A Theory is not What You Build

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Kari Jormakka arrived in Vienna in late 1998 at a significant moment in the city's urban and architectural development. The dissolution of the Soviet Bloc in the early nineties was finally delivering tangible socio-economic impulses, and Austria had committed itself to the European Union. The city was growing again, and there was a lot to be built. At the same time, the older guard of Viennese architecture, whose post-modern interpretation of the Viennese tradition had drawn so much international attention – the Hans Holleins, the Hermann Czechs, the Boris Podreccas – were making way for a new generation of architects who were exploring new meanings and methods in their work. Kari's appointment as Professor for Architectural Theory at TU Wien positioned him in the middle of an emerging, and rather flammable, debate.

I strongly maintain that Kari's contribution to this discourse, while not dogmatic, provided many young architects with decisive impulses that helped them to formulate original and valuable positions. How did this unfold? As the parameters of Vienna's specific discussion were complex and intertwined, it is helpful to recapitulate what was at stake in the early 2000s.

Spectacle, Sachlichkeit and Superdutch: Vienna Anno 2000

Through his position at the Viennese Academy of Applied Arts, as well as his virtuosic manipulation of the medial spectacle, Wolfgang Prix had in many ways established himself as the new *alpha* on the range, and made his presence known beyond academia and the media as well. In 2002 he was appointed chairman of the *Gundstücks-beirat*, which is the municipal commission responsible for adjudicating the quality of social housing in Vienna. At that time, social housing represented over 90% of the new housing production in the city,[1] so this meant that Prix and his principles of deconstructive architecture asserted an enormous influence on what was being built. The effects were quickly perceptible. Social housing, in the post-war years too often the grey lady of the Viennese scene, was suddenly given a featured role in the architectural spectacle. So, okay: if architecture must burn, it was now at least able to ignite with public funding.

But many designers, less drawn to the bonfire of the vanities, sought inspiration from other currents and traditions. Adolf Krischanitz and Michael Loudon, for example, looked more to new developments coming out of Switzerland that meshed ideas from the Italian neo-rationalist *La Tendenza* with Teutonic *Neue Sachlichkeit* and concepts from fine art movements like *Arte Povera* and Minimalism.[2] This new Swiss architecture had its inception in Dolf Schnebli's embrace of *Architettura razionale* at the ETH Zürich from the seventies to the nineties. He brought, for instance, Aldo Rossi to the school as a guest professor and promoted the Tessiner rationalists. Many of the decisive figures in the *Nordschweizer* scene around the year 2000, such as Jacques Herzog, Pierre de Meuron, Roger Diener, Marcel Meili and Christian Sumi,[3] had studied with Rossi and/or Schnebli, or worked in Schnebli's studio. The intellectual foundation of this architecture – simplicity, materiality and an intense interest in the relationship between urban morphology and architectural typology – asserted a strong influence on many young practices that were emerging in millennial Vienna.

In 1995 Rem Koolhaas brought out *S,M,L,XL*, and late the following year *Arch+* released the German translation of the book. Winy Maas and Jacob van Rijs started offering their Datascape studios at Rotterdam's Berlage Institute in 1997,[4] and in December 1998 Winy Maas published his seminal text "Datascape: The final extravaganza" in *Diadalos 69/70*. If the *Tendenza* aspired to uncover the ageless principles of the historic city, the new Dutch school grappled with the economic fluxes and regulatory undercurrents that shape the neoliberal metropolis. While Koolhaas – like Prix – was featured in the influential exhibition *Deconstructivist Architecture*, curated by Philip Johnson and Mark Wigley, which graced New York's MoMA in 1988, by 1996 it had become clear he was less interested in formal neo-constructivism than in what he called "programmatic alchemy".[5] His position endeavoured to deliver the death blow to typology as method, as well as to the sort of urban connoisseurship that formed the bedrock of *La Tendenza*. Koolhaas' writings strove to explain OMA's work, which was in and of itself a pursuit of adequate architectural forms for the multifarious programs that Big Finance bankrolled, as well as the heterogeneous urbanity these monetary vectors produced. MVRDV, on the other hand, didn't seek to cast their responsibility as planners away into the churning slipstream of neoliberalism. Rather, their Datascapes attempted to generate concrete urban and architectural form out of the fundamental regulatory parameters that govern contemporary socio-economic activity. The belief here is – to paraphrase Bart Lootsma – that the influences upon an architectural design can be quantified, and that the building itself then becomes an embodiment of the social forces that undergird these numbers.[6] The idea of convoluted programming and computer-friendly quantification as a generator of form quickly became very attractive for Viennese students, especially so in the tech-savvy halls of the University of Technology.

A Question of Meaning. Heimlich Manœuvres: Ritual in Architectural Form

Kari Jormakka was assistant professor in Ohio State University at the turn of the eighties and nineties, during its Peter Eisenman era.[7] This early training made deconstruction and generative design methodologies a life-long interest of his. With this background and inclination, he engaged and exchanged with numerous leading architects working in the expressive architectural palette that so defined the early and mid 2000s in Vienna. This unquestionably enriched the scene: Kari was a formidable partner in discussion, and his encyclopaedic knowledge and sharply analytical intellect contributed to the formation, interpretation and presentation of ideas for some of Vienna's leading offices. Yet, while Kari's understanding of form and its design methodologies was comprehensive,[8] it can be argued that his most lasting contribution to the contemporary discourse is to be found in other, arguably less media-friendly or seductive themes.

For many architects, artists and social scientists in Vienna, Kari's most incisive and original work was captured in his book *Heimlich Manœuvres: Ritual in Architectural Form*, which was published by Bauhaus University Weimar's publishing arm Verso Verlag in 1995. This book was less concerned with how architectural form was produced or interpreted than it was with sifting out how social and cultural meanings are imparted through the active, often unconscious use of architectural space itself. In emphasizing how architecture performs upon the subjective user, *Heimlich Manœuvres* formulated an alternative to formal and semiotic systems of architectural interpretation. The meth-

odology was linguistic and recalled Martin Heidegger in its use of etymological geneses, yet Kari thought it to be more in the mould of the seventh century thinker St. Isidore of Seville, who used the analysis of the words that described the two fundamental activities of civilization – agriculture and construction – to explain their traits and origins.[9]

The book's argument proposed that architecture could be best understood through human ritual. Rituals refer to nothing other than themselves and create their own reality; they re-create rather than represent. What is important is that rituals are participative and are "based upon the interaction of the ritualized body with conventions inscribed within the social body."[10] These interactions necessitate architecture, as these interactions require specific types of spaces in order to be effectively performed.[11] Thus, cultural interactions are conditioned by the spaces that support them – and the spaces are conditioned by the acts that they embrace and contain. The claim was that the interaction of performed rituals with the built space that encompasses them shape and define social practice: hierarchy, domesticity, property, pedagogy, the city, the state.[12]

Of great importance was the recognition that these rituals were primarily unconscious acts. Certainly, there are many forms of conscious rites – religion relies heavily on such practices, for example – but the focus in *Heimlich Manœuvres* was on the small, unwitting ceremonies of our daily lives. A certain essence of these quotidian practices are the mechanisms of power: they generate the hierarchical microstructures that underpin the functions of society. Yet these microstructures are not simply about *perforce* processes of dominance and subjugation; in Kari's reading they are much more elegant and omnipresent. Rituals are present in the finely graded, performative interactions that constitute social practice. They do not represent or symbolize anything, but they enable us as individuals to access and to influence (as well as to be influenced by) social groupings, and the let us constantly assess our relation to and position in these groups.[13] By providing each of these processes of ritual interaction with an appropriate spatial framework, architecture engages human behaviour in a subtle, dialectical dance of mutual and interactive generation.

Performative Meanings and the Production of Space

Heimlich Manœuvres and its ideas fired a lively debate upon Kari's arrival in Vienna, some four years after its initial publication. The conflation of performative meanings with ritual and space was of great assistance in breaking the conceptual logjam that developed in Vienna as the 2000s drew on. In the early nineties a small community developed in the city – artists such as Sabine Bitter, Helmut Weber and Barbara Holub, the philosopher Robert Pfaller, and architects such as Sabine Pollak, Roland Ritter, Lena Streeruwitz and myself – which engaged with Kari and discussed the issues his book raised.

To some of us in the group, Kari's discussion of performative meanings and ritual suggested an approach to the production of social space that enriched and expanded Henri Lefebvre's abstract Marxism, brought the idea of typology out of the analogical and rationalistic straitjacket inherent in the *La Tendenza* and offered a humanizing alternative to the neo-liberal, quantifying empiricism of the new Dutch school. There was much interest among us in how social ritual and performative meanings might

intersect with critical-materialistic space theory, which had by then become a burning issue in sociology, public art, and speculative architectural practices. With the publication in 1991 of an English translation of Lefebvre's 1974 classic *La Production d'Espace* [*The Production of Space*], the concept of spatial practice as a lived space of experience slowly spread out from its Parisian domicile. By 1999, it had reached Vienna, and energized a generation of young architects who were deeply concerned about the social underpinnings of urban space and architectural form.

La Production d'Espace inspired new lines of thought throughout architecture theory. Yet, as powerful as its ideas were, the project's global-political ambitions meant that it delivered conspicuously few practical insights into causal process and it said little about how the finely grained realities of life contributed meaning to the production of space. What Lefebvre proposed was a superordinate theory which classified space as a social product within the Marxian tradition. His project was a philosophical framework that sought to define space, to politicize and categorize it within western history. What it did *not* do was develop analytical tools that were directly applicable to design processes for architecture and urban planning.[14] These disciplines seek to formulate solutions for the continuously developing spatial needs of a dialectically evolving society; they require frameworks of conceptualisation capable of directly connecting social practice with concrete spatial situations. Many analytically inclined actors in the Vienna scene tried to envision how the potency of Lefebvre's abstract concepts could be more directly applied to meaning in architectural space.

While Kari always seemed to regard the French Marxists with a great deal of scepticism, many in the community were fascinated by the possibilities that his ideas might offer in this regard. Pursuing the principles outlined in *Heimlich Manœuvres* further*,* ritual could be regarded as a conceptual tool for producing tangible connections between social practice and spatial organisation. In enacting ritual, the body interrelates with specific spatial situations, in such a way that the ritualized body and the space of ritual are existentially co-dependent and ultimately construct each other in a dialectic manner. By defining social practice as a performance of everyday rituals, social relations could be linked with the production of specific forms of architectural and/or urban space. Seen through this lens, it could be said that forms of social relations (rituals) give rise to formal spatial organisations (social space). These spatial organisations situate people in relationship to each other, as well as to the space that contained them, and the action of ritual imbue this relationship with social meaning.

It could be argued that Kari's postulation regarding ritual disentangles some of the abstraction and philosophical vagueness of *La Production d'Espace*, most particularly the question of how space and praxis are functionally and substantively interwoven. This addressed the essence of how space might carry value and meaning: if space was a socio-economic product, as Lefebvre justly claimed, then the conjoining of ritual activities and performative meaning would not only express the motivation behind the form of a given space, it would also invest the space with social significance. This interconnection of ritual, form and meaning hypothesised a mechanism for analysing and understanding how meaning could be imputed into space and endowed both the form and the organisations of social space with an inherent and substantial cultural value.

Type, or Not to Type

This argument implies perforce a certain specificity; the claim that particular social relations give rise to distinct, identifiable spatial organisations inevitably raised the issue of type. In this case, the formulation would be as follows: *specific types of social relations engender specific types of spatial organisation*. Accordingly, through the principle of performative meaning, type would both embody and convey the meanings inherent in that social relation. This formulation would seem to closely parallel Quatremère de Quincy's assertation that type is the abstract essence of an idea embodied in form, and therefore a form that exemplifies the meaning behind the idea itself.[15] Yet, Kari wanted in no way to hitch his concepts to the draught-horse of type; it was certainly no oversight that *Heimlich Manœuvres* did not discuss the issue. Kari seemed rather ambivalent about the subject. Although his pedagogical publication *Basics: Design Methods* (2008) treated type as a respectable design tool,[16] in *Geschichte der Architekturtheorie* (2003) he is very equivocal about what it can and cannot do. He did recognize that it operates as a vehicle for conveying historically culturated meanings but was rather dismissive of the way that most architects applied the concept in criticism and practice.[17]

Around the turn of the millennium, Rossi's concept of the analogous city was widely regarded as the benchmark explication for type. For Rossi, type was an apparatus through which the city produces and reproduces itself. It is both process and object, a morphological building block of organised social space that conveys meaning. Rossi's idea of collective memory infuses these building blocks with a consciousness that binds individuals into an urban collective. The city is the amalgamated artefact of the individual activities and aspirations that it contains. In this sense the city is both an event and a form.[18] With respect to the previously prevailing mind-set of the functionalists, this was a truly innovative ontology of the city, and it is a conceptual construct that has inspired more than one generation of architects. And, at a quick glance, this formulation might even resemble Kari's interconnection of ritual and space. However, the differences are very significant, and the semiotic and urban morphological implications of Rossi's concept were, for Kari, deeply fraught with problems.

His apprehensions had to do with the way that Rossi and *La Tendrenza* conceived of type as a vehicle for history and collective memory. In *L'architettura della città* [*The Architecture of the City*], first published in 1966, Rossi recognizes the significance of ritual in the production and maintenance of collective memory, but links it intrinsically to myth and monuments.[19] The built artefacts of the city, structured by and expressed through type, give form to the singularity of place in the city. The artefact may become an event in and of itself, but it is an event that symbolizes only by reference to something of collective import: myth, memory, or ritual. Or, as Eisenman summarized it, they become "…the sign of the place as expressed in form."[20]

The issue was not only that its signification was intrinsically referential; both the meaning and the form of Rossi's types were fundamentally invariable and inflexible as well (Rossi himself did not believe that housing types had changed since antiquity).[21] Kari recognized that the manipulation and modification inherent to the design process rapidly compromised the semiotic content and functional patterning of a type.[22] If there were indeed cultural meanings imbedded in a typological form, the appropriating and amending processes of analogous design would rapidly make it unintelligible. This inelasticity was also deeply ingrained in Giorgio Grassi's superbly materialistic form of

rationalism, in which he used the lens of the enduring urban artefact to investigate design as a process of making. Grassi's conception of architecture, formulated as the translation of eternal typological principles into the language of the prevailing local building technique, left little room for suppleness of meaning or adaption to new social relations.[23]

What Kari valued was conceptual processes that were lithe, agile and more amenable to the sort of necessary adjustments and redirections that good design demanded. Diagrams were therefore preferable to type; these were "a heuristic pictogram which liberates architecture from language, interpretation and signification while resisting typological fixation."[24] The formal and spatial figures expressed within a diagram were not laden with any *a priori* meaning, they were free to follow the necessities of program and construction, or react to the inspirations and constraints of site. This is not to say that the forms and spaces that these diagrams produced would be free of meaning; it was understood that they would be invested with performative meanings through the activities they accommodated and the daily rituals that they would empower.

This interpretation made recent developments of German-Swiss architecture clearly comprehensible for many actors in Vienna. Without jettisoning *La Tendenza's* concern for the integrity of the existing city, post-millennium Swiss architecture extrapolated Grassi's primacy of materiality into buildings that were no longer burdened with fixated cultural interpretation or referential historical signification. As Jacques Herzog asserted:

> "We want to design buildings which provoke sensations, not ones that embody any particular idea… we are more interested in [using] direct physical or emotional impressions… to create works that are essential and understandable for everyone, ones which imprint themselves directly on our consciousness, through layers of context and culture, as sensations."[25]

The intention stated here was to create an architecture of sensual experience, capable of conveying meaning, yet liberated from processes of analogy.

The Homologous Form: Space as an Embodiment of Social Relations

Although its semiotic foundation was undeniably problematic, *La Tendenza* did possess the formidable ambition of explaining the totality of social, cultural and technological complexity that comprised the city. As Jane Jacobs pointedly stated, cities are "organized complexity",[26] so there was a compelling desire at Kari's institute to go beyond analogy and explore how the production of complex patterns of urban social space might unfold.

The ideas of the Italian materialist semiotician Ferruccio Rossi-Landi offered those of us engaged with Kari's thinking an alternative avenue of inquiry. Rossi-Landi proposed that the production and exchange of commodities was related to the production and exchange of messages, i.e. language. Both were simply different forms for the communication of society, which is the process through which society produces and reproduces itself. As they were different aspects of the same social process, Rossi-Landi maintained that these were *homologous* forms of the constitutive social relations underpinning culture.[27]

The extension of this premise was that the homology between verbal and non-verbal communication also encompasses messages communicated in and through space. If ritual interacted with social space to generate non-referential, performative meanings, then the space, the ritual and the meaning they embodied would be homologous forms of an underlying, immaterial social relation. For example, the idea of exchange is a social relation that might take the form of, for instance, a floating market in Indonesia, a storefront grocery store in Vienna, or a supermarket in suburban Maryland. These dramatically different spatial organisations share little or no recognizable type-form, yet these spatial manifestations share a common origin in the essential concept of the social interaction they house.[28] Society communicates its relations through lived forms such as these; the totality of these homologically related forms provide society with its economic, linguistic and spatial order. These forms are necessary for producing, perceiving and reproducing society; without them, society cannot exist.

Furthermore, it followed that all the complex processes and interconnected information that flows into the production of social space could be regarded as homological forms that participate in Rossi-Landi's communication of society. These were all different, yet related formal manifestations of an underlying concept. Kari was well-versed in Wittgenstein and offered up the picture theory from the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1922), with its metaphor of the gramophone as an image, to describe this process: the grooves of a record, the score on paper and the waves of sound share an internal logical structure that connect their diverse forms to the underlying, generative musical thought of the composer.[29] This recognition opened up new possibilities for imagining the variety of homologous forms involved in the production of social space. Not only would space be a formal manifestation of the thoughts behind a social relation – the plans and the planning, the process of financing and building, and, of course, the practice of appropriating the spaces for use would all be homologous manifestations of the same social process. Other aspects of cultural praxis – such as laws, regulations, social conventions and financial constraints, as well as economic intentions – will impinge or have a bearing on upon a given social relation and decisively influence both the form of its spatial manifestation, as well as its inherent socio-cultural meaning.

This brings us back again to Wittgenstein. What we are dealing with here are relationships between parts of the world – cases, in Wittgenstein's dictum, or, better yet, *facts*. Facts represent meaningful relations between the parts of the world: "The facts in logical space are the world."[30] The homologous forms of social relations – space, praxis, conventions, norms – provide worldly delineations for the case of social relations and thereby allow us to experience and comprehend them. When these homologous forms are meaningful, they can be said to be facts, and it is the totality of these facts constitutes the world. If we consider the city to be a world, it is these facts, which are embodied in homologous forms, that constitute the city. Some of these forms can be expressed as material things – local climate, the prevailing organisation of a society's domestic space, or an existing division of public and private property. But others are immaterial – a society's common conventions on what *comprises* privacy, how building activities might be financed, or how building codes regulate the relationship of public and private rights. So, as in Wittgenstein's words, "the world is the totality of facts, not of things"[31], we can understand the essential reality of the city to be manifested in a complex and finely intertwined matrix of material and immaterial

social facts. The production of social space arises out of a process of creative interaction with this matrix, the homologous forms that it contains are both the ingredients we use to construct the city, as well as the recipes and know-how required for combining them. Social space, when we produce it, becomes, with all its attached meanings, a fact in and of itself. Through this process we generate and appropriate the spaces of the city, and how we act in – and interact with – these spaces endow performative meanings.

Facts. Or the Use and Abuse of Data

The idea of the spatially generative matrix of social facts was very useful for critically evaluating the new Dutch school associated mostly with OMA and MVRDV. On a philosophical level, it offered a definition of civic identity capable of countervailing Koolhaas' rather nihilistic idea of the generic city. If a city was comprised not only of space, ritual and practice, but also of all the material and immaterial facts derived from the history of its social relations, then – despite the globalization of consumer products, building materials and West End shows – each city must be a *unicum*. These matrices of material and immaterial facts *are* the identity of cities, and no two urban places could share the same matrix.[32] More concretely, this concept of facts as constituent urban building blocks offered a method for unravelling Datascapes and combatting further maltreatment of information through algorithmic misappropriation. In the words of Lootsma, datascapes return to "the hardest essence of modernism, which is the relation between architecture, planning, everyday politics and everyday life…[not through] an architectural language, but in a quantitative approach."[33] The claim was that the valorisation of quantity enabled MVRDV to utilise data as a form of language, one which could transform social practice into design parameters. Through the applications of algorithms and mathematical diagrams, form could be directly derived from the quantification of society, and in particular from the financial, economic and legal parameters attendant to any and all design tasks. The idea was that the design process would produce an architecture that was in tune with collective priorities, connected to the urban fabric and liberated from the need to be an individualistic, unique formal object.

Datascapes certainly produced dramatic buildings well-suited for the media, and the idea quickly drew attention from among the disciples of the spectacle. The idea that information could be quantified spread rapidly among a new wave of designers who bound their parametric inputs to ever more refined and increasingly digitalized algorithmic functions. Zaha Hadid's architectural partner Patrik Schumacher promulgated parametricism as a new style, in which the deformation of previously understood spatial orders was valorised as "the *lawful* inscription of information" that would produce a "lawfully" differentiated urban "field".[34] Working together in practice, Schumacher and Hadid disseminated this "style" to all corners of the world.

The question quickly arose as to whether the algorithmically manipulated quantification of social practice delivered projects befitting to Datascapes' original goals. The process certainly did generate new and often interesting forms, although much of what was produced quickly became – as Schumacher openly propagated – a new style that could be efficiently and effectively appropriated by both corporate and (in an especially proficient manner) authoritarian capital. But this was not only an issue of association; it was also a problem of content. While it may somehow be possible to effectively

quantify social practice – Lootsma went so far as to claim that collective emotions could be measured[35] – is it not just more satisfying but also more useful to regard the intricacies of social relations as something intrinsically qualitative in their nature?

The inherent problem here resides in the issue of meaning. Consider how *Heimlich Manœuvres* argued that meaning is embedded in the interaction of social space and the performative activities that it accommodates. These meanings are the foundation of the social relations that underlay the fabric of the city. How can the complex significance of these activities – the everyday rituals of life – be quantified? In what ways could their meanings become truly different, solely because they are larger or smaller, faster or slower? The idea of social facts extends the question of meaning to the other homological manifestations of social practice that constitute the urban assemblage. The legal, economic and hygienic parameters that collaborate in the production of space may (at times!) be expressed in quantities, but do these quantitative values truly represent the full, intrinsic significance of the social relation that they give expression to? To put it simply: *all parametric data is derived from social facts, but not every social fact can be quantified in data.* It is therefore imperative for critical academics and practitioners to ask: why would we heedlessly delegate responsibility for the design and production of our cities to data, to algorithms, to quantifications?

The conceptual integration of performative rituals, non-referential meaning embodied in social space and a matrix of qualitatively grounded social facts sets out a coherent framework for analysing and judging these urgent questions. Although Kari was fascinated by issues of design process, this framework did not propose a method for design. Instead, it was a methodology for analysing and interpreting a problem, as well as for assigning value and meaning to the strategies for, and results of, its solution. In this way, it presented architects and critics with an intellectual construct that could empower them to, for example, contest the claims of the parametricists and resist the enticements of quantification. By doing so, it reaffirmed the role of the designer as an informed, enabled and purposeful actor capable of controlling the design process – and thereby reinvested architects with responsibility, both for their decisions within the design process and for the forms and spaces that it produced. Above all, it proposed a way of approaching design that privileged the non-representational, performative meanings that pervade the spaces of everyday life. What was relevant was not *how* designers produced a particular form, but *why* they might choose to produce it.

OK. But What Does This Have to Do With Building in Vienna Today?

These may be compelling arguments, but they are very speculative and theoretical. What might these ideas really have to do with everyday practice? And why do I feel it necessary to explain them in such detail? Because the issues central to this discourse became very germane by the end of the 2000s as a series of developments fundamentally transformed the environment for architecture and urban planning in Vienna. What were these events, and how did they affect the urban discourse? And why do I believe that these theoretical arguments offered useful insights for the problems that architects have faced in the last decade?

First off, the financial crisis of 2008-2009, coupled with the emergence of the digital gig economy, dramatically changed the investment landscape of the city. The market for offices, retail and shopping centres largely collapsed. Public funding for culture and leisure became increasingly tight, and prospects for projects in the culture sector dried up. Housing and social infrastructure increasingly assumed the lion's share of planning and building activity in the expanding city. As a result, the type of buildings amenable to spectacular, medially marketable architecture were largely off the agenda. What was now on the menu was the planning of spatially dense and programmatically complex built fabric – primarily housing – for the city. This required different affinities and sensibilities, especially because the city had outgrown the previous limits of its built-up area. Newly laid out, multifunctional urban districts were being connected to the peripheries and inserted into interstices of the city. The increased built density and programmatic intensity of these new projects demanded a more sophisticated and adept integration of social, administrative and infrastructural issues in their planning.

Yet, while subsidized social housing began to deliver an increasingly important contribution to the development of the city, the rules that governed it were significantly altered. By 2009, Prix had ended his term on the *Grundstücksbeirat*. Whatever opinion one might have of coop himmelb[l]au's architecture, one must appreciate how Prix helped elevate architectural quality in Viennese social housing. His influence, in a phase during which the Developer Competition established itself as a crucial institution in Vienna, strongly cemented the importance of high-level architecture by the awarding of funding for subsidized housing. However, buffeted by economic and social developments, the emphasis started to shift. In 2009 Michael Ludwig, then Commissioner for Housing (and Mayor since 2018), introduced the principle of social sustainability into the competition process. This valorised everyday community activities and interactions in public housing. In practice, it integrated new actors, such as urban sociologists, social institutions and charitable organisations, into the planning process. Cooperative urban design processes were introduced into the procedures for city planning, and the design of housing and the production of the city became an increasingly multi-layered, interdisciplinary and decentralised practice. The architecture still had to be intelligent, innovative and distinctive, but the design process now demanded a nuanced and networked approach to the making of social space.

On top of this, through the strange conjunction of the financial crisis with the successful renewal of 19th century housing, Vienna depleted its stock of low-cost, open market housing, precisely in the moment when both private and public coffers were overstrained. This impelled Ludwig to introduce the SMART-Housing program in 2013, which required that social housing include a large proportion of lower-priced, compactly sized units. Accommodating this new prerequisite tightly constrained

project budgets. Winning competition designs still needed to be innovative, but they had also to be exceptionally disciplined, spatially efficient and economic. Much creative energy went into creating innovative yet optimised floor plans; at the same time, the spatial quality of the collective, community-sustaining spaces in the house, on the estate and for the neighbourhood also assumed great importance. The goals were lofty, but money tight. Construction had to be exact and well thought out – money saved on the building shell might be applied to the finishes. The detailing was, by necessity, inventive yet economical, and the use of materials precise and spare.

At the same time, many of the city's deep-seated, constitutive social structures began to evolve and to be transformed. This affected such elementary practices as the family and household, play and recreation, work and leisure. Families became generally smaller and often more fragmented; the composition of households have adjusted and have become more heterogenous. The care of children, as well as where they played and when they came home changed. There were disruptions in how, where and when people worked. The changes that all this provoked were sometimes subtle, but they often represented dramatic revisions to the daily rituals that populate the spaces of the city. Innovative planning for this newly emergent social reality demanded new analytical and socio-conceptive skills. These emphasized a more complex understanding of how space is actively appropriated and how this appropriation affects the social value of the space.

In sum, these emerging professional demands practically amounted to a new job description for planning in the city. This re-orientation of the discipline provided a very welcome opportunity for a growing number of critical architects who, during the late 2000s, grew increasingly interested in the social principles which underlay the production of urban space. This is the generation defining new directions today. What characterises the work of such offices as feld72, Studio Vlay/Streeruwitz, ppag or einszueins is a qualified rejection of the primacy of form in favour of an increased emphasis on program and social process. This may have paralleled Dutch developments, yet the line of attack and the aura of the work is distinctive and different. It is less quantitative and certainly less flippantly sensational; it is more concerned with the micro-processes of space than the macro-processes of composition. The activeness of space, the power of everyday social rituals and the evolving practices of community strongly influence what these practices build. The best architecture being produced in Vienna is formally diverse, but, when it hit its stride, its unassuming beauty seems always to grow out of a compelling internal logic.

It doesn't appear that these architects share a common methodology for making form. The impression is more that they possess a mutual affinity for using the simple, sharply observed content of life as inspiration for designing space. To use a bluntly culinary metaphor, they are using different formal recipes to combine a common set of locally sourced, conceptual ingredients.

Coda: An Impassioned, and Not Always Quiet, Contribution

I believe that Kari Jormakka deserves much credit for the emergence of the conceptual structures behind much of Vienna's contemporary architecture. Through his writings, his lectures and his presence at Vienna University of Technology, Kari Jormakka's theoretical groundwork deeply infiltrated the scene and decisively shaped the discourse that stimulates the most interesting actors today: the fluency with which these practitioners understand the role of performative meaning in the production of social space; the use of typology as an elastic and pragmatic tool, not as a dogmatic cultural relic; the ability to understand the nature of a diagram and their ability to use as a tool for fluidly integrating meaning and form; their awakened and knowledgeable usage of information as qualitative social facts, rather than quantitative algorithmic fodder. All of this is much indebted to his intellectual efforts, especially to the ideas he presented in *Heimlich Manœuvres*, later to be further expanded and refined. This is not to claim that today's actors consciously recall Kari's example of the Greek *agorein* as the integration of act and space in the systematic debate of communal affairs; that would be fatuous.[36] But his work contributed mightily to the ground tenor of the time, which many consciously – or unconsciously – absorbed.

Through his writings, his teaching, and his mentorship, Kari Jormakka challenged a generation of Viennese architects to critically reflect upon what methodology is. He motivated them to more deeply contemplate the qualities and effects of the spaces they designed, and to be sensitive to the subtle, yet essential social meanings inherent in city they were building. Above all, he clarified what the role of logic, concept and method should play in the process of design: theory is there to inform our actions, not to dictate them.

A theory is not what you build.

It is what helps us understand why we build what we do.

Notes

[1] A.o. Univ Prof Dr Wolfgang Blaas & Univ Ass Dr Robert Wieser, *Wohnwirtschaftliche und volkswirtschaftliche Probleme durch Kürzung der Wohnbauförderung / Studie des IFIP Institut für Finanzwissenschaften und Infrastrukturpolitik der TU Wien*. Wien: Kammer für Arbeiter und Angestellte für Wien, 2004, 33.
[2] For a discussion of this school of thought see: Martin Steinmann, "The Presence of Things: Comments on Recent Architecture in Northern Switzerland," and Wilfried Wang, "Instances of Factual Architecture", in Mark Gilbert & Kevin Alter, *Construction, Intention, Detail: Five Projects from Five Swiss Architects* Zürich: Artemis Verlag, 1994, 8-31.
[3] The careful reading of the curriculum vitae of the leading architects in this generation quickly reveals the extent in which they were intertwined with both Rossi and Schnebli during the formative years of their careers.
[4] Vedran Mimica, "The Berlage Experience", in Jennifer Sigler and Roemer Van Toorn (eds.), *hunch,* No. 6/7. Rotterdam: The Berlage Institute, 2004, 51
[5] Rem Koolhaas, "Bigness and the Problem of Large", in Rem Koolhaas and Bruce Mau, *S,M,L,XL.* New York: Monacelli Press, 1995, 512
[6] Bart Lootsma, "What is to be Done", in Véronique Patteeuw (ed.), *Reading MVRDV*. Rotterdam: NAi Publishers, 2003, 24-65
[7] Kari Jormakka was at the Knowlton School of Architecture at OSU, Columbus, Ohio, in 1989-1995, which was the period in which Peter Eisenman completed the Wexner Center for the Arts in the same city, and Jeffry Kipnis, a theoretician well known for his affinity for Eisenman and Coop Himmelb(l)au

as well as his collaborations with Greg Lynn, ascended to a full professorship at the school: https://knowlton.osu.edu/sites/default/files/cv/jkipnis_cv.pdf (accessed 24.11.2019).

[8] Kari Jormakka, with Dörte Kuhlmann & Oliver Schürer, *Basics: Design Methods*. Basel: Birkhäuser, 2007.

[9] Kari Jormakka, *Heimlich Manœuvres: Ritual in Architectural Form*. Weimar: Verso, 1995, 6.

[10] Jormakka, ibid*.,* 3.

[11] Jormakka, ibid., 4.

[12] Jormakka, ibid*.,* 4-5.

[13] Jormakka, ibid*.,* 5-6.

[14] Although Henri Lefebvre does get somewhat more concrete in *The Production of Space* in the section titled "Spatial Architectonics", in which he touches upon the body in space, gestures, doors and thresholds as well as monuments, his handling of the practical workings of space always remain abstract, subordinated to the political program. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*. Trans. David Nicholson-Smith. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991, 169-228. David Harvey stated as much in his afterword to the English translation: "The book is, therefore, also an opening towards new possibilities of thought and action. Although the culmination of a lifetime of engagement, The Production of Space takes the form of a preliminary enquiry which contains much that is explosive, much that has the capacity to 'detonate' (a word he himself frequently choses) a situation that threatens to become fixed, frozen and ossified. It is, above all, an intensely political document." Lefebvre, ibid., 431.

[15] Quatremère de Quincy, "Type", in *Encyclopedie Methodique*, *Vol. 3*. Trans. Samir Younés, reprinted in *The True, The Fictive and the Real: The Historical Dictionary of Architecture of Quatremère de Quincy*. London: Andreas Papadakis Publisher, 2000. For a very short synopsis of the argument see: Christopher C.M. Lee, *The City as a Project | Type*: August 16, 2011. http://thecityasaproject.org/2011/08/type/ (accessed 24.11.2019).

[16] Jormakka, Kuhlmann & Schürer, *Basics: Design Methods*, op. cit.

[17] "Types are not in themselves classifications of formal or functional constants, but rather constants that convey meaning or are perceived through experience to do so. In this construct, buildings are understood within the terms delineated by those art-historical or social disciplines that address the prior meanings embodied in entities … nobody would perceive a building as being meaningful unless it can be placed in a significant context, such as, for example, being situated in relation to some sort of precedent. This is an imperative condition, for interpretations are based upon typologies … yet, in contrast to artistic creation in music and literature, types are described as universal constants, which are not invented (or, at least not ascribed to an individual), but rather, are discovered or revealed. Most proponents of this doctrine, including the early Aldo Rossi, share this point of view. As types are universals and thereby preconditions for identification and interpretation, they cannot constitute in themselves any artistic meaning or value. Thus, the creative act lies in the process of specifying those aspects which are not contained within a type, as well as in the divergence from, or modification of the type, in as much as this can in anyway be received and comprehended. Seen this way, the architect is more the interpreter of a musical composition than the composer. Typological theory relegates architectural creativity to a realm that many theories regard to be of secondary significance: detail or ornament." Kari Jormakka, *Geschichte der Architekturtheorie*. Wien: Edition Selene, 167-168. Translation by the author.

[18] Aldo Rossi, *The Architecture of the City*. Trans. Diane Ghirardo and Joan Ockman. Cambridge, MA: Oppositions Books/MIT Press, 1982, 130-131.

[19] Rossi, ibid., 24. Rossi's classifications of the city's artefacts belie the essence of his theoretical project. Rossi divided the artefact city/the city of artefacts into two realms or categories of works: housing and monuments. Housing is the fabric of the city, the private realm of domesticity and work. Here society – the individual lives the quotidian culture of the city – is produced and reproduced. Monuments are in the public realm, where the individuals of the city meet and experience themselves as the collective. Monuments express the history, the mythology and the collective memory of the city – where the city has come from, what it is striving to be. This dichotomy is essential, for the processes for the production and dissemination of meaning are intrinsically different for each realm. Rossi rather openly admits that monuments are of special importance to him, and this preference sets the tone for the project.

[20] Peter Eisenman: "The Houses of Memory: The Texts of Analogy", in Rossi, ibid., 7.

[21] Taken from an interesting, yet revealing, mash-up of Aldo Rossi words: "[Type] developed according to both needs and aspirations to beauty; a particular type was associated with a form and a way of life, although its specific shape varied widely from society to society. [...] I would define the concept of "type" as something that is permanent and complex, a logical principle that is prior to form and that constitutes it… In fact, it can be said that this principle is a constant… I tend to believe that housing types have not changed from antiquity up to today, but this is not to say that ways of living have not changed, or that new ways of living are not possible." See Nelson Mota, "The Timelessness of Form: An Apocryphal Interview with Aldo Rossi and Christopher Alexander", in Elena Chiavi, Pablo Garrido

Arnaiz, Matilde Girão, Francisco Moura Veiga, Francisco Ramos Ordóñez, Brittany Utting & Rubén Valdez (eds.) *CARTHA II 2016 / 04*, Basel: Park Books, 2016 (e-book), 2019 (print edition), 2/04.

[22] Kari Jormakka, "The Diagram Debate", in Österreichische Gesellschaft für Architektur & Institut für Architekturwissenschaften, Abteilung für Architekturtheorie, TU Wien (eds.), *Diagrams, Types, Algorithms*. UmBau 19, Edition selene: Wien, 2002, 52-53.

[23] Giorgio Grassi, *Questions of Architectural Design*. Rome: Divisare, 2018. The original German language text appeared as: "Befreite, nicht gesuchte Form. Zum Problem architektonischen Entwerfens", in *Diadalos*, no. 7, 1983.

[24] Jormakka, "The Diagram Debate", op. cit.

[25] Jormakka, *Geschichte der Architekturtheorie*, op. cit., 238. Originally in Paloma Poveda (ed.), *Herzog & de Meuron. El Croquis*, vol. 84, II, 1997, 11ff. Translation by the author.

[26] Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York: Vintage Books, 1961, 432. Jacobs goes on to say: "All these are certainly complex problems. But they are not problems of disorganized complexity. to which statistical methods hold the key. They are all problems which involve dealing simultaneously with a sizeable number of factors which are interrelated into an organic whole." (emphasis by the author)

[27] For an overview of Rossi-Landi's ideas on this subject see: Augusto Ponzio: "The Role of Language and Ideology in Social Reproduction According to Rossi-Landi", trans. Susan Petrilli, in *TRANS*, Nr. 16: *Innovations and Reproductions in Cultures and Societies*. Wien: INST-Verlag: http://www.inst.at/trans/bio/trans/16Nr/01_2/ponzio16.htm; https://marxismocritico.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/the-role-of-language-and-ideology-in-social-reproduction-according-to-rossi-landi.pdf (accessed 14.10.2019).

[28] See Mark Gilbert, "Systems of Identity: On the Complex Patterns of Social Space", in *Skriptum zur House Rules*. Wien: Institute for Architecture Theory, TU Wien; Lehrveranstaltung 259.288. For a further example see Mark Gilbert, "The Elusive Meaning of Form", in Walter Bohatsch (ed.), *Continuously*. Salzburg: Anton Pustet Verlag.

[29] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1922 (Eighth impression, 1960); 4.014-4.0141.

[30] Wittgenstein, ibid, 1.13.

[31] Wittgenstein, ibid, 1.1.

[32] See, for example, Mark Gilbert, "On Beyond Koolhaas: Identity, Sameness and the Crisis of City Planning", in Österreichische Gesellschaft für Architektur & Institut für Architekturwissenschaften, Abteilung für Architekturtheorie, TU Wien (eds.), *Architektur und Gesellschaft*. UmBau 20. Wien: Edition Selene, 2003, 114-128.

[33] Bart Lootsma, "What is to be Done", in Patteeuw (ed.), op. cit., 35.

[34] Patrik Schumacher, "Parametricism as Style – Parametricist Manifesto", London, 2008: http//www.patrikschumacher.co/Parametricism%20as%20Style.htm (accessed 14.10.2019). Italics by the author.

[35] Bart Lootsma, "What is to be Done", in Patteeuw (ed.), op. cit., 37. It is worth noting that Reinier de Graaf of OMA is still talking about measuring emotions, although he is somewhat sceptical about its positive utility. Reinier de Graaf, "In the age of big data, everything is measurable, even happiness", *Dezeen*, 3.10.2019: https://www.dezeen.com/2019/10/03/happiness-architecture-reinier-de-graaf/(accessed 14.10.2019).

[36] Jormakka, *Heimlich Manœuvres*, op. cit., 171-177.