

Chapter 3

Debate

Chaired by

Per Olaf Fjeld,
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Koray Gokan, Istanbul, TURKEY

I would like to make a comment on Constantin's use of the term 'object'. If we talk about urban design we start from the object 'city' and then later on, nowadays we start talking of space. Our task becomes very difficult because the subject called 'space' is no longer part of our discipline of urban design or architecture; it is the work of psychologists and sociologists. I start experimenting since my subject is really the student. I concentrate on the city and I create the environment to teach but I define the subject as close to the mind of my students. What is important then is how my students comprehend, feel, define what they are given; this is my subject and it is important. Some of the times depend on students' comprehension and perception. We deal with small scale subjects but sometimes we get into the larger scale. This is what I am trying to do but I do not know if I am doing right or wrong.

Cesare Macchi Cassia, Milan, ITALY

I found Constantin's speech very interesting in terms of the student perspective in relation to our context. As I mentioned earlier in my speech, students are the citizens of our contemporary city and, whereas for us the city must be studied, for students it represents the context of life. Our perspective on students makes for interesting discussion because although we talk about urban design, we are essentially talking about the teaching of this field.

Constantin Spiridonidis, Thessaloniki, GREECE

To answer Koray Gokan's question, I would say that organizing our course or teaching is a kind of project. This means that it must have **an object: the student, a subject: the teacher, a trajectory: the process** and, finally, **selection: based on critiques of previous activities** and, on top of that, it must have **value**.

Juhani Katainen, Tampere, Finland

Perhaps I could add to this discussion, whose general title could be "reflection on educational field theory", which is what we are actually doing here. What is very important is to understand the *location* of a school, not only the geographical, but social and spiritual location as well. They are all different, yet we use words at an abstract level that makes the whole world similar. The fact is that in various schools in my country, we use the city as a laboratory, which can sound like a generalization, but if you go to Tampere, walk along the streets and then use that industrial city of 170,000 inhabitants that has lately started changing, then that would be quite concrete. So, it is all very well to talk on a theoretical level, but a very important part of our teaching and working with students and teachers, as well, is to understand where we are located.

Therefore, in trying to educate architects, I think, it is essential that we, first of all, make them aware of local problems and work towards finding solutions for these, and then we can move on to other contexts or circumstances. In any case, they will have plenty of opportunities in their own professional lives to explore new territories and create "new worlds" if they are clever enough to do so. This attitude may sound contradictory to this new European concept of treating architectural education, leading us to talk quite generally about "a European architect" or "create a program for European architects", which is all very understandable, but we also need to keep in mind that *we all come from somewhere, and some things are closer to our hearts than others. Perhaps understanding these priorities is a good starting point for discussion.*

Ali Uyanik, Aarhus, DENMARK

In a way, I feel that *the students are projects rather than subjects, having as their object, the city*, possibly, and our goal is to take them through the educational process. However, there is a problem with this education that we have not discussed yet, which is public, that is, concerning the inhabitants of the city and civic, concerning the authorities or politicians. This means that in order for our education to succeed fully, we need the cooperation of those who care and will

provide for the city, so that we are all working for the common welfare of the city. Therefore, besides students and our efforts, we have one more object – the public and our politicians. Students do not need to be only strategically equipped to do projects that are more process oriented than design projects. When they do design projects, they have difficulty in how to design creatively on a large scale, and they end up with patterns that have nothing to do with space, sociology or real life. For example, when I was in Istanbul, I heard of a new area which was to undergo development, where high rise buildings were being placed on the Istanbul logo in the form of a tulip. It seems that was the best plan the architects could come up with because city planners usually make patterns. How do you make designs on such a large scale? This is a problem area for my students, and it is for this reason that I raised the question earlier about how to get students that are strong in design involved in the planning and not just engage strategic or analytic thinkers at that level. Therefore, we need to bring more elements together if we want to achieve some understanding or arrive at solutions.

Constantin Spiridonidis, Thessaloniki, GREECE

This is not necessarily to give an answer, but express a thought. Whatever students bring into the classrooms, whether it is ideas, patterns or images, we know that there are strong reasons for their doing so and mainly influenced by what is accessible to them in their environment outside the educational setting, ranging from their social contacts to magazines, the internet or media. It seems to me that we should not develop a negative attitude to these external influences and implicitly try to eliminate the novelty they bring in. This will only cause conflict. Rather we should respect their ideas.

Unfortunately, there is a kind of resistance in our schools of architecture to whatever is avant-garde. For example, I have often heard teachers say that the constructivist approaches in their schools are forbidden, and if teachers are not inclined to accepting such ideas, then they cannot develop. This resistance is an issue that should be discussed, in an atmosphere of understanding, because it does not do justice to the free spirit that architecture ought to have in welcoming new ideas and changes. We know that students bring in new ideas, not so much because they have been taught by others, but directly from society at large, and their personalities are identified with the co-existing layers or strata. Nowadays, there is no unique personality as was pervasive in the Modern Movement or during the '60s or '70s when we were educated. Understanding a space in terms of layers is a way for students to express themselves. I think our role as schools is to incorporate new ideas and make our students understand them, not copy them.

A few years ago, along with four schools of architecture, we ran a "Common Curriculum Development" project, having the same design theme, same location, same building, same brief, but with each project being developed in the different schools. What was surprising to discover when we brought all the projects together was that the projects could not be classified according to the individual schools, yet the teachers in the respective schools had each a distinct personality or architectural orientation. In fact, the teachers were all so different in their approaches that we had trouble communicating with each other at times. However, it was clear that the student work was not representative of the teaching orientations the students were exposed to in the classrooms, leading us to think that there must be other sources influencing our students which obviously come from outside, and this is not just fashion or the internet.

Perhaps, we need to consider that what contributes to the problem is that schools are not in touch with the changes happening in society, and unless we understand these changes, we will not be able to communicate with our students. What is more is that teachers will be wondering what they are actually doing in the classrooms if on the wall there is a reflection of the constructivist students from one school, the Modernists from another and a digital group from another space. Quite honestly, I have never seen the traces of my teaching in any of my students' works, and I do not know if this is a direct result of my teaching or stance as an architect. I suppose we can never be too complacent about what we know, and we should always be conscious of what is missing in our education because changes happen very fast and it is our students, after all, that represent our contemporary society.

Cesare Macchi Cassia, Milano, ITALY

I must admit that I learn far more from my students than what I actually offer them because I offer methodologies and suggestions, a way of thinking or understanding, but they give me a reality, which I experience every year. In the middle of the academic year, there comes a moment when I feel that I have learned so much more from them, and this has something to do with what Constantin has just mentioned.

Vana Tentokali, Thessaloniki, GREECE

I greatly appreciated Constantin's presentation and wish to refer to a point he made about students, which suggested that we should learn / teach what the students want to learn. I think this is a crucial point to consider if we are to follow the wishes of our students, which is a question I often ask myself. From personal experience, I think that the whole design process works on a rotation system from the theoretical starting point to the actual practice or construction, the final point. As educators, we deal with both, at times being aware of this and at other times not. On the other hand, students come to us not as "tabula rasa" or "clean slates", but as individuals with their own backgrounds. The question is, *what can we do with this background?* Most often, particularly when the students are not talented, if I try to find what the students want to learn, I am lost, so I will try somehow to change that background.

You may want to ask, "Well, *who are you* to do that?" or "How can you do that!" I would say that I am trying to find the starting point of the design process, which is the theoretical part, and this is the tool leading to the design practice. One of the many ways of going through this rotation system, as already mentioned, is to realize that there is a process which, quoting from Bourgeois, is "Undo and Redo", so that when I change the first phase of the design, I redo, and what we are to do as educators is to create the conditions for the students *not to want* what they want to learn, but, as a first step to "redo" what they know. To elucidate this, I can say that all of us, not just students, are products of social conditioning, however, students, in particular, are conditioned not just by external parameters, but by us, educators, as well. Consequently, we should ensure that our role is to create the conditions for them to be "formed" by *theory* through us. In this way, the educator becomes merely a vehicle of the student's theoretical formation.

Constantin Spiridonidis, Thessaloniki, GREECE

This clarification is very helpful in bringing out the fact that what I meant is not at all in opposition to what you have just described. When I talked about the ability to understand what students want, I was not suggesting that we should necessarily ask them what should be taught. What I meant is basically what you said, but I will rephrase it in my own words. We should use our theoretical knowledge in order to instill what we want to teach in the value system of the other. The question is how to make it possible, in a teaching process, to permit students to reveal their own value systems along side the value system of the teacher, and it is between these two articulations that this idea of "a new world" comes into the picture. In contrast, what is not a good strategy is the teacher's insistence on what he / she wants to teach and to restrict students to learn what the teacher has in mind.

Since changes happen so quickly in our society, our students will not go very far if they are taught one truth. Therefore, what we must teach our students is how to change, and that architecture is neither one nor fixed, but changeable because it reflects societies and cultures that are constantly changing and, consequently, architecture, as an expression of these changes will be different tomorrow. Perhaps the magic of teaching lies in the fact that it is articulated with learning, and if I were to answer David Willey's question on why we teach, I would say that there is only one answer: *we teach because we learn*, and observing the changes our students go through is valuable knowledge.

Tom Jefferies, Manchester, UNITED KINGDOM

There were some interesting points made in the previous expositions. Two of these were the ten-

sion that exists between the identification of an individual within a collective cultural milieu and the certain symbolic elements used by Constantin to describe individuality, such as one's choice of mobile phone, the type of training shoes you wear or brand of jeans, etc, as a way of identifying oneself within a collective culture which has somewhat lost its individual character. On the other hand, Cesare Cassia mentioned the kind of tension that exists between the notion of the contemporary city as fragmented, dynamic and difficult to quantify space and the Modernist or traditional notion of the city as something that is fully planned or quite static and unarguable. Now, my question is, *between these two tensions how do you see the role of the architectural institution in terms of actually mediating between these situations? Is the institution a relatively stable filter through which things can be understood? Or is it a very dynamic, fluid entity which kind of responds and reshapes itself according to contexts?*

Constantin Spiridonidis, Thessaloniki, GREECE

My opinion is that it must be a filter, but not be stable; so, it must be changeable, renewable and dynamic to absorb changes outside. For example, in the past, I never used to teach in my Urban Design course about the notion of sprawl. The urban sprawl is a term introduced years ago to mean the dispersion, but in our days it used, after Aaron Betsky, to express the fragment character (or nature) of our urbanity, that pieces of city which 'suddenly' can appear on almost any kind of environment. So, I could teach all those elements we normally teach in such a course (space, the city, the urban environment, historic environment, etc), but would never talk about a sprawl until it, eventually, made its way from outside. Strangely enough, many students know already this term from architectural literature before come to my course and use it in their design assignments. As a result, I was obliged to incorporate it into the teaching from then on. Naturally, I had to familiarize myself with the concept and understand what that was, but could not reject or ignore it because it was already part of the students' experience.

I think we should be open to new ideas, but filter incoming information as well. We cannot stress, enough, the importance of leaving our minds open; in fact, I will never forget the strong reactions brought about by the use of the computer as a design tool in our school, where it is generally felt that teachers' perspective on traditional hand design should be maintained. However, we know that students are not only uninterested in some of these methods, but will probably never even use these skills. Surely, there exists a resistance which is articulated with power games played in schools, with our inability to adapt which leads to stronger resistance and so on, but as teachers, we also feel the urgency to do something about changing that attitude.

Cesare Macchi Cassia, Milan, ITALY

Our instrument of responding to the problems posed by society in the physical project is *form*, which also represents the *tool* of the physical project. If we put the same complexity of today's world in the form, we will talk about the form on different levels. Previously, in my speech, I referred to 3 levels: the structural, typological and stylistic. Thus, we can affirm the necessity of continuity at the structural level with an interesting mixture of continuity and dynamism at the typological level and, then, accept the complete personification at the stylistic level. In this way, we can absorb the complexities inside our tools and respond to a situation for which flexibility and change implementation is absolutely necessary, working strictly with our instrument, which is *form*.

Cânâ Bişel, Ankara, TURKEY

My question is on the same issue, once again. I think that seeing students as important subjects of a course of teaching and learning is a very important point. From my own experience, as *subjects* students are influenced and formed by two things, mainly, the everyday environment in which they live, the city and the fascination with architectural publications through the media, internet, etc. Both of these, however, are not always well integrated. On the question of what stance architectural institutions should take with respect to what is happening in cities, I would say that from my particular context, cities in Turkey, today, are undergoing tremendous trans-

formation with not only liberal policies on sprawl and fragmentation of urban space, but transformation of existing urban areas, as well. There is a general formlessness or lack of structure; so, I believe that as teachers and researchers, we should base our teaching on this criticism.

Earlier, we discussed the mission of architecture education, which of course has many missions, such as developing creativity or originality, etc., but should it not, also, have the role of being critical of what exists? Resistance can also be an avant-garde position since not all new things are actually avant-garde. Take for example, all these images being circulated to promote neo-liberal views or developments, all those brands and the fragmentation and privatization of urban space, with public space being lost. Of course, students, being part of this culture, are fascinated and tend to see all that as a positive development. So, *are we retrograde? It seems to me, we should maintain our position as critics, but also develop creative positions against them.*

Constantin Spiridonidis, Thessaloniki, GREECE

I think that this is a very crucial and interesting issue you have raised. Of course, we must be critical, but what does it mean to be a critic? If we understand this from a theoretical point of view, looking back to the '70s when we spoke of "theory and critique" which at the time referred to the inability for architecture to produce a theoretical discourse, so, the critiques substituted or replaced the theories. Times have changed, and I do not think that a critic has the same role to play as then. So, a critic today will compare value systems and the question is *which value system is best?* Obviously, we should define how we understand incoming information from the outside world, and we have a mission and obligation to express this to our students.

However, you mentioned "fascination with images" which expresses a kind of value judgment or preconceived notion of images that may be superficial or does not show a profound understanding for either the image maker or those who are fascinated by the images. It is quite possible that our interpretations are misleading in terms of what students understand from such material, and my feeling is that they have far greater depth than we give them credit for. Besides, students express themselves through such means, and our mission as institutions is certainly to present *our way* of understanding the world, but we must also accept the *ways of others* if we are to help students discover and express their own world and not just stop at experiencing ours.

If we look at the exercises or the theoretical courses in many schools of architecture, we can see that they usually start with Le Corbusier, and then go to Alvar Aalto, Luis Kahn, and their contemporaries. There are many exercises on "à la manière de" which is a typical example, but they are limited to this period of time. Of course, I am not suggesting that there is anything wrong with doing such tasks, but they should also be working on what is going on today. I know colleagues in schools of architecture been reproached for inviting avant-garde guests on the pretext that their ideas may be dangerous and should be kept out of the school. This is inconceivable, much like "The Name of the Rose" by Umberto Eco, and, I am afraid that this attitude is not only an exception in schools of architecture. In most schools of architecture, the history of architecture stops at the '60s, and the theory of architecture does not include contemporary architecture, as if it did not exist. What is crucial then is to find the articulation of those two perspectives. Surely we cannot accept everything with blind faith, but we should keep the door open for new ideas.

Cesare Macchi Cassia, Milan, ITALY

This more complex view of the form is not a mechanical factor. We can arrive at formal expressions to express language in our projects at the structural level. For example, we can refer to the projects of Tschumi or some of the first projects of Rem Koolhaas. So, we can use simple architecture to resolve structural problems. In Milan, north-east of the metropolitan area, there is a fantastic project for Montadori by Niemeyer that has organized all this part of the curb (kerb) with this image or point of controlling immensely the space far more than the single architecture. Therefore, the main point I wish to stress here is that the complexity of form is not mechanical; one can use another level by adopting a compositional attitude.

Josep Muntanola, Barcelona, SPAIN

Prof. Cassia's lecture reminds me of [.....] answer to me when I asked about this particular problem of architecture, the city,... He gave two answers, one of which is similar to what Cesare Macchi Cassia said, which is that of a neo-order for a new social life, although his view did not envisage the order of the architect's composition and so forth.

The second point is a suggestion he made for us to read a book that was very popular in the United States then, entitled, "Theatre of Spontaneity", which puzzled me at the time, wondering why we would be asked to read such a book. On reading the book I discovered why. This is a book by a German scholar from the United States that portrays a spontaneous theatrical confrontation with the educational world, thus a story built around an open confrontation between various students, professors, etc. What in my mind is important here is not to make the same mistake that made in this book in terms of the confrontation with Philip Johnson and Hitchcock. The problem was that the architect in the book was very critical of Philip Johnson and Henry-Russell Hitchcock, and although he was right, this caused a disaster with the dismissal of resulting in a dramatic split between the avant garde and in Hitchcock's order. On the one hand, we had the view that urban designers did not know how to design and that architects lived in a world apart, thus splitting the group right in the middle.

Therefore, I think that confrontation is bad from a negative perspective. What is positive is for us to have different views, but always look for a common ground, whether this is local or international, in our critical encounters between urban designers and architects so that we do not make distorted generalizations about each other. It is very important, however, for us to be critical on such points as trans.....neutral, the student. Also, it is impossible to teach architecture without teachers clearly defining their own values in relation to social and political ethics, otherwise, students are lost.

I mention this because in some schools there seems to be a lack of consistency, with students constantly improvising and changing. This must be a reflection of their teachers who may not hold consistent views or clear positions on the situation regarding the city. It is quite possible that teacher attitudes, whether we are conscious of this or not, may be leading students to be inclined in a certain direction or make certain choices about form and reality in urban design, etc, so that their acts may not be so spontaneous, after all, but influenced by our perceptions or positions on issues.

Another consideration is that in preventing confrontation, unknowingly, we may be avoiding wonderful possibilities in architecture. But, we should be careful that in dealing with possibilities, for example, prototypic solutions, like making fine forms through urban design and the making of a genetic process through form, in both fields, is not acceptable in most schools, and if a professor teaches architectural and urban planning at the same time, he / she will be dismissed since it is against the whole system or institution. A value system is not an individual matter, but has a collective dimension because new social needs are collective social needs. Of course, every individual perceives these needs in a special way, and this is where the "theatre" and necessity for confrontation comes in. After all, in an institution of completely neutral and transparent architecture, there is no architect. If there is some kind of relation between the physical form and the social meaning or content of the form, there should be some value system. Although this does not mean that we should impose this value system on the students, but use it to help them build and connect with one of their own. Nevertheless, I think that they should be made to feel that there is a connection between the form and social interaction.

This is important, because I noticed that students in some schools hop from one school to another, so that they go to urban design if there is more money and projects in this particular field, but if there is a prestigious architect doing prestigious form elsewhere, then they will go there. So, in effect they are actually using the institutions as choices are made based on economic and political factors with little regard for form and urban design. In conclusion, negative confrontation should be avoided, but positive confrontation between different views and perspectives is very important, otherwise it becomes monolithic. At the same time, we should be cautious of not avoiding new solutions and positions that do not manage to rise. In fact, we should question

such outcome and try to understand the reason(s) why. Perhaps in a negative way, we are urging students to take the two positions previously referred to, and we also create the stereotypes of the architects they want to imitate, thus contributing to the fascination.

Finally, we should aim at finding a common ground rather than confrontation because with all the different views on architectural education and a common ground, students will be made to feel confident that they can improve the interrelation between architecture and the city rather than see the task of innovating their nice final projects as an impossible one. In this way, we not only facilitate their work, but will also help them realize that the way we operate is not always based on our own value system, but the only choice we have.

Cesare Macchi Cassia, Milan, ITALY

Regarding what has been said about the individual and social needs, there seems to be a problem in the affirmation of the form of the contemporary city, which is that social needs are expressed through individual positions. The need to live in a single house is a personal, individualistic position that, at least in my country, is determined by one's overall economic and cultural possibilities. The result of this individualistic position is reflected in social expression, and the problem is that our work does not seem to be interested in offering a response to these social needs expressed through individual positions. If we take into consideration the book of Clarence Stein, then we can appreciate the validity of understanding these individualistic positions that have become social positions. In Europe, I do not see this interest. For example, in my own school there is no research on the family house that Bernardo Secchi calls "casa isolata sul lot" (a single house on a lot / piece of land). A way of arriving at a better configuration of the contemporary city, utilizing the needs of the society is a very important factor for us, and it is for this reason that we must listen and offer different scenarios, as well as work within a process which is on-

Constantin Spiridonidis, Thessaloniki, GREECE

I do not have much to add, except for some brief comments, I certainly agree with the distinction made regarding social values rather than individualistic ones, and if individual values or differences do manifest themselves, it is because there is an environment where such values are socially accepted and permitted. For example, take digital architecture, which is something new and for this reason rather 'strange' appearing before us, but there are reasons that society allows such phenomena to appear, and we need to understand the mechanisms that sustain such forces.

Emel Aközer, Ankara, TURKEY

When the object of a project is a particular city and when students are expected to analyze, read or understand it, then the notions of analysis, reading or understanding need to be clarified. For Hans-George Gadamer, "understanding" is to form a project from one's own possibilities. My question is: what skills or competencies should a student have beforehand in order to develop an understanding of a city in all its complexity?

Cesare Macchi Cassia, Milan, ITALY

There is nothing that needs to be done *before*. This is something that comes together during the actual course of the project, at that moment in time. I really do not understand how with a compositional attitude you can expect students to understand separately or at a different time how to develop an urban project. Therefore, simultaneously, the student is called upon to understand the given situation and propose a solution to the problem of a particular area. There is no difference between *understanding* and *designing* since they overlap, and you are responsible for your student during this process, so, there are actually no propeadeutic moments (preparation period) involved in this process.

Emel Aközer, Ankara, TURKEY

There are different paradigms and different theoretical perspectives in urban design. Does not every formulation of a problem situation require a theoretical / conceptual framework? Do students not need a prior understanding and critical readings of these paradigms for being able to freely choose among them, and to grasp and formulate a problem situation by means of the conceptual tools they offer?

Constantin Spiridonidis, Thessaloniki, GREECE

I understand those positions, but there is an issue that should be discussed. This task of clarifying the values, contents and perspectives of each of those paradigms must be part of the theoretical development in the school, and according to my understanding, the theory course must have as its objective the spectrum of paradigms raised over the years (past and present). So, with this knowledge that students acquire, they will select the paradigm that is closer to their understanding of the world. Our task is to give them the confidence to raise questions, and this ties in with what David Willey mentioned, yesterday, about how to facilitate students to ask the proper questions because the way that a question is posed defines how it will be answered. Therefore, in terms of design, the way a space is analyzed, for example, will determine how one will proceed through a complementary process of theory and design, which, after all, is not two different worlds, and this process should be conducted in as competent and efficient a way as possible.

Cesare Macchi Cassia, Milan, ITALY

What is important is that we always start off with a problem because it makes it easier for everyone to understand. If the problem concerns a region, then the problem is also a physical / environmental one, not just social, economic or psychological. Also, in order to get our students' attention, we should talk to them as citizens, starting with a presentation of the problem, which is actually turned over to them, and using our skills as teachers, we develop and build on student responses in an effort to arrive at potential solutions.

Patrick Flynn, Dublin, IRELAND

Just a few comments on pedagogy and how you looked at the tutor bringing something into the pedagogical process. Both teacher and student contribute to this process each bringing in their own realities, and with the merging of these realities, a third force emerges which is teaching / learning, if we want to call it that. This pedagogical process seems to acknowledge the reality of the student on equal terms with that of the tutor, as they see it, in order to try to create this force. That pretty much relates to a topic we talked about, this morning, on the "socially constructed realities", which is an interesting approach. I was just wondering, however, how do we resolve the conflict between that approach to teaching, which places a lot of emphasis on society and the here and now, as opposed to the more traditional narrative or story of architecture, which stresses the ramification or importance of individuals who often work against society to promote their own values and impose a new vision on society. That is, perhaps, the more traditional way that architecture was taught, with the view of examining such individuals and emulating them, somehow, as opposed to the idea discussed this morning, suggesting an approach that emerges from society.

Traditionally architecture was taught by presenting a series of individuals who held a view point that often worked against society and which represented their own ideological approach that they used to impose something on society. That approach seems contrary to what we have discussed earlier about the student having a reality that we accept as valid and that the teaching emerging from this teacher-student mixture of realities comes directly from the existing society or actual context as opposed to what is in the mind of one individual person.

Constantin Spiridonidis, Thessaloniki, GREECE

Would you please explain what you mean by "against society" because that is not very clear to me.

Patrick Flynn, Dublin, IRELAND

I suppose that, traditionally, architecture was taught as a series of heroic individuals who had a vision that was *outside* of society or apart from society rather than part of it (belonging to society). In some ways, you were taught to emulate (imitate) these people that had these visions apart from society rather than visions within the society.

Simon Beeson, Edinburgh, UNITED KINGDOM

I think the question addresses the idea that, if in the design project we adopt the pedagogical approach Flynn suggests is worth adopting and which may produce new, worthy results in responding to students, culture and competing paradigms, it cannot *only* be applied to the design project. It cannot be just an attitude that we apply in the studio or in design, but it has to be consistently applied in the student's education for it to make any sense. *All teachers, all of us are just one tiny voice in the student's experience.* However, the school or education is a much bigger voice, made up of lots of other tiny voices, and if we all adopt different paradigms of teaching, just as that design (pointing to a design on display) is addressed in a particular way, then I agree with many of the things you said, and I think that it is a very generous proposal of what it means to teach. However, this response is required throughout the curriculum; otherwise, it means nothing and just becomes another ad-hoc design strategy. So, there can be problem here. The history of architecture may be presented "heroically", though I am not suggesting that it is, yet it is always presented in *another* way to the way studio or design presents architecture. It is very difficult to have a consistent curriculum where the same attitude or the same values are brought across.

Constantin Spiridonidis, Thessaloniki, GREECE

Do you think that the curricula we have in our schools are consistent? You say not. If you are asking about whether it is possible to have a consistent curriculum, then I would be hesitant about it being possible, so why should this be an objective then? One might say that a curriculum must not be consistent, and an inconsistent curriculum is not necessarily ad hoc. If we agree that there are many views on the issues we are working on, sometimes far more than we expect, then a curriculum must be flexible. However, since all students are required to have that standard, basic knowledge and skills by the end of their education, irrespective of curriculum, then there may be some concern over the issue of how to ensure consistency of the competences.

I do not have a precise answer to this question, but I presume that the school has an obligation to ensure that type of consistency, even with more flexible curricula. The question that remains is *what kind of strategies we need to adopt in order to ensure consistent results through flexible curricula.* This is obviously a question of system rather than content of studies so there are many aspects to this. Although, traditionally, it is thought that the acquisition of this consistency of competences occurs in the student's mind, with the school stepping back, I believe that this is not a good strategy and that we should do more to ensure this through flexibility. This last remark is in reference to the "individual positions" you mentioned, and all I can say at this time since this is a big debate, is that I do not consider the individualistic stance as a social danger in today's world.

Paola Michialino, Newcastle, UNITED KINGDOM

I was thinking about what Constantin Spiridonidis was saying about the various interpretations of the role of the urban designer such as designer, social facilitator and cultural interpreter, and about what Cesare Cassia mentioned about the form and the importance of the form as a tool for extension. I then reflected on what I wanted my students to learn and realized that what I would like them to learn is how to deal with or answer those questions while, at the same time, being able to design forms, resolve the special questions, as well as being social facilitator and

cultural interpreter. My impression is that there are other skills, though, related more to an ability to cooperate and understand the capabilities of other professions and professionals, as well as the skill of asking questions. This latter skill is important because I have the impression that what the students tend to do and what we tend to ask them to do is *answer* questions and find forms *rather than ask* questions. Moreover, they should learn to listen to the questions raised not only by the society itself, but the space and characteristics of the city. Besides these remarks, I also wanted to ask you about what you think is the role of urban design in all that, whether it acts as a kind of medium, mediating between the architect of building constructions which are sort of finished forms and the role of the planners which involves programming the space at a certain time where there is a dynamic evolutionary movement. It seems to me that the role of urban design as a discipline is quite roundabout, involving various capabilities and inputs that allow all these elements to come together in order for the city to be built.

Cesare Macchi Cassia, Milan, ITALY

I agree with you, but I wish to remind you, once again, that your specific competence along with that of this group is a physical competence and then we offer forms to the process.

Paola Michialino, Newcastle, UNITED KINGDOM

Yes, but the problem with the students is that we teach future architects and they tend to do essentially forms which is logical but that does not give them the sensibility for everything else that is going on outside the form and that is a question of collaboration which can give them more inputs than an architect can think of.

Constantin Spiridonidis, Thessaloniki, GREECE

I think that it is not possible, now, to start defining the relationship between planners and architects because it is a very long discussion that is worth having in the near future. There are many parameters that could make them different, today. First of all if we talk about architects and urban planners, we are referring to division of labor in the domain of production of space, and we know very well that division of labor depends on social and financial conditions. Also, as a direct outcome of a certain period in our culture and civilization during the middle of this century, the cities developed in a certain way and created these professional categories that still exist today, however, the type of cooperation between the professionals have changed because work conditions are different.

Nowadays, in many competitions we can see architects permeating the decision making processes that normally involve urbanists. Take for example the competition for a 7-kilometre project along the seafront in Thessaloniki, which was actually an urban-scale project connecting the city along the seashore. In the past, such a project would draw urban planners, but nowadays, architects are invited to contest. However, this does not imply that urban planning is considered to be inadequate or underestimated in any way, but simply that the relationship between the two disciplines is different today. Therefore, perhaps it is better to say that urban design is *in between*, and this is true, but this notion has its limitations. I think that we live in a period of time that tries to eliminate limitations and limits in various ways, but an outcome of this is the confusion created between urban and architectural design.

Paola Michialino, Newcastle, UNITED KINGDOM

But this is exactly my question. We are talking about teaching urban design but we do not know what we are talking about, where it starts and where it stops.

Loughlin Kealy, Dublin, IRELAND

I just want to return, very briefly to the issue of "consistency" in a school, and also the question of who decides on the curriculum. Does the student decide by free choice? How does this smor-

gasbord get put together? I think, this comes to the core of how schools of architecture and schools of urban design find themselves negotiating within their educational landscape or their own institutions. Again, I would not be offering solutions to it, but I would think that it is extremely important that students are actually presented with some sort of vision of what they can expect to find when they enter the study of architecture, and I do not mean that in a prescriptive way. What I actually mean is that in some way or other we reach a meta understanding, as I pointed out in my speech yesterday. There needs some sort of level of coherence, and this does not refer to consistency, but a level of coherence (intelligible articulation), which allows one to explain what the mission is all about.

The search for that, if this is a serious quest in any school of architecture, is, in my opinion, a good objective and a way forward, and if it changes over time and is inherently dynamic, then it is fine and there is no need to worry too much. However, if, for some reason or in different stages, that is not a continuing quest, then one does need to be worried and one does find oneself dealing with conflicting paradigms in a much more fundamentally-conflicting way, thinking that it is a risk, a changing situation, but that things will move on. I think the connection between where we, as educators, "pitch the tent" is always, somehow, conditioned by ideologies, and I think one has to try to bring out those ideologies all the time and make them explicit because we do not function without them; they are part of the baggage that we bring, and we need to be clear about what they are and be fairly honest about them. I do not want to go much further than that, but to go back to a quote that I gave, yesterday, from Paul Clay's writing on modern art. Part of the quote I put up on the screen was "...We have found parts, but not the whole". Then, he goes on to say, "We still lack the ultimate power because the people are not with us."

Jean François Mabardi, Louvain-La Neuve, BELGIUM

I have a simple question for which I do not expect an answer, now, but I would like an explanation for your use of the term "paradigm".

Paola Michialino, Newcastle, UNITED KINGDOM

There are some details I want to add to our discussion on the relationship between urban design and architectural design. The influence of the big names, like Rem Koolhaas, Frank Gehry, Zaha Hadid, is huge. Koolhaas, for instance, claims that we have to "architectonize urban reality and the suburban sprawl", so, with the extent of such influences, I assume, that students and professors, as well, everywhere try to "architectonize" urban reality. But, I am not sure if this should be taken lightly or seriously. .

Constantin Spiridonidis, Thessaloniki, GREECE

I will not try to the details of the question on paradigms just yet because it is rather complex. I would like just to clarify that I use the term to describe an approach to architecture which has a particular way to understand architecture, the architect, the design activity and its process. This understanding is part a consistent philosophical environment characterized by a particular understanding of the human being, the society and the world.

I want to clarify that I never said that the curriculum must be defined by those students who want to be taught something. On the contrary, I would say that our task in designing curriculum is to stay close to what we understand the students want. With reference to Paola Michialino's statement, I do not think that it is enough for our students to make designs, drawings and projects, unless these activities reflect or act as a mirror for the students' own learning and understanding, which can in itself, of course, be an objective or mission of the school.

The other point I wish to add is that there are schools that have curricula that are object oriented, where architectural design and urban design appear as different objects. There are also others whose curricula are process oriented, where the emphasis is not so much on whether you teach *urban* or *architectural space*, but the emphasis is on the *design* with themes on urban space and architectural design.