

LANDSCAPE – CONCEPTS OF MODERNISM AND THE CURRENT PRACTICE

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Abstract. This conference was the 14th edition of a conference series on conservation of the Modern Movement, how to approach it contemporarily. It was dedicated to landscape, a forerunner of the upcoming 2018 edition on urbanism. The first 7 editions dealt with conservation of Modernist architecture in different European countries, followed by thematic issues. The conference also featured the results of the Le Notre forum which took place in 2015 in Bucharest on the topic of the Colentina river emerald necklace of lakes Modernist landscape. The conference series are convened by Alex Dill from the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology.

Key words: Frankfurt, 20th century, landscape design, conference.

1. Introduction

The conference took place in Karlsruhe, 24-25 February 2017 at the Faculty of Architecture (Fig. 1 - 3). The conference was part of a series of conference dedicated to the conservation of the heritage of Modernism which reached with this conference to 14th year and edition. The first 7 editions were dedicated to conservation of Modernist heritage in different European countries (first East and West, Russia, Czech Republic, Italy, France, the Netherlands,

UK etc.), and the other 7 to thematic editions such as authenticity, energy, housing. This edition changed scale and was dedicated to landscape, while the following one will be dedicated to urbanism. This edition was co-convened by landscape architect and professor Henri Bava (Fig. 4). This year's focus on landscape was due to the fact that Modernist concepts are not only related to architecture, but also to landscape. DOCOMOMO, the association for DOcumentation and COnservation of the

MODern MOVement has a working group on landscape and is also patroning these conference series. Both Le Notre and the “Ion Mincu” University, one partner in the consortium organizing the Le Notre forum in Bucharest, were partners in the conference along with a number of partners, including DOCOMOMO. As in previous editions, landscape utopias of Modernism were addressed along with future perspectives of these landscapes nowadays. In this sense this conference like the series as a whole offered an answer to the question on how to build the future on lessons of the past. The dialog between the built and unbuilt landscape was a central question. Today, unlike in Modernist times, ecology is a central challenge. As in previous years the conference consisted of three parts: lectures, exhibition and excursion. Participation in the lectures and in the excursion was recognized as continuing education for architects. The excursion sites in Frankfurt on the Maine were chosen exactly for the relevance of this city for Modernist landscape. Lessons were to be learned from the lectures to the excursion sites, for example from the Dutch harbours for those in Frankfurt.



Fig. 1. Faculty of Architecture in Karlsruhe, architect Josef Durm.

More details on the topic and the full programme can be found at KIT (2017). Previous overviews are offered by the

conference announcement on the Le Notre (2017) news site and the corresponding report (Bostenaru, 2017).



Fig. 2. Interior of the faculty of architecture with the poster of the conference in front of the chair of Alex Dill.



Fig. 3. Registration area



Fig. 4. Henri Bava (left) and Alex Dill (right) the conveners of the conference

Cooperation in the field of conservation of modernism, the topic of the doctorate of the second author, resulted in a book from a former international cooperation network and featured insights of the

conference together results of the doctorate (Bostenaru *et al.*, 2015). This book was launched on the 23rd of April 2015, on the international day of the book, in Bucharest, when also the Le Notre Landscape Forum took place. Acquaintance with the landscape of Bucharest led to the presentation space given to it in the conference. Topic of the forum was the northern lake chain of Bucharest, created during Modernist times. While the first author was speaker, the second author contributed to the organization, prepared during a COST TD1406 stay in November-December in Karlsruhe and the results were prepared during the next COST stay in April 2017.



Fig. 5. Free hand drawing exhibition

1.2. Exhibition

The exhibition (Fig. 5) was dedicated to a today neglected field in architects' formation. It presented free hand drawings of landscape from the student

excursion to Southern France (Larzac) in 2016 and was a re-edition of an exhibition in November-December. The curator of the exhibition was Udo Beyer from KIT.

1.3. Lectures



Fig. 6. Conference room with attendance

The lecturers in the conference (Fig. 6) were international, namely from Germany, Finland, Netherlands, France and Romania.

The first block of lectures presented contemporary landscape architecture works from offices in Berlin (atelier le balto), Amsterdam (West 8) and Paris (agence TER).

From Atelier le balto Veronique Faucheur and Marc Pouzol, two of the three leading members presented. The landscape architects are French but work in Berlin since 20 years. They also learned gardening and then studied with Henri Bava in Versailles. Being gardeners allows them to change the project during execution. The first project presented was SEE, the shaping of a field in different coloured circles and allowing access to people for example for picnic for the international garden show IBA Großräschen (near Cottbus, IBA, 2005), a project from 2005 (le balto, 2005). The second one was the garden which whispers (Ohrenweide, a field for the ears), an approach to activation of landscape, a participative approach thought to

education and stimulation. The project was finished 2008 for Lutherstadt Eisleben and the garden show IBA Stadtumbau (urban regeneration) Sachsen-Anhalt in frame of the project „Lutherweg Eisleben“ (the way of Luther in Eisleben, 2008). Before it obtained the 1st prize in a competition in 2007 (le balto, 2008). The next project was from another garden exhibition, IGA Campus – spectacle gardens from 2016, a project built by landscape architecture students from different countries (French, Italian, Portuguese, from the Ukraine) (le balto, 2016). To close the presentation also sketches were presented (le balto, 2017a), for example predesigned landscape in Sweden, Schoreline Park, Göteborg 2017, House of one (2017) – Göteborg (le balto, 2017b). Other sketches refer to a cooperation with an architect Kuehn Malvezzi, for example L’Insectarium de Montréal, Mehringplatz Berlin Kreuzberg (3rd prize), „Stuttgarten“2015 (le balto, 2015)

From West 8 urban design and landscape architecture (West 8, 2017a) it was Christophe Elsässer presenting. The first project was approaching the site of the Weissenhof Siedlung in Stuttgart, an icon of Modernism. The second one presented the approach to urban blocks taking into account the interior courtyard. This way some rural needs can be addressed in the dense city. A highlight was the Madrid project Puente del Rei – Avenida de Portugal 2006-2011 (West 8, 2011) done in collaboration with MRIO Arquitectos. From overseas it was presented The Comedien, Lakefront Toronto 2006-2015 (West 8, 2015). And finally it closed with the already mentioned project of the main train station in Rotterdam 2004 – ongoing (West 8, 2017b).

The series of the design shows was concluded by Henri Bava from Agence TER. After an introduction on the future

of landscape from Le Corbusier and Le Notre a series of projects were shown:

- Parc de Boulogne-Billancourt 2011 (Agence TER, 2011),
- Strassbourg Deux Rives 2016-ongoing (Agence TER, 2016a)
- Barcelona canopia urbana (smart canopy) Plaza de Gloria Catalona next to Torre Agbar 2014 (Agence TER, 2014)
- Los Angeles 2016 (Agence TER, 2016b)
- Master Plan Shanghai 2017 (ArchDaily, 2017, Agence TER, 2017a and b)

The first block was followed by a block on history of landscape, with Munich, Berlin and Rome in focus. The Munich Modernist landscape was presented in 7 stations, including the English garden, the Olympia Park München 72 and the Westpark München 1983, international garden show IGA / Petuel park with the buried motorway. The problem of river reshaping was addressed. Ulrike Gawlik from KIT presented totalitarian landscape architecture in Italy, Germany and Spain, a current DFG (German research foundation) research project which she is pursuing after an introduction to Rafaella de Vico and E42, the 1942 exhibition in Rome, which was the doctorate topic. In the current project the focus shifted to fascist cities such as Sabaudia. The second author spent a year in Rome last year and could relate to this landscape, where also a previous Le Notre landscape forum was organized. For urban periphery exactly the landscape of the EUR was chosen at the landscape forum.

A special topic was given by the talk of Pia Fricker (Zürich/Helsinki) on digital methods to landscape architecture. First the renaturation of the River Aire was presented. The approach to this was that

of open Spaces – decomposing. It was followed by a negative example of Tapiola Keilaniemi Towers SARC Architects with a destroyed landscape. At the ETH Landscape Layers – Landscape Toolbox were developed in frame of the MAS LA Lab ETH. This includes:

- Audio Lab – Landscape audio,
- Storytelling – communicating design,
- Landscape video – image & sound

Tools to decode complexity help understanding the space and integrating data into the process. From tools to landscape new visualization and then to design describes parts of the design studio methodology for the design of landscape at Prof Girot. In large scale landscape architecture the architecture of the new and resilient settlements in Arizona was shown putting questions such as what quality, how to deal with wind, the role of drones and the meaning of the data in landscape design. The final project shown was Gottard Project Göschenen ETH.

The contributions from Ellen Fetzer representing Le Notre and of Tiberiu Florescu from Romania closed the lecture series with the presentation of the Le Notre forum 2015 in Bucharest. The presentation of Tiberiu Florescu on dynamic master plan of Bucharest was thus a forerunner for the next year edition on urbanism. Ellen Fetzer included the German component to the history of Bucharest with the Willy Prager historical photos from the time of Modernism which can be found in the Baden-Württemberg Landesarchiv in Freiburg (2017).

To closure of the lecture series a panel of all speakers took place (Fig. 7). It debated challenges and tools, and the influence of landscape on urban development.



Fig. 7. Panel of the conference

1.4. Excursion

The excursion led to Frankfurt on the Main and presented different sites of the green belt (a project of 1990/91 of mayor Tom Koenigs, 1991) particularly around the two harbours in the East and the West.



Fig. 8. Ernst May Siedlung Bornheimer Hang, 1920s

The first stop was the Ernst May Siedlung on Bornheimer Hang (Fig. 8). The guided tour was offered by the Ernst May society (2017). This is a typical site for Neues Bauen in Germany, and includes a strong garden component. Living together is in

dialogue with rural type housing. The housing is integrated in the green belt. The May Siedlungen were built 1928-30. At Bornheimer Hang, different for the other one by May, the new neighbourhood was an extension of an existing one, not a new periphery development. As such, also the architecture is not radical Modernist (ex. the roofs). The neighbourhood includes also a church in Modernist style. The neighbourhood is protected as a monument. Later on the school designed for the neighbourhood was visited, located at a certain distance.



Fig. 9. Ost Park Frankfurt

The second stop was the Ost Park (Eastern Park, Fig. 9). This is the second park in size from the green belt in Frankfurt after the Nidda valley. The park was thought for poor worker families in the periphery of Frankfurt, in neighbourhoods such as the visited one or the Riederwald one, in other words as a social park. It was connected to the building of the East Harbour which will be visited. Later on

the rests of the Schwedler bridge were visited, which was one of the possibilities to reach the park when it was designed. The park features a rich flora and fauna (incl. geese). The beginnings of the park date 1880 when Bornheim was included in Frankfurt space. Around 1902 the first plans were done by garden architect Andreas Weber. These plans were not implemented. In the next 10 years these were further developed by Carl Heicke. The implementation of the park as we know it today started 1906 as the first popular park in Frankfurt and Germany. In the Modernist time these developments were continued by Max Bromme who also built in the park. The park was damaged during WWII and 1953 the regeneration started. Since 1986 the park is protected as monument. After the visit of the school another part of the park was shown, where housing for homeless is provided near the Schwedler Steg, the previous pedestrian bridge access.



Fig. 10. Charles-Hallgarten-School, architect Ernst May, 1930

The next stop was the Charles-Hallgarten-School (Fig. 10) built 1928-1930 after the plans of architect Ernst May, following reform thoughts in pedagogy. A central thought in landscape is the dialogue with landscape, the school classes are in parallel blocks with courtyards in between, and light following Modernist thoughts.



Fig. 11. European Central Bank, Coop Himmelb(l)au 2014

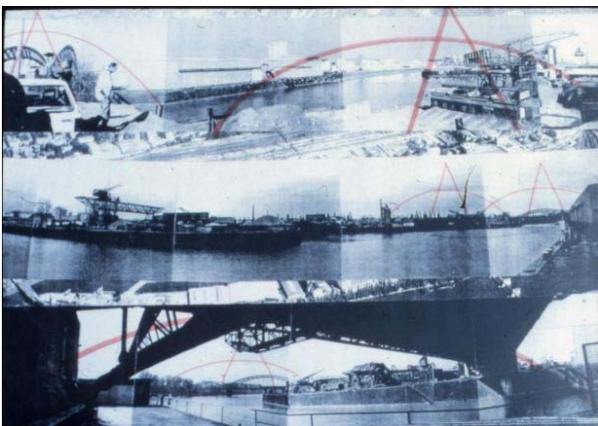


Fig. 12. Analysis of the site at the East Harbour for the diploma work Aqua Mega (1999, a project of a museum in the Easter Harbour, co-referent Henri Bava, main referent Rüdiger Kramm, at the institute of whom Alex Dill was working then) by Bostenaru

The East harbor developed in recent years, particularly with the presence of the European Central Bank. The transformation of the industrial area was subject of DOCOMOMO discussions at previous conferences. The solution foreseen by Coop Himmelb(l)au (2014) (Fig. 11) after the winning solution of the 2010 competition damaged the former building of the Großmarkthalle (Wholesale Market Hall) by Martin Elsaesser (1928) by removing two of the vaults. Now the free spaces of the EZB as well as the harbor park are remarkable developments in connection with a new Maine bridge. These were all transformations which happened to a site which was also site of the diploma work AQUA MEGA at KIT of the second

author in 1999 (Fig. 12). The urban concepts developed then by David Chipperfield were not implemented, despite these changes and that of the harbor park which we will see. The free spaces of the bank were developed by Vogt landscape architects. A new bridge connects the eastern harbour with the other side of the river. The EZB includes also a memorial to victims of Holocaust.



Fig. 13. Hafenpark in the Eastern Harbour in Frankfurt, with new bridge

Also part of the Eastern Harbour area is the Hafenpark (harbor park, Fig. 13), designed by Götte landscape architects (2017, Frankfurt, 2017).



Fig. 14. Luxury housing developments at the Western harbour

The last stop, after crossing the central area along the museum side was the Western harbor, an area more developed than the Eastern harbour due exactly to the vicinity of the museum side. The excursion led to luxury housing

developments (Fig. 14) which respond to a market request.

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