produces an annual report of generalised findings to AESOP EXCO.

Qualification of experts for the expert pool

The activities of the QA Pool of Expertise are managed by the coordinator. The experts creating the QA Expertise Pool are recruited from the AESOP member schools and (possibly) the collaborating professional organisations. They are nominated by the member schools, by the COREP members, or EXCO members, or they can offer their capacity by themselves. The members of the QA Expertise Pool should represent broader experience of the teaching, research and planning practice as well as of the management of the educational process (including the quality assurance). Their expertise can be based on their own involvement in the education and research in the schools of planning or on their reflections from the collaboration with them form the position of planning practice. They should represent regional/local specific as well as international experience. Persons who may have personal tights or interest with the applying school or university shall not be considered for this particular expert team.

Procedure guidelines for development a case of QA experts` support

The process of expertise will be initiated by a planning school of a university that seeks for expert assistance. The school will indicate the issue(s) that the assistance of AESOP is sought for. The school seeking for the assistance should attach own self-evaluation including SWOT analysis and dilemmas for future actions as seen by its staff. The request of the school should be directed to the coordinator of the QA Expertise Pool. Upon receiving such request, the coordinator will first consider (possibly with his core group) whether (1) such request is conform to the AESOP mission of the quality assessment, and (2) the request is complete to start the assessment procedure. The coordinator may ask for additional information in order to enable the assessment. If these two prerequisites are fulfilled, the coordinator will nominate the ad hoc expert team out of the list of the expert pool on behalf of the implementation of the local assessment. The ad hoc expert team will comprise three persons at the minimum, with one member as the chair. The coordinator arranges the contract with the local school (including the budgeting of costs). The documentation submitted by the school for the expertise will be distributed by the coordinator among the

members of the designated expert team. The types and sequence of the procedures of quality assessment will be individually set by the expert team for each individual case of expertise, following the nature of expertise and issues requested as well as any other considerations. Typically, the steps of the expertise procedure will consist of the next steps:

- request for additional information, particularly explanations concerning the issue of the expertise and the self-evaluation;
- internal discussion of the received materials among the members of the ad hoc expert team;
- possible personal visit to the school or any other direct contact by a member / members of the expert team with the school staff, with interviews and discussions of preliminary findings;
- elaboration of interim report and recommendations by the expert team and providing it to the head of the school;
- personal visit to the school by the expert team, with discussing of the interim report;
- elaboration of final report and recommendations and providing it to the head of the school and to the coordinator of QA Pool of Expertise.

All documentation will be collected by the coordinator. The coordinator selects relevant issues for AESOP on behalf of his annual report. Before publishing or providing any part of the documentation from the part of AESOP, consent of the head of the school is necessary. However, this may not obstruct accumulation, use and dissemination of knowledge received by experts and expertises for the benefit of the quality of planning education.

Learning process

The experience on diverse modes and models of planning gained during the cases of the quality assessment expertises will be collected and recorded in the QA Pool of Expertise Web Archive in order to cumulate knowledge. The coordinator sends the generalized information in his annual report to AESOP (leaving out the confidential parts) and also all relevant other documentation to AESOP on behalf of dissemination on the AESOP web, after having acquired the agreement of the local head of school. This information will be made public for the AESOP wide member schools and for the general public. Generally applicable findings, especially those dealing with matters for identifying modes and models of planning education and their applications by particular schools, will be made public.

Start

COREP Liverpool approved the present proposal. The coordinator of the QA Pool of Expertise will start the implementation of the pool and he will announce via AESOP Website a Call for Applications as soon as the process of implementation is ready for the kick-off.

Quality in Planning Education: the Vision of AESOP

Roelof Verhage[9]

The quality of planning education in Europe is a central concern of AESOP. In order to assure this quality, AESOP has developed numerous activities:

- 1990: towards a European core curriculum in planning education
- 1995: AESOP Statement on planning education
- 2004: Book "Improving planning education in Europe"
- 2007: Bologna survey (+ update)

The 1995 AESOP statement of planning education still offers an adequate description of the "core curriculum" of planning schools. Moreover, the concerns of the beginning of the 1990s are still topical: increasing internationalisation of planning practice, fear of standardisation of planning curricula if EU would work towards accreditation and getting full national recognition of the planning profession in some countries.

The 1995 statement therefore offers a good basis towards a more systematic approach to quality assessment by AESOP. A closer look into it allows the identification of a key issues to be dealt with when engaging in "European wide" quality assessment: this activity has to deal with the tension (identified in the 1995 statement) between:

- "European countries to a large extent face the same kind of planning problems".
- "European countries are becoming more and more aware that exactly their differences … are perhaps the most important assets of this continent".
- As a consequence, the Core curriculum requirements should not be too detailed in order to allow for differences between planning schools. The central elements of the core curriculum of spatial planning education are the following:
- Theoretical and practical knowledge on the desirability of, legitimacy of and conditions for purposeful planning intervention;
- Theoretical and practical knowledge on the preparation and advancement of such interventions and on judging the effects thus generated;
- Technological knowledge and skills to actually engage in planning activities in real life situations

The translation of these central elements into core requirements is structured in three categories. The core curriculum develops the knowledge that the students should acquire, competencies that they should develop, and a professional attitude that they should develop. It also states that students should have the possibility to specialise in particular fields of planning. Besides these "learning outcomes", the core curriculum contains practical requirements concerning the duration of the programme and the link with planning practice.

This core curriculum is still up to date, and could serve as a basis for further steps in the process of quality assurance by AESOP. In concomitance of the last two AESOP Head of Schools meeting specific working group have been organized focussing on the above discussion. The present contributions aim to resume the outcomes of these working groups, and to contribute to address a way forward for AESOP in the concern of promotion of quality in planning education in Europe.

Building on AESOP 1995 core curriculum: evidences from Lods HoS meeting

During the AESOP HoS meeting that took place in Lodz in 2009, the issues presented above have been discussed through by five questions: (i) Is it realistic for AESOP to prepare this type of quality assessment? (ii) If the answer is yes: where are necessities for further development? (iii) Where should we start? Can we

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take the 1995 document? (iv) Which shape should the AESOP core curriculum take? (v) How can we organise this?

i) The question whether there is a political will to develop assessment is important. It makes no sense to do anything when there is no need for it or when we cannot deliver. And AESOP can deliver a description of the core curriculum, it has proven it in the 1995 statement. A central question that needs to be answered though, in order to take the core curriculum further, is the required level of abstraction. A high level of abstraction is probably necessary in order to be operational in different contexts. But: how to determine the level of precision that is required in the core requirements?

From the point of view of Italy, turning the core curriculum into quality criteria for planning schools is not only realistic, but it is necessary. The core curriculum needs to be addressed in parallel to the issue of accreditation. For Italian schools to get accreditation, the experience of fellow schools is important. Many schools have longer traditions than the Italian schools. Now they have to reform their planning curriculum in line with the Bologna process, they need to know what other schools do.

Part of the answer here needs to be a reflection upon what we want to achieve with the core curriculum. The answer probably is multiple. The core requirements can serve:

- To define the planning profession in contexts where it has to get legitimacy.
- To do quality management (assessments, but also helping to create quality).
- To allow mobility of planning professionals.
- To assure quality of planning education in a context of increased mobility of students, between countries and between studies.

ii) The situation has changed a lot since 1995, so core curriculum needs to be revised. A very important change is the change to bachelor and master. We have to reflect upon how to introduce this into the core curriculum.

The core curriculum is very good, but there are three main developments since 1995 which make its revision necessary:

- Bologna process,
- Changes in the profile of professionals: globalisation, European integration,
- More attention for quality assessment in higher education.

The question is: how to revise the 1995 core curriculum and make it applicable to bachelors and masters. Especially the bachelors are posing problems. Public administration does not always accept bachelors as students who finished their studies. The question whether the difference between bachelor and master is only a matter of “going deeper into the material” or whether there is a structural difference between bachelor and masters is very important. The answer is probably that the difference goes further than only going deeper into the material, because bachelors students come from another background then masters students.

The RTPI answer to the question is a focus on learning outcomes. These are the same for bachelors and masters. Also: professional accreditation (becoming a chartered member of RTI) is only possible after a masters’ degree.

Other differences which could exist between bachelors and masters: there is a difference in the degree of independency. That is a learning outcome, and we could define a level for that in a certain way.

In this respect, a core curriculum requirement could also concern input requirements: what do students need to know to start a masters degree. This can be based on the diploma supplement of the bachelor they fulfilled, compared to the core requirements.

Another reflection upon the bachelors masters question: what do we think about the duration of a planning degree? Three years could be too short to deliver professionals. In relation to this, if ever we want to have core requirements, than we should make sure that these are minimum requirements.

iii) The 1995 statement seems to be a good starting point to take the issue of quality assurance further. But it is important to find the right level of precision in the definition of the criteria. A “concretisation” of the general criteria of the core curriculum is required.

iv) Some elements to take into account concerning the shape of the AESOP core curriculum:

- We have to be aware that the profile of the bachelor is formulation towards professional employment and towards further study.
- We have to build into the professional environment knowledge about the limits of the professional standards, and of the ways certain conditions can be acquired by professional experience.
- The core curriculum should combine minimum standards and the possibility of developing high quality. AESOP should show what the optimum could be and help the schools in attaining this. But the two need to be addressed in a separate (but combined) way. This is important because of the different functions of the AESOP curriculum requirements: assessing quality (labelling) and stimulating excellence, helping planning schools to develop, etc. Both activities require different procedures.
- The definition of what we do is necessary, because it is the basis for what we want to teach. We might need to distinguish between spatial planning and spatially relevant plannings.
- We have to decide whether we want to formulate the core requirements in terms of inputs (evaluation the contents of the curriculum) or formulate it in terms of outcomes (evaluation of learning outcomes). That means that the ultimate test for the curriculum is the works of the students.

v) An AESOP working group should take this issue further. This can be presented as a follow up of the bologna working group. This working group should at the same time work at the "quality management system" that AESOP is providing. The core requirements are one of the elements of the AESOP quality management system. In fact, the reflection upon the AESOP quality management system is the central thing to do. And that reflection should start with a reflection upon what exactly we want to achieve by this system. At the same time, we have to be aware that a lot of things exist in quality assurance. We should only develop things where AESOP has a real value added (to existing accreditation systems).

In order to proceed in this direction, the following where seen as potential elements of AESOP way forward:

1. Adaptation of the contents of the core requirements
   - « operationnalise » the core requirements: towards a checklist
   - Distinction Bachelor and Masters level: other requirements or same requirements but different degree of understanding?
   - Create sensitivity to national situations: propose different models, use « best practice »
2. Develop the practical modalities
   - Offer assistance in (national) procedures of quality assurance
   - Develop a procedure for quality assessment by AESOP
   - Create and offer expertise in evaluation of planning curricula

In the following section, a working document on the evolution of AESOP admission criteria for new member schools is presented. The document constituted the main focus of discussion of one of the working group of AESOP HoS meeting that took place in 2009 in Lille, whose outcomes are also included in this issue right after this contribution.

Towards AESOP admission criteria for new member schools

> *"AESOP and especially its individual members will try to ensure that planning education in European member states follows the core curriculum"*
>
> *"AESOP will develop and maintain a directory of planning schools that adhere to the curriculum"*
>
> *"AESOP will look for any opportunity to advance the requirements of the core curriculum to become the European Standard"*
>
> *(1995 AESOP Statement on planning education)*

In order to take further steps in the direction announced in the 1995 AESOP statement on planning education, AESOP has started a process towards a clearer definition of the required qualities of planning schools[10]. This has been discussed at the AESOP Heads of Schools meetings in Leuven in 2007 and Lodz

[10] See Geppert and Verhage (2008), Towards a European recognition for the planning profession, *Planning education*, n° 1 and minutes of the 2008 Lodz HoS meeting.

in 2008. A next step in the process is the "operationalisation" of the AESOP core curriculum, as laid down in the 1995 statement, in the form of a check list for planning schools. This checklist could be used for the admission of new member schools, making this process more transparent and contributing to the AESOP core curriculum becoming the European standards for planning education. This document presents a first draft of such a checklist, for discussion at the 2009 HoS meeting in Lille.

Generalities

The curriculum of AESOP member schools is articulated around three core issues:

- Theoretical and practical knowledge on the desirability of, legitimacy of and conditions for purposeful spatial planning intervention;
- Theoretical and practical knowledge on the preparation and advancement of such interventions and on judging the effects thus generated;
- Technological knowledge and skills to actually engage in spatial planning activities in real life situations.

An interdisciplinary approach is a requirement in order to address these issues adequately.

Education - learning outcomes

Difference Bachelors / Masters Degree

The issues that are being addressed in a Bachelors and a Masters degree of spatial planning, and the knowledge, competencies and attitudes that are transmitted are basically the same. However, the degree to which knowledge, competencies and attitudes are internalised by the students vary.

- Graduates of a Bachelors degree in spatial planning are able:
  - to enter into a programme delivering a masters degree in spatial planning;
  - to actively participate in the identification, analysis and solution of spatial planning issues and problems in a professional context.
- Graduates of a Masters degree in spatial planning are capable of independently dealing with spatial planning issues, at any stage of the process from the identification of planning problems and issues to the implementation of solutions.

The differences between Bachelors and Masters Degrees have consequences for the respective curricula at two levels:

- Teaching modalities: at the Masters level, a heavier emphasis is put on the confrontation of students with real life planning problems than at the Bachelors level. An individual dissertation is a requirement at the Masters level.
- Complexity of taught material: Graduates at the Bachelors level should have a comprehension of the mechanisms underlying spatial planning issues. In the course modules, this sometimes requires an analytical approach focussing on parts of spatial planning issues at a time. Graduates of the Masters level should be able to deal with the complexity of spatial planning issues. This requires a more global and synthetic approach in the course modules.

Students entering a Masters degree should have successfully completed a Bachelors degree, but not necessarily in the field of spatial planning.

Core curriculum requirements

Knowledge:

- General (disciplinary) knowledge applied to spatial planning (minimum 25% of credits in Bachelors, 15% of credits in Masters degree)
  - Disciplinary (geographical, economical, sociological, historical, …) approaches to the object of spatial planning: the natural and man-made environment.

- Developments in the natural and man-made (economic and social) environment and knowledge of men's exploitation, i.e. possibilities for sustainable development

- Specific knowledge of spatial planning (minimum 25% of credits in Bachelors, 15% of credits in Masters degree)
  - The nature, purposes, theory and methods of spatial planning;
  - The history of spatial planning as an institution and a profession;
  - The cultural differences of spatial planning on a European and an international level
  - The political, legal and institutional context of spatial planning practice
  - The instruments and performance of instruments for implementing planning policies
  - Specialised fields in spatial planning and the relationships across and between these fields
  - Competencies:
- Professional skills specific to spatial planning (minimum 15% of credits in Bachelor, 25% of credits in Masters degree)
  - Methods for problem definition and collaborative problem solving in interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary settings
  - Thinking in terms of concepts, instruments and measures and management of knowledge for practical application
  - Valuing and managing the built and natural environment
  - Anticipating future needs of society, including the appreciation of new trends and emerging issues in planning
  - Integrating aesthetic and design dimensions in spatial planning proposals
  - Devising plans, programmes and measures and guiding implementation policies
- Tools used in the professional field of spatial planning (minimum 10% of credits in Bachelors, 15% of credits in Masters degree)
  - Techniques for data collection and for data analyses and synthesizing
  - Techniques and tools for the graphic representation of spatial planning proposals
  - Methods for generating strategic spatial planning proposals and the advancement of implementation

Professional attitude

Based on an awareness of:

- Spatial planning to be basically oriented towards solving the needs of society within the framework of sustainable development
- The cultural embeddedness of the man-made environment;
- The value dimension of planning;
- The ethical implications of planning

No minimum of credits is attached to this category of learning outcomes, as they are addressed to a large extent throughout courses in the first two categories.

The remaining 25% (Bachelors degree) or 30% (Masters degree) of credits are to be used according to the particularities of each school.

Practical requirements

In order for the above mentioned learning outcomes to be assured, a number of practical requirements concerning the organisation of the degree, the teaching modalities and the composition of the teaching staff should be fulfilled.

Duration

- A Bachelors degree in spatial planning requires a duration of minimum three academic years or 180 ECTS.

- A Masters degree in spatial planning requires a duration of minimum one calendar year or 90 ECTS, to be realised after the successful completion of a Bachelors degree.

Teaching modalities

- Planning schools propose a variety of teaching methods, in order for the students to obtain a variety of skills (lectures, applied work, seminars, workshops, internships, study trips, individual and collective dissertations, …)
- During both the Bachelor and the masters degree, regular exposure to and interaction with planning practice is required. The exposure of students to real life planning problems can take the shape of study trips, intervention of planning professional in course modules, interviews with professionals, training periods, professional workshops, …
- A "European dimension" is present in the curriculum. This can take various forms (student and teaching staff exchanges; field trips; course modules on planning in other countries).
- Students have the possibility to specialise in particular fields of planning, by choosing optional courses, training periods, dissertations, …
- At the Masters level, the individual realisation of an individual dissertation on a spatial planning issue is required of all graduates.

Teaching staff

- The composition of the teaching staff reflects the interdisciplinary character of planning education: various disciplinary backgrounds or specialisations should be represented (policy science, geography, architecture, law, economics, …)
- Professionals working in the field of planning are involved in various teaching modules (especially at the masters level) in order to assure the connexion with planning practice.

Students

- The recruitment of students from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds (geography, economy, sociology, law, policy sciences, architecture, engineers, …) is encouraged, or at least students from various disciplinary backgrounds have the possibility to enter into degrees in spatial planning.

Research

The planning school – through the intermediary of its staff members – is not only involved in transferring knowledge (teaching), but also in producing knowledge (research), and has a concern for linking research to teaching. In order to do this effectively:

- Members of (teaching) staff are involved in research projects and programmes concerning spatial planning or related issues.
- Members of (teaching) staff direct PhD theses and actively involve PhD students in teaching activities.
- Members of (teaching) staff are active in the dissemination of research findings to a wide audience, including students.

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Making Use of the Dublin Descriptors of Academic Quality

Anna Geppert[11]

Introduction: the Dublin descriptors of academic quality in the context of the Bologna process

In June 1999, at their meeting in Bologna, European ministers of higher education and research set an agenda for the process of building a European Higher Education Area, which has been officially launched at the Budapest-Vienna meeting of 12 March, 2010 (Budapest-Vienna Declaration, 2010). The three overarching objectives of the Bologna process have been the introduction of the three cycle system (bachelor/master/doctorate), recognition of qualifications and periods of study throughout Europe and quality assurance. Regarding the latter, the Bologna declaration has endorsed the objective of "promoting European co-operation in quality assurance with a view to developing comparable criteria and methodologies" (Bologna declaration, 2007, p.4).

As Higher Education is not a competence of the European Union, the choice of these methodologies and criteria remains national. However, national Quality assessment agencies collaborate within international networks, such as the European Association for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ENQA) which has, with the support of DG Education and Culture, produced two initiatives endorsed by the ministerial meeting in London (London communiqué, 2007, p.4). The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) establish a shared methodological background to the development of quality assurance. The European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) which aims to provide information about trustworthy quality assurance agencies operating in Europe.

In 2009, the ministerial meeting in Benelux enhanced student-centred learning which comes with "the necessity for ongoing curricular reform geared toward the development of learning outcomes" (Leuven-Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué, 2009, p.3). With this respect, in 2004, an informal network for quality assurance and accreditation of bachelor and master programmes in Europe, the Joint Quality Initiative, has proposed a shared set of descriptors of academic quality for Short Cycle, First Cycle, Second Cycle and Third Cycle Awards, referred to as the "Dublin descriptors".

The Dublin descriptors of academic quality should be understood as complementary with the Bologna instruments aiming to facilitate student mobility (ECTS system). Also, they contribute to "elaborate a framework of comparable and compatible qualifications for their higher education systems, which should seek to describe qualifications in terms of workload, level, learning outcomes, competences and profile." (Berlin communiqué, 2003, p.4). Also, they should be consistent with the instruments expressing this overarching framework of qualifications in The European Higher Education Area (Diploma Supplement, Europass curriculum vitae).

The aim of this paper is not to give the opinion of the author regarding the Dublin criteria, but to introduce this set of "Dublin descriptors" to the Planning community. Also, this contribution is limited to gathering information and providing materials which may be used to open a discussion regarding the appropriateness and adaptability of this nomenclature for our disciplinary field. We will proceed in three steps. Part 1 exposes the Dublin descriptors and provides an example of implementation of this nomenclature in a Master in Planning. Part 2 shows how the learning cycles are differentiated in this nomenclature. The conclusion reflects upon the possible actions that AESOP, which has the mission of promoting excellence in Planning Education and Research, may undertake with respect to this European evolution in the field of Quality assessment.

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A typology focusing on learning outcomes

The “Dublin criteria” proposed by focus on learning outcomes, divided into five “families” :

- Knowledge and understanding
- Applying knowledge and understanding
- Making judgements
- Communication
- Learning skills

These learning outcomes may be general (transversal) or specific (disciplinary). In 2007-2008, the author has participated to a joint diploma in spatial planning of the University of Reims (France) and the Slovak Technical University of Bratislava. In this trans-national context, the Dublin descriptors appeared useful for the analysis of the goals of the Master programme. The final typology produced (Fig. 7) provides an information complementary to the description of teaching units in the program (Fig. 8). In no case is this example proposed as a “universal” solution – planning programs vary in their scope, teaching methods, and develop various professional skills – but as an illustration of how learning outcomes and program courses may interact.

Figure 7 : Acquired competencies and learning outcomes according to the Dublin criteria

K - Knowledge and understanding with regard to: • Spatial planning and policy-making in different institutional contexts; • Theoretical foundations of planning concepts, methods and styles in a comparative international perspective; • The processes that determine urban and regional development as well as their interconnectedness with the three dimensions of sustainability (economical, societal, environmental) ; • Robust knowledge reflecting the current state of the art within the 2 specialisations chosen in the program’s offer : Territorial policies of the European Union – Planning cities and regions for competitiveness – Planning the transition towards the knowledge society – Regeneration of wide distressed urban areas – Project management – Innovative tools for planning)
T- Technical skills: ability to apply the knowledge to the professional practise: • Carry out advanced studies on current problems, opportunities and future needs in the field of planning at the local, national and international level and for this purpose: • Use quantitative and qualitative tools for spatial analysis • Analyse the game of the stakeholders • Relate a planning question to its social, economical, environmental, political context • Propose a comprehensive strategy to cope with a planning issue and for this purpose: • Develop inter-sectoral and mutli-scalar approaches • Evaluate the institutional and financial implications of a planning project and/or policy • Carry out an environmental assessment of of planning project/policy
O- Overall ability to judge: • Assess the merits of various theoretical and policy-based analyses of planning • Detect the implicit assumptions in theoretical and societal views on planning problems • Contextualise planning objectives and policies in different timely, cultural and institutional backgrounds • Develop their own opinion on the nature and manner of dealing with new planning problems
C- Communicative skills: • Make effective and oral an written presentations of complex tasks in urban planning and regional development • Use of the modern communication techniques and tools • Lead and work in international, multi-disciplinary contexts • Negotiate with institutional and non-institutional stakeholders
L- Learning abilities: • Independently track developments within the discipline • Define his needs and make good use of life-long professional learning opportunities • Adapt to the evolutions of a career and when relevant develop/transform his profile • Study at post-mater level, including PhD

Figure 8 : The parallel approach in terms of teaching programme, Joint diploma of "Master in Spatial Planning of the University of Reims (France) and the Slovak Technical University of Bratislava (Slovak Republic).

	STUBA – Bratislava	University of Reims
S1	***Fundamentals I*** 1. Courses (20EC) • Spatial planning and regional development • Territorial management and marketing • Transport and technical infrastructure • Spatial Planning studio 1 2. Introduction to mobility (5EC) 3. Advanced English or Slovak for beginners (5EC) Tuition language options: English, Slovak	***Fundamentals I*** 1. Courses (20EC) • Planning law and policies • Economy and society • Environmental issues • Planning history & theory 2. Introduction to mobility (5EC) 3. Advanced English (5EC) Tuition language : French
S2	***Fundamentals II*** 1. Courses (20EC) • Social communication and psychology • Applied theory of systems and synergetics • Applied informatics, GIS, CAD • Spatial Planning studio 2 2. Introduction to mobility (5EC) 3. English for planners / Slovak for beginners (5EC) Tuition language options: English, Slovak	***Fundamentals II*** 1. Courses (20EC) • Urban planning • Public finance • Environnemental management • Project management 2. Introduction to mobility (5EC) 3. English for planners (5EC) Tuition language : French
S3	***Planning for the transition towards knowledge based society (R)*** 1. Courses (15EC) • Technology and society • New typology of spatial structures • Social ecology and social work 2.Research thesis (15 EC) on transition towards knowledge-based society 3. Slovak (5EC, optional) Tuition : English	***Planning for cohesion at the European scale (R)*** 1. Courses (15EC)) • Territorial fragmentation and spatial recompositions in the European Union • Cohesion policies of the European Union • Spatial development perspective and Territorial agenda of the European Union 2.Research thesis (15 EC) on European cohesion issues and policies 3. French (5 EC, optional) Tuition : English
S4	***Regeneration of large distressed urban areas (P)*** 1. Courses (15EC) • Planning aspects of urban regeneration • Typology of urban distressed areas • Methodology of regeneration processes • Best practice and transfer of know-how 2. Studio work + prof. report (15 EC) on Urban regeneration – model areas 3. Slovak (5EC, optional) Tuition : English	***Project managment in complex situations (P)*** 1. Courses (15EC) • Prof. communication • Methodology for analysis of stakeholders games • Governance and territorial engineering 2. Workshop + prof. report (15 EC) on project management in complex situations 3. French (5EC, optional) Tuition : English

Differentiating Bachelors and Masters

As a result of the Bologna process, the implementation of the three-cycle structure has widely spread in Europe and has become a dominant standard, with the exception of some specific study fields related to regulated professions. However, the interpretations of the Bachelor/Master structure vary and different models exist in different countries (Eurydice, 2010):

- 180+120 credit (3+2 academic years)
- 240+60 credits (4+1 academic years)
- 240+90 credits (4+1.5 academic years)
- 240+120 credits (4+2 academic years)

In the field of Planning as well, a common approach to Bachelors and Masters has not reached consensus so far, neither between governments, nor in the academic community. This has been confirmed by two surveys lead with the support of AESOP in 2006 (Davoudi and Elison, 2006) and in 2008 (Ache, Jarenko, 2010). In 1995, within AESOP, a working group has proposed a "Core curriculum" for the field of planning which has been endorsed by our Association but doesn't specify further the differentiation between the cycles (Geppert and Verhage, 2008, pp. 23-25). Given the evolutions within the European Higher Education Area, it would appear important for European planning schools to develop further the 1995 Core curriculum taking on board he issue of cycle differentiation (Verhage, 2010) .

Between 2002 and 2004, the Joint Quality Initiative has been elaborating on the question of the differentiation between the cycles with regard to the qualifications (Fig. 9) and the Dublin descriptors (Fig. 10). This typology is being used in some countries, like the Netherlands, and not in others. It is reported here not as an standard or ideal to reach, but as an element which might be of use if AESOP wishes to build further on the differentiation between cycles in its field of Planning.

Figure 9: Qualifications that signify completion of each cycle (working paper JQI meeting in Dublin on 18 October 2004, pp. 2-4)

Qualifications that signify completion of the first cycle (Bachelor) are awarded to students who:

- Have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in a field of study that builds upon and their general secondary education, and is typically at a level that, whilst supported by advanced textbooks, includes some aspects that will be informed by knowledge of the forefront of their field of study;
- Can apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner that indicates a professional approach to their work or vocation, and have competences typically demonstrated through devising and sustaining arguments and solving problems within their field of study;
- Have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their field of study) to inform judgements that include reflection on relevant social, scientific or ethical issues;
- Can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- Have developed those learning skills that are necessary for them to continue to undertake further study with a high degree of autonomy.

Qualifications that signify completion of the second cycle (Master) are awarded to students who:

- Have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances that typically associated with Bachelor's level, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context;
- Can apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study;
- Have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgements;
- Can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously;
- Have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous.

Qualifications that signify completion of the third cycle (Doctor) are awarded to students who:

- Have demonstrated a systematic understanding of a field of study and mastery of the skills and methods of research associated with that field;
- Have demonstrated the ability to conceive, design, implement and adapt a substantial process of research with scholarly integrity;
- Have made a contribution through original research that extends the frontier of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work, some of which merits national or international refereed publication;
- Are capable of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas;
- Can communicate with their peers, the larger scholar community and with society in general about their areas of expertise;
- Can be expected to be able to promote, within academic and professional contexts, technological, social or cultural advancement in a knowledge based society.

Figure 10: Differenciation between cycles with regard to the Dublin descriptors

Knowledge and understanding	
1 Bachelor	[Is] supported by advanced text books [with] some aspects informed by knowledge at the forefront of their field of study ..
2 Master	provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing or applying ideas often in a research* context ..
3 Doctor	[includes] a systematic understanding of their field of study and mastery of the methods of research* associated with that field..
Applying knowledge and understanding	
1 Bachelor	[through] devising and sustaining arguments
2 Master	[through] problem solving abilities [applied] in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts ..
3 Doctor	[is demonstrated by the] ability to conceive, design, implement and adapt a substantial process of research* with scholarly integrity .. [is in the context of] a contribution that extends the frontier of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work some of which merits national or international refereed publication
Making judgements	
1 Bachelor	[involves] gathering and interpreting relevant data.
2 Master	[demonstrates] the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete data ..
3 Doctor	[requires being] capable of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas..
Communication	
1 Bachelor	[of] information, ideas, problems and solutions ..
2 Master	[of] their conclusions and the underpinning knowledge and rationale (restricted scope) to specialist and non-specialist audiences (monologue) ..
3 Doctor	with their peers, the larger scholarly community and with society in general (dialogue) about their areas of expertise (broad scope)..
Learning skills	
1 Bachelor	have developed those skills needed to study further with a high level of autonomy ..
2 Master	study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous..
3 Doctor	expected to be able to promote, within academic and professional contexts, technological, social or cultural advancement .

Sources : working paper JQI meeting in Dublin on 18 October 2004, pp. 2-4

Concluding remarks: a necessary implication of AESOP in defining criteria of academic quality in the field of Planning

Whereas the precedent sections were voluntarily neutral and informative, the following remarks reflect the opinion of the author about the necessity for AESOP to engage in the definition of criteria of academic quality for the field of Planning. The goal is not easy to reach. On the one hand, the diversity of situations of Planning education and practice in European countries calls for a sensible approach, avoiding over-normative definitions and based on respect for the diversity of our schools strongly linked to our planning systems and cultures. On the other hand, Planning is being challenged by European integration and by the strong, sometimes hegemonic positions of neighbour disciplines more ancient and often more structured at national and international levels. Also, we believe that it is a necessity for the Planning discipline to better define its identity at the European level and that a common engagement towards the further definition of criteria of academic quality is part of such endeavour.

With this respect, focusing on learning outcomes and professional qualifications appears a timely approach, coherent with the priority of developing “student-centred learning” on the 2020 Agenda of the European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education (Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué, 2009). The Dublin criteria may provide a good start for a reflection about our field. Yet, their appropriateness should not be taken for granted and the question of their adaptability cannot be solved without a consistent work and a participative debate within our community.

The timing is good. AESOP is developing a quality agenda with initiatives that point in the same direction, such as the creation of a working group on quality issues and of an “expert pool” available on demand for our member schools. In 2009, representatives gathered at the 4th Heads of Schools meeting in Lille (France) have expressed the demand for collecting and disseminating information about descriptors of academic quality for the use of all (see the report of the Workshop following this paper). Rise to the challenge is possible.

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Tirana, outskirts 2011 (Photo Co-PLAN)

Rien ne va Plus
Texts on the economic crisis and its intricate relation
to architecture / Edited by Powerhouse Company

NAiM / Bureau Europa + A10

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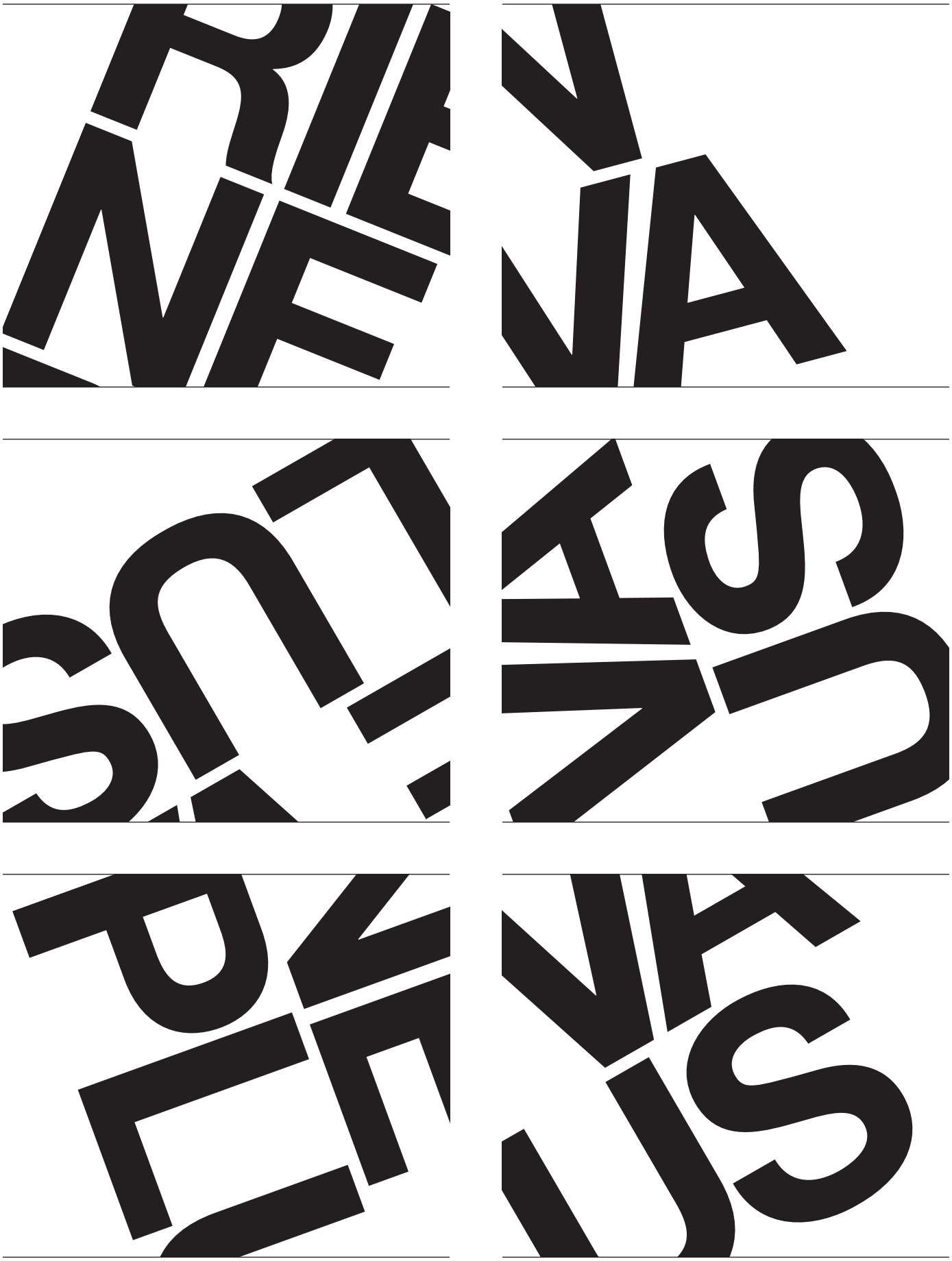

Rien ne va Plus
Texts on the economic crisis and its intricate relation to architecture / Edited by Powerhouse Company

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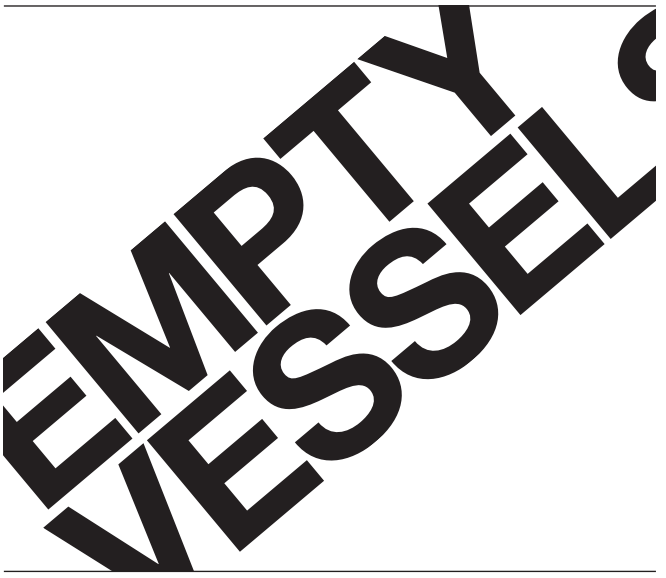

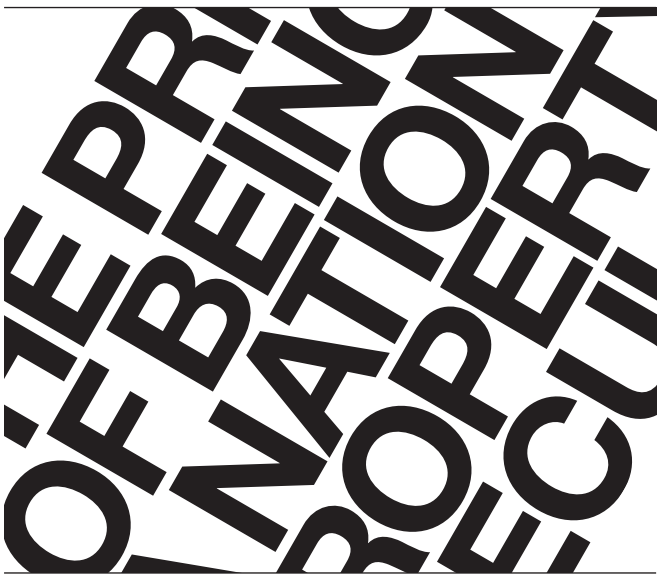

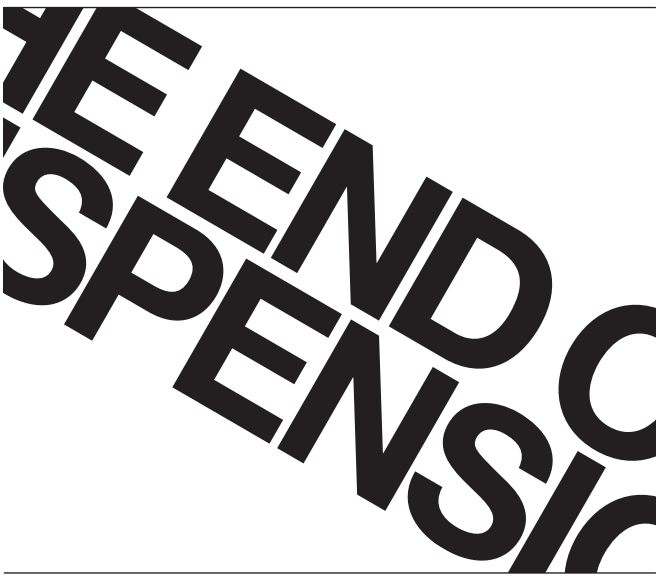

Rien ne va Plus
Nanne de Ru, Charles Bessard and Rieke Vos

The current global economic crisis, raging fully since September 2008, is already recognized as the biggest in the past 60 years and is expected to deepen even further. The social, economic and environmental impact of the crisis is unveiling a shocking truth regarding the effects of globalization, deregulation and the market economy that, at the same time, has been the basis of Western economic growth in the past few decades. During this time, the concept of business cycles, with an aggravated boom-bust sequence, has been described as the "natural" auto-regulation of the market economy. This also implies that every bust carries the undiscovered basis for a new boom. However, the extent of this particular crisis, as well as the signs that a continuation of business as usual could prove fatal for our environment, indicates that a more profound position on the current crisis is needed. The eroded morality that allowed the flourishing greed of the last decade prompted the depth of the malaise. Not only has our global economic system of a free market economy been proven to be flawed, we seem to have lost moral guidelines for dealing with the excessive results of the free market economy.

The impact of the financial crash on architecture was unforeseen and unprecedented. Architectural projects were about the first investments to be put on hold, and architects, along with bankers, were the first who suffered collective layoffs. The question, 'what's wrong with our financial system?', could be followed by the question, 'what's wrong with our architecture?'. This crisis is particularly relevant to architecture for two reasons. First, because this last boom was caused by the financial structures of real estate loans and speculation; Architecture was a means of wealth rather than well-being, with the result that houses were being built to be resold rather than inhabited. It became a speculation feeder and obtained a doubtful role as marketeer. Second, because of the evolution of the ethics of architecture as well as its position towards and engagement with the society that produces it. From the socially committed origins of modernism, to postmodernism, to fashion and icon architecture – what is left of the moral authority that the modern movement had given to architecture? And if architecture is no longer socially committed, how can it provide for much-needed sustainable solutions? How can we create architecture that is based on long-term qualities rather than on short-term profits?

Rien ne va Plus started as a research project based on the assumption that we are today witnessing three crises. First, an economic crisis caused by excessive speculation on housing, secondly, an environmental crisis giving rise to unprecedented climate changes and thirdly, a generational crisis caused by the retirement of the biggest generation ever. While reading numerous magazines and newspapers over the last year, we grew to feel that these three crises were linked. In this reader, we have compiled key texts about these three crises, without making a clear distinction which text belongs to which crisis. This is not only because these texts were not written with this assumption in mind, but also because in the end they all point towards the same intricate problem: how to grasp the complexity of these current crises and how to create an outline for the future. Within this project our aim was to try to compose the interrelation of these crises by compiling key articles on each field. The articles by George Soros and Paul Krugman point at the economic aspects of the financial crisis. The article by Wouter van Dieren and Arnold Heertje reveals the shocking link between sustainability and the current economic crisis, as they claim that the rebuilding of the current economy will be disastrous. Economist Mark Thornton has written an extensive article, shortened for this reader, on the complex relation between high-rises and economic bubbles. Bart Lootsma points at the politics of populism and its relation to real estate and architecture, whereas Martin Pawley describes the mechanism of individual housing speculation. Sociologist Louis Chauvel has written an extensive study on the consequences of the Baby Boomers and the generational rift that is now growing. Bruno Latour asks the crucial questions we are facing, namely, how to be critical in postmodern times. The reader ends with a number of articles on the position of the architect in light of these crises. Jay Merrick questions the importance of architectural icons. Saša Randićs asks how the bubble burst affects the position of architects, whereas Zvi Hecker points at the moral void left by architects and the spectacular buildings they have created over the last decade. In our final article we attempt to describe the current deadlock of architecture in terms of deregulation, speculation and the shifted morals of Baby Boomers.

In conclusion, we would like to point out that this research was never intended to create a conclusion on how to make a better practice, or how to do things better from now on. At least not immediately. The term Rien ne va Plus comes from the roulette table. It refers to the moment when all bets have been made, the moment of suspense before the outcome of chance is revealed. It is the announcement of the end of the game, with its still uncertain outcome. Literally, Rien ne va Plus is the moment where nothing goes anymore.
This compilation of texts doesn't try to predict the outcome of the bets that were taken in our global casino economy. We don't attempt to formulate the answer. Not only does the profound impact and interrelatedness of the various crises make it difficult to formulate immediate solutions, but most of all we feel that we need to make a shift in our overall mindset. That is why this document is an opening to a conversation with you, the reader. In the coming year we will be creating a series of events throughout Europe concerning this book, to initiate a dialogue about the possible solutions to these crises. We hope you will engage; articulate your position, formulate suggestions, share your thoughts and perhaps in a year from now our conversations will have led to the point where we can start to reveal possible outcomes.

Comments and remarks can be emailed to:
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George Soros is an American businessman, economist and philanthropist. He earned a fortune with stock market speculation and is currently listed on the 29th position on the Forbes World's Richest People list. However he is valued for his insightful analyses on economics. This article was previously published on January 23, 2008 in The Financial Times.

The Worst Market Crisis in 60 Years
George Soros
The Financial Times, January 23, 2008

The current financial crisis was precipitated by a bubble in the US housing market. In some ways it resembles other crises that have occurred since the end of the Second World war at intervals ranging from four to ten years.
However, there is a profound difference: the current crisis marks the end of an era of credit expansion based on the dollar as the international reserve currency. The periodic crises were part of a larger boom-bust process. The current crisis is the culmination of a super-boom that has lasted for more than 60 years.
Boom-bust processes usually revolve around credit and always involve a bias or misconception. This is usually a failure to recognise a reflexive, circular connection between the willingness to lend and the value of the collateral. Ease of credit generates demand that pushes up the value of property, which in turn increases the amount of credit available. A bubble starts when people buy houses in the expectation that they can refinance their mortgages at a profit. The recent US housing boom is a case in point. The 60-year super-boom is a more complicated case.
Every time the credit expansion ran into trouble the financial authorities intervened, injecting liquidity and finding other ways to stimulate the economy. That created a system of asymmetric incentives also known as moral hazard, which encouraged ever-greater credit expansion. The system was so successful that people came to believe in what former US president Ronald Reagan called the magic of the marketplace and what I call market fundamentalism. Fundamentalists believe that markets tend towards equilibrium and the common interest is best served by allowing participants to pursue their self-interest. It is an obvious misconception, because it was the intervention of the authorities that prevented financial markets from breaking down, not the markets themselves. Nevertheless, market fundamentalism emerged as the dominant ideology in the 1980s, when financial markets started to become globalised and the US started to run a current account deficit.
Globalisation allowed the US to suck up the savings of the rest of the world and consume more than it produced. The US current account deficit reached 6.2 per cent of gross national product in 2006. The financial markets encouraged consumers to borrow by introducing ever more sophisticated instruments and more generous terms. The authorities aided and abetted the process by intervening whenever the global financial system was at risk. Since 1980, regulations have been progressively relaxed until they have practically disappeared.
The super-boom got out of hand when the new products became so complicated that the authorities could no longer calculate the risks and started relying on the risk management methods of the banks themselves. Similarly, the rating agencies relied on the information provided by the originators of synthetic products. It was a shocking abdication of responsibility.
Everything that could go wrong did. What started with sub prime mortgages spread to all collateralised debt obligations, endangered municipal and mortgage insurance and reinsurance companies and threatened to unravel the multi-trillion-dollar credit default swap market. Investment banks' commitments to leveraged buyouts became liabilities. Market-neutral hedge funds turned out not to be market-neutral and had to be unwound. The asset-backed commercial paper market came to a standstill and the special investment vehicles set up by banks to get mortgages off their balance sheets could no longer get outside financing. The final blow came when inter-bank lending, which is at the heart of the financial system, was disrupted because banks had to husband their resources and could not trust their counterparties. The central banks had to inject an unprecedented amount of money and extend credit on an unprecedented range of securities to a broader range of institutions than ever before. That made the crisis more severe than any since the Second World War.
Credit expansion must now be followed by a period of contraction, because some of the new credit instruments and practices are unsound and unsustainable. The ability of the financial authorities to stimulate the economy is constrained by the unwillingness of the rest of the world to accumulate additional dollar reserves. Until recently, investors were hoping that the US Federal Reserve would do whatever it takes to avoid a recession, because that is what it did on previous occasions. Now they will have to realise that the Fed may no longer be in a position to do so. With oil, food and other commodities firm, and the renminbi appreciating somewhat faster, the Fed also has to worry about inflation. If federal funds were lowered beyond a certain point, the dollar would come under renewed pressure and long-term bonds would actually go up in yield. Where that point is, is impossible to determine. When it is reached, the ability of the Fed to stimulate the economy comes to an end.
Although a recession in the developed world is now more or less inevitable, China, India and some of the oil-producing countries are in a very strong countertrend.
So, the current financial crisis is less likely to cause a global recession than a radical realignment of the global economy, with a relative decline of the US and the rise of China and other countries in the developing world.
The danger is that the resulting political tensions, including US protectionism, may disrupt the global economy and plunge the world into recession or worse.

RESTORATION OF THE OLD ECONOMY WILL BE DISASTROUS

Wouter van Dieren is director of the environmental consultancy committee IMSA in Amsterdam, and is additionally a member of the Club of Rome. Arnold Heertje is an economist and professor emeritus of the University of Amsterdam. This article was previously published in the opinions section of the Dutch newspaper NRC Handelsblad on March 3rd, 2009.

Restoration of the Old Economy Will Be Disastrous
Wouter van Dieren and Arnold Heertje
NRC Handelsblad, 3 March 2009 (translated and shortened)

In less than a year, the world economy has fallen into a recession of an unprecedented nature. We prefer to call it a transition, as the characteristics of it are very different from all other recessions since the great war. Our view is that the old economic instruments do not apply and that a major shift is needed. The recipe of stimulus and budget cuts, as is recommended all over, is a wrong approach. Casino capitalism and the free market ideology have fallen flat, and we have to go beyond business-as-usual, in both our analyses as well as in our repair and cure.

That deceit of the financial market forms the basis of this current recession needs no further explanation. However there are other causes that have hardly been recognized. They are related to the overstrained behavior of present-day management, which we would like to call the 'trees-will- grow-into-heaven' illusion. Another cause is a lack of awareness amongst investors, governments, managers and economists, about natural capital, a notion that hardly even appears in economic jargon. Causes can also be ascribed to consumers whose behavior differs from the way managers and economists would want. Finally, also nature's behavior is also not conforming the old economic mantras. If we don't seize the opportunity to change these essentials, then the old instruments are deemed to fail.

A few examples. Take a look at the automobile industry. General Motors goes bankrupt because its management doesn't know the world, because they neglected the climate and energy problems and didn't understand consumers. Their 'trees-will-grow-into-heaven' is based on the belief that free trade is the only compass for their economy. It is an economy which knows no legitimacy for state interventions on saving energy and reducing CO2, in which waste is considered normal and boundaries are lacking.

A new car for every American, every three years. Regulation on emission was being contested and costly oil was bound to disappear cheaply in the whirlpool of eight cylinder engines. In Denmark high taxes are charged for new cars. Consumers maintain their cars for a decade or even longer, and as a consequence, not the sales, but the maintenance industry flourishes. In the collective prognoses of the European car industry there is little reference to the Danish model. Consumers had to co-operate: a new model every three years, and one in four Europeans owns a car, children included.

Now that the market has changed, and consumers maintain their cars a little longer, hundreds of thousands of employees are losing their jobs. Panic hits and accordingly the remedies are: demand must be stimulated and the automobile industry receives governmental support. President Sarkozy developed an outrageous plan to reclaim the production of Peugeot and Citroën from Central-Europe by subsidizing it in France. This will lead to approximately five million extra unsaleable cars. We don't even have enough parking space to store them. Should they go straight to demolition? Or should we take a look at the basis of this insanity instead? It is located in Absurdistan, a country that exists everywhere in Europe.
In Absurdistan people gain brown coal via surface mining, so we see extensive landscapes of ploughed and dug up soil, kilometers long and wide, and five hundred meters deep. Hundreds of villages had to be abandoned. The brown coal is used for power plants, which produce thousands of megawatts of energy for the neighboring blast furnaces. There they produce steel, which in return is shipped to the machine factories, where the digging machines that dig up the brown coal are produced. Even though the cycle seems circular, there is no such course, since the final product or net output is a devastated landscape and a lot of CO2-emissions. It must be admitted that employment was secure here until recently. The ones that don't believe it should travel to North-Bohemia, between Teplice and Ostrava, or to Gatzweiler nearby Kleve.
Another example, the aircraft-sector. Schiphol wants to grow, from its current 45 million passengers to 85 million in 2025. In England 228 million passengers took-off in 2005, in 2030 this number should rise to 490 million. The sum for the whole of Europe will be 1,2 billion passengers in 2030. Just to make a comparison: today people make 2 billion flights a year worldwide. For England the initiated growth would involve a new airport the scale of Heathrow every five years. For the

whole of Europe, this means ten to fifteen new Heathrows every five years. You would expect a red lamp to start blinking somewhere, because this simply cannot be true.
These so-called feedback loops are: events and effects that change, correct or slow down the linear prediction patterns, didn't seem to exist in the world view of airport management. Like, for example, oil-shortages and rising kerosene costs, climate assessments and flight taxes, regulation against sound pollution, logistical complexities on airports and flying corridors, and most of all aversion against flying itself. Not all English consumers spent their vacations at the destinations offered. But in the prognoses this is what is being expected. Because trees apparently refuse to grow five hundred meters high, management (and the stock exchange market) in the first place blames the trees. Following that, they file a profit warning, which means that one should explain to the shareholders that the trees don't do what they are supposed to do, or that the management didn't fully understand the trees. Everyone has been counting himself or herself rich. But the sum of these overstrained prognoses will one day translate into a recession.
It would be more realistic to conclude that the world economy will be pushed into reality with force. Only sequoia's grow over a hundred meters high.

The business plans of concern always count with a flow model: with rapid transfer of raw materials, transport, production, sale and consumption up to waste. There is considerably less attention for un-exchangeable, un-reproducible means of capital, such as nature, with which every producer somehow has to deal. The population of China is predicted to grow to 1,46 billion in 2030. In this year the average level of income will equal that of the US in 2009. This implies an equivalent of 1,1 bilion cars. For this, China would need 98 million barrels of oil per day. The current world production of oil is 85 billion barrels. Even if half of the automobiles were hybrid or electrical, they probably wouldn't be able to move around very much. The asphalt needed, plus the conversion for biological diesel or ethanol, presumes two times the cultivated area of what is used for rice production today.
All over the world the natural conditions of capital are dealing with these same paradoxes. Finishing natural resources pays off, but it doesn't lead anywhere. The fact that exhausting these natural resources involves dazzling sums of money, that in return appear on the economic balance sheets as growth, is not only a mathematical anomaly, but most of all should be setting off some alarm bells. The rainforests in Southeast Asia have been demolished in this way; the plundering elites live in the richness and decadency of Singapore, where the billions from destruction are added on the accounts of casino banks – and that is what we call world economy. Now that this case is being exposed in a spectacular manner, consumers are going on strike; they block the demand. The positive effects of this are countless. People are saving again. Shorter vacations and closer to home. Fewer flights and therefore less sound pollution, less CO2 and valuable energy cuts. More restrained consumption and therefore less waste. Fewer new business parks and therefore more landscape saved. Fewer housing developments and therefore less empty real estate. Count your profits, we would say, but these positive reports do not show themselves in numbers. In April Nobel Prize winner and economist Joseph Stiglitz will probably release a report, initiated by Sarkozy, that is supposed to correct these kinds of integrated flaws of the GDP. If this doesn't happen, even in times of complete exhaustion the world will continue to think that it is inevitable. Act and counteract, hence guarding the supplies, will probably be recommendated.

The world economy is a systems error. The German scientists Ernst von Weizsäcker and Friedrich Schmidt Bleek developed an interesting amendment on it called resource-efficiency, for which they received the Japanese Takeda Prize, an equivalent of the Nobel Prize. Make sure that the amount of energy and nature per GDP-unit will decrease with a factor of ten. This will result in recovering natural conditions of capital and a sustainable GDP.

A few countries have adopted resource-efficiency as a good opportunity for a new economy. In the Olivier B. Bumble-story (1), "De Bovenbazen", businessman Amos W. Steinhacker rages against these kind of proposals: "Nature is the enemy of capital! Nature works for free! And free is like a curse! Nature shouldn't produce! We should produce! We! We ourselves!" Marten Toonder wrote this passage in 1963, in a story about the credit crisis. After this recession, the world economy shouldn't be about the return to a continuously accelerating flow from raw materials to waste, it should be about restoring and creating capital in the form of permanent energy sources, stabilizing the climate, providing security against extreme weather circumstances, drought and floods, recovering nature and biodiversity and, mostly ignored, taking drastic measurements to secure agrarian production. After 2025 all phosphate will be exhausted. Without phosphate, no agriculture. End of story.

What is at stake in the real world? Energy demands will grow by 45 percent until 2030, and oil prices will grow in the coming years up to 180 dollars per barrel. Greenhouse gas emissions will increase by 45 percent until 2030, and as a result temperatures will rise with six percent. The consequences are beyond all imagination. The economic costs alone will amount to five to ten percent of the world's GDP – a multiple sum of what the credit crisis has cost so far. And four billion people will have to survive below the poverty line in 2030, mostly due to flaws in the economic system and climate change. The ones that, in the last couple of years have turned to banks or the global casino for investments in sustainable innovation have been told constantly that their plans weren't bankable, because the risk would have been too high. But the real reasons behind the refusal to invest in the future has become clear now.
The ones that amuse themselves in a pyramid game don't want to hear about the desert. If we act blind and deaf to the cry for a greener, safer and more secure world, it could result in populist escapades. If we support the banks with tax money, yet do not prevent casino capitalists from tackling these same banks with their behavior on the stock market, it will unmistakably lead to collective consumer cynicism instead of to the trust that politicians and enterprises yearn for. Pleading for the dismissal of environmental regulation because it would impede economic recovery is wrong, not only on analytical grounds, but also in an economic respect. Environmental regulation has created millions of jobs since the 1970s and has an effect increasing wealth. Dynamic leaders, projectdevelopers and politicians who say they endure inconvenience by these kinds of regulations, should re-consider. It's not the regulations, but their own incompetence that creates blockades.

This recession is different from all previous ones, and the old economic repertoire won't suffice in giving the answers. The signs that we are in an historical transition become clearer every day. We predict that both the American and the Chinese economies will be quicker in setting up this transition than the European. Indeed, the neo-liberal model may evaporate as Rhine capitalism is being restored, but Europe still has a deficit in think tanks and academic institutions within which this transition can be anchored, not to mention the enduring resonance of market ideology, the misperceptions of climate skeptics and the prevalence of yesterday's ideas which emerge as white smoke from the chimneys on our outdated government buildings.

Notes

(1) Olivier B. Bumble (Olivier B. Bommel in Dutch) is a fictional anthropomorphic bear and main character of an originally Dutch series of comic books written by Marten Toonder between 1946 and 1986.

Paul Krugman is a Nobel Prize-winning economist. He has gained general fame through his weekly columns in The New York Times in which he often openly criticised the Bush administration and lately the Obama administration.
A longer version of this article has previously been published as a column in The New York Times on December 19, 2008.

The Madoff Economy
Paul Krugman
The New York Times, December 19, 2008 (shortened)

The revelation that Bernard Madoff – brilliant investor (or so almost everyone thought), philanthropist, pillar of the community – was a phony has shocked the world, and understandably so. The scale of his alleged $50 billion Ponzi scheme is hard to comprehend. Yet surely I'm not the only person to ask the obvious question: How different, really, is Mr. Madoff 's tale from the story of the investment industry as a whole?

Consider the hypothetical example of a money manager who leverages up his clients' money with lots of debt, then invests the bulked-up total in high-yielding but risky assets, such as dubious mortgage-backed securities. For a while – say, as long as a housing bubble continues to inflate – he (it's almost always a he) will make big profits and receive big bonuses. Then, when the bubble bursts and his investments turn into toxic waste, his investors will lose big – but he'll keep those bonuses. OK, maybe my example wasn't hypothetical after all.

So, how different is what Wall Street in general did from the Madoff affair? Well, Mr. Madoff allegedly skipped a few steps, simply stealing his clients' money rather than collecting big fees while exposing investors to risks they didn't understand. And while Mr. Madoff was apparently a self-conscious fraud, many people on Wall Street believed their own hype. Still, the end result was the same (except for the house arrest): the money managers got rich; the investors saw their money disappear.
We're talking about a lot of money here. In recent years the finance sector accounted for eight percent of our GDP, up from less than five percent a generation earlier. If that extra three percent was money for nothing – and it probably was – we're talking about $400 billion a year in waste, fraud and abuse.
But the costs of America's Ponzi era surely went beyond the direct waste of dollars and cents.
How much has our nation's future been damaged by the magnetic pull of quick personal wealth, which for years has drawn many of our best and brightest young people into investment banking, at the expense of science, public service and just about everything else?
Most of all, the vast riches being earned – or maybe that should be "earned" – in our bloated financial industry undermined our sense of reality and degraded our judgment. Think of the way almost everyone important missed the warning signs of an impending crisis. How was that possible?
The answer, I believe, is that there's an innate tendency on the part of even the elite to idolize men who are making a lot of money, and assume that they know what they're doing.
After all, that's why so many people trusted Mr. Madoff.

SKY SCRAPERS AND BUSINESS

Mark Thornton is an American economist of the Austrian School and a senior fellow at the Ludwig von Mises Institute in Alabama. Since 2004 he has done extensive research on the housing bubble. A longer version of this article was previously published in The Quarterly Journal of Austrian Economics, vol. 8, no.1, Spring 2005.

Skyscrapers and Business Cycles
Mark Thornton
The Quarterly Journal of Austrian Economics vol. 8, no.1,
Spring 2005 (shortened)

The skyscraper is the great architectural contribution of modern capitalistic society, and is even one of the yardsticks for twentieth-century superheroes, but no one had ever really connected it with the quintessential feature of modern capitalistic history – the business cycle. Then, in 1999, economist Andrew Lawrence created the "skyscraper index", which purported to show that the building of the tallest skyscrapers is coincidental with business cycles, in that he found that the building of world's tallest building is a good proxy for dating the onset of major economic downturns. Lawrence described his index as an "unhealthy 100-year correlation". The ability of the index to predict economic collapse is surprising. For example, the Panic of 1907 was presaged by the building of the Singer Building (completed in 1908) and the Metropolitan Life Building (completed in 1909). The skyscraper index also accurately predicted the Great Depression with the completion of 40 Wall Tower in 1929, the Chrysler Building in 1930 and the Empire State Building in 1931.
What is the nature of the relationship between skyscraper building and the business cycle? Surely, building the world's tallest building does not cause economic collapse, but just as clearly, there are economic linkages between construction booms and financial busts. What theoretical connections can be made between skyscraper building and business cycles? Andrew Lawrence noted overinvestment, monetary expansion and speculation as possible foundations for the index, but did not explore these issues. With the destruction of the World Trade Center and the increased threat of terrorism, the skyscraper index may have already lost its usefulness for future prediction (1), but even if that were the case, the theoretical linkages between skyscraper building and business cycles may still have usefulness in improving our understanding of business cycles and the economic theory behind them.

Do Skyscrapers Predict?

Lawrence (1999a) was apparently the first to make the claim that the construction of the world's tallest building is correlated with impending financial crisis, although the subject of the world's tallest skyscrapers and their relation to economic crisis is also prominent in Grant (1996). Lawrence showed that in almost all cases the initiation of construction of a new record-breaking skyscraper preceded major financial corrections and turmoil in economic institutions. Generally, the skyscraper project is announced and construction begins during the late phase of the boom in the business cycle, when the economy is growing and unemployment is low. This is then followed by a sharp downturn in financial markets, economic recession or depression and significant increases in unemployment. The skyscraper is then completed during the early phase of the economic correction, unless that correction was revealed early enough to delay or scrap plans for construction. For example, the Chrysler Building in New York was conceived and designed in 1928 and the groundbreaking ceremony was conducted on September 19, 1928. "Black Tuesday" occurred on October 29, 1929, marking the beginning of the Great Depression. Opening ceremonies for the Chrysler Building occurred on May 28, 1930, making it the tallest building in the world.

The skyscraper index is a leading economic indicator in that the announcement of building plans predates the onset of the economic downturn. There have been four major skyscraper booms in the twentieth century, interspersed by periods of relative normality and less severe business cycles.
Figure 1 presents the history of the world's tallest buildings and demonstrates that many major economic downturns were associated with their construction.

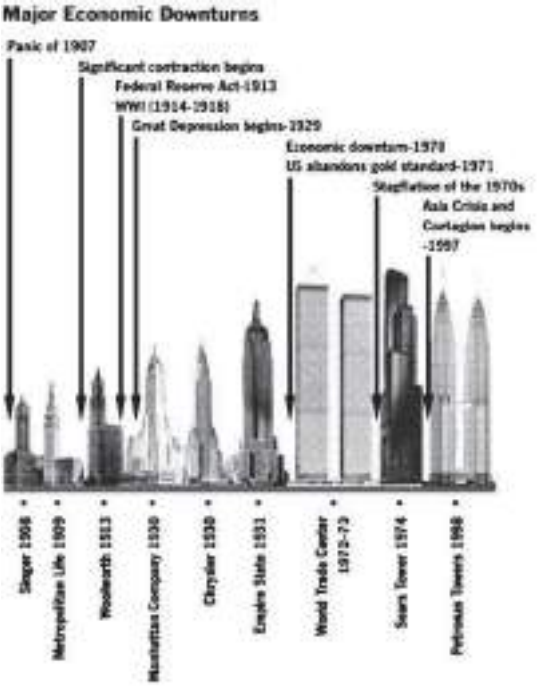

Figure 1: Skyscrapers and Economic Crises

The first skyscraper cycle occurred between 1904 and 1909 and included the Singer Building becoming the world's tallest when completed in 1908, and the Metropolitan Life Building setting a new record in 1909. The Panic of 1907 occurred at a time when seasonal factors relating to fall harvests coincided with cyclical factors in money and credit. It was ignited into financial panic when a bank regulated under the National Banking system refused to clear funds for the Knickerbocker, an unregulated trust. The result was widespread runs on banks and one of the sharpest downturns in American economic history. This episode is particularly important and of continuing relevance because it is widely considered to be a key event in the passage of the Federal Reserve Act in 1913. The Panic is widely considered to have been caused by problems associated with the structure and regulation of the National Banking system. The solution adopted was to increase the size and regulatory power of the national government in matters of money and banking, although

in recent years some economists have questioned whether that was the proper response. Naturally members of the Free Banking School such as Lawrence White and George Selgin would be critical of such a policy response. See Rothbard (1984) for a public choice critique of the founding of the Federal Reserve. (2)

Bypassing the Woolworth Building, which at first does not seem to fit the general pattern in Lawrence's analysis, the second episode of the world's tallest buildings occurred at the onset of the Great Depression.Three record-setting skyscrapers were announced during the late 1920s, when the stock market boom was being matched by booms in residential and commercial construction. In 1929, the skyscraper at 40 Wall Street was completed at 71 stories, followed by the Chrysler Building in 1930 at 77 stories, and the Empire State Building in 1931 at 102 stories. Clearly, there was a capital-oriented boom in the construction of ever-taller buildings before the Great Depression. The third major cycle of skyscraper records occurred in the early 1970s. Once again the economy was coming off a strong and sustained boom in economic activity during the 1960s. The economic downturn of 1970 marked the beginning of more than a decade when the economy struggled with inflation and recession, as well as disrupted institutions and markets. From 1970 to 1982 the American economy suffered from stagflation, several deep recessions and from high levels of the misery index (inflation rate + unemployment rate). As the last vestiges of the gold standard were being abandoned and the Bretton Woods system was disintegrating, construction workers in New York and Chicago were busy building the next set of the world's tallest buildings. Breaking records set in the early days of the Great Depression, One World Trade Center was completed in 1972 and Two World Trade Center was completed in 1973, both at 110 stories. In Chicago, the Sears Tower was completed in 1974, which was also 110 stories but reached a height of 1,450 feet compared to the 1,368 feet of the World Trade Towers. Once again, economists failed to anticipate the downturn in the economy, failed to provide a good explanation for the economic problems, and did not provide effective remedies for the economic problems of the day. Even though high oil prices occurred after the economy began its contraction, the theory of "supply shocks" was born.
The fourth cycle ushered in the East Asian economic crisis. The Pacific Rim countries such as Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, and South Korea experienced significant economic growth during the 1980s and 1990s. With the region's leading economy, Japan, in recession and stagnation for much of the 1990s, the "Asian Tigers" were considered miracle economies because they were strong and durable despite being small and vulnerable. The Petronas Towers were completed in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in 1997 setting a new record for the world's tallest building at 1,483 feet, beating the old record by 33 feet (the two towers were only 88 stories high compared with the 110-story giants built in the early 1970s). It marked the beginning of the extreme drop in Malaysia's stock market, rapid depreciation of its currency, and widespread social unrest. Financial and economic problems spread to economies throughout the region, a phenomenon known as the "Asian Contagion".

The common pattern in these four historical episodes contains the following features. First, a period of "easy money" leads to a rapid expansion of the economy and a boom in the stock market. In particular, the relatively easy availability of credit fuels a substantial increase in capital expenditures. Capital expenditures flow in the direction of new technologies, which in turn creates new industries and transforms some existing industries in terms of their structure and technology. This is when the world's tallest buildings are begun. At some point thereafter, negative information ignites panicky behavior in financial markets and there is a decline in the relative price of fixed capital goods. Finally, unemployment increases, particularly in capital and technology-intensive industries. While this analysis concentrates on the U.S. economy, the impact of these crises was often felt outside the domestic economy.
It would be very easy to dismiss the skyscraper index as a predictor of the business cycle, just as other indicators and indexes have been rightly rejected. However, the skyscraper has many of the characteristic features that play critical roles in various business cycle theories. It is these features that make skyscrapers, especially the construction of the world's tallest buildings, a salient marker of the twentieth-century's business cycle; the reoccurring pattern of entrepreneurial error that takes place in the boom phase that is later revealed during the bust phase. In the twentieth century the skyscraper has replaced the factory and railroad, just as the information and service sectors have replaced heavy industry and manufacturing as the dominant sectors of the economy. The skyscraper is the critical nexus of the administration of modern global capitalism and commerce, where decisions are made and transmitted throughout the capitalist system and where traders communicate and exchange information and goods, interconnecting with the telecommunications network. Therefore it should not be surprising that the skyscraper is an important manifestation of the twentieth-century business cycle, just as the canals, railroads, and factories were manifestations in previous times.

Cantillon Effects in Skyscrapers

The skyscraper is considered an art form, but its construction is essentially a business that must pay heed to incentives and constraints; and therefore skyscraper construction can be expected to closely follow even small changes in relative prices. In re-evaluating the early skyscraper artistically, Huxtable (1992, pp. 23–24) noted: "Essentially, the early skyscraper was an economic phenomenon in which business was the engine that drove innovation. The patron was the investment banker and the muse was cost-efficiency. Design was tied to the business equation, and style was secondary to the primary factors of investment and use... The priorities of the men who put up these buildings were economy, efficiency, size and speed".

Changes in the rate of interest (the relative price between consumption goods and capital goods) can have three separate Cantillon effects on skyscrapers. (3)
All three effects are reinforcing and all three effects are interconnected to the transformation of the economy toward more roundabout production processes. When the rate of interest is reduced, all three effects contribute to the desire to build taller structures. The world's tallest buildings are generally built when there is a substantial and sustained divergence between the actual interest rate and the natural rate of interest, where the actual rate is below the natural rate as a result of government intervention. When the rate of interest increases, the financial effects reduce the value of existing structures and the demand to build tall structures, and when combined with depressed economic activity, the desire to build at all.
The first Cantillon effect is the impact of the rate of interest on the value of land and the cost of capital. A lower rate of interest tends to increase the value of land, especially in the central business districts of major metropolitan cities. Land values rise because lower rates of interest reduce the opportunity cost or full price of owning land. Treating the rate of interest as an exogenous cause, a reduction in the interest rate will increase the demand for land and result in an increase in land prices. However, the overriding issue with land is "location, location, location", so that the interest rate will have differential effects on land prices.
When the rate of interest is falling, the land best suited for the production of the longer term, more capital intensive and more roundabout methods of production will increase in price relative to land better suited for shorter term, more direct methods of production. As land prices generally rise, the yield from any

piece of land that would make ownership of it profitable also rises. Combined with a lower cost of capital brought about by a lower rate of interest, land owners will seek to build more capital-intensive structures, and at the margin this will cause land to be put to alternative uses. In the central business district this means more intensive use of land and thus higher buildings. Simplified, higher prices for land reduce the ratio of the per-floor cost of tall versus short buildings and thus create the incentive to build buildings taller to spread the land cost over a larger number of floors. Lower rates of interest also reduce the cost of capital, which facilitates the ability to build taller. Thus, higher land cost leads to taller buildings. (4)
The second Cantillon effect from lower rates of interest is the impact on the size of the firm. A lower cost of capital encourages firms to grow in size and to become more capital intensive, and to take advantages of economies of scale. Production and distribution become more specialized and take place over a larger territory. Instead of a dairy farmer raising cows and producing milk for the domestic market, larger firms raise a greater quantity of dairy cattle, ship raw milk to processing plants and ship processed dairy products back to wholesale and retail distribution sites. The production of dairy products becomes more roundabout, but also more productive. As part of this more roundabout production process, firms develop central offices or headquarters, as well as marketing offices, within their market territory. This increases the demand for office space in central business districts. This demand in turn raises rents and encourages the building of more, and still taller, office buildings within the central market district.
The third Cantillon effect is the impact on technology of constructing taller buildings. Inevitably, record-breaking skyscrapers require innovation and new, untried applications of technology. Buildings that reach new heights pose numerous engineering and technological problems relating to such issues as building a sufficiently strong foundation, ventilation, heating, cooling, lighting, transportation (elevators, stairs, parking), communication, electrical power, plumbing, wind resistance, structural integrity, fire protection and building security. There is also a host of "public" issues connected with increases in employment density brought about by tall structures, such as transportation congestion and environmental concerns. (5)
Beyond the mere technology it takes to build the world's tallest building, every vertical beam, tube, or shaft in a building takes away from rentable space on each floor built, and the more floors in the structure, the greater the required capacity of each system in the building, whether it is plumbing, ventilation, or elevators. Hence, there is a tremendous desire to innovate with technology in order to conserve on the size of building systems or to increase the capacity of those systems. Therefore, as the height of construction rises, input suppliers must go back to the drawing board and reinvent themselves, their products and their production processes.

All three Cantillon effects resulting from lower rates of interest are, of course, interrelated and reinforcing. All three are generally recognized by those involved in the building of large office buildings, including architects, bankers, contractors, design specialists, engineers, entrepreneurs, finance specialists such as bond dealers, government regulators and the tenants themselves. In addition to the location and prestige of a skyscraper address, tenants place higher value on office space with better light, view, and networking opportunities. (6)
Higher interest rates discourage the building of taller buildings, and of construction in general, because capital is scarcer and land is less in demand, and available at lower prices. Existing structures experience financial difficulties that relate back to Cantillon effects, such as higher borrowing costs, lower capital asset values, and a decreased demand for office space. Firms engaged in office building construction and their suppliers face a decrease in the demand for their services, the impact of which falls hardest on those firms who specialize in the production of the tallest buildings. It is not atypical for the owners of such buildings and the builders of such elaborate construction projects to go bankrupt during economic slumps.
The interest rate is what makes the construction business, in part, such a speculative business. Home builders build "spec houses" and face the risk of finding a buyer at a profitable price. Developers build speculative office buildings, which, in contrast to many corporate headquarters, are investments that rely on an uncertain flow of rental income. Separating the winners from the losers is not as much a matter of greed as it is a matter of time. Carol Willis (1995, p.157) explained the difference between normal times and boom times: "In normal times, when costs of land, materials, and construction are predictable, developers use well-tested formulas to estimate the economics of a project. These calculations are based on the concept of the capitalization of net income. This value takes into account the net income for thirty or forty years... the conventional market formulas and the concept of economic height were widely known and followed in the industry. Most speculative building was not risky, but reserved in its calculations and highly responsive to market desires".
All of the normal calculations that help ensure profit and avoid loss are not, however, reliable during the boom phase of the business cycle. As Willis explained (1995, pp.157–58):
"In booms, the so-called rational basis of land values is disregarded, and the answer to the question 'What is the value of land?' becomes 'Whatever someone is willing to pay'. Some speculators estimate value on new assumptions of higher rents; others simply plan to turn a property for a quick profit... But due to the cyclical character of the real estate industry, the timing of a project is crucial to its success, and the amount a property reaps in rents or sale depends on when in a cycle it is completed or comes onto the market".

Building the world's tallest building has been a matter of particularly bad timing by entrepreneurs, and even if they were able to successfully steal away enough tenants from the remaining pool of renters, the economic problem for society is that valuable resources are lost in the process of constructing buildings that are bad investments and under-utilized. (7)
However, it is not the entrepreneur's formula that is at fault, but a system-wide failure that has occurred periodically throughout the twentieth century and before, known as the business cycle. Hoyt (1933) found the building cycle was a "motion of a definite order" lasting 18 years, on average, from peak to peak.
But Willis (1995, p.159) raised the key issue as it relates to skyscrapers: "Indeed, a key question about cycles is, if their pattern is so predictable, why don't people foresee the inevitable bust? This conundrum can perhaps be answered by looking more closely at the dynamics of speculation and at a typical skyscraper development".

Hoyt suggested that the cycle is long enough for people to forget the lesson of the previous cycle and thus not be able to apply it to the next cycle. However, the building cycle is much more volatile than their 18-year average would suggest, and the construction industry is affected by other cycles of shorter duration. Together with the impact of local economic conditions and government intervention, the combination blurs any usefulness of the simple knowledge that business cycles exist. As Willis (p.164) noted: "After the collapse of an inflated market, it is easy to look back on the grave errors of judgment that preceded a crash; yet the basic indicators of the twenties economy seemed to promise unimpeded growth. Pent-up demand for office space after World War I, the expanding numbers of the white-collar workforce, and the increasing per-person average for office space all fueled the building industry. Each year, the summaries of annual construction figures reported record numbers".
Willis did correctly identify that "easy financing underlie all booms", but this does not answer her conundrum because easy financing and low interest rates are also at the heart of genuine economic growth. The entrepreneur's problem is that profit

calculations cannot show for sure whether interest rates will remain low and projects will succeed (economic growth) or rates will rise and projects will fail (business cycle). It seems that only time will tell.
The business cycle may indeed have a predictable pattern, but its timing and magnitude may be beyond rational human construction. Overbuilding by the construction industry is not a problem of the construction industry per se, but a problem of too much financing and some sort of government-caused distortion. For example, Hendershott and Kane (1992, pp. 61–69) made the following conclusions concerning the construction boom of the 1980s: "Why did our nation overbuild so much and so long? The answer lies largely in the distortion of private incentives by misguided governmental policies on both the regulatory and legislative fronts... Building requires both construction and permanent financing; overbuilding requires too much of each, financed at too low a rate... developers have traditionally used substantial debt financing and this tendency was especially strong in the U.S. during the 1980s. Highly leveraged building projects were a natural response to government-distorted incentives".

Buildings and Business Cycles

An office building is a capital good that is used to bring a variety of consumer goods to market in the sense that production in the office building involves the decision-making process over all aspects of the firm. Its use is ubiquitous in "big business" and is totally absent in small businesses such as family farms, hot dog stands, plumbing services, auto body repair shops, etc. As such, the office building is a critical capital good in very roundabout production processes that represent virtually all modern production and all cutting-edge goods and service production. The modern economy is inextricably linked with the large office building, or as Willis (1995, p.181) put it: "Skyscrapers are the ultimate architecture of capitalism".
A re-examination of the evidence suggests that the skyscraper index is a better predictor than first formulated by Lawrence (1999). Obviously this does not suggest that building heights should be used as a guide to fiscal and monetary policy or that skyscraper heights should be limited to prevent economic crisis. It does, however, lend additional standing to the Austrian theory of the business cycle. (8)
Furthermore, it suggests that both the cause of skyscrapers reaching new heights and severe business cycles are related to instability in debt financing, and that the institutions that regulate debt financing should be re-evaluated, if not replaced with more efficient and stabilizing institutions.

Notes

(1) Glaeser and Shapiro (2001, p.15) did not find a statistically significant effect between the amount of terrorism and the numbers of skyscrapers built. They also note that the number of skyscrapers may not be market determined because of government intervention (e.g., building codes) as well as the builder's desire for personal aggrandizement.
(2) Naturally members of the Free Banking School such as Lawrence White and George Selgin would be critical of such a policy response. See Rothbard (1984) for a public choice critique of the founding of the Federal Reserve.
(3) Cantillon effects are named after their discoverer, economist Richard Cantillon (1680–1734). He was the first to show that changes in the money supply and credit have important impacts on the economy: an increase in the supply of money will cause economic expansion, but this process will ultimately be self-reversing, as prices will rise and imports will increase, hence sending money back out of the economy. See Thornton's original article pp. 58–59.
(4) See Atack and Margo (1996). They examined the market for land in New York City during the nineteenth century. Their evidence suggests that land values tended to increase during deflationary periods, but less so during inflationary periods.
(5) Kim (2002) showed how increases in skyscraper building and, in particular, improvements in skyscraper technology, lead to increases in employment density.
(6) See for example the evidence presented by Colwell and Cannaday (1988).
(7) See for example Hendershott and Kane (1992, p.68), who estimated that there was more than $130 billion wasted in the commercial construction boom of the 1980s. The Empire State Building was nicknamed the "Empty State Building" because of its high vacancy rates until after World War II.
(8) For a comparison of Austrian business cycle theory with many of the competing business cycle theories see Zijp (1993), Cochran and Glahe (1999), and Garrison (2001).

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The Price of Being a Nation of Property Speculators
Martin Pawley
The Architects' Journal, 17 February, 2005

Home Truths

Long ago a little-known commentator put his finger on the heart of our housing problem. If we go on like this, he wrote (in the mid-1980s, when, by 21st century standards, we barely knew what to 'go on like this' meant), houses would end up earning more money than the people living in them.
At the time this was intended as a statement of the ridiculous but we now know it was a statement of the obvious to come. And now it has come: people's houses really are earning more than they do, and as a result every householder has been turned into an untaxed, self-employed developer.

In this new situation the production of new houses – which were numerous enough to act as the government's means of controlling the housing market as recently as the 1970s – has been overtaken by the tidal wave of transactions involving existing houses that nowadays outnumber new ones by a huge margin. No one should doubt that this is a momentous issue in itself, but it is yesterday's issue. We should no longer be allowed to forget that the century of owner occupation was the 20th, while we are citizens of the 21st, the century of owner speculation, and in consequence our take on the housing problem is different.

For a start we are all experts now, not amateurs.

We can no longer plead that we thought we were answering a deep call of human nature when we took out our first mortgages. Now we have to admit that we were in it for the equity and the untaxed capital gain. Deep in our subconsciouses we have erased any lingering idea that our houses are primarily private places to eat, sleep and raise families. If we still want that sort of anachronistic dwelling we will have to fight to keep ourselves out of the housing market, as did the 93,000 Birmingham council tenants who last month voted overwhelmingly against handing the running of their homes over to a new housing association – which they correctly saw as the first step towards a privatisation deal of some sort guaranteed to get them onto the street.

The true 21st-century house, trimmed for market combat, will of course resemble a 19th-century vicarage – like every other house in this country, new or old – although somewhat downsized and possibly constructed from blue kryptonite that automatically lights up at night.
Nominally it will be a three-bedroom dwelling, but in practice it will operate like a small hotel, run by a single householder with an offshore bank account but minimal furniture and the constant presence of tenants who pay cash and are always changing. For their benefit, every room in the house, except bathrooms, will be kitted out with a bed, a currency dealer's workstation and an automatic teller machine. In this way, the traditionalism that disfigured so many of the chintzy houses of the owner-occupier era will give way – at least internally – to a rigorous functionality, reflecting the fact that many of these houses will remain unoccupied for long periods and may be sold three or four times every year while their value increases.

In 1978, four times as many houses were sold as houses built. By 1988, ten times. By 2008, perhaps a hundred times as many will be sold or refinanced. Nothing will stop it. Industry is finished and the oil is running out. We are a nation of speculators adjoining a continent of tenants, just as surely as the Easter Islanders were a statuary economy in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

Better get used to it.

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The Paradoxes of Contemporary Populism
Bart Lootsma
www.architekturtheorie.eu (shortened)

The rise of populism in Europe goes hand in hand with the crisis of the welfare state and representative democracy. Therefore it is no wonder that architecture, although maybe not in the sense of exceptional architectural masterpieces, but as housing and urbanism, is one of the main issues for populist politicians. The issue is primarily about financing, ownership and shifting large flows of money from the government to the private sector. Populist arguments are largely about these issues too. They are about the possibility to own and invest in one's own house and about the freedom the owner may have to shape it to fit his or her individual needs and desires. Therefore, this issue is not so much about architectural style as it is about the freedom to live the way one wants and to design his or her own property. This is central to populist arguments. But the rhetoric of postmodernism may in some cases be helpful for populist politicians, and in the end the results of populist politics may be largely postmodern or historicised in a confused way. Populists and postmodernists may not necessarily share the same enemy, but they at least share a common symbol of an enemy, the large pre- and postwar modernist housing estates. For populists this symbol represents the state, for postmodernists it represents Modernism in its most alienated form.

Processes leading to the privatization and deregulation of the housing market are not new. They started already in the 1970s in Thatcherist England, were accelerated in the 1990s and the first years of this century under the politics of the Third Way in the Netherlands, Great Britain, Germany and Austria, and under the pressure of budgetary conditions for European countries to participate in the Euro. In a relatively short period of time, compared to the period it took to establish systems of public housing, this has already led to considerable shifts in the financing of the built environment.
As the building industry is responsible for a large part of a nation's economy, these shifts led to shifts in power as well, and paved the way for new forms of populist politics. This is perhaps not so different from the way Silvio Berlusconi's political success was largely enabled by his control over the media industry in Italy. Real estate firms largely financed the late Dutch populist Pim Fortuyn and his political parties.

Together with health care and education, providing public housing has been at the core of the welfare state from the beginning. Over the last century, in most European countries, in order to deal with housing shortage, caused by large-scale migration from the countryside to the industrialised cities, war and the post-Second World War baby boom, and its consequences – speculation, unhygienic living conditions and an uncontrollable growth of several metropolises – different systems of housing corporations were created that develop, build and today manage enormous estates of affordable housing. These corporations are financed by rents, state-guaranteed loans and subsidies, and employ large numbers of people. Today, the housing stocks and land by themselves represent a considerable amount of capital.

After periods of great success in the 1920s, 1930s, 1950s and 1960s, from the early 1970s on there is a growing dissatisfaction with the housing these corporations provide. Particularly in the reconstruction period after the Second World War and the economic and technological growth of that period, housing production became largely industrialised and standardised to be able to cope with the massive demand – which it did extremely successfully. The monotony, anonymity and mono-functionality of these quarters became appreciated less and less. In the same period, the nineteenth-century quarters and city centres had been neglected or torn down. Housing corporations and

architects came up with new concepts of housing, which succeeded each other rapidly. However, they could not do whatever they wanted because important parts of the system are also complex laws, rules, norms and regulations that form the conditional framework for subsidies and further financing. These notably limit the amount of square metres and typologies in relation to price. Most of this legal and financial framework was developed in the 1930s and 1950s, in a period in which Western societies were still defined by class distinctions. Public housing was developed for the masses that, in a representative democracy, would serve their interests. Representative democracy and industrial production, by their nature, are both very suitable for handling issues that relate to large quantities and statistical data. Within the enclosed space of the nation-state, prognoses based on population surveys were still reliable. For example, the predictions about the growth of a city like Amsterdam from 1929, stating that the city would have between 800.000 and 1.2 million inhabitants in the year 2000, were quickly reacted upon and enabled the city to work with the famous Algemeen Uitbreidingsplan by Van Eesteren and Van Lohuizen, until recently with only minor interpretational changes.

Today, such predictions would be almost impossible as cities are globally related in such complex ways that local surveys, even in combination with comparisons to other cities, would never be enough. On top of that, from the 1960s on, a process of individualisation developed in Western welfare states. Paradoxically, individualisation is also largely a consequence of the success of the welfare states. While individualisation may have first appeared as something to fight for, today we realise more and more that is something that is forced upon us – be it by the soft seductive strategies of the media industry and politicians or by the economic and political forces that create migration. Paradoxically, the basis of individualisation is formed by both the eternal desires for the dream world of freedom and the fear of poverty, starvation and war. It is produced by prosperity and high levels of education that make people able to choose and to decide for themselves, just as much as by the economic deprivation that tears people away from their traditional bonds, families and communities. (1)
All of this challenges the way the welfare state traditionally takes care of housing and urbanism. People, with all their individual biographies and desires, demand individual solutions for their lives.

Now, if we take populism as 'a rhetorical style that holds that the common person is oppressed by the "elite" in society, which only exists to serve its own interests, and therefore, the instruments of the State need to be grasped from this self-serving elite and instead used for the benefit and advancement of the people as a whole', and if we see populists as reaching out 'to ordinary people, talking about their economic and social concerns', appealing 'to their common sense', then it is obvious that the systems and organisations that were developed to provide public housing are ideal targets for populists from both the left and the right and any direction or route in between. (2)
And indeed, almost all political parties are guilty of it. It has, in reaction to the success of the populists, even become normal and acceptable. Or, as the new leader of the former social democratic party in the Netherlands recently wrote in the left-wing intellectual weekly De Groene: 'A little bit of populism is allowed'. (3)

The most worrying, and unfortunately predominant, form of populism in Europe today is not a grassroots phenomenon. It is a specific form of what Thomas Frank calls 'Market Populism'. (4)
Frank describes the 1990s as an era of 'many and spectacular avant-gardes, of loud and highly visible youth cultures, of emphatic multiculturalism, of extreme sports, extreme diets and extreme investing'. But even if we 'marvelled at the infinite variety of the Internet and celebrated our ethnic diversity' we have probably hardly ever seen such an amount of intellectual consensus about the role of businesses in society. Even the leaders of the left parties accommodated themselves to free market faith and the 'New Economy'. Frank analyses how politicians throughout the political spectrum started to believe that markets are a populist system, which is more democratic than democratically elected governments.
'With their mechanisms of supply and demand, poll and focus group, superstore and internet, markets manage to express the popular will more articulately and meaningfully than do mere elections. By their very nature markets confer democratic legitimacy, markets bring down the pompous and the snooty, markets look out for the interests of the little guy, markets give us what we want'.

'Many of the individual components of the market-populist consensus have been part of the cultural-economic wallpaper for years', Frank writes. 'Hollywood and Madison Avenue have always insisted that their job is simply to mirror the public's wishes, and that movies and ad campaigns succeed or fail depending on how accurately they conform to public tastes. Similarly, spokesmen for the New York Stock exchange have long argued that stock prices reflect popular enthusiasm, that public trading of stocks is a basic component of democracy. And ever since William Randolph Hearst, newspaper tycoons have imagined themselves defenders of the common man'. Still it remains surprising how populism, originally a rebellion against the corporate order and a political tongue reserved by definition for the non-rich and non-powerful, has now become the tongue of the wealthy.

Frank explains this by saying that the generation of '68 in the United States, the generation that is in power today, was not interested in class struggle, but in the first place despised the 'wisdom and values' of the American middle class. Therefore the Republicans could often harvest electoral gain from within the working class by appealing to these values, like patriotism and the family. This echoes what Francis Fukuyama writes in his introduction to 'The End of History and the Last Man', in which he argues that capitalist democracy is the end phase of society. (5) Fukuyama emphasises the importance of 'thymos', the feeling of self-respect, and relates it to religion, nationalism, the whole complex of ethical values and norms of a people and the way people feel united in small communities. This may not (be) true for the United States in the more radical forms we have learned to know over the last couple of years, whereby we should not forget that it was never was a welfare state. In the United States, Jeffersonian philanthropy and charity, sometimes carried out by large organisations, have always taken up large parts of the tasks of the welfare institutions that in Europe were created by self-organisation, revolution or by means of a representative democratic process. Most recently, it is the new phenomenon of the 'capitalist churches', television churches like the Houston- based Lakewood Church, that on one hand provide many welfare-like services, and on the other have an enormous effect with a populist version of Baptist religion preaching that 'everyone can be a winner'. (6)
Taken seriously in Forbes, and sometimes reaching 95 percent of American households, these churches have become an influential factor in American politics. In Europe we do not see these kind of desperate and radical developments yet. We must admit that it is true, however, that in Europe the generation of '68 was also less interested in class struggle than it originally may have seemed. On the other hand, until the 1990s, the influence of left-wing parties, the fact that much poorly paid work was done by immigrants and production was being moved to countries with low wages made the middle class so dominant that the class struggle seemed over.
Still, also in Europe we see a reflection on cultural and family values that is increasing in reaction to massive immigration in some cities, particularly after 9/11.

The real reason for the revival or rebirth of all these values, however, is not necessarily to be found in the values themselves. The reason has more to do with the way in which they are connected to the values of new successful entrepreneurs that support their populist protégés, or front men with money, that enables them to market and advertise themselves in ways other politicians could only dream about.
These are the paradoxes of market populism: its critique of the presumed dominant elite of the welfare state is not in the service of the people but of a different, new elite that is the product of the successful welfare state itself, and the way this success was dealt with in Third Way politics.

In the 1990s the Netherlands, like most European welfare states, joined the international trend in which the government withdrew. The unification of Europe had an important part to play in this, because the creation of a free market without frontiers took precedence. This obliged the Dutch government to abolish, privatise or adapt many (semi-) governmental bodies, subsidy regulations and laws. For architecture and urbanism, the most important moment in this process was the abolition of subsidies for social housing in 1994. The debts of the housing corporations were remitted all at once and since then they have had to operate as independent concerns without governmental support. The corporations may have lost their subsidies, but more important seems to be that the government has lost a crucial planning instrument. With the enormous amount of residential building taking place, it had been until then a reasonably controllable and certain factor in the creation of national recommendations for town and country planning, regional plans and urbanisation plans. The government was able to make clear decisions about where residential building was allowed and where not. But the government also lost control over the architectural and urban quality of the new quarters themselves. In the Vierde Nota Ruimtelijke Ordening Extra (Fourth Recommendation Town and Country Planning – VINEX), the exact locations for residential building were still indicated, but, in anticipation of the transition to a free market system, constructors, investors and speculators began to buy up the land at these locations. They often do this in an extremely strategic way, following for example the 'zebra model', in which they buy strips of land from farmers in certain areas, leaving other strips clear. For the local authorities it turns out to be much more expensive, too expensive in most cases, to buy this land and thus they are forced to negotiate with the owners about its development. The real consequences of this situation became clear much too late. It means that the authorities, even before making real plans, have to make agreements and contracts with the parties in the market, in which many procedures and details are agreed upon. The new quarters are then developed by new ad hoc 'concerns', in which the local authorities have no more weight than one of the other parties. Often the urban plan is still developed by or commissioned by the municipality, but it is subjected to many amendments in the process. The creator of the plan is appointed as supervisor and is responsible for the quality of the project. However, he hardly gets any support from the authorities, in the sense that the authorities 'arrange' things, and if he fails it is almost impossible to penalise him. Besides, the government, as opposed to some time ago, cannot make a 'list of architects' that it would favour for their specific cultural quality, because within EEC legislation the architect is an entrepreneur like any other, competing freely with his architect-entrepreneur colleagues. As this competition is a based upon economic principles, cultural qualities hardly play a role any longer, and besides, the architect's fees are steadily going down. The offices which are superior in quality give up and concentrate on specific, better paid projects and most of the house building is increasingly going to third, fourth or fifth rate offices.

Present day government follows a policy in which individual house ownership is encouraged. For this purpose, plans that are being realised at the moment have to make room for individual parcels where individual principals can build houses of their own creation.
These individuals may have a lot of money but they have, to put it mildly, very common taste. They generally build so-called 'boerderettes': houses that are vaguely reminiscent of farms, sometimes following the Dutch example, often cheered up by influences from French country houses, English cottages and Heidi-houses. Here the principals also prefer architects of a lower standard, because otherwise they are too expensive; or they do not work with any architect at all, and instead, for example, directly with contractors or firms offering catalogue houses. For the higher quality architecture offices, the creation of an individual house is an unremunerative task, except maybe for the Moebiushuis of UN-Studio or the Dutch House of OMA, which is only accepted as a friendly favour or because of the special wishes of the client.

We see that an apparently simple and innocent measure like the abolishment of subsidies for public housing in no time leads to new concentrations of money and power. There is no question that the largest part of these new concentrations is legal. But the enormous growth of these concentrations on one hand and the ideologically determined reduction of rules and control on the other also led to new forms of organized crime. It is not just the Russian mafia that launders its money by investing in real estate in cities like London and Amsterdam. Also local criminals have discovered the potential of the real estate market. This goes far beyond money laundering. Criminals blackmail real estate tycoons to move, sell and resell real estate for prices that may not exactly be their market value. This however, is very difficult to verify by the authorities, not in the least because of the complex networks of firms that is involved.

From a country that had a leading role in introducing Third Way politics in the Purple Governments in the 1990s and seemed economically and culturally exceptionally healthy to such a degree that all other European countries, and even Bill Clinton, were looking at it with great interest, in a few years' time the Netherlands again has gained a leading role, but now as an example that others certainly do not want to follow. The side effects of Third Way politics, particularly in the field of architecture and urbanism, can hardly be overlooked. Even if it is clear that welfare states and western European democracies have to change, it has become clear that populist criticism is not enough and that new perspectives soon have to be developed. The populism as introduced by Pim Fortuyn in the Netherlands that is now followed by others had a devastating effect, not just on architecture but on the Dutch state as a whole.

Notes

(1) Ulrich Beck, 'Je eigen leven leiden in een op hol geslagen wereld', Archis 2, 2001
(2) For this definition of populism see: www.wikipedia.com
(3) Wouter Bos, 'Een beetje populisme mag', De Groene 8, 2005
(4) Thomas Frank, 'The Rise of Market Populism: America's New Secular Religion', The Nation, 30 October 2000, www.thenation.com
(5) Francis Fukuyama, 'The End of History and the Last Man', Free Press, New York / Maxwell McMillan, Toronto, 1992
(6) See: www.lakewood.cc
(7) (9) Pim Fortuyn, 'Autobiografie van een Babyboomer', Karakter Uitgevers bv, Rotterdam / Speakers Academy Uitgeverij BV, Uithoorn, 2002
(8) Pim Fortuyn, 'De Verweesde Samenleving', Karakter Uitgevers bv, Rotterdam / Speakers Academy Uitgeverij bv, Uithoorn, 2002
(10) Jutta Chorus & Menno de Galan, 'Bouwwereld tilde LPF van de grond', NRC Handelsblad, Zaterdags bijvoegsel, Rotterdam, 27 July 2002, p.19
(11) Bart Lootsma, SuperDutch, Thames & Hudson, London, 2000

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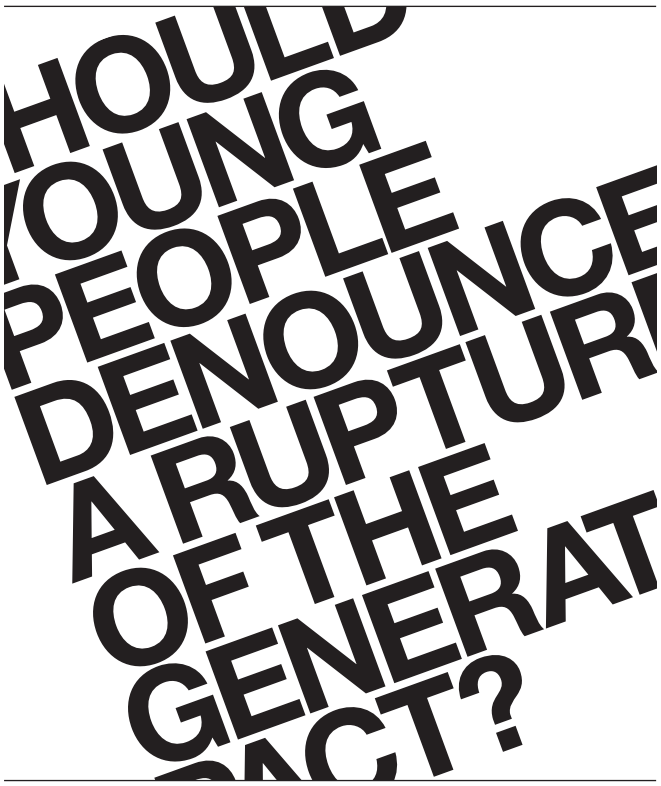


Should Young People Denounce a Rupture of the Generation Pact?
Louis Chauvel

"Should young people denounce a unilateral rupture of the generation pact that their own elders made in their disfavour"?

This question is somewhat abrupt. Nothing prepares today's French society to receive it. On the contrary, everything works together to exclude this question, making it a simple improbable hypothesis, without tangible content.

We do recognize that considerable efforts were made by families towards quality of education and the well being of their children: the material aids, symbolic and monetary, that are given to new generations by their parents, grandparents and sometimes even beyond. We can measure the inestimable flow of resources – numerous, inexhaustible and continuously renewed – that the elders give to their next of kin, to their fellows.

However, this discomforting question could be asked with more acuity. It brings the elder generation back to their responsibility towards a social world they will one they leave to others, as the numerous cohorts which benefited from the 'Glorious Thirty Years' (1945–1975) are retiring and the experience of these past favourable years are vanishing behind the horizon. Since half of the French population is born after 1965, all that remains are imprecise memories of this optimistic period. A growing demand for an assessment has been formulated ever since, but it is more importantly a matter of questioning ourselves what these generations owe each other.

The question of intergenerational justice

Since Emmanuel Kant, the question of reciprocal duty is open, and will remain so. This question is extremely complex, perhaps because we do not fully know what justice will be in the long term. However, Kant underlines the extraordinary dis-symmetry between generations, in regards to progresses of all sorts – longevity, medical progress, accumulation of literary and philosophical works, economical growth, etc. – which opens a possible source of injustice, uncertain and therefore disturbing. Being born later is sufficient to draw benefits from our near and far ancestors which we won't be able to return. "Older generations appear to carry through their toilsome labour only for the sake of the younger, to prepare them a foundation on which the latter can erect a higher edifice which is nature's goal. And yet only the youngest generation has the good fortune to inhabit the building on which a long line of their ancestors has (unintentionally) laboured without being permitted to partake of the fortune they had prepared." (Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose, 1784) That way, the younger inherit a richer, nicer, fuller and more elaborate world, wherein the progress was produced by the work of their ancestors. It is the privilege of being born later on. This debt towards our ancestors cannot be paid, except in homage to their memory or, above all, by handing-over even more to our own children, to work as much and provide them even better.
As we cannot fully measure what we truly owe our ancestors, the risk is also to be unaware of what to leave to our successors. This ignorance creates an intellectual discomfort for the responsible. However, it could also provide an alibi for a general carelessness that needs to be considered. It is indeed necessary to raise the curtain above the collective legacy that is left to new generations.

Seven generational fractures

The last 25 years, marked by economic deceleration and massive unemployment, have given rise to multiple generational fractures. It is a situation hard to resolve, as it is silent and denied. The following collection of seven elements will help us to understand that this rupture is a result of our historical inconsistency.

The first element concerns purchasing power's repartition: in 1975, a salaried employee aged 50 years earned an average of 15% more than a 30-year-old employee; the adult classes lived on an equal footing. Today, there is a gap of 40%: the fruits of economic growth, which has slowed down since 1975, were taken aside for employees 45 years and older. A generational reading allows us to understand that yesterday's valued young people have become today's favoured seniors, by seniority.

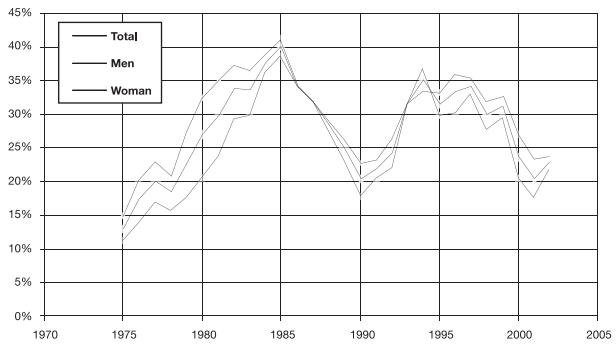
The second factor involves qualifications' progress. On average, from one year to another, the part of salaried employees carrying a responsibility or a valued expertise continues to grow, even after the "crisis". This growth is consubstantial to our representation of social progress. However, for the 30-year-old salaried employees, the portion of these jobs is the same as it was in 1980, without any sensible progression: today, essentially, the expansion of managers is conceded by the dynamic of 50-year-olds. More precisely, throughout their career, the generations born between 1945 and 1950 stayed on the crest of a rising wave of managers, which decreases for the younger. At the beginning of the 1960s, the baby-boom's first-borns benefited from an academic explosion, and afterwards profited from the employment dynamics of the 1965 – 1975's youth: development of the EDF, nuclear industry, aerospace engineering, telecommunications, health industry, publicity, the press, etc.

The third lesson concerns a delaying effect: for a given birth group, it is the 30-year-olds' situation that will set perspectives

on all ulterior ages. For those who did not make their place, the situation tends to remain unchanged. The first victims of the 1975 slow down were the generations born after 1955. They were 20 years old when unemployment increased and still suffer from the after-effects of this slow professional start-up. It is preferable to have been 20 years old in 1968, when the unemployment rate – after receiving a degree – is at 4%, than in 1994, when this rate reached 33%.
Full employment at the beginning of an adult life is an inestimable collective resource that was never transmitted.

The fourth lesson concerns the sudden change in social ascension possibilities. Being born in the period between 1910–1915 on average, the soixante-huitards' parents had a difficult fate: a quarter of them were precocious orphans, a quarter were invalid children, a youth growing up during the inter-war crisis, and the Second World War. The recovery of "The Glorious Thirty" (1945–1975) was waiting for them, but they were already 36 years old when the retirement system was created, asking them for 35 years of contribution before full retirement. To them, this was an impossible contract. For the majority, reaching an old age within a society of wealthy youngsters, was miserable. For the generation born around 1945, the social elevator worked at full speed. For their children, born around 1975, these conditions of social ascensions were often compromised, since today's youth are more of a golden generation than a sacrificed one. The psychological risk is therefore the internalization of failure, which appears personal, but is nothing less than a collective collapse.

Unemployment rate amongst people who finished school within 24 months or less.



Source: Compilation Enquêtes Emploi INSEE 1975–2002; the author's calculations.

The fifth observation is that, for the first time during a period of peace, the young generation's situation is more difficult than that of its parents. The 1997–2000 economic recovery made them believe they had reached the end of the tunnel, but within two years – following the completion of their education – the unemployment rate remained greater than 20%, hence represents a rate four times higher than what their parents experienced at the same age.
Three years of recovery, entirely vanished today, could never correct 25 years of fundamental de-structuring.

The sixth point concerns the transmission of our social model to future generations. It appears that the Welfare State changes at the calendar's pace, but this conceals a generational dynamic. In 1945, when 35 annuities were required for a full retirement, we more or less excluded the ones born before 1915; these generations were marked by monstrous inequalities between the privileged strata of society and the industrial proletariat. Those born from 1920 to 1950 benefited from providentialism as well as from growing protective and redistributive social rights, favourable to the emergence of a massive middle-class. Today, new young people leave school around their twenties, they lose a year or two to unemployment without indemnities or informal activities, and only start to contribute when they are about 23 years old. To ask for 40 years of contribution as it is today (42 years in the proposal of the Charpin au Plan report, and 46.5 according to the Medef's suggestion) is like lighting a demographic time bomb that could explode starting from 2015 when, without sufficient contributions, the candidates for retirement will multiply. Obviously, the conditions are easier for the fraction of young people who will successfully pass the Malthusian selection test of scholastic or economic excellence. But this group is in opposition more and more to the less qualified and therefore regenerating the germs of a new unequal society. For the new generations, the postwar social project esthablished in 1970 is disintegrating little by little through the reconstitution, at the bottom of the new generations' social pyramid, of a massive social category which is forced into a choice that often looks like a threat: between exploitation and exclusion.

This case's trial is now closing on a seventh section concerning the problem of, not patrimonial, but political transmission. The instability of political representation can be measured by a clear indicator: in 1982, a union or political representative was 45 years old; in 2000, he is 59 years old. An ageing of 14 years in 18 year period corresponds to an almost perfect situation of absence of renewal: 40-year-olds of the 1980s will soon become the 60-years-olds of the twenty-first century's first decade.
In the specific context of the late 1960s' political socialisation, favourable to an early entrance into politics, the socialized generation installed itself little by little to take roots in the highest functions. Now its generous, youthful ideals have given way to other world visions. In 1981, 38% of the assembly's deputies were less then 45 years old; in 2002, they were only 15%.
It is not a simple question of the captain's age; otherwise the argument would not subsist that long. This fact shows that important orientations and decisions engaging the long term are taken without the participation of those who will assume the consequences. When the contributors are not asked to show up to the agapes, we ought to question ourselves; in regard to the debates concerning retirement, the absence of the young people seems obviously organised, even though they will be the ones enduring the heaviest consequences of any reforms. Even worse, the ageing of the political body, parallel to the one of research and universities, of companies, etc., is happening in conditions where nothing is prepared to insure a transmission.

We have to worry that, sooner or later, this moment of transition without transmission will occur violently, for nothing was truly done to anticipate it, and everything was put together to retain, as long as possible, the irresistible movement of time.
It is possible to claim, like Alain Finkielkraut, who is close to those he denounces, that "the problem is not which world we will leave to our children, but to which kind of children we will leave our world." The purpose is to accuse youth of incompetence, and wonder where it comes from. The collective irresponsibility that prevails (Kant would have said "unintentionally") in the institutionalization of this generational fracture, and the intentional refusal to take its inventory, could be at the heart of this rupture of the generation pact, which young people are more and increasingly questioning.

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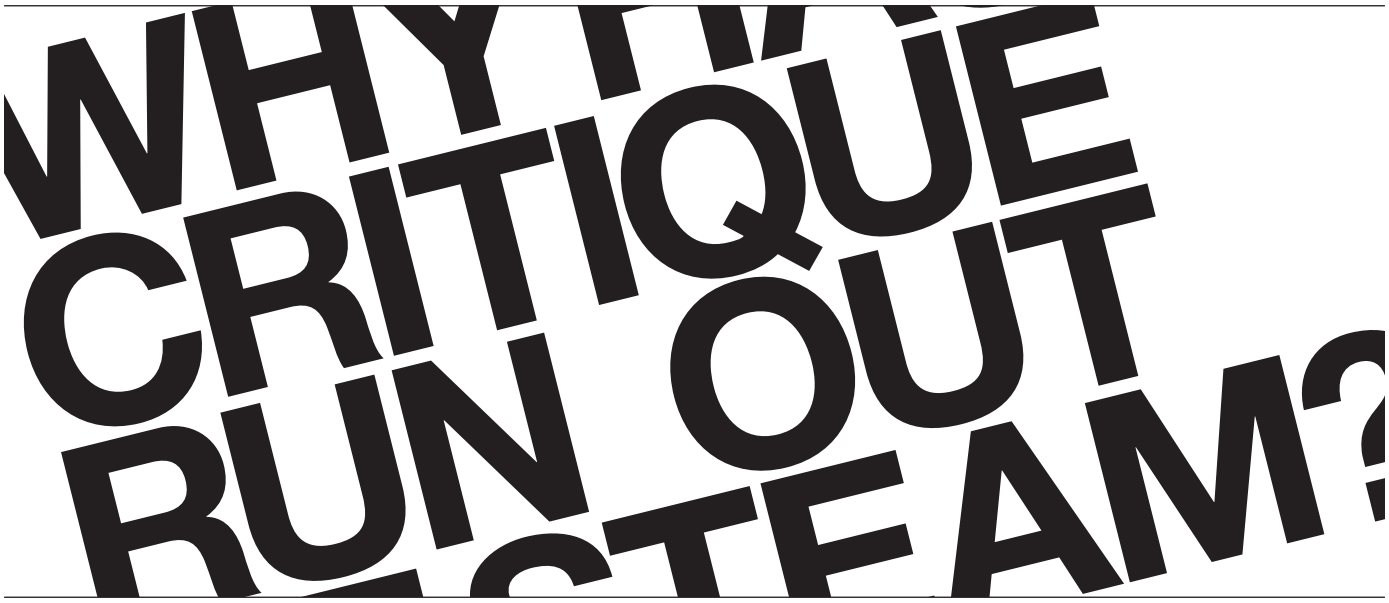

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From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern
Bruno Latour
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Wars. So many wars. Wars outside and wars inside. Cultural wars, science wars and wars against terrorists. Wars against poverty and wars against the poor. Wars against ignorance and wars out of ignorance. My question is simple: Should we be at war, too, we, the scholars, the intellectuals? Is it really our duty to add fresh ruins to fields of ruins? Is it really the task of the humanities to add deconstruction to destructions? More iconoclasm to iconoclasm? What has become of critical spirit? Has it not run out of steam?

Quite simply, my worry is that it might not be aligned to the right target. To remain in the metaphorical atmosphere of the time, military experts constantly revise their strategic doctrines, their contingency plans, the size, direction, technology of their projectiles, of their smart bombs, of their missiles: I wonder why we, we alone, would be saved from those sort of revisions. It does not seem to me that we have been as quick, in academe, to prepare ourselves for new threats, new dangers, new tasks, new targets. Are we not like those mechanical toys that endlessly continue to do the same gesture when everything else has changed around them? Would it not be rather terrible if we were still training young kids – yes, young recruits, young cadets – for wars that cannot be thought, for fighting enemies long gone, for conquering territories that no longer exist, and leaving them ill-equipped in the face of threats we have not anticipated, for which we are so thoroughly disarmed? Generals have always been accused of being on the ready one war late – especially French generals, especially these days; what would be so surprising, after all, if intellectuals were also one war late, one critique late – especially French intellectuals, especially now? It has been a long time, after all, since intellectuals have stopped being in the vanguard of things to come. Indeed, it has been a long time now since the very notion of the avant-garde – the proletariat, the artistic – has passed away, has been pushed aside by other forces, moved to the rear guard, or maybe lumped with the baggage train. (1)

We are still able to go through the motions of a critical avant-garde, but is not the spirit gone?

In these most depressing of times, these are some of the issues I want to press, not to depress the reader, but to press ahead, to redirect our meager capacities as fast as possible. To prove my point, I have not exactly facts, rather tiny cues, nagging doubts, disturbing telltale signs. What has become of critique, I wonder, when the New York Times runs the following story?

Most scientists believe that [global] warming is caused largely by manmade pollutants that require strict regulation. Mr. Luntz [a lobbyist for the Republicans] seems to acknowledge as much when he says that "the scientific debate is closing against us". His advice, however, is to emphasize that the evidence is not complete. "Should the public come to believe that the scientific issues are settled", he writes, "their views about global warming will change accordingly. Therefore, you need to continue to make the lack of scientific certainty a primary issue". (2)

Fancy that? An artificially maintained scientific controversy to favor a 'brown backlash' as Paul Ehrlich would say. (3)
Do you see why I am worried? I myself have spent some times in the past trying to show the "lack of scientific certainty" inherent in the construction of facts. I, too, made it a "primary issue". But I did not exactly aim at fooling the public by obscuring the certainty of a closed argument – or did I? After all, I have been accused of just that sin. Still, I'd like to believe that, on the contrary, I intended to emancipate the public from a prematurely naturalized, objectified fact. Was I foolishly mistaken? Have things changed so fast?

In which case the danger would no longer be coming from an excessive confidence in ideological arguments posturing as matters of fact – as we have learned to combat so efficiently in the past – but from an excessive distrust of good matters of fact disguised as bad ideological biases! While we spent years trying to detect the real prejudices hidden behind the appearance of objective statements, do we have now to reveal the real objective and incontrovertible facts hidden behind the illusion of prejudices? And yet entire PhD programs are still running to make sure that good American kids are learning the hard way that facts are made up, that there is no such thing as natural, unmediated, unbiased access to truth, that we are always the prisoner of language, that we always speak from one standpoint, and so on, while dangerous extremists are using the very same

argument of social construction to destroy hard-won evidence that could save our lives. Was I wrong to participate in the invention of this field known as science studies? Is it enough to say that we did not really mean what we meant? Why does it burn my tongue to say that global warming is a fact whether you like it or not? Why can't I simply say that the argument is closed for good?
Should I reassure myself by simply saying that bad guys can use any weapon at hand, naturalized facts, when it suits them, and social construction when it suits them? Should we apologize for having been wrong all along? Should we rather bring the sword of criticism to criticism itself and do a bit of soul-searching here? What were we really after when we were so intent on showing the social construction of scientific facts? Nothing guarantees, after all, that we should be right all the time. There is no sure ground even for criticism. (4)
Is this not what criticism intended to say: that there is no sure ground anyway? But what does it mean, when this lack of sure ground is taken out from us by the worst possible fellows as an argument against things we cherished?

Artificially maintained controversies are not the only worrying sign. What has critique become when a French general, no, a marshal of critique, namely, Jean Baudrillard, claims in a published book that the World Trade Center Towers destroyed themselves under their own weight, so to speak, undermined by the utter nihilism inherent in capitalism itself – as if the terrorist planes were pulled to suicide by the powerful attraction of this black hole of nothingness? (5)
What has become of critique when a book can be a best seller that claims that no plane ever crashed into the Pentagon?
I am ashamed to say that the author was French, too. (6)
Remember the good old days when revisionism arrived very late, after the facts had been thoroughly established, decades after bodies of evidence had accumulated? Now we have the benefit of what can be called instant revisionism. The smoke of the event has not yet finished settling before dozens of conspiracy theories are already revising the official account, adding even more ruins to the ruins, adding even more smoke to the smoke. What has become of critique when my neighbor in the little Bourbonnais village where I have my house looks down on me as someone hopelessly naive because I believe that the United States had been struck by terrorist attacks? Remember the good old days when university professors could look down on unsophisticated folks because those hillbillies naively believed in church, motherhood, and apple pies? Well, things have changed a lot, in my village at least. I am the one now who naively believes in some facts because I am educated, while it is the other guys now who are too unsophisticated to be gullible anymore: "Where have you been? Don't you know for sure that the Mossad and the CIA did it?" What has become of critique when someone as eminent as Stanley Fish, the "enemy of promise" as Lindsay Waters calls him, believes he defends science studies, my field, by comparing the law of physics to the rules of baseball? (7)
What has become of critique when there is a whole industry denying that the Apollo program landed on the Moon? What has become of critique when DARPA uses for its Total Information Awareness project the Baconian slogan 'Scientia est potentia'? Have I not read that somewhere in Michel Foucault? Has Knowledge-slash-Power been co-opted of late by the National Security Agency? Has Discipline and Punish become the bedside reading of Mr. Ridge?

Let me be mean for a second: what's the real difference between conspiracists and a popularized, that is, a teachable, version of social critique inspired, for instance, by a too-quick reading of, let's say, a sociologist as eminent as Pierre Bourdieu (to be polite I will stick with the French field commanders)?
In both cases, you have to learn to become suspicious of everything people say because "of course we all know" that they live in the thralls of a complete illiusion on their real motives. Then, after disbelief has struck and an explanation is requested for what is "really" going on, in both cases again, it is the same appeal to powerful agents hidden in the dark acting always consistently, continuously, relentlessly. Of course, we, in the academy, like to use more elevated causes – society, discourse, knowledge-slash-power, fields of forces, empires, capitalism – while conspiracists like to portray a miserable bunch of greedy people with dark intents, but I find something troublingly similar in the structure of the explanation, in the first movement of disbelief and, then, in the wheeling of causal explanations coming out of the deep Dark below. What if explanations resorting automatically to power, society and discourse had outlived their usefulness, deteriorated to the point of now feeding also the most gullible sort of critiques? (8)
Maybe I am taking conspiracy theories too seriously, but I am worried to detect, in those mad mixtures of knee-jerk disbelief, punctilious demands for proofs and free use of powerful explanation from the social neverland, many of the weapons of social critique.

Of course conspiracy theories are an absurd deformation of our own arguments, but, like weapons smuggled through a fuzzy border to the wrong party, these are our weapons nonetheless. In spite of all the deformations, it is easy to recognize, still burnt in the steel, our trademark: MADE IN CRITICAL-LAND.

Notes

(1) On what happened to avant-garde and critique generally, see Iconoclash: Beyond the Image Wars in Science, Religion and Art, ed. Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel (Cambridge, Mass., 2002). The present article is very much an exploration of what could happen "beyond the image wars".
(2) This Mister Luntz seems to have been very successful; I read later in the Wall Street Journal: "There is a better way [than passing a law that restricts business], which is to keep fighting on merit. There is no scientific consensus that greenhouse gases cause the world's modest global warming trend, much less whether that warming will do more harm than good, or whether we can even do anything about it. Once Republicans concede that greenhouse gases must be controlled, it will only be a matter of time before they end up endorsing more economically damaging regulation. They could always stand on principle and attempt to educated the public instead [Wall Street Journal, 8 Apr. 2003]. And the same publication complains about the "pathological relation" of the "Arab street" with truth!
(3) See Paul R. and Anne H. Ehrlich, Betrayal of Science and Reason: How Anti-Environmental Rhetoric Threatens Our Future (Washington, D.C., 1997).
(4) The metaphor of shifting sand was used by neomodernists in their critique of science studies; see A House Built on Sand: Exposing Postmodernist Myths about Science, ed. Noretta Koergte (Oxford, 1998), but the problem is that the authors of this book looked backward to reenter the solid rock castle of modernism and not forward to what I call, for lack of a better term, nonmodernism.
(5) See Jean Baudrillard, The Spirit of Terrorism: Requiem for the Twin Towers (New York, 2002).
(6) See Thierry Meyssan, 11 Septembre 2001: L'effroyable imposture, translated as 911: The Big Lie (London, 2002). Conspiracy theories have always existed, what is new in instant revisionism is how much scientific proof they claim to imitate.
(7) See Lindsay Waters, Enemy of Promises, forthcoming.
(8) Their serious as well as their popularized versions have the defect of using society as an already existing cause instead of as a possible consequence. This was the critique that Gabriel Tarde always made against Durkheim. It is probably the whole notion of "social" and "society" which is responsible for the weakening of critique. I have tried to show that in Latour, "Gabriel Tarde and the End of the Social", in The Social in Question: New Bearings in the History and the Social Sciences, ed. Patrick Joyce (London, 2002), pp.117–32.

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Change?
Saša Randić
ČIP (Man and Space), January 2009

At the beginning of this year, the Indian portal Daiji World released the information that over four months the police had found more than 3000 abandoned vehicles on the parking lot of the Dubai airport, most of them with keys in the ignition. The airport administration can not simply remove the vehicles because they are properly parked and no offence has been committed. This unexpected problem is, of course, a result of the economic crisis that affects the construction branch and the real estate market. This especially applies to the workers from India and South Asia who left their new homes in a hurry, leaving family cars on the parking lot.

For the architectural world the abandoned automobiles symbolically mark the end of an era whose symbol is Dubai, of which Koolhaas asserted would be the city of the 21st century. The development of Dubai is directly connected with architecture. The wonder of the new economy has not based its development concept on local needs and available resources; by using the model of Las Vegas, the city of the 20th century, it has become a new international attraction in the middle of another desert. The credit for the fast development of Dubai does not go to the scenery and pleasant climate or gambling and vice, like with the role model. The key role here has been played by architecture: structures in the form of a wave, sails, islands in the form of the world and palms have become the principal attractors of the new city. Some of the attractions have followed the model of Vegas of the nineties with spectacular pyramids, sphinxes, pirates, and miniatures of European cities. But more than with animal and archaeological forms, the new city identified itself with contemporary iconic architecture. Virtual architecture in a virtual economy, architecture of symbols that do not symbolize anything, but architecture successful insofar as it managed to draw attention to its environment.

The idea of reducing architecture to the level of digital illustration and visual attraction became successful because it is entirely simple and communicative. In order to make it even more communicative, visual symbolism becomes even more banal.

In a world of unlimited resources and financial means, there are no boundaries: the only important thing is that a project is spectacular.

The proportions of the architectural crisis have been best delineated by Phillipe Starck with his public repentance in the interview for Die Zeit in March last year: “I was a producer of materiality and I am ashamed of this fact. Everything I designed was unnecessary”.

At the same time, in the context of Starck’s words, we can not demand from architects, and even designers, to retain a certain level of critical thought and ideological attitude in their work, when that is irrelevant to the contemporary society.

The economic crisis has a positive influence in this respect, because it changes social priorities. In the past, each large economic crisis caused changes in architecture; during the last one, in the past century, paper architecture emerged and became real, thanks to the Emerging Economy Countries.

As André Glucksmann said: “Postmodernism, which places itself beyond good and evil, beyond true and false, inhabits a cosmic bubble. It would be a good thing if fear of a universal crisis allowed us to burst the mental bubble of postmodernism – if it washed away the euphoria of our pious wishes and brought us once again to see straight”. A society that forms its needs differently simply does not need hollow architecture any more, because it does not need the production of unnecessary things that Starck is ashamed of.
The crisis of historical proportions has simply eliminated the purpose of iconic architecture much more efficiently than all theoretic discussions. The economic reality naturally focuses attention to urgent points of contemporary society.

One of them is the concept of contemporary cities that have lately been more the object of interest for geographers, sociologists, and economists than architects. There is also the question of energy-related and environmental sustainability, less attractive to the architectural public than fire protection studies. In spite of the contrary and widespread opinion, the question of the sustainable city does not depend on concepts of energy-efficient buildings. The essence of the problem is in the structure of the city. Built environments produce more than half of greenhouse gases, of which the one with low population density are the worst, but precisely this form is on the increase. European cities have continued to occupy new territory, although the increase in the number of inhabitants is slowing down. The most conspicuous example is Madrid, whose surface area has increased by fifty per cent since 1990, while its population has grown only by five per cent. The attractiveness of the American suburban model has resulted in the expansion of the periphery and progressive growth of road infrastructure. Similar processes also happened in Croatia: infrastructure projects have first taken up the building of roads before the public transport network. High buildings were stigmatized as a remnant of socialism and mostly excised from city-planning. However, paradoxically, the grey panoramas of Eastern European cities were environmentally more efficient than their contemporary suburban versions. The need for the ecological balancing of cities actually returns the main function to the collective housing model. It is fantastic how opportunities for creating new typologies emerge from totally unexpected circumstances.

And finally, the crisis directly influences the architect’s position. Massive lay-offs in leading international offices were accompanied by advices like “it is time that you turn attention to your education and return to universities”, which is a solution equally effective as the evacuation of the Titanic. As in every trouble, the luckiest and the nimblest ones escape unharmed.

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Empty Vessels: Eye-con Architecture
Jay Merrick
The Independent, October 15, 2008

Is your town a bit frayed? No problem: just commission a piece of "iconic" architecture. Is your city perceived as not quite remarkable enough? Ditto. Lord Foster's Peace Pyramid in Kazakhstan is described as "iconic". So, too, is the forthcoming building at Tate Modern by Herzog and De Meuron; not to mention the China Central Television building, designed by Rem Koolhaas and now approaching completion in Beijing. Three very different architects, three very different architectural icons – but iconic of what? Iconic of the commercial stampede to produce cheap thrills. Too much of the apparent concern about architecture actually reveals a profound lack of interest in any discussion that might suggest that architecture, and our relationship with it, is not only complex but is in a crucially debatable condition.
Architecture in Britain is becoming a culturally reductive retrovirus. If you imagine that you're responding viscerally, intelligently or creatively to buildings and the places they affect, you must face the possibility that your perceptual and critical systems have been burnt out by voracious consumption of architecture. And the most obvious evidence of this is the sugar-rush appetite for architectural icons.
The architectural historian Charles Jencks coined the term 'eye-con' in relation to this proliferation of architecture pumped up to bursting by hype – a sub-species of the hype that first inflated, and then destroyed or maimed several of the world's most iconic financial institutions. Icons are images or likenesses that represent something. Most of today's so-called architectural icons represent only the iconic intentions of their designers, or commissioners. These buildings are iconic, but not actually icons in any potent sense. It doesn't fully exist, or engage.
This complexity is not merely an academic luxury; nor is it confined to the Richter-Hampstead-Shires scale of "good value" conversational grist among the chattering classes.
Architecture, from Hawksmoor to FAT (Fashion Architecture Taste, an architecture practice), exists in an age where Googlism has replaced Fordism as the paradigm of infinite growth and consumption.
Architecture blurs vaguely and irrelevantly past the window of the 7.40 clattering through East Croydon or Penge or Watford, jumbled with passing advertising hoardings and I'm-on-the-train cell phone monologues. Architecture hovers in the margins of distant wars, cloned celebrity revelations, and the latest mistaken cure for cancer. In its more grandiosely hubristic manifestations, iconic architecture seems indistinguishable from studio-lit tubes of because you're-worth-it face cream: today's architectural icons are usually bizarre curios, or a manifestation of penile dementia.
Iconic architecture is conceived and marketed as predigested, faintly hallucinatory new realities. Somebody else, somebody designing or commissioning buildings who has little or no interest in the sensual, emotional, physical and philosophical braids of place and ordinary daily life, is one profitable step ahead, setting architectural and urban agendas that turn out to be hollow. When confronted with a building, or group of buildings and spaces, we should occasionally feel like strangers in a strange place – a place that is worth considering because it marks a moment, an engagement of various presences: topography, architectural physique, a beating heart, an eye that momentarily notices more than it usually does, a reimagining.
If we didn't from time to time feel this connection with buildings and places, then we're mere sat-nav existentialists. The surfeit of iconic buildings recalls Daniel Libeskind's fascination with the "presence of absence" in architecture. Supposedly iconic buildings usually suggest the opposite: the absence of presence. And if buildings seem absent, or in some way vacuous, perhaps we're agreeing to be absent and vacuous, too.
Architecture is popularly seen as a "designer" issue – building as box-fresh singularity, critically pre-neutered, strobed with cutaway shots, one-liners, rabidly sincere gazes and pointlessly jerky hand movements. It's easy to forget that architecture – whether chalet-bung or art gallery – should confirm, ramify and communicate human scale, measurement, materials and places. It should be a prism through which flow spectrums of time and transformation.
You don't have to sit in St. Paul's to experience this: it'll hit you, hard, in the tiny mausoleum at Soane's Dulwich Gallery, or in the angular volumes of Lynch Architects' Marsh View cottage in Norfolk. Iconic architecture, the village idiot of the piece, is being absorbed into a sea of ironic thought, manner and deed.
"Our wretched architectural icons", to only slightly misquote Albert Camus, "have a smell of the office clinging to them, and the blood that trickles from them is the colour of printer's ink".
Iconic architecture now has more to do with Big Brother than with any thoughtful concentrations of rich and variable cultural presence. If we become utterly supplicant to the iconic and architectural bling, then we risk becoming desensitised to less obviously dramatic, but potentially more engaging, humane, and affecting buildings and places. Most architectural icons smooth over contradiction and difference. Are we disdained by urban master planners, or developers and their value-adding "name" architects, who are so often replaced by cost-cutting jobsworth designers after planning permission has been gained?
What is the architectural and urban planning difference between new and supposedly iconic high-rise clusters in Dubai, Shanghai and Moscow?
The contemporary expression of iconic architecture is rooted in at least two things: impossibility, and arrogance. In the 18th century, Etienne-Louis Boullée's stunning architectural proposals, featuring utterly colossal pyramids and spheres, accentuated the idea of architecture as singular icon.
Mies van der Rohe, a seminal figure in Modernism, declared in the 1920s that "building art is the spatially apprehended will of the epoch... the spatial implementation of intellectual decisions". Today, iconic architecture is essentially the spatial implementation of corporate decisions. Signature architecture has become the boardroom's, and the city authority's, bitch.
The phrase "architectural icon" belongs in a vitrine. It's the cultural equivalent of Damien Hirst's shark in a tank: a dead curiosity. Are Koolhaas and Herzog simply producing empty icons – hermetic architectural scripts in glass, steel and stone, rather than buildings that want to express more than design virtuosity? That want, in effect, to have relationships with people, streets and places. The proliferation of supposedly iconic architecture has played a central role in making us strangers in an increasingly strange place.
Perhaps we are losing our awareness of architecture as a resonant cultural force – that vital, earthy, lively agent of activity. Perhaps we must make do with the following, from the highly thought of architect Glen Howells. In describing his recently completed building at the National Film and Television School in Beaconsfield, he said: "We quite like that it's a fuck-off building". Howells' remark represents the tip of a funereal iceberg that is burying the idea of architectural presence, and debate, in a blogtastic knowingness whose roots lie in the stage-managed popularisation of architectural icons.
The pursuit and worship of architectural icons is toxic proof that we are maxing out on the minimum thing.

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Architecture Stripped of its Ornate Garment
Zvi Hecker
Der Tagespiegel, January 2009

The continuous unfolding of the world economic crisis not only inflicts hardship on the personal well-being of individuals and societies, but will inevitably create radical shifts in our aesthetic sensibility.
Taken unguarded by the collapse of the world stock markets and the demise of financial institutions, we should not be surprised by the deepening of the moral-ethical breakdown that generated this economical crisis in the first place.
The erosion of the moral-ethical standards caused by the decline of personal responsibility and institutionalized social inequality and injustice may prove to be more destructive than a military force. History's graveyards carry the names of great military powers that ran their course and disintegrated into a total breakdown of their political structures, even before their legions reached the battlefield. Rebuilding the moral-ethical foundations that have been undermined in the present crisis will be more laborious and will take longer than to arouse the appetite of the panic-stricken credit-financed consumerism.
Architecture, while embracing the human dimension constitutes an integral part of the economic landscape. It therefore can't be absolved from the moral-ethical dimension of the present crisis, nor is it immune from the fallout of the economic slowdown and the appearance of a new aesthetic perception.

For more than a decade architecture sucked in cheap and abstract money that was channelled to fuel an excess of building construction, resulting in the infamous sub-prime mortgage meltdown. Abstract projects solidified into Architectural form, and, sponsored by oil and stock market wealth, were "grounded" in the most socially unjust locations and in the most environmentally wasteful ways. Real estate, disguised as Architecture, falsely credited with sustainability, turned out to become the profitable terrain-for-surplus capital, absorbing into its ever more elaborate shapes money that could not have been invested otherwise.
The more obscure and environmentally irresponsible were the financial investments, the more excessive became the Architectural form. In its most extreme version the Architecture's mere existence became its function, just as the inflated growth of the financial market became its only raison d'être.
Architecture, like the world at large, turned a blind eye to global poverty and enduring conflicts. Equally indifferent to ethics, architecture preferred instead to glorify the zeal and the leverage of financial wizardry. Draped in layers of ornate garments, glamorous and decorative, it carefully disguised its narcissistic genesis.

Strangely enough, this self-referential Architecture of negligible conceptual depth was embraced as long overdue evidence of the multifarious talents of the Architect. Long said to be inhibited from expressing his talent, the enterprising practitioner responded eagerly to overseas requests for colonial patronage to adorn repressive regimes with warmed-over-architectural images. Obsessed solely with maximum visibility, Architecture relied on the image of the "Architect as Artist", committed only to his or her inner fantasies and desires, "Architect as Designer", engaged in designing clothes, fashion collections, ashtrays and carry bags, and "Architect as Entertainer", staging pseudo- intellectual spectacles.
No longer required to follow the rules of logic, coherence and clarity of the plan, the "Architect as Architect" became rapidly irrelevant. This may explain why, in recent years, so very few significantly innovative designs emerged in Architecture's core fields of engagement: solutions for housing, urban design, and integration of the socially deprived, subjects which were the bedrock of the Modern movement.
Denied any incentive to explore and innovate, the Architect thrived on the work of earlier generations in a kind of parasitic subsistence. Old architectural schemes and banal off-the-shelf plans were hastily recycled and wrapped within a dress of different materials, glass at the top of the list. To broaden its appeal, glass elevations were belligerently promoted as being ecologically sustainable and environmentally friendly. Heavily dependent on sophisticated high-tech for its functioning and maintenance, the environmental claims were never confronted, nor seriously contested.
However, paradoxically, this all-glass Architecture found its partner and prey in the world of banking and international business. With its claim for the virtues of transparency, glass Architecture offered respectability and supplied the best possible alibi for the murky transactions it wrapped so elegantly. In today's crisis the glass alibi might be short-lived and insufficient in restoring the vanished trust in the operations of business.

Even Berlin, not yet carried away by the hysteria of capitalist development, yielded to the pressure of historians promoting architectural nostalgia in disregard of the legacy of radical modernism that the city harbours so proudly. Berlin's pseudo aristocratic genealogy will be rightfully restored by rebuilding fake elevations of the eighteenth-century castle. Of no great architectural merit in its original version, the fake replica of the castle will become a farce. The ultimate irony is, however, that the Berlin of today is unable to distinguish between stylistic novelty and true originality, thereby excluding any possibility for a refined masterpiece to be recognized and welcomed.
Essentially, every economic crisis not only breaks with the immediate past, but also provides moments of accelerated change, an opportunity to transgress the present status quo and to leave a contemporary footprint.

The crisis of the late 1920s and the Great Depression that followed was such an intense force that wiped out the ostentatious ornament of late nineteenth century classicism. White, plain and undecorated, the emerging Architecture was a clear break with the past and was total anathema to that which it replaced. The underlying roots of the two crises, though eighty years apart, stem from a soil contaminated by the level of dishonesty to which financial institutions had sunk.
A moral-ethical position will be needed to put into motion creative forces that were silenced by the widespread decadence. A natural change of our aesthetic perception will follow. The inevitable slowdown of building construction and the emergence of another aesthetic reality will provide a fertile ground for the germination of new ideas. They will be conceptualized, developed and codified, like musical notes, through architectural plans, built years later when the economy picks up again.

Architectural form is a reflected image of the idea that inhabits the plan. Hierarchies of human scale are its measure, and clarity of intention its means of to beauty. It unites needs and dreams into ever-new aesthetic sensibilities. This inseparable duality is what makes Architecture such a uniquely profound profession. Centuries of creative commitment and the endowment of new ideas generated a rich architectural tradition. It is entrusted upon us on the condition that our own generation will enrich and broaden the horizons of this great heritage.
In our ever-changing world, Architecture's eternal relevance lays in its degree of idealism and its responsibility to alleviate the contemporaneity of the human condition. New ideas are the sole means of its attainment.

Architecture is a human art, never humane enough.

Charles Bessard and Nanne de Ru are the founding partners of the architectural office Powerhouse Company, based in Rotterdam and Copenhagen. They are also initiators of this publication, as well as the exhibition Rien ne va Plus that opened September 12, 2009, at NAiM / Bureau Europa in Maastricht, The Netherlands.

The End of Suspension
Charles Bessard and Nanne de Ru

"When written in Chinese, the word 'crisis' is composed of two characters – one represents 'danger' and one represents 'opportunity'". – John. F. Kennedy, April 12th 1959

crisis: c.1425, from Gk. krisis "turning point in a disease" (used as such by Hippocrates and Galen), lit. "judgment", from krinein "to separate, decide, judge". – Random House dictionary 2009

Crisis ≠ Opportunity

One of the strange things about the persistent crisis the world has been in for the last year is that nothing is fundamentally changing. This is despite gargantuan sums of public money injected into banks and the millions of people becoming unemployed at a rate still growing. After one year of crisis it seems that the duality and instability of the moment is still unresolved: to which side will the scale tip? The myth that, when written in Chinese, the two symbols that compose the word crisis mean 'danger' and 'opportunity', seems to be omnipresent. Many architects think that after the crisis there will be a better position for architects, because the public domain will be served better. Or because sustainability is now unmissable in architecture and therefore architects could recover their progressive role and moral authority. At the same time real estate investors are becoming aware of their insane risk taking, but they keep looking forward to continuing the search for big returns once this crisis is over. Meanwhile contractors believe that after the crisis the 'design and build' model will finally take over and lubricate all the procedures by redistributing responsibilities and marginalizing further the role of independent third parties like architects. Less resistance, faster profits. Faster profits, less risk. Less risk, the investor will agree, no more "inefficient" and "uncontrollable" architects. Power will come to them.
Opportunity. It is the buzzword. Everyone is eagerly searching for a better future, groping to find out what is around the corner of the road, despite all the signs indicating that we are marching down a dead end. There are omnipresent indications of unprecedented dangers: scarcity of natural resources, staggering climate changes, unprecedented national debts, growing income inequality, continued real estate-driven speculation, dressed-down public sector, rise of populist politics, etc., etc. According to myth-busting sources, the actual meaning of the Chinese symbols for crisis is not 'Danger' and 'Opportunity' but 'Danger' and 'Crucial point'. (1) That is exactly where we are: a point where crucial decisions must be made and short term opportunism becomes unbearable.

From Paradox to Parody and Back Again

Using a myth about Chinese symbols to indicate a way of seeing the current malaise is in many ways an ironic indicator of our collective postmodern confusion. The same goes for our current crisis with its global character. Indeed, the enormity and the interwoven-ness of the current crisis, which ranges from the economical to the social, political and moral domain is hard to grasp and understand. The last few decades, fierce globalization and deregulation have made our world more opaque, while claiming to make it more transparent by eliminating regulations. Meanwhile postmodern relativism rendered it reactionary and even regressive to judge it. Now the paradoxes of globalization are turning into parodies. What can you make of the United States of America's biggest creditor being the world biggest authoritarian regime, China? Who would have dared to proclaim that, thirty years ago, when the United States under Jimmy Carter opened up to China? (2) Who would have imagined even ten years ago that both IBM and Hummer would be Chinese companies? Or that big corporate banks would practically be owned by the American government? And what should we think of intellectual outposts of the famed French Sorbonne University and Harvard Medical School opening universities in Gulf states that allow systematic violations of human rights? (3)
How about the Louvre, the former royal palace that was opened

to the people after the French revolution, which is now opening an extension and disseminating parts of its collections in the authoritarian state of Abu-Dhabi? (4)
Now the big bubble burst, and all promises of the everlasting more-more-more seemed false. We wonder: has our quest for what we cherish the most, creative and intellectual freedom, turned into a parody while we suspended our judgment? What are our beliefs in the values of artistic freedom if we are willing to sell our artistic products to regimes that do not believe in them? What are we pursuing with globalization if not the sheer profit of a bigger market? And isn't a democracy less profitable than an authoritarian regime?
What if there really is an end to our natural resources? How long can we remain naive or complacent? Is this global crisis devastating enough to reconsider the hypotheses?

The End of Means

Similar paradoxes and questions have set off an architectural debate on ethics and morality in the profession over the last decade, reaching its highest-point at the architectural output of the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. The lead event itself displayed the almost unbearable nature of the current globalization paradox; on the one hand a celebration of China entering the world stage and opening up to colossal market opportunities, while at the same time perpetuating continuous crackdowns on human rights and censorship. Brought to us live on TV by the "free world's" global corporations. In this paradigm, architecture played an emblematic role in the lead-up to this event. Famed international architects were invited to design many of the new venues, with, as its prime piece, the unsurpassed design of the Beijing National Stadium by Pritzker prize laureates Herzog & De Meuron. Some critics questioned the ethical nature of these commissions, pointing not at the high quality of the architecture, but at the propagandist use of the buildings in a country violating human rights and severely limiting intellectual and creative freedom. (5)
Some critics addressed the inhumane working conditions on building sites. (6)
When Ground Zero architect Daniel Libeskind claimed never to work for or in China under its current regime (7), architects like Herzog & De Meuron, as well as Rem Koolhaas, fiercely defended their position to work in China, claiming it to be "unavoidable" to offer services to China or "arrogant" (8) not to work there, and stating the belief that China would change for the better. (9) Indeed, why should an authoritarian regime be deprived of a Western-designed masterpiece? Why should Western architects turn down such opportunities to make an unprecedented architectural statement? Looking back at the opening ceremony, one can wonder who in the end made a statement, Western architecture or the current Chinese regime. Despite their justifications and noble intentions, the architects of the National Stadium were barely invited to the opening ceremony. (10) A cynic could claim that it proved architecture was just the means to an end instrumented and manipulated by an authoritarian regime. The Chinese artist Ai Wei Wei, who co-designed with Herzog & de Meuron on the stadium, and is an official dissident of the Chinese government, wasn't even invited at all. He would have refused out of principal anyway, stating that he thought the ceremony was "too far from the spirit of freedom". (11)

Less Freedom, More Opportunities

After China revealed the power and possibilities of international design architecture, a.k.a. the Beijing effect – amplifying the alchemical Bilbao effect at Chinese scale – more countries discovered the power of architectural masterpieces and landmarks. With oil prices soaring and the interest rate of the dollar historically low, the Arabic Gulf states (described by The Economist as part of "a cartel of authoritarian regimes practised in the arts of oppression") and Central Asian countries like Kazakhstan exploded with real estate developments. Tax-haven city-states like Dubai presented ambitious plans for new financial hubs equal to London or New York, and airports boasting more future flights than Paris' Charles de Gaulle or London's Heathrow. Similar to the nature of hedge funds, these countries hold executive power over staggering fortunes within a very small elite group, practically unaccountable by international law. (12) The enormous financial power of these countries, grown out of the fruits of global market economy, had to condense into bricks and mortar, and if not in Europe or America, where else? Western architects, like many Western corporations and institutes, were invited to join in the creation of this "inevitable" (13) new reality and were asked to design buildings and structures as never seen before. Entirely new and speculative cities or even entirely new capitals for new regimes are now the fertile ground for Western architecture to blossom...
Looking back, didn't those business opportunities mark a turning point in the value of the architect's moral integrity?

Meanwhile, Back Home

The irony of these super-large-scale projects developed in authoritarian regimes is that it is exactly those kind of projects that have become impossible to realize in Western democracies since the main post-war rebuilding finished in the early 1960s. Not only is the concentration of political, legal and executive powers necessary to realize those projects not compatible with the framework of democratic regimes, but more importantly, the ongoing liberalization of the real estate market consequently made grand, publicly financed urban schemes practically impossible. Since the late '80s the power of the public sector was eroded with an unprecedented insistence, while in the '90s the power of the market sphere hypertrophied through massive privatization and mergers. Public long-term planning was replaced by a short-term market-based approach. As the market's pendulum oscillated further between boom and busts, the political and public domain crumbled and gradually outsourced to third parties and private interest its responsibilities in securing social progress and collective interest. The European real estate market itself was also subject to deregulation and privatization, creating unprecedented real estate speculations across Europe. (14) In some countries, like the Netherlands, the real estate boom was fueled by the sell-out of scarce municipal lands and the liberalization of the government financed housing corporations that produced social housing. (15) The responsibility for managing the extensions of cities was outsourced to the market. It was believed that they would better respond to the need of the population. Soon it was possible to make more money than an average year's salary by speculating with home values. With mortgages at an all time low and developers eager to build homes with high returns on investment, building for profit became far more important than building for quality, or perhaps even necessity.
This resulted in a rapid speculation on land value and in cheaper constructions and lower quality of building.

Esthetic Consultant

At the same time, the profession of architecture, which used to be a market independent and a regulated profession itself, was subjected to deregulation. Under the pressure of the European Union's anti-trust policies the classical system of fixed fees was declared illegal. In some European countries the architect officially became a consultant or adviser. Within this free market, architects now started competing on fees rather than on quality. Furthermore, progressive generalizations by investors of 'turnkey' and 'Design & Construct' developments profoundly affected the conditions of the architect's involvement. In the most extreme cases, the position of the architect as 'building master' is debased to a mere 'esthetic consultant' in large development consortiums taking care of the conception, realization, maintenance and management of the building.

In some cases the architect is hired and paid by the contractor. In other cases he is appointed through a 'building-manager' and not directly by the client, de facto losing its an independent position. As a result, the architect nowadays rarely manages building-sites, contracts, payments and quality control, but becomes instead managed by managers and builders themselves, and subject to their partial quality control.

Bigger is Better

As for public buildings, the European tender regulations of 2004, meant to level the playing field, forced the public sector to reset the standards for architecture offices to compete for public buildings. Capabilities of bidders are now increasingly evaluated mainly on their turnover and their stability within the free market rather than on the quality of their references. Paradoxically, the anti-trust approach to architectural services has contributed to the rise of fewer but larger offices able to enter in architectural tenders. Similar to the mechanism of a free European football player market that has led to the more or less the same sixteen football teams competing for the European Champions League every year, the European tender regulations have created a handful of big European architecture offices that win more or less all the big public tenders. Strangely enough, one can always have too small of a turnover, but never too big of one. As Dutch architecture office Kempe Thill recently pointed out, (16) in the current Dutch public tender climate, Ben van Berkel would not have been able to design the world famous Erasmus Bridge in Rotterdam, and Rem Koolhaas would have never built his exceptional masterpiece, 'De Kunsthal'; put in today's context, their then-relatively inexperienced offices would simply have had too low a turnover and too little built references.

From Bubble Architecture to Architecture Bubble

Where the architects' fixed fee for services had implied an independent position also described in the code of ethics, in some countries the liberalization of the architectural profession meant the (partial) removal of the code of ethics. (17) The architectural avant-garde, left with an ideological vacuum after deconstructivism, declared the postmodern conditions of globalization as inevitable. (18) Architects traded their defensive, critical attitude to a projective and collaborative role, admitting the conditions as a given. Offices grew tremendously over the years, (19) some nearly doubling every year with turnovers following the rise of the stock exchange. Former 'paper architects' like Zaha Hadid and Coop Himmelb(l)au suddenly had multiple buildings on site. As 3D drafting programs reached unequaled qualities of modeling and Hollywood's powerful render programs became available for architects, artists' impressions were more real than ever, leading casual viewers of the architects' images to wonder whether the building was built or just conceived. Simultaneously this software also allowed every design, no matter how blobby, pixelated, smooth, meshed, curved, cantilevered or suspended, to look real and therefore makeable, feasible and desirable. Parallel to the fatal complexity of mortgage-based financial products supposed to finance these iconic architectural miracles, many of the buildings themselves were technically completely unresolved, energetically totally unsustainable (20) and finally, programmatically unrealistic. During this boom, just like so many other trades, architects have rarely been less critical as they have been in recent decades. Perhaps the ride was just too thrilling to ponder the consequences, perhaps there was no immediate urgency – just like everyone else, architects believed that there was no limit to growth. But as we hit a stone wall one year ago, the spectacular renderings were revealed to be as much an illusion as the economic bubble that generated them.

Generation Bubble

Coinciding with the current economic crisis is the beginning in the Western hemisphere of an unprecedented generational rift as the 'biggest generation ever' (1945–1960) is nearing the retirement age. In some large Western countries, such as the United States of America, France and Germany, the generational overweight was stronger than other countries, yet the pure statistical dimension of this generation created an evolutionary zeitgeist of revolutions and perpetual quests for freedom. In many ways, from economic to cultural and ethical, the past forty years have been dominated by this single generation, also known as the Baby Boomers or Boomers. From the 1968 student revolutions to the economic recessions of the '80s and the glorious age of the presumed new economy, from postmodernism to deconstructivism, from the welfare state to globalization and liberalization: all main tendencies of Western society grew along with this generation. The Boomers surfed their wave, flooding society with a majority of teenagers and students at the end of the '60s and flooding today's society with retirees. The question is what they leave in their wake.
Of course the problem of generalizations (or should we say generationizations?) is that they apply to the entire group, yet to no individual in particular. But its hard to avoid the pure statistical facts that portray the Boomer generation as an extraordinary generation, that created extraordinary opportunities and gained enormous powers for themselves. (21) Boomers were extremely different in cultural, social and economic background than their parents and grandparents, who endured one or two wars and the Great Depression. Growing up in the post-war boom, it is not surprising that they evolved from a young adolescents' revolutionary attitude against the pre-war generation to a non-critical attitude towards fin de siecle post-modernity in their midlife. Through its unprecedented size and power this generation was somehow able to be continuously "experimental" and suspend judgment in order give a chance to the opportunities it held.

To Find Criticism Within the Inevitable

The introductory text by Rem Koolhaas to the publication Al Manakh, (22) a survey on the Gulf states, is called 'Last Chance?', and is a short pamphlet claiming that "The Gulf is reconfiguring the world" and that therefore "it may be the final opportunity to formulate a new blueprint for urbanism".
The question is if Rem Koolhaas, born in 1944 to become one of the greatest architects of these times, would have claimed the same if he had been twenty-five years old today? Or would he have called it 'First chance!' Or even 'No Chance...'? Perhaps no more than a coincidence, but the current widespread short-term thinking that contributed to the depth of the current crisis stands in sharp contrast to the long-term thinking heralded by the youth in the '60s. With more of life behind them than in front of them, many Boomers are now securing themselves with large bonuses and golden parachutes: under the pavement still lies the beach. As the Boomer wave burst through the dams of religion, restraint, boredom, morals and conservation, the following generations are left with the difficult task of defining their place within the flotsam of moral debris. The ungrateful task of cleaning up after the party.
Examining the results of the current crisis, we can state that judgment has been suspended to the point where it has become almost ridiculous to claim more mere optimism. Instead has it become difficult not to fall into sheer complacency or even negativism. Fifty years after John F. Kennedy created the myth of crisis meaning both 'danger' and 'opportunity' in 1959, the moment has come to reset our critical agenda.

Meanings Instead of Myths

Instead of seeking yet another miraculous new opportunity looming on the horizon, it is perhaps wise, as Fernando Donis recently pointed out, (23) to look for the meaning of the crisis within its own linguistic origins. The word 'crisis' originates from the Greek 'krisis', which means "turning point in a disease".

As such, it was used by Hippocrates to indicate a point in the progression of disease at which either the illness would begin to triumph and the patient would succumb to death, or the opposite would occur and natural processes would make the patient recover. (24) If we read into this meaning of the word crisis, we understand the enormous risk we are taking if we expect to be cured through a natural process.
And if we do cure, what's the next bubble we run into? Sustainability and the green energy industry? (25)
Interestingly enough, however, 'crisis' also means "judgment", coming from the Greek 'krinein', which means, "to separate, decide, judge". And this is exactly the difficult and complex task that needs to be done in these times: to separate, to decide and to judge. Not in order to condemn and wash away our recent architectural past or to 'kill our idols' in search of our own legitimacy. Rather to reproach our heritage with a critical standpoint towards the meaning and goals of progress for the future of the planet, globalization, free-market and democracy. We need to separate. We need to judge. To take up the Herculean task of untangling the postmodern mess of morals. We need to decide. To avoid the atrocious consequences of carrying on to consume the planet the way we are doing now. To refocus our attention on the long-term values of architecture. To gain unprecedented intelligence on managing our complex global morals. We need to face reality and acknowledge what is working and what is not. At the same time we can never reset our condition, we need to evolve it – progress it further. But we can only do that if we choose to change things, one piece at a time. Over and over again. This is political, because it affects us all. But it is also personal, because in the end our personal future is at stake.

We have no choice but to make a choice.

Notes

(1) Explained on the weblog of Victor H. Mair, Professor of Chinese Language and Literature, Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Pennsylvania. See http://www.pinyin.info/chinese/crisis.html (retrieved on July 29, 2009)
(2) See McRae, Hamish. "We must seize the opportunity to radically rethink our government" in: The Independent. June 7, 2009. http://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/comment/hamish-mcrae/hamish-mcrae-we-must-seize-the-opportunity-to-radically-rethink-our-government-1698517.html (retrieved on July 29, 2009)
(3) See Harris, Paul. "Torture-tape Gulf prince accused of 25 other attacks" in: The Guardian. May 3, 2009. http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/may/03/uae-sheikh-accusation-assualt-tape (retrieved on July 29, 2009). Human Rights Watch published numerous reports on the violation of human rights in the United Arab Emirates, on their website, particularly concerning the working conditions of migrant workers. See http://www.hrw.org/en/home.
(4) See also "France: Abu Dhabi Louvre Must Respect Labor Rights" in: Human Rights Watch. July 18, 2007. http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2007/07/18/france-abu-dhabi-louvre-must-respect-labor-rights (retrieved on June 29, 2009)
(5) See for example Buruma, Ian. "Don't be fooled – China is not squeaky clean" in: The Guardian. July, 30 2002. http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2002/jul/30/china.features11 (retrieved on June 14, 2009)
(6) See also "One Year of My Blood" in: Human Rights Watch. March 11, 2008. http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2008/03/11/one-year-my-blood-0 (retrieved on August 2, 2009)
(7) See Olcayto, Rory. "Ethics debate: Take an ethical stance, Libeskind tells his peers" in: BD, The Architect's Website, February 15, 2008, http://www.bdonline.co.uk/story.asp?storycode=3106421 (retrieved on July 15, 2009)
(8) See interview with Herzog and de Meuron for Der Spiegel: "'Only an Idiot Would Have Said No'" in: Der Spiegel Online. July 20, 2008, http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,569011-2,00.html (retrieved on July 15, 2009)
(9) Interview with Rem Koolhaas on: NOVA College Tour 2009. April 22, 2009. http://www.novatv.nl/page/detail/uitzendingen/6866/NOVA+College+Tour+met+Rem+Koolhaas (retrieved on April 23, 2009)
(10) Herzog & de Meuron had to arranges tickets themselves, where never officially invited, see also interview with Herzog and de Meuron for Der Spiegel: "'Only an Idiot Would Have Said No'" in: Der Spiegel Online. July 20, 2008, http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,569011-2,00.html (retrieved on July 15, 2009)
(11) Ai Wei Wei in an interview. Zhang, Flora. "China's Olympic Crossroads: Bird's Nest Designer Ai Weiwei on Beijing's 'Pretend Smile'" in: The New York Times. August 4, 2008. http://olympics.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/08/04/chinas-olympic-crossroads-birds-nest-designer-ai-weiwei-on-beijings-pretend-smile/?scp=1&sq=Ai%20wei%20wei%20august&st=cse. (retrieved on July 14, 2009)
(12) See also Gapper, John. "Dubai built it and the world did come", in: The Financial Times, November 21, 2007. http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/eea3210e-9854-11dc-8ca7-0000779fd2ac.html (retrieved on July 29, 2009)
(13) Rem Koolhaas "to find optimism in the inevitable", in Ouroussoff, Nicolai. "City on the Gulf: Koolhaas Lays Out a Grand Urban Experiment in Dubai" in: The New York Times. March 3, 2008. http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/03/arts/design/03kool.html (retrieved on July 29, 2009)
(14) "Caught in the downward current" in: The Economist. March 19, 2009. See also "Through the roof. House price gaps. 1997 – 2007 %." source: IMF.
(15) This led to excess situations such as a Dutch housing cooperation, rooted on socialist seeds, starting to pay their director close to a million euro a year for managing the lowest cost housing stock.
(16) See the report on European tenders in the Netherlands by Atelier Kempe Thill: Towards a New Culture of Public Contract Procurement Procedures. July 2008. http://www.atelierkempethill.com/0077_en.pdf (retrieved on July 20, 2009)
(17) See Wasserman, Barry, Patrick Sullivan, and Gregory Palermo. Ethics And The Practice Of Architecture. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons. 2000.
(18) It is also interesting to note here that the philosophers so often referred to by deconstructivists, Deleuze, Guattari and Foucault, hardly produced any major works after 1990; this of course is not true of Baudrillard.
(19) See for example the growth of Norman Foster's office. "World Architecture Top 100 2008" in: Building Design Magazine. January, 2008.
(20) See also In den Himmel gebaut – Wolkenkratzer de superlative a documentary by Gabi Schlag and Benno Wenz, aired on 3sat on March 25, 2007
(21) For facts and dates see Chauvel, Louis. "La Responsabilité des Génerations" in: Projet. Summer 2001, n.266, pp.14–22.
(22) Bouman, Ole, Mitra Khoubrou & AMO/Rem koolhaas. Volume / Al Manakh, Amsterdam: Volume, 2007.
(23) Donis, Fernando. "Evolution in the age of crisis" in: Conditions Magazine. 1st issue, 2009: pp.24–27.
(24) Also used later by Galen. After a crisis, a relapse might follow, and then another deciding crisis. According to this doctrine, crises tend to occur on critical days, which were supposed to be a fixed time after the contraction of a disease. If a crisis occurred on a day far from a critical day, a relapse might be expected.
(25) See also our article "Copenhagen beyond the bubbles", in: Arkitektur M, June 2009

"We are certainly in a period when Lord Rogers, Lord Foster, lord-this, lord-that, socialists supposedly, are chasing power and money like everybody else, and without being cynical about it, because they have to work. That they have to get jobs is the logic of that situation. Let me say, I do think that there is great architecture that doesn't have to do this. People do turn down jobs. (James) Stirling refused work for Disney. There is architectural integrity. There is no determinism in history. There are great architects produced outside that system. So don't succumb, resist it, but know it's there". – Charles Jencks, 2005

"My administration is the only thing between you and the pitchforks". – Barack Obama to bankers, 2008

"Over the past decade and more it has become fashionable for aging Generation X-ers to sneer at the older Baby Boomers who preceded them in America's generational cohorts. There is a rough justice in this: No American generation was ever as hate-filled, sneering and contemptuous of their parents, nor as self-indulgent and self-righteous as they themselves aged, as the boomers have been. But like any kind of age, race or religious prejudice painted with a broad brush, the Generation X whines and sneers at their predecessors are as simplistic as the boomers' rants in their day were, and it gets old and ridiculous just as fast". – United Press International report, 2009

"If Monaco is, in Jack Nicholson's phrase, Alcatraz for the rich, what shall we make of Dubai?" – Germain Greer, 2009

"Go back about 35 years. The end of the great Post-War Boom is usually dated to 1973. In 1973 there were no personal computers, no internet, fax machines were extremely expensive things that basically only major news organizations had. Ships were unloaded by guys toting big bags of stuff, no free containerization, no barcode scanner. Today we are a vastly richer, more productive society than we were in the early 70s and yet we are not sure where the typical family has gained any thing. How is that possible? The answer of course is that there were huge, huge gains at the top of the income distribution. A few people got much, much richer and that took all or almost all of the gains. We talk about second Gilded age referring back to the era of the Robber Barons, and that is not a metaphor, its not hyperbole, its not exaggeration by the numbers the distribution of income in the United States in 2005 almost exactly matched what it was in the 1920s. So it may be not quite the age of J.P. Morgan but we are certainly fully back to levels of inequality that was not been seen since the 1920s, it's an extraordinary thing". – Paul Krugman, 2007

"I'm the designer. My client is the autocrat".
– Robin Pogrebin, 2008

"It's very cheap and easy for architects and artists and film-makers to pull out or to make this kind of criticism. Everybody knows what happens in China. All work conditions in China are not what you'd desire. But you wear a pullover made in China. It's easy to criticise, being far away. I'm tempted almost to say the opposite... How great it was to work in China and how much I believe that doing the stadium [and] the process of opening will change radically, transform, the society. Engagement is the best way of moving in the right direction. It would be arrogant not to engage, otherwise no politicians could go there, no athletes. You would just close the borders". – Herzog and De Meuron on working in Beijing China, 2008

"I have often found Rem Koolhaas' provocatively ideological neutral stance problematic... I want to hear architects try to think that through. I want to know that they've grappled with it". – Barry Bergdoll, 2008

"The point is, ladies and gentleman, that greed, for lack of a better word, is good. Greed is right, greed works. Greed clarifies, cuts through, and captures the essence of the evolutionary spirit. Greed, in all of its forms; greed for life, for money, for love, knowledge has marked the upward surge of mankind. And greed, you mark my words, will not only save Teldar Paper, but that other malfunctioning corporation called the USA". – Gordon Gekko, 'Wall Street' by Oliver Stone, 1987

"I think [Stararchitect] is a name that is actually degrading to the vast majority of people it is applied to. And it really is a kind of political term that for certain clients is important because they use star architects. My hope is that through the current complexity that title will exit discretely and disappear. […] It is not possible to live in this age if you don't have a sense of many contradictory forces, each building has to be beautiful, but cheap and fast, but it lasts forever. That is already an incredible battery of seemingly contradictory demands. So yes, I'm definitely perhaps contradictory person, but I operate in very contradictory times." – Rem Koolhaas, 2009

"Today, outlandish architecture and design-art are placed alongside Damien Hirst's diamond skull and the Candy and Candy's apartments as symptoms of empty extravagance".
– Kevin McCullagh, 2009

"Building is the means by which the egotism of the individual is expressed in its most naked form – the Edifice Complex. Democratic regimes are just as likely to deploy architecture as an instrument of statecraft as totalitarians. Even so, just as it is as well to keep a careful eye on those leaders with a taste for writing poetry, so an enthusiasm for architecture is a characteristic that should ring alarm bells when present in a certain kind of political figure". – Deyan Sudjic, 2005

"The personal status of these architects [Frank Gehry, Daniel Libeskind, Jean Nouvel, Rem Koolhaas, Norman Foster, Santiago Calatrava and Renzo Piano] is now so great and the demand for their presence so high – from students, the lecture circuit and competitions as well as the cities themselves – that their work is almost by necessity strongly conceptual and cannot rely on any detailed study of fine grain or culture of locality". – Robert Adam, 2008

"I was a producer of materiality and I am ashamed of this fact. Everything I designed was unnecessary". – Phillippe Starck, 2008

"Public housing, a staple of 20th-century Modernism, was nowhere on the agenda. Nor were schools, hospitals or public infrastructure. Serious architecture was beginning to look like a service for the rich, like private jets and spa treatments".
– Nicolai Ouroussoff, 2009

"What is new about the architecture of the gifted architects [Gehry, Hadid, Prix and others] you mention is that it is without political or social intention. The work of earlier 'free-form' architects always carried some message, usually of liberation, or even utopian reform. Today's counterparts are making pure art – it exists in a sphere entirely its own. Icons, yes, but expressing what? Certainly they are celebrations of human uniqueness – the uniqueness of genius. It is the uniqueness of an elite. I adore genius, and God knows there's not too much of it at any

time, but, today, we need more than that in architecture. Modernism pretended – or actually hoped – that architecture would be the instrument for making a better world for most people. That idea has melted away in architectural discourse". – Lebbeus Woods, 2008

"Now the question is what can replace the housing bubble". – Paul Krugman, 2005

"Weak belief is a problem. Iconic buildings are caused by weak belief, because clients don't have the strong belief to say to the architect, 'this is what the icon should be about'. Up to the Nineteenth Century, the client always imposed their taste, iconography, and meaning on the architect. Or they shared that with the architect, so they wouldn't have to tell them, but they knew what they were about. And they did, I think they did up until the Modern period even, to a degree.
Today, clients are insecure and society is completely pluralist and insecure, and doesn't know what it wants. But they (society and clients) do know they want a landmark. Weak belief plus the desire to have a landmark, plus celebrity culture, plus globalized capitalism, plus the art market's desire for the new – all those factors together produce iconic buildings. This is why we're in an iconic building era, not because we want to be. People don't want to be". – Charles Jencks, 2005

"It has been demonstrated now that you can be very successful economically while being fairly incompetent. This means a big shift in values, because wealth used to be linked to competence". – Richard Sennett, 2009

"[Those who oppose to] 'icons' are part of the reason that things are ugly, but they don't realise it... Through history, public buildings are iconic and if we want less we have no self-esteem. We might as well go back to the caves. If you add up how many iconic buildings have been built recently, how many are there? 50? 100? It's nothing. So people can fuck off ".
– Frank Gehry, 2008

"Architecture translates the digital, recollected micro-world into a real physically perceivable macro-world. Nowhere else is one able to convert the simulated computer-screen world into reality so impressively. And this is not the least reason why sculptural architecture has become so popular". – Hanno Rauterberg, 2008

"If we did not take action to solve this crisis, it could indeed threaten the future of human civilization. That sounds shrill. It sounds hard to accept. I believe it's deadly accurate".
– Al Gore, 2006

"Engagement is the best way of moving in the right direction".
– Jacques Herzog, 2008

"Wall Street got drunk, it got drunk, and now it has a hangover. The question is, how long will it sober up and not try to do all these fancy financial instruments?"– George W. Bush, 2008

"What's left after a bubble bursts? The greater city that was built by this, and every past, boom. Architecture tells a story that is always out of date, proclaiming former prosperity, symbolizing pride before it's tarnished. At the same time, architecture also preaches resilience: What's a downturn to a tower? Corporate America may totter, but its I-beams stand tall".
– Justin Davidson, 2009

"What is certain is that as job losses cut deeper into the creative sector, talk of the benefits of a good recession will go down as well as a banker's bonus". Kevin McCullagh, 2009

"Gucci-capitalism was a form of capitalism in which social and ecological justice were completely detached from the economy. There was a yawning gap between them. This form of capitalism is so focused on gaining things, on picking the fruits of growth, that it didn't sufficiently think about how this growth is created and divided. Particularly in the US and UK, people are more ashamed about not having the latest Gucci-bag or sunglasses than having debts". – Noreena Hertz, 2008

"At this particular moment, I think that everyone who is honest with themselves can't help think about 1929, which came at the end of an extraordinarily fertile period for architecture".
– Robert A. Stern, 2009

"I am convinced that the problem is a deep-seated one and we need to rebuild the whole world financial and monetary system from scratch... The idea of the absolute power of the markets that should not be constrained by any rule, by any political intervention, was a mad idea. The idea that markets are always right was a mad idea". – Nicolas Sarkozy, 2008

"Recently, for reasons I won't divulge, I've been thinking about brains. But so have a lot of Baby Boomers. Our brains are important to us. I remember Woody Allen's character in 1973's 'Sleeper' saying, 'My Brain. It's my second favorite organ'. Thanks to the invention of Viagra this is still true. The Big Issue: we are now worried about losing our second-favorite organs to fun afflictions like Alzheimer's. It's why we buy brain games".
– Chuck Nyren, 2008

"Don't subsidize inefficiency... let these businesses go bankrupt. They gambled, they lost. That's part of life". – Ed Prescott, 2008

"I've been thinking a lot lately about Tom Brokaw's book 'The Greatest Generation', that classic about our parents and their incredible sacrifices during World War II. What I've been thinking about actually is this: What book will our kids write about us? 'The Greediest Generation'? 'The Complacent Generation'? Or maybe: 'The Subprime Generation: How My Parents Bailed Themselves Out for Their Excesses by Charging It All on My Visa Card'. Our kids should be so much more radical than they are today. I understand why they aren't. They're so worried about just getting a job or paying next semester's tuition. But we must not take their quietism as license to do whatever we want with this bailout cash. They are going to have to pay this money back. And therefore, we have an incredibly weighty obligation to make sure that we not only spend every stimulus dollar wisely but also with an eye to creating new technologies".
– Thomas L. Friedman, 2008

"We don't need anything material. It is more important to develop your own ethics, and to live according to those rules. Apart from that, we don't need to worry about anything".
– Phillippe Starck, 2008

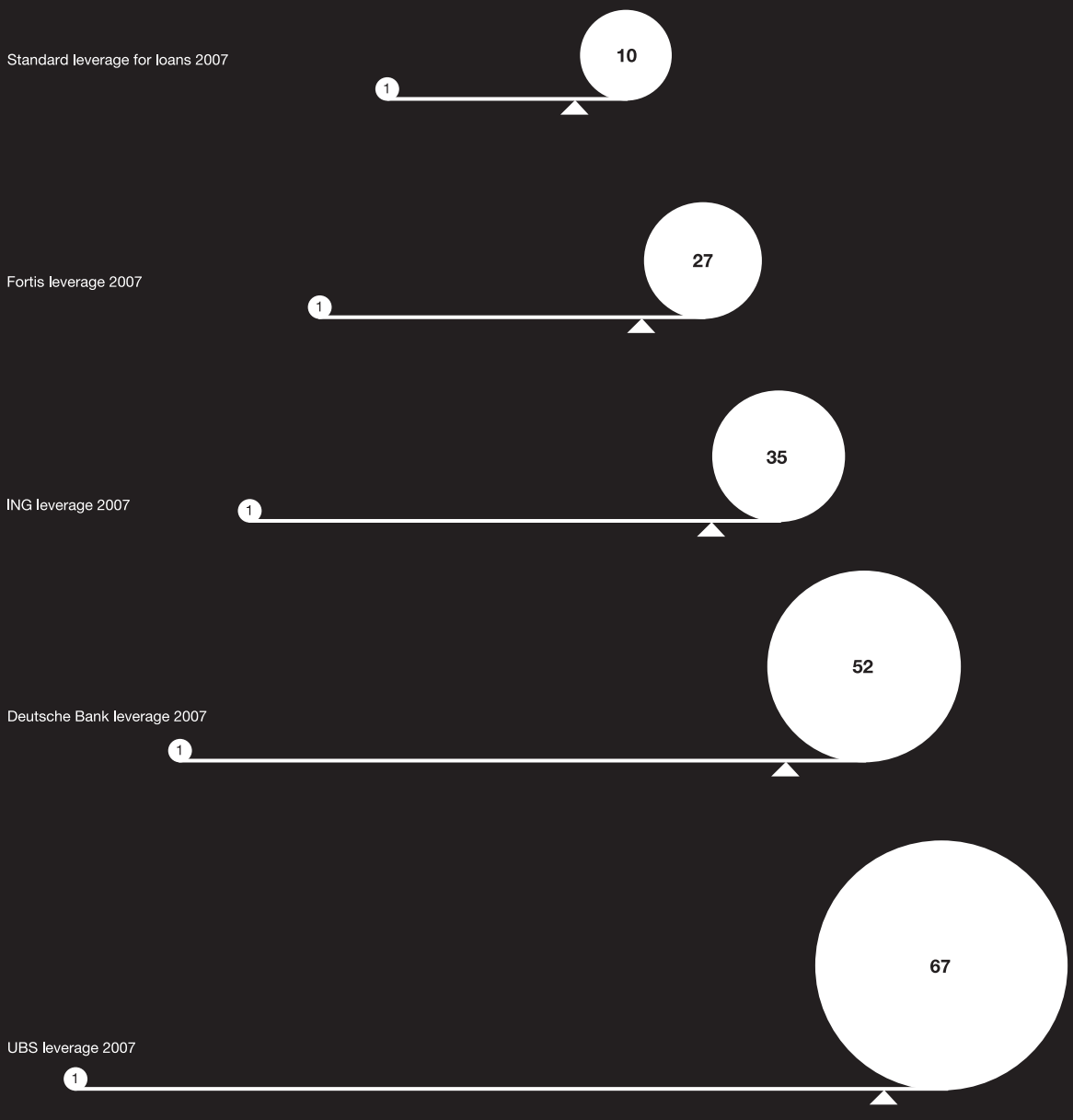
"When the music stops in terms of liquidity, things will get complicated. But as long as the music is playing, you've got to get up and dance. We're still dancing". – Chuck Prince, 2008

"I'm not attending the opening ceremony, I'm not interested in it, and I haven't received any invitation. If I need to be more clear on why I'm not willing to be part of the ceremony, it's that I think it's too far from the spirit of freedom. I've always thought of this ceremony as a product of government bureaucracy, rather than a natural celebration and expression generated among free citizens. I feel that there are too many regrets in this ceremony, which could make me unhappy".
– Ai Wei Wei on the Olympic Games in Beijing, 2008

"[The challenge for architecture] is a rediscovery, or reinvention, of a bond between ethics and aesthetics – the relationship between the way a thing looks and what it does. This is not the quest for a new functionalism, but for a new authenticity. If architectural aesthetics is reduced to style, then living is reduced to appearances". – Lebbeus Woods, 2008

Out of Balance

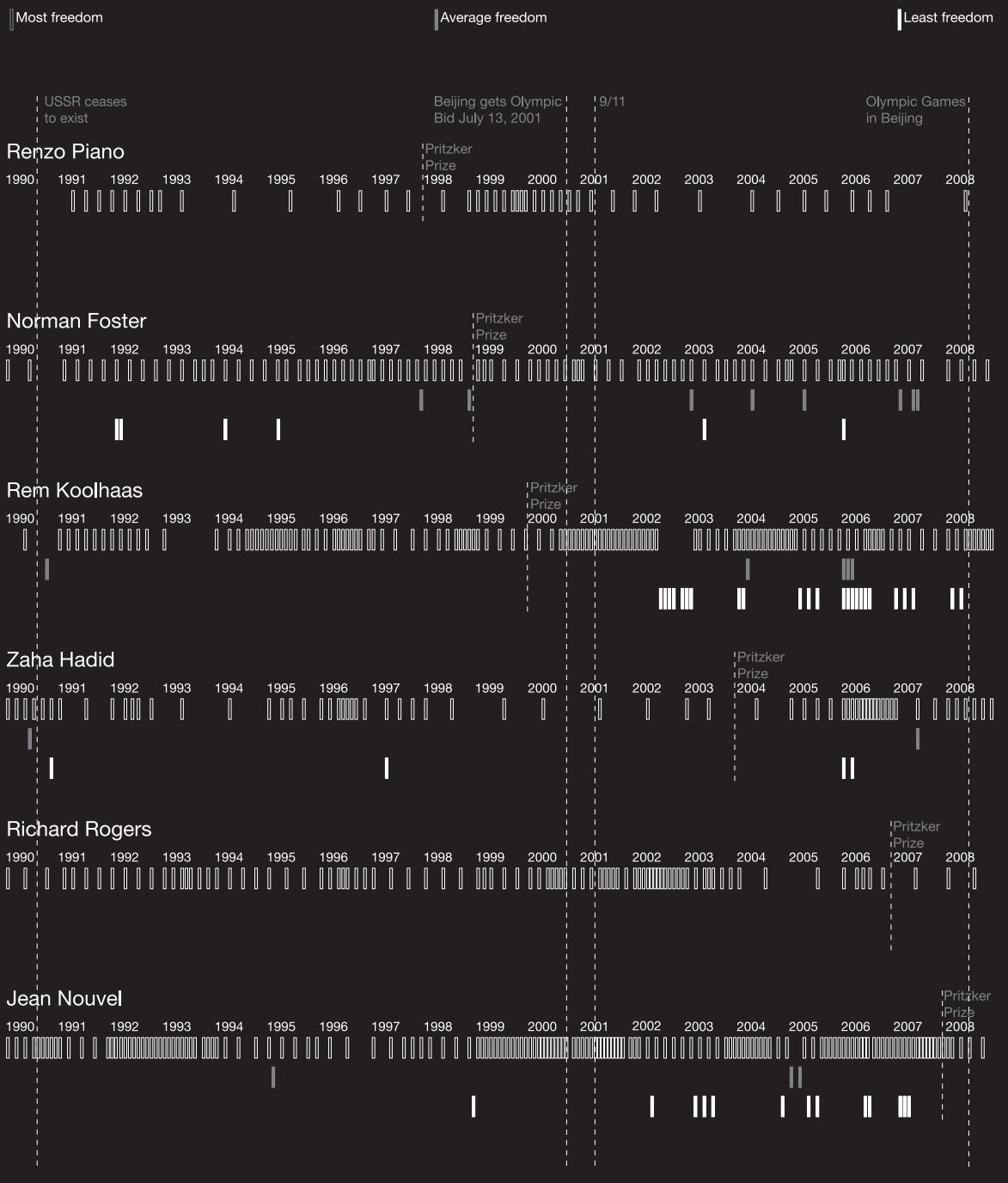
In 2007 the standard leverage that a bank would offer for a loan was factor 10, meaning it was possible to lend 10 times the asset or activa your were willing to give in return. For investment banks themselves, however, different and far more risky leverages were created, going up to a factor of 67 for the UBS bank. This number is even considered a low estimation by economists, as ingenious financial contructions may have pushed the actual factor up further. As the financial crash came, the enormous leverage collapsed, bringing banks to the edge of bankruptcy.



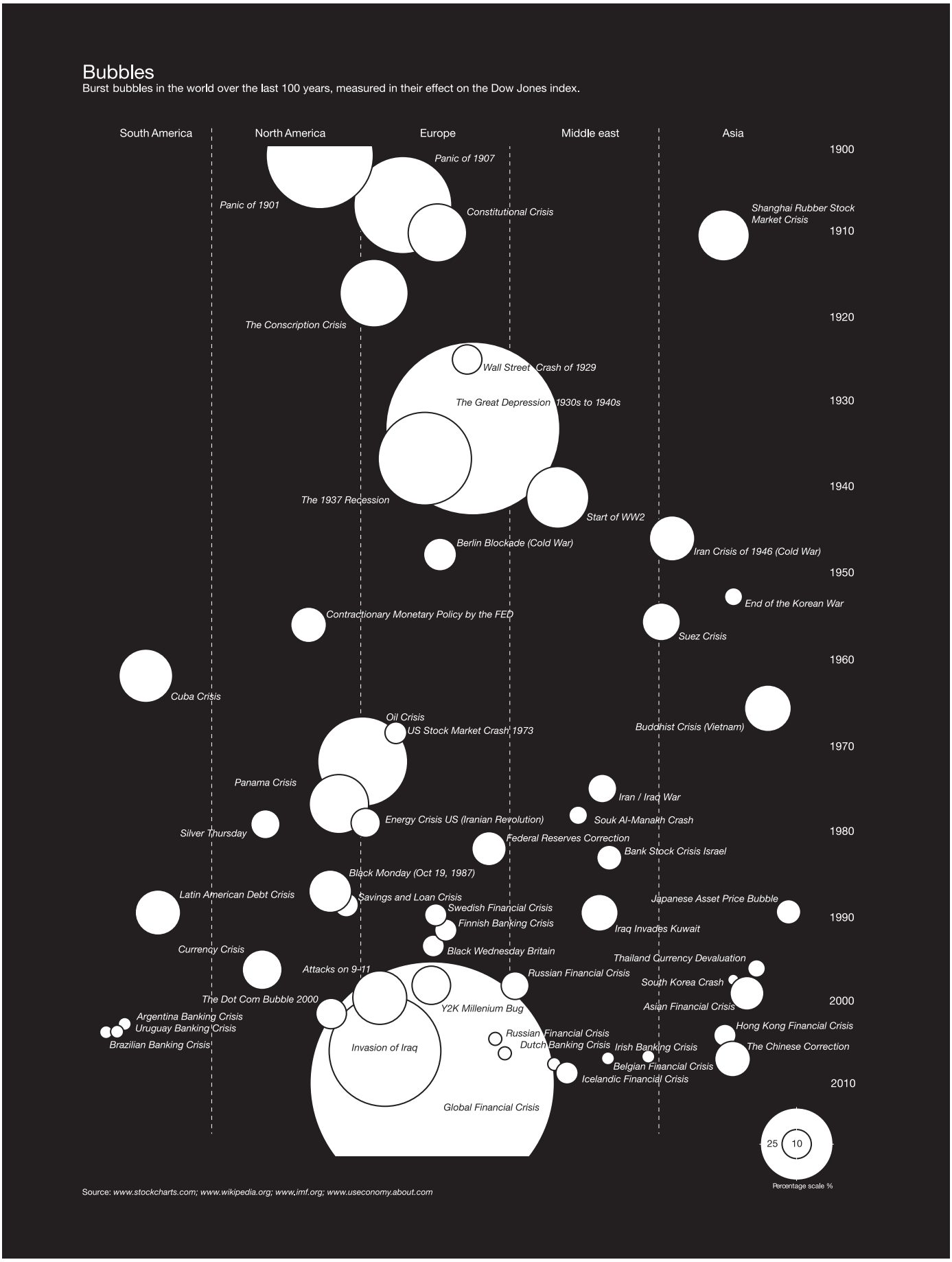
Source: *Centre of European Policy Studies; www.voxeu.org/index.php?q=node/1669*

Regimes and Architects

Number of projects per architect divided by the freedom status in the countries of their location, according to the World Freedom Atlas.
The World Freedom Atlas judges the Freedom Status per country on several criteria: freedom of expression, artistic freedom and freedom of participation in the political process. Countries with the biggest freedom status include North America, Europe, Japan, India, Brazil and South Africa. Countries with a medium freedom status are, amongst others, Venezuela, Turkey, Libanon, Malaysia and Thailand. China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates amongst others, are indicated as countries with least freedom. The freedom is rated on a scale of *0 - 40*. Least Freedom rates from *0 - 15 points*, average from *16 - 30 points* and most freedom is *30 - 40 points*. The diagram is based on projects published on the websites of Pritzker Prize winners since 1998. China, UAE and Russia are the countries from the last category where the selected architects have most frequently worked.

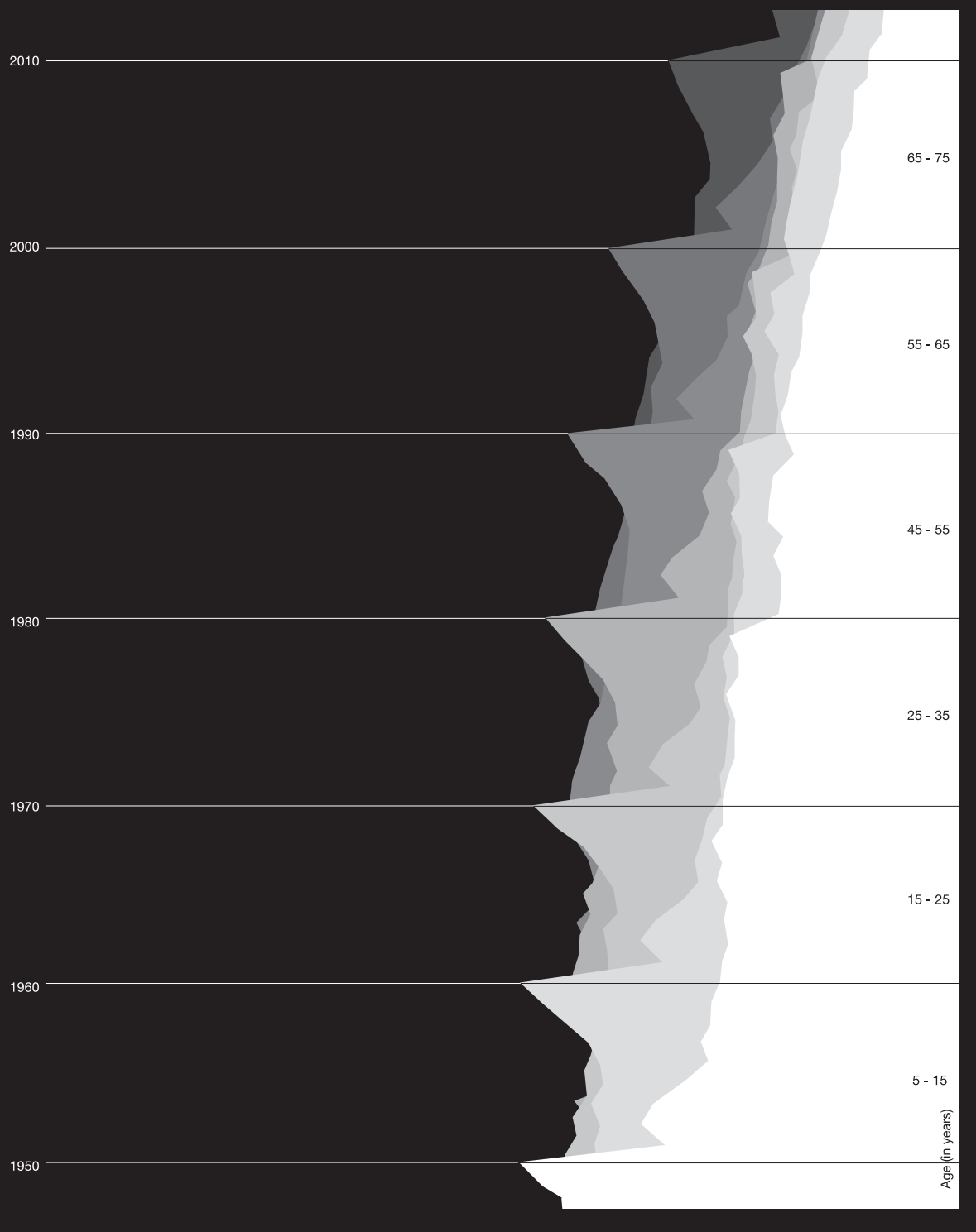


Source: *www.freedom.indiemaps.com; www.rsh-p.com/rshp_home; www.jeannouvel.fr; www.oma.nl; www.fosterandpartners.com; www.rpbw.r.ui-pro.com; www.zaha-hadid.com*


Bubbles
Burst bubbles in the world over the last 100 years, measured in their effect on the Dow Jones index.
South America
North America
Europe
Middle east
Asia
1900
1910
1920
1930
1940
1950
1960
1970
1980
1990
2000
2010
Panic of 1907
Panic of 1901
Constitutional Crisis
Shanghai Rubber Stock Market Crisis
The Conscription Crisis
Wall Street Crash of 1929
The Great Depression 1930s to 1940s
The 1937 Recession
Start of WW2
Berlin Blockade (Cold War)
Iran Crisis of 1946 (Cold War)
End of the Korean War
Contractionary Monetary Policy by the FED
Suez Crisis
Cuba Crisis
Oil Crisis
US Stock Market Crash 1973
Buddhist Crisis (Vietnam)
Panama Crisis
Iran / Iraq War
Energy Crisis US (Iranian Revolution)
Souk Al-Manakh Crash
Silver Thursday
Federal Reserves Correction
Bank Stock Crisis Israel
Black Monday (Oct 19, 1987)
Latin American Debt Crisis
Savings and Loan Crisis
Swedish Financial Crisis
Japanese Asset Price Bubble
Finnish Banking Crisis
Iraq Invades Kuwait
Currency Crisis
Black Wednesday Britain
Thailand Currency Devaluation
Attacks on 9-11
Russian Financial Crisis
South Korea Crash
The Dot Com Bubble 2000
Asian Financial Crisis
Y2K Millenium Bug
Argentina Banking Crisis
Uruguay Banking Crisis
Hong Kong Financial Crisis
Brazilian Banking Crisis
Russian Financial Crisis
Dutch Banking Crisis
Irish Banking Crisis
The Chinese Correction
Invasion of Iraq
Belgian Financial Crisis
Icelandic Financial Crisis
Global Financial Crisis
25
10
Percentage scale %
Source: www.stockcharts.com; www.wikipedia.org; www.imf.org; www.useconomy.about.com

Riding the Wave

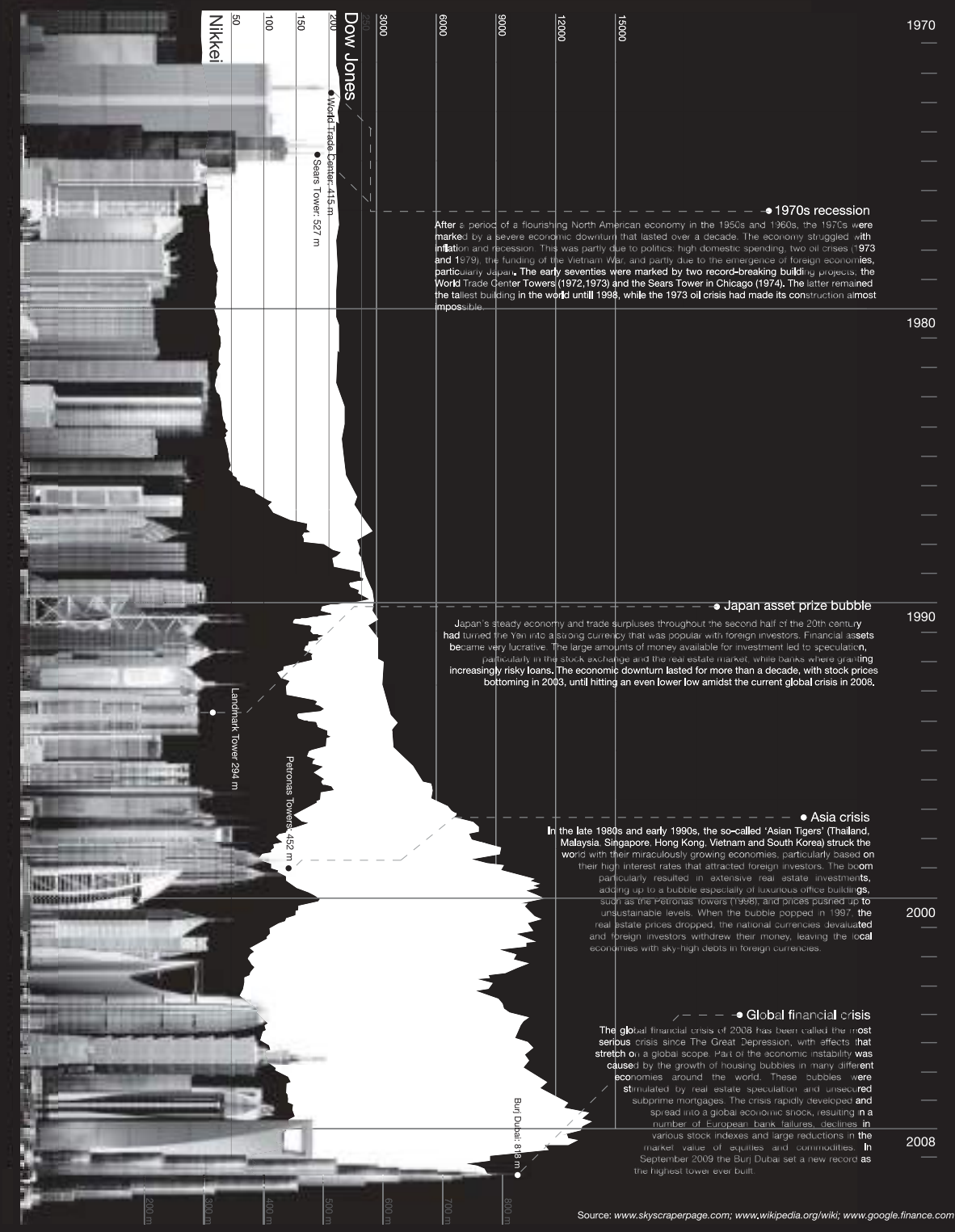
As the Baby Boomers generation born between 1945 and 1955 got older, a zeitgeist of revolutionary events grew with them. Overlayed here are age-pyramids of the EU 12 from 1945 - 2015 and the crucial moments in economic, political and popular culture.



Source: Eurostat, www.wikipedia.org, www.historycentral.com

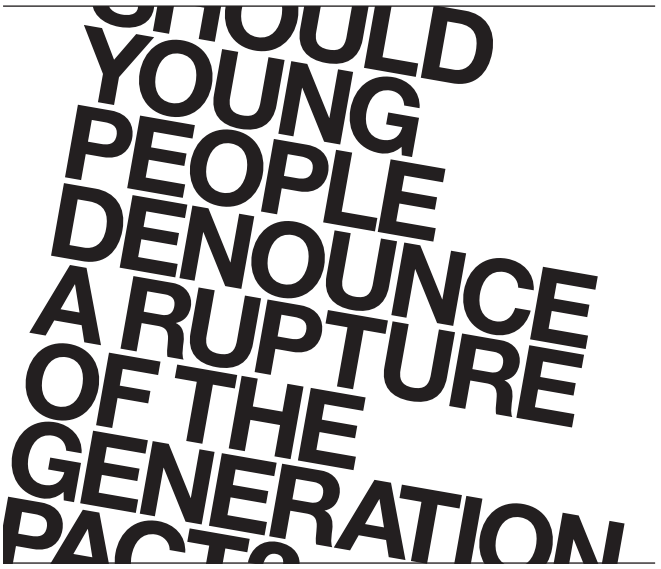
Skyscraper Index

The relation between the movements of the Dow Jones, the Nikkei index and the highest skyscrapers built.
In 1999, Andrew Lawrence developed The Skyscraper Index, which shows a relation between the height of skyscapers and economic down-turns. His theory is rooted in the assumption that economic turns always move in cycles. Lawrence uses the height of skyscraper projects to predict an economic crisis, instead of a boom. The results of this index can be somewhat misleading, however, because due to the length of the construction period, the completion of a building is often dated after the deepest point of the cycle, just when economy is starting its recovery.



Source: *www.skyscraperpage.com; www.wikipedia.org/wiki; www.google.finance.com*

naim / bureau europa + a10



Colophon

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Durrës, Albania 2011 (photo Co-PLAN)


HOTEL


HOTEL

Skopje, Pristina, and Tirana:

Radical makeovers, re-inventions and retrofits

Ana Dzokic and Marc Neelen (STEALTH.unlimited)

NOTTE:

During the study trip 'What's up, what's down. Cultural catalysts in urban space' (from 1 to 17 October, 2010), a group of 20 architects, urban planners, artists, designers and critics studied the urban transformations of recent decades in a number of Europe's secondary cities. The tour (initiated by the Netherlands Foundation for Visual Arts, Design and Architecture | BKVB in Dutch, see http://fondsbkvb.nl) visited the Balkans (Skopje, Pristina and Tirana), Marseille, Northern England (Manchester, Leeds and Liverpool) and the Basque Country (Bilbao and Vitoria-Gasteiz). The programme for Skopje, Pristina and Tirana was prepared by Ana Dzokic and Marc Neelen of STEALTH.unlimited, in cooperation with 25 partners in these cities. The results of the trip include the article by Tijs van den Boomen, published in the weekly De Groene Amsterdammer, 06-01-2011. The BKVB has funded the translations for Forum A+P.

It's intriguing to follow the development of cities in Albania and the former Yugoslavia, especially if you approach them from a very different perspective. That's why the Netherlands Fonds BKVB (one of the leading Dutch cultural foundations in the fields of art, architecture and design) included Skopje, Pristina and Tirana in the 2010 tour of European cities they organised for a group of architects, urban planners, artists, curators and critics. The theme of the study tour was how the top-down (cultural) profile of these cities interacts with bottom-up initiatives and networks, and how this influences the cities' development. It was, in many respects, a dizzying trip.

Ever since the radical changes of the early 1990s, from the relatively open socialist society of the former Yugoslavia, and from a stringent communist society in Albania, to something that is best described as an experimental form of capitalism, the development of cities in this region has been both remarkably synchronous, and also diverse.

What all the cities – and all the bodies that govern these cities and countries – have in common is an unprecedented and often largely uncontrolled transition from a planned economy to an extremely liberal form of capitalism. Because none of these societies were well prepared for this transition, and old power structures were often able to form creative ties with new and powerful players, a form of market mechanism has been created that is seemingly reminiscent of the Dutch system, for example, but which is characterized beneath the surface by power monopolies, political favouritism and oligarchic structures. Of course, this also affects the city, not least because unprecedented profits could be made from the privatisation of collectively owned property and in real estate. Moreover, the makeover from a society based on collectivism, to a society based on individual satisfaction, requires major modifications to sectors such as housing and retail facilities.

Despite this strong similarity in development trajectories, there are also notable differences, first of all in cultural development. The former Yugoslavia has in fact always offered room for cultural diversity, which can be seen in the way cultural actors responded to the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the new context they faced

in the early 1990s (war, economic crisis, and new regimes and power structures). So a certain degree of autonomy, rebellion and radical innovation was already ingrained, from Kosovo to Ljubljana. The 1990s also saw the birth of a new vision in the cultural field: the promise of an open, transparent network society. For example, the collapse of Yugoslavia coincided with the emergence of the Soros Foundation, funded by the Hungarian-American investor, speculator and philanthropist George Soros. His Open Society Institute has enabled small but strong, independent cultural actors to emerge in many cities. Since the mid 1990s, this 'NGO scene' (not to be confused with large non-institutional actors such as the European Cultural Foundation, based in Amsterdam, which are also known as NGOs) has focused on anti-war activities, democracy, and new methods of (internet) communication, but it has also proved to be the driving force behind a renewal in artistic and cultural activities. Now, a decade and a half later, times have changed. International donors are steadily withdrawing from the region, the sympathy for small, activist, network NGOs is subsiding, and national institutions in various countries are being rebuilt, drawing on the experience and often the staff of the NGO network.

The situation in Albania is rather different. Because the Hoxha regime was considerably more repressive, Albania has no tradition of tolerated autonomy, or of rebellion or radical innovation in the cultural scene. Even today, the cultural scene in Albania is fairly homogeneous - many would call it mainstream. In Tirana, the grassroots level of small, experimental, cultural initiatives and independent venues is scarcely visible. Alternative music comes from Kosovo, while artists outside the conventional have by now moved to New York, Berlin or London. In Tirana itself, there is not much going on that could be called unusual. This makes it remarkable that Tirana of all places now has one of the most interesting initiatives in the field of urban development policies, and also has a radically independent Biennale - currently supported by neither city nor state.

There are also differences between the cities, which relate to differences in the societies' starting positions.

From Kenzo Tange's Skopje to Skopje 2014

The 1963 Skopje earthquake, which

destroyed 75 to 80 percent of the city, had a tremendous impact on the city's vision of its future. As a result of this twist of fate, the city acquired a futuristic (United Nations donated) master plan, designed by the young Japanese architect Kenzo Tange, whose metabolic architecture has left its distinctive mark on Skopje. The new Skopje was not just a vision of the future; the future was built in Skopje, with great panache and worldwide support from 78 countries.

Since the birth of Macedonia as an independent Republic, the country has been struggling with this futuristic modernist image. The country has an ongoing dispute with Greece about the origin, authenticity and ownership of the Macedonian identity, boiling down to the naming of the country as 'Macedonia' (by the Greek government seen as a false claim or provocation). This dispute means that Macedonia's hopes of joining NATO, the EU, and other international bodies frequently face a Greek veto.

The current government of Macedonia has decided to give the country a complete 're-make' to place the country in a new historical perspective, beginning mainly in the capital. In early 2010, a promotional video announced the *Skopje 2014 Plan*, which envisions an unprecedented stream of new construction projects, cultural interventions and 'repairs' to the face of the city. Initiated and financed by the Macedonian government, and in particular by the Ministry of Culture, the first results of this 'new vision' have appeared literally in the heart of Kenzo Tange's futuristic Skopje, in the form of neoclassical postmodern government buildings, dozens of neo-kitsch bronze statues, a 20-metre statue of Alexander the Great (or 'Alexander of Macedonia'), and an Orthodox Christian church. The result is a fascinating clash between futurism and a newly manufactured past, which strongly divides the residents.

Pristina: centre of a 'bottom-up nation' in the 21st Century

In 1974, Kosovo was granted the status of an autonomous province under the Constitution of Yugoslavia. In 1989, this autonomy was withdrawn under Milosevic, after which the Kosovan Albanian majority developed a parallel underground infrastructure (schools, universities, hospitals, and paramilitary structures), which was sustained for many years. Now, after years of being united in opposition to Belgrade, Kosovo has to grow from a rather one-dimensional society to a differentiated Kosovan society. Yet international organizations (which arrived here in the aftermath of the 1999 NATO intervention) still have a lot of control, and quite literally occupy parts of the city-centre of Pristina. The Kosovans have a difficult relationship with the international community, with the dubious investors, and with political favouritism. All these factors are visible in the face of the city; they are etched into its development, and often quite literally built on top of another, layer upon layer.

Kosovo is experiencing interesting cultural developments. Since the early 2000s, a new generation of artists from Kosovo, most of them educated in underground schools, has made a break-

through on the international circuit. Inevitably, much of their work, and their international popularity, was linked to the struggle for independence. Now that Kosovo has achieved independence, this international charisma has largely evaporated. In many cases, a search for new orientation is also visible in the artist's work as a result.

Tirana, reinvented and retrofitted

In the past two decades, a significant proportion of the population of Albania has settled in Tirana. The city is now trying to become an integral city, following this huge growth spurt. Since the election of the artist Edi Rama as mayor, Tirana has seen a number of widely-discussed developments. Rama is best known for his low-cost revamps, which since the year 2000 provided dreary residential blocks with a new look, designed by himself and a number of well-known artists. But Rama is also the driving force behind the 2003-2004 Tirana Master Plan, prepared by the French Architecture Studio. Under this plan, a number of international design contests have been announced, for developing and increasing the intensity of use of the area inside Tirana's inner ring road. The approach of development through design competitions has met mixed success, due mainly to difficult match the combination of (high) political ambition with international architects, and the realities and capacities 'on the ground' of local investors, local (implementing) architects teams and contractors. The master plan has another effect: real estate developments are taking place, often with astonishing speed, out of sight of the master plan arena.

According to UN Habitat, most future urban growth will occur in a way that contrasts radically to development conventions used by architects and urban planners. In many cases, urbanisation occurs before there are any urban or infrastructural plans, and the professionals only play a role later to 'retrofit' the necessary urban infrastructure into the emerged neighbourhoods. In this situation, we need to modify our tools and methods urgently. Tirana is a good example. More than half of the city originated 'informally,' with all the challenges this implies with respect to structure, infrastructure and social cohesion. The question remains whether professionals can make clever use of the power of residents' initiatives in shaping their city, so that this back-to-front planning can nevertheless result in a good urban structure?

One final observation: the article 'Between the mud and the model: bottom-up urban development', written by Tijs van den Boomen, a freelance journalist and one of the participants in the BKVB study tour, examines the development of Skopje, Pristina and Tirana, and relates it to that of other European cities. He concludes that Dutch politicians and planners can benefit from the experiences of these cities – and he is not the only one. We too have found the exchange between these widely differing regions of Europe important to maintaining the vitality of our discipline, and our cities.

Between the mud and the model:
bottom-up urban development

Tijs van den Boomen

This article was published in 'De Groene Amsterdammer' on January 5th 2011.

NOTE:
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The Netherlands has always been the land of drawing boards, but too much legislation and the economic downturn have paralysed this top-down planning. What can we learn from other countries? We look at examples of bottom-up city development from shrinking Liverpool and the booming Balkans.

In the centre of Kosovo's capital Pristina, a digging machine is levelling a corner lot. The lot is so small the digger can barely turn. It is one of the last empty spaces in the densely-built city centre. The owner, Qazim Babatinca, proudly shows us the building plans. The house he is building with his brother will have four stories. The design and permits cost him 15,000 Euros. "I wanted to do it legally and that's expensive," he says. I ask him why he bothers, when everyone here builds illegally anyway. He laughs: "I've lived in London for too long, you can't help but adapt."

Following the Serbian capitulation in 1999, construction projects began sprouting throughout the city. There was plenty of capital, from both Kosovan Albanians working abroad and from organised crime. Supervision failed. When the head of City Planning tried to stop the illegal construction projects in 2000, he was simply murdered.

The group of architects, city developers, critics and artists that the BKVB Fund has invited for the study tour 'What's up, what's down – Cultural Catalysts in Urban Space' have mixed feelings about Pristina. There is aversion to the unplanned proliferation and the ugliness that results, but also admiration and perhaps even jealousy of the vitality and the unlimited possibilities.

Because the Netherlands doesn't have any very big cities, the BKVB Fund has chosen to visit second-rank cities, roughly the size of Amsterdam. In the course of two weeks we will visit nine European cities currently undergoing radical transformations. What can the Netherlands learn from these cities, what inspiration can they offer? The Netherlands, with its famous heritage of spatial organisation and urban development, needs to move in a new direction. The Dutch town planning machinery has become bogged down in its own complexity and red tape. The lack of a new vision was painfully obvious during the coalition negotiations

following the elections. In the new structure, the Ministry for Spatial Planning was eliminated: all that is left is the Ministry for Infrastructure and the Environment.
Many plans have also been put on hold, due to the economic downturn, and it remains to be seen whether these will ever be revived. The age of the master plan has in any case ended: nowadays there is more talk of bottom-up planning, spontaneous planning and temporary uses. But no one knows exactly what this entails. It is not easy to shake off a century of the drawing-board mentality.

The inhabitants of Pristina have taken to unregulated construction with a vengeance in recent decades: entire suburbs have been illegally built. This 'turbo urbanism,' as the German city developer Kai Vöckler calls it, is not exclusively a Kosovan phenomena; it caught on throughout the Balkans. The big international investors hardly get a look in here. Often the owner and contractor will share the risk and retain one floor each after construction, while renting or selling the rest of the building. What is ultimately located in the building – a store, an office, a workshop or residences – depends on market forces. An architect is rarely involved, it's considered quite something if a design engineer checks the plan for structural adequacy. Naturally, such unplanned and unrestrained urbanisation results in considerable problems, such as the demolition of cultural heritage, an overloaded infrastructure, arguments between neighbours, a terrible lack of facilities and a dispiriting lack of taste. Surprisingly, the feverish construction has not produced slums, as has happened almost everywhere else in the world.

Take for example the residential suburb Shutka, in Skopje, the capital of the country that is officially called 'The Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia,' in deference to Greek sensitivities. Shutka is the only gypsy neighbourhood I've visited where strangers are neither treated like Santa Claus nor faced with rejection or even threats. You seem to go unnoticed.

Shutka has something between 20,000 and 50,000 inhabitants: no one has even an approximate idea of how many people really live there. It's a mixture of run-down wooden housing, loud villas, empty lots

and concrete houses, small shops and three-story plastered buildings in all the colours of the rainbow. The roads are full of donkey carts and homemade delivery scooters, but also Mercedes and minivans. Self-reliance is the driving force behind this neighbourhood, and the result exhibits a blossoming vitality.

In Albania, where turbo urbanism started in the nineties, it has already entered the next phase. Here we can see a possible way of dealing with spontaneous neighbourhoods. Over half of the capital Tirana, including the suburb of Bathore, was built illegally. Bathore was formed in the early nineties when farmers from the North moved to the city in droves. Bathore became a concept in Albania, it even became a verb: the Bathorisation of the country.

Bathore is now fully built, with 70 to 80 thousand residents. At first glance it's hard to imagine that the district was built illegally. It may be a bit chaotic to Western eyes, but the houses are big and well-maintained, there are schools and stores, and the roads are paved and wide enough for buses.

The illegal settlers followed the lines of the drainage ditches in what was a wasteland. But how did they ensure there was enough space left for infrastructure, were they that well-organised? "The roads were built later," says Dritan Shutina, the manager of Co-Plan. Co-Plan is a non-government organisation, with funding from Cordaid, which the Dutch Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies has supported with expertise and information.

With its feet literally in the mud, Co-Plan developed the zoning plan for Bathore. "Making plans isn't about drawing, it's about reaching people and harmonising different interests.' It took three years to convince people to relinquish a bit of 'their' land for roads. "We asked what they thought was most important, and the answer was always, 'the future of our children.' We took that as a starting point, and argued, 'If your children get sick, how will the ambulance get here to take them to hospital?'"

It took a lot of talking, and it was far from easy. They had grown up in the mountains, and still had a tribal way of thinking. Most of them still kept a gun under their beds. It took a long time, but the project was eventually successful, in part because Co-Plan didn't just make plans for the roads, it also fought the City Council to get the whole suburb legalised. At first the idea met with disbelief from the powers that be. Their idea was to wipe the whole suburb off the map. But nowadays, politicians realize that the inhabitants of Bathore are also potential voters. Besides, every road that is laid out, and every school built, is inevitably a step towards legalisation.

Bathore was Co-Plan's first project, but now they are active throughout Albania. Social workers are still the cornerstone of the organisation, but Co-Plan has extended its work to include master plans for entire cities, and input to national spatial planning policies. In 2006, Co-Plan even founded a private university. The first thirty students will graduate from Polis University this year. It's this

connection between high and low, mud and model, residents and politics, that makes Co-plan's work so inspiring. Talking and doing at the same time.

Co-Plan is concerned not only with unruly growth in Albania, but also with shrinkage. The countryside and the smaller cities are emptying. However for really striking examples of population loss – a problem the Netherlands will also face during the next few decades – the study group went to northern England. Since the 1950's, the population has been shrinking drastically in the area that once led the industrial revolution. The population of Liverpool dropped by almost half, from 850,000 to 440,000. The city hit rock bottom in the eighties. Since then, the city has recovered economically and culturally, at least if you look at the city centre.

Liverpool has hosted the famous Liverpool Biennial since 1998, which in 2008 led to it being chosen as the cultural capital of Europe. In the same year, a shopping mall the size of 25 football fields opened, with more than 160 stores, fourteen theatres and its own bus station. The warehouses beside the harbour look neatly renovated and the beautiful modern Museum of Liverpool is almost complete. As an extra mark of distinction, the city centre is surrounded by parks whose higher points offer panoramic views of the city. A depressing detail here is that the hills are artificial, built from the rubble of the working-class neighbourhoods that used to be here.

Further to the East, some of the working-class suburbs are still standing. In Anfield, for example, street after street of two-story houses stand abandoned. Steel plates have been welded over the windows and every building has a sign to warn burglars: "All valuables have been removed." The city renewal came to a screeching halt here: one section of the neighbourhood was levelled, but now there is no money left even to demolish the remaining houses, at a cost of 2,500 Euros per house. The ghost houses are literally a stone's throw from the world-famous FC Liverpool football stadium. It's because of the stadium that the abandoned streets are filled with parked cars once every two weeks.

The Dutch artist Jeanne van Heeswijk will be working in Anfield for two years, under an invitation from the Liverpool Biennial. Van Heeswijk is known for her social interventions. To break the apathy, she has already organised unemployed youth to design and build their ideal housing units. She already has volunteers and an empty lot that used to have 24 houses. Now she is fighting for the right to use bricks and timber from buildings being demolished. The demolition companies want to keep these, as they are in great demand in London for renovating luxury apartments.

Van Heeswijk has proven to be exceptionally good at handling practical problems, but it remains to be seen whether her intervention is any match for urban decline and houses left empty on such a large scale. 'Do it yourself' is a wonderful approach, and one that fits with the local punk tradition, but when looking at Anfield's many abandoned streets, it can be disheartening.

Nevertheless the active residents in the Anfield and Breckfield Steering Group support the plan. "We have no choice but to remain optimistic," says one of the volunteers. He is referring to the fact that residents themselves were responsible for the restructuring plan, which was approved eight years ago and provided for the demolition of 1400 houses.

We found more fighting spirit among a group of older residents in the much smaller neighbourhood of Granby, close to Liverpool's city centre. Granby too was earmarked for demolition, some 15 years ago. In some places, half the houses have been boarded up. The majority of the residents owned their homes, and every street still has a few residents who refuse to sell out. A group of older residents painted several houses, as a way to cheer the place up. The idea caught on and the group asked everyone in the neighbourhood to paint the houses next to them, and those across the road.

We have seen this before on this study tour: paint as a means of social rehabilitation, or at least for decoration. The most striking example was in Tirana, where Mayor Edi Rama had entire neighbourhoods colourfully painted. His project has since attracted international artists such as Olafur Eliasson. True, there are some really nice art works there, but it falls far short of being an inspiring attempt to blow new life into a city. It's exactly what its name suggests: a façade project.

However Granby is a different story, precisely because the residents aren't over-awed by the rules and norms of modern art, and are unabashedly looking for comfort and pleasantry. They have no fear of clichés, so the walls with their blocked-out windows have been painted with childish curtains and mailboxes, and with stars and flowers of every imaginable colour. No aesthetics committee had a hand in it, there were no workshops, no master plan, no analysis, nothing. The result is pure poetry, reminiscent of a somewhat demented old lady who has put on make-up and is, for a moment, the flirtatious girl she used to be.

The operation fits perfectly in the Victorian neighbourhood of low-rise houses with bay windows, well-proportioned streets, old trees and tiny front gardens. It draws attention to the area's quality; you can easily imagine that gentrification will catch on here. You could almost think you are in the old Jordaan, a working-class area in Amsterdam, just before it was taken over by young professionals. The similarity with the Netherlands is strengthened by trailers full of pot plants, parked here and there on the pavement, and the Farmers' Market that the women organise every first Saturday of the month. "You can't get fresh vegetables here any more," is their laconic explanation.

Will the activist-oldies be able to stop the bulldozers? They often despair, but they also know that the quality of the area has already improved a lot. Every year they hold out improves the odds that their neighbourhood will be rediscovered and new life will begin from the bottom up. Their unpretentious activism may not be a

solution, but it is a start.

The differences between Northern England and the Balkans are extreme: dramatic decline versus explosive growth. Both of these processes occur in the Netherlands too, although on a smaller scale. By 2040, over half of the Dutch municipalities will have shrunk in population. This decline is strongest at the geographical margins: North-east Groningen, Southern Limburg and the Dutch portion of Flanders. The Central Bureau for Statistics has predicted that these areas combined will lose 150,000 inhabitants. The population of the area known as Parkstad Limburg, which includes Heerlen and Kerkrade, will drop by 15 percent.

Meanwhile the urban agglomeration in the West (the *Randstad*), and cities in the centre of the country will see a lot of growth. Utrecht will grow by 35%, making it the fastest-growing city in the Netherlands. But even the most successful cities will experience some deterioration. Take Amsterdam for example: overall the city will grow by an eighth, but the urban renewal in New-West, the post-war suburbs in the western part of the city, has come to a complete halt. A more extreme example can be seen in Liverpool: a booming city centre and dying suburbs.

What can the Netherlands learn from the cities that were visited? The examples of large-scale population loss aren't encouraging. It's unreasonable to expect the inhabitants of a district such as Amsterdam's New-West, where large empty lots are witness to the thousands of homes that have been demolished, to take the initiative to halt the degeneration. And it's unrealistic to expect art projects to turn the tide. But when you look closer, there are real possibilities. On a neighbourhood level, or for individual apartment blocks, the energy and fighting spirit of the residents can be a starting point. Art can play a role, but only when the local community is involved: art for art's sake will not help.

Spontaneous urbanisation also is an extension of resident action. Now that the big project developers and construction consortiums have lost interest, local initiatives and smaller investors must be allowed to fill the gap. This can only happen if we abandon the idea of a master plan and accept that we can't predict what a neighbourhood will look like, 20 years from now. This realisation is slowly penetrating even to policy-making circles. Councillor Maarten van Poelgeest of Amsterdam recently argued for bottom-up city development. In the policy document 'Sensible sequels to the construction freeze,' he rejected plans for the Sluispoort development on Zeeburger Island. Instead the area will "be used for temporary facilities for now, and will gradually grow towards a definitive plan. (...) To facilitate this, the Sluisbuurt Free State Plan is being developed."

Perhaps Van Poelgeest should call on Albania's Co-Plan organisation to monitor and advise, and to ensure there are good connections between the top and bottom, up and down. That would also be a nice example of reverse development aid.

Local Challenges:
Urban Development and Housing in Albania

Anila Gjika & Dritan Shutina

ABSTRACT

This document is based on the report entitled "Analytical Review of the Construction Industry and Housing Market in Albania," a research study undertaken and funded by the Institute for Habitat Development within the framework of Making Policies Work (MPW) program.

The article tries to explain the deformation of planning system in Albania and its use as an alibi against planning system in itself, which has lead to negative externalities and considerable problems in the territorial context of Albania, nowadays struggling between the vacuum of institutions and energy of people. The authors try to also connect such developments with the impact of liberal policies applied in the post communist societies after the changes of early 90-s. This is confronted with the inherited problematique of property restitution and misinterpretation of the rights of development over land. The article compares the balance between individual and public interests which often has been disrupted violently in Albania leading to corruptive or informal developments

Summary

Urban developments in Albania continue to generate both positive and negative emotions. The reaction to these developments is a spatial reflection of the socio-economic transformation that the Albanian society and its individual citizens have experienced and are still experiencing. This transformation is characterized by a great amount of energy on the part of the individual and the state's inability to harvest and channel this energy. As a result, urban developments in Albania continue to be dominated by informal processes, short-term gains, and are in contradiction with the source of energy generated by the individual striving "for a better future".

Looking back, the political and socio-economic changes in post-communist Albania were accompanied by aggressive urban developments, due to that fact that until the 1990s only 35% of the population was urban, and the centralized system had created considerable sectoral and regional disparities that needed to be addressed. However, the rapid transition from a centralized to a free-market economy was not accompanied by a rapid transformation of the governing institutions, which could use effective planning and investment in infrastructure as essential instruments guiding the country's urban development. Therefore, the old central planning process, where the state was the decision maker and the individual was an instrument, was substituted with a new reality, where the individual led the developments, while state institutions were unable to keep up with the pace of these developments (Shutina, 2009).

The question naturally arises: why is urban development and the housing sector in Albania still spontaneous and driven only by private initiative after almost 20 years? To answer this question, we should first analyze the ideology that accompanied Albania's change from a command economy to a market economy.

Before the 1990s, through a functionalist plan of land use, the state, the only policymaker and controller of resources, determined where and how production, provision of services, housing, etc., were to be arranged. Upon adoption of free market principles, the state lost its monopoly as the only provider of these products and services.

Even though controversial in terms of certain services, the withdrawal of the state as the market provider was a logical solution for boosting the newly emerging market economy. However, the government's de facto withdrawal from the role of the regulator in the area of urban development was more of a knee-jerk reaction than a thought-out strategy. As such, it did not encourage a more efficient urban development. On the contrary, it corrupted the system and radicalized the individual's pragmatism in relation to the city.

Without discounting the contribution that urbanization has made towards poverty alleviation, it is important to point out that in the absence of effective urban planning, this process has also caused many problems, such as social exclusion, urban segregation, and environmental damages (Shutina, 2009). By presuming the individual's conduct as rational and non-self-regulating, the role of the state in influencing the individual's conduct vis-à-vis the public interest is indispensible. In this context, the design of urban plans to guide development and investments is not a luxury, but a necessity. Lack of alternatives for investments (including fear of a financial crisis), dependence on remittances, and low human capital drives individuals to invest ineffectively in real estate. The failure of the state to intervene further exacerbates this behavior, which ultimately can backfire on the citizens themselves. Moreover, society (itself in critical need of public investments) loses from this inefficient allocation of resources.

Often times, urban planning is equated only with the urban aspect of it and is not regarded as a collection of physical, financial, social, economic, and environmental instruments that can enable harmonization of various interests. To illustrate this point, the local government can influence the expansion, intensity, and duration of urban development only through an effective collection of taxes on land and property.

The challenge is: how the transformational processes will be stimulated at the community, neighborhood, and city level so as to ensure a sustainable development. This

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challenge can be managed successfully only if the most forward-looking segments of society and the state itself, as an expression of the collective will, engage in urban transformation processes that harmonize private and public interests. This means that urban planning will not be conceptualized simply as a technical exercise, but as a complex and multi-dimensional policymaking instrument. Above all, it means that urban planning should be participatory, at each and every level, in order to enable a democratic process in the urban product. As a result, urban planning becomes a transforming process onto itself, where the individual adapts his conduct to the benefit of a common vision of the city (Shutina, 2009).

Urban Development and the Construction Industry: the Albanian Context

Post-1990s Albania points to a long and complex transition. This is the result of changes that occurred during the transition from a centralized economic system to an economic system based on free market principles. The post-communist society experienced many economic and social – sometimes traumatic – changes, associated with the dissolution of a 'totalitarian' system of planning and the dismantling of the state-owned assets. In a few years, as a result of the 'shock' therapy, the symbols of authority and control vanished. The transition to a free market economy took place in the absence of institutional support structures and, furthermore, in the complete absence of a legal and financial framework that could facilitate these economic changes. The radical transformation undoubtedly entailed economic, social, and political implications for the post-communist Albanian society and, to this day, this is reflected in the structure of the economy, as well as in the urban development and the housing sector.

Privatization of the construction industry and the emergence of a housing market, consisting mostly of dwellings built during the communist era, created a new competitive environment. Individuals and private companies started to run their businesses in this domain, becoming, within a 15-year period (1993-2008), creators, as well as consumers, of a stock of buildings estimated to be about 300,000 (270,590 informal buildings[1] [ALUIZNI[2], 2009] + 36,252[3] [INSTAT[4], 2008] buildings with legitimate building permits). In the meantime, the public sector contribution to this stock does not exceed 6,000 buildings [INSTAT, 2008]. To put these numbers in prospective, it is important to point out that the total number of dwellings built during the communist era (1945-1989), was about 457,300.

The main characteristic of the urban developments in post-communist Albania was that people, for the first time, had the freedom to choose where they wanted to live. Presented with such a choice, people, in large numbers, started to move from the mountainous or less developed areas of the country towards the Western Plain and major urban areas in search of better opportunities for

employment, education, and a better life. Given the government's failure to predict and address such a development, this uncontrolled influx of people strained the housing market and infrastructure of urban centers across the Western Plain. This emerging need for housing was addressed in various forms and methods, legal and illegal, fueled by high profit margins generated by the emerging housing sector in Albania. In contrast, the need for improved public infrastructure, a direct responsibility of the local and central government was minimally addressed, if addressed at all. The value of investments in the physical infrastructure during the period 1995-2008 was about ALL[5] 112,223 million. By comparison, the estimated value of investments 'formally' made in the housing sector was about ALL 551,542 million, or 83% of the total investment in the construction industry[6].

A by-product of the events described above, this situation presents a unique opportunity for exploring the impact of the decisions taken or "not taken" by the Albanian government regarding urban development and the housing sector. Although it is true that, even after 20 years of transformational processes, the developments in the urban and construction sectors continue to be spontaneous and led mainly by private initiative, now we are in a position to assess these phenomena and to offer recommendations on how to change the old 'models.'

This policy paper starts with an overview of the economic, social, and spatial developments in Albania and the impact they have had on the country's urban development and housing sector. This paper seeks to analyze the main characteristics of urban development in Albania along with the housing sector cycles during the last 15 years. After an analytical and comparative analysis of the urban development, the housing sector, and investments in public infrastructure during various periods of time in the country's economic development, it offers recommendations for improving the situation.

"The construction industry is the sector of the national economy that engages in building of new structures, including site preparation, alteration, maintenance and repair of buildings, structures, and other real property" (Business Dictionary, 2009).

The science that studies the construction sectors on the basis of economic principles is known as construction economics[7]. According to construction economics, the construction sector is limited to activities that generate value-added for companies that construct buildings and infrastructure. Similarly, the standard system of industrial classification, that constitutes the basis for the construction industry definition, considers only those firms that are involved in the process of constructing social and civil buildings (Myers, 2004). This implies a broad range of activities, including also those related to infrastructure, new buildings, repair, maintenance, and demolition. The following table shows the type of activities within this industry classified by sector.

Table 1. Construction Industry Defined by Sector[8]

Sectors of Construction Industry	Examples of types of activity
Infrastructure	Water supply & sewage
	Power and electric grid
	Roads
	Airports, harbors & railways
Residential	Public sector (public housing)
	Private sector (private homes)
Public non-residential	Schools, universities
	Healthcare centers, hospitals
	Sports facilities
Private industrial	Factories, plants
Private commercial	Shopping malls
	Private schools
	Hotels, restaurants, etc.
Repairs and maintenance	Repair of houses
	Additions and reconstruction
	Routine maintenance

Figure 1. Definition of the Construction Industry and Its Elements[10]

Defining the elements of an industry becomes even more difficult when there is a lack of consensus on its definition. Three big blocks of industry elements are identified: 1) Factors of production, 2) Markets, and 3) Products. The picture of the industry becomes more complete with a fourth element, which is the 'market agents'.

The literature usually divides the construction industry in two big segments, which are referred to as 1) the design segment and 2) building segment[9].

The construction industry has four distinctive features: 1) Each project is connected with a single product; 2) The industry is dominated by a great number of small companies; 3) The country's overall economic conditions influence the demand within the industry; 4) Demand determines the price.

On the other hand, economics deals with the concepts of solution, insufficiency and opportunity costs and is defined as the science of solutions. Every use of a resource is accompanied by opportunity costs, because an alternative use of that resource is sacrificed. The following graph shows a mutual relationship among selections that could be presented through production possibility curve.

The graph provides an illustration of two products generated by the Albanian construction industry in the year 2000 and 2006. The relationship between the two activities/sectors identified within this industry is defined as a function of the efficiency of resource utilization and the priority given to a certain sector – in this case, the housing sector. By maintaining the established priorities, an increase in resource utilization efficiency, even on a small scale, leads to an increase in the output in both sectors.

How Does Albania Compare to Other Countries in the Region?

To provide a better view of the situation on urban development and housing in the countries of the region, we have focused our analytical examination on the main reforms undertaken on some key issues that affect urban development and the housing sector, such as:

1. Land ownership rights;
2. Home mortgage loans;
3. Reforms on the privatization of the housing sector;
4. Legislation on maintenance of buildings;
5. Urban planning and building permits;
6. Property taxes.

The matrix presented below assesses all these factors. As the matrix indicates, the most important reforms undertaken at the regional level are those related to securing private property rights and the

improvement of the immovable property registration system. This reform is still underway in Albania and it continues to generate problems in terms of spatial development.

Many important reforms seem to have been undertaken for the purpose of improving the legal environment as it pertains to urban planning and construction. The success of these reforms, however, has been very limited across the region. The process of establishing a legal framework is still going on in Albania. The property tax is another element that is considered important due to its impact on land use and home ownership. The way is it levied is different in all the countries in the region, but, unlike these countries, Albania has not yet imposed a tax on urban land, referred to as "urban plot" in the immovable property register. With regards to the maintenance of buildings, legislation is incomplete in some countries, while in some other countries its enforcement poses challenges. (Table 2)

a. *Right to ownership and registration of immovable properties.* In many countries of Southeastern Europe, the constitution guarantees the right to home and land ownership. The issues of the right to ownership and ownership title are considered resolved as regards the housing and mortgage market. In various countries, this right relies on property laws, approved mainly at the end of the 1990s. In Albania, these rights are protected by the Civil Code. In terms of registration of immovable property, all countries have established an appropriate system of property registration. Until 1995, property registration in Albania took place in the "hipotekë" office. After the adoption of the Law on Registration of Immovable Properties in 1995 the "hipotekë" office was converted into what is now the Immovable Property Registration Office (ZRPP).

b. *Legislation on house loans and mortgage loans*: Many countries in the region adjusted their legislation to allow the use of properties as collateral for obtaining loans. In Albania, the Civil Code regulates all relationships of borrowing, in which immovable property can be used as collateral. This procedure was further improved with the addenda made to this Code by the Law on Collateral.

c. *Legislation on privatization*: Albania and Moldova were the first countries in the region that initiated massive privatization in 1993. Similarly, in other countries in the region, privatization was regulated with the adoption of laws that determined the form of privatization and the price at which families could buy the house they lived in.

d. *Law on maintenance of buildings*: Some countries in the region adopted a law that addressed the issue of responsibility for the maintenance of multistory buildings. Other countries addressed this issue by making the necessary

Table 2. Matrix of reforms[12], related to urban development and housing, undertaken in the countries of the region by 2005 (Tsenkova, 2005)

Country	Ownership rights	Loan for house mortgage	Privatization reform	Maintenance of building	Urban planning & construction	Tax on property
Albania	X*		X	X**	X**	
Bulgaria	X		X		X	X
Croatia	X*	X	X	X		X
Romania	X	X	X	X	X	X
Serbia	X*		X		X**	X

Note: *Problematic system of registration of immovable property;
**Ineffective enforcement of law

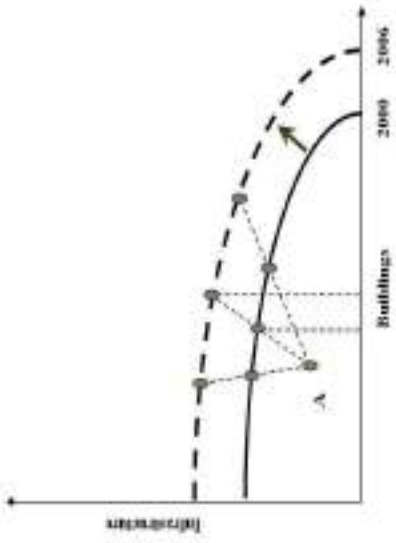


Figure 2. Increased Output and Production Possibility Curve[11]

adjustments to their existing laws. In Albania, the law on maintenance of multistory apartment buildings was initially approved in 1993. However, this law was never enforced, because it failed to take into account the country's reality. In recent years, the legislation has been updated, particularly after the adoption of Law No. 10112 "On Administration of Common Premises in Apartment Buildings" (April 4, 2009) and the by-laws pursuant to it.

e. *Legislation on urban planning and construction*: Many countries in the region have adopted legislation on urban planning to stipulate the responsibilities of the private and public sector in the urban development process. Master plans for territorial development have been adopted for almost all of their main cities. Some of the problems that have affected urban development in countries such as Albania, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Montenegro, are related to obstacles in the efficient use of the land, incomplete urban planning, and procedures on building permits. In addition, the large scale of illegal buildings bears witness to the inability of all the actors in this sector to establish a coherent and comprehensive urban planning strategy.

f. *Tax on property*: In many countries, the property tax on a house is not determined on its actual property value, but rather on its square footage. Most countries apply a tax on urban land, whereas Albania does not apply this tax yet. It applies a tax on the building, which is a flat fee, but varies from one city to another, because it is determined within the ceiling price imposed by the law, in accordance with the decisions of local government councils.

Critical View of Urban and Housing Developments in Albania

Below is a view of the territorial distribution of dwelling units in apartment buildings, industrial parks, and infrastructure, in the post-communist period of the country's development (1990-2009). The large number of built/privatized residential units and their quality, the expansion of cities, lack of investment in infrastructure, and other problems of expansions are the main phenomena identified during the cycles of urban developments in Albania. To provide a better understanding of the physical dimension of the extension and expansion of Albanian cities, this paper includes maps prepared for 10 Albanian cities[13]. These cities have been selected from a national sample in order to ensure a complete representation of the issues under consideration. The selected cities are Tirana, Elbasan, Korça, Fier, and Lushnje (cities located in the interior part of the country); Durrës, Shkodra, Lezha, Vlora dhe Saranda (extending along the western coast of the country).

Housing Sector

According to the latest population and houses census, there were 520,936 residential buildings in Albania in 2001[14] (INSTAT, 2001). A quarter of these buildings were constructed before 1945. Until this time, the population was mainly rural and there was no public intervention in housing, while industrialization was negligible. These houses are generally

single-family units, though oftentimes large enough to accommodate more than one generation. Referring again to the 2001 statistics, more than half of the inventory of the residential buildings in villages belongs to the stock built before 1945 (INSTAT, Repoba 2001).

More than half of the buildings (about 457,300) were constructed during the time of the communist regime at an average of about 10,000 buildings per year. Most buildings in urban areas were state-owned apartment buildings, whereas in rural areas the buildings were mostly single-family type residences privately built and owned. Some land and financial resources were provided in rural areas for personal use constructions and private residences.

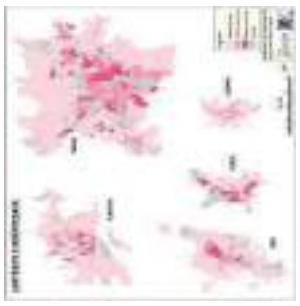
Until 1989, the public sector accounted for 70% of the residential housing inventory. According to the 1989 registration[15], the average number of apartments in a building was 7. Compared with other Eastern European countries, the inventory of apartment buildings in Albania is of a more recently-built stock. Some 75% of apartments were built during 1970-1990, while in other countries, such as Estonia, Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary, the number of apartment buildings constructed during the same period of time accounts for only 40% of the total stock.

After 1990, over 300,000 buildings or additions to existing ones (270,590 informal buildings[16] [ALUIZNI, 2009] + 36,252 buildings with construction permit[17] [INSTAT, 2008]) have been built by the private sector and about 6,000 buildings have been built by the public sector (INSTAT, 2008), at an average of 15,000 residential units per year. According to World Bank assessments[18], over 66% of the buildings have been constructed by the informal sector. However, the above figures indicate that this category constitutes about 88% of the total stock of buildings in the country. The weight of the public sector is rather inconsiderable, constituting no more than 2-5% of the total of buildings, which indicates that private enterprise has taken a leading role in this sector. A stable average of 5-7 dwelling units per building is observed.

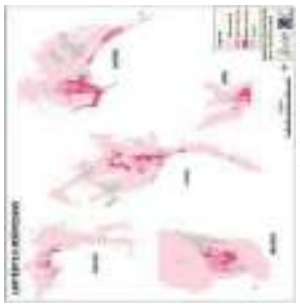
Compared with other European countries, Albania has one of the lowest levels of residential building. With the exception of the number of families per dwelling unit, all other indicators, such as number of dwelling units per 1,000 inhabitants, number of people per room, and square meters per person, are the lowest in Albania. Regardless of the increase in the number of dwelling units per 1,000 inhabitants from 219 in 1989 to 253[19] (INSTAT, Repoba 2001), this indicator is still the lowest compared with other European countries. While there are huge differences between the rural and urban areas, this indicator is lower in cities. The average number of people living in a dwelling unit in Albania is 4.15 in urban areas and 4.72 in rural areas. This indicator has been decreasing since the end of the 1980s. Apart from overcrowding of dwelling units, Albania has another characteristic: vacant homes. The latter has been due to: 1) migration and movement of the people from mountainous areas to plains or from rural areas to urban areas; and, 2) saturation of the market with

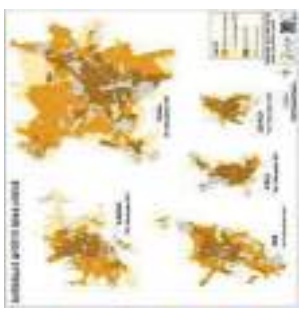
Extension of city in years by land category
Vlora (Co-PLAN, 2010)

Extension of city in years by land category
Elbasani (Co-PLAN, 2010)



Height of buildings according to extension of cities (Co-PLAN, 2010)





Extension of cities by year (Co-PLAN, 2010)

dwelling units, satisfaction of initial need, and inability to afford high priced housing offered by the private sector. According to official statistics, which date back to 2001, about 92,125 dwelling units or about 13% of the total number of dwelling units are vacant. The highest rate of vacant dwelling units is in rural areas, particularly in Vlora with 24% and Gjirokaster with 26%. The lowest rates are noted in the areas of Elbasan, Kukes, and Lezha. This phenomenon is closely linked with the migratory movement of the population. During 2009, about 4,000 dwelling units were reportedly vacant (Monitor, 2009). This is explained by the saturation of the market, economic crisis, and unaffordable prices of units offered in the free market.

One of the most important reforms undertaken in the housing sector is the massive privatization of over 230,000 apartments in 1993. Within 1-2 years, about 98% of state-owned apartments were privatized. Given the scope and the speed with which it was implemented, this undertaking was perceived both as a pullback of the Albanian state from the housing issue, and as being 'reminiscent' of the previous policies of *equality*[20]. (Andoni, 2000)

The privatization of the state-owned dwelling units was followed by the exacerbation of the problem of their poor maintenance. This problem arose not for lack of state subsidies or because of state inefficiency, but for failure to act on the part of the families, now owners of these dwelling units. The legal framework on co-ownership, drafted on the experience of countries such as the United States of America, proved to be immature and impossible to apply in the Albanian context. Because of their bad experiences during the communist regime, people now were demonstrating an individualistic attitude, unwillingness to collaborate and a lack of trust (Andoni, 2009). Another unmeasured and unidentified effect of the privatization of dwelling units in Albania to date is the loss of a considerable number of ground level apartment units, which were converted to service premises (Andoni, 2009).

From the post-communist period to date, however, the dwelling unit market has been characterized by a continuous expansion in both investments and impact on the country's economic growth. According to official statistics, for about four decades the housing sector "absorbed" about 1.3% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Taking into account the fact that investments in the housing sector were made by the state mainly in urban areas and that urban population constituted on average 35-40% of the entire population, this contribution is comparable with that of other European countries (1.2-2% of GDP) (Andoni, 2009). Today, the construction industry (infrastructure and housing, where the latter takes up about 83% of the investments within the industry) contribute to approximately 14% of the GDP, compared to 1.3% of the GDP during the four decades of the communist rule. This industry consists of 5,500 enterprises and directly employs over 92,500 people[21] (8.4% of the total employed). If we were to add the value of

the economic contribution represented by individual investments on the part of citizens (who build or repair their own houses), the value added by the services provided by industry intermediaries and the role and weight occupied by the real estate sector in the Albanian economy, the figures would be much higher. Residential construction and the housing market constitute an important economic activity that is characterized by a substantial cash flow. In addition, of great significance is also the fact that dwelling units are the most important property owned by most Albanian households.

Urban Development: Dimensions of the Phenomenon

Confined for about 50 years in a totalitarian system, it is obvious that, upon the collapse of the communist rule, an individual would want to move at enormous speed from one extreme, where he was part of an ideological group with an established goal, to the other extreme, where the individual is free to make his own choices and is responsible for his own well-being.

Unlike the individual, the state (and its institutions) could not be reformed with the same speed, due to its inability to properly reposition itself in the new system. Thus, even when issuing building permits to businesses, the state simply took a reactive role, not considering (or only superficially considering) their spatial dimensions. In the housing sector however, the state withdrew almost completely (until 1998) from the residential housing market, adapting a *laissez-faire* attitude, where an individual had to search for his own solutions.

During this period, urban development was characterized by a dual transformation process, mainly due to illegal buildings: 1) the establishment of second 'cities' around the traditional boundaries, thus leading to the disappearance of the previous 'yellow line'[22] (Andoni, 2009), and 2) densification in the 'heart' of the city through construction of new tall buildings and attachments/additions to the existing buildings (a mixture of legitimate and illegal buildings, where the latter constituted the majority). In search for a solution and in the absence of the state as a regulator, individuals established the housing market, which, in great part, was illegitimate. At that point in time, the side-effects of rapid urbanization were perceived as transitional phenomena.

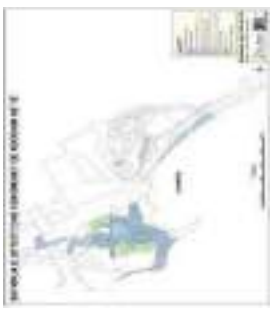
In reality, our modern city centers are an 'unstructured' product of the free initiative that has tried to capitalize on their geographic position, natural sources, and administrative access. Spontaneously developed, through interpretations of the micro-economic theory, whereby companies choose the location to maximize the profit, whereas individuals choose location to maximize its usefulness, our cities were mostly perceived as a meeting place, where companies and individuals could fulfill their interests[23] (Shutina, 2009).

As a consequence, from 1990 to 1999-2001[24], urban areas of Albania's main cities, particularly in the Western Plain, started to expand from 17-32% in Korça and Lushnje, to 57-67% in Elbasan, Fier, Durres, Shkodra and Tirana. Furthermore, during 2001-2007, the expansion of these cities continued to increase but at a


Areas constructed before 1990s, height of buildings and the phenomenon – Fieri (Co-PLAN, 2010)


Areas constructed before 1990s, height of buildings and the phenomenon – Tirana (Co-PLAN, 2010)


Extension of city and its phenomena – Tirana (Co-PLAN, 2010)


Extension of city and its phenomena – Durrësi (Co-PLAN, 2010)


City by height of buildings and land category – Korça (Co-PLAN, 2010)


City by height of buildings and land category – Fieri (Co-PLAN, 2010)

slower rate, marking an average physical expansion of 39%. During this period, it is observed that cities, such as Saranda, Vlora, or Lezha, with substantial tourism potential, and Elbasan, were characterized by a faster pace of expansion, as compared with the first period under study.

However, it appears as though the 'trend' of physical expansion of the Albanian cities in terms of their 'boom' is almost similar in all cities (with the exception of Lushnja and Korça). During the first period of transition (1990-2001), this trend was expressed in higher rates of expansion that kept up with the pace of population growth in the cities under consideration. As explained earlier in this study, this increase is attributed not only to the mechanical change of population, but to the internal migration of the population in particular.

During the second period of transition (2001-2007), upon partial normalization of the migratory movement within the country, the physical expansion of cities slowed down. An exception to this are Saranda, Vlora and Lezha, where the expansion is still high due to the great potential and increased demand for tourism. Durres seems to have started addressing the basic needs for tourism infrastructure and housing and this has been the main cause for the city's tendency to slow down its physical expansion.

A second situation reveals urban developments in areas within well-defined cities whereby the use of pre-transition planning instruments, by both central and local governments create inequality among owners, transferring the problem to the beneficiaries of the development and in turn creating a collective problem. In response to the demand for urban housing, directly by costumers or through construction companies, individual investors, guided by selfish interests, sought to develop their properties into buildings that could generate maximal profits for them. With the institutional mentality of "he is the land owner" and in the absence of an integrated plan for the city, urban development became haphazard to the point that, figuratively speaking, one individual owned the building and another one owned the park, thus violating the equality among proprietors. The fragmented urban management, however, was flexible enough to accommodate assets that unfairly provided no real value to a proprietor (if, from the start, public assets have not been distinguished from private assets in terms of development, in property dispute situations a park cannot be accepted as a viable property option). Consequently, instead of a building and a park, we have two buildings to satisfy both owners, and in the process we have harmed the community in terms of the absence of public spaces and decrease in the value of the apartments that the owners purchased with the understanding that there would be a public park in the area. If we collect cases like this across the city, we understand that this problem affects everyone: winners, losers, the entire city, and its ability to offer green spaces and attractive services. Essentially, we have not managed the entire city; instead we have satisfied only some narrow interests and have generated inequality and exclusion

in the city. Moreover, this form of city management causes the individual, who is disappointed with this inequality, to take a more selfish approach towards the city (Shutina, 2009).

Finally, despite being identified as one of the main forms of densification in the cities under consideration, the vertical extension of the city remains limited compared to the horizontal extension, with small individual dwelling units. It is important to point out that this phenomenon indicates that the new city inhabitants have had more 'access' to urban or arable land for such constructions than they have had 'access' to the housing market.

This means that the product ensured in this market is not only a result of the traditional forms of information flow and investments. In order to build an affordable house, most new city inhabitants have tried to avoid red tape and the costs associated with the purchase and registration of the land and obtaining building permits. By building in an amateur fashion and illegally, they ensure the construction of the building is affordable and the cost is extended over a period of time.

Allocation of Investments in Infrastructure and Housing

In many respects, our cities have been in a 'latent' state and, with the exception of some central urban areas, they continue to be established while still seriously lacking in public investments and infrastructure. Regarding this issue, it becomes very important that we identify ways how to address these needs. How are we going to harmonize the public need with the private interest for the purpose of securing spaces for infrastructure development in the most efficient way and the shortest time possible? Should public interest subsidize private interest during the property acquisition to this end? How would the value-added, created from investments in infrastructure, be managed?

Therefore, it is of interest to analyze the mutual relationship between investments made in the housing sector and public infrastructure within the construction industry. The following graph and table show the data and the trends during 1995-2008, as regards investments made in the 'formal' (licensed and permitted) part of the sector.

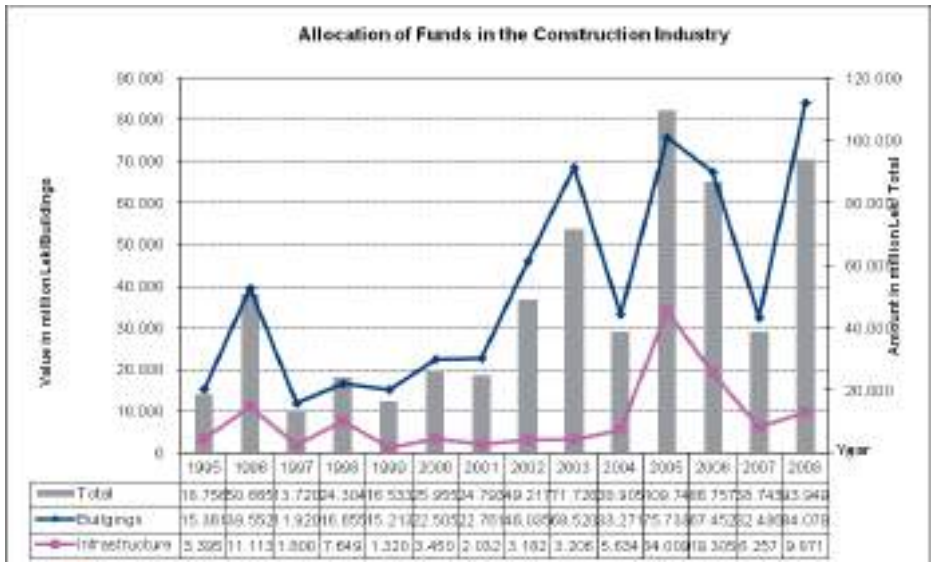


Figure 3. Allocation of Funds in the Construction Industry. Source: INSTAT 2008

It should be noted that investments in infrastructure in Albania are very small when compared with investments in housing, unlike other countries in the region, where the ratio indicates more comparable values between the two. Thus, formal investment in housing during 1995-2008 is estimated[25] to be about ALL 551,

542 million or 83% of the total investment in the construction industry, whereas physical infrastructure investment is only ALL 112,223 million (INSTAT, 2008).

It is precisely this lack of spatial planning that drives investment in the housing sector, creating the phenomenon of unlimited expansion of urban areas and the impossibility to address the need for capital investments and infrastructure development in these areas. Territorial planning and infrastructure provision, in particular, have a direct impact on the housing market, through their huge influence on the price, as one of the most important elements of this market. Such effects have been observed during the infrastructure development of road transportation projects (including Tirana-Durres, Durres-Lushnje, or Tirana-Rinas corridors, etc.,). Regardless of the fact that it involves a higher level of investment, this shows the importance of road infrastructure planning as one of the principal ingredients of territorial planning and development. Besides its direct impact on the betterment of living conditions, road infrastructure also helps in guiding the movement of goods and people, having an effect on economic development and, as a consequence, on the standard of living.

Recommendations

The planning system and its mechanism on land use play an important role in the control and management of urban developments in general and housing sector in particular, for the purpose of offering a sustainable, efficient, and needs-responsive development. By means of development plans and control instruments in particular, the planning system must be considered as a way to determine the current and expected needs for physical and social infrastructure, housing, formulation of relevant policies, and allocation of the appropriate amount of land. The planning mechanisms should also play a significant role in facilitating and controlling the process of production of infrastructure (service) and residential units (housing).

In addition, the most effective way to ensure the most efficient use of land includes the application/introduction of a 'smart' tax on houses and property. In spite of the fact that we recommend further exploration of public-private partnerships regarding development of urban infrastructure, particularly fee-based services, such as water supply, removal of urban waste, etc., we think that local revenues should serve as the financial resource for investments in 'public goods,' such as roads, drainage systems, green spaces, etc., which do not generate revenues from user fees.

Therefore, local government units could examine other potential sources of revenue such as property tax on urban land or, at least, on vacant urban space. Likewise, revenues from tax on impact of infrastructure could be better managed by earmarking this source of revenue for investment in physical infrastructure only.

A loan is another source that could be utilized by LGUs to fund physical infrastructure, given their importance in guiding and promoting urban development and efficient use of land. There are other possibilities, through various forms of public-private partnership, which should

also be explored to ensure profits from the value-added created from the land development.

Finally, as a reassurance for a sustainable urban development, all these actions should seek to increase efficiency within the construction industry through better utilization of the factors of production: land – through improvement of policies on management and administration of urban land; capital – through improvement of the banking sector to ensure access to loans (lowering interest rates, facilitation of procedures, etc.,); technology – through simplification of procedures for technology importation and promotion of domestic production of construction materials; and entrepreneurship – through the structuring of industry and establishment of clear-cut criteria regarding the creation and recognition of companies within this industry.

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Footnotes:

1 *ALUIZNI, Number of self-declared buildings, 2009*

2 *Agency for Legalization, Urbanization, and Integration of Informal Zones*

3 *INSTAT, Number of building permits at national level, 2008*

4 *Institute of Statistics*

5 *ALL, Albanian Lek*

6 *INSTAT, Allocation of Funds in the Construction Industry, 2008*

7 *Construction Economics can be discussed and studied systematically, particularly after the contribution of George Ofori, Establishing Construction Economics as an Academic Discipline, 1994.*

8 *Adapted from the theory of Danny Myers, Construction Economics - A New Approach, 2004.*

9 *Danny Myers, Construction Economics - A New Approach, 2004.*

10 *The figure is prepared by the authors of this paper based on the Danny Myers theory, Construction Economics - A New Approach", 2004.*

11 *Adapted from the theory of Danny Myers, Construction Economics - A New Approach, 2004*

12 *Sasha Tsenkova, Housing Policy Reforms in post-socialist Europe, 2005*

13 *These thematic maps were prepared for the research study "Analytical Review of the Construction Industry and Housing Market in Albania", undertaken and funded by the Institute for Habitat Development within the framework of Making Policies Work (MPW) program. For collecting and mapping the information were involved students from Polis University: Belina Kodra; Ela Goxhaj; Iris Kashariqi; Marina Mekshi; Mario Shllaku; Refation Dobi and Renaldo Gace.*

14 *INSTAT, Repoba 2001*

15 *Census conducted in 1989, the last census conducted under the communist regime*

16 *ALUIZNI, Number of self-declared buildings, 2009*

17 *INSTAT, Number of building permit at national scale, 2008*

18 *World Bank, Urban Sector Review in Albania, 2007*

19 *INSTAT, Repoba 2001*

20 *Andoni, D. "House, Individual, City", Forum A+P 3, 2009*

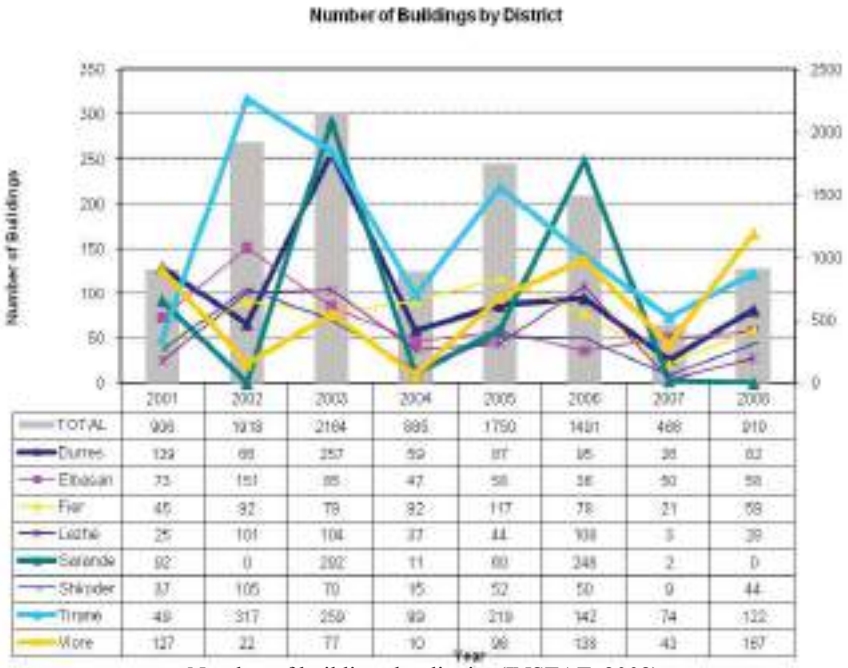
21 *INSTAT, 2008*

22 *Boundaries within which construction is permitted*

23 *Shutina, D. "Planning as ...", Forum A+P 3, 2009*

24 *Note of the authors: Considered in this study as an in-between year*

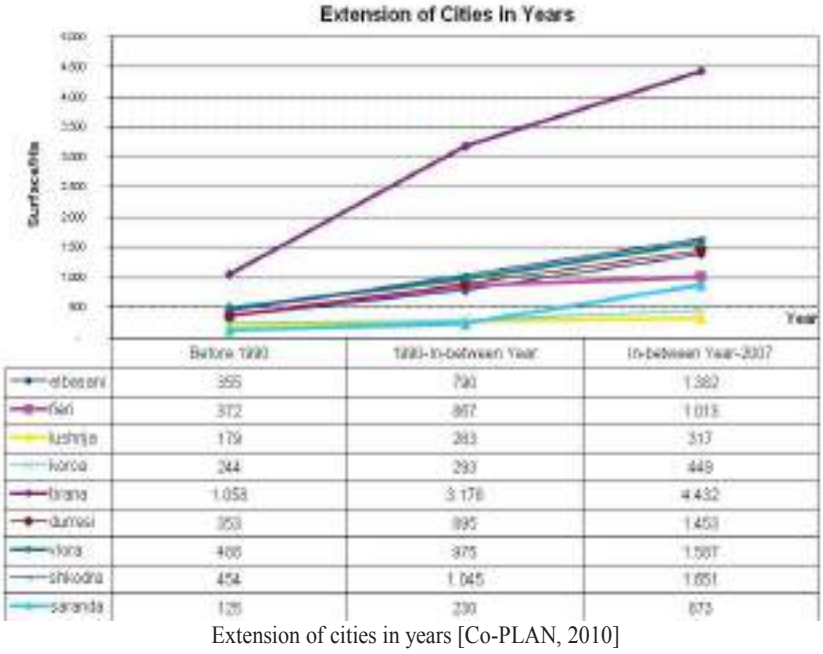
25 *INSTAT, Allocation of funds in the Construction Industry, 2008*



Number of buildings by district (INSTAT, 2008)

Year	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Houses	82%	78%	87%	69%	92%	87%	92%	94%	96%	86%	69%	78%	84%	89%
Infra-structure	18%	22%	13%	31%	8%	13%	8%	6%	4%	14%	31%	22%	16%	11%
Total	18,756	50,665	13,720	24,304	16,533	25,955	24,793	49,217	71,726	38,905	109,742	86,757	38,743	93,949

Distribution of funds in the Construction Industry (INSTAT, 2008)



Extension of cities in years [Co-PLAN, 2010]

FORUM A+P
Periodik Shkencor për Arkitekturën dhe Planifikimin Urban

TERRITORIAL PLANNING IN ALBANIA:
From Law to Reform

Rudina TOTO & Eriselda ÇOBO

This document is based on the report entitled "Analytical Review of the Construction Industry and Housing Market in Albania," a research study undertaken and funded by the Institute for Habitat Development within the framework of Making Policies Work (MPW) program.

Executive Summary

This paper seeks to analyze the current situation of territorial development in Albania, as reflected in the solutions and stalemates of the current legislation and recommend issues that need to be considered during the process of enforcing the Law on Territorial Planning and during the process of drafting bylaws and regulations pursuant to this law. These recommendations will support the work of the National Territorial Planning Agency (NTPA) and other stakeholders affected by this law, particularly the local government units (LGUs).

This paper is based on the territorial, legal, and institutional analysis, as well as on the current issues confronting LGUs. It highlights the essential differences between the old and the new legislation on territorial planning[1], points out key issues within the urban context in which this change is taking place, and clarifies what constitutes the "New Territorial Planning Instruments".

Many of the questions that will be raised in this document aim at rearranging the puzzle in front of us and pointing out many important facts that policymakers, institutions, and society need to consider prior to agreeing upon the final solutions.

A New Era of Spatial Planning in Albania?

Reform in Planning

It is debatable whether or not we have really initiated spatial planning reform in Albania. In fact, a number of opinions exist on this matter. The fact that we now have a law on territorial planning that is substantively different from the previous law on urban planning is not a sufficient argument in favor of reform. Furthermore, the establishment of a legal framework regarding legalization of informal settlements, another institutional aspect and important instrument addressed by the Government of Albania, again cannot fully justify the claim that we have initiated true reform. Although spatial planning reform is not the topic of this paper, through a simple analysis of the territorial

1 *The term "territorial" here and throughout the text means "spatial." It is being used to reflect the use of the same term in the Law on Territorial Planning (2009) and other documents, etc., associated with it.*

CV

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planning law and recommendations on its enforcement, it will, among other things, point out what it takes to have real reform in spatial planning and discuss how ready we are, as a society, to undertake this important step.

Meanwhile, it is a fact broadly accepted by all actors and institutions that Law No. 10119 of 23.4.2009, *On Territorial Planning* is a legal instrument that not only is substantively different from the previous *Law on Urban Planning*, but, above all, requires us to navigate unexplored areas of theory and practice. These theories and practices may have been tested elsewhere in the world, but are completely new to Albania and, furthermore, are beyond its current institutional and human resources capacities. Thus, reform or not, one important element in what is currently going on with spatial planning in Albania is a change in legislation; the substitution of the *traditional* urban planning law (with rules regarding location and architecture of buildings and protection of legitimate interests connected with private property) by a law that takes into account not only the buildings, but the entire territory, and addresses not simply the rules, but also ***planning and development.***

The purpose of this law, as stated in its Article 1, is to ensure the sustainable development of the territory, through facilitating the interaction among sectoral policies, which can significantly affect planning issues. According to the law, these objectives can only be achieved by means of continuous horizontal and vertical institutional coordination as well as by ensuring transparency of and public participation in the decision-making process.

The new *Law on Territorial Planning* introduces a set of conceptual changes compared with the *Law on Urban Planning*. Its enforcement is accompanied by positive aspects and important challenges. Given the 20-year period of territorial changes in Albania, the drafting of a new law on territorial planning and land management was an institutional step that was expected. A modern territorial law would solve old problems and, more importantly, it would ensure a sustainable development of the

territory through a rational use of land and natural resources.

The history of urban development in Albania during the communist regime (1944-1990), where everything was 'state owned' and the 'state' made all the decisions, was characterized by a Soviet-Eastern style of architecture and urban design. It was during this period too that the practice of providing towns and villages with their own general regulatory plans started. After the 1990s, the political, economic, and social changes triggered uncontrolled urbanization, occupation of public spaces, multi-story buildings with high density in town centers, illegal/unauthorized constructions in suburban areas, as well as establishment of new urban areas with substantial infrastructure deficiencies.

Law No. 7693, *On Urban Planning*, was approved in 1993. It stipulated *the general rules of location and architecture of structures* in the entire territory of the Republic of Albania, excluding arable land. Another law *On Urban Planning* (Law No. 8405) was approved in 1998. It brought about several improvements, as compared with the previous law, but was based on similar urban concepts and failed to consider, at all, the important changes occurring in the territory during that time. Furthermore, it ignored the phenomenon of illegal constructions and other problems arising from the change in the ownership system - from state to private ownership.

After the year 2000, the first tendencies on the need for radical changes in the urban development legislation were identified. Inadequacies of the law hampered the sustainable development of our towns, placing priorities on individual interests and ignoring the public interest. These initiatives were reflected in Law No. 8652, *On Organization and Functioning of Local Governments*, where local government units (municipalities and communes) had the authority for the management of their own territory.[2] According to the organic Law *On Organization and Functioning of the Local Government*, this competency is considered *"own function"* of the municipality or commune and paragraph 'g' of Article 10 of this law describes it as, "Urban planning, land management and housing according to the manner described in the law." Thus, the organic law has delegated the further elaboration of this important legal issue to the sectoral law (the planning law). However, the initiatives launched on the territory by the organic law were not reflected in the technical amendments to the *Law on Urban Planning*. Although it underwent frequent amendments, the latter inherited many legal pitfalls that allowed room for misinterpretation and misuse.

The year 2006 marked the beginning of the process of reforming the legal and institutional structure of territorial planning. On April 23, 2009, the Parliament of Albania passed Law No. 10119, *On Territorial Planning*. The proposal underwent numerous debates and discussions, as the policy document was being drafted. This policy document was used as the basis for drafting the new law. Although the consultation process was fairly lengthy, the representation of the

2 *Law No. 8652 of 31/07/2000, Article 10, Paragraph 'g'*

direct stakeholders, the local government units, was inadequate. Moreover, the consultation process that was initiated with the policy document suffered from a lack of openness, as the law was being drafted and getting ready for approval.

In addition, the law itself was considered as a framework law[3] whose application would depend completely on bylaws and relevant regulations. In fact, a careful reading of the law would reveal that it maintains its framework nature only for some concepts and processes, while it provides too many details for some others. For example, the processes of drafting the planning instruments are well defined in the law. And so are the special development control instruments or the development permits and other permits. Also, there are at least 12 articles throughout the law that spell out what a local or other planning instrument should consist of, to be in compliance with the law.[4] However, the way this law is written and how the details of the regulatory processes and their various legal aspects are presented - spread out in several chapters, instead of being contained in a number of articles - gives the initial impression that the law is not very cohesive.

Given this situation, regulatory agencies and particularly the National Territorial Planning Agency (NTPA), an entity newly established by the law, should think strategically how to draft bylaws and planning instruments. These bylaws not only should comply with the *Law on Territorial Planning* and the legal requirements for preparing these acts, but should be also sufficiently guiding or informing, so as to provide answers to the questions on the law raised by the stakeholders. Furthermore, these bylaws should reflect the reality of institutional capacities and territorial developments, even though the law may have not adequately addressed these issues. Also, the process of drafting these bylaws must put an end to the 'non-collaborative' atmosphere created during the process of drafting and adopting the law. In the meantime, the question has often been raised whether the bylaws, adopted upon a Council of Ministers' Decision, will accomplish these goals or the debate on the *Law on Territorial Planning* should be reopened. Can these "small" legal and dynamic documents make a controversial law succeed? In addition to these bylaws, what else is needed to incorporate the *Law on Territorial Planning* into the legal system and what are the costs? Any radical change or attempt for reform will present its own dilemmas, which will have to be addressed. It is important not to hang on to obstructive excuses that will only prolong the status quo.

Changes in the Planning System

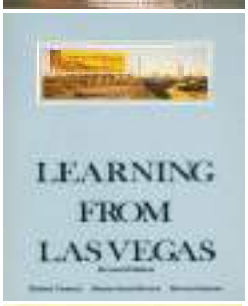
The differences between the two laws are evident right at the first chapters where the purpose, objectives, and fundamental principles of planning are laid out. The new law differs from the old one in that it provides the option for planning to avoid

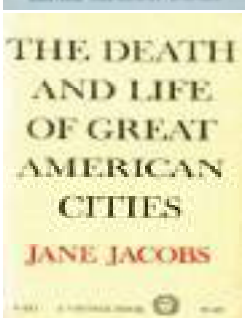
3 *Framework laws lay down basic legal principles without attempting to be specific.*

4 *The articles of the Law on Territorial Planning elaborating the structure and content of the planning instrument, particularly the general local planning instrument, are 20, 21, 22, 25, 40, 41, 47, 48, 64, 65, 66, and 70.*









the restriction to "*general rules of location of buildings,*" and to be considered in its multidimensional[5] entirety and in each part of the territory. The local planning instruments proposed by the *Law on Territorial Planning* should cover the entire administrative territory of the relevant municipality or commune, regardless of the urban, rural, agricultural, natural, etc., characteristic that this territory may have (Article 27). In addition, the Law on Territorial Planning does not stop with **planning**; it pays considerable attention to the **development of territory and its control**. Starting with Chapter VII, there are at least 38 articles in the law providing exhaustive details on territorial development, apart from other aspects of development stated throughout the law.

Another important aspect of the *Law on Territorial Planning* has to do with the structure and institutional interaction. The *Law on Urban Planning* clearly defined the powers of the planning authority, regardless of whether or not the appropriate authorities were described and whether the competencies were elaborated in full conformity with the principle of decentralization established by the organic law. The territorial law considers decentralization as a fundamental principle of how it assigns competencies to authorities. At first glance, it appears as though full decentralization has been achieved. However, we can say that the principle of decentralization is preserved only from the viewpoint of urban planning, and that it is not the case as regards land-use planning and land management[6]. According to the *Law on Territorial Planning*, which covers more than urban land, the division of competencies indicates that territorial planning and development control is not an exclusive function, but is actually built as a shared function.

To illustrate this point, apart from NTPA, all line ministries and their subordinate entities may draft territorial policies and plans in accordance with their competencies and these instruments shall be binding to local territories. In addition, once the issues[7] of national importance and the national zones[8] are determined, the central institutions shall make decisions on planning of local territories or shall condition local planning. The 18 "first category" municipalities, as defined by the territorial planning law, shall submit their general plans to the National Territorial Council (NTC), while all other LGUs shall have their plans approved by NTC in the first round of drafting their plans, in accordance with the *Law on Territorial Planning*.[9] If we analyze the development process, we notice that the central planning authorities, such as the ministries and NTC, shall issue development, building, and infrastructure permits for activities well defined in the *Law on Territorial Planning*[10] and that certainly occur in

5 *For example, Article 24 of the Law, speaking of the uniformity of planning instruments, stipulates that these instruments are created as a combination of type (Section I, Chapter III), classification (Article 23), and level (Section III, Chapter III).*

6 *Referring to the terms used in Article 10 of the Law on Organization and Functioning of the Local Governance*

7 *Articles 8, 8/1, 32, 74 and 89 of the Law on Territorial Planning*

8 *Zones that are under the administration of the national government.*

9 *Article 89 of the Law on Territorial Planning*

10 *Article 8, 8/1, 72, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, and 79 of the Law on Territorial Planning*

the local government's territory. *In this framework, municipalities and communes can maintain their autonomous governing power as regards the function of territorial planning and development, only if they draft their general planning instruments, which must be well coordinated with the central level, in order to avoid potential conflicts of competencies.*

The discussion on decentralization is not conducted to indicate whether the territorial planning and development control function should be completely or partly decentralized. In fact, this is an important national decision, because the territory constitutes the basis that supports life. Therefore, decisions about it should not be conditioned on local pride or central government's desire for control. This 'partial decentralization' as stipulated in the *Law on Territorial Planning* is not in conflict with the organic law, as stated above, and the existence of multiple controls on territory is probably useful for the stage of development Albania is at right now. Furthermore, the selection of a proper relationship between **centralization and decentralization** will be defined from the type of system selected by the stakeholders. It is questionable, however, whether or not all stakeholders have had their say in this decision-making process; who was invited and who was ignored while the system was being selected? It is hard to answer this question after the fact, but it would have been helpful if the *Law on Territorial Planning* had shed some light regarding this decision, which seems to be hiding between the lines.

To close the discussion on authorities and competencies, the *Law on Territorial Planning* inherits the ambiguity of the organic law and the *Law on Urban Planning* in terms of the '*Region*', as the second level of local government. According to Article 14 of the *Law on Territorial Planning*, a region may draft and adopt all planning and development control instruments stipulated in the law as competencies of a commune or municipality. However, according to this very article, the region cannot violate the autonomy of the municipalities or communes. Since the region has neither territory to manage nor competencies extending over the territory, how will this article of the *Law on Territorial Planning* be enforced? The answer is: either it will not be enforced at all or some major changes in the competencies of local government in Albania need to be made, so that the region is also empowered and stops 'existing' in a legal and institutional vacuum.

Unlike the *Law on Urban Planning* that stipulates the protection of legitimate interests linked with private property, the new Law on Territorial Planning represents an important conceptual step forward in that it does not differentiate between the privately- and state-owned land; instead it imposes rules on rational use of land and defines the ways how these rules should be enforced. These rules seek to **balance the public and private interests** and turn the local authority from a follower of the private initiative to a leader of development and definer of paths, which private initiative will then develop. The special development control instruments[11]

11 *Article 63 through to 70 of the Law on Territorial Planning*

are meant to offer alternatives to '*purchase*' and '*compensation*' as the only two methods of land management. The law goes beyond a framework law definition for all these instruments, except for the concept of "development right", where the law limits itself to just a definition.

The right to development constitutes an essential concept and although the law does not sufficiently elaborate on its importance as an instrument and how it should be used, it is *fortunate* that at least it is included in the law. It seems that the *Law on Territorial Planning* was hesitant to deliberately state that the right to development, i.e., the right to build, is defined, issued or conditioned by the public interest and the representative of the public interest is the planning local or central authority. This may be due to the "this is my property and I do whatever I want with it" mentality, prevailing in Albania during the last 20 years of transition. At first glance, one may claim that the real land rights are harmed. In fact, the building intensity, as a practical indicator of the development right (Juergenmeyer et al., 2003), is not a real but a virtual right, once various institutions define it or prohibit it from occurring through a series of laws and principles, which are in accordance with their territorial competencies.

Article 1 of the *European Convention on Human Rights* stipulates that, "No one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by law and by the general principles of international law" (CoE, 1952). Further on, this provision is completed with the statement that, "The preceding provisions shall not, however, in any way impair the right of a State to enforce such laws as it deems necessary to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest..." According to this convention, the choice is available to each and every state. In fact, Article 160 of Law No. 7850, *Civil Code of the Republic of Albania* (29.07.1994) as amended, delegates the right to regulation of activities on territorial development to the planning instruments, consequently, to the respective law on spatial planning. Thus, as long as the legislation (*Law on Territorial Planning*) states that **the development right** is equal to building intensity and land use and specifies that planning authorities may permit, prevent or condition the building intensity and type of land use, then we have chosen a development right that is changeable, transferable and subject to market and public rules, all at the same time. This is another instance where it would have been helpful if the *Law on Territorial Planning* had been a little more deliberate and specific.

A sensitive aspect of the *Law on Territorial Planning* is the ***transitory period of its enactment and the revocation of Law No. 8405, On Urban Planning.*** In addition to the need for serious commitment on the part of institutions to understand the law and its bylaws, this period is crammed with activities pointing at two directions: 1) preparation of planning and development control instruments in compliance with the requirements of the *Law on Territorial Planning*; and 2) transition of planning instruments (regulatory plans and partial urban studies), which are being prepared

as the law becomes fully effective or that have already been adopted prior to the enactment of the law. There is much to be done in both directions. The first one is important, because the implementation of the law through bylaws, such as uniform regulations, simply facilitates the process, but does not complete it. The implementation can only be carried out when each and every planning authority will have prepared its own instruments in conformity with the bylaws, as required by the law. The second direction is very sensitive, because, as the law states in its transitional provisions, each and every instrument adopted prior to the enactment of the law or during the process of drafting it, shall be revised in compliance with the provisions of the new law. Only then shall this instrument become valid for use in issuing development, building, and infrastructure permits.

The first impression from reading the *Law on Territorial Planning* is that its **concepts and relevant terminology** are relatively difficult when compared with the traditional urban planning applied in Albania. In reality, the new law cannot be considered easy to digest, given its complexity of concepts and processes as they relate to the local government units, and its implementation is largely dependent not only on the establishment of the legal framework, but also on the development of relevant institutional and human resource capacities.

The conceptual differences of the new law start with the name of the law and continue with its two types of processes: **territorial planning** and **development control.** This is different from the old law where these concepts did not exist and where urban planning design and construction permits were its main focus. In addition, local instruments are to be designed for the entire administrative territory and the concept of "yellow line"[12] is eliminated. This way, the planning and development control instruments will convert the arable and natural land into urban land, only when in conformity with the respective legislation on agriculture, forestry, water resources, pastureland, and environment.

The new law reaches a 'different level' in terms of information on territory by introducing the concept of **Territorial Register,** as one of the means for establishing the basis of sustainable development in the territory. According to the law, the register is a multi-plan database in the Geographic Information System as well as a transparent "audit" instrument, because all important draft regulations, including permits, will be published in it and only then will they become effective. This high tech method of maintenance and administration of information on territory is undoubtedly valuable in the territorial planning and development process. However, it is a far cry from the current logistics and human resource capacities needed to implement it. This is the reason why the traditional ways of information collection and management need to remain in effect while a national program for the permanent establishment of the registry gets on its way. This program

12 *The boundary of the area where development is allowed to take place. Alternatively can be called the boundary of the urban area.*

must go beyond the training of local or central staff and should incorporate the government's priorities to usher in a new era of information management in Albania.

Law No. 10119 makes no longer makes mention of Urban Planning Studies on territory, but offers Planning Instruments in a hierarchical order that is aligned with the levels of administration of power and territory under the jurisdiction of the respective institutions. The **planning instruments** at every level (national and local) are policies, plans, and regulations. Their classification is defined as sectoral, cross-sectoral, and general. The full list of planning instruments will be addressed in the uniform regulations of planning and will be organized as a ***combination of types, classes, and levels*** of instruments as defined by 24 of the Law on Territorial Planning. If we were to refer to the old law for comparison purposes, the planning instruments constitute a new concept. The only element that, to a certain extent, allows for a comparison is the General Regulatory Plan, which has been converted into the General Local Territorial Plan. However, the latter claims to be more evolved in both content and methodology.

Uniform and Model Regulations

The uniform and model regulations proposed from the *Law on Territorial Planning* present a good opportunity to complement the deficiency not addressed in the urban planning regulation. In order to completely fill this vacuum, it would require local or central public institutions to draft their own regulations in compliance with the uniform regulations. The uniform and model regulations have been drafted by NTPA during September – November 2010 with support from the USAID Local Governance Program in Albania and through an intensive process that included the participation of all stakeholders. It is expected that the regulations will be legally adopted in 2011.

The Uniform Regulation on Territorial Planning replaces and complements the first part of the Urban Planning Regulation: ***the Types, Contents, and Procedures of Drafting Urban Planning Studies.*** Of course, the uniform regulation does not intervene in the planning methodologies, but establishes uniformity of conduct in planning.

The Territorial Development Control Regulations specify the rules on the form and structure of development instruments, the application of planning instruments, the process of development control, the format of the project for each typology of development application, etc. This regulation provides, to a certain extent, the definitions that are infrequently mentioned in the current regulation and in the Law on Urban Planning in terms of development and building permits, but goes beyond these two regulations. Indeed, this instrument may impose a new regime of relationships among developers, owners, and LGUs, turning the developer/proprietor into a contributor to development and not simply into a beneficiary.

The Model Planning Regulation allows local government units to develop as long as they have adopted their general local plans, and restricts their activity to the

same extent for the purpose of encouraging adoption of local plans.

These are the three basic regulations for the implementation of the law. While uniform regulations ensure uniformity of form and structure of planning and development control instruments, the model regulation is a 'small' transitional regulation making sure that building will not halt completely in Albania for 2 years. This is due to the stipulation on these regulations made by the *Law on Territorial Planning*.

These regulations are in full compliance with the *Law on Territorial Planning* and with the relevant Albanian legislation. They take into account the needs of interest groups in Albania in order to be implementable. Since interest groups need clarifying details, as the concepts of the law have not been fully assimilated by its actors, NTPA, in cooperation with the actors involved in the drafting process, has established a good and pragmatic balance between the legal norm and the clarifying guidelines in these regulations.

While the three basic regulations cannot legally simplify the law, they have tried to clarify it. Hierarchy of instruments and their mutual relationship is further highlighted. The processes are made visible, readable and easily enforceable. Regulations show in practice what the law states about the fact that a development, building or infrastructure permit cannot be issued unless it is preceded by a general local territorial plan. Since the model regulation is deterring the unplanned development, these plans are the only instruments through which the local authorities will materialize their local autonomy on territorial planning and development. Finally, these three regulations show how fragmented development is transformed into integrated development and how a developer will not generate his profits at the expense of the society, but will cover the costs of development directly linked with the private property development, as it's done in countries with sustainable and fair development.

Another important regulation, as provided for in the *Law on Territorial Planning*, is the regulation on building. It sets forth the basic binding technical norms and conditions for design and implementation, construction, use, maintenance, dismantling, and removal of structures. There have been building rules and regulations before, but this regulation, in this form and content, has never existed before and this improvement is a precondition for the application and effectiveness of the other bylaws of the *Law on Territorial Planning*.

The new law is intertwined with a considerable number of applicable laws. Therefore, its enforcement will call for technical amendments to some specific existing laws in order to achieve harmony and avoid conflicts among them. In their descriptive and analytic report on the relationship of the *Law on Territorial Planning* with the Albanian legislation, the writers of the law suggested that about 94 laws are affected and need to be revised. This number can, however, be reduced considerably if, during the implementation of the law on territory and other laws, efforts are placed on working through

good interpretation of the law, silent interpretation, good coordination with special laws, prevalence of provisions of the latter, and, of course, through exhaustive elaboration of the regulations adopted so far and to be adopted in the future. In principle, its inclusion in the Albanian legal and institutional system may be considered to be the biggest challenge of the new law. The effective enforcement of the new law is closely linked with the legislation on development of physical and social infrastructure at the local level, local taxes and fees, management of immovable property of local government units, etc.

Challenges of the Law on Territorial Planning

The analysis carried out so far, be it a comparison between two laws or two urban situations during two different periods of time in our country's history and the comments provided in the roundtable discussions with stakeholders and interviews conducted with local authorities indicate that the challenges to the enforcement of the *Law on Territorial Planning* are the following:

- **Building proper capacities** at the central and local level in order to deal with a new territorial planning and development system;
- **Assimilation of new legal and professional concepts** in planning not only by institutions but also professionals and developers in general;
- **Clarification of competencies** of decision-making and planning authorities, regardless of government level;
- **Drafting of supportive legislation** for enforcing the law and drafting of national and local planning and development control instruments;
- **Financial, technical and institutional support** to put the new system in place.

The biggest challenge of the Law on Territorial Planning is essentially its becoming part of the Albanian legal and institutional system and the consolidation of its position within this system. This challenge can be addressed not only by the 5 items listed above or by drafting bylaws in accordance with the transitional provisions, but also by the approval of changes that the Law on Territorial Planning will impose on or suggest to the current legislation in general.

Only when our legal system is fully revised in compliance with the provisions of the Law on Territorial Planning and when the institutional engine is empowered to implement it, then this law will have entered the Albanian legal system and we can claim that we are speaking of a true Albanian reform in spatial planning.

During the drafting stage, there have been debates as to how much "European" the *Law on Territorial Planning* is. The debate itself is important, as European integration is a priority issue for the country. We need to consider, however, that while the planning philosophy and concepts are continuously evolving in Europe (Tosics et al., 2010; EC, 1997), their translation into respective legislation of individual countries is still in its infancy. Planners have embraced the European Spatial Development Perspective Directive[13] and

13 *ESDP - European Spatial Development Perspective, which is not binding but orienting in terms of application.*

the policy of territorial cohesion. Yet, European countries have historic and territorial identities, as well as a history of highly consolidated legal systems to allow spatial planning to easily become a binding European policy. The *Law on Territorial Planning* has listed a series of principles that comply with the European planning philosophy. In terms of choices, it seems that the law goes beyond Europe. There is a tendency to include as many international elements or instruments without focusing on a comparison with a few well-defined systems. The *Law on Territorial Planning* seeks to refer to several models (of unspecified origin) without succeeding to merge these models within the Albanian legal and development context. Thus, the essential need to integrate this law into the Albanian legal system continues to surface.

With respect to the three basic regulations, the European planning legal systems have been studied in order to understand what forms of implementation of various instruments are most appropriate for Albania. In any case, for the purpose of clarity, the reference model for the three regulations shall only be the *Law on Territorial Planning*, whatever European resemblance it bears or not. In this context, when there is sufficient ambiguity, as we further elaborate the law for implementation purposes, it is useful and necessary to be consistent in the selections we make, regardless of the sources of reference.

Last but not least, it is important to change the mentality of the institutions and law enforcement agencies as a whole. Although important, the fact that we are used to a particular legislation and a specific planning language for many years cannot stand in the way of us accepting and implementing a new law, especially when the political forces have reached a consensus on it. This does not rule out, at all, the need for making improvements to the *Law on Territorial Planning* with the aim of better reflecting the Albanian reality. However, it does raise the question: "Do we really need to make deep changes to the newly-approved law without even implementing it?" The complexity of the *Law on Territorial Planning* should be de-mythicized and should not trigger concerns and anxiety. It only requires the will to reassess it, improve it as necessary, and implement it, always paying attention that these processes do not jack up the costs, increasingly becoming a burden to the Albanian citizen.

Short-term Recommendations on Enforcement of the Law on Territorial Planning

Key Aspects and Concrete Steps in the Enforcement of the Law on Territorial Planning

To address the above challenge, Law No. 10119, *On Territorial Planning* should satisfy a range of requirements, which are grouped according to the transitional provisions and according to key issues raised by local actors, regardless if they are addressed by the law or not. The groups of issues are shown in the following diagram and cover all spheres, which the law needs to update or address.

The above diagram identifies four groups of issues that need to be clarified

via bylaws and related guidelines, amendments to this law or other laws, and national programs aimed at capacity building. During the transitional period of the law's enactment, it is very important to focus on the first set of urgent issues. These issues have been partly addressed by the law and, given the delays in the passage of bylaws, they become a priority, as they hold back other issues, thus increasing the cost (social, environmental, and political) - caused by the mismanagement of the territory - which Albanians will have to bear.

Once established and fully operational with bylaws, staff and logistics, the NTPA's priority issues include[14]:

1. Preparation of a 2-year activity plan (the adoption of a national strategy of spatial planning should also incorporate an action plan that is completely linked with the NTPA's short-term plan);
2. Establishment and operation of the National Territorial Council;
3. Preparation to start working on the General Territorial Plan and Issues of National Importance;
4. Adoption of the three 'basic' regulations: uniform planning regulation, uniform development control regulation, and model planning regulation;
5. Training of LGUs on basic regulations;
6. Support to LGUs on adaptation of their planning instruments in conformity with the new territorial law;
7. Addressing the urgent issues (described below);
8. Development of NTPA human resources;
9. Drafting of guidelines, in compliance with the basic regulations, to clarify the planning and development control powers of each and every authority at every level.

A 2-Year Action Plan for Enforcing the Law on Territorial Planning

This action plan is expected to become an integral part of the national planning strategy. The plan ought to consider:

- The existence of General Regulatory Plans, adopted at least in the last 5 years, and the manner and time of their adjustment to the new planning and development control instruments;
- The existence of general regulatory plans drafted and in the process of adoption, but blocked due to the vague separation of decision-making powers between the national and local levels of authority.
- The existence of general regulatory plans in the drafting process (under the World Bank LAMP Project), which, in due course, need to be adjusted to the new methodology proposed by the regulation;
- Mobilization of the NTPA human resources to manage the intensive surge of work, particularly in the first 6 months after the law has become fully effective.
- Mobilization of human resources of local government units, so as to implement the three basic regulations

14 Legislation on the registry has been drafted and ratified and the work on the registry is being finalized.

and the registry, thus ensuring their autonomy in planning;

- Legalization of informal areas, with main focus on territories of communes, which will have to draft land-use plans in compliance with the legal provisions;
  - Amendments to some laws that directly affect the enforcement of the Law on Territorial Planning, such as:
    - Law on Local Taxes
    - Law on Organization and Functioning of Local Governance
    - Law on Prefect[15]
    - Law on Procedures on Expropriation for Public Interest (Eminent Domain)
    - Law on Registration of Immovable Properties
    - Other laws as needed.

How to Increase Institutional Capacities at the National and Local Level?

Building the proper capacities for the implementation of the *Law on Territorial Planning* is not a process that can be considered concluded within a certain period of time. There may undoubtedly be a list of activities that need to be addressed in the short-term, but institutional capacity building should become a long-term program for the Government of Albania. The goal of the Capacity Building Program is to retrain the planning authorities, at each level of government, on understanding the new concepts and practices of land planning and land management incorporated in the territorial legislation and on enforcing them accordingly. Since the new law is complex and suggests radical practical changes, the capacity building program should address procedural matters of daily activities, as well as conceptual issues.

The program should also address the specific needs at the central and local level. The National Territorial Planning Agency is the main subject of the program at the central level, whereas at the local level municipal, communal, and regional officials are the main focus of retraining. The two principal components of the program are: 1) procedures and bylaws (drafting and enforcement) and 2) professional training on planning issues and concepts. The program should also utilize standard training for understanding the law and basic planning concepts, as well as provide on-the-job support to central and local institutions for drafting relevant planning instruments in compliance with the law. NTPA will have to develop this program and lead its implementation.

Future Direction

The *Law on Territorial Planning* and the dynamic regulations drafted to ensure its enforcement should be tested in order to understand the problems and need for improvement. Since we are dealing with a new 'mechanism', which, regardless of the technical objections to it, has earned the blessing and consensus of the political class, it is wise to test it in order to understand how and to what extent we have harmonized the various interests and what the next step will be. Otherwise, it is prudent to avoid endless delays and

15 The Prefect represents the central government at the local level. In Albania, the Prefect is an institution that operates at Qark level.

consider a thorough and integral review of the territorial planning law, without failing to take into account the political and civil costs to the country. Whatever the solution is, the success is going to ultimately depend on the will and professional capacities of the public institutions responsible for its enforcement at both levels of governance.

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BETWEEN UTOPIA AND PRAGMATISM

UFNISHED MODERNISATIONS

UNFINISHED MODERNISATIONS BETWEEN UTOPIA AND PRAGMATISM

ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN PLANNING IN FORMER YUGOSLAVIA AND ITS SUCCESSOR STATES

Unfinished Modernisations is a collaborative, long-term research platform on architecture and urban planning. It brings together partners from both institutional and non-institutional sectors from South-Eastern Europe: TrajekT, [Slovenia], Maribor Art Gallery [Slovenia], the Croatian Architects' Society and the Institute for Contemporary Architecture, Zagreb [Croatia], the Belgrade Architects Society [Serbia] and the Coalition for Sustainable Development [Macedonia].

The project is aimed at fostering interdisciplinary research on the production of built environment in its social, political and cultural contexts. It encompasses the countries that succeeded former Yugoslavia, spanning the period from the inception of the socialist state until today. The topic of the research is the way in which divergent concepts of modernization conditioned architecture, territorial transformations, and urban phenomena. The project seeks to detect effective, resilient, and socially responsible models of architecture and urban planning. While largely unexplored and lacking appropriate interpretation, many of the models created in the region were original and experimental and may be used as inspiration for a progressive current practise both inside and beyond the regional borders. The project also seeks to reconstruct an important segment of the shared history of South-Eastern Europe and to strengthen cross-cultural respect and understanding through trans-national collaboration and mobility.

This platform for collaboration in the field of architecture and urban planning gathers 14 interdisciplinary teams. Over the course of two years, they will research various architectural and urban planning phenomena within the social, economic and cultural context of socialist Yugoslavia, and the reflections of these processes in today's independent states after Yugoslavia's demise. The researches will focus on the ways in which the architecture and urban planning were influenced by the concepts of modernization and the social experiment of construction in the self-government socialist society, and what influence did the architecture and urban planning have on creation of the social reality. In that sense, architecture and urban planning are seen as an integral part of the process of general modernization of the society, and also as a specific cultural phenomenon.

Unfinished Modernisations will be carried out through a variety of activities: workshops, symposia, lectures, exhibitions, publications, and interactive web-site\blogs. These efforts will culminate in a final exhibition in Maribor [Slovenia], the 2012 Cultural Capital of Europe, which will give the project broad European exposure

UNFINISHED MODERNIZATIONS: FRAMING THE FIELD

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The collaborative project Unfinished Modernizations explores the various phenomena in the construction of the built environments in the countries of former Yugoslavia. The research focuses on the shifting concepts of modernization as a precondition for the development of a democratic and emancipating society. Even though modernization is a global phenomenon, the motifs and effects of its implementation differ from one environment to the next as much as the ideological aspects of its instrumentalization. The project deals with two different socio-political contexts: socialist Yugoslavia, with its powerful and yet constantly shifting role of architecture and urban planning in modernization; and the transitional and post-transition societies that replaced the Yugoslav state. It investigates how the processes of modernization, inherited from the socialist period, were sustained and transformed into affirmative experiences and practice or abandoned and deconstructed with the help of regressive tendencies during the post-socialist transformation.

CONTEXTUALIZING MODERNIZATION

Rapid modernization was an inextricable part of the project to establish a socialist Yugoslavia. At first, that project was modeled after the Soviet Union and after the break from Moscow it was redefined without abandoning some of its basic principles. Its success directly contributed to the sustainability and independence of the federal state and its policy of equidistance from the Eastern and the Western blocs. Due to their liminal and peripheral position, the unequally developed lands of the former Yugoslavia joined the modernizing processes later and with a lower intensity compared to the heartlands of modernity in the West. In order to build socialism, it was imperative to simultaneously modernize all segments of society and this project was based on an original political and economic interpretation of the concept of workers' self-management, derived from the various sources and experiences of Marxist theory and the limited understanding of historical revolutionary processes. In its initial phase, the concept of workers' self-management was largely aimed at a criticism of the Soviet-type state socialism and the related "statist" tendencies in the Eastern bloc. The strategic normalization of relations with the West and East established Yugoslavia's liminal position in the international relations, which played an important role in preserving the independence of the "Yugoslav path" and helped establish the cultural porosity of the country's borders. The system thus tolerated the pluralism of ideas and expressions as long as they could be explained through the concept of the freedom of creativity and as long as they did not critically encroach upon the foundations of the political and ideological platforms.

Even after the thorough transformations caused by the 1948 rift with Moscow—most importantly the establishment of the system of workers' self-management—Yugoslav socialism continued undergoing successive revisions It was in a perpetual state of reform, reacting internationally to political and economic trends and internally to various unresolved tensions, which were either inherited from the past or newly produced. Implemented largely through the method of trial and error, self-managing socialism was based on the progressive idea of strengthening the position of workers\citizens and their active participation in management and government in order to liberate the creative potential of individuals and the collective. Lacking any clear predecessors, the project was unavoidably an experiment.

MODERNIZATION EMBODIED

Parallel and supplementary to the theoretical and practical platform of self-managing socialism, the project of modernization was a crucial component of the imagined social progress. Particular accent was placed on two "classical" aspects of modernization, industrialization and urbanization, which were understood as the sine qua non for economic and social development and the foundation for a revolutionary society. For that reason, the twin processes of industrialization and urbanization acquired strong ideological identification with the construction of socialist society, especially before the early 1970s. In the operational sense, however, they hybridized local circumstances and solutions with global modernizing trends and experiences, leading to a unique Yugoslav brand of socialism.

In certain aspects, Yugoslav socialist modernization demonstrated an apparent autonomy from and even resistance to political ideology. One example was the relative autonomy of modernist culture, which yielded some interesting and authentic results. On the other hand, the basic principles that guided the specific modernizing processes were not always particularly innovative, nor was their application always successful, thus failing to fully support the progressive theoretical vision of socialist self-management. The implementation of progressive intentions was ultimately plagued by all kinds of contradictions and tensions, both within the structures of authority and in the broader society. Particular problem was the discrepancy between a continuing insistence on a monolithic ideological and practical leadership of the Communist Party and the proclaimed, but never truly implemented, democratization of society and the desired "withering away of the state."

MODERNIZATION IN ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN PLANNING

Architecture and urbanism reinterpreted the socially progressive goals of modernism, elaborated in the pre-war period. In the case of resource management, a certain level of egalitarianism was achieved in the areas such as the distribution of housing stock, while the planning principles were implemented strictly top-down and through zoning morphologies and architectural types that were not essentially different from the Western or Eastern models. Experimental or utopian approaches were not implemented because they exceeded both the pragmatic needs of modernization and the available resources. The neo-avant-garde agenda to construct aesthetically advanced living environments in the spirit of the synthesis of plastic arts, which reached a peak of elaboration in the mid 1950s, had only limited practical effects. Just like workers' self-management, the theory was slow to penetrate common practice.

The affirmative shifts were achieved on two general plans. First, the modern humanist ethics was recognized and applied as a paradigm compatible with the horizon of social development. For that reason, new settlements were constructed according to relatively high standards, compared to similar examples in the East or West. Second, certain particular experiences still succeeded in the intention to allow the citizens to directly participate in the production of the city [for example, individual residential cooperatives].

Architects and urban planners enjoyed a rather high social position and influence, as well as considerable freedom in conceptualizing the production of the built environment. Expropriation of private estates and the establishment of social ownership enabled large-scale interventions and the status of cultural and technical elite allowed architects and urban planners a great deal of aesthetic autonomy. On the other hand, these professionals were not included in decision-making mechanisms of political and economic production of the built environment. Similarly, the management of resources remained conventional and similar to state socialism; neither architects nor construction industry were integrated into a common system with common goals. Therefore, architects and urban planners implemented cultural moderniza-

tion and construction industry implemented technical modernization, while the research of experimental models of design and management remained on the level of resolving immediate pragmatic themes like the "right to housing". But certain achievements of architectural imagination and its operative application mediated between the cultural-social and technical modernizations, such as the advanced research in the area of prefabrication and mass production of buildings.

Executed progressive models can primarily be recognized in innovative architectural solutions, for example in the area of the so-called "buildings of social standard." Most extensive contributions to modernization of society were achieved through generic and solidly built modern architecture that improved living conditions in every way, from housing to higher education. High modernism became an implicit or explicit sign of the superiority of socialism in achieving just modernization for everyone on scales ranging from furniture design to large buildings of great symbolical importance. Its success in the local context legitimated Yugoslavia's international position by confirming its independence from Soviet influence even visually. But modernism in architecture and urban planning did not stop at reproducing rudimentary, purely functional solutions. On the one hand, it followed the broader international tendencies to explore advanced typological and morphological models; on the other, it morphed into some unique and idiosyncratic architectural poetics. The development of an architectural culture that was authentic, yet in close correspondence with international trends, renders Yugoslav modernist architecture of the postwar period simultaneously and immediately identifiable both with the general character of its period and with its locale. But in their transfer to the local context, international models were inevitably transformed and adapted to local conditions, sometimes creating unique hybrids whose meanings remain insufficiently explored and interpreted.

Besides a common absorption of international tendencies, Yugoslavia's diverse cultural centers cultivated their own idiosyncratic methodologies and aesthetic, each centered on its own institutions of architectural education. This diversity was in some cases seen as a natural continuation of local architectural traditions, while in others it served as a means of explicit construction of individual national expressions. The common task of modernization thus created a common direction within which heterogeneous schools developed, often dominated by charismatic creative personalities. In this complex context, modern architecture was not aimed at creating a new pan-Yugoslav identity. Instead, such identity formed implicitly and spontaneously, as a consequence of a common concept and conditions of modernization.

CONTOURS OF INTERPRETATION: RELATIONSHIP TOWARDS THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT AND ITS CRITICISM

The international map of modernization and modern culture is far from complete. Long viewed from a predominantly Western perspective, modernist practices in "peripheral" and "marginal" societies have hardly been integrated into the international narrative of modernist culture. The lack of interpretation and assessment of the effects and achievements of modernization renders the former socialist East largely a terra incognita of international modernism. Before the fall of the Berlin Wall, the social and cultural landscapes in the East and the West displayed considerable differences, many of which still survive even today. East European modernism and its social motivations and effects thus cannot be interpreted as directly analogous to the Western canon. What in the West was considered mainstream cultural production, in the East could have acquired a subversive overtone. On the other hand, what in the East was a straightforward product of social needs, in the West could have been misread as aesthetic dilettantism. Both sides thus frequently interpreted each other's cultural production with considerable aesthetic bias, which was largely, although not always consciously, politically motivated.

With its porous borders towards the East and the West, with its own experimental system, and with a host of inherited and new contradictions, socialist Yugoslavia was a fertile ground where various experiences and practices overlapped, occasionally resulting in authentic creative methodologies and poetics. But the relationship between dominant ideology, the experiment of socialist self-management, and the project of modernization remains largely unexplored. In the field of architecture and urban planning, it would be particularly important to detect and analyze the progressive models that related the social system, decision-making mechanisms, and design practices, especially in the cases where the concept of self-management significantly affected the production of the built environment. All these relationships require careful critical analysis, particularly with respect to their incompleteness and failures in integrating the disparate modernization processes into a holistic and functional system of the production of the city, while taking full advantage of the idea of social ownership.

It may be argued that socialist Yugoslavia had the necessary political and cultural preconditions to develop harmonious, socially balanced, and stimulating built environments. Why, then, did modernism's utopian horizon remain out of reach? The potentials were realized only in isolated urban interventions, mostly by demonstrating the considerable power to implement projects on a large-scale. The form of the city remained similar to forms known from capitalism or state socialism and comparative differences emerge only when focusing the analysis on a micro-scale. The gradual exhaustion of the revolutionary spirit, economic difficulties and irrationalities, and the increasing internal tensions further stifled the implementation of progressive ideas.

OPEN QUESTIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

Can we identify what kind of cultural and social progress was made in socialist Yugoslavia? What were its specificities? How autonomous were cultural achievements and how much did they rely on the social system? To what extent and in which instances were progressive relations established between the available resources, mechanisms of management, architectural ideas, and the needs of citizens? In which cases did architecture and urban planning help citizens emancipate and develop their creativity and self-awareness? Which were the ones that inhibited or impoverished the city as a complex collective organism? Is it possible to outline the basic contours of socialist urban modernization and its specificities or singularities?

The contemporary practices of the construction of the built environment in the post-socialist transitional and post-transitional contexts highlights the urgency of these questions. Despite the establishment of Western-style democracies, new values have failed to replace the collapsed value system of the socialist period, which stifles collective creativity, the participative empowerment of citizens, and the emancipation of individuals and the collective. Clear values are missing in every field: from politics, which lacks moral legitimacy as much as any recognizable theoretical or ideological foundation, to general culture and civic life, which lack a sense of civic solidarity are prone to re-traditionalization and regression. Civic and non-governmental initiatives are gaining momentum, but they have not grown to a significant force in general social processes and their activities remain focused on individual and tactical operations, rather than strategic plans.

In the context of the "dispersion of thought" and the trivialization of public life, which reinforce the neo-colonial order, it is necessary to critically analyze the unfinished socialist modernism as a way of strengthening self-awareness and reinforcing local identity. The omnipresent physical traces of socialist modernization, inescapable throughout the region's cities, constitute not only an important segment of cultural heritage, but they also participate in the collective memory and potentially can serve as obvious

counterpoints to the speculative method of the construction of the city in the current neo-liberal "society of control." The built environments and individual architectural artifacts inherited from the period of intense modernization under self-managing socialism are largely superior to the general, basically anti-modern, situation we encounter today in most of the countries of South-Eastern Europe and Western Balkans. Although the future will be built literally on the ruins of an interrupted experiment, nostalgia towards the lost utopian horizons is not a productive position. Instead, it will be necessary to use the local traditions of socially progressive thought to explore new, revised, directions of modernization if the region is to be integrated into the international community without being once again vassal and colonial. The region can escape its fate of Europe's permanently repressed "Other" only by building on its own authentic modernization processes and by creatively exploiting its liminal position with porous cultural borders. The current social situation hardly offers any hope of reaffirming the experiences of socialist self-management towards the construction of social democracy. But it is up to intellectuals to explore the potentials of the region's unfinished modernizations and to try to revise and adjust them to the contemporary moment.

\ Maroje Mrduljaš, Vladimir Kulić, July 2010 \

MODERNISM IN YUGOSLAVIA

IDEOLOGY AND ARCHITECTURE

Vladimir Kulić [Florida Atlantic University]
Nika Grabar [School of Design, Ljubljana]
Dubravko Bačić [Faculty of Architecture, Zagreb]
Aleksandar Ignjatović [Faculty of Architecture, Beograd]

This research explores the shifting interactions between political and architectural ideologies in postwar Yugoslavia. During the socialist period, the state relied on a complex set of basic political principles: socialism, self-management, federalism, and non-aligned foreign policy. On the other hand, architecture was broadly defined through the domination of modernism in its various guises: from avant-garde and neo-avant-garde tendencies, "high modernism," and various regionalist interpretations, to a post-modernist critique at the end of the period. Rather than adopting a unidirectional model that sees architecture as a mere reflection of politics, this research explores the multiple reciprocal interactions between the two fields: their contradictions and conflicts as much as their mutual dependencies and reinforcements. Because neither of these two fields was ever static, but in constant flux, the emerging picture is complex and highly unstable, dependent upon contingencies as much as on any fixed political or architectural principles.

The research follows four distinct threads that cover most of the socialist period. Nika Grabar interprets the phenomenology of architectural form through the lens of social and political change using the example of Revolution Square [today Republic Square] in Ljubljana. Dubravko Bačić explores the reverberations of the 1930s "conflict on the literary left" in the architecture of the early socialist period. Aleksandar Ignjatović analyzes the construction of architectural historiography and its role in legitimating the political system, especially its relationship to cultural and ethnic identities, the federal organization of the state, and the concept of Yugoslavism. Finally, Vladimir Kulić inquires how the ideology of artistic autonomy was used in the mutual legitimation of modernist architecture and the political system in the 1950s and 60s.

——— Vladimir Kulić teaches at Florida Atlantic University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He studied architecture at the University of Belgrade, where he also taught for five years before moving to the United States. He received his PhD in architectural history from the University of Texas at Austin, where he specialized in post-World War II modernism and wrote a dissertation about architecture and the state in socialist Yugoslavia. His writings have appeared in books and journals in Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, the United States, Great Britain, Spain and Switzerland. Vladimir is co-editor of Sanctioning Modernism: Architecture and the Creation of Post-War Identities [forthcoming 2011] and co-author with Maroje Mrduljaš and Wolfgang Thaler of Modernism In-Between: Architecture in Socialist Yugoslavia [in progress]. In 2007, he won the Trustees Merit Citation from the Graham Foundation for the Advanced Studies in Fine Arts. He is also the winner of the 2009 Bruno Zevi Prize for a Historical-Critical Essay on Architecture, awarded by the Fondazione Bruno Zevi in Rome.

——— Nika Grabar [1978] graduated from the Ljubljana Faculty of Architecture in 2003. In the following year she began her work as a researcher at the Institute for Architecture and started postgraduate studies at the Faculty of Architecture in Ljubljana. In 2007 she was awarded a Fulbright scholarship

and continued her research in the field of architecture and politics at Columbia University, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation in New York for two years as a visiting researcher. She defended her PhD thesis "Architecture of Vinko Glanz - Between Classicism and Modernism" in 2009 at the Ljubljana Faculty of Architecture. Since then she has been teaching at the Academy of Design in Ljubljana, where she also continues to do research in the field of architecture, politics, and public space.

——— Dubravko Bacic [Dubrovnik, 1977] is a junior research fellow and instructor at the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Architecture. Bacic runs a small design office in Zagreb\Dubrovnik, regularly contributes articles and reviews to architectural journals in Croatia, and is a PhD candidate in architecture at Zagreb University. He received his first degree from the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Architecture, and his MDes in history and theory of architecture from Harvard University Graduate School of Design.

——— Aleksandar Ignjatović is assistant professor at the University of Belgrade; he holds a PhD and an MA in history and theory of art and architecture. Aleksandar Ignjatović has participated in numerous international projects and research programs: EUNAMUS Project: European national museums: Identity politics, the uses of the past and the European citizen, Linköping University, Sweden; Regimes of Historicity and Discourses of Modernity and Identity, 1900-1945 in East Central, Southeastern and Northern Europe, Center for Advanced Studies, Sofia, Bulgaria; Comparative History Project, Central European University, Budapest. His publications include several important works which deal with the issues of achitectural history, ideology and national identity in the late 19th and in the 20th century, such as: Jugoslovenstvo u arhitekturi 1904-1941 [The South Slav Ideal in Architecture 1904-1941], Belgrade 2007; "From Constructed Memory to Imagined National Tradition: Tomb of the Unknown Yugoslav Hero [1934-1938]", Slavonic and East European Review, vol. 88, no. 4 [October 2010], 624-651; "Architecture, Urban Development, and the Yugoslavization of Belgrade, 1850-1941", Centropa, vol. IX, no. 2 [2009], 110-126; "Peripheral Empire, Internal Colony: Yugoslav National Pavilions at the Paris World Exhibitions in 1925 and 1937", Centropa, vol. VIII, no. 2 [2008], 186-197, etc.
Over the last several years, Aleksandar Ignjatović has delivered numerous scholarly presentations at international conferences in cultural and architectural history. He has lectured extensively at the University of Belgrade and Central European University, Budapest.

TECHNOLOGY OF SOCIALIST URBAN PLANNING

NEW BELGRADE
THE MODERN CITY'S UNSTABLE PARADIGMS

Milica Topalović [ETH Studio Basel]

Contrary to the perception of architecture, urbanism and practices of spatial production in Yugoslavia as stable, homogeneous and even monolithic domains, they can also be associated with a history of instability, change and rupture, and even experiment. New Belgrade, for long serving as the flagship project of the socialist state, provides strong evidence of this thesis. Between the founding concepts of New Belgrade as Yugoslav administrative capital and its present day interpretations as commercial and business district, we can recognize a long period in which its modernist premises were repeatedly called into question. The new city's project already underwent major revisions under socialism, for instance between the late 1940s and early 1950s, when questions of state representation were explored through the designs for the capital, and in the 1960s and 1970s when priorities shifted to the expression of egalitarian values through public housing.

Despite the unstable strategies of modernism demonstrated in the design of New Belgrade, its radical abandonment as a modern urban vision only took place over the past two decades, matching the break-down of the socialist state. This loss of urban continuity is part of a larger and more extensive loss of relationship to the socialist past: in the framework of the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the communist world, and the country itself, the theoretical construct of Yugoslav socialism - the domains of social theory and history in particular - regressed into chaos; a contemporary re-assessment has barely begun. The question of what socialism was about or how properly to appraise socialist practices and products, has now been further obscured by more than two decades of gradual and strategic removal of vestiges of socialism in the political, economic and cultural spheres, and not least of all in urban space. Hence the actual relationship being formed in Belgrade [and in Serbia] to its socialist modern inheritance is still open and vague; and yet its emerging contours are highly pertinent. In New Belgrade, we can observe a myriad of independent strategies and micro-strategies being applied to bring forms of socialist modern architecture and urbanism into the present, albeit in a new context and with very different meanings.

Despite the absence of any urbanistic concept during the 1990s and after 2000 that might have guided the viborous construction in New Belgrade [along with the processes of the privatization of the former socially owned property, the increasing commercialization of urban space and its desecularization], a closer examination reveals that, without a doubt, New Belgrade is currently emerging as both a primary urban center and a desirable residential area. It is not surprising that much of New Belgrade's recent success is still based on urban qualities introduced by the initial modern layout dating back to the 1950s and the early '60s: the metropolitan centrality based on accessibility and strong infrastructure, proximity of city and landscape, the high quality social infrastructure, public space and amenities integrated with the concept of community, etc. Thus, a new critical appraisal of urban qualities of New Belgrade, and ultimately the creation of relevant architectural and urbanistic concepts and strategies for the continuation of its 'unfinished modernity' are the motives behind this research.

transformations of physical structure of public domain and collective housing typologies [SuperPrivate];
urban phenomena of tourist development on the Adriatic coast [Tourist Transformations];
cultural, interdisciplinary and tactical networking
[Zagreb Cultural Capital of Europe 3000 _ www.kulturnikapital.org];
models of participatory urban planning and bottom-up development in 7 locations of the Adriatic coast [Croatian Archipelago – New Light Houses \ www.croatianarchipelago.com];
spatial justice and urban struggles in post-socialist societies [International Conference - Neoliberal Frontline \ www.operacijagrad.org] models for the renewal of a Zagreb downtown block [blokiranje.org]

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URBAN TRANSFORMATIONS IN NEW BELGRADE

Ivan Kucina [Faculty of Architecture, Beograd]

This research will provide a critical overview of the planning intentions and realizations of New Belgrade, the city that started as the hometown of a new society striding towards a bright future but actually achieving an unexpected multiplicity through a serial of politically driven opportunistic transformations.

KEYNOTES

Relations between social-political production and the urban space produced
Development of New Belgrade as a serial of dispatches, derogations, deviations and desertion
Unfinished layers of New Belgrade
Concept of unplanned multiplicity achieved by the capacity of New Belgrade to adapt and change

INTRODUCTION

Although process of urbanization of the marshland between the rivers Sava and Danube started before World War II and the first modern constructions appeared before socialism, it was the period of socialist urban modernization after World War II that was the longest and the most vigorous, that created the New Belgrade urban presence. New Belgrade was developed from scratch in an environment of continual social reforms following the progression of the political imagination in socialist Yugoslavia. It was the continual pace of political and economical change that forced the transformations of urban discourses. They created the unfinished and intermingled layers of a new city of unplanned expandability: the centralized concept of a modernist city that in the fifties-sixties did not manage to constitute its center; followed by the self-management territorial arrangement of the inadequate mega housing blocks in sixties-seventies, empowered by the executive building landmarks dictated by the socialist construction corporations in the seventies-eighties; which was then mutated following the postmodern criticism promoting the formal urban matrix of the 19th century industrial city during the economic crisis in the eighties-nineties; to be upgraded by the deregulated and downscaled self-sufficient local services during the institutional collapse in the nineties-zeros; enlarged by singular profit-oriented initiatives along the transition toward the market economy in the zeros-tens. The series of dispatched, derogated,

deviated and deserted tendencies that characterized both the socialist utopian ambition to create an ideal collective environment and post-socialist market development with the inclination toward increasing singular interests have created anunplanned discontinuity of urban development resulting in the heterogeneous structure of New Belgrade, as distinct from the uniformity of modernist cities worldwide. Irrespective of the concept of modernism, New Belgrade became a city that is loved by its residents.

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RESUME
When Tomorrow Comes: Multiplicity by Chance

——— Ivan Kucina is Assistant Professor, practicing architect and artist, one of the initiator for much of the current research and workshops on informal urban processes in the Western Balkan. Born in Belgrade in 1961 and graduated from the Faculty of Architecture University of Belgrade in 1988. Since 1997 works full time at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Belgrade. Teaching and lecturing as visiting professor at the School of Design Strategies, Parsons the New School of Design, NYC, 2009.

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILDING TECHNOLOGY

ARCHITECTURE AND PREFABRICATION BETWEEN THE FIFTIES AND SIXTIES: HISTORY, DEBATE, EXPERIMENTATION, LANGUAGES.

Luka Skansi, Ines Tolić [IUAV University in Venice]

After World War II, the urgency of the new social, cultural and urban circumstances called for a rethinking of construction practices, prefabrication being indicated as a solution capable of responding to mass-construction problems and of achieving industrial objectives almost at the same time. In Yugoslavia, as elsewhere during the 1950s and 1960s, the industry of prefabrication improved greatly: it not only quickly increased its production capacities, but also progressed in terms of typological solutions, technological achievements, and design quality within a certain political and economic framework, which, it seems, particularly favoured experimentation.

Curiously enough, the contemporary architectural debate was only partially concerned with experimentation in the construction field, while much more space was dedicated to reports mainly devoted to themes such as the modernist legacy, the language of tradition, the urban project and the relationship between architecture and the city.

However it might have been, the themes of prefabrication and industrialization of architecture are today extremely topical. In a time when the building process is fully oriented towards assembling elements produced off-site – a process that consists today basically of choosing elements from "catalogues" – contemporary architectural research needs a deep reflection on its expressive potential in relation to the existing tradition of assembling architecture out of a limited number of given elements. Furthermore, the theme of prefabrication is particularly effective in demonstrating how the content of architecture can not only be communicated through a language of volumetric and plastic effects, but can also be achieved by a clever exaltation of its structural components, by tactile characteristics of its materials, or by marking the image of the building through the modular repetition of structural details.

Given the above mentioned, the objectives of the research are:

to map, by using the then contemporary periodicals and manuals, all the most significant achievements in the field of prefabrication; to retrace the companies which were engaged with it and to outline the debates they promoted;

to reflect on the dissemination of prefabrication systems in postwar Yugoslavija while highlighting those experiences in which, within the field of industrialization, practitioners approached prefabrication as an opportunity for research into architectural language, thus achieving formal and structural characterization of architectures through standardized elements;

to reflect on the legacy of the "modern movement" and the relationship between architectural style and the industrialization of the building process in postwar Yugoslavia, putting it in relation with

earlier debates on prefabrication and into a wider cultural context in which there had been similar experience [from Gropius and the German debate to the Russian, French and Swiss research and experience of the Thirties]

to understand the formal themes and linguistic variations explored by architects within the various building systems, by analysing in what way the use elements was influenced by the nature of materials [concrete, wood or iron].

to investigate the process of diffusion and circulation of ideas relevant to prefabrication systems and techniques, thus highlighting the existing relationship between architectural design, the prefabrication industry and product marketing.

——— Luka Skansi is a historian of architecture and teacheas at University IUAV in Venice. He graduated in architecture in 2002, and received a Ph.D. in history of architecture and the city at the School for Advanced Studies in Venice [2006]. His articles and essays – on pre-revolutionary Russia, on Peter Behrens, on Rem Koolhaas' formative years, on Italian architecture of the '50 and '60, on architecture in ex Jugoslavia – have been published in different books, magazines and encyclopedias. In 2008 he curated in Vienna [Architektur am Ringturm Gallery] an exhibition on Slovenian architecture in the 20th century [Architektur. Slowenien_Meister & Szene]. In 2009 he received an honorable mention in the Bruno Zevi Prize competition for his historical-critical essay on Russian architecture of the twenties. He recently finished his research on Italian architect Gino Valle and published two books: Gino Valle. Deutsche Bank Milano [Milano: Electa 2009] and Gino Valle Complete Works [with Pierre-Alain Croset, Milano: Electa 2010].

——— Ines Tolic is a post-doctoral fellow at the IUAV University in Venice, doing research into the cultural role of small urban centers in the Veneto Region. She graduated in architecture with a dissertation on the video representation of architecture and cities in post-war Croatia [IUAV, 2004] and received a PhD in history of architecture and the city at the School for Advanced Studies in Venice [2009]. In 2009, her dissertation on the reconstruction of Skopje after the earthquake of 1963 won her the Gubbio Prize [ANCSA] in the "best PhD category" and is to be published in 2011. In 2009, she was visiting researcher at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, where she carried out a research on contemporary South African architecture [the findings were published in 2010]. She collaborates with the NGO Coalition for Sustainable Development, Skopje; and is a member of the research unit "Memory and Representation of Cities" at the IUAV University, Venice.

CROATIAN ARCHITECTURE 1945-79

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

Nikola Polak, Vesna Milutin [Institute for Contemporary Architecture, Zagreb]

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times,
It was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness,
It was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity,
It was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness,
It was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair,
We had everything before us, we had nothing before us...
\Opening lines of Dickens A Tale of Two Cities [1859]\

The primary historical source for the novel A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens was The French Revolution: A History by Thomas Carlyle. As critic of society, Dickens was influenced by Carlyle's view that history cycles through destruction and resurrection, in both the physical and the spiritual realm of man. Placed simultaneously in Paris and London, Dickens' story is a suitable metaphor for exposing the urbanistic and architectural dispute over the two Zagrebs within one –in terms of both their construction and their destruction.

In the transitional nineties the two cities within one, the capitalist old town of the bourgeoisie and the socialist new town of the working class, were both caught up in entirely new circumstances of production and legislation: firstly, all planning documents were suspended, then planning discipline and the entire profession collapsed. A brutally liberal context was created for the isolated production of buildings by the method of „no concern". Both legislation and the profession tried to cope with the problem, responding to the emerging consciousness of the scary dimension of this problem arising from the irreparable damage to city and urbanity. In the production of the city at the time the crisis of goals was most evident. What is the metropolis after the final achievement of an independent state, what it is to its citizens, what to expatriates, what to the Europe to which it belongs historically and will soon join again politically? Even today answers to these questions are not clear.

FIRST MODERNISATION \ NOBLE CITIZEN

Croatia welcomed the time of the first modernisation in the mid 19th century as one of the victorious kingdoms in the centuries-long battle of Europe against Ottoman predominance, but without any political elite capable of using this to gain political independence. Thus the development of the Croatian capital became a major integrating element of domiciliary, expatriate and finally the imaginary free Croatia. As a result of the first modernisation, which, poorly adjusted as it was to the local circumstances, actually caused the first big wave of emigration, Zagreb developed in two ways. First as a center of a political community under the rule of the Habsburgs, and second as a center of this imaginary, ex- and possibly future independent Croatia. On both integration levels Zagreb expressed itself mainly in the cultural domain, when culture became a major integrating factor for the Croats.

Born after the French revolution, the first modernisation generally means a process of spreading and cultivating a typical way of life based on civil rationality. In an operative sense its meaning is restricted to the spatial processes of transformation of society known as urbanisation, bureaucratisation and industrialisation. In marginal areas of the monarchy at that time there was no functional elite capable of realising such a program. One exception is the degree of bureaucratisation necessary for the repressive operability of empire, and therefore induced by Habsburg centralized system.
Therefore the first Croatian modernisation was mainly realized in terms of symbolic gestures which, with their immanent energy of emotional charge, create the illusion of the achievement of social and political tasks still forbidden or impossible to exercise.
Out of these gestures, the measures and rules of urbo-architectural syntax emerged. According to them the new town was constructed. In his suggestive essay „What happened to Zagreb“ [Man and Space, special edition, June 1996., pp.28 – 41], Ivan Rogić Nehajev explains the emergence of the Lower Town as the first „new Zagreb“:
„ Because the social imagination was saturated with integration demands it is not odd that different, sometimes even naive historical retrospectives and fantastic images of Arcadian conditions were taken so seriously. It is not strange that the basic idea on which the transformation of the Lower Town dwelt is one of a square\garden governed by an institution authorized to control the symbolic world: the Academy of Sciences and Arts. It is hard to avoid an impression that a deliberate and almost Baroque consistency took place in repressing the pragmatic causes or motives of the design of public space on Zrinjevac. As if a clear rhetorical decision refused to admit the typical entrepreneurial savagery of the liberal era in which this transformation was taking place. And tended to ppreserve the new center from any unsuitable traces of its unrestrained pragmatics. The first New Zagreb, which is in the collective experience of contemporary citizens of Zagreb known simply as Lower Town, is in the first place a symbol, and only then a real place where unrestricted communal interests could be confirmed.“
The same mechanisms of restraint were applied in the huge housing development taking place in the Lower Town at the time. The formative and spatial measures assigned to the figure of the users as noble citizens, primarily as free men, first and foremost support the symbolically constructed face of the metropolis. As Rogić Nehajev stresses „ the first urbanisation of Zagreb is a true example that neither city nor urbanisation is an imprint of social circumstances. They are, on the contrary, carefully nurtured tools of change of the same circumstances.“
Lack of contradictions is present also in following period of technological innovations. Protagonists of the Modern period, with its sensibility and talents, supported the old symbolical paradigms with new formative means. On a symbolical level, different expressions responded to the paradigm with same success while applied in a structurally uniform manner.

SECOND MODERNISATION \ REPRESSION IS THE ONLY LASTING PHILOSOPHY

The second modernisation inherited the physical structure of the city, new technologies and formative means, even many protagonists, but was to submerge them in the challenge of different symbolic and pragmatic paradigms. The socialist government, faced with the grandiose needs of reconstruction, in the conditions of political and economic isolation, was forced into industrialization. Paradoxically, the new ideology brought the disciples of the ideas of the modern movement close to the realization of a dream, as the socialist system finally satisfied the majority of the preconditions for the realization of the Modern project. Firstly, there was the ‘state’ as a powerful and unique patron which alongside its economic power had publicly owned land at its disposal thus controlling the land-property politics, completely in keeping

with the La Sarraz Declaration which demanded 'a collective and methodical politics of landed property' for modern architecture. Then there was the planned economy, first as a systemic overview of needs and resources, and then as a unique decision maker on directing social energy into the industrialization of construction. Finally, in the conditions of collectivisation, industrialization and accelerated urbanisation, the presupositions of theAthens Charter, which saw urban housing as consisting of "high, generously spaced residential blocks wherever there was a need for high population density'', were fulfilled.
In the new conditions of general collectivisation and the all-powerful five-year plans, the tasks were dichotomous: first the elementary fulfilment of basic needs with a minimum of architectural articulation – production plants, infrastructure and housing, and then superstructure objects, schools, science and sports institutions, and finally prestigious state and party buildings. However, the expertise, education, knowledge, talent, modernity and enthusiasm of the top architects was coupled with rigid planning and management based on paleotechnical knowledge, an absolute absence of urban insight, suspicion of intellectuals and, heaven forbid, artists, as well as misunderstanding of the real needs of society for authentic and high quality architecture.
In the fifties and sixties south Zagreb was created as a pinnacle of successfully executed Modern urbanism, a fact superbly elaborated in Peter Blake's famous „Form Follows Fiasco" published in 1978. But the first emerging elements of the market economy supported the idea of extra profit. This was duly elaborated in the state study of Targeted Housing Development [USI] of 1975:
„Social action for the construction of flats for workers clearly indicates the need for the definition of a notion of the standard flat in our circumstances. Despite clear political i.e. class attitudes, in practice misunderstandings are common, and the lowering of standards and overproduction of small flats are evident. There is no doubt that our society must answer questions such as what is a standard flat today, and how big it should be in connection with family size?"

Following this detection of the situation this study defines its aims and purpose:
„The standard flat, in plan, structure and size - depending on the number of inhabitants, equipment, location and design with its urbanistic setting - must satisfy social, psychological and biological needs. These conditions must be fulfilled within optimal building, urbanistic and maintenance costs, in accordance with the economic potential of our society."
Accordingly USI is the only „programmed building within the frame of midterm programmes, where prices are negotiated through social agreement." Paradoxically, the common practice of user participation advanced at the time in Europe was completely strange to the model of self-governing socialism. All other housing remained on the „socialist market".

THIRD MODERNISATION \ THE WORLD IS FLAT

The Berlin Wall fell on November 9th 1998, and the first software that enabled personal computer to be really effective was promoted only six months later, on May 22nd 1999. As in the transitional nineties a tenfold increase in major political events, inventions and companies reached a critical point of convergence the world became flat declares Thomas L. Friedmann in his „Brief history of 21st century". Lowering of trade barriers and political barriers and the exponential technical advances and innovations of the digital revolution have made it possible to do business or almost anything else instantaneously with billions of people across the planet. This third modernisation is shifting the local into the global without a mediator, with no physical or time distance. A new kind of illiteracy is forming, causing maladjustment and excommunication. Is our actual perception of housing part of this convergence?

In the period of unregulated entrepreneurial housing in the nineties, while the world was flattening, USI seemed to be a single meaningful normative whole capable of harmonizing the situation on the housing market to make housing once again a socially relevant and responsible factor. It served as a model in a normative effort named Subsidised Housing Construction [POS]. As an attempt to stabilize chaotic market its Guidelines were finally published in 2004. Thanks to the social and professional effort followed by political will, POS produced a number of successful architectural competitions, making the reputations of a number of young architects and teams who produced some of the top recent architectural achievements.However, both the successful as well as the doubtful buildings of this origin contributed to the understanding that POS is not sufficient and that it covers only a limited segment of the population. Many questions remained open, such as standards, norms, and most of all housing typologies, all of them still at the mercy of building developers. Their insight and responsibility towards place and space, individual and society, and most of all towards the time in which we build is mostly miserable, with few exceptions.

AIMS AND MEANS

Within one century, three models of housing crystallized in Zagreb, having clear and defined standards: middle-class office-worker apartments of the lower town, socialist working-class flats of new Zagreb topped with USI, and finally POS as a single attempt to bring order into the legislative and normative interregnum of recent transitional period. We can more easily define actual aims after a comparative analysis of norms, standards, design points, urbanistic elements and urban intentions present in these three models. Such an analysis could provide us with answers to the crucial ongoing issues: what housing means to individual and community, followed by – ways of housing today and proper standards and norms, followed by – the current relationship between public and private urban space, followed by – the way in which city and housing are built in the current flattened world.
A broader professional and social platform of education in terms of housing culture can be put in place, resulting in many benefits for individual and community. With norms and standards changed, new visions of directions and possibilities are opening up, ways of conceiving our housing in accordance with the time in which we live. It may finally be that not all is in the economy, that more likely, as Dickens said ... we had everything before us, we had nothing before us.

——— Nikola Polak, born in Zagreb in 1949, graduated from the Faculty of Architecture in Zagreb in 1975. He got his MA at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University, 1977 – 1979. He got his PhD at the Faculty of Architecture in Zagreb in 1994. From 1979 – 1991 he worked as an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Architecture in Zagreb. He has had his studio in Vienna – Zagreb since 1994. Author of many projects and buildings, articles, essays and studies on theory and history of architecture both inland and abroad. He has participated in many international architectural seminars and exhibitions. The founder and president of Academia Moderna in 1998. The founder and director of the Institute for Contemporary Architecture in Zagreb.
Awards and recognitions: Architectural Salon Award, Belgrade, 1987; Zagreb Salon recognition, 1988; Zagreb Salon Recognition, 1991; 32nd Zagreb Salon award for an interior, 1997; City of Zagreb award, 1997

——— Vesna Milutin, born in Zagreb in 1971. Graduated from the Faculty of Architecture in Zagreb in 1997; she lives and works in Zagreb. After graduation has worked at the Institute of Architecture at the Faculty of Architecture in Zagreb and as a freelance architect. Established the architectural studio Capsula with partners in 2000.

At present, she runs her own architectural office and also works as a program and project manager at Institute for Contemporary Architecture in Zagreb. She is the author of internationally published, exhibited and awarded works.
Awards: Vladimir Nazor Award, 2004; Silver Plate Luigi Consenza European Architectural Award for the best realisation by young European architects, 2004; Piranesi Honourable Mention, 2004; 3rd Award at 41st Zagreb Salon, 2006; several architectural competitions awards. Major projects \ realisations: King Tomislav Square, Samobor, 1999; Central park Sisak, 2002; Touristic Center, Skrad, 2003; Vodnjan Squares, 2003; residential building, Cres, 2004; residential and office building, Velika Gorica, 2009; urban settlement Milerov Breg, Zagreb, 2010. Research: Croatian Architecture 1945-79 – Towards an Architecture of Synthesis, 2010-12.

PULA

FROM MILITARY BASE TO COMMONS CITY

Emil Jurcan [Pulska grupa, Pula]

Since the beginning of modern development the city of Pula has been strongly linked to naval and military purposes. After 150 years of army presence the military scaled down its capacity and withdrew from the coast. In this situation Pula is faced with vast ex military areas in the city center, on the periphery, on the coast and inland. One of the main characteristic of these areas, in contrast to ex industrial areas, is that their natural diversity is very well preserved. Apart from nature these areas have strong infrastructure and building capacities suitable for habitation. These factors enable utilization and activation of empty areas without new investment.

DEMILITARIZATION ALLA POLESANA

In Pula there is a long tradition of the informal and temporary utilization of ex military facilities. One of the first autonomous spaces was the Casoni Vecchi Fort in the Vidikovac neighborhood, where the Monte Paradiso hard core festival started taking place in the early 1990s. From a music venue for punk concerts, this space turned into a meeting point for all generations of people from neighborhood.
Much bigger than the Casoni Vecchi Fort is the Karlo Rojc Social Center. This ex-military barracks was squatted in 1997 and after unsuccessful attempts at expulsion, the City finally legalized the squat and decided to let the space free of charge to local non-profit organizations. It took 10 years for the tenants to occupy the building. Today, Rojc is a home to over 100 different organizations dealing with culture, music, and social issues. Although this heterogeneity resulted in very weak links between the organizations, they all have one thing in common: Rojc became the central space for the organization of free time in the city and is often referred to as a "third home."

Another, even larger, attempt to create autonomous space took place in the Katarina-Monumenti area on the northern part of Pula Bay. This is a big ex-military complex with several abandoned barracks, magazines, and different army buildings. After the military left, people started using the space for music and arts festivals. The first such event took place in 2005, after which the number of festivals constantly grew, with the result that the festival schedule of Katarina-Monumenti is now fully booked during the whole summer. Along with this development, the area started to be used for marginalized economic activities that could not find adequate locations elsewhere. The Katarina island was thus occupied by fishermen, who had spent years waiting for the local authorities to act on their promise and build them a fishing harbor. In the end, they decided to create their own harbor in the abandoned military complex. Car mechanics and shepherds also use the area. The local population started using it for sports and recreational activities, and some of the buildings are permanently inhabited. The examples of Katarina and Monumenti differ from the previously created autonomous spaces, because the autonomous economy in these locations outgrew the production of social relations and culture and, for the first time, moved into the material sphere. The working name given to this model of autonomous space is komunal, a term which in the local Istrian dialect describes common land, i.e. land that is neither state- or city-governed, nor private.

MUZIL - THE LAST STRONGHOLD

If we compare the experience and the results of the transformation of ex-military areas into autonomous spaces to the "official" transformation of abandoned military buildings, we come to surprising insights. Informal initiatives created 900m2 of autonomous space in Casoni Vecchi, 25.000m2 in Karlo Rojc, and 30ha in Katarina-Monumenti. On the other hand, the city authorities managed to turn the 30,000m2 of the Vladimir Gortan barracks into a bus station and office spaces. The ratio between autonomous and official action is thus 10:1, and speaks clearly in favor of autonomy.
This kind of statistics is a great motivation for future actions, but also entails a great responsibility. The actors of autonomy in Pula are aware of the fact that their actions go beyond the limits of traditional squatting. Comprehensive, long-term activities of marginal squatter culture can develop into a movement capable of transforming the urban environment. The political, economic and urban models employed in this transformation expand outside the autonomous spaces and ultimately transform society.

TOWARD A POST-CAPITALIST CITY

The next important action of the autonomous initiative in Pula is the opening to the public all of the 180 hectares of Muzil, currently still under military control. The aim is to open the last military zone in the town to common use, and create the conditions for its autonomous development. Spaces like Muzil are an ideal laboratory for the creation of new social and economic relations. One of the first public uses of Muzil took place last summer [2009] when an international conference under the title "Post-capitalist City" was organized there. One of the products of this conference was "The Declaration of Komunal" available on: http:\\p2pfoundation.net\Pulska_Grupa
Our intention is, through this kind of practice, and a direct application of theoretical principles, to create models capable of replacing the current capitalist system. These are experiments in post-capitalism!
Although some processes of utilization have already started informally it is crucial to develop "different tactics of access" so that these processes become part of the city strategy for demilitarization. These tactics could become the first step in creating a different scenario for empty land and defining the communal values that could develop there. Spaces like the "komunal" could become basic resources in urban planning and the city which emerges from these spaces could become a "Creative Commons City".

——— Jurcan Emil [1981, Pula, Croatia] received his degree in architecture from the Faculty of Architecture in Ljubljana in 2007. He took part in the work of the Temp collective, which in 2005 and 2006 undertook several reclamation actions of abandoned spaces in Ljubljana. Since 2006 he has been a member of "Pulska grupa" and since 2009 a member of the Civil Initiative for Muzil. The initiative is dealing with organizing architectural workshops, conferences, publications and exhibitions regarding the situation of the abandoned military sites in Pula. The group has presented its work at several architectural schools and international exibitions.

THE EVOLUTION OF TOURIST LANDSCAPES

AN 'AFFORDABLE ARCADIA'

Maroje Mrduljaš [Faculty of architecture, Zagreb]
Luciano Basauri, Dafne Berc [Analog, Zagreb]
Miranda Veljačić, Dinko Peračić [Platforma 9,81, Split]

Tourism and leisure culture are among the leading phenomena which reflect the in-between condition, specific mechanisms of economic and spatial planning and high-quality architecture of post-WWII Yugoslavia. During the 1950s Yugoslavia opened its borders to foreigners and soon became a major tourist destination thanks to its beautiful landscapes, especially along the Adriatic coast. The holiday-making industry flourished and was incorporated into strategic economic planning as a reliable source of income and employment. At the same time, the rising standard of living enabled the domestic population to enjoy the leisure culture as well. The Yugoslav Adriatic Coast became a popular tourist destination and one of the rare places where citizens from Western and Eastern Europe could freely meet in an "affordable working-class Arcadia".

Quick development and the demand for modernization of the economically deprived coastline area after WWII were one of the strategic priorities in the former Yugoslavia. One of the important steps in this process was the development of complex spatial plans in which local experts and UN's multidisciplinary international team worked together. Even though these urbanistic projects showcased advanced "integral approach" and tested out the concept of the synthesis of urban and economic planning, most of them stayed unrealized in their original form. The importance of these planning proposals lies in their interdisciplinary methodology and the involvement of local municipalities in planning decisions, which was stimulated by the economic and political reforms based on the ideas of decentralization and self-management.

Hotels and tourist resorts emerged as one of the most exciting investigative topics for architects, forcing them to respond to a range of problems: the various natural and cultural contexts, organization of complex functions, innovation in building technologies, etc. Architects enjoyed significant freedom and were not bounded by the strict rules of the tourist industry and its accompanying iconography typical of Western countries. Within a rather short period between the mid-sixties and mid-seventies, a remarkably quick evolution of typologies and concepts emerged: from international-style modernism to spatially more complex structuralist formations and "soft" megastructures sensitively integrated into the landscape. Entrance halls and interior public spaces of the more prestigious hotels were designed and furnished by the leading Croatian artists and designers in modern "socialist Gesamtkunstwerk" style, very similar to the interiors of communist party headquarters, city halls or federal parliaments. Intentionally or not, tourist facilities were a means of representing the iconography of progressive socialist culture to the international audience.

As a parallel investigation line, some projects successfully experimented with the reinterpretation of local vernacular or historical morphologies in an attempt to harmonize modernity and regionalism.

It might be argued that tourist architecture and the coastal spatial planning promoted the advances and originality of Yugoslav socialism to both East and West. These cultural\ideological inputs implicitly

produced a comparative advantage on the international tourist market. Promotion of market-oriented thinking and the integration of Yugoslav's tourism industry in the global competition affected the design of tourist facilities. The position of the architects changed and the rise of the management elite imposed new demands. From early seventies onwards, high-modernism was gradually replaced with a more picturesque, futuristic or regional iconography.

However, the tourist industry and accompanying architecture and urban planning should be subjected to criticism. Tourist resorts were mono-functional and lacked more organic integration with the local communities, social issues in spatial plans for tourist areas were not addressed with enough care, the concept of tourism was seasonal and the spatial resources of huge tourist facilities were underused.

The tourist industry in socialism was followed by its counterpart - small scale private initiatives that induced the growth of coastline settlements in late seventies and eighties. Similar to the official economy, local communities relied on tourism as the easiest source of income and neglected their traditional trades. The so-called "apartment-isation" phenomena congested the coastline, often in the form of a more or less unregulated small-scale construction which escalated after disintegration of Yugoslavia.

During the nineties, the tourist industry stagnated due to the regional wars and conflicts. The economic transition resulted in the collapse of some of the very large tourist companies, which were sold to foreign investors, while others survived. Still, the mythical status of tourism as the savior of the Croatian economy survived.

The present state of the Croatian coastline is the outcome of a complex set of different transformations. Historical cores are surrounded by often chaotic, small-scale construction meant for renting. Ex-socialist tourist facilities have been redesigned in order to accommodate new standards. Reconstructions are mainly insensitive to modernist architectural culture. Thanks to the spatial plans from late sixties and the current moratorium on construction on the coastline, the Croatian Adriatic still remains unbuilt in comparison to other European Mediterranean countries.

The Croatian Adriatic region demands attention and careful examination not only because of its interesting architectural and planning history, but even more because it is one of the most valuable European coastline resources.

——— Maroje Mrduljaš is an architectural\design critic.

Editorial positions: Oris magazine, Arhitekst; Zagreb, Život umjetnosti\Life of Art, Institute of Art History, Zagreb; Plan Series, AGM, Zagreb. He is an independent expert of the EU Mies van der Rohe Prize for Architecture. He has published numerous essays, articles and interviews in Croatian and international periodicals and publications, selection: Domus, Milano; Architecture+Urbanism, Tokyo; Il Progetto, Trieste, Hintergrund, Vienna; Materia Arquitectura, Santiago; deutsche bauzeitung, Leinfelden-Echterdingen; Oris, Zagreb. Editor and author of several books, selection: "Dizajn za nezavisnu kulturu\ Design for independent culture"\ Clubture\upi-2m, Zagreb, 2010; "Contemporary Croatian Architecture – Testing reality" [with Vedran Mimica and Andrija Rusan], Arhitekst, Zagreb, 2007 [Neven Šegvić Award of the Croatian Architects' Society for the best achievement in theoretical, critical and publicist work in 2007]. Curator, member of curatorial teams and contributor of several exhibitions, selection: "Architecture as Nature", [with Leo Modrčin], London Festival of Architecture, London, 2010; "Balkanology: New Architecture and Urban Phenomena in South Eastern Europe", [curator: Kai Vockler; with Vladimir Kulić]; Swiss Architecture Museum, Basel, Architekturzentrum Wien, 2008-2009; "New Housing Models – Experimentation and Everyday Life", [curators: Oliver Elser und Michael Rieper], Kunstlerhaus – Vienna, 2008; "Continuity of modernity, fragments of Modern and Contemporary Architecture", Ringturm Gallery,

Arhitektst [with Vera Grimmer, Tadej Glazar, Andrija Rusan, Adolph Stiller], Vienna, Skopje, Belgrade, Bucharest, Amsterdam, Barcelona, 2007-2010; "Image and Likeness, Self-reflection in graphic design" [with Sunčica Ostoić]; Multimedia Center, Rovinj, Croatia, 2007; Commissioner and curator [with Mirko Petrić and Mladen Orešić] of the "040506", triennial of Croatian design, Rovinj, Zagreb, Split and Ljubljana, Croatian designers' society. 2006

Works as the head of the Research Library at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Zagreb

——— Luciano Basauri [1972, Santiago] is a Chilean architect living in Zagreb. He finished postgraduate studies at the Berlage Institute in the Netherlands after studying architecture at Universidad Central de Chile.

——— Dafne Berc [1970, Zagreb] is a Croatian architect, currently finalizing her PhD thesis "Mediterranean Species" at the Universitat Politécnica de Catalunya in Barcelona. She finished postgraduate studies at the Berlage Institute in the Netherlands after studying architecture at the University of Zagreb, where she teaches as a lecturer.

In 2007 Basauri and Berc co-founded Analog, an architectural organization dealing with research and design, whose most relevant work includes studies about urban implosion and dispersive tourism in Croatia.

——— Platforma 9.81 is a collective of architects from Croatia engaged collaboratively and independently in the critical rethinking of and debate on urban planning and public space. Working as architects they take part in the production and transformation of the built environment, yet this practice is closely entwined with their active involvement in the organization of platforms for discussion and research into economic and cultural shifts, desires and realities that become tangible through architectural transformations. In their research, Miranda Veljačić and Dinko Peračić of Platforma 9.81 focus particularly on the Croatian coastline affected by rapid tourist development but also on other cultural and spatial transformations of coastlines. Their other projects include an investigation into the swift changes in Croatia during the period of transition and the activation of a network of temporary public spaces for cultural activities in abandoned premises. Veljačić and Peračić are based in Split, Croatia.

——— Dinko Peračić received an MAA from the Institute of Advanced Architecture of Catalonia [IAAC] and an architecture and urban planning degree from the Faculty of Architecture, University of Zagreb. He is a founding member of Platforma 9, 81 - an association for architectural research and a partner in the ARP architectural studio. He focuses on projects for culture, urban planning and tourism. Has won awards in several architectural competitions in Croatia. Award of the Architecture Salon in Zagreb 2006 with R.Šilje and 2009 with M. Veljačić. Lives and works in Split.

——— Miranda Veljačić was born in 1976 in Zagreb. In 1999, together with Dinko Peračić and Marko Sančanin, she established Platforma 9,81. Since 2000 she has organized and participated in many activist, research, competitive, architectural, urbanistic and art projects; workshops, conferences and lectures. In 2002 she graduated at the Architecture Faculty in Zagreb. In 2006 she became a member of the Split Architects' Association and also a member of the programme committee for urban and youth culture of the Multimedia Culture Centre in Split. From 2007 until 2008 she worked as editor of Oris. Award of the Architecture Salon in Zagreb, 2009, with D. Peračić.

MAPPING THE LEGACY OF MODERNISM

URBAN [RE]CONSTRUCTION CASE STUDY SARAJEVO

Elsa Turkušić [Faculty of Architecture, Sarajevo]
Nina Ugljen [Arhitektonski fakultet, Sarajevo]

After the dissolution of Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Herzegovina suffered a high level of urban destruction. The period of building and reconstruction that followed after the end of war in 1995 can easily be compared to that of vigorous building and modernization in Yugoslavia after the World War II.
The aim of this research is to draw a parallel between the urban and architectural achievements of these two periods with their different economic, political and social systems.
The research will be conducted by way of identifying\mapping and comparing the main architectural achievements of the respective periods, the type and the amount of investments and the level of accomplishment of the projects. Furthermore, the analysis will focus on public opinion of the time with respect to the new architectural projects\buildings.
Sarajevo will be used as an example in the research, being the capital city and the city with the most investments. Some important parts of the city are still not fully planned - for example the area of Marijin Dvor, in which the concept of development of a central city point shows discontinuity, incompleteness and illogicality.
Therefore, the research will include a historical analysis of the development and spatial integration of [unfinished] architectural and urban projects after WWII, as well as identification and valorization of all the main architectural structures built by 1990.
The aim is to establish the basis for constructive criticism of the present situation through which practical and effective solutions for the existing problems could be found. The architectural development of BH in the period after the formation of Yugoslavia, and even before, has never been thoroughly researched and historically analyzed and valued. Yet it should be considered as a basis for future BH architectural and urban developments.

——— Elsa Turkušić studied at the Faculty of Architecture in Sarajevo and at the Escola Tecnica Superior d`Arquitectura de Barcelona. Graduated from the Faculty of Architecture in Sarajevo in 2002, where she also received her master`s degree in 2010. Her first profesional activites started during her studies, when she worked in the aSZ arquitectes office Barcelona in 2000 and in the Centre for Design and Research at the Faculty of Architecture in Sarajevo in 2002. As a graduate architect she has been working in the fields of architectural design and of cultural heritage protection. During 2003 and 2004, she was involved in the projects Historic Cities Support Program: Conservation and Revitalization of Historic Mostar [the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, Geneva and IRCICA Istanbul]. She has cooperated with the Institute for the Protection of Cultural-Historical and Natural Heritage of Canton Sarajevo since 2006, as well as being co-author with the Institute for Architecture and Urbanism at the Faculty of Architecture

since 2008. At the moment she is a member of the editorial board of the book "Architecture in Bosnia and Herzegovina 1995-2010". Also, she has been correspodent for the magazine A10 New European Architecture [Netherlands] since 2006. She works as a teaching assistent in Design Depratment at the Faculty of Architecture in Sarajevo.

——— Nina Ugljen – Ademović was born in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 1967.

Graduated from the Faculty of Architecture in Sarajevo in 1990. She finished her postgraduate studies at the University in Ljubljana, Slovenia, Faculty of Architecture, where she received her master's degree in 2002. At the University in Sarajevo, Faculty of Architecture she received her phd degree in 2007.
As a graduated architect she has been working in the fields of architectural design as an associate architect in Architectural Atelier Ugljen – Sarajevo.
From 1993 since 1997, she worked in Final–projekt [Architectural Atelier] Zagreb, Croatia.
Currently she is working both as a docent in Design Department at the Faculty of Architecture in Sarajevo, and as an associate architect [Atelier Ugljen].
She is also teaching on PHD Studies at the Faculty of Architecture in Sarajevo.
She is an author of several articles and one publication and was a board member of Kanton Sarajevo Architect's Association [ASAS], 1997 - 2005; and Architect's Association in Bosnia & Herzegovina [AABH], 2003 – 2005.

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INNOVATION IN POST-WWII MODERNISM IN SLOVENIA

Nataša Koselj [Faculty of Architecture, Ljubljana]

The research focuses on the culture of innovation as a central aspect of Slovenian architecture 1945-1980. It will analyse the chief architectural journals of the period and use the project for the Revolution Square in Ljubljana as a case-study. Spanning almost the whole socialist period, the realisation of this project offers insights into both the industrial development and the political and cultural changes in Yugoslav society. The research will ultimately re-examine the principles of preservation of the post-war architectural heritage in Slovenia.

NEW SLOVENIAN CITIES OF THE 20TH CENTURY

Matevž Čelik [Trajekt, Ljubljana]
Maja Simoneti [Institute for Urbanism, Ljubljana]

In the early 20th century, before the collapse of the Austro Hungarian Empire, what is nowadays Slovenia was predominantly rural. Industry developed slowly. Entrepreneurial drive in the new country of Yugoslavia after World War I was interrupted by the beginning of World War II. The communists seized power in 1945 and called for modernization and in the first five-year plan they put forward industrialization, economic self-sufficiency of the state and the exploitation of natural resources. The new authorities used modernization to legitimize the regime in the eyes of the people as well as to impress their international allies. Above all, the communists tried to compensate for the delay in the development of a predominantly agricultural country. This was the time in which both the economy and social reality were managed by ideological interests, a time of large projects that left a major mark upon Slovenia.

Industrialization was accompanied by accelerated urbanization and the small Slovenian cities also expanded markedly. Between 1947 - 1950 three projects were created for three practically new cities: Nova Gorica, Velenje and Kidričevo. There were different reasons for creating each of them and they have been developed and built in the different circumstances, in the three different geographic parts of Slovenia and they also respond differently to the new development. Nova Gorica was designed for the new border between Italy and Yugoslavia, which cut the rural hinterland off from the previous urban focus, Gorizia, nowadays in Italy. Velenje was developed because of the lignite mine. The reason for the planning of Kidričevo was the half-built German aluminum factory. Indeed none of the three sites was embedded in totally empty space untouched by pre-war urbanization. All three sites were developed as political and economic projects according to the basic concepts of comprehensive planning, inspired by the international paradigm of modern functionalism.

Today Nova Gorica and Velenje have developed into major regional centers and each of them in its own way radiates vitality, hosts comprehensive development of business, tourism and trade. Kidričevo has remained a small village in which the aluminum factory remains the largest company. All three sites are phenomena of the times; on the verge of the new millennium, after transition to a market economy and the shift from classical industries, they found themselves in a specific situation in which they had to restructure and also search for a formula of development for themselves.

In the study we want to find out how these cities, as urban tissues, have survived the transition, what their potential for development is as well as what the role of the “ideological” concept of urban development of cities was, how resistant it is to time and to the socio-economic changes and what has been passed on to the present as specific urban quality, element of identity and a stable urban tissue for future urban development.

——— Matevž Čelik is architectural critic and architect. In addition to his critical and editorial work, he has recently dealt particularly with urban renewal, new approaches to urban management in the

preparation of some important public competitions related to projects of the European Culture Capital in Maribor 2012. As of September this year he is running the Museum of Architecture and Design in Ljubljana and promises to turn the new national institution into a dynamic place of ideas and skills in dialogue. Matevž Čelik is also co-founder and editor of the web site Trajekt.org and a member of the Editorial Board of Oris magazine in Zagreb. His book New Architecture in Slovenia, which was published in 2007 in Vienna and New York, has attracted much attention and put contemporary Slovenian architecture on the shelves of bookstores, libraries and architectural enthusiasts worldwide.

——— Maja Simoneti, MPhil, is a landscape architect experienced in urban planning and research. She works in private enterprise, for LUZ d.d. [www.luz.si] and is a part time research partner of Institute for Spatial Policies [www.ipop.si], a private non-profit organisation. In twenty years of practice she has dealt with planning and design issues on national, community and project levels, participated in a range of interdisciplinary and international working teams dealing with spatial development, design competitions, cultural programs and assessments. She takes a special interest in questions of urban development, landscape change and preservation, urban open space, public participation and spatial literacy. She is an active publicist, participant and organizer of events and member of professional associations [Slovenian chamber for architecture and space - www.zaps.si, Društvo krajinskih arhitektov Slovenije - www.dkas.si]. She wrote a book about public participation in open space management and published a few other co-authored research reports on green space and education for sustainable development. She was a member of Trajekt's editorial group that was given the Plečnik Medal for a contribution to architectural culture in the year 2004 and shared some design competition prizes as well. Recently she has been focused on green space management and advising Ljubljana's deputy major for urban development; in addition, she is involved in the international project VITALLANDSCAPES that explores possibilities for productive management of cultural landscapes and she coordinates a network project "Odgovorno do prostora!" which aims to empower civil society in the field of overall interests in issues of spatial development.

CONTINUING THE PROJECT OF ARCHITECTURE

CASE: SLOVENIA

Petra Čeferin [Zavod ARK – Institute for Architecture and Culture, Ljubljana]

If Yugoslavian modernism were included in the critical histories of modern architecture, not only would it be better known and appreciated today, not only would some buildings that have been demolished perhaps still be standing, but the critical evaluation of modern architecture would certainly be made more complicated. Tafuri would not have been able simply to conclude that modern architecture worked in the service of the capitalist city and significantly contributed to the integration of modern capitalism in all the structures and suprastructures of human existence. Not only because Yugoslavian modernism worked as the means for the building and integration of socialism in the local society. But also because – and this is the thesis that I put forward in my research – in Yugoslavia architecture was practiced as a creative or thinking practice. In socialist Yugoslavia architecture certainly played an important role in the project of building the new state and the reality of socialist society. The central thesis of my research, however, is that architecture was also acknowledged as a creative\thinking practice. This means that it not only served the system but that it actually worked as one of the practices – together with other creative practices such as art, philosophy, theory – that question and one might say transform the existing reality. They transformed reality in the sense that they revealed that there existed some other reality outside the strictly regulated reality of socialist society, let's call it, the reality of free creative production.

In my research I plan to show a few examples of the architecture resulting from such practice and which still work in such a way. By doing this I will not only show that in socialist Yugoslavia architecture, as practice for the transformation of reality, was possible but – and this is crucial – that architecture can work in such a way at all, that there is something like a "transformative capacity" in architecture. My thesis is that in Yugoslavia, where thought as thought was appreciated, this capacity was much more visible than it is in today's world, which I could describe as being characterised by an anti-thinking orientation. And yet, I will try to show a few examples of contemporary architecture in Slovenia confirming that today too such a practice is possible, that it is actually being continued.

To conclude, I plan to address the question of "unfinished modernisation" from a specific point of view: I am not interested in modernisation in the sense of improvement or progress but rather in the sense of a process that is always tied to this moment, always about opening a new possibility here and now. By the process being unfinished I do not mean that this is something that was interrupted and no longer is, rather that it has simply not been completed, that it is continuing and needs to be continued.

——— Petra Čeferin, PhD, is an architect and the director of the non-profit association Zavod ARK – Institute for Architecture and Culture. She is the author of Constructing a Legend: The International Exhibitions of Finnish Architecture 1957-1967 [Helsinki, 2003], Transforming Reality with Architecture: the Finnish Case [Rome, 2008], and co-editor of Architectural Epicentres: Inventing Architecture, Intervening in Reality [with C. Požar; Ljubljana, 2008] and Project Architecture: Creative Practice in the Time of Global Capitalism [with J. Bickert and C. Požar; Ljubljana, 2010]. She is also the author of several critical articles and essays on modern and contemporary architectural production.

BELGRADE HOUSING ARCHITECTURE 1960-70S

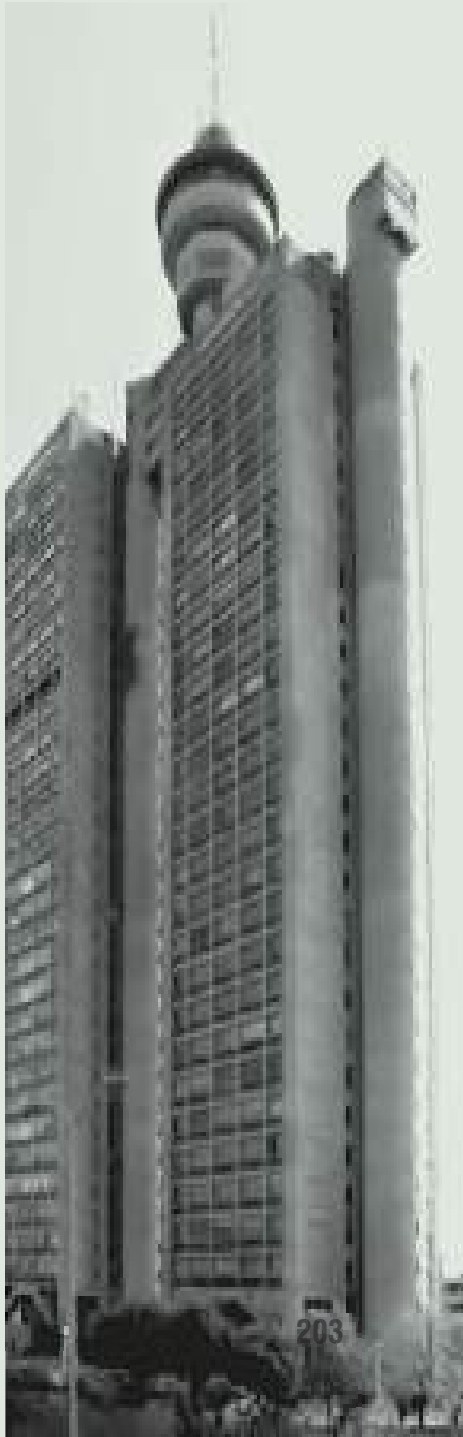
PRIVILEGED DWELLINGS FOR A SOCIETY WITH NO PRIVILEGES

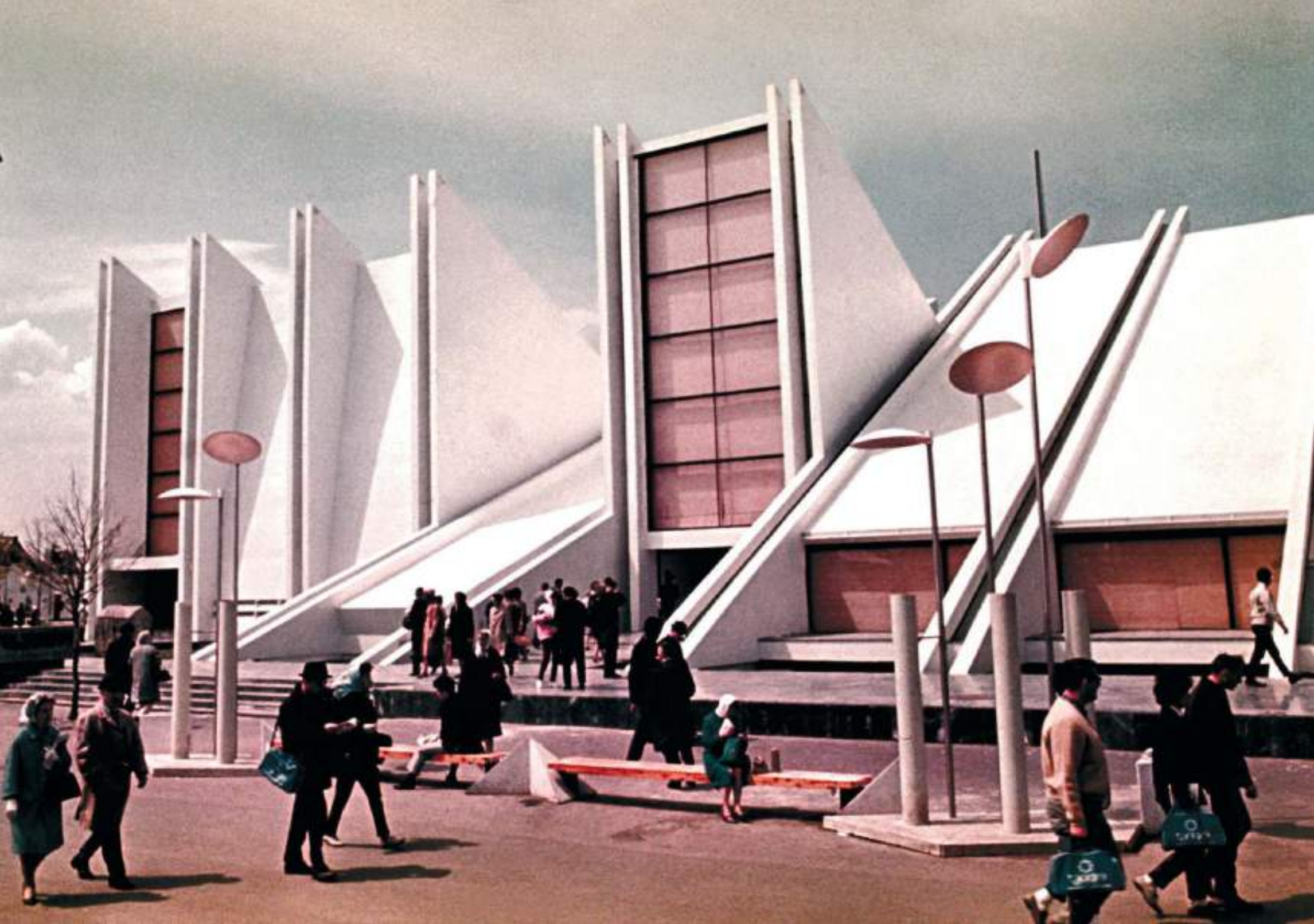
Tanja Conley [Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Boston]

The research focuses on the relationship between the architect and the investor in the creation of the programs of collective housing in Belgrade during the 1960s and 70s. In spite of the well-know socialist saying that "everyone should receive according to his needs", the needs of socialist man were very loosely defined, producing a gray zone within which the privileged groups profited in the seemingly equitable society. Although based on a vague system of property, the socialist system defined precise mechanisms for the financing of housing complexes, with the investors of those projects closely tied to the state apparatus and political leadership. Thus, the employees of the Yugoslav Army, police and state administration enjoyed a privileged status, being granted the best positioned, designed, produced and equipped housing units. The main theme of this research will be the influence of socialist investors in conceptualizing the programs and standards of housing typologies planned for privileged social groups. Attention will be paid to mechanisms through which investors shaped the ideas of architects and urban planners in the realization of the housing projects, fostering class divisions within a society of supposedly equal rights.

The research will start with case studies of buildings recognized by the architectural profession as successful in terms of their architectural and urbanistic values. Focus will be on the central zone of New Belgrade, the edge blocks defining the zone that the first phase of research will cover. Keeping in mind that financing of those 'blocks' was not consistent, it will be of importance to track how the changing investors managed to modify the programmatic concepts of housing ensembles and units. The reverse line of influences of how the architects and urban planners succeeded in reshaping the original visions of the investors will be also taken into consideration. Changes in programs, standards and equipment from the first ideas generated in the 1960s to the more ambitious projects seen in the 1970s will be followed in parallel with the political and economic changes in the country. The ways architects and urbanists were granted commissions and how the original concepts went through transformations from the ideal schemes proposed by the competition entries down to the final realizations will also be addressed. The proposed study of New Belgrade's central zone consisting of blocks 21, 23, 28 and 30 will include the analysis of urban elements within the blocks, along with the typologies of housing units and their conceptual modifications followed through the time-span of two decades.

——— Tanja Conley teaches Architectural History at Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston. Previously she worked as a senior advisor on urban conservation at the State Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage in Belgrade. She is the author of the book Czech-Serbian Architectural Connections, 1918-1941 [RZZSK, 2004] and numerous articles published in European and American journals. She is the editor of and a contributor to Capital Cities in the Aftermath of the Empires: Planning in Central and Southeastern Europe [Routledge, 2009] as well as editor of a three-volume series on





the founders of architectural history in Serbia titled Valtrović & Milutinović: Documents I, 2, 3 [National History Museum, 2006-2008]. Currently she is editing a special volume of Nationalities Papers titled 'Nationalizing' Belgrade: Reading Serbian and\or Yugoslav Civic Iconography' and completing the book Belgrade, Zagreb, Ljubljana: Defining National Architecture between Tribal and Imperial based on the dissertation for which she was granted a PhD at Cornell University.

VAGARIES OF CONSUMERISMS

Dubravka Sekulić [Jan van Eyck Academie, Maastricht]

"Socialist society is actually per definitionem a consumer society, because it has to meet the basic needs of the broad working masses and to provide more of the results of material and spiritual culture." [1] This is how Stipe Šuvar, leading Yugoslav sociologist and politician explained the relationship between socialist and consumer society in 1970, twelve years after they had been revealed as a pair inseparable for the development of a [happy] socialist society for the first time in the Program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, accepted at the Seventh Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia held in Ljubljana in 1958. This program was the most important document articulating the directions of development of the Yugoslav socialist society on its road to becoming a communist society. This program stated that "the main task of socialist economic policy" should be "the constant improvement of the material and cultural conditions of life and work of working people" [2] It was noted that "only with a permanent increase in the production of material goods is it possible to ensure and steadily improve the living conditions of working people, which in turn is an essential element and requirement to encourage development of productive forces and an increase in labour productivity." [3] and that increase of production would inevitably lead to "better supply of consumers with goods" To put it in plain words. Not only did it become accepted to aspire to material possessions and consumer goods, but it became desirable. This shift from the austerity of postwar reconstruction and modernisation to modernisation through consuming was picked up fast by popular culture and just six months after this program was defined, at the first "Yugoslav broadcasting festival" in Opatija the winning song "Mala devojčica" [Little Girl] sung by Ivo Robić and 13 year old Zdenka Vučković was an ode to consumerism.

"Daddy buy my a car, bicycle and scooter,
buy me bear and bunny, Yugovynil cart,
daddy buy me cookies, sweeties and oranges two,
at least one small dolly, and I am telling you that is all" [4]

This de facto meant that the good proletarian, worker had to become a good consumer for the society to develop further and that worker needed to want more in order to work more. Sounds familiar doesn't it? This shift toward consumerism was not sudden, and in fact the economic organisation of Yugoslavia supported it. Centred around the concept of the withering away of the state, the Yugoslav take on how

[1] Šuvar, Stipe, Sociološki presjek jugoslavenskog društva. Školska knjiga, Zagreb 1970. pIIO-III. [as quoted in Duda, Igor, U potrazi za blagostanjem. Srednja Evropa, Zagreb 2005. p 59]
[2] Program Saveza komunista Jugoslavije. Prihvaćen na Sedmom kongresu Saveza komunista Jugoslavije [22-26. travnja 1958. u Ljubljani, GRO Jože Rožanković, Sisak 1984. p 190 [as quoted in Duda, Igor, U potrazi za blagostanjem. Srednja Evropa, Zagreb 2005. p 47]
[3] Ibid, p 185
[4] "Tata kupi mi auto, bicikl i romobil,
kupi mi medu i zeku, kolica Jugovinil,
tata kupi mi kolača, bombona i naranče dv'je,
bar jednu malenu bebu, i velim ti da je to sve"
lyrics by: Vandekar, performed by Zdenka Vuković i Ivo Robić, Opatija 1958

state socialism should function, defined since the split with the Soviet Union in 1948, was a mixture of planned and market economy with the self-managing worker as the owner of the means of production and driving force of the system. The work day was divided into three parts: eight hours of sleep, eight hours of work and eight hours of free time. It was believed that the more productive the leisure time was, the more productive the worker would be. Much as the organisation of economic system that supported this type of consumer driven socialism is interesting, what interests us more here is to see how this was manifested in space?

In numerous towns of ex Yugoslavia urbanisation came after the Second World War. These towns, although developed on top of different urban matrices and urban histories, were given similar features during modernisation. A walk through the centres reveals the common thread that connects all the towns developed in this period. Three buildings placed on the main square or in its vicinity. A house of culture, department store and hotel – three points on a line along which the socialist construction of everyday life and leisure time unfolded.

After the initial phases of postwar reconstruction and construction of the basic infrastructure, mostly done by voluntary work, for example half a million youthful voluntary workers participated in the construction of the "Brotherhood and Unity" highway, from the second half of fifties it was time to build an infrastructure that would support the creation and development of new socialist everyday life and culture. Construction of house of culture, department store and hotel, in this sequence in time, in the centre of the town became a driving force for this culture to appear, develop and to be contested.

Houses of culture came first. Besides disseminating "high" culture, the main purpose of the house of culture was to organise permanent education and to include all people not solely as consumers of culture but also as producers.

Yugoslavia was an economic miracle in the 1960s with a growth rate much higher than most European countries. The increase in production led to a rapid increase in the living standard and this brought about new shopping habits and consumerism. Department stores, although not an unknown typology in Yugoslavia, started flourishing in the second half on 1960s when some of the most important chains [Beograd, Nišpromet, NAMA] were formed. The concept of the department store was not changed for socialist Yugoslavia, for at its core it was still a democratization of luxury in a sense that even just admiring the goods on display indicated the appreciation of modern society and that ability to browse, explore and dream of potential ownership was a good stimulus for workers to increase their productivity, thus their position on the socialist ladder and their buying power. Department stores played multiple roles, on the one hand revealing that even in socialism there was inequality, but on the other, they were the place where the changing position of women in society was the most visible. Women were the main employees in the department stores and they were models of how the new woman should look and behave. Women were also the most present customers, as the number of women who were working and earning salaries independently of their spouses was increasing steadily.

In this sequence, hotels were created the last, as sort of palace for citizens, so everybody could enjoy their luxury. The hotels were the pride of each town, a way to show how prosperous the town and its area were. There was a social network to back up the existence of a hotel in any town, so no matter how small it was, it could provide for a support infrastructure for all sorts of cultural events, festivals, student excursions etc. Its service part [restaurant, swimming pool, discotheque...] was not just made for the guests but also for local people, as a sort of all-in-one package to provide the much-needed infrastructure for the towns. The local administrations tended to make the hotels as grand as they could so they could provide more to their citizens. So if you wanted if you wanted to have bigger restaurants you had to have more rooms, to retain the proportion between the number of rooms and the size of the

restaurant, and once you had a lot of rooms, a swimming pool came naturally. This is how Jagodina, a town of 80,000 people, ended up with a hotel featuring 350 beds.
These are just some of the aspects to be addressed during this research. But in addition, attention will be paid to the processes surrounding decisions and policies related to these structures, their relation to the urban environment in which they were constructed and the urban environment they provoked around them, the impact they had on the development of the towns and on their decline after the 1990s, and these interests will be mapped through 8 case studies from different parts of Yugoslavia. With the use of these examples, the thesis of Boris Groys that "socialism was possible only with dreams about capitalism and the free market" will be tested out and what happened after the emancipatory aspect of consumerism left town will also be questioned.

——— Dubravka Sekulić [1980] is an architect focusing on the topics of transformation of the public domain in contemporary cities. At the moment she is working on the book "Don't Stare so Romantically!" in which she is using roof extensions in Belgrade as a case study for analysing the relationship between the law, spatial policies and informal development. Her other work focuses on the topic of standardisation of television in Europe and its relation with the Eurovision Song Contest, through which she tries to tell the political story of Europe after World War II. Also, together with Žiga Testen, Pietro Bianchi and Gal Kirn she is working on the book and conference "Surfing the Black" about the Yugoslav Black Wave cinema. Together with Branko Belaćević, Marko Miletić, Jelena Stefanović and Srđan Prodanović she recently completed the research project "Fifth Park: Struggle for Everyday" about possibilities of sharing knowledge of the urban struggle. She was an East European Exchange Network fellow at Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart, Germany. Currently she is a researcher at the Jan van Eyck Academie, Maastricht, The Netherlands. On this project she will collaborate with Jelena Stefanović, sociologist from Belgrade, Serbia.

ARCHITECTURE AND THE MEDIA

Processes of modernization of the urban [and rural] environment in what was once a common Yugoslav state may well be traced in the physical space and its representations; however, with the development of the electronic mass media [products of the modernization of the society par excellence] they assumed a new level of 'documentarity'. In the various non-documentary 'genres' of the new mass-media output [cinema, TV 'fiction', subsequently advertising or music video production etc.] the physical space was gradually becoming a fictionalized setting for the new processes of modernization. The society was transforming 'in reality', but also in the fictional narratives of the same social reality.
This research gives an insight into the vast [and yet uncharted] realm of relations between the modernization of the physical space [at both macro and micro levels] and its mass media representations in Yugoslavia. We have decided to focus on two popular media forms: cinema [Maja Vardjan] and music video production [Irena Šentevska]. We shall be searching for the particular 'topoi of modernization' in both media and raising the following questions: how did the transformations of the 'real space' [with all the complexity and local idiosyncrasies in the Yugoslav society] feature on film and in music videos respectively; what can these 'fictional' genres communicate about 'real life' in Yugoslavia, and what kind of 'documents' do they represent in the first place?

MODERNISATION AND THE FILM SLOVENIAN CINEMA IN THE 1960S AND 70S

Maja Vardjan [Ambient revija, Ljubljana]

Film uses the architecture and space of the city to convey commentaries on the characters and the psychological, social and physical context in which they live.
In this research I want to explore what fictional films can tell us about the process of modernisation, the architecture and the city in the specific period of the 1960s and 1970s. This period was both a determining moment in the modernisation of Yugoslavia as well as an outstanding period for Slovenian film.
I am not looking for obvious examples where the city and architecture are the explicit subject of a film, but rather for examples where they perform as a background, sometimes evident only in a few fleeting scenes. They are often revealing as to how neighbourhoods are constituted, how relationships between private, semi private and public spaces work as contexts for intimate dramas and everyday life.
The research will focus on both mainstream and avant-garde film productions, it will analyse rough neighbourhoods and domestic interior spaces as they appear in the juvenile film Sreča na vrvici, as well as examples where the overt subject of architecture is absent, as in the film Ko pride Lev, directed by Boštjan Hladnik, where the central scene is an empty apartment, furnished only with the ultimate symbol, a Jogi mattress.

——— Maja Vardjan, born in Kranj in 1971. Studied at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Ljubljana. Works as architecture editor of the magazine Ambient and is Slovenian correspondent for the magazine A10 – New European Architecture. Her texts on architecture, design and visual arts have been published in numerous Slovene and international publications. From 1996 to 2002 she was engaged as architecture commentator for Studio City, a programme of Slovene National Television. Since 2008 she has worked as programme director of the design and architecture gallery T5 Project Space in Ljubljana where she has curated several exhibitions and events. She is the author of the book Design in Dialogue, a publication devoted to contemporary Dutch and Slovenian design and is currently at work on a book about the work of Bevk Perović arhitekti.

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TOP[OS] OF THE POPS: TOPOI OF MODERNIZATION IN YUGOSLAV MUSIC VIDEO PRODUCTION

Irena Šentevska [Beograd]

From the mysterious appearance of the building of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade in an early video for Serbian folk diva Dragana Mirković ['Hej mladiću, baš si šik?'] to the capital's recreation areas as captured in the video 'Tam dol na ravnem polju' [Rokeri s Moravu]; from the TV appearance of the band Indexi on a building site in New Zagreb to images of Disciplina kičme rocking a heritage site [Vidikovac] in Maksimir etc., we shall be exploring the 'visual semiotics' of the use of the cityscape [or rural environment], architectural landmarks, design items, nooks and crannies and 'fetishes' of modernization in this particular media form. We shall not be looking only at music videos stricto sensu, but also at features from television music programs [a popular and influential media form, especially in the early stages of development of the pop music industry in Yugoslavia].

The research will be presented in a correspondingly 'popular' form. It will comprise a] a'Top Chart' of the most outstanding examples [music videos], with textual comments from the researcher [as a contribution to the printed publication]; b] a web edition of the Top Chart [with featured videos available online]. Both the textual and the online version of the Chart should be available to the visitors of the exhibition in Maribor.

——— Irena Šentevska graduated at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Belgrade. Holds an MA in stage design and an MAin arts and media theory from the University of Arts in Belgrade. Her cross-genre PhD research explores the urban transformations of Belgrade in the last 30 years as documented in music videos produced in Serbia\ the former Yugoslavia. She was formerly curator and producer at YUSTAT's Biennial of Stage Design, the most extensive national exhibition dedicated to stage design and technology in Southeastern Europe [1996-2006]. For her work as a curator in 2006 she received the Grand Award of ULUPUDS – the most prestigious award in the discipline in the country.

EMANCIPATED CITIZEN: NAKON ŠTO JE MODERNIZACIJA NAPUSTILA GRADOVE

CITIES LOG: KALUDJERICA

Ana Džokić, Marc Neelen [STEALTH.unlimited, Rotterdam\Beograd]
Nebojša Milikić [Beograd]

During the two decades since the start of the 1990s, the former republics of Yugoslavia have each charted their own path, and while their societies develop along different lines it is striking to see how much they share in terms of issues concerning urban development. With the Cities Log, since 2009 a probe has started into the changes in a number of cities in the post-Yugoslav context. What are the events, the occurrences and the laws that are changing the trajectories of these cities, and who are the actors that initiate or determine these changes? How is the future of these cities forged? Privatization, clientelism, the creative abuse of laws and regulations seem commonplace in a context affected by unregulated urbanization and fast capital investments set within the horizon of a neoliberal context. In the Cities Log series, one might speculate that Kaludjerica [a suburb of Belgrade] occupies a special position. Typical 'transition' issues [privatization of the housing stock, emerging real estate development, large infrastructural investments, the struggle for collective space] might be – at this time – largely uncommon for Kaludjerica.

KALUDJERICA SELF-MANAGED

During the enthusiastic phases of the modernization of Belgrade, Serbia and SFRY [1960 – 1980], not everybody shared the benefits and advantages of the state housing policy. Many construction workers were employed in Belgrade on a precarious or seasonal basis and thus stayed out of the reach of the urban and financial planning of the state and city authorities. Nevertheless, the job opportunities, as well as the chances for education and professional upgrading - which even in distant suburbs of Belgrade were far better than in the provinces from which most of inhabitants of Kaludjerica originate [southern and south eastern regions of Serbia] - and also other conveniences of living and working in Belgrade, made many of them decide to try to settle somewhere in or near the city. As the modernization of the city grew, the mass of skilled and semi-skilled workers grew simultaneously, accompanied by a lack of means, knowledge or even a basic awareness about the criticality and complexity of possible consequences of such an unforeseen co-growth.
A gap appeared in the overall relation between institutional and practical thinking, between planning and deciding, between the desired and possible, the imaginable and the real. And tens of thousands of people practically lived in such an existential gap for decades. Kaludjerica, known as the "largest unregulated settlement" in the Balkans has comprehensively expanded and reflected the nature of this gap. No state institution so far found the right way to engage in a comprehensive urbanization and modernization of

this settlement. The notions of illegality, lack of regulation, lack of hygiene and so on were attached early on to the entire suburb and fringe areas where today hundreds of thousands of people live and work. It is in the unwritten history of the place that the diagnosis of this mismanagement and misunderstandings lie. The years of confrontations and standoffs with the state and the city authorities have somehow been transferred to the cultural and political profile of the settlement. The ways of parceling land, organizing building lots and projecting houses, the ways of establishing and maintaining streets and improvised infrastructure trace the history of negotiations between a rapidly modernizing society and its shadowy and even hidden back yard. Seeing Kaludjerica today, at its beautiful, simultaneously modern and traditional houses, its wonderful position in the city, knowing about the potential for further development of the policy of individual housing and confronted with its confusing status and negative public image, one can ask: is Kaludjerica the top or the bottom of the philosophy and practice of self-management? With its early history of mass-individual development, Kaludjerica might be one of the places where the potential to find new forms of collectivity lies in a rather bottom-up nature – contrary to what one finds in most other situations. Decades after individual investment started off here, collective investment may still be only looming on the horizon [for instance, the need to construct a sewer system]. The Cities Log: Kaludjerica will not only map this potential, but also look at the actors that could make this happen and place it in the perspective of other cities and urban areas.

——— STEALTH.unlimited - Ana Dzokic [1970, Belgrade, Yugoslavia] and Marc Neelen [1970, Heerlen, the Netherlands]
STEALTH is a practice based between Rotterdam and Belgrade – in which shifts of perspective between urban research, spatial intervention and cultural activism are a key element. For over ten years STEALTH has investigated the urban developments of South East Europe, starting from their research project Wild City on the massive unplanned transformation of the city of Belgrade since the 1990s. STEALTH is part of a group of protagonist-practices pointing to the responsibilities and capacities of architecture in contemporary societies. In 2008 they co-curated the Dutch Pavilion at the Venice Architecture Biennial with the project Archiphoenix: Faculties of Architecture, and in 2009 the International Contemporary Art Biennial in Tirana, Albania - the first biennial contribution to the urban transformation of this city that tripled in size in the last 20 years. Since 2009 they have run the Cities Log research that investigates the roles of different players in the development of cities in South East Europe. They are co-initiators of the platform Who Builds the City? [Ko gradi grad?], in Belgrade, Serbia.

——— Ana Dzokic - 1998, Faculty of Architecture, University of Belgrade; 2000, MA+ Berlage Institute, Amsterdam. Marc Neelen - 1997, MSc Faculty of Architecture, Delft University of Technology.

——— Nebojsa Milikic [1964, Belgrade, Yugoslavia] art manager, artist, researcher and activist, lives and works in Belgrade, Serbia.
1996 - 2008 - organizational, artistic and curatorial practice in visual and relational arts; political and socially engaged artistic projects and actions; research projects and public campaigns targeting problems of social and political communities in transition; critical texts on politically charged cultural and artistic production; workshop moderator and lecturer at home and abroad. Works in Cultural Center Rex in Belgrade, as the initiator and coordinator of a program for the democratization and decentralization of culture [the core of which is the project Flux dedicated to the cultural policy of\for suburbs and neighborhoods of Belgrade], the initiator and coordinator of debate programs and the editor of YEAST, the youth web-magazine for culture and politics [www.rex.b92\kvasac].

QUE RESTE-T-IL...?

FROM A CENTRALIZED URBAN POLICY TO THE DEFINITION OF CONTEMPORARY PLANNING STRATEGIES IN EX-YU TERRITORIES

Right from Yugoslavia's establishment as a Socialist Federation of Republics, urban policy was quite an important issue for the country and its government. Thus, the research we propose is aimed at defining the main goals those policies implied and at interpreting the results in the light of a broader cultural, political and social contemporary debate.

Particular attention will be given to defining the political and theoretical context from which the above mentioned planning policies developed. For instance, the projects for Skopje – considered as a representative case study - will be analysed in relation to the objectives set by the Standing Conference of Cities and Municipalities [Stalna Konferencija Gradova i Općina], an organization whose origins are to be traced to the first decades of the 20th century and whose models are to be found in the International Federation for Housing and Town Planning and in the United Nations' Housing Building and Planning Council. Some heirs of this organization are still active today and thus it is possible to put the Conference's work in a temporal as well as in a territorial perspective.

Our final goal is to contribute to the field of urban studies, to highlight the main goals of Yugoslavia's urban policy and to demonstrate that urban planning was a means to provide political stability, economic growth and social security at the same time. Given these objectives, we will try to define the changes that occurred [or were hoped for] in all Yugoslavian cities, even though we are dealing primarily with Skopje and Macedonia. In the attempt to identify successful contemporary strategies of dealing with the post-socialist built environment, we will attempt to define new governments', planners' and citizens' ambitions and to test out the way their actions reverberate in a multiethnic society that now seems to be lacking any shared ideological framework.

CONTENDING THE CITY. THE RECONSTRUCTION OF SKOPJE IN THE LIGHT OF GLOBAL AMBITIONS AND LOCAL NEEDS

Ines Tolić [Universita IUAV, Venezia]

After being struck by a devastating earthquake in 1963, Skopje became a matter of concern for national and international architects unlike any other city in former Yugoslavia and like only a few other examples in the world. Through the case of Skopje it is thus possible to highlight the general aspects of

Yugoslavian contemporary urban policy, having in mind the international context as well. Moreover, by following the reconstruction of Skopje, it is possible to demonstrate that during the Cold War era and for the government of Yugoslavia, architecture and city design were so strictly related to politics that they represented an almost literal illustration of it. Thus, the main objective of this research is to highlight the importance of the reconstruction process against an international panorama, to define the relationship between politics and city design, and to outline the consequences of both for the contemporary society.

——— Ines Tolic is a post-doctoral fellow at the IUAV University in Venice, doing research into the cultural role of small urban centers in the Veneto Region. She graduated in architecture with a dissertation on the video representation of architecture and cities in post-war Croatia [IUAV, 2004] and received a PhD in history of architecture and the city at the School for Advanced Studies in Venice [2009]. In 2009, her dissertation on the reconstruction of Skopje after the earthquake of 1963 won her the Gubbio Prize [ANCSA] in the "best PhD category" and is to be published in 2011. In 2009, she was visiting researcher at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, where she carried out a research on contemporary South African architecture [the findings were published in 2010]. She collaborates with the NGO Coalition for Sustainable Development, Skopje; and is a member of the research unit "Memory and Representation of Cities" at the IUAV University, Venice.

URBAN TRANSITIONS. SPATIAL CONSTRUCTIONS IN DIFFERENT SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXTS

Divna Penčić [Faculty of Architecture, Skopje]
Biljana Spirkoska [Skopje, Tajfa Architects]

Even though the basic settlement pattern was worked out over two millennia, the city of Skopje grew from a town to a city in less than hundred years, and a complex new urbanity grew up with it. This vibrant urban transition of the city in the 20th century, driven by various factors, although predominantly historical, led to urban transformations, many of which resulted in termination of the physical and morphological continuity of the city matrix. An exploration of the urban matrix will be undertaken considering both its conceptual and actual dimension: the genesis of the city according to the planned concepts in first place, and the dynamics of the realization of those concepts and the actual state of construction in the second. Given the abovementioned, the main goal of this research is to detect the points of discontinuity on both levels and to highlight their inherent potentials as active transformative agents within the urban tissue.

——— Divna Penčić is currently working at the Faculty of Architecture, SS. Cyril and Methodius University, Skopje, as an assistant professor at the department of urbanism, while finishing her PhD on the effects of urban plans on the discontinuation of the spatial transition of Skopje in the 20th century. She has participated in several collaborative research and cultural projects, among which was "Towards new strategies for communicating the cultural capital of Macedonia abroad", and international workshops. She has written a number of articles on architecture [co-author of Urban transformations of Skopje:

Fragmented city – legacy of history] and is a co-author of several publications, among which are the Manual on architectural standards and guidelines for creating accessible environments, the first of its kind in Macedonia [2006], and Skopje – An Architectural Guide [2009]. She is an active member of the NGO Coalition for Sustainable Development – CSD and the Association of Architects of Macedonia – AAM. She is also a member of P.A.B – Prva Arhi-Brigada [First Archi-Brigade].

——— Biljana Spirkovska is currently studying for her master's degree at the Sino-German Institute at Tongji University in Shanghai, China, while working in an office for design, engineering and urban planning, "Vektor 90" in Strumica, Macedonia. She is one of the founders of the studio for architecture, urbanism and research, Tajfa Architects, in Kumanovo, Macedonia. She graduated at the Faculty of Architecture in Skopje, Macedonia, and received a master's degree at the Institute for European Urban Studies at Bauhaus University in Weimar, Germany. During her studies, she did an internship at the urban planning and design office "Design, Community and Environment" in Berkeley, California, while also working as a part-time teaching assistant at the Institute of Urbanism at the Faculty of Architecture in Skopje, Macedonia.

ADOPTION AND REJECTION OF ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN SPACES

Biljana Stefanovska [Technische Universität Darmstadt]

The transformation of public spaces in Skopje provoked protests and a controversial debate well before the announcement of the so-called "Skopje 2014" plan earlier this year. The forced interruption of the protests organized by the First ArchiBrigade on 28th March 2009 provoked reactions on different sub-cultural levels and resulted in an unexpected creative tide. Dealing with different media, local and international artists tried to express their disagreement with the above-mentioned plans on one side, while demonstrating on the other that there is a need to abort top-down planning in favour of plans based on collective efforts and new communication methods. Following the debates about the city and its images [official and non-official, real or invented], the objective of this research is to investigate the concept of subjective metropolitan or urban images in relation to the insufficiently known events of 28th March; to trace the origins of the contemporary nostalgic attitude towards the supposed past, and to raise awareness about both the importance of shared urban spaces and progressive planning instruments. Given the above mentioned, to find alternative concepts for the future of the city and to discuss new planning methods are among the most important tasks of the research outlined here.

——— Biljana Stefanovska is currently working as a lecturer at the Technische Universität Darmstadt's Faculty of Architecture, while completing her dissertation on cultural and climatic aspects in the transformations of housing structures. At the university she is also working on interdisciplinary projects in the field of future housing visions, and was the initiator of a seminar on the usage of architectural spaces in films. Furthermore, she has participated in several intercultural projects and workshops as a visiting professor or lecturer. She has published a number of articles on architectural topics and is the co-author of the book Erfindung Wohnen [Wasmuth Tübingen|Berlin, 2007] on the rethinking of dwelling forms. Hr latest projects and publications deal with space and language, spatial mental maps, the new situative urbanism and urban transformations.

Matrix City
IMPAKT FESTIVAL 2010
IMPAKT FESTIVAL UTRECHT « ENGLISH EDITION » 13 - 17 OCTOBER 2010

photo: Francesco Jodice, 'Citytellers Dubai'

The city's uncertain future

UTRECHT Experts have become increasingly uncertain about the lack of convincing models to handle the growth of cities. Less than two years ago, the instant collapse of the prestigious Dubai project which was labelled as a development model for the free market, came as a major shock. Following suspension of payments and a near-bankruptcy, almost one quarter of all builder's cranes (30,000 out of approximately 125,000) are currently inactive. Due to financial and legal problems, the city is no longer able to contribute to accelerated global urban growth, which, consequently, poses the danger of a sudden boom of low-rise and on account of the resulting low density thereof, may entail a direct increase of the climate crisis. Recently, doubts have risen about the growth stability of the Chinese real estate market; a problem of a potentially much larger scope. Beginning of August, Chinese media spread the rumour that over a period of six months, 64,5 million electricity meters in Chinese cities have measured zero power consumption – a rumour which was instantly and expressly denied by the energy companies in question. After all, this number would imply that approximately 200 million newcomers in the rapidly growing cities have refused to move into the housing projects built for them, and abandoned the registered real estate market forced by its high costs, finding refuge in the unauthorised districts in and around the city. A scenario which is quite common in the great number of megacities in less government regulated parts of the world.

UN experts view the explosive growth of new cities with growing concern

United Nations experts voice great concern about the explosive urban growth - which increasingly takes the shape of an uncontrollable virus infection, now that urban growth mainly takes place outside of the regulated real estate market. However, there are hardly any alternatives, or at least not any feasible ones, which also carries a great risk in view of the important choices and investments that must be made. One of the possible scenarios – albeit only available for a small elite – relates to the design of so-called gated communities at sea. A few steps further even is the plan of a number of scientists to digitalize the urban experience, allowing a much larger number of citizens on a smaller surface to have a 'urban' experience without the need of making high investments.

Small-scale alternative economies and communities

By now, after years of promoting, and in some cases, even forcing the free market, the World Bank increasingly pleads in favour of the opposite. Micro-credits and 'bottom-up development' are now regarded as a realistic and feasible alternative for stimulating the economy and wealth. Next to large controlled economies like China and the unmanageable utopia of the free market, small-scale alternative economies and communities have emerged worldwide, sometimes driven by poverty, and sometimes by dissatisfaction with current polities or consumer society. And although this development usually meets with a great deal of sympathy, experts also raise questions about this development. It is not uncommon for these new communities – whether it concerns gated communities for the super rich or 'back to nature' communities comprised of people disappointed in affluent society – to manifest themselves as true autarkies. The autarky, a combination of total self-sufficiency and economic, political and social isolation from the rest of the world, appears a stabile alternative, but recent history has shown that autarkic experiments like the one in Albania, are far from stabile. And what to think of the people who have retreated to the forests of the USA as fully self-sufficient communities, using the same arguments as the Californian hippies, yet heavily armed?

Autarkic experiments far from stabile

The urgency of this issue is of such nature that an expert group has hijacked the Utrecht-based Impakt Festival under the theme Matrix City. Under the relatively safe umbrella of a cultural festival, Matrix City offers a stage for taking stock of contemporary urban developments, and discuss these in an independent and open setting. ■

Deserted UFOs surface everywhere

Read more about observations of as yet unidentified objects > p2

'I don't want to live in Utopia'

About the dangers of realizing *The Ideal* > p4

Facebook threatens with legal action

Suicide application provides peace in the virtual world > p21

A new summer of love

Are we heading towards a total re-experience of the 1960s? Read all about it on > p24

Impakt Festival 2010 programme newspaper

All about the Impakt Festival: locations, times, screenings, exhibitions, performances – and more. As supplement with the newspaper > p9

Deserted communist congress centre 'Buzludja' in Kazanlak, Bulgaria (photo: Linda Ferrari and www.lostbulgaria.com)

Deserted UFOs surface everywhere

MUNSON, TEXAS At various isolated locations there have been recent observations of deserted UFOs. In Texas, a 'residential UFO' with a diameter of 8 metres was seen which, upon closer inspection, had much in common with the prototype for future living as designed by the Finnish designer Matti Suuronen in the 1960s. Experts say that there is no reason to panic and that there are at least 100 of these Futuro houses around the world. The fact that the house looks remarkably similar to a so-called flying saucer or UFO is more the result of the futuristic visual language of the 1960s and 1970s than a pre-announcement of an outer space invasion. Whether this information reassures everybody is yet to be seen. Apparently, the UFO has also recently surfaced in a secret storage space of the Utrecht Central Museum. This brings the uncanny or *unheimische* very close. We, moreover, should ask ourselves why - if the Futuro house is really all that innocent – it is hidden so carefully. If it was a normal, yet small, house as experts tell us, then why not prepare this version stored in Utrecht for use by the Utrecht homeless or victims of the credit crunch? As for now, the city of Utrecht refuses any comment, and states that it wishes to refrain from any involvement in artistic affairs.
However, these are mere modest observations compared to the reports arriving from the former East bloc. Here, many deserted 'objects' with a more than just coincidental UFO resemblance have recently turned up. The dimensions of these objects are absolutely heroic. Especially isolated mountain tops appear to be favourite locations for landing.

'The perfect design of the spaceships reflects the housing of the future. The plastic age is about to begin.'

(Avotakka Magazine 5/1968)

This cannot be a coincidence; indeed, landing objects like these in a valley is not exactly practical. A recent example of such an UFO sighting is the object observed at Stara Planina in Bulgaria. As a token of advanced technology these objects are usually made from heavy concrete. With our contemporary techniques, there is no way these objects can be kept up in the air. So, the question is how did they get there?
Information services fail to provide an answer to this question. These objects must be regarded as relics of a past utopia, as monuments of former communism. For these relics, some countries did not use so-called socialist realist design, as was the case in Russia, but – also as a sign of a different, more liberated socialism like in Yugoslavia – a futuristic 'Sputnik style' as a symbol of belief in technology and progress. Experts say that these former communist monuments look so disturbing because they are no longer maintained.
This may be well and true, but it is nevertheless quite remarkable that these objects are detected at so many locations. So, vigilance seems in place. There also is a conspicuous link between both phenomena. It is general knowledge that the Soviet Union government has ordered a large number of Futuro houses. They could easily be placed on deserted mountaintops with helicopters. ■

Futuro house on mountain top (source: Mika Taanila)

Still from the film 'Crni Film' by Zelimir Zilnik

Moving homeless people around embarrasses the authorities

UTRECHT Where did the homeless go? Utrecht's main shopping centre Hoog Catharijne used to be one of the favourite hideouts of the Utrecht homeless. Their presence was tolerated for a long time but a couple of years ago the limit was reached and they were banned, at least at night, so that the phenomenon more or less disappeared from the city scene.
Also in the socialist utopia of former Yugoslavia, everybody could expect a roof above their head. However, as it turns out, suitable shelter is not always available. In the beginning of the 1970s, the young film director Zelimir Zilnik invited six tramps to stay a few days in his small apartment in Novi Sad. As his wife and son were already sleeping, Zilnik unexpectedly returned home with his boisterous guests. The homeless were allowed to stay in the living room while the director and his wife stayed in their son's sleeping room. Next morning, Zilnik went into town to ask passers-by for advice. Can somebody tell him where the homeless men can get help? Nobody is able to come up with a real solution while policemen and authorities complain about the absence of regulations for taking the tramps into custody. And the six tramps, most of them of considerable age, are eventually turned out onto the streets again... ■

Dogs, work, revenge and mystery

DELHI 30,000 stray dogs live in the city, is there enough employment for them all? Many are out of work. On Monday, a family of dogs in the South Ex area attempted to avenge the death of a friend. The dog was run over repeatedly until it was flat as a pancake on the cold concrete. For days after, the others went on an attack revenge rage, crazy spree attacking and teasing wheels of cars and bicycles. Running at them then running away.
People thought they had lost their senses, but the dogs knew exactly what they were doing. One night, G was walking home; a dog followed her and wouldn't go away, so she let it follow. She offered it chicken, but it wouldn't eat it, she offered it bread it but it didn't take it. It just followed her without wanting anything.
(source: News From The Animal Kingdom - Issue#01, Kayle Brandon and Heath Bunting) ■

City food in the concrete garden becomes easier to find

Bristol Food for Free (photos: Kayle Brandon and Heath Bunting)

DELFT In Delft, the FoAM network searches for pioneering plants: the most persistent weeds. What can we learn from these opportunistic plants that are able to withstand sun and wind, create micro-climates for other plants and are sometimes useful or even edible? Do these plants have characteristics that we can also apply in pioneering architecture? In order to map these pioneering plants, FoAM developed Boskoi; an application for mobile phones. With this application, you can scan your environment for edible plants. Boskoi indicates where the plants are growing and provides information about the harvest time, the edible parts and the medicinal effects.
According to the artists Kayle Brandon and Heath Bunting of Irational.org, the public space of the city of Bristol in the UK also harbours a great deal of edible plants. Their list includes dandelions, lime blossom, elderberry, nettles, chives, wild strawberries, cherries, apples, quinces, wall nuts, birch elixir, plums, berries, rose hips and blackberries. At the most unexpected locations, city flora and fauna emerges, desired or undesired. According to Brandon and Bunting, 'spaces of forgotten, abandoned or ambiguous ownership could be seen as the remaining cracks that reveal the body behind the city's concrete garment.' ■

Housing bubble colours New York pink

Red Lines Housing Crisis Learning Center (source: Queens Museum of Art)

NEW YORK What is the effect of the credit crisis on a city like New York? In 2009, architect and artist Damon Rich visualized this by placing neon pink triangles across the 850 square metres model of the NYC panorama (made for the World Exhibition of 1964). Each triangle symbolizes a housing block with three of more house owners who were no longer able to pay their mortgage and were disowned. In 2008, their number amounted to more than 13,000, colouring large parts of the panorama pink.
The pink panorama is part of Rich' project *Red Lines Housing Crisis Learning Center*, a project to visualize and materialize how the abstract hocus-pocus with financial risks influences spatial planning. Whereas in the past a concrete objective or vision was the basis for a building project, financial risk management nowadays seems to be the most important stimulus, signals Rich.
Mortgage speculation in the USA is one of the main causes of the current worldwide financial crisis, which is for this reason also called the credit crisis. In order to realize the ideal of 'each American his own house', people were palmed off with overly high mortgages. And, in order to encourage them to increase consumption (as the booster of a flourishing economy), taking out a second mortgage was stimulated. Interest rates were low so the mortgages were affordable. However, as from 2007 interest rates started climbing which caused an increase of the monthly expenses and got house owners into trouble; many of them simply were no longer able to pay their mortgage. ■

Tram recognizes troublemakers

ROTTERDAM This autumn the city of Rotterdam will start with a face recognition trial on the tram. 'Troublemaker line' number 2 will be equipped with cameras that scan the biometric characteristics of the faces of boarding passengers. If the camera recognizes notorious troublemakers who have been banned from public transport for repeated misconduct, it will send a signal to the ticket conductor who has authority to remove the unwanted passenger from the tram. There are still some ifs, buts and maybes; the camera is unable to recognize people getting in right behind someone else and hats and sunglasses also hamper identification. The Rotterdam transportation company RET acknowledges that the system is not yet waterproof: 'That would only be the case if we are allowed to work with fingerprints.'

Rotterdam seems determined to deploy this Big Brother-like application, also for the mere reason that cameras are said to have 'a preventive effect as well'. The fact that everybody – without distinction – will be scanned, apparently does not raise any eyebrows.

New techniques are increasingly used to monitor our environment. For our safety, but also to make more profit or to increase mobility. For instance, this year the city of San Francisco will start checking on the occupation percentage of approximately 20,000 parking spaces by means of wireless registration and inform motorists with text messages about the closest available parking spot, whereas in Tokyo, motorists are informed by means of a wireless system about approaching dangerous road sections on one of the main roads, the Metropolitan Expressway. ■

Tomorrowland (illustration: Information Technology and Innovation Foundation)

Hope for Palm island

DUBAI Palm Jumeirah, also known as Palm Dubai, is one of the most spectacular projects in this desert boomtown. The reclaimed island shaped as a palm tree functions as a safe haven for economic refugees from the top segment. Although by now there are two new and much larger artificial islands, including The Worlds Islands which allow buyers to purchase the insular image of a country of their choice on the islands shaped as a world map, Palm Jumeirah still is the symbol of the hallucinogenic development of the Arab Emirates. The islands exemplify the crazed

Credit crisis

out real estate economy; even before the first stone was laid, some villas on Palm island were already resold more than ten times. However, ever since the credit crisis, the economic stability of the islands has become pressurized. And the islands' ecological durability already was a problem to begin with. The Berlin agency SMAQ has prepared a number of scenarios for the required further development of Dubai. SMAQ was confronted with the question of how they are planning to give the Palm an ecological future with the 'Re:Cover' project:

"The media always had mocked the problem of stagnant water. The Palm's 'calm lagoons' were growing algae! Evidently, this is an indication of rigid shielding – half necessary, half standing in the face of coastal water dynamics. To solve the symptom and rescue reputation, the circular breakwater had to be modified with gaps to allow for the oxygenation of water by the tides. We take this as a hint that the remedial measure should be carried further as a proactive strategy: that the concealing concept

Palm Dubai (scenario illustration: SMAQ)

Oxygenation by the tides

should finally be exchanged for a more porous one. The task at hand: Detecting the points at which the play-hard defense can be turned into a permeable structure funneling the hydrological vectors of the sea (image 4). The slim architecture of the Palm makes it easy. By breaking the structure at its narrowest points - the stem - thickening the foundations at its windward side and giving over to the processes of erosion offside, the structure is both protected from and permeable to the streams of water. The by-product of adapting to the natural currents is a setting enriched with different degrees of urbanity: harbor fortifications take turns with gentle housing canals that dissolve into a play of eddies, drifts and wildlife.

Yes. With little effort, the symmetrical stand-alone figure can be turned into a field responsive to the directionality of flows. The future comes closer as the city is understood as a component of a larger system of environmental forces." ■

(photo: Victor Borisov)

Man digs his own underground

LEBEDYAN, RUSSIA Whereas construction of the Amsterdam North-South underground railway line causes ancient houses to subside, entails towering costs and brings half of the city to a standstill, the Russian Leonid Mulyarchik has single-handedly been building on an underground for his city since 1984. He uses his pension to pay for the required and very simple tools: a spade and piek, stones, a bit of concrete and a cart to wheel the rubble away. To dig a one metre of tunnel takes him almost a day, and finishing the ceilings and walls another three. Mulyarchik has all documents and licenses in tip-top order and the underground meets all safety requirements. Eventually, fully automatic wagons for three or four persons will constitute the underground railway. All the while, the city of Amsterdam will study the used 'fail-proof' techniques with growing interest. ■

Matrix culture

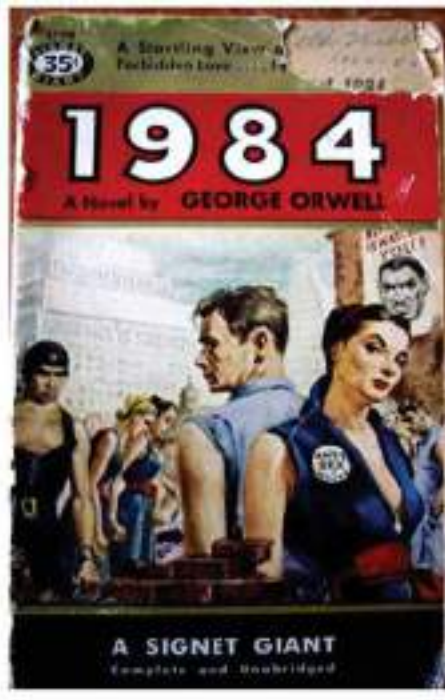
Konrad Becker

Applied psychology became an instrument for bureaucratic institutions to efficiently match individuals to the social roles of mass society. Psychotechnicians in an emergent modernity were dedicated to objectifying the study of human subjectivity. Sociometric psychology tries to pin down the individualizing features of persons within an environment of anxieties and urban angst related to the effects of depersonalization in mass production. Not yet too far removed from animal magnetism and mesmerism, a new science of measuring the self, of mapping the individual character, emerged into a range of applications. Psychometric research to objectify subjective psychological parameters for an emergent technological society remains ambiguous and conflicting in its definitions. Emerging sciences like graphology are still embedded in occult character schemes, dowsing or wielding the pendulum. Today's surveillance technologies like biometric scanning, fingerprint identification or iris-recognition are the heritage of late nineteenth-century theories of race and anthropometrics. Mediums and spiritualists have left their mark in many fields beyond psychology, including forensic science and criminology. In the no-go zone between cultural history and the history of science, the nineteenth-century spiritualist pseudoscience of a world of ghosts and its occult beliefs in spirits, a complex adaptation to modernity, has morphed into the twentieth-century applied social sciences of cybernetic operations research and applied psychology. A field like psychoanalysis, which helped to spawn psychological methods for professional public relations as in the work of Edward Bernays, nephew and promoter of Sigmund Freud in the U.S., still struggles for its scientific status. Capitalism and the neo-classical belief system of psychoanalysis paired well in the business of capitalizing on individual dreams. Myths as the dreams of mankind are the commons of the phantasmal, while the dream of subjective representation is like private property and individual possession that can be capitalized. Clandestine services that practice the art of assessing and exploiting human personality and motivations for concealed purposes introduced Personality Assessment Systems (based on Dr. John Gittinger's work with Dr.Sidney Gottlieb, the head of the CIA's MK-ULTRA mind-control projects), that became standard operating procedure in business and intelligence since the 60s. From psychocybernetic social theories and "optimization" of the workplace to scientific communication and mass psychology, many genres of academia and the influence business are rooted in the murky waters of occult beliefs, a shadow land of death and dreams. Deep psychological operations research is not founded on a projection of "omnipotence of thought," but on pragmatic action in a world where thought and reality are not radically distinguished. "What is the release of the Matrix?" asks Chinese philosopher Li Qing-an, and he answers: "Having a body outside the body." ■

From: Konrad Becker, Strategic Reality Dictionary. Autonomedia 2009.

‘I don’t want to live in Utopia’

Philosopher Hans Achterhuis pleads for a systematic distrust of utopia



Piet Vollaard

UTOPIA “Behind the reality of each utopia, no matter how ‘ideal’ and peaceful this imaginary society may seem, eventually lays an imperative, authoritarian dystopia in which hidden or open violence is used to maintain this ideal’s necessary status quo.” Philosopher Hans Achterhuis has been propagating this disquieting statement with growing conviction for quite some time now. A recent lecture at a seminar of the faculty of Philosophy was one of the places where he expressed this view, but the issue of utopia has been one of his topics as early as the 1990s.

At the above-mentioned seminar, Achterhuis explained how it all began. On his way back from a congress about shortage and ecology, he started reading the book *Ecotopia* by Ernest Callenbach. In this book which was published in 1975, we look through the eyes of an ‘American star reporter’ at a fictitious community in the future year of 1999. In Ecotopia, people live in harmony with nature according to strict rules of sustainability. As is the case with most utopias, the main character/guide takes us along on a trip through this land of the future and tells us about its constitution, education, production, economy, and other matters; in the case of Ecotopia all with a strong emphasis on ecological principles. Achterhuis becomes fascinated with the substance of this utopia which in many respects matches his personal convictions of social criticism and those of his contacts from the environmental movement. Nevertheless, he comes to the conclusion that he does not want to live in this future paradise. Why not, and what was bugging him exactly? For Achterhuis, this question was the main reason to commence his study into the phenomenon of utopia. In 1998, this resulted in publication of ‘Utopia’s Heritage’, in which Achterhuis concludes that each utopia bears traces of a dystopia (the opposite of a utopia). In Ecotopia, for example, the isolated community in the American Northwest is protected against outside interference by means of exactly the kind of modern technology the community detests. And not protected lightly, one may add! Throughout the United States, the community hid nuclear bombs to protect it against invasion. The more utopias Achterhuis read – the utopia originally is a literary genre which always relates to a description of the ideal state -, the more convinced he became of his conclusion: I absolutely do not want to live there.

The word utopia has been derived from the book Utopia which was published in 1516. In the book with this title (although the actual title is *De Optimo Reipublicae Statu deque Nova Insula Utopia*), the English humanist Thomas More, through the eyes of the fictitious traveller Raphaël Hythlodaeus, describes an ideal state located on a distant island. Utopia has been synonymous with the ideal community ever since and the book is the prelude to a large body of utopian descriptions which continue to be written up to this very day. Almost everybody agrees that matters in Utopia have been adequately arranged. According to Achterhuis, the reason for this is that nobody actually reads the book itself anymore. If you do, you will quickly find out that not all things are as ‘utopian’ as people tend to think. Everybody living in Utopia states that they are happy, but, to name just one less utopian matter, there is slavery so that the utopians themselves do not have to work. There is no need to travel; after all, ‘Why travel if everything here has been arranged so perfectly?’ according to the utopians. If you wish to take look beyond the borders of the ideal city anyway, and you do this without obtaining hard-to-get permission, you run the risk of being banned or condemned to slavery. Social monitoring is enormous (on voluntary basis, of course). The position of women is subordinate to that of men. The architecture is hopelessly dull: straight, identical streets with identical houses and interiors (because everything is ideal, it must be the same).

> *“All hell will break loose on earth and human beings will one day remember the good old days, when they still listened to us – and probably they won’t even do that anymore. It won’t even be tragic anymore, just wretched. It’s hopeless. Forget it.”*
>
> (the angels in: Harry Mulisch – The Discovery of Heaven)

Compared to this, our detested post-war residential areas such as the *Kanaleneiland* district in Utrecht are miracles of varied urban architecture. And this only is the tip of the iceberg of counter-arguments.

So, on second thought, maybe utopia is not the right place for convenient living after all.

And, according to Achterhuis, Thomas More himself may also have been quite aware of this ambiguity. In the preface, More introduces himself as a character and states that “this Utopia is probably too good to even be true.” He more or less wrote the book as a jocular gesture for his ‘pen pal’ Erasmus. But More’s story started to live a life of its own. The jokes and the slightly ironic undertones have become lost to later readers, who are blinded by their fascination for the elaborate description of the ideal community, which, of course, at the same time also constituted criticism on the society of that time. The name Utopia as conceived by More himself, for instance, is a combination of *eu*-topos (good/happy place) and *u*-topos (non-existent place). In addition to this criticism on the society of his day, More may have wanted to express that ‘fortunately’ Utopia does not exist – or at least give readers reason to consider this possibility.

As the first described utopia, the book Utopia generally receives a ‘favourable press’ in this day and age. This is not the same for the second source of many utopias to follow: *The New Atlantis* (Nova Atlantis) by Francis Bacon (indeed a far forefather of the British painter by the same name). This book appeared in 1616, some years after his death, and also describes – as seen through the eyes of seafarers shipwrecked on a deserted island – an ideal community. But whereas More’s Utopia predominantly describes a political/social ideal state, Bacon emphasizes science and technique as the highest good. In the New Atlantis one can marvel at many inventions and technologies, of which many, but not yet all, have now been realized. In a sense, the New Atlantis can be seen as the beginning of modern science. The establishment of the Royal Society (in full: The Royal Society of London for the improvement of Natural Knowledge), including early members such as Boyle, Wren, Hooke and Newton, in any case was co-inspired by Bacon’s ideas. This remarkable company of people (at the time still named Natural Philosophers), who gathered regularly and conducted a correspondence with like-minded people abroad, discussed and mutually criticized the most recent discoveries and inventions.

Although Bacon’s ideas are initially followed in comparable techno-utopias, appreciation begins to fade at the start of the 19th century. Along with the increasingly domineering rise of new technology and the related industrialization, the negative sides of technology also became visible. Many 20th century critics even hold that Bacon can be retroactively blamed for modern technological disasters such as the Holocaust and the atom bomb. This accusation is the most eloquently and literary expressed by the angels in *The discovery of heaven* by Harry Mulisch, who announce the apocalypse at the end of the book. *“To the old global disasters are now added the ravaging tidal waves of the new: with their Baconian control of nature, people will finally consume themselves with nuclear power, burn themselves up through the hole they have made in het ozone layer, dissolve in acid rain, roast in the greenhouse effect, crush each other to death because of their numbers, hang themselves on the double helix of DNA, choke in their own Satan’s shit, because that swine didn’t conclude his pact out of love of humankind, only out of hatred for us. All hell will break loose on earth and human beings will one day remember the good old days, when they still listened to us – and probably they won’t even do that anymore. It won’t even be tragic anymore, just wretched, It’s hopeless. Forget it.”*

> *Love is the ultimate resistance against the dictatorship of both utopia and dystopia*

> *There is hardly any criticism on the book Utopia because nobody reads it nowadays*

It is not the wars, *“that is all still the old, politics, that doesn’t mean a thing.”* No, the world’s downfall is caused by the utopian new, the technique, is Achterhuis’ summary of the angels’ conclusion.

Mulisch’ angels voice a sentiment which by now has become almost common among politicians, philosophers and even among some scientists. It cannot be denied that next to progress, comfort and wealth, technology has also brought us many bad things. However, to blame Bacon, or technology and science in general, and to exclude accomplices from other disciplines from any blame, that is taking things much too far. According to Achterhuis, this can partly be attributed to failure to read the source text at all, or at least to a misinterpretation thereof. So, whereas Achterhuis emphasizes the darker edges of Utopia, he still feels obliged to defend the New Atlantis against criticism, or at least to put any overly harsh criticism into perspective. Bacon was well aware of the potential detrimental consequences of his utopia. In fact, there should be less reason to criticize the New Atlantis when compared to Utopia. For instance, contrary to More in his social utopia, Bacon in his techno-utopia leaves more room for human freedom and the arts. In More’s social utopia, this is not necessary, because people are happy as it is. Utopia is much less open, and far more compelling than the New Atlantis. In the New Atlantis, a Jew is one of the central characters. Bacon chose a Jew to criticize the expulsion of the Jews in the Europe of his time whereas in More’s work, all characters are well-behaved, white Englishmen.

Add to this that an overly rigid distinction between Utopia and New Atlantis, as reflected in the two domains of alpha and beta science, of feeling versus ratio, is factually incorrect. In arguing this, Achterhuis refers to Bruno Latour who states that this distinction, and, in fact, the whole concept of this break with tradition as allegedly caused by modernity, is an incorrect assumption and that instead both domains have always been intertwined, and are increasingly becoming entangled in steadily growing networks. Achterhuis also believes in this strong mutual network entanglement. And he criticizes the idea that an emphasis on technique automatically implies less attention for non-technique. However, Achterhuis does not go so far as to concur with Latour in his view that there is no such thing as (the break to) modernity.

The question ‘Do I want to live in Utopia?’ automatically leads to the derivative question as to whether this situation is not reality already, and as to whether we are not already living in Utopia or Dystopia. In order to answer this question, we need to bear in mind three general ‘family characteristics’ of the utopia (Achterhuis lists more but these are the most important ones). First of all, Utopia is makeable and precisely this is exemplified in the described utopias. There are no goals that cannot be reached. So, when referring to a utopia as a way of indicating that an ideal cannot, or should not be reached, is contradictory to the above-mentioned characteristic. Secondly, the utopia can only exist through separation in time and place, by breaking with the past, and the non-utopian environment in a radical manner. This is beautifully pictured in Utopia, where the island which originally was a peninsula, is literally dug off from the mainland, its history and the criticized ‘others.’ So, in this day and age, a realized utopia must be total, or else there will still be need for separation.

> *A realized utopia means the end on imagination*

Thirdly, utopia always relates to a community, a collective. A personal ideal, fulfillment of personal desires or mutual one-on-one relations between people are not utopian if this ideal or this desire does not relate to living together in a group and the group’s mutual relations. In many utopias, the individual is even completely banned. So, love, by nature a personal one-on-one relation, can never be utopian. As a matter of fact, love does not exist in Utopia, whereas - often - free sexual contacts with several fellow utopians do exist. What is more: Achterhuis concludes that love constitutes the ultimate re-

sistance against both dystopia and utopia. In addition to love, keeping a diary, for instance, also is an act of individual resistance against the dictatorship of the collective. Place an individual in a utopia, and what you get is the immediate unmasking of the utopia, according to Achterhuis. On account of this latter argument alone, we should be distrustful of every utopia and interpret it as a dystopia. For who would want to expel love, or the right to act or even think as an individual?
This resistance of the individual is described particularly vigorously in the two famous dystopias of the 20th century: *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley (1932) and *1984* by George Orwell (1949). Just like every utopia evokes its subsequent dystopia, both books can be seen as a criticism of Bacon's New Atlantis, or of techno-utopia in general. This certainly is the case for *Brave New World*. In many respects the predictions of Huxley are even awkwardly close to actual reality. The human breeding machines

Huxley felt that Brave New World had become a reality in the 1950s already

and the normalized education may not be reality yet, but Huxley himself felt that Brave New World had turned into a reality as early as the 1950s already. Achterhuis argues that this is not true. Read the book and compare it to reality and you will find just as many differences as similarities. The assertion that modern-day society is fully under the spell of drugs (in *Brave New World* the drug soma is constantly used), is true only for the most pessimistic of social critics. Huxley, as a matter of fact, did not regard drug use as a problem, and even demonstrated to be an advocate of the use of hallucinogenic drugs in his book *The Doors of Perception*. No wonder this book became a kind of bible for the hippies of the 1960s. Save perhaps for the plus of recreational drug use, there will not be many people who would want to live in Brave New World, although Achterhuis states that there are still certain groups in California who are trying to reach this exact ideal of Brave New World.
However, this will not apply to the society described by Orwell in his dystopia *1984*. This book mainly deals with a criticism on the big utopia of communism, which according to its supporters had in fact been realized in Orwell's time. Save for a few corners of the world like North Korea, this belief has disappeared completely ever since the 1990s. But certain aspects of 1984 are still quite recognizable. Big Brother has become synonymous with all intrusions of our privacy which we nowadays wilfully tolerate. Cameras on the street (in the near future, also at home?), person registration; it is all Big Brother, at least when you look at it from the surface. Fortunately, there are also many differences to oppose this spectre. The world is not (no longer?) divided into three large continental states - Oceania, Eurasia and the rest – which are constantly in state of war with each other (if this had been the case in *1984* at all, then this would have been deliberate propaganda to keep the people in permanent state of fear and aggression). In any case, our present world including even the southern hemisphere is far less aggressive and far more prosperous than the society described in 1984. Newspeak has not yet been admitted to the educational system, but Achterhuis delicately concludes that the intentions of Wittgenstein and the logical positivists are very close to the basic principles of Newspeak.

Both in *Brave New World* and in *1984*, love undermines the dominant powers. But Winston and

Newspeak has not yet been admitted to education

Julia from *1984* are eventually caught and Winston is returned to the social harness by means of physical and psychological torture. In *Brave New World* the returned 'savage' invokes, next to his right– or more accurately: his freedom – to have a love relationship, the right of being unhappy, sick, old and insecure. He ends up as a kind of tourist attraction in the 'savages reservation' and indulges in self-chastisement to expel his passion for Lenina. Eventually, he kills her and commits suicide, the only freedom he had left.

Do I want to live in Utopia?
No, it is not particularly nice to live in a dystopia. And in view of Achterhuis' assertion that each utopia foreshadows its dystopian opposite, it is also no fun to live in a utopia. This may be difficult to bear for some people, but it is a reality. In this respect it must be noted that we are referring to total utopia. Of course, segments of small utopian projects have in fact been realized. Successful improvements to our collective prosperity and well-being are in fact feasible, and desirable also. But the actual, *total* utopia is not. There is nothing wrong with idealism, but there is quite a lot wrong with realizing *The Ideal*. If it were possible to realize this at all, then it would end with drastic control and eventually dictatorship of the controllers over the controlled.
And another thing: a realized utopia means the end of the imagination, of literature, and the arts in general; and – one may add – also the end of a festival like Impakt. So, it is wise to distrust the utopia. Visitors of Matrix City are well advised to ask themselves upon every encounter with any featured manifestations of dystopia and utopia: Do I want to live there?■

Hans Achterhuis, 'The Legacy of the Utopia', Baarn: Ambo, 1998

Masdar City (source: Deutsches Zentrum für Luft und Raumfahrt, DLR)

Sustainable desert city under construction

ABU DHABI As the towers of Dubai waver, huge projects are still underway in neigbouring Abu Dhabi - a state unaffected by economic turbulence, due to its enormous oil resources. One of the most appealing of the projects currently being undertaken in Abu Dhabi is Masdar, an eco-city designed by Britain's foremost hi-tech designer, Sir Norman Foster.
The city is being constructed just south-east of the city of Abu Dhabi, near Abu Dhabi International Airport. The city is projected to cover six square kilometres, and will consist of a maze of streets, intersected by two green zones following the original flow of small streams. The city will be home to approximately 50,000 people, as well as offices and cultural facilities.
The design employs a variety of renewable energy sources. Automobiles will be banned within the city, calling for a system called personal rapid transit. Oil-dependent means of transport will not be completely done away with, but they will have to be parked outside the perimeter walls of the city. Masdar's architectural and planological design, though modern, is based on that of traditional desert cities. This means that structures will be built close to each other, resulting in streets that are almost permanently shaded. This allows for taking walks outside, an activity that has been rendered virtually impossible as a result of high-rise building in other modern Gulf cities. The street plan has been laid out in such a manner that cool morning and evening breezes will be utilized to their fullest extent. Having as much water as possible run through the city will improve its living environment and will lower the temperatures at street level even further.
Energy will be produced by a sprawling solar power plant outside the city. There are also plans for a 'wind farm'. Drinking water will also be provided using solar energy – all Gulf States employ a considerable portion of their energy to desalinate sea water. Furthermore, approximately 80 percent of wastewater will be recycled into drinking water, or be used as a means of irrigation. Biological waste will be used for improving soil conditions and fertilization. Whatever waste remains will then be recycled by a recycling plant, also outside the city. ■

The Venus project, a society 'beyond politics, poverty & war'

VENUS, FLORIDA *'The Venus Project presents a bold, new direction for humanity that entails nothing less than the total redesign of our culture. There are many people today who are concerned with the serious problems that face our modern society: unemployment, violent crime, replacement of humans by technology, over-population and a decline in the Earth's ecosystems.*
The Venus Project is dedicated to confronting all of these problems by actively engaging in the research, development, and application of workable solutions. Through the use of innovative approaches to social awareness, educational incentives, and the consistent application of the best that science and technology can offer directly to the social system, The Venus Project offers a comprehensive plan for social reclamation in which human beings, technology, and nature will be able to coexist in a long-term, sustainable state of dynamic equilibrium.'
These are the inspiring words industrial designer and futurist Jacque Fresco chooses to present his futuristic-utopian vision - a vision laced with a healthy dose of sustainability. Fresco's vision and the many cheerfully optimistic, sci-fi-ish designs that accompany it, may put to mind a blend of Chriet Titulaer and the Das brothers, rather than its ideal of technocratic self-sufficiency. Its starting points, however, show many similarities to those of a utopian vision, especially to Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis*.
Particularly when it comes to its emphasis on schooling – 'preparing people intellectually and emotionally for the changes and challenges that lie ahead – which may easily degenerate into authoritarianism, and to its faith in the possibilities of science and progress, its starting points may not bear to be taken at face value.
On the other hand, at his research center in Florida, Fresco has in fact started putting his principles into practice. Some futuristic homes have already been built. And while the planned metropolis may still be some years in the making, the already existing small park of villas actually looks very attractive. ■

illustration: The Venus Project

Underground garden city to fill Siberian crater

MIR, SIBERIA Far away in Eastern Siberia's permafrost desert, the enormous crater of disused diamond mine Mir awaits its new destiny. Mining was discontinued here in 2001, but Mir's crater, approximately one thousand metres wide at the surface and 550 metres deep, cannot just be abandoned. Should the mine fall into a state of disrepair, its stepped-in walls, still supporting the tracks that were once used by ore-trams, would collapse, which in its turn could cause landslides. Moreover, the crater would soon fill up with water, creating all sorts of complications.
Russian architectural firm Ab Alice has come up with the plan to reclaim the crater by building an eco-city, housing some ten thousand people. According to Alice, their city's solid concrete structure will not only stabilize the crater, its immense depth will also give direct access to geothermal energy - in an area that is otherwise permanently frosty, at temperatures that will often plummet down to minus sixty degrees centigrade. The projected city will be covered with a glass dome, consisting of solar panels, providing the city with some 200 megawatts, while at the same time keeping out the cold.
The city will be made up of three 'layers': an under layer for agriculture; a middle layer for foresting, keeping the city's air fresh and clean; and a top layer, consisting of homes, offices and social and cultural facilities. The city Mirny is hopeful this project, dubbed Eco-City 2020, will put the remote region of Yakutia on the map, both as an attractive place for people to settle, and as a tourist destination. ■

Mir krater (source: www.telesys.ru)

Launch of a floating free state

MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA *April 15th, 2008 – "The Seasteading Institute today announced that it has been established in order to establish permanent, autonomous ocean communities to enable experimentation and innovation with diverse social, political, and legal systems."*
With this press release, a group of Silicon Valley millionaires, including PayPal founder Peter Thiel who contributed $ 500,000 to the institute, announced the establishment of new communities, free of legal, political and social ties. The institute's philosophy is partly based on the pamphlet *SeaSteading – Homesteading on the High Seas* by Wayne Gramlich, who received direct support from Patri Friedman, grandson of the disputed economist Milton Friedman. The basic principles entail a mix of libertarianism, cyberpunk, eco-utopianism, techno-futurism and a fair dash of free market ideology. The first Seasteads will consist of free states floating around on the oceans. "If Seasteading becomes a feasible option, changing of government will be a matter of setting sail to another country without the need to leave your house," according to Friedman.
With this, the Seasteaders connect with the oldest traditions of utopia: the deserted island where the ideal community of enlightened spirits chose to live in isolation from the criticized world, and where the social, scientific and political-legal experiment can be transformed into a 'genuinely existing reality', although a certain tie with existing states is still assumed to be present. Seastead is not the only one to propagate the floating free state: in an article in *Wired* (19 May 2008) a true 'Pantheon of wouldbe utopian communities' floating on the world seas is listed, like the Aquarius Project, which aims at nothing less than hegemony over the universe, The Republic of Minerva of Las Vegas millionaire Michael Oliver, which was already announced in the 1970s but has not yet materialized, or the more realistic Freedom Ship, a large passenger ship which as a free state, offers "an ideal place to live or run a business, a friendly, safe and secure community with large areas of open space and extensive entertainment and recreational facilities."
As for now, however, Seastead seems to be the most feasible option for potential 'refugees.' Political autonomy is reached by the

illustration: www.seasteading.org

Seasteaders by using so-called 'flags of convenience'; a practice by which ships carry the flag of the state which is economically the most practical, the cheapest or the least compelling legally.
The fact that the ideology is firmly rooted in the economic-libertarian free market 'utopia', and the fact that ever since the credit crisis, this utopia is built on an unstable basis, does not seem to bother the initiators yet. By now, the start-up capital has grown to $ 1,000,000, which is still not enough to build a prototype. But more money will be raised shortly, according to the initiators. In 2009, The Poseidon Project was announced, a first trial of Seasteading, which will consist of a community of at least 50 residents living in an oil platform-like setting: "economically fully self-sufficient, technologically safe and de facto full political autonomy." The estimated costs amount to approximately 20 million dollar, an amount the initiators expect to raise in the next five years. ■

Wild Gardener looks 1000 years ahead

Piet Vollaard

MILDAM, FRIESLAND For more than thirty years, Louis Le Roy single-handedly and with his bare hands piled up discarded bricks, paving stones and kerbstones and let nature run its course. As a result, he changed a barren Frisian meadow into a fascinating jungle where qualifications such as beautiful or ugly no longer have any meaning. Le Roy refers to this project as the Eco-cathedral. The project was taken over by a small group of volunteers a couple of years ago because health problems prevented Le Roy from continuing it. This transition marks the beginning of a thousand year shift of continually new builders. Meanwhile, hundreds of truck loads of street rubble have already been processed into piled up constructions, the oldest of which are already in part overgrown by nature. People visiting the project get the feeling they are walking among the ruins of

Switch Off Nature – Switch On Nature

an ancient and forgotten Maya culture.

Louis Le Roy became known for his creation of the nature garden or 'wild garden', measuring one and a half kilometre and laid out along the *Kennedylaan* of the city of Heerenveen together with the residents of the bordering housing district in the beginning of the 1970s. In 1973, he published *Natuur Uitschakelen – Natuur Inschakelen* [Switch Off Nature – Switch On Nature], which gave him international esteem as an advocate and theoretician of the 'wild garden.' The basic idea behind this was: do nothing, or as less possible, let nature run its course, and you will wind up with a complex eco system which by far surpasses cultivated gardens in terms of richness and 'beauty.' For the *Kennedylaan* project, he encouraged residents to participate in the project. Not by planting flowers, but by erecting constructions out of dump materials amidst the wild garden structures.

However, his most ambitious project is the Eco-cathedral. The biggest misconception about Le Roy's Eco-cathedral is that it mainly is a pilot project for the 'wild garden' concept. And although the project does in fact reveal what a meadow looks like after letting nature run its course for more than thirty years (fantastic), this is not what the project is about. The Eco-cathedral is mainly a project, or more accurately, an exploration in which time, nature and human construction are the variables. As an answer to the question what a single human being would be able of establishing, he started piling up bricks in his meadow. In doing so, it was important that he did all work by himself and with his bare hands whereby his main interest was not the ecological or constructional aspect. Le Roy especially regarded the Eco-cathedral as a cultural project in time. In this context, 'cathedral' refers to the cathedrals of the middle ages which were projects involving several generations of builders over various periods of time.

Still from the film 'Louis Le Roy, life and work in time and space' by Beate Lendt

Continuing process

Unlike many other 'green prophets', Le Roy does not regard mankind as nature's enemy. Le Roy time and again emphasizes that man is part of nature and that his interventions are just as 'ecological' as those of flora and fauna. For this reason, his project is often characterized as an equivalent fusion of culture and nature. It would also be a misconception to see Le Roy as a garden architect. Of all things it may be, the Eco-cathedral is not a planned garden in the making. Le Roy fits a lot better in the tradition of visual artists who consciously limit themselves to one continuing process. The constructions he produced by means of piling up stones have not been planned beforehand, but emerge during the process - in real time as it were –. They are not chaotic mountains, but meticulously levelled towers, walls and terraces, with layers arranged according to colour. More fascinating and poetic than wild nature is the idea of one individual cleaning truckloads of stones and - sometimes extremely heavy - kerbstones and concrete wells with his bare hands, rolling them over his territory and piling them up in precise stacks of several feet high; the concept of one man who puts so much energy in arranging dump materials, while allowing nature to overgrow his work in the course of a couple of seasons, and the concept of one man who keeps on building regardless.

With his piling, Le Roy barely managed to keep ahead of nature. Each season his constructions of the preceding year were conquered by plants and trees. Year in, year out, he continued his piling work tirelessly and provided nature with the opportunity to overgrow and conquer his new constructions. The project is not growing in the conventional sense of the word. It is never finished. Ten years ago, the project was in the same state of (non-)completion as it will be in twenty years. It has no real beginning and no real end; it simply is.

The lessons of Louis Le Roy

At the turn of this century, Stichting Tijd [Foundation Time] was established having as its main objective to preserve the continuing process. Meanwhile, volunteers have taken over the building from Le Roy who is no longer capable to build himself after an accident. The foundation's regulations have been prepared in such a way that – should the project ever be in danger of coming to a standstill – regular attempts will be made to attract new builders who will continue working on the project. Such for a period of a thousand years. On a time scale of this magnitude, the current state of affairs of the project compares to nothing more than putting up a few pickets. In respect of the *Kennedylaan*, the foundation concluded a contract with the city of Heerenveen having a duration of 100 years, thus guaranteeing continued building by residents and students.

In this way, his projects have been transferred to the community. The art of patiently arranging, allowing coincidence and the unexpected, is the lesson architects, urban developers and planners can learn from Le Roy. If the architects, urban developers and authorities are really serious about allowing more freedom, they will have to learn that there is no end to building, that a dynamic process does not have an end, that predicting and working towards an ideal state (which every plan in fact is) is useless and that planning needs to be replaced by a way of accompanying processes which is as careful as it is laid-back.

Another lesson is that nature is capable of handling much more trash than we think. If we let nature run its course, it will be strong enough to leave humans a great deal of freedom. The problem in the way we deal with nature is that we think we need to protect it against ourselves, that we need to restrain it, fence it off and re-arrange it for its own good. That is all rubbish, we should simply leave it alone so we can play around it as much as we want. ■

Still from the film 'Whose Utopia' by Cao Fei

The cost of an iPhone

SHENZEN, CHINA Earlier this year a wave of attempted suicides came to light at Foxconn Ltd., one of China's largest contract manufacturers for consumer electronics, producer of end goods for Apple, Dell and Hewlett Packard. No fewer than ten young assembly workers at the Shenzhen based factory - employing some 400,000 – did in fact take their own lives. Most of the suicides had an alarmingly similar profile: they were all in their late teens or early twenties, and had only recently started work at Foxconn. The wave of suicides once again raised questions about the circumstances under which Chinese workers put together our products. The fact that work in factories such as Foxconn's may not be all it was once made out to be was made abundantly clear.

Whose Utopia, by Chinese filmmaker Cao Fei, shows the huge factory halls of OSRAM China Lighting Ltd., with its machinery placed in a tightly ordered arrangement. Between the machines, dancers move. Among them, a winged ballerina in white tutu and pointe shoes, and an elderly gentleman dressed in black. The dancers' silent, dreamy expressions make for a sharp contrast with the factory workers' endlessly repetitive motions.

The film is Cao Fei's response to the reality of her fellow Chinese, moving to cities in large numbers to find work in factories there. In China, progress means a lot of hard work for a lot of people. Subjecting themselves to the mind-numbing reality of the assembly line, they dream of a brighter future. ■

Australian hippie communes threatened by ageing

AQUARIUS, AUSTRALIA In the early seventies, the Aquarius Festival was held in Australia. For many young Australians it was the impetus to rediscover nature and start their own communes. In doing so, they became part of a counterculture that originated in the late sixties, in response to rapidly increasing urbanization and a growing unease about progress' less palatable aspects – there were concerns about the environment, about oil dependency, etcetera. The desire to experiment with new ways of living in a closer relationship to nature inspired young peole worldwide to start small living communities outside cities. Thirty years on, most of the experiments have been abandoned, but a number of communes still exist in Australia.

The success of a commune depends on the participants' willingness to make a joint effort. It means its members need to share a common goal. It takes a lot of deliberation and striving for consensus, based on shared values and ideals. This in turn leads to a set of rules, to be endorsed by all members. At least, this is the picture that emerges from *The Making Of Utopia*, a documentary shot in Australia, by Finnish filmmakers Tellervo Kalleinen and Oliver Kochta-Kalleinen. Three of the communes they filmed originated in the seventies as an off-shoot of the Australian hippie movement.

'The Making of Utopia' (photo: Tellervo Kalleinen and Oliver Kochta-Kalleinen)

So how come they've been so successful? One of the founders of the Dharmananda commune (fifteen people, thirty cows) thinks it's because they managed to somewhat curb the onbridled lifestyle that characterizes so many hippies. They just set to work, without much theorizing.

The filmmakers asked each commune to come up with a fictitious story, dealing with both the success of their community and with the dangers that threaten its existence. The results are some very amusing scenes of commune members feigning a desire to get rich by cultivating genetically enhanced truffles – a mortal sin for sure, to these lovers of 'real food' – and a song about the luxury that would result from building an eco-resort. It soon becomes apparent that their greatest strength lies in their tenacity and in a sense of solidarity, the result of years of living together. No one doubts the ideals or principles of their commune. The greatest threat to their way of life turns out to be old age. The founders of the communes will not be able to make the required physical effort for very much longer. Young people are still joining their communities, but it remains to be seen whether they will be as steadfast as their elders. ■

Still from the film 'Facts on the Ground' by Bik Van der Pol

More land for more containers

ROTTERDAM Off the coast of South Holland, where the river Maas flows into the North Sea, new land has been in the making since 2008. Located next to the first Maasvlakte, a second stretch of reclamation land is being created. Both Maasvlaktes are part of the Port of Rotterdam, one of the largest container ports in the world. In fact, from 1962 to 2003 Rotterdam Port was the world's busiest port, until it was superseded by the ports of Shanghai and Singapore. The Port of Rotterdam is instrumental as a port of transshipment for containers and bulk cargo, such as crude oil, coal and ore. The cargo tonnage handled annually by Rotterdam Port is 420 million tons. Through Rotterdam, 150 million consumers are reached within a radius of 500 kilometres and a time span of 24 hours. These consumers are reached by trucks, trains, riverboats, coasters and pipelines.
Since the port is currently working at maximum capacity, growth is limited. To maintain its leading position, the docklands are being expanded through land reclamation, covering some 5000 acres (2000 hectares). This is roughly the same size as Rotterdam's city centre. The second Maasvlakte will be twenty metres deep, meaning it will be accessible to even the latest container ship designs.
Land will be reclaimed using a sea wall consisting of both hard and soft components. Beaches and dunes will make up the softer parts of this sea wall, while gravel, stone and concrete will form its harder components. Land will be filled behind this sea wall.
The artist couple Bik Van der Pol have filmed the contours of the future second Maasvlakte from a helicopter, resulting in impressive images of a sea slowly filling up with sand. An environment of enchanting purity, yet frightening in its scale. ■

Biker babe does Chernobyl

CHERNOBYL, UKRAINE Now and then the effects of the Chernobyl disaster still surface in Western Europe. Authorities in Bavaria, for instance, claim that wild hogs shot by hunters in their state are often radioactive. This is said to be a result of radioactive fallout, which sank into the earth after the disaster and affected truffles. Hogs eat truffles, as well as other kinds of mushrooms that easily absorb radiation. In Russia, in the area surrounding Chernobyl's ill-fated nuclear plant, high concentrations of radiation will remain for centuries to come, making the area unfit for human habitation. It is therefore a restricted area, inaccessible without an official escort. Elena Filatova, a young woman from Kiev, has, through her connections, managed to find a way around this requirement, and has obtained a permit to cruise the area on her motorcycle. Her websites www.*kiddofspeed.com* and *www.elenafilatova.com*, show photographs she has taken during her trips through the *dead zone*. The images are of rampant nature, abandoned farms and a completely deserted city. The citizens of Chernobyl had no choice but to leave everything behind, since everything had been contaminated. Filatova's photographs sometimes show glimpses of Elena herself, wearing a motor jacket and holding a small geiger counter. In texts accompanying the images, Elena tells us about the effects of the nuclear disaster, and about her crossing the area in relative safety by not straying from the asphalted roads.
The image of this attractive young woman, crossing the contaminated stretch of land on a fast motor bike – a Kawasaki Big Ninja ZZR1100, as her website proudly proclaims – obviously seems to good to be true. And rumour, as circulated on the internet, has it that a young woman in a motor jacket was spotted as a member of a group of tourist visiting exactly those locations that are documented on Elena's blog. Not singlehandedly crossing the dead zone on her motorcycle, but being safely led around by a tour guide in a tour-coach! Whatever the truth, there can be no doubt about the reality of Chernobyl and the desolate images of the deserted landscape and the abandoned city.. ■

Ghost Town (photo: Elena Filatova, www.elenafilatova.com)

Post Home the Aftertime

Peter T. Lang

Unveiling the city

UTRECHT With the exhibition at Hoog Catharijne, screenings, a conference and a talk show, the Matrix City programme features a large variety of big and small interventions in the urban environment. The editorial staff of this Matrix City newspaper asked co-curators Ana Dzokic and Marc Neelen (STEALTH.unlimited) about the principles underlying the programme.

"The objective of the Impakt Festival as a whole is to present audiovisual arts in an interdisciplinary context. It is probably no coincidence that the festival was conceived in a period when media art (the 'new media') slowly started entering the scene. Nowadays, the novelty has more or less worn off, and the festival therefore strives to offer a cross-cut of experimental audiovisual arts and to link these arts to developments in society. We have been operating as architects/curators in an international field of artists and architects, and in the segment of what one may refer to as cultural activism for quite some years now. In doing so, we mainly focus on the question of how the city and urban culture can develop – what it is exactly, who should be concerned about it and how we can design a future with a larger group of people. This means that we often meet all sorts of people to relate very directly about the ways in which the urban environment can be developed – something that can be done by means of discussions or workshops, but also by means of designing a trial environment. Kristian Lukic, co-organizer of the Matrix City part of the Impakt Festival, has stronger background knowledge about media culture and an interest in the effects of new developments in communication and information technology. The combination of both perspectives makes it more interesting for us.

We mainly focus on the question of how the city and urban culture can develop

For the three of us a festival like Impakt is fertile soil and an important stage offering us the chance to reach a much broader audience than we are used to, with a subject that is relevant for everybody."

You are responsible for the part of the festival by the name of Matrix City. What is the idea behind the exhibition, screenings, debate and talk show which together are referred to as Matrix City?

"The Impakt organization had already thought up the name Matrix City for the 2010 programme before we became involved. It obviously – whether you want or not – also refers to the film *The Matrix*, and to the idea that there may be an alternative 'real' reality hidden behind the reality we experience. Progressing from this concept, we decided to take a somewhat different approach than the usual fascination for the amalgamation of a digital interaction layer into the urban environment as is commonly featured at cultural events and design meetings. After all, is the city itself not a matrix, an omnipotent system which entices and seduces us while creeping under our skin and keeping us prisoner? Of course, the reference to *The Matrix* cannot be overlooked by the civilized festival goer. However, we see the city in terms of 'war against the controllers' not as the festival's main focus – you don't wage war at a festival. We are more concerned with the question as to who these controllers are and what they are monitoring exactly. And further to this, the question as to whether we can afford to keep living in the city the way we always have; what is the price of urbanization and how long can we afford to 'pay' this price?"

Is there a particular scene from The Matrix referring to this idea?

"There are two relevant scenes. The first one is the scene in which the hero Neo (The One) is forced to choose between a red or blue pill, between the consciousness of 'imprisonment' and slavery, or a return to the comfortable world, the 'reality' as we know it. But what is reality? *"If real is what you can feel, smell, taste and see, then 'real' is simply electrical signals interpreted by your brain"*, explains the 'guide' Morpheus. And those electrical signals can be manipulated.

It is a choice related to conflict and justice, but also related to comfort and safety; matters that keep us engaged in many different ways, and that are also reflected in the urban environment.

In the second relevant scene, the controller (the 'architect', not exactly promotion for our profession) shows the belly of the 'machine.' How everything 'they' make us believe is no more than a thin layer obstructing the view on the 'real', totally different machination. With the Matrix City programme we are more or less trying to brush away parts this obstructing layer.

However, we regard the idea behind this film mainly as an adequate and recognizable starting point from which we can explore various paths to more contemporary developments. Such as the consequences of the recent credit crisis versus the million dollar city of Dubai which is being erected at a terrific speed; the flight into smart phones and web2.0 communities and what that means for our understanding of reality; the alternative communities making their retreat from the real world trying to build a sustainable living; the large number of 'refuge' islands, bomb shelters and luxurious passenger ships ready to be inhabited by the super rich when 'things go wrong'; the consequences that mortgage debts from the 'big world' have for the small world of local communities; the totally alienating industrial landscapes which have arisen world-wide, and also have been deserted again in many cases… etc.

You may actually be led to believe that in a not so very distant future, at a not so distant location, people are in fact working on a 'matrix plot'

One of the good things about *The Matrix* is that the film in some cases comes remarkably close to our 'normal' reality. It is not until you 'reverse' this world or when you take a look 'behind the scenes' that its science fiction character becomes visible. You may actually be led to believe that in a not so very distant future, at a not so distant location, people are in fact working on a 'matrix plot.' This is quite credible as it is and the works featured at Impakt may even increase this feeling. Although there is just as much counterevidence contradicting these conspiracy theories."

Can you give us a few examples of the things to go see?

"We try to look at matters from as many different perspectives as possible. It is all about a variety of realities and dreams, about urban practices and 'escapist back to nature movements', about small projects as well as magnanimous and poignant projects, and about disillusion.

The most recent disillusion, of course, is the collapse of the desert city for the super rich, Dubai. Smaq, for instance, presents a number of future scenarios for Dubai according to which this capital-based mirage is transformed into a 'real city.' At a much more personal scale, Damon Rich shows us the impact of mortgage debts on the map of New York. More or less connected to this is the gameboy series *Game Broker* by Derivart which features the financial crisis of the 1980s and 1990s – and the dot-com crisis of 2000 – with a sort of classical 8 bit 'feel', whereas the computer game *Nildegree* (by Vladimir Todorovic and Justin Tan) shows the impossibility of a sustainable future built on exponential speculation.

Is the city itself not a matrix, an omnipotent system which entices and seduces us while creeping under our skin and keeping us prisoner?

The film *Manhattan* by Paul Strand reveals the promises of New York in the 1920s in an old documentary (1921) which has now become part of the American cultural heritage and of the American Dream, which, in turn, formed the basis for the development of Dubai almost one hundred years later.

The ambiguity of the makeability doctrine is not only prominently present in the large variety of urban environments we create, but also in the production landscapes often located on the borders of the city, an industry we need to keep our cities supplied and going. A number of festival contributions reveal the enormous scale, the terrifying beauty and the tremendous impact these production cities have on the landscape. Bik Van der Pol filmed the construction of the *Nieuwe Maasvlakte*, and Cao Fei shows the duality of imagination versus the drudgery of the working environment of endless Chinese production floors where the products manufactured are eventually shipped in containers to that same *Maasvlakte*. The Chinese conveyor belt workers have the same dreams as we have, but we all know very well that these dreams will be smothered by the desire for wealth and our lust after ipods, ipads, and iphones – a dangerous combination as also suggested by the recent boom of suicides in the factories of Shenzhen.

But we also offer vistas into another world. The New Babylon project of the recently deceased artist Constant (featured in the short documentaries *Met Simon Vinkenoog naar het New Babylon* by Constant and *New Babylon de Constant*) shows the energy and conviction of the 1950s and 1960s in respect of the scenario of feasibility and makeability leading to a breakthrough into a new society and urban environment where there is no longer any need for man to work and the *homo ludens* can fully dedicate all efforts to creative development. However, in the end we got stuck with 'alternative cities' like *Hoog Catherijne*, which seem to refer to the large spatial structures of New Babylon in terms of form, but where 'fun' has become the equivalent of 'shopping', and self-development mainly equals consumption. Today, gaming has turned into an economy of its own, as is demonstrated by many of the Internet games which have degenerated into virtual gambling houses or market floors. A development which is far removed from the liberating counterculture propagated by Constant.

Pop culture has paved the way for a total aesthetization of our urban environment, including the aesthetization of discontentment and resistance against this development

However, we also show alternatives and ask ourselves who is best prepared for the future: the people who retreat to the underground atom and apocalypse proof private shelters of Vivos in the Mojave desert, the people involved in modest, step-by-step development of a more sustainable future such as 2012 Architecten which base their constructions almost entirely on recycled materials, or the far-reaching proposals of Seasteading, Venus and similar organizations – anticipating an entirely re-arranged society which bids farewell to our current urban environment in a radical way?"

Is there, in addition to the myriad of media arts featured, also a message you wish to communicate to the public?

"Very summarily put: pop culture has paved the way for a total aesthetization of our urban environment, including the aesthetization of discontentment and resistance against this development. Mediatization and technology have reached such levels of pervasiveness that they directly interfere with our daily lives in a sublime manner. It is virtually impossible to escape this. And the amount of money involved has taken on astronomic proportions.

At the same time, it is not clear who has asked for this, who wants it, and who 'designed' it that way. We want to make clear that our current way of handling and associating with the city may be a lot less durable than we think: our urban future is built on quicksand. The city deserves a much smarter, more durable, liberating and open approach. It is remarkable that it seems difficult at the moment to come up with attractive and daring alternatives, whereas the more modest approach fails to convince when considering the current and pressing issues at hand (population growth, peak resources, climate change). This represents a major part of the city's dilemma." ■

Colophon

This is a supplement to the Impakt Festival Utrecht, 2010.

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The dilemma of El Morro

Ana Dzokic and Marc Neelen, STEALTH.unlimited

A few days ago we arrived in Medellín, Colombia. It is our first time in *América del Sur* and we still feel a bit uncanny going around the city. Our Spanish is non-existent, and we're about a head-and-a-half taller than the average. We're sticking out – literally.

We have been invited to work on for us the most contradictory projects so far – to build a large wall around a neighbourhood close to the center of the city. Only a few days before we left for Medellín, the details of this strange project emerged.

The neighbourhood to be fenced is a part of Moravia, a district that was known as one of the most violent neighbourhoods of the city. Moravia is *alto voltaje* – high voltage – even according to its own residents.

The most notorious part of Moravia, it's epicenter, is *El Morro*, or The Nose. It is the highest point of the neighbourhood, and stands out against the sky with the kites flying above it.

A few years ago, around 15.000 people were living on this hill. Most of the inhabitants that came to El Morro originated from poorer regions of the country. It was one of the largest informal settlements of the city.

They settled here to escape the drugs war between guerrilla, militias and the army. Many of them are farmers, forced away from their land. El Morro became their hope – a hope built on a grim, stinky and toxic reality.

The hill, once over 45 meters high, has been growing here between 1972 and 1984, when a large pit was gradually and 'temporally' filled with the excrement of the city: industrial, hospital and domestic waste.

After the dump was closed, people inhabited this 'urban mine' and continued their recycling industry – either taking the material out from the hill, or collecting it throughout the city.

The waste provided a welcome source of income for those without work, as El Morro's inwards revealed all sorts of materials. And the area developed its own specialism – recycling. Like light-switches made from hospital syringes reclaimed from the waste.

During our three weeks stay in Moravia, we visited 'eco facilities' where for instance plastic crates are chopped by hand and ground to granules for the plastic industry. In hot and damp workshops, they clean the plastic with caustic soda and sulphuric acid, which keeps the sewers here in a spic-and-span condition.

Meanwhile, El Morro started to sink. The organic material slowly composted, giving the inhabitants their own source of gas for cooking (!), while at the foot of the hill toxics started to seep into the surrounding areas. Apart for waste, the hill also gave a safe shelter to many of the drugs related gangs that make the city unsafe.

And now… a 1.7 kilometres long wall is to change this for good?

In recent years, the city decided to take action – by investing in amazing public facilities in these difficult areas of the city. As a part of 'social urbanism' policy Moravia got a *Cultural Development Center* built by one of Colombia's most renowned architects. It's always bursting with activities.

The city also started relocating the inhabitants from this toxic dump to new housing blocks. The inhabitants become owners of their new apartments. Slowly the population is thus removed from El Morro.

Soon, also the neighbourhood kitchen will need to move. It has been here already for 17 years, run by volunteers to feed 200 children every Saturday. Even former inhabitants of El Morro who moved few kilometres away keep coming back for this moment!

The dump now needs to be sealed to collect the toxic water leaking from its edges and divert it to facilities where plants digest the toxics and remove the heavy metals that would otherwise flow into the surrounding neighbourhood. The first prototype facility is already up.

To seal – ok, but a wall? Not only to us, but also to the inhabitants of El Morro this comes as a threat – and worse … will they get locked inside?! Years of community work … suddenly reveal a resistant and decisive community. Did the authorities through this participatory process create their own most articulate opponent?

In the heated days to follow, together with the community leaders and a team of designers we set out to imagine how this 'enclosing' can be transformed from a threat into an opportunity, and actually provide the space for new community activities and give them back an economy after El Morro will be closed.

Still a bit uneasy about the acceptance of the final *compromiso* by the community, the plan is finally presented on top of the hill. We decide to make sure it is a deal – and meet separately with some of the community leaders, to explain the details of the plan.

Soon we hope to be back – not only to continue the project, but also to meet again with the great people we've met on this captivating spot. *Hasta Luego!*

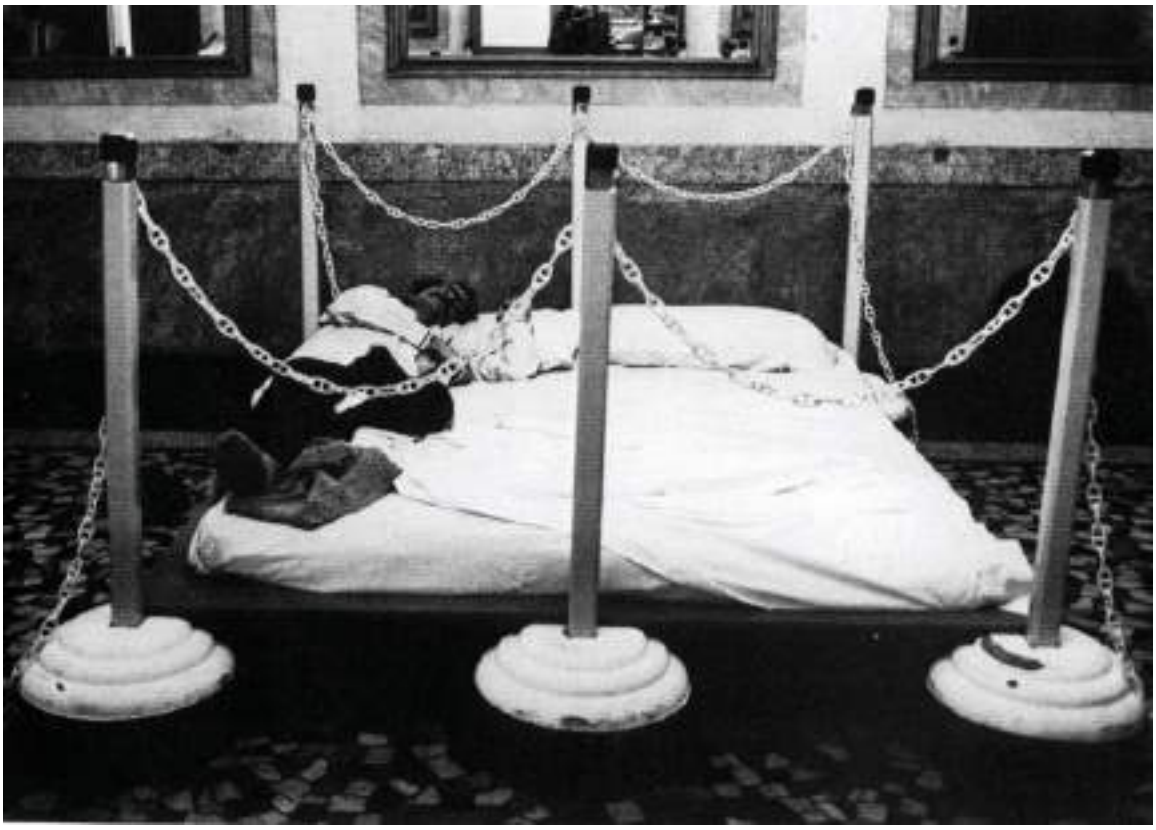
The metropolitan dreams of Ugo La Pietra

Peter T. Lang

MILAN In one of Ugo La Pietra's most memorable performance projects, staged in Milan in 1979, the architect-designer used half a dozen concrete moveable street bollards strung together with a loose chain, to cordon off an area on a busy city street where he arranged a bed for him to sleep in. La Pietra's intent was to toy with simple everyday street furniture in an attempt to confuse the public's perceptions on domesticity and civic space. As La Pietra observed in a recent interview, he wanted to construct new social-urban relationships "without any conditioning" making direct connections between an individual and the city and the city and the individual.

Though he acted for the most part on his own, he often collaborated with a broad community of critics, artists, designers, architects and urban designers. Part of the generation born in 1938, Ugo la Pietra finished his studies in 1964 at the Milan *Politechnico*, together with a number of notable classmates, including Renzo Piano. Like many in this period, he pursued his hand in painting, becoming in 1962 one of the founding members of *"Gruppo del Cenobio"* a short-lived artist collective named after the gallery where they collectively exhibited their work. They considered themselves part of Lucio Fontana's circle, the Italian minimalist known for his provocative acts of canvas slicing.

By the time of the late sixties, however, Ugo La Pietra had become a prominent exponent in the Italian Radical design movement. And the most consistent expressive medium underlying Ugo la Pietra's work was his use of multi-media documentation to develop his urban research and experimental postulations. Using photography, film, and later video, La Pietra explored Milan's peripheries and quotidian street settings carefully registering common everyday uses,



Still from the film 'Spazio reale / Spazio virtuale' by Ugo La Pietra

Virtual space and physical city

taking specific note of the most minor transformations made by the city's anonymous designers. Then La Pietra would set out to disentangle them, through a careful process of analysis and de-codification. The Milanese architect- designer sought out rather unusual means to "re-appropriate" the city that he hoped would build, little by little, a virtual environment linked to the city's active street life. A world that would be totally re-wired, an urban communications network that might well have anticipated today's all pervasive internet.

Complimenting his urban research, Ugo La Pietra's constructed an impressive network of contacts through his prodigious work as editor and publisher. In particular, he edited during the early seventies the magazine "In" which has since acquired almost cult status among those seeking out rare essays and projects by some of the most noted cutting-edge critics and designers from around the world. He also has a knack for curating, pulling together complexly structured exhibitions like *Spazio Reale-Spazio Virtuale: lo spazio audiovisivo* (Real Space-Virtual Space: the audiovisual space). Ugo La Pietra was involved in the Milan based collective Fabrica di Communicazioni (Communications Factory) and helped pull together, in 1973, one of the most spectacular short-lived collectives that immediately represented the who's who of the Italian design scene – 'Global Tools.' Oddly this assembly of later day Italian Radicals, that included the likes of Sotsass, Superstudio, Archizoom, 9999, UFO, Gianni Pettena, and other giants of the day, played a decisive role in auspicating the coming of the eighties Italian post-modernism.

Conceived as a sort of anti-school of Radical design, the Global Tools encounters took place just about the time when experimentation in conceptual design had passed its peak. By 1973, the architectural design world would begin to rediscover the more reputedly coherent values of strictly regulated formalist ideology, in what would be the equivalent of a return of the *ancien regime*. In fact many of the former "Radical" practitioners traversed this moment of crisis by adapting their skills to this new retro-trend, taking their designs into more stylistically mannerist frontiers. Ugo La Pietra, however, continued to keep to his urban conceptual practice, though the crafts undercurrent guiding the Global Tools school would certainly mark La Pietra's later work.

It could be argued that La Pietra bridged the transitional seventies with his filmmaking. He made a number of films, from 35 mm shorts to documentary features. *"La Grande occasione,"* (The Great occasion) his earliest (15' 35 mm BW film, produced by Abet Print-1972), was awarded the First Prize at the International Festival at Nancy in 1975. The film played on the untapped potential within the Milan Triennale building's sprawling empty spaces. La Pietra also produced in 1979 *Spazio Reale o Spazio Virtuale?* (Real Space or Virtual Space?) (20', 16 mm color film, production Milan Triennale). Rendered in documentary format, this film is a treatise on Milan's deep urban culture teeming with local creative inventions.

Ugo La Pietra's 1979 feature length documentary was tied to a much larger project connected to the XVI edition of the Milan Triennale, where he was brought in to develop one of the five themed sections in the exhibition. La Pietra had been appointed curator of this section by a distinguished commission, whose members included Gillo Dorfles and Umberto Eco. For *"Lo spazio audiovisivo"*, (Audiovisual space) the commissioners' goal was to understand the multiple aspects of *"the 'space' produced by the television screen, (space) 'inside' the television screen, as well as the 'space' promoted, solicited and conditioned outside of the screen itself."* (Virtuale Reale 5). La Pietra exploited this opportunity to tie together a number of open projects he had been working on over the decade, mostly exploring the dialectical relationship between the very real contexts of the city, and what lurked in the virtual world beyond.

While groups like Superstudio and Archizoom were formulating ways to derail contemporary society, through explicit attacks on the growing culture of conformism and consumption, La Pietra kept his focus glued to the local phenomenon of a rapidly expanding Milan. La Pietra gravitated around Milan's extensive and unregulated un-planned, urban periphery, where he observed and photographed and later filmed small –scale individual interventions he found emerging in these areas. These became part of his broader survey on "minor" urban interventions, actions he would refer to as *"Gradi della libertá"* (Degrees of freedom). La Pietra suggested that through these contexts one could find the codes to unlock the repression around us.

"The places where we live are continuously imposed on us. In reality the space in which we operate can only exist as a mental model that is continuously modified through experience. It is necessary to find the form that is born out of our experiences instead of by imposed schemes." (Ugo La Pietra "Instructions for the use of the city" Edizioni Associazione Culturale Plana,1978, republished in XVI Triennale di Milano, "Spazio Reale-Spazio Virtuale: lo spazio audiovisivo" Catalogue, Milan, Marsilio, 1979) 68

The 'relocation' of the city

But La Pietra also sought out other urban contexts that might further his quest for "un-balancing" the living environment. He investigated the city centers, where he pointed his camera on very local manifestations of urban creativity, made largely by anonymous authors. Here his focus was primarily on storefronts, and much of what takes place at street level and on the sidewalks. These studies would also fuel alternative creative processes, which La Pietra split into different didactic themes: *"Abitare è essere ovunque a casa propria"* (living is being everywhere in one's own home), *Attrezzatrue per la collettività*, (Equipment for the collective), *Istruzioni per l'uso della città* (instructions for using the city), *Come disegnare la pianta della tua città* (how to draw a plan of your city).

Each of these tactics represent steps towards what La Pietra identifies as the "re-appropriation" of the city, something he sees as similar to what native American Indians do when they give a kind of spiritual identity to a territory, a "sensorial value" to the landscape. In these next series of projects, which la Pietra called *Gradi della libertá* (Levels of Freedom), La Pietra would attempt through a series of multimedial tactics to subvert normal every day urban customs, creating social exchange mechanisms --- on one hand through the designing of audio-visual technologies that would undermine typical barriers between inside and outside, domestic and public, and on the other a sort of urban decodification, mapping, tracing,

As curator of *"Lo Spazio Audiovisivo"*, La Pietra asked Alberto Farassino to edit a section on international film, which included numerous Lumiere brothers turn of the century BW shorts, in a tribute to cinema's conquest of urban space, as well as films by Michael Snow, Chris Welsby, and Clements Klopfenstein.
The re-appropriation of the city, 35mm BW 1977-78 produced for the George Pompidou Center, gives, according to Ugo La Pietra, *"the poor results of an analysis for the discovery of the degrees of freedom that still exist on the inside of the urban system; they are the desperate and dis-organic attempts of a society that no longer can find reasons for what it does, for why it does what it does, or where it does it." (Virtuale-Reale 68).*

The significance of Ugo la Pietra's work lies precisely in his capacity to seek out and document the kind of urban contexts in transition that suggest to him new strategies for creative urban intervention. La Pietra's documentation serves to delineate an operative urban dimension where he can critically develop radically new experimental tactics… that back in the late sixties were explicit challenges to the existential condition of the modern city. But despite all the promises technology has offered in these last decades, Ugo La Pietra has not become that much more optimistic about the state of contemporary society. As La Pietra recently remarked: *"Today with the increase in technological tools it cannot be said that there is a major exchange between public and private spaces even if the marketplace of leisure time (like happy hour) encourages an even greater presence of people in urban spaces. The culture of today moves only great masses of people: concerts, blockbuster exhibitions… There still lacks, just like back in the seventies, places to make culture."* (interview with PTL). A meaningful call to get back to the basics, to get back out on the street and go for a spin. ■

Golden Billion

Kristian Lukic

There are rumours that cities are built to gather the population in one place, and by that, to significantly reduce its number in an easier and more efficient way.

The spectre of the theory of Golden Billion is haunting again. Known mostly in the Russian speaking world (Russian: золотой миллиард / zolotoy milliard), the term was coined by A.Kuzmich (Anatoly Tsikunov) in his book *The Plot of World Government: Russia and the Golden Billion*, to describe the developed West. These days, Golden Billion in networked conspiracy theories usually refers to a post-apocalyptic New World Order with a world population of less than one billion. Crucial point in this decimation of the population (current number of population is almost 7 billion) is global urbanization as a means to group people in the specified area, and thus easily control and potentially decimate the population.

The fact is that the population in cities, without a link to countryside production, is fully dependent on the organized distribution of resources (food, water...), thus enhancing the possibility of catastrophic scenarios in times of social instability. The land of those who cultivated it, now belongs to global investment funds from Gibraltar, Bermuda and the Virgin Islands, so new citizens cannot "go back" to their former homeland.

According to some modern prophecies, the goal also is to microchip (or nanochip) the population, and thus mentally and physically control humanity and literally create a new class (or species) of cyborgs. Without a chip, it will be impossible to buy and sell goods, food, and impossible to survive. Some describe this as one of the signs of the End Times, connecting it with the prophecy from the Apocalypse when humans wouldn't be able to buy or sell anything without the so- called Mark of the Beast in their forehead or hand.

How to force someone to implant such inhuman thing? First thing is to concentrate the population in urban areas, disconnect them from food production and water collection and distribution. The more distant they are from the processes of production, the more dependent they will be on third-hand distribution. If eventually they were to consider acquiring goods from the places of primary production outside of urban zones, the cost of transport and the lack of time would create a significant obstacle to do so. In that case, the only option is to revert to supplies from third-hand distribution. And in a potential cashless society, functioning in the beginning with credit card system (today only 3% of the whole money sum is cash), but relatively soon to be replaced by sophisticated credit chip implants, it will be the only way to survive.

'Cities are the abyss of the human species.'

~Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Émile

Thus, the "conspiracy theory" of microchipping (or nanochipping...) is playing the role of an agent of awareness, an alarm trigger that can potentially raise questions and form critical attitudes toward such a step that is surely questioning the concept of humanity more than ever before. On the other side, spreading the information, and "normalization" of the microchipping idea, before any official claim of such intention, when this idea is still a purely speculative operation, might pave the way for benevolent use of human chips (safety, fear of kidnapping, marking criminals and children). Then, it would slowly become mandatory by legislation.

This would surely be the fulfilment of some artists' dreams that are familiar with persuasive technologies, ubiquitous media, mobile platforms, bioart and locative devices. These artists probably dream about sustainable urban environments and eco-awareness. So, in this dreamed utopia, everyone will drive an electric car, eat organic vegetables made by electric robots and pay the vegetables with subcutaneous electric microchips. Of course, this utopia will come after decimation of mankind as prophesied in the "Georgian tablets" that reads as one of its 10 commandments: "Maintain humanity under 500,000,000 in perpetual balance with nature and guide reproduction wisely - improving fitness and diversity".

So, cities are centripetal machines that suck population into them, acting as efficient dehumanization agents. Cities as aggregators of sin and immorality play a significant part in biblical stories, especially with Sodom and Gomorrah. During the Romanticism period in the 19th century, especially in Germany, prominent figures of the Völkisch movement were criticizing the rapid urbanization of Europe and Germany, thus disconnecting the Volk from Nature, its spiritual and physical habitat. They were against urbanization, multiculturalism in the cities, mixing of nations and races. In a certain way, their environmentalist ideas set some basic principles for contemporary ecology. One of the principles was a strong spiritual focus on the power and laws of natural forces, leading often to anti-humanistic attitudes, which regarded humans as agents of pollution and considered the deployment of any means in order to protect Earth from pollution. Many ideas of the Völkisch movement influenced the former shaping of strong environmental protection legislation in National Socialist Germany that was the first in the world to be implementing it. Some prominent Völkisch movement members were mixing environmental issues with open racism and anti-Semitism as Peter Staudenmaier wrote in his book Ecofasism. The Holocaust idea can be connected with the idea of the innocent and pure Mother Earth, where only those who deserve it, by protecting and nurturing it can live in harmony with nature. ■

Still from film 'Site Specific_LAS VEGAS 05' by Olivio Barbieri

Las Vegas gambling its future

LAS VEGAS Cities like Las Vegas and Dubai don't seem to be particularly concerned about the imminent shortage of water and energy threatening them. There's a somewhat apocalyptic side to this. Hardly a century old and built in the middle of the desert, Las Vegas is not only the biggest gambling city in the world, it's also the largest per capita consumer of water in the US. The city takes almost 90 percent of its water from Lake Mead, where water levels are plummeting as a result. The idea seems to be to enjoy it while it lasts: *après moi le déluge.*

But other dangers appear to be threatening Las Vegas as well. New, tax-free casinos are springing up like mushrooms in Indian reservations, which are subject to their own legislation. In the end, Vegas may not succumb to it's own artificiality, but may be under Indian threat – almost two centuries after the Indian Removal Act of 1830 was passed by the American legislature. ■

Beneath the desert sands: safety, convenience and luxury

USA In the middle of nowhere, in the Mojave desert in the western United States, stands a bland little hut made of concrete. The small building gives access to a secret refuge, constructed in preparation for a variety of potential 'end-of-days' catastrophes. Deep under the desert sands lies a bunker dating back to the Cold War. This bunker – still fully functional and outfitted with a nuclear blast detector – is currently being renovated and converted into what is meant to be the ultimate underground hide-out, where well-paying 'refugees' may comfortably abide the apocalypse, whether it be an atomic war, a meteorite impact, some ecological disaster, biological warfare, or total economic collapse.

The entrepreneurs behind this initiative have compared the bunker's design to that of a luxury cruise ship, where the end of time may be idled away as if on a holiday - for as long as a year if necessary. Among other things, the shelter houses a fully equipped hospital, a movie theatre, a dental clinic, supplies for a year long stay and comfortable living quarters. The only thing slightly less idyllic compared to cruise ships will be the view from the cabin windows. The bunker is part of a network of twenty similar shelters, situated all over the US, potentially housing a total of some 4000 refugees. The network is being commercially developed by the Vivos company. The government has its own shelters, so why shouldn't American citizens be allowed to have their own hideouts?

The bunkers are currently being equipped. And that's just as well, because, as we all know, all Hell will break loose in 2012. For just $50,000 (children pay half price) you, too, can prepare yourself for the inevitable. It may not be cheap, but you really can't put a price on safety. ■

Vivos Shelter (source: www.terravivos.com)

Life: Supersurface by Superstudio

Life: Supersurface

Superstudio is one of the most well known protagonists of the Italian radical architecture from the end of the 1960s and the start of the 1970s. With the cycle *Five Fundamental Acts* Superstudio objects to the idea of architecture as a dead piece of decoration of life. Instead, Superstudio chooses to show the great themes of life and creates an architecture based on the 'Five Fundamental Acts': life, education, ceremony, love and death.

Life, Supersurface is a film from this cycle and was shown for the first time during the exhibition *Italy: The New Domestic Landscape* in the Museum of Modern Arts in New York (1972), curated by Emilio Ambasz. Originally, the 35mm film was made to imitate commercial advertising and promotion films. As an argument for the liberation of mankind, *Life, Supersurface* projects a never-ending communication and energy grid that is rolled out over the entire planet. The film mostly consists of stills made to move and zoomed in images of this network. At the end, two actors dance a ballet of nature and technology. ■

Conspired environments

Konrad Becker

Only absolute tyranny or a spontaneous random mob could be pictured as devoid of concerted action and conspiratorial planning. Even random mobs will try to avoid division by police forces, and autocrats routinely compartmentalize information as operations strategy. Conspiracy is the default mode of oligarchic societal structures, from Rome to Byzantium, medieval dominions and contemporary plutocracies. Orchestrating more or less ingenious forms of scheming has always been the order of the day, and there is a blatant conspiracy of the rich to get richer. In a worldwide machinery of business interests and individual gain, corruption gains a new power.

But conspiracies are not necessarily by individuals or a minority against a majority, nor are they always centrally controlled or coordinated. El Iblis Shah identifies multiple "conspiracies of the many against the few" in Western democracies.

The very emergence of the modern term "conspiracy theory" and contemporary conspiratorial concepts is connected to the globalization of trade in the late nineteenth century and the materialization of complex worldwide interrelations. According to the Oxford English Dictionary the first use of the term dates back to an economics article from 1920, and only much later did it began to enter regular usage. It was related to investigations into the complex matrix of a global economy and its veiled vectors of influence. Simplistic collusion theories are profoundly silly when they do not include enough vectors of influence, yet by connecting too many dots they become a cloud of worthless vagueness. However, conspiracy theories are also poetic abstractions, enlightening allegories and amusing dramatizations, instructive entertainment as well as informative and useful. They are abstractions that constitute a valid effort to engage with an increasing complexity of causal interrelations and the patterns of collusion of interests and influence in a networked world. In a largely integrated global media environment the politics of power are necessarily related to communications agenda-setting. There is a largely invisible conspiracy of data-mined preferences linking customer profiles ("whoever bought this item also bought this one") to virtual purchase circles of online shops and music portals. In Western pluralistic societies the power to influence results in democracies where the concept of a public and a free press remains widely invisible too. Manufacturing consensual reality cannot be explained by a paranoid model of infiltration or a simple understanding of duped recipients of messages designed to inhibit an imaginary "true consciousness." It requires a more thorough understanding of subjectivity and social gravity. Looking into the mechanisms of the power of media and PR reveals how manipulation by external forces can be challenged. Those with a sense of opportunity utilize communication settings to create their own meanings instead of the ones imposed by a cultural cognitive industry. Parallel cultures of unauthorized rereading of meaning gain momentum through aligning interests and what could be called networks of cultural counter-conspiracies and epistemological guerillas. ■

From: Konrad Becker, Strategic Reality Dictionary. Autonomedia 2009.

Second Life on Sale?

Of virtual worlds and things that pass

Piet Vollaard

THE GRID, JULY 2010 – According to the Second Life Grid Survey almost half of the 60,000 'regions' existing in 2010 are 'dead or stored'. Is an exodus threatening the most successful virtual world? And does it matter?

If various economic, social and political reasons in the real world obstruct the creation of an ideal city and an ideal community, then it should at least be possible to realize this ideal in the virtual world. Indeed, the laws of economics and politics do not apply there. And, partly due to the absence of any restrictions of place and time, the possibilities for building a strong social community should be much more real.

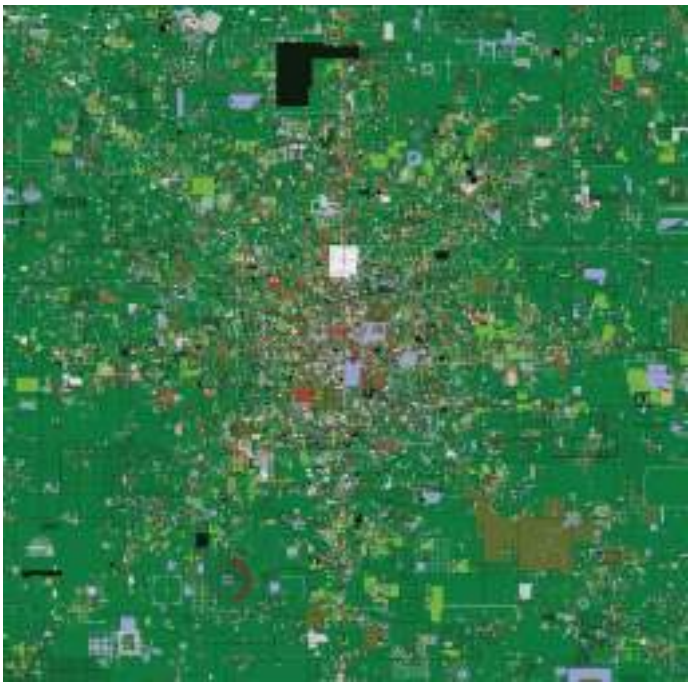
This probably was the train of thought of many Internet pioneers. And indeed, there is no other place than the virtual world of the Internet that has seen the establishment of so many alternative communities involving so many participants, and so many cities with so many buildings. There is also no place, for that matter, that has seen them disappear just as quickly, but that is inherent in pioneering. After all, the former Wild West of the United States was also littered with deserted villages and small towns.

As from the moment people were capable of communicating from a distance through computer networks (Arpanet, late 1960s), they started sending each other messages, raising discussions and setting up collective groups. Initially, this concerned scientific and military communication, which was the prime reason for setting up the Internet, but before long the subjects and the groups linked to these subjects expanded in many different directions.

The Well

In 1985, Stewart Brand and Larry Briljant started The Well *(the Whole Earth 'Lectronic Link)*, which is generally considered to be the first real online community, including the first newsletters. Brand is one of the big pioneers of the 1960s alternative movement in California. His book *Whole Earth Catalogue*, which was published in various volumes between 1968 and 1972, was more or less considered to be the bible of intellectual counterculture of those years. In 1966, Brand set up a public campaign to disclose to all inhabitants of this earth the satellite photos NASA made of the earth and which were kept secret until then. And this photo was put on the cover of *The Whole Earth Catalogue*. Brand intended to use this catalogue to gather all relevant scientific, cultural and countercultural information, and continually update and correct this information with the help of readers. The *digi* slogan *Information wants to be free*, attributed to Thomas Jefferson by some, and unearthed and popularized by Brand was the ideological basis of the Catalogue and of its successor on the Internet: The Well.

In the years of the Internet before it became the worldwide web, when communication was still only text-based and conducted by email, newsletters, BBS (Bulletin Board System) and news groups, many communities like the Well came into being. Eventually, these communities ended up as the predecessors of so-called web2.0 communities like Facebook, LinkedIn, Hyves, etc. Communities that are far less ideological, but all the more popular.



The map of Alphaworld, circa 2005

MUDs

In addition to this 'serious' application of internet communication, the new medium was also used for playing games ever since its conception. In many cases, these games were based on the so-called *role playing games*, like Dungeons and Dragons, starting from the very first pioneers like the Colossal Cave Adventure (1975) and Zork (1977) up to the enormous success of MUD (Multi-User Dungeon), which became the generic name for this kind of online gaming communities as early as 1978. The variations (and the related abbreviations) were enormous, and with the introduction of the graphic possibilities of the www, these role playing games were able to develop into the present, highly successful generation of online games such as Warcraft.

Virtual cities

Next to the more text-based online communities which initially revolved around exchanging information and discussion, and the role playing games which were mainly about having fun with like-minded enthusiasts until the early hours, a third variant originated, i.e., the online virtual worlds, or in digi-language: MMORPG (Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game). One of the predecessors in this genre was the Active Worlds application which was set up in 1994 as an alternative browser, while the first popular browser Mosaic was made available to the public only one year earlier. Whereas browsers such as Mosaic were mainly concerned with information transfer (text, but also images, hyperlinks and file transfer), the makers of Active Worlds envisioned a combination of information transfer and online communities such as the many MUDs. An important innovation was that users did not make pages (as done for websites) but were building houses, initially in so-called 2.5D, but before long in 3D. With a personal avatar (an online alternative personality) and from their self-constructed virtual house, users were able to seek contact with fellow inhabitants, but could also transfer information, both by means of chats and by links to 'ordinary websites' (of course, nothing was ordinary in those days).

With this, the 'real world' approached the virtual world. In these virtual worlds, distance, which was later neutralized by the Internet, was replaced by proximity: you actually had to walk over to your neighbour (in Active Worlds you could also fly to go quicker) in order to see what he had to communicate. And in order to be able to talk, your neighbour had to be 'in.'

The fact that the city was an attractive metaphor, is also apparent from the conception of *De Digitale Stad* [The Digital City], the first Dutch public Internet provider and portal which was started in 1994 and later turned into the xs4all provider, next to a host of other companies. You entered *De Digitale Stad* on the 'central square' and your personal website was referred to as your 'house.' You could collect your mail at the post office, go to the education square, health square and, insofar as relevant in the first few years, take the subway to a website outside of the city.

But *De Digitale Stad* was 2D and controlled top-down. Active Worlds soon appeared in full 3D and its control was restricted to a building and social protocol and a ban on commercial use. Following installation of the 'browser', you could visit the city and its residents, look at houses and larger buildings and chat with avatars. But the best thing (I thought) was that you could build houses and palaces yourself and invite your friends to these constructions where you could later even show film clippings (through online links), make music, visit shops (through links with online shops), gambling houses (you get the picture), etc. And all of this around the turn of the century when many people still looked at the Internet as a hype which would blow over.

Alphaworld

In fact, Alphaworld (the name given to the most important city in Active Worlds) was no more than a large, open, green-coloured field with X and Y coordinates. In the middle of the field (at coordinates 0,00; 0,00) there was an entrance gate where a guide would welcome visitors. Residents of Alphaworld could look for their own spot in the field to start building. Especially, this possibility of building turned out be a success. Alphaworld had a special building materials site where you could collect building components, a worthy combination of IKEA and Wickes. Alphaworld moreover included a AW building school and users were encouraged to think up new building materials and complete building components (staircases, elevators, doors, house fronts, furniture, etc.) and offer these on the building yard. Over time, Alphaworld grew into a complete city of which a 'map' was only published later. The most remarkable feature of this city map was the chaotic development spreading out from the centre. Not very surprising if you let the inhabitants loose without any form of regulatory city design. But anyone looking at the Alphaworld map through one's lashes could detect higher levels of density along the north-south and east-west axis and the diagonals. This was the result of localization by means of coordinates. Indeed, N2000; E2000 or SE;W3000 is easier to remember than N37564, E2947.If you lost the coordinates of your house or that of your friends, you would never find them again. Not really a problem because you could build as many new houses as you pleased. This turned walking through the suburbs of Alphaworld into a bizarre experience. To your left and right, you would see unfinished and deserted houses, or pieces of roads that suddenly stopped, but also complete castles including moats looming up at the horizon. Futuristic, Escher-like constructions that were apparently erected in 3D, but for which the builder obviously lacked the 3D insight in order to arrive at something coherent, and therefore just left off and started again elsewhere. No wonder you would never meet many people in the areas outside of the centre.

Enter: the money

Alphaworld still exists, but never received a large following. Today, there are several virtual worlds. Significantly different from the no-money politics of Alphaworld was Entropia Universe, a large multiplayer world, which totally revolves around (virtual) money. Although development of Entropia was already started in the mid-90s, the first public and commercial application saw the light no sooner than 2003. Entropia is set up in a science fiction-like environment where you claim land as a colonist with the goal of increasing your possession. Next to a whole range of other forms of production, you can win minerals and sell these; so, a true paradise for wannabe economists and speculators. However, the concept behind Entropia mainly is that users first have to buy themselves into this world, and then can engage in making as much money as possible. And Entropia also offers the possibility of conversing this virtual money into real money at 'the bank'. At the first public sale of virtual banking licences in Entropia, approximately 400,000 real US dollars were made. At its highpoint, Entropia had more than 800,000 users. The Guinness Book of Records refers to the sale of a virtual space station for 330,000 real dollars as the most expensive virtual object ever. In June 2010, the makers of Entropia announced that they will sell their world for 6 million.

With this ending, Entropia more than anything resembles the classical pyramid scheme with early birds getting away with the money at the expense of those enrolling later.

Second Life / Real Life

Almost at the same time as Entropia Universe, the comparable virtual world of Second Life took off. In this virtual world, money also pays a role but is not as prominently featured as in Entropia. Second Life most resembles Alphaworld, but uses virtual money and has more technical possibilities. Especially building and enhancing the avatar, your 'second identity in your second life' is much more important than in Alphaworld. Unlike Alphaworld and Entropia, Second Life was an immediate media success, and as a result, also a success among users. Around 2004, you were hopelessly obsolete if you had not at least one avatar in Second Life. Banks and other large companies were queuing to open up a branch in Second Life. Artists and journalist sometimes stayed in Second Life for months on end to report on their virtual reality. And various countries opened up an embassy in Second Life.

Amsterdam for sale in Second Life (source: www.timothyhorrigan.com)

Like in Alphaworld, you could build your own dream palace in Second Life. But you could also become a land owner (which was more or less free in Alphaworld, where you only had to pay a small user's fee to start building). And you could also buy complete islands in Second Life to cover with commercial real estate (how fairy-like). Despite the rather sweet appearance of Second Life, money quickly made this world go around too. And although it concerned virtual money, calculated in Linden Dollars (named after its creator Philip Linden), virtual real estate in Second Life, and in some cases popular avatars were quickly converted into hard cash in the real world. Moreover, Second Life, like Entropia, offered various ways to make money with activities other than friendly chats, including, of course, online gambling. This was prohibited in 2007, which in turn, resulted in 'virtual bankruptcies' of 'in-world' banks, thus having economic ramifications in the real world. In addition, Second Life increasingly faced fraud, extortion and violence. Violence which also found its way into the real world, forcing youngsters to give up their avatar or their possessions (something which is also found with other popular online games). In 2009, around 230 inhabitants were able to make more than 5,000 US dollar from Second Life. Now in 2010, the attraction has totally worn off, and you are no less than a loser now if you are still hanging around in Second Life: "So 2006!"

And so ends what may have been the biggest promise on the Internet in a major let-down. The virtual world is not the real world. But worse than that: it is just no fun to keep hanging around there, and then it is easy –unlike the real world – to step out. Online communities are still flourishing in many forms and on many different platforms. This is a situation which is likely to last, although new hypes will also certainly come into play. However, whether we will ever be able to really lose ourselves with our avatar in our virtual city and lose contact with the real world, is highly debatable. And even though, at some point, we may be able to use all our senses in this virtual world (up to now, we can only see and listen), and be able to experience the physical sensation of making love (according to some people, the real 'killer app' of the Internet), it will still be easy to step out, to put the virtual real estate on sale, ignore all virtual friends, give away the virtual money, and if so desired, commit commercial suicide and return to the daily reality of the real world. ■

Nerds stay at home

Still from film 'Hikikomori' by Francesco Jodice and Kal Karman

TOKIO Hikikomori and Otaku are Japanese adolescents who have turned away from the hustle and bustle of metropolitan life. 'Hikikomori' means ' to retreat from society'. These adolescents, mostly boys, no longer see the point of joining in the urban ratrace and they're not sure what to do with their lives. 'Otaku' means both 'nerd' and 'home'; it is the moniker these adolescents have given themselves. They hardly ever leave their rooms, and spend their time gaming, watching videos or reading comics. Communication with others is preferably done through indirect means, like mobille phones, or the internet. The Otakus are a countermovement, distancing themselves from city life, that never resting, frantic, ever-demanding, money-making, money-spending machine that is urban existence. Where are the residents of Matrix City? - They're in their rooms, preferring the virtual realities of internet to the spectacle of the big city. ■

Gaming as a job

SHANGHAI It's everyone's dream: cashing in on your hobby. Korean and Chinese adolescents have found their very own niche market within the online gaming community. As long as you're up playing all hours, why not try and make some money? The name of this new game is 'gold farming': young gamers collecting as much in-game currency and other virtual goods as possible and selling them to other, less talented or less patient players, who are willing to pay. The digital merchandise is made available through sites like Ebay, where they can be purchased using PayPal's online banking system.
Reliable figures for gold farming are hard to come by, but estimates suggest that gold farming has been around for many years and that millions of dollars are involved. This money, however, is to be divided among tens of thousands of young people gaming incessantly. Online game designers and hosts are unhappy about this new development and virtually every game prohibits gold farming. Some countries even go so far as to ban the posession of any virtual money, thereby banning a large portion of online games. Several revenue services are looking into the new industry, not least because there is a concern that an entire economic system, of unknown scale and mysterious attraction, is materializing outside of their reach.
Chinese goldfarmers could probably not care much less. Says one of them: 'I sudenly realised that the online sale of cheap virtual products to Americans is the same as exporting cheap Chinese labour.' As long as Chinese prices remain competitive, gold farming will be profitable to them. ■

Facebook threatening to sue 'suicide site'

ROTTERDAM *Tired of your Social Network? Liberate your newbie friends with a Web2.0 suicide!* The Web2.0 Suicide Machine is a program that allows you to 'unfriend' yourself from Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIN and MySace. The Suicide Machine then deletes every trace you left behind on the internet through these sites. After using the Suicide Machine, you'll be completely Web2.0-free. And without Facebook, you'll finally be able to find the time to meet real people. Without Twitter, you'll be free as a bird. The Suicide Machine started out innocently enough, but it has led to a debate on social media and privacy, culminating in a warning by Facebook to shut the program down.
The Suicide Machine speaks to the mixed feelings that social media arouse in some. On the one hand these media are readily accessible and seemingly open platforms, a means for the world to meet at the push of a button, and to share news, exchange invitations and gossip with friends and friends' friends. At the same time, however, they're also a very insistent medium, their user-friendliness the result of shrewd design. And of course, the accessibility of these platforms comes at a price – their owners are making a lot of money. They do this by selling advertising space, but also by making the personal data of millions of users available to interested commercial parties – at a price, of course. Privacy is of only minor importance when it comes to selling these data, a fact users are largely unaware of. In fact, hardly anyone takes the trouble of reading internet's fine print. Users are therefore largely unaware of the fact that, by signing up, they consent to the use of their data. The builders of the Suicide Machine soon got to know Facebook's serious side, when the company threatened to sue them. ■

Urban-physical spaces transform into gamespaces

Ilias Marmaras

The immersion of virtual worlds and the networks of the digital social media in the recent years have strongly influenced and transformed our perception of the urban landscapes, changed the social relations and gave birth to new forms of political struggle. We cannot talk anymore about separated environments like the "physical" as opposed to the "virtual", but rather about a fusion that is perceived as a constant change. Consequently, in these new environments identities, subjectivities and performative actions are born and function in a dimension that can be seen and analyzed as an "imaginary dimension consisted of new forms of desire production" while at the same time older ways of understanding the social and the political power relations and hierarchies should be considered. A fusion that gave form for a period of time to such a gamespace happened in Greece, and especially in Athens, during the riots of December 2008.

The events that took place during this period can be seen much more clearly if one goes further from the standard political analysis that is usually used to explain the causes and the results of such revolts and political movements by introducing terms and concepts used in the online video games, virtual worlds and in the social media. Terms as *single user game*, *multiuser game* or *gameplay* become very useful in order to understand the forms of participation, the ways of acting and the political demands of these 'urban wars'. The riots can be presented through such terms – as well as the streams of information, the emergence of which became possible through the social media and to some extent in the virtual world of Second Life.

If, until now, we were accustomed to the quotidian competition until "final fall" in the realm of the people -a competition that produces the legislative frame context of the mutual extermination of the players in the social arena- perhaps now is the time to see a new kind of war, the war that is turned against the gamespace itself. ■

Persuasive technologies

Konrad Becker

The power of suggestion works most effectively by making targets believe that ideas and desires they identify with are made up by their own mind. "The most potent weapon of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed," said Steve Biko about the politics of consciousness,
in I Write What I Like. Soft despotism of ideological warfare cultivates and exploits mass irrationality. Victims are guided by their own desire into a trap, a situation which limits freedom irreversibly. "Who moved the cheese?" When the cheese is stealthily moved, you can bet that it is a trap. Influence works best with victims unaware of manipulation. Eventual internalization of rules is the goal of engineering consent through creation of myths and necessary illusions. Perception management handles audience interest by attracting media attention; it uses simplified labels, distinguishing symbols and distinctive phrases or slogans. Strategic communication must be carefully timed and informed by intelligence on events and public opinion. While communications may be channeled through prestigious leaders, credibility alone determines output. When white communication sources are less credible or have undesirable
effects, black disinformation is employed. Consequences of actions need to be carefully considered and, in order to deal with counter-reactions, a deflective form of action or diversion needs to be in place to diminish frustration impact. Traditional disciplinarian programming is long term and discontinuous, contemporary consumer control societies are based on continuous short-term rapid cycles without limit. Prisons without walls raise desires and satiate them through fetishized consumer democracy. Through social control of primary drives, one-dimensional humanoids compliant with submissive consumerism and economic productivity grant stability. Instead of repressing desire, the shaping of identities for stable societies draws on strategies of creating and designing products for the innermost desires. Motivational research in corporate focus-group sessions is modeled after psychoanalytic group therapy and personality assessment schemes. Lifestyle marketing segmentation in definable categories of personal values allows psychographic targeting beyond income and location demographics. While security and belonging is a primary psychological need for mainstream economic target groups, for the aspirational segments of society what counts is status and the esteem of others, while for the category of overachievers it is control. For a percentage of reform-oriented populations, self-esteem is at the forefront. There is no society but personal satisfaction, self-actualization through consumer products that make it possible to express one's self. Removed from social concerns, the seduction into a hyper-individual lifestyle of isolation advertises capitalism as socialism for oneself. To get into the mind of voters, politics converts into a consumer business responsive to vote markets. When systems fail in their domination over individuals by means of persuasion, they take control through rituals of fatality. Technologies of mind transform into machineries of death. ■

From: Konrad Becker, Strategic Reality Dictionary. Autonomedia 2009.

Oilfields in Baku

View on Sectors (photo: Victor E. Nieuwenhuys, source: Haags Gemeentemuseum)

Oil Rock in Baku, a realized New Babylon?

BAKU, AZERBAIJAN One of the world's oldest oil cities is Baku, the 1,500 years old capital of Azerbaijan. As early as in the eighth century, the presence of oil in the ground was already known. Marco Polo says in his travel journal: *"Near the Georgian border, there is a spring from which gushes a stream of oil, in such abundance that a hundred ships may load there at once. This oil is not good to eat; but it is good for burning and as a salve for men and camels affected with itch or scab."*

Boomtown

Ever since the fifteenth century, surface oil has been won from wells. However, commercial development took a real flight at the end of the nineteenth century when the need for fossil fuels started growing quickly. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Baku was the largest oil field in the world, good for fifty percent of production worldwide. In those years, Baku was a real boomtown and also a centre of finance and speculation, comparable to a city like Dubai today. The extraction of oil enabled the city to grow into one of the most prosperous cities of the region. Parks, large urban dwellings and a majestic boulevard still bear witness to this wealth. Baku also was the stage of the onset of the Russian revolution. And as is always the case with large oil fields – there is nothing new under the sun with the Iraq war – the oil fields of Baku were the object of heavy fighting. In fact, the battle of Stalingrad in World War II was a struggle for the control of Baku and consequently, for a second oil supply duct in the direction of the Mediterranean Sea.

Post-industrial landscape

Today, Baku continues to be a big oil producer, but it has since long ceased to be the most important one; this role has been taken over by the Middle East. In and around the city, the extraction oil fields look deserted, while oil is still seeping from the ground. And off the coast of Baku lies one of the most fascinating industrial landscapes of the world: the so-called Oil Rock, a system of oil platforms, derricks, workers' houses and connecting roads built on piles sixty miles from the coast. A terrifying and at the same time sublime post-industrial landscape which nowadays has largely passed into disuse. The authorities do not deny Oil Rock. This would also be impossible as it can be seen from the boulevard and is certainly visible with Google Earth. However, a visit to this oil town is not exactly encouraged. A BBC team wanting to make a documentary there was not granted permission and could only film the 'city' from a helicopter. It is said that many of the platforms have subsided and that at some places water is even gushing into the former workers' houses.

New Babylon

Images of the Baku oil field are no less than apocalyptic. However, strangely enough, the city on piles also strongly resembles the Situationist project New Babylon of the Dutch artist Constant Nieuwenhuys. Constant, who worked on the project from the late 1950s until the beginning of the 1970s, envisioned a new city which would spread out like a network of large steel spatial constructions over existing cities and landscapes. This city was to offer room to the free creative development of the nomadic *homo ludens* (the playful man) liberated from the need of having to work. In order to realize this project, Constant gave up his painting and for years on end produced a large quantity of models, drawings and collages exploring the potential of new Babylon. In many respects, New Babylon is a utopia, albeit a utopia in images and not a described one (as is common). However, gradually Constant became less convinced of the feasibility of his project. Like many of the former Situationists (Constant, for that matter, was already expelled from the movement by Debord at the end of the 1950s), he became disillusioned with the possibility of a real creative revolution in the aftermath of May 1968. Although he never renounced the idea behind New Babylon, the last paintings of the project made around 1974 reveal an increasingly dystopian image. Images which are terrifyingly close to the images of post-industrial Baku. ■

illustration: Ramon Knoester, WHIM architecture

A refuge of buoyant refuse

PACIFIC OCEAN There are places in the world's great oceans where 'plastic' islands can be found. They are formed by plastic that is either blown or dumped into the sea, and is then carried to specific spots by Atlantic currents, where they accumulate into floating refuse heaps. Although these islands are often invisible from the sky, they consist of huge quantities of pieces of plastic, big and (mostly) small, suspended just beneath the ocean's surface. In fact, there is so much debris, the chances of being able to clean everything up seem slim indeed.

Maritime species, like seabirds and turtles, swallow the plastics and may die as a result of not being able to digest them. Another problem is that toxic wastes, such as PCB's and DDT, attach themselves to small particles of plastic, that find their way into the digestive systems of humans, when they eat seafish.

The newly found islands inspired Ramon Knoester (of WHIM architecture) to try and transform the floating heaps of garbage into buoyant isles that are fit for human settlement. The idea is to create islands by processing the debris *in situ*. Knoester is now researching what technical requirements are to be met.

One option under consideration is to gather all the small pieces of plastic that are currently degrading and seeping into the marine ecosystem, and to mellt these together for some new purpose. It would be killing two birds with one stone: collecting the debris will become more attractive and floating islands are created that may serve as places of refuge for victims of climate change. Life on one of Knoester's *Recycled Islands* will be similar to that in any urban context, but it will be as independent from mainland existence as possible. The cultivation of food will take place on the island itself, as will the development of energy and the recycling of waste goods.

Since there is so much plastic floating around, Knoester's projected islands are no small matter: his first design would cover some 10,000 square kilometre, roughly the size of Hawaii. ■

Second-hand is better

Wikado project 2012 Architects, playground made of recycled wind turbine blades (photo: Karola van Rooyen)

ROTTERDAM Under the slogan *Superuse*, 2012 Architects are working on more efficient forms of recycling in construction. Over the past years, the firm applied the most unexpected forms of 'superuse' of 'second-hand' materials; a playground of discarded wind turbine blades, a coffee bar made of old washing machines, a 'listening bar' annex lounge chair of old car tyres, a watchtower of stainless steel draining boards, a shop display of old car windows, etc. By now, 2012 Architects also finished the completion of an entire villa almost completely built from recycled materials and components.

As from the 1960s, recycling has been an important strategy for sustainable, ecological or green building. Recycling reduces the refuse heap and puts an end to unnecessary energy consumption. 30% of Dutch refuse originates from construction. Today, approximately 90% of this refuse is being recycled. In practice, this means that the refuse is sorted, and shredded or crushed. This material is used as base material for embankments, or melted down or compressed into new materials. However, the value added to the base materials in the production process of construction materials, is largely undone by the process of recycling itself. It is required to use energy in order to shred or crush the refuse and produce materials which at most have the same properties as before, but are usually of lesser quality. Moreover, many materials are not suited for this way of recycling because they are compound materials and can only be broken up in separate base materials by using a great deal energy. This problem is in part solved by second-hand markets and shops. The big advantage of second-hand use lies in the fact that the high-grade properties of the compound products are preserved and are not degraded to low-quality building materials. However, in construction second-hand use is hardly common practice. Current second-hand use in construction must be regarded as the still-smouldering remnants from the 1960s subculture. This is not to say that this subculture has not professionalized over the years. With its Rural Studio, the University of Auburn (Alabama), for instance, applies a combination of local construction techniques and radical re-use. For one of the buildings of this university, laminated car windows, which are normally disassembled, granulated and melted into low-quality products (usually bottles), are applied in their original composition to build a large glass front.

Superuse

Superuse assumes that much 'refuse' can be used in its original, unaltered state. There is no need to disassemble or crush the materials. Clever design in which the existing characteristics of the refuse are included in the design at an early stage, may lead to innovative applications and unexpected styling. A use beyond the actual, original use: *superuse*. To realize this, it is necessary to make quite some changes to the traditional process of design and construction. Salvaging in its broadest sense must become part of the process and not only be part of the end, but also be considered at the beginning of the building process: salvage company and contractor combined in one. In addition, the design process must also be adapted. Designers can no longer rely on the exact specifications of recycled building materials, but need to discover the hidden qualities second-hand materials have to offer.

By way of listing such hidden qualities and to learn from mutual experience, 2012 started a website, www.superuse.org, allowing everybody to place his or her examples of superuse.

It is not required that the refuse is taken from buildings alone. Next to materials and semi-manufactured products, installations, entire buildings and parts thereof as well as urban residuals also qualify for re-use. An important new 'design task' particularly relates to recognizing the specific building properties of refuse materials which were not used in construction originally. This demands thorough research, creativity, and knowledge about the properties required from a specific building product in order to understand that the side of a refrigerator is suited as insulating material for house fronts and that washing machine doorframes are perfectly locking windows.

In listing the properties of the refuse, economic aspects may also play a role. Many products are now already subject to payment of a statutory removal contribution. This means that some products can be purchased for 'negative material costs'; in other words, they bring in money. In the future, the costs of this removal contribution are expected to increase, thus providing an additional economic impetus for re-use. It may not be long before it will be more expensive to throw a product away than it is to mend it. ■

The use of subsidized rapping

Jacco Hupkens

KANALENEILAND, UTRECHT As a hip-hop city, Utrecht is known for its eclectic, positive music, with C-Mon & Kypski, Kyteman's Hiphop Orchestra and Arts the Beatdoctor being its most famous representatives. But there's another hip–hop scene to be found in the city, that of the *community centre rap* in neighbourhoods that have been in the news in a negative way over the last couple of years: Overvecht, Zuilen, and Kanaleneiland. Usually the lyrics of this music don't carry much hope. They're about surroundings in decay, criminality and poverty. Through organizations for well-being, the city supports projects in which adolescents from these neighbourhoods can develop themselves as a rapper. However, it's still rare for one of these youngsters to become a serious artist. What exactly is the use of subsidized rapping and what role does hip-hop play for these neighbourhoods' youth?

Mark van Rijn is an MC and an experienced leader of workshops in the Utrecht Centre for the Arts (Utrechts Centrum voor de Kunsten, UCK), which manages radio and music studios in several community centres in Utrecht. According to Van Rijn, most of the youngsters he guides in the workshops want to rap only because it's cool to call yourself a rapper, not because they are interested in rapping as an art form. "About seventy percent of them look at it as something temporary, a good way to express their emotions. But they don't want to practice in being on stage, they don't want to learn how to do freestyle (improvised rapping, ed.) and after a while they give up on hip-hop. To develop oneself as an artist, and to build up a network, one has to try harder, and they don't.

KK kehba's in Kanaleneiland

A significant phenomenon is the fact that almost all of the boys from Kanaleneiland use *gangsta*-slang, American-inspired lyrics about gang violence and criminality. "They will rap something like 'I'm the Big Daddy from the street,' etcetera. Come on man, you're twelve years old!" says Van Rijn. Or they copy a verse from the YouTube-clip *Shab 180cc*, which has a soundtrack about racing and stunting on motor scooters and breaking in and is very popular in the neighbourhood. (Stunting with scooters and bikes, usually by riding it on one wheel for a while, is a popular activity amongst the local Moroccan-Dutch youth.) Some lyrics from the *Shab* soundtrack's lyrics: "No problem at all/ screwdriver, lever, flipper and a brick." The song is made by the The Hague-based hip-hop group DHC. Some people are having problems with the song being used as a soundtrack for an Utrecht film. On YouTube for an agitated commenter responds with a heavy Dutch-American accent: "Fuck Utrecht kk kehba's ('cancer whores', ed.) I'm kk glad that I'm a Hagenees (inhabitant of The Hague, ed.), wollah."

Kanaleneiland, quickly built in the sixties, mostly containing blocks of flats with cheap rental apartments, has many unemployment and criminality problems. In the last couple of years these problems have decreased, but are still very substantial. A city-survey showed that in 2008, fifty percent of the neighbourhood's inhabitants felt unsafe, mostly because of difficulty with adolescents. Half of the people in Kanaleneiland are low educated, a number twice as high as the city's average. Forty percent of the inhabitants are Moroccan-Dutch, twice as much as there are Dutch or Turkish.

The first thing Van Rijn advises his workshop's participants, is to rap about something close, about their own lives: family, school, or their own neighbourhood. That's how in 2007 *Hands Off My Neighbourhood!* came about, reacting on an assembling-ban in a part of Kanaleneiland. This restriction was ordered in an attempt to contain street criminality. Rapper Yassin 'Loki' Celli describes the neighbourhood as one of "cameras and misery," wrongly portrayed by "the media," unemployment being the cause of all the trouble. Meanwhile he brags about his "VW Golf VR6 with big fat rims."

The song became a small hit on YouTube - it has about 150 thousand views. Loki performed in a clip by the sensation blog Geen-Stijl and Volkskrant.TV, a quality newspaper's blog, made a report on him in which he points to racism: "Don't think every Muslim is the Taliban" and "I'm a Moroccan, so I'm the main offender." Volkskrant portrayed him as a social commentator and a mouth-piece for his Moroccan neighbours.

According to Van Rijn, who was involved with Loki's music, six months later Loki's fame could be expanded thanks to a music video accompanying a song about Geert Wilders, who had just released his web film *Fitna*. "For this clip we had gotten a 5000 euro subsidy from the city, on the condition that the clip would be completed in two and a half months. That's when he started showing diva-like behaviour. He wanted motorbikes in the clip and someone famous. It wasn't possible. In the end I had to give back the money to the city." Loki wasn't to be reached for this article, according to his Hyves-page he is mostly working on his studies right now.

Social competences

If getting youngsters seriously involved with music is so difficult, why then does the UCK put so much effort in this workshop? Van Rijn: "It's not as much about the artistic result as it is about the process. For high schools, rap is a way to get attached to the so-called "social competences" of difficult adolescents. It's very hard to get them to write an essay, but they are willing to try writing rap lyrics. Loki's failed music video does make Van Rijn dreary, though. "This boy, like many others, mostly wanted to be cool, play the rapper. It was all about the attention. Now he has wasted all goodwill. Actually, this example has taken some power out of my optimistic believes in these kind of big projects." ■

A radical alternative for Vredenburg

UTRECHT In 1973, the last section of Hoog Catharijne was opened which was, together with the Rotterdam-based Zuidplein, the first real mall of the Netherlands. Six years later, the adjoining music centre Vredenburg was also opened. Today, both former showpieces are under drastic renovation. But things could have gone the other way too.

In the early summer of 1968, the city of Utrecht asked four architects, including Hermen Hertzberger and Frank van Klingeren, to present their vision on the construction of a new cultural centre. The entire area around the station is being redeveloped at the time and the city decided to have a new concert hall built on the Vreeburg square, next to shopping mall Hoog Catharijne, another planned project for the area. Van Klingeren pleaded for an open, informal cultural centre, which he believed should not be situated on the border, but in the heart of the new shopping centre and around the public square. He pleads for accessibility– a centre for all layers of the population with a large degree of openness, and a combination of cultural functions, all with the emphasis on experiment. In an interview with the *Utrechts Nieuwsblad* (29 June 1968) he explains:

"The music house in Utrecht must also have a very informal architecture, where you have entered before you know it. I would like it to have a fantastic café annex restaurant where you can eat and drink and at the same time see the Utrecht Symphonic Orchestra or a beat group and where you can pass through while shopping. My focus is on the direct interrelationship between human beings: I am not into all kinds of passages, doors and other obstructions which can never be overcome by the broader public audience anyway. You need to create all possible (unclosed) spaces where anything can happen …."

Frank van Klingeren (1919-1999) was one of the most radical architects of the Netherlands. He was unparalleled when it comes to giving shape to the large societal changes of the 1960s and 1970s. He summarized his mission with the word 'de-clotting'. He was all about breaking away walls; metaphorical walls such as the walls between the – in the Netherlands still very present - social pillars (social democrats, Protestants, Catholics, liberals, etc.), the walls between the young and the old, between various classes of society, etc. but also breaking away actual, constructional walls. In 1967, cultural centre *De Meerpaal* in Dronten was opened: one big glass box with diverse functions (open air theatre, market place, café, creative spaces, conference rooms, cinema, but also spaces for sports and games), all mixed together and especially: without walls. Of course, in addition to unexpected encounters and interaction between various cultural expressions, this also resulted in nuisance. On market days, it was hard to hold a conference, and during a sporting event, it was hard to understand the quieter passages as recited in the open air theatre. But Van Klingeren regarded these troubles as an advantage: it was the beginning of a get together and quite possibly, of mutual understanding. Integration and confrontation, two sides of a lively and open society as encountered by Van Klingeren in the villages and little towns around the Mediterranean, where public life, both political/social and cultural, was not clearly divided. Whether this resulted in a nice looking building was of less interest to him; a 'smoothly functioning social mechanism' was his main concern.

You need to create all possible (unclosed) spaces where anything can happen …

In Utrecht, he did not succeed in his goal. The city was not very enthusiastic, *"I don't get this at all. I fail to see how a music centre can function without differentiation at least."* Drawings were never made, the plan never went beyond an ideological concept. A few months after the interview, he got involved in a car crash and was unable to work for quite some years. Later, in 1974, he would build the controversial *centre 't Karregat* in Eindhoven, which even combined a school without walls and cultural facilities and shops.

After much struggle and alternative plans, the city of Utrecht finally got its Vredenburg music centre after a design of Herman Hertzberger. Some elements of the concept of Van Klingeren were still present; it was (originally) possible to walk past the foyer of the music halls while shopping. But it all was a watered down version of the radical integration envisioned by Van Klingeren.

Today, half of this centre has been torn down in the process of building a new music building around the old concert hall. This time, also, elements of Van Klingeren's ideas have been preserved because the design concerns a collective building housing various different organizations. However, this design would nonetheless not meet with much enthusiasm from Van Klingeren: the walls between the various music organizations are solid and mark-proof, and only the foyer may allow for some mutual encounter. But the need for differentiation was anticipated well. And, for that matter, he also clearly understood that buildings are never finished, that there should always be space for changing insights. In the interview he predicts that there will naturally be future changes: "[one has to] *keep another million in the pocket, so after five years you can announce that you will start some renovations in order to remove any manifest deficiencies."*

Maybe the city of Utrecht would have been wise to pay more attention to the words of this radical outsider in Dutch architecture. ■

Sound creeping through the streets

The hauntological city

Melvin Wevers and Pim Verlaek

Streets or landmarks guide us through the matrix of the city similar to the way the grooves of a vinyl disc guide the needle. Think of Lauryn Hill's 1998 music video "Everything is Everything" where New York City is transformed into a gigantic record, with a needle amplifying the street surface into the song's rhythm. When the DJ scratches the record, the streets are moved back and forth - shuffling the movements of passersby. The multitude of dynamic grooves that exist within modern day cities are often constructed upon visual and physical markers.

The work of the German sound artist Christina Kubisch augments the visual and physical make up of the city with both audible and inaudible sound. For the Impakt Festival 2010 she has created an audio walk through the city of Utrecht. Participants are equipped with customised headphones that are able to turn electromagnetic vibrations into audible sound. As people follow her route, the plethora of different sounds the city sustains are exposed. The immense impact of sound on the experience of the city becomes apparent.

The character of a city is regularly defined by its architectural style, its culinary tradition, and last but not least the personalities of its inhabitants. Sound, one of the main contributors of the character of a city, is regularly omitted from this list. The perception of space is predominantly determined by the aural characteristics of a location. Moreover, one could envision the dynamic nature of a city as a cesspool of vibrations. Sound does not always have a clear origin, but its origin always lies in a past that is still haunting the matrix city. Sound is creeping through the streets, canals, buildings, and crevices of the city as a ghostly entity.

These eerie vibrations of sound are not only markers of old times, but also of the present times through the existence of new technologies, such as wireless Internet signals or the electronic security gates at shops. The assemblage of old and new alters our auditory perception of the city. This tension between the past and the present is inscribed in the notion of the *hauntological*. This concept has been developed by the French philosopher Jacques Derrida to describe the existence of the *specter* - neither a being nor a non-being. Derrida compares the specter to the *undead*, as the concrete anticipation of death: a state of which it is not certain when it will come, especially since death might have already passed the present. If one would draw a parallel to sound, the spectral character of sound makes it difficult to determine whether the sound's origin lies in the past or in the present. As the sound produced by the old and the new are difficult to separate, a feeling of uncanniness presents itself.

A past that is haunting our hearing

One could draw a parallel between the hauntological and the sound of the city. As the city alters, buildings cease to exist or shift in function, while in the meantime vibrational forces of old times still resonate. Artist within musical genre cultures such as Hypnagogic Pop, Chill Wave, and Hauntology, deal with these processes. In their work they are not simply trying to reconstruct a mythologized time past that is not to be reclaimed. They communicate that the past has always been spectral, in other words never existent and never non-existent. As we live in a time where the past has and still is *saturating* the present, it becomes apparent that there is no clear origin that could function as retro. In other words, there exists no such thing as a clearly circumscribed past; the past always comes from another preceding past. Following the hauntological, there is no past that is not of the ghostly kind.

By adding the sonic hauntological to the matrix city, one is problematising the linear sociocultural development of the city. By either thinking of the city as a modernist project, or by trying to reclaim the past through postmodern notions of retro - the notion of progress is either clearly linear or nihilist. Instead of envisioning the city as a dead-end street, the hauntological move of seeing time in its spectral multidimensionality equips inhabitants with tools to speculate about a future that is neither nihilist nor nostalgic. Instead, the lens of hauntology allows one to perceive the sonic urban landscape within a hazy temporality. This results in seeing the city as an object disjointed in time. Demarcations between center and periphery, between foreground and background sounds become contorted. What appears is time out of place, an uncanny presence that oscillates between the old city structures and the new technological currents.

Urban shamans

There are those who turn to tour guides and *urban planners* for itineraries through the city. We argue that by embracing the hauntological perspective one turns into an urban shaman: a facilitator of new perceptions of the city through an altered reverence of the vibrational currents in the city. Urban shamans strive to capture the city's hauntological presence through the technological uncanny. Kubisch does so by the amplifying electromagnetic signals, while others turn to lossy media such as VHS and cassette tapes. Their use of the technological uncanny presents us with the spectral characteristics of the matrix city. As a result, we are able to not only discern between signals and noise, but also to sense possibilities of a more nuanced view of the city not stagnated in noise or preoccupied with the rustic remembrance of the past. The hauntological citizen is equipped with a novel urban consciousness and sonic literacy. ■

New summer of love

John Thackara

A new crop of establishment reports pour cold water onto *high-tech*, high-gloss, high-complexity urban futures. A new report from *Lloyds Insurance*, for example, predicts diminishing energy security for rich countries. 'We are heading towards a global oil supply crunch and price spike' the report states, in which 'energy infrastructure will become increasingly vulnerable'. It looks as if the energy crisis and the financial crisis could be feeding off each other. One respected financial blogger, Stoneleigh, describes the hydrocarbon epoch we're in now as a 'fleeting interlude in history' and anticipates a 'net energy cliff' and accompanying deflation in the years not too far ahead.

Many people assume that 'green tech' will save our high entropy lifestyles as oil and gas become less abundant. But resource constraints also pose hard questions for *high tech* urban scenarios. Rare earth metals essential to the production of green tech – hybrid cars, mobile phones, thin layer photovoltaics, lithium-ion batteries, synthetic fuels, among others - are running short. According to the EU's *Raw Materials Initiative*, we are approaching Peak Antimony, Peak Cobalt, Peak Gallium, Peak Germanium, Peak Indium, Peak Platinum, peak Palladium, Peak Neodymium and Peak Tantalum. Otherwise stated: we might be able to manufacture solar panels, or electric cars, but there won't be enough rare minerals to make both.

The bigger problem is that these discontinuities - in terms of climate, financial systems, and resource flows - are so *unpredictable*. We face an array of so-called 'wicked problems' that are simultaneously complex, contingent, uncertain, and urgent. A single-vision, top down approach to design and planning simply does not work in the face of this uncertainty. A somberer-than-thou new mood articulated by Clive Hamilton in *Requiem for a Species*. 'It's too late to avert catastrophic change' Hamilton insists; 'our politics and institutions are too dysfunctional to make elegant adaptations. We'd better prepare ourselves for surviving as best we can.'

Surviving as best we can

What does 'surviving as best we can' mean in an urban context? The new watchword is 'adaptive resilience' – a condition in which society, and its citizens, learn how to adapt, and respond to change, continuously.In this situation, the design focus evolves from the delivery of large-scale, hard-wired solutions, towards a focus on resource ecologies and a re-skilling of the citizenry. In this context, writing reports, proposing policies, and designing plans, are no substitute for taking practical action in our daily lives. Otherwise stated: You can't eat information.What works best in a complex context is to devise a potential solution, implement it, at least in prototype, and watch what it reveals about the problem itself through the changes it effects.

This inverts the normal flow of design thinking. When it comes to *wicked* problems, a solution must come before the problem.

States Horst Rittel, who first coined the term, 'solutions to *wicked* problems are not right or wrong, merely better, worse, good enough, or not good enough'.

Another *wickedness* expert, Valeria Brown, points out that this welter of perspectives, ideas and meanings is 'not self-integrating'. Locking a bunch of different people in disciplines in a room won't deliver progress. Tackling wicked problems, she concludes, is 'like herding cats'.

Integrated participative changing processes

Cat herding is untypical, to put it mildly, of the design processes that have governed city design until now. But these are hardly typical times, and new approaches to co-creation are springing up. In his new book *Power and Love: A Theory and Practice of Social Change* Adam Kahane explores why it is that some groups of people manage to solve such complex problems, while others stumble or fall. For twenty years Kahane has worked around the world on many tough and vital urban and social challenges: food security, health care, economic development, judicial reform, peace making, climate change.

'A challenge is dynamically complex when cause and effect are interdependent and far apart in space and time; such challenges cannot successfully be addressed piece by piece, but only by seeing the system as a whole.

A challenge is socially complex when the actors involved have different perspectives and interests; such challenges cannot successfully be addressed by experts or authorities, but only with the engagement of the actors themselves.

And a challenge is generatively complex when its future is fundamentally unfamiliar and undetermined; such challenges cannot successfully be addressed by applying "best practice" solutions from the past, but only by growing new, "next practice" solutions.'

sorce: Power and Love, A Theory and Practice of Social Change, Adam Kahane

Our two most common ways of trying to address social challenges, Kahane writes, are the extreme ones of aggressive war, and submissive peace. Neither of these ways works. 'We can try, using our guns or money or votes, to push through what we want, regardless of what others want—but inevitably the others push back. Or we can try not to push anything on anyone—but that leaves our situation just as it is'.

Kahane's book explores a way that is neither war, nor peace, but collective creation. 'To co-create new social realities, we have to work with two distinct fundamental forces that are in tension: power and love' (my emphasis). Kahane draws on definitions of power and love suggested by the theologian Paul Tillich. Tillich defines power as "the drive of everything living to realize itself, with increasing intensity and extensity." Power in this sense is the drive to achieve one's purpose, to get one's job done, to grow. Tillich defines love as "the drive towards the unity of the separated." Love in this sense is 'the drive to reconnect and make whole that which has become or appears fragmented'.

Secret Garden Party 2010 (photo: Danny North)

The love practitioners

This notion of love as the 'drive to reconnect' has nourished an emerging infrastructure of *next-generation* Institutes. They organize events and deploy "social technologies" with the common aim of raising awareness and enable collective action. The *Presencing Institute*, for example, deploys a process called *"Theory U"* as part of its drive to create a *"Global Awareness Based Action Research University"*. Otto Scharmer, who conceived *Theory U*, runs workshops around the world in which mixed groups 'co-sense and co-create positive change'.

Another newcomer, the *Elos Institute* in Brazil, is a social non-profit organization founded in 2000 by a group of urban planners and architects. Its purpose is 'to propel the movement to make the world we all dream a reality, now.' *Elos* runs a collaborative game called Oasis that 'awakens and enhances communities through rapid and high impact actions.' These typically involve NGOs, local government, and people from adjacent other neighbourhoods of the city. A cross between an architectural *charette*, and an Amish-style barn-raising, Oasis games typically end with a square, a park, a day care centre or a cultural centre being built there and then. Then there's an *Alia Institute*, based in Halifax Nova Scotia, whose leadership-development model blends intensive skill-building modules facilitated by pioneers in their fields, mindfulness meditation, creative process, and plenary dialogues. These and other institutes intersect with a network called *Art of Hosting*. This global community of practitioners uses "integrated participative change processes", maps, and planning tools "to engage groups and teams in meaningful conversation, deliberate collaboration, and group-supported action for the common good".

Down and dirty

If the plethora of new-agey buzzwords used by these new institutes makes you nervous, join the club. The timeliness and value of their work makes sense, but their arcane language, and an insistent focus on the word "leadership", gives this institutional arm of the love movement a whiff of cultishness. In the broader culture, the love bug takes lighter forms. I've hung out with a bunch of smart and energetic twenty-somethings this summer; they seem equally at home running Oasis games with troubled communities, and hanging out at wild festivals such as Secret Garden Party (see picture above). This new love generation is well aware of the challenges that survival will pose to us all in the times ahead. But they seem determined to have fun confronting them. Their positive energy complements the work of the serious new age institutes beautifully.

But as I said at the top, you can't eat words. And skilled facilitation, however empathic and artful, is a means to an end – not the end in itself. Practical skills are an essential part of the mix. This focus on practical preparation explains the rapid growth of the Transition Movement. The transition model 'emboldens communities to look peak oil and climate change squarely in the eye' and addresses the question: 'for all those aspects of life that our community needs in order to sustain itself and thrive, how are we going to rebuild resilience in response to peak oil, and drastically reduce carbon emissions in response to climate change?' The core activity of a Transition Town is Energy Descent Action Planning (EDAP). Rob Hopkins, who developed the process and founded the movement, describes the capacity of a community to embark on an EDAP as "resilience."

On a smaller scale, but no less down-and-dirty, I especially like the sound of Radical Urban Sustainability Training (RUST) in Albany, New York. This intensive course touches on cleaning contaminated soils using plants, fungi and bacteria; rainwater harvesting; aquaculture using ponds, plants, fish, algae; Worm composting and soldier flies; edible and medicinal mushroom cultivation; and so on. It's a long way from the leadership training of the new age institutes, and from the new-hippiness of the festival circuit. But we probably need all three. ■

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