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Utjecaj transformacija arhitektonske profesije na arhitekturu grada Zagreba od 1945. do 1961.

Doktorska disertacija [sažetak]

The Influence of Transformations of Architectural Profession on the Architecture of Zagreb 1945-1961

Doctoral Dissertation [Summary]

This dissertation explores and charts the progression and effects of the transformations of post-WWII architectural profession reflected in the study of a selection of architectural realizations in the period from 1945 to 1961. Zagreb as the republic capital is recognised as the locus of the initial formation of the post-war Croatian architectural practice as well as the origin of numerous professional discussions influencing even the federal level of the nascent state. It was chosen as the representative case-study of the entire former republic of Croatia since the comprehensive review of all available experts in particular republic centers undertaken immediately after the war with the purpose of planned distribution of personnel clearly revealed that both the concentration and total number of licensed architects and construction engineers in Zagreb far exceeded those of other Croatian cities as well as other republic centres. This research is based on the acute need of expanding the body of knowledge about the architectural profession that would, in addition to the existing analytical work dealing with the formal qualities of selected postwar buildings, include the circumstances, the mediations, and processes determining the entire system of architectural production.

This system is analysed through the determination of a series of key inputs ranging from the character and number of stakeholders in the commissioning of buildings, type and number of these commissions, the construction costs of particular buildings to the topic of architectural fees. The complex relationship of the fixed triad of investor – architect – contractor is investigated during the period of large-scale social and political turmoil lasting from 1945 to 1961 with the additional survey of the pre-war situation. The transition from the capitalist social system between the world wars to the new socialist paradigm after 1945 had a decisive influence on dramatic changes in the architectural profession. This process of radical transformations encompassed the transition from multiple investors and total freedom of forming independent and private design organisations, the sudden appearance of the state as the sole investor with all professionals having to place their expertise at the system's disposal to the gradual decentralization which reintroduced the possibility of free professional association and autonomous practice. The activities of professional associations, architectural organisations and individual experts in the time overburdened with legal and professional, not to mention political and ideological constraints reveal many constructive achievements of potential use even to the present day functioning of the profession.

The main goal of the research is, by delving into external and internal circumstances of practicing architecture, to investigate both the level of the autonomy of design and the scope of instrumentalisation of the work of architects by tracing these developments in three distinct phases.

The results of the inquiry into the transformations of the architectural profession in Zagreb presented in this thesis reveal the close and often decisive link between the results of the professional work of particular design organisations and the formal determinants of their operation and business arrangements. The research reveals the day-to-day circumstances of work inside these design organisations, the scope of their activities, along with the wider socio-political issues influencing them. The abandonment of traditional methods of work, based on slower artisanal work in the construction of buildings in favour of the industrial production of entir architectural elements laid bare the latent rift in the profession causing the surfacing of disputes initiated by these transformations. This marked the shift away from the established valorisation of individual artistic contributions of architects as authors and towards their transformation into equal and no longer crucial associates within the process of industrialisation of construction and the rising dominance of large design and construction companies. The concept of "investment buildings" after 1961 even eliminates "architects" as a term, becoming indicative of the ensuing period of the 1960's growth of Zagreb fuelled by the initiation of the ambitious programme of mass housing construction predominantly taking place on vast expanses of empty land across the river.

[Translated by author]

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Radom se istražuje i bilježi tijek i učinak transformacija arhitektonske profesije nakon Drugoga svjetskog rata te kauzalnost tih promjena na odabrana arhitektonska ostvarenja u vremenu između 1945. i 1961. godine. Prijelaz od 'klasičnih' metoda rada, koje počivaju na sporijem obrtničkom radu u građevinarstvu, prema industrijskoj proizvodnji arhitektonskih elemenata, rezultirao je i razotkrio latentnu temu rascijepa i sukoba nastalih transformacijom struke u specifičnom trenutku u vremenu. Tada se dogodio prijelaz od ustaljenog vrednovanja individualnog doprinosa u arhitekturi kriterijem autorskog udjela prema industrijalizaciji građevinarstva proizvodnjom industrijskih arhitektonskih elemenata i posljedično tome transformaciji arhitektonske profesije u veće građevinsko-izvođačke firme unutar kojih su arhitekti postali tek jedni od stručnjaka.