NORDISK ARKITEKTURFORSKNING
NORDIC JOURNAL OF ARCHITECTURAL RESEARCH

2/3.2009

Architectural Competitions

NORDISK ARKITEKTURFORSKNING

NORDIC JOURNAL OF ARCHITECTURAL RESEARCH

2/3.2009

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KOMMENDE TEMA I NORDISK ARKITEKTURFORSKNING:
Architecture, Climate and Energy

Innhold: Vol. 21, No 2/3.2009

NORDISK ARKITEKTURFORSKNING – NORDIC JOURNAL OF ARCHITECTURAL RESEARCH

IN MEMORY – MINNEORD

In memory of our friend, the lecturer, scientist and president

Lena Villner

Lena passed away on Saturday 19 September 2009 after a short illness. Lena was a university lecturer of architectural history at the KTH School of Architecture and took an active interest in several areas, including teaching, research, administration and public activities. In 1997, Lena defended her dissertation about Tempelman, which was as interesting as it was liberating in its ease of reading. In 2005, her academic career brought her to the position of director of graduate studies. In 2008, she became a reader in architectural history. We will remember Lena in particular for her strong commitment to the journal on Nordic architectural research, Nordisk Arkitekturforskning, and for her hard work for the association. Lena was a knowledgeable and highly respected member of the supervisory board, and in the period 2002-2004, she served as president of the association Nordisk Arkitekturforskning. Lena will be sadly missed by us all.

Vännen, läraren, forskaren och presidenten

Lena Villner

Lena lämnade oss lördagen den 19 september 2009 efter en kortare tids sjukdom. Lena var universitetslärare i arkitekturhistoria vid KTHs Arkiekturskola och aktiv inom flera områden: utbildning, forskning, administration och utåtriktad verksamhet. 1997 disputerade Lena på en intressant och befriande lättläst avhandling om Tempelman. Hennes akademiska karriär fortsätt 2005 med uppdrag som studierektor för forskarutbildningen. 2008 blev hon docent i arkitekturhistoria. Vi minns särskilt Lenas starka engagemang för tidskriften Nordisk Arkitekturforskning och hennes arbete i föreningen. Lena var en kunnig och respekterad medlem av styrelsen och under perioden 2002-2004 var hon president i föreningen Nordisk Arkitekturforskning. Det är med stor sorg och saknad som vi minns Lena.

End user participation as an input to shape the brief in architectural competitions

A threefold translation process

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Nordic Journal of Architectural Research
Volume 21, No 2/3, 2009, 15 pages
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Abstract:
In this paper, the potential relationship between two design processes that are traditionally regarded as independent: the architectural and the organizational respectively, is being considered and discussed through the implications that *end user participation* might have on the written brief, upon which an architectural competition is being based. The empirical context is the establishment of a new municipality town hall outside of Copenhagen, Denmark. In this project, end user participation has served as a vehicle to induce the design process, while results from the participational activities have provided a provisional input to form the competition brief. This process of transference: from participation to brief and subsequently to design, discloses a complicated endeavor, in which the outcome of the end user participation is being brought through various phases of translation; interpretation and coding. The paper is a preliminary illustration of three particular instances of coding – *moments of translation* – in which features that traditionally characterize the two design processes involved (the architectural and the organizational) in such a setup somehow get entangled. The paper suggests that end user participation might form an *organizational parameter* in the process of designing architecture, and tentatively discusses how such a design criterion might form a challenge for contemporary architects in terms of professional identity and work method. Although not at all fully unfolded in the following text, concepts that derive from ethnography, communities of practice and actor-network theory have served as inspiration.

Keywords:
End user participation, architectural competition brief, the architectural design process, organizational design

Introduction

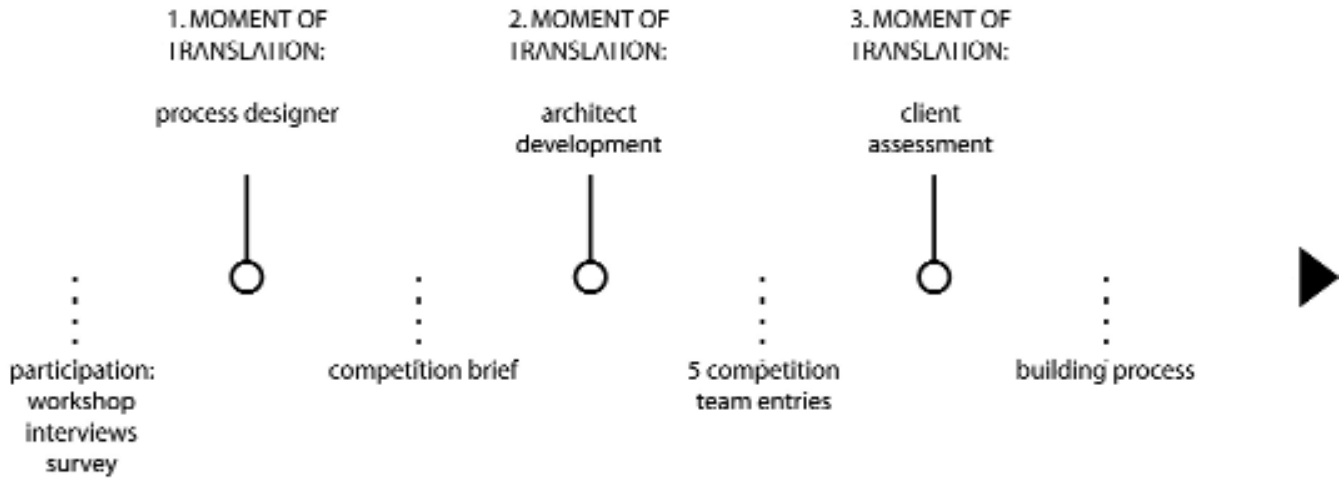
'[...] the central reason [that the architects won the competition] wasn't as such that they had outlined a really stimulating house – which I think it is, also based on some aesthetic considerations – but because [they] had been faithful to the assignment. The guy that lead the team [...] responded that this was exactly what they had made their success criteria: to translate our process, the user oriented process, in a way that made it visible in the house.'

In this quote, the managing director of the municipality administration, Daniel, describes his first meeting with the team of architects, who had won the architectural competition that outlined the design of the new building – a town hall – that would subsequently form the physical framework of the organization, of which he was in charge. The quote reveals the essential factor that distinguished this particular proposal from the other competitors and made the selection process approachable. The team had, as he puts it: *'succeeded in [...] translating our written propositions and transformed them into an architecture that assigned organizational understanding.'*

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the potential relationship between two design processes that are traditionally considered as independent; the architectural and the organizational respectively, through implications that *end user participation* might have on the written brief, upon which an architectural competition is being based. The empirical context is a building project: the establishment of the new town hall outside of Copenhagen, Denmark. In this project, end user participation has served as a vehicle to induce the design process, while results from the participational activities have provided a provisional input to form the competition brief. The point of departure is a series of participational workshops, in which some 60 out of 575 municipality administration staff members participated. The activities took place prior to the architectural competition that initiated the town hall project, and also prior to that the competition brief was being written. This process of transference: from participation to program and subsequently to design, discloses a complicated endeavor, in which the outcome of the end user participation is being brought through various phases of translation; interpretation and coding. In the following, three particular instances of coding or *moments of translation* are in focus, and it is the content of and the transfer between these processes that will be preliminarily unfolded.

The first moment of translation was a process of encoding. Here, a group of *process designers* undertook an interpretation of the data produced in the initial participational workshops. The interpretation resulted in a *requirement analysis* subsequently referred to as a central input to the competition brief. The role of such a process designer as a newcomer in the building industry, as well as the methodological approach that the process designer represents, will be briefly illustrated and discussed below.

The second moment of translation was a process of decoding. Here, the point of departure is the actual competition brief, wherein the economical, technical, organizational and other criteria upon which the competition is based,



Model 1 illustrates the emergence of the design as a sequential process. Each moment of translation is based on an input that results in an output, subsequently used as an input to the next moment of translation.

was brought forth. The competition itself was a public tender, where five consortia, consisting of a contractor, an engineering firm and an architectural firm, were invited to participate. In this process, each of the competing teams undertook an interpretation of the material in the brief and formed a proposal. Below, it is the architect's process of interpretation (in general) that is in focus, and in particular the correspondence between the methodological approach that might characterize the traditional architectural design process on the one hand, and the type of organizational input that was included in the brief as a result of the participational workshops, on the other.

The third moment of translation was yet another process of decoding, in which the client organization responds to the proposals provided by the five competing teams. Based on the implications that the participational workshops afforded on an organizational note, the client's response to the architectural proposition was also a result of these same implications. On a general level, the paper offers a few points to a preliminary analysis of the potential consequences that such conditions might have for the process of designing architecture and thus indirectly for the architect profession.

The town hall project provided a setting, in which end user participation served as a vehicle to induce not only the architectural, but also the organizational design process. Here, the interactive workshops and other participational activities were initiated in order to induct significant developments within the organizational design – in the context of designing architecture. The organization itself was a result of a recent fusion between two municipality administrations, an event also seen as an opportunity to set forth a certain organizational redesign. Added to this came the planning and emergence of the new town hall, which was expected to contain and support forthcoming organizational activities. These two design initiatives were somehow considered integrated by the managing director, who saw the latter (the town hall) as a resource to that of the first (the fused organization). The setup indicates that end users are given an opportunity to influence not only the design of the new building, but also the rationale upon which the design is being based – a rationale that may reflect the current organizational design and at the same time designate an organizational redesign. The notion thus seems to be that organizational design and architectural design might constitute one another in a mutual relationship. Certain organizational components are brought into the architectural design process as an input that has derived from the end user participation, while the emerging architectural configurations are conversely being applied in the continuous developments that take place in the organization. The competition brief is but one of the instances that represent the potential link between the two design processes at stake: the architectural and the organizational respectively.

The literature

The type of project introduced above is one that might describe why managers as well as scholars within the field of organization studies recently seem to have found joint interest in the spatial structure of organizational practice (e.g. Becker 1981, Hatch 1987, Gagliardi 1991, Yanow 1995, 1998, Horgen et al. 1999, Weick 2003, Boland and Collopy 2004, Kornberger and Clegg 2004, Hernes 2004, Dale 2005, Clegg and Kornberger 2006, Yoo et al 2006, Taylor and Spicer 2007, Ewenstein and Whyte 2007, van Marrewijk 2009). The concern reflects current societal tendencies, such as the increased focus on individual needs and wishes within processes of organizational development, or on the continuous request for types of collaboration that can generate new products and services, often entitled innovations. In order to support and direct that these innovations can come about, contemporary managers aim to explore approaches that can indorse such developments. Acknowledging that this type of work – towards the new – cannot be commanded but rather supported, factors that might facilitate processes of development and collaboration, have become vital. A result is that the spatial design of an office environment is increasingly being recognized as a component that can be considered relevant to the way performance in organizations transpires. If managers need new arguments to undertake the management assignment, the spatial context of organizational life might represent a potential substance to such arguments.

Although end user participation seems to have been established as an integrated part of the design process within larger parts of the design industry throughout the last couple of decades (e.g. Wasserman 2002, Hedegaard Jørgensen 2003, Kristensen and Grønhaug

2003, Oxford Research/Inside Consulting 2004, FORA 2005, Sander 2006, Friis 2007), ethnographically based approaches do not yet seem to have been thoroughly established, either within the contemporary architectural firms or within the architectural educations. Conversely, the focus on the spatial context of organizational life as a potential strategic contributor, seem to be growing among contemporary managers. Here, end user participation seems to represent an opportunity to establish a connection between organizational life and the architectural framework in which it unfolds. This said, we still need actual knowledge, as well about how spatial design can matter in an organizational perspective, as about how this type of input can be handled in the context of designing architecture.

End user participation as a conceptual approach seems to be methodologically based on a rather compound and eclectic approach, which among other traditions can be traced back to broader areas such as ethnography, environmental psychology and human computer interaction. In recent years, the involvement of users in design processes seems to have been associated with a variety of concepts, such as *participatory design* (e.g. Schuler and Namioka 1993, Horelli 2002, Bell et al. 2005, Ivey and Sanders 2006, Sanders 2006,) *user-centered design* (e.g. Norman 2002, Hedegaard Jørgensen 2004) and more broadly *ethnography in design* (e.g. Blomberg et al. 1993, Anderson 1994, Forsythe 1999, Dourish 2006), in the attempt to enhance various types of product development. In terms of the interaction between work processes, technology and the spatial framework, the approach referred to as *new ways of working* (e.g. Duffy 1990, Bjerrum and Bødker 2003, Duffy and Worthington 2004) seems particularly central.

As for the architectural perspective, and the various developments that the architect profession currently seems to go through, the somewhat ambiguous understandings of what the profession might be characterized by, still seem persisting. Starting with Vitruvius some 2000 years ago, the confusion seems to have continued, which is in various ways noted in contemporary studies that describe different aspects of the architectural design process (e.g. Saint 1983, Blau 1984, Gutman 1988, Cuff 1991, Brand 1994, Pinnington and Morris 2002, Fisher 2005, Beim and Vibæk Jensen 2006). This somehow unclear profile leads to conflicts in regards to whether the profession and its knowledge can be codified and represented in scientific form, or if it should rather be seen as a part of the arts (Fisher 2005, Beim and Vibæk Jensen 2006). The price of such a lack of closure in regards to daily practice is, among other things, diminishing fees and a fragmented market with many small firms, compared to other services such as law or accounting. On the other hand, the unclear characteristic is also keeping the professional identity together.

On method: a research approach and a research objective

In this research, ethnographic method serves as inspiration on two levels. In terms of the general research design, the fieldwork, the data and subsequent analysis, the work has been inspired as well by ethnography and qualitative research (Spradley 1979, Van Maanen 1988, Chambers 1994, Tedlock 1994, Strauss and Corbin 1998) as by case study research (e.g. Yin 1981, Gioia and Chittipeddi 1991, Stake 1994, Flyvbjerg 2005). This dual approach of combining participation and observation in order to get access to data, requires a fine balance between 'going native' and playing the part of the classical, neutral observer. I have concurrently partaken in workshops and other participational activities and consciously tried to establish a relationship with the involved parties, while also continuously pointed out my role as an external researcher.

The data material, upon which the paper is being based, has been collected over a period of approximately 18 months. I have taken part in a substantial part of the workshop activities that have included the involvement of end user representatives, as well as in managerial meetings within the client organization; collaborative meetings between the client's top management and the process designer; collaborative meetings between the client, the contractor, the architect and the process designer, and finally two larger gatherings to which the entire client organization (the municipality administration) have been invited. I have undertaken 19 semi-structured interviews with representatives from the client organization, the process designer and the architect, who in one way or another have been involved in the participational activities. I have also had access to a substantial amount of documents and working papers upon which the end user participation as well as the general development of the buil-

ding project, has been based. During the period of time that the participation were planned and carried out, I also spent approximately three months full time at the process designer's office. My data is thus comprised not only by input from semi-structured interviews, available documentation and various types of material produced during the design process, but also by informal discussions and conversations that I have partaken in and observed among people who have been involved in the project.

Parallel to this, the participational activities themselves, which represent a central research object also seems to be based on an ethnographic tradition. In this type of building project, end user participation seems to represent a vehicle in order to induce design processes. It signifies a certain *product* that currently seems to be establishing as a part of the collaboration between client and design team, which might potentially contribute to the development of a design solution. The product seems to be represented by a type of methodological approach that is undertaken by a group of advisors entitled 'process designers'. These approaches have been studied to some extent in order to understand how users might contribute in certain types of product development. But although the participational activities have become acknowledged as a useful resource in design processes within various industries, it still seems unclear what the contribution consists of (e.g. Blomberg 1993, Anderson 1994, Forsythe 1999, Dourish 2006).

Input to moment of translation 1: end user participation in workshops

End user participation in architectural design involves activities, in which representatives of the client organization, who are also the forthcoming tenants of the building, are being invited to contribute to different phases of the architectural design process. An overall purpose seems to be to identify and anticipate central work processes in order to unfold the potential coherence between organizational practice and spatial context. In the town hall project, the end user representatives were primarily involved in a series of workshops, several workplace surveys and a small amount of interviews. The participants were some 60 staff members, who represented various parts of the organization, predominantly invited to partake in the activities by their managers. Within the framework of these activities, the staff got the opportunity to discuss organizational matters such as current and forthcoming work processes and the spatial contexts within which they appear. Here, issues like collaboration, proximity, acoustics and concentration were among the central.

The purpose of workshop 1 was to map out the reservations and concerns that the staff had in regards to the establishment of the new building, as well as to discuss the various new opportunities that such a venue could generate. The managing director introduced the workshop by pointing out that the interactive sessions were part of the current development of the municipality's overall vision, in which the new town hall would play a significant part. The workshop was organized as a 'café seminar' (Brown, Isaacs, Wheatley 2005); a concept in which dialogue sessions based upon one particular question or several questions that address different themes, take place in smaller groups (approx. 5-8 people) around tables, like in a café. In the workshop, each table represented its own theme, and the participants were mixed across departmental affiliation and professional status. Each table also had a voluntary 'café host', who was the group's timekeeper and responsible for its contribution to the plenary presentations. The questions primarily regarded the participant's perception

A few images from workshop 2 in the Town hall project, in which the participants discuss current and forthcoming conditions in terms work processes and relationships in relation to disposition: placement, proximity and distance in the new building.

of present and future work processes and routines, as well as their expectations – worries and hopes – to the physical structure that these activities would take place in.

While workshop 1 served as an introduction to end user participation as a contributor to the development of the town hall project, but also as a potential vehicle to support internal discussions about concerns and expectations on the journey towards a new organizational structure in the new building, the purpose of workshop 2 was rather to more systematically map out how work actually took place within the departments: the relationship between professions, competencies and work processes on the one hand, and the spatial framework that accommodated these activities, on the other. It was again structured as a café seminar, in which the tables were organized departmentally and asked questions like:

'What is your work responsibility and what are the important factors that characterize the physical environment that should accommodate this work?', 'When do you work alone and when do you collaborate?', 'With whom do you collaborate and what are the competencies you need to be close by in order to solve your tasks?', 'Can you characterize the type of atmosphere that would enhance the type of work you are responsible for?'

The questions were supported by equipment like cardboard plates and pictograms to go with it, upon which e.g. current and future tasks/responsibilities or workplace atmosphere characteristics were printed. The plates were photocopied while produced, and subsequently presented by the café host and discussed in a plenary session by the end of the workshop.

Moment of translation 1: producing a stock

In the first moment of translation, a group of process designers undertook an interpretation of the data produced in workshop 1 and 2. The results from these workshops were sequentially generated in two steps, as the outcome of the first workshop gave input to the content of the second. The result was a requirement analysis; a report that had as its purpose to inform the subsequent design process and, more concretely, the written brief upon which the architecture competition was being based.

The development of such an analysis is based upon an approach, in which the process designers transform large amounts of submitted input – factual or technical pieces of information that describe the staff and their daily habits around the individual workstation, as well as more general considerations about the work processes in the organization and the spatial contexts that these appear in – to an output, through which the development process can progress. These data produced by the participants were accompanied by a number of meetings between the process designers and the management team, as well as by a survey that aimed to map out the proportional relationship between work processes, their spatial context, and time. In this process of translation, the process designers reduce the compound amount of data to form a somehow firm requirement analysis. As one of the process designer explained to the participants in one of the workshop in the town hall project:

'Our method is to take all the input and material you produce [in the workshop] and boil it down to an extract.'

The input from the end users is necessarily a rather intricate material, based upon perceptions, convictions and expectations from a highly compound group of participants. Asking the process designers about their process of translation, the replies primarily emphasized the importance of categorizing the input, and discussing the patterns that emerge through the categorization in relation to the organization's formulated vision:

'We arrange it after some headlines that we think represent what the workshop is all about. [...] Based on the wording, we go in and process it according to these categories. [...] we make a vast spreadsheet that says: what is about their locational utilization, what is about their support rooms, what is about IT, what is about...etc. a whole lot of categories.'

Another process designer emphasizes the more strategic relationship between the things said in the workshops, those that appeared in the observation studies and those defined in the overall vision:

'[We] try to define some categories, through which we can check whether there is a coherence between what we [they] say and what we [they] do. And if there isn't [coherence], what does it

then mean? […] we take the whole tool box we have been served through workshops, observations, surveys, factual pieces of information, and bring all this stuff back home and assemble it into a requirement analysis that is being benchmarked with the vision. And then we ask: what is possible, and which elements need to be reshuffled in order for this [the vision] to succeed?

The process designer's product thus aims to secure cohesion between the client organization's forthcoming physical framework and the activities it is supposed to accommodate. This notion of consistency between the architectural product and the organization's professional practice potentially discloses a focus on how a building project may be utilized as an opportunity to reconsider certain organizational aspects in terms of work processes, professional relationships and structure, and it is upon this potentiality that the process designer base her product. In such a perspective, the product might be said to address certain strategic aspects of the client organization's activities, and thus attend to the management assignment.

The content of the activities that constitutes the end user participation (being it workshops, interviews, surveys or other) is usually based on a range of meetings between the management team of the client organization and the process designers, upon which the process designers develop a program draft that they concurrently discuss and negotiate with the management team as the project proceeds. The process designer's methodological point of departure in the planning of these activities seems to be a series of so-called *tools*; sequential concepts based on the particular phases that a client project normally run through, in which each phase include certain interactive exercises where different levels of the organization: top management, middle management and other staff, are invited to participate.

But how might we characterize this methodological approach? What signifies the area of doing ethnography is, among other things, that it can be seen as analytical rather than purely descriptive (e.g. Spradley 1979, Van Maanen 1988). It is the analytical aspect that makes ethnography ethnographic: through the empirical experiences of the ethnographer upon which her interpretations are made (Dourish 2006). The ethnographer's ability to attend to and handle the analysis subsequent to the processes studied is thus seen as crucial. Might the process designer's methodological approach thus be characterized as ethnographic? As one process designer points out:

'The method has accumulated through experience, but there are none of us that has any ethnographic training. […] You can see also it through that all of us are architects, who haven't as such worked with it. And there hasn't been any [ethnographers] hired.'

Dourish' point seems to be that as ethnographical approaches are often used inconsistently, the results might come out as helpful, but also somehow ignorant to the potential contribution that the ethnographic methodology can provide.

Input to moment of translation 2: the brief

Because of the fact that the first workshops took place prior to the architectural competition, the result of the workshops, represented by requirement analysis, could inform the written brief upon which the architectural competition was based. In order to include parts of this material into the brief, the process designers were involved in the actual phrasing. In this sense, the staff's input somehow made up a kind of organizational design parameter; one of the criterion that set forth the architectural design process.

The brief itself consisted of two sections that, among other things, included an overview of the collaborational conditions of organizing the project in a partnering structure; a description of the technical preconditions of the building site as well as an overview of the existing buildings; climatual conditions and ambitions; factual information about the municipalital context that the new town hall was supposed to accommodate, as well as key financial figures upon which the project was being based. Included in the text was also a part that might be characterized as an 'organizational' piece of input. This description, which covers 8 out of 104 pages, strongly highlights the type of clients that the building is supposed to support and accommodate: local citizens, politicians and administrative staff, and the way in which the building's intentions corresponds with the needs of these user groups.

One of the process designers, responsible for the end user participation in the town hall project, describes the requirement analysis' influence upon the brief in a subsequently published article (CINARK 2006):

The requirement analysis was reflected in the brief and a tender material, differently configured than in a traditional setup. In the brief, the human relationships that the house was supposed to accommodate, as well as the desired connections between the work processes and their spatial contexts, were described. It thus [...] took some of the soft, human factors and translated these into spatial requirements. The brief also indicated the type of ambience that the locations should support, according to the activities. The relational descriptions were supported by the traditional part of the brief, as we know it [from conventional programs], in which a range of factual conditions that the competing firms are supposed to address, are listed. The competing teams have defined solutions and visions in an unconventional manner, which have made them more open towards opportunities than in traditional competitions, and made them produce unusual proposals.' (Andersen 2006: 65).

Here, the process designer somehow defines her product in the context of the production of a requirement analysis, not only as an integrated part of the process of designing architecture, but also as a primary input to the competition brief: *'the traditional part of the brief, as we know it'* is here represented as a supplement to the input from the end users. In this version, the organizational project: the development process that the organization involved was made subject to through involvement and participation, becomes a crucial point of departure from which architectural design can be developed and constituted.

Towards moment of translation 2: the language difficulty

There are possible reasons for the potential collaboration between the architectural and the organizational fields to appear as a complicated endeavor. One is that of language, which seems to involve a dual communicational challenge. The organizational parameter brought into the brief as a result of the end user participation represents a format and a style that might be perceived as unfamiliar to architects (Markus and Cameron 2002). Conversely, the professional language shared by architects and the methodological approach they use in their process of developing a design proposal, is also known to be difficult for outsiders to decipher (e.g. Cuff 1991, Brand 1994, Lawson 1997, Fisher 2000, Basar 2005).

This lack of an unequivocal verbal outline somehow seems to be unconsciously included in the professional identity (Gutman 1988, Cuff 1991, Fisher 2000). Theoretically, the phenomenon of a secluded professional language does not point toward the architect profession in particular, but more generally towards how groups of people form a mutual frame of reference in establishing a shared practice (Steiner 1998). In such a perspective, interaction between different types of traditions, like e.g. an architectural design process on the one hand, and an unfamiliar organizational input, on the other, might somehow collide. A theoretical concept that illustrates this might be that of *communities of practice* (Wenger 1998, Merriam et al. 2003). Here, a practice is basically the compound amount of things that people within a certain group do in order to solve their tasks and feel recognized and competent. On this basis they form a genuine sense of belonging.

The community forms their own vocabulary and ways of doing things, and to crack the code of these ways might be difficult for outsiders. The increased interest in end user participation in design processes that is brought forth on a societal level might thus offer an opportunity to discuss the friction between these two fields as they seem to draw closer: architecture and organization. In this friction, a certain amount of *linguistic experimentation* is most likely necessary. In an interview, a young architect reflects upon the fact that their professional language can be difficult for people with other professional backgrounds to make out:

'I don't think we're aware of it – that we have an esoteric language that others cannot understand. But I think it'll help to bringing others [people with different professional backgrounds] in [to the work process], as that will make them question what we talk about.'

He refers to the current situation for contemporary architects, who are increasingly confronted with an extended amount of collaboration partners in the design process, an extension that represents a communicational challenge – but also a potentiality.

In the town hall project, a community of professional architects is confronted with an input – produced by a different community with a different professional language – that takes a shape that to them seems unfamiliar. But if the brief is perceived as unusual compared to traditional briefs, then what constitutes its difference?

Moment of translation 2: when brief meets architect

The architect Peter, who was closely involved in the design of the town hall, describes the difference like this:

'There was something about the format that struck me. You could easily see that it was someone with a different viewpoint that had written this brief than had it been an engineer or [one of the contractors]. They would have used a different angle, that's for sure. [...] It also had to do with the content and prioritizing what's important and what isn't.'

He reflects upon the implications that such differences might have in the actual design process:

'Those things [factual information like e.g. the amount of staff] are very loosely defined. [...] Don't ask me why. But they are very vague. And I can perhaps also allow myself to say about the whole brief [...], it was very rough, and rougher that they usually are. [But] having said that on the one hand we would have liked it to have been more firm [...], there is also something about the freedom that it gives the process of designing; that we also indirectly can influence the programming with our tools. That our design can contribute to bring opportunities across that we might not have seen without [the roughness that characterized the brief]. This is often the problem with the very dry engineer based briefs; you put up so and so many square meters of this and so and so many square meters of that. Such a setup makes you locked in the creative process.'

Here, he points out the paradox that this type of input seems to produce: it might be perceived as difficult to work with for an architect, as it appears imprecise in terms of concrete spatial requirements, while at the same time including a lot of indications. On the other hand, he finds that this ambiguity gives the architect an increased freedom in the actual act of designing.

The second moment of translation was then a process of decoding, in which the brief was interpreted by the five competing consortia that were invited to participate in the public tender. Here, the competing teams used the various aspects of the brief as their primary design parameters. The focus in this paper is on the architect's process of interpretation and the way in which the traditional architectural design process corresponds with the organizational input that was included in the brief as a result of the end user participation.

What happened in the encounter between brief and architect in the town hall project? The architect Peter describes what happens on a general level when he, as an architect, is confronted with a brief, which he also relates to his experience in this particular project:

Interviewer: *What happens when you read the brief?*

Peter: *It sets forth a process. And then there are a lot of other things that is set in motion, so to speak. The brief itself is one thing, but we also use a lot of other things.*

Interviewer: *What are those?*

Peter: *Those are time and place. [...] The historical context; where we are time wise and all that. [...] The scenic situation, and at the same time making a modern house that corresponds with our time. All of that is one big chunk. And then there is the user program, which is the other big chunk. And then there is the technicality of the house that is a big chunk as well. And all of that go into one big pot and is somehow supposed to get processed. And here we probably use the process of designing to test, that is, we give it some kind of shape and sketch up some spatial frameworks, some correlations and some diagrams, where we test all this – ping-pong. Try some; sketch; try again. How does that work? Is it possible to have natural ventilation in [the town hall in this project] in 2007 with such and such user requirements? There are a lot of leads to pull at the same time, so it's not the kind of thing that can be put into a concept, I think. [...] To begin with, I think we often follow many tracks. [...] It's difficult to explain in words. It's easier to explain in a sketch. [...] I claim that it's an analytical method.*

Interviewer: *What do you mean by that?*

Peter: *I mean that we make a range of analyses to begin with, where you analyze the place, analyze the technical requirements, analyze the lighting conditions. Those things. But it's not very scientific – it's more of a feeling, a sensing way, I think I'd say. And then it is out of that analysis that some ideas, and sketches, and form, manifest themselves. And that is what generates a new draft, and then you do the [process of] analysis once more, or go back and do the test. […] You somehow work in circles or spirals. […] You try to identify, you try to get all the way around. You do one round, and then something falls off in the centrifugal force, and thus the circle eventually gets smaller and smaller. It's really difficult to explain in words.*

The dialogue might illustrate the lingual dilemma: he finds it hard to explain his method in words, but it also comes forth that he is highly familiar with the process he pursues – *'the analytical method'* – which might be characterized as intuitive rather than scientific. The different types of approaches that contemporary architects today seem to take represent an ongoing and significant discussion within the field (e.g. Beim and Vibæk Jensen 2006, CINARK 2006, Friis 2007).

The winning proposal in the town hall project held direct references to the brief in terms of the interior disposition of the office plan *['according to the efficient interior propositions in the brief']* while describing the actual workplace area. Although not appearing particularly lucid, phrasings like:

'In a modern workplace, it is important that whether the interior design implies individual offices or open plan offices divided by shelving units, the scale should continuously zoom into smaller units, all the way down to the individual work station and its contemplation. Only that way is it possible to create a balance between individual work and collaboration' might indicate an ambition to emphasize a particular focus on the individual office worker that had been involved in workshops prior to the competition. But the quotation represents a part of the translation of an unfamiliar input. As Markus and Cameron describes the architect's meeting with written briefs that seems ambiguous or contradictory:

'Communication works by inference, and interpretation begins from the assumption that what is said or written, is said or written for a reason: however redundant, enigmatic, illogical or contradictory it appears on the surface, an attempt will be made infer the reasoning behind it.' (Markus and Cameron 2002: 76).

Moment of translation 3:
when proposals meet client

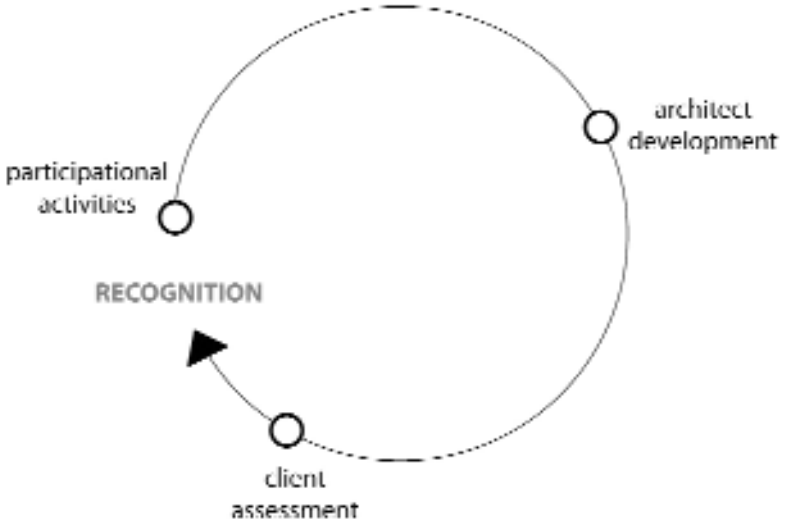
The third and final moment of translation discussed in this paper was yet another process of decoding. Here, the client organization responded to the proposals, and it is in this process that the potential entanglement between the architectural and the organizational design processes seems most obvious. As indicated in the introduction to this paper, the competitor's ability to handle the organizational parameter was considered a central assessment criterion to the committee. The managing director describes how it became a selection principle:
'[…] the project we were choosing was the one most loyal towards the organization's own thoughts about what the house should accommodate.'

The managing director emphasizes the important of this recognition by pointing out how a few of the proposals – the winning project as one – were distinguished from the others:

'Some of the sketches [from the competing proposals] seemed to illustrate standardized concepts – designs that could have been developed for whoever, whenever – and then there were a couple, in which it clearly came through that they had studied some of our ideas and conceptualized on this basis.'

According to data, the committee fully agreed upon the winning proposal, which also came forth in the written feedback where all of the five proposals were being assessed. One of the members of the selection committee highlights the proposal's interior flexibility as one of the central features that distinguished the winning project from the others:

'Well, it signified that kind of dynamics. That is, it signified a building that wasn't static. It signified a building, in which you could see it would be possible for them [the inhabitants] to change. […] That is, where we could see that it could end up in different ways. This was also what we'd asked them to do in the proposal; to show different scenarios of how the departmental areas could be



Model 2 illustrates how the processes of end user participation not only seems to inform the brief in the architectural competition, but also somehow forms an assessment criterion, upon which the selection committee choose the winner. In this circular process, the participational activities are somehow revisited, through the format of the proposal.

used, [...] to make sure that the scenarios we had indicated [through the organizational input in the brief] were kept alive throughout the project. [...] they had a very fine interpretation of and empathy for the things that were important to signify.'

But what are the implications of this type of organizational input? Below, a few of these will be preliminarily discussed in an architectural, as well as an organizational perspective.

Discussion

Inviting the end user as a potential contributor to the architectural design process through an interactive process, in which information on an organizational level is produced in order to inform the architectural design, also indicate that a more delineated connection between the two design processes; the organizational and the architectural respectively, seems to be approaching. As we have preliminarily discussed above, a higher level of proximity between these design processes might have certain implications to an architectural practice, which collide with e.g. the secrecy that characterizes as well the traditional architectural work process, as the professional language shared by the architectural community. But it also points towards a certain feature as to how a design can emerge, being it architectural or organizational, and to how the factors that influence the development of a design, can interact. In the town hall project, we have to do with two fields that involve rather different methodological traditions, and to consider these performed in an integrated design process, might also offer some potentiality to both.

In search for an approach to understand more about the relationship between the architectural and the organizational, and the potentiality that a closer connection between them might hold, we briefly turn to *actor-network theory* for inspiration (e.g. Callon 1986, Latour 1999, 2006). Actor-network theory might be characterized as an empirically based methodology, in which a central point of departure is that the social reality should be comprehended and analyzed, not simply as the result of the interactions between cognitive subjects in a social network, but rather through the actual multitude of components that are involved in all types of social action. It is thus not only the human (often cognitive), but also the non-human (often material) contributors, as well as the relationship between them, that is in focus. These relations, and the conditions upon which they are based, are neither static nor stable, but perpetually transforming – in the very cause of their interaction. If we consider end user participation in such a context, we might see it as an illustration of how an architectural design process, in which an organizational parameter is integrated, might be perceived as the collective process that it indeed is. This would require that it should be understood in a collective perspective: the architectural design process is informed and influenced by a lot of things, and among them are the organizational aspects and the intricate network of factors it represents.

What seems to happen in the town hall project, in which a vast amount of human as well as non-human contributors interacts, is that their encounters; their assembly and overlap becomes constituting for the direction in which the actual designs (being it architectural or organizational) seem to develop. The assembly between these different factors, and their ability to mutually overlap and swap properties and competencies, is of particular interest in the search for the possible connection between the architectural and the organizational. On the basis of the relationship between the original and the interpreted version in the various translations done by the designers – the new can occur. To handle this operation of assembly and overlap, and to understand more about the transference that they cause, we need to accept translation, not as *'a shift from one vocabulary to another, from one French word to one English word, for instance, as if the two languages existed independently. I used translation to mean displacement, drift, invention, mediation, the creation of a link that did not exist before and*

that to some degree modifies the original two.' (Latour 1999: 179).

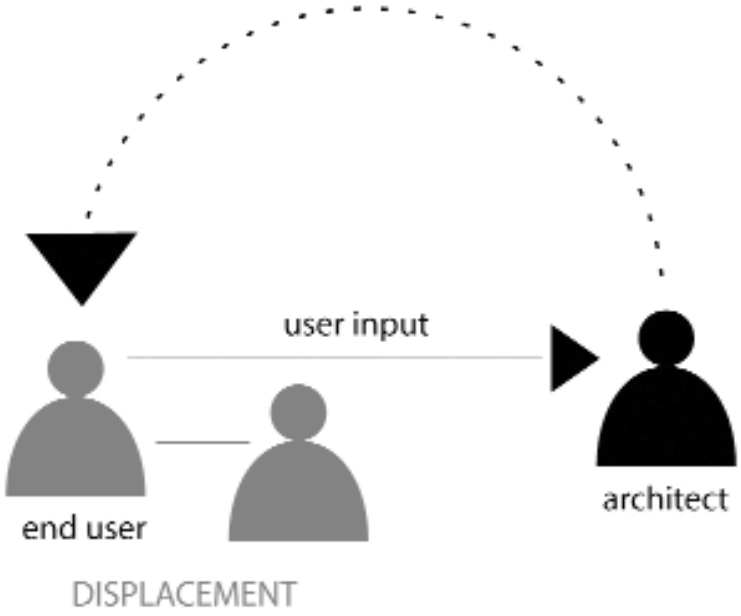
In this perspective, end user participation might be perceived as a product that affords an ongoing change in the components (human as well as non-human) that are made subject to it. They mutate and thus become something or someone else. In the workshops: the conversations and exchanges that the participants are invited to partake in, they undertake a certain *cognitive displacement* during the cause of their participation. Data shows that their perception of factors such a work processes, collaboration opportunities, as well as the general characteristics that signify their organizational identity, somehow seem to modify throughout the town hall project. This notion of a cognitive displacement that continuously influences the client's sense of organizational identity might be seen as a challenge to the architect: to be able to respond to an organizational parameter thus somehow demands an ability to handle *a moving target*. The input that grew out of the first moment of translation and were brought into the brief might as such be perceived as unfamiliar to architects. If we add to it, that the consigner of the input also changes continuously, as a result of the subsequent discussions that their participation seems to have caused, it is likely to include an extra challenge.

As we have seen above, *recognition* appears to be crucial to the process of selection: the winning project is the proposal that, according to the selection committee, were most loyal to the organizational parameter. But this experience of recognition is also affected by the continuous displacement that the interactions cause: the participational activities modify the participant's perception, a modification that is a potential reason for perceiving the design configurations as unrecognizable. In the process of selecting among the five proposals in the town hall competition, the amount of time that passed from the initial workshops until the actual selection process was relatively short (approx 5 months). Here, the time frame might have supported a certain level of recognition; a sense of coherence between the client perception of the organizational input that was given on the one hand, and the architectural configuration that specifically aimed to meet this demand, on the other. But there are also examples from data of how client representatives – much later in the design process (in which end user participation kept playing an important part) – strongly reacted to certain architectural solutions, based on how their sense of organizational identity unconsciously seems to have modified. A part of not finding the architectural proposition recognizable might thus be that of having changed yourself. In that perspective, end user participation as a method and the outcome that such participational activities result in should be perceived as ambiguous. For the designers – being it architects or managers – it might thus be important to take the modifications that the method itself go through, as well as those it seems to catalyze, into account.

As it appears multiple times in the data, architects generally seem to claim the profession's tradition for a close and persistent dialogue with client and user. In that sense, the conditions upon which the architectural design process is being based in the town hall project can hardly be perceived as 'completely different'. The type of requirements called for in this type of extended contact with the client, might even be perceived as fairly similar to those traditionally put forth by users – and thus not as such radically different from that of the traditional architectural design process. What is different, though, is that the dialogue seems expanded in several ways: the organizational input is produced *throughout* the process, which necessarily extends the actual dialogue in terms of duration.

And not only is the amount of data that makes up the initial input significantly more extensive in terms of volume, the frame of reference that the client organization rest on, also seems to be continuously alternating: the eyes and the mind of the client undertakes continuous changes throughout the process. By being invited to participate in an interactive dialogue about the spatial organization of the activities in a forthcoming building, and accepting this invitation, the end user is made an active part of the architectural design process.
Model 3 illustrates how the participating end users might be subject to change through the cause of their participation.

The potentiality of a closer relationship between the architectural and the organizational design processes and the implications that such a connection might have for the architect profession, obviously needs to be thoroughly explored in forthcoming papers. A closing comment to these preliminary indications could be that an increased amount of end user partici-



Model 3 illustrates how the participating end users might be subject to change through the cause of their participation.

pation in building projects, which might include different types of parameters to inform the process of designing, does not preclude professional architects to perform as just that: professionals with an expertise. But if the design of a spatial framework is supposed to emerge in a collective process that involves end user representatives, it seems important that contemporary architects get more closely involved in such a process. Throughout the town hall project, the end user participational activities were planned, facilitated and interpreted by process designers – the architects (of the winning team) never partook in any of the subsequent workshops, nor were they thoroughly invited. As the architect Peter pointed out above, an organizational input might be perceived as vague, open and voluminous: an approach that somehow imply freedom, while at the same time require a close contact and a continuous openness. It seems necessary for contemporary architects to accept this extended contact as ongoing, but also to release from the interaction accordingly, in their own professional process of translation.

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