Toward a remedial architecture

Hartman, T.S.

Award date:
2015

Link to publication
Toward a Remedial Architecture

Teije S. Hartman
Toward a Remedial Architecture

Graduation Studio
“ID: On Representation in Architecture”
October 2014 - August 2015
Master Architecture, Building & Planning
University of Technology Eindhoven

Author:
T.S. Hartman
www.teijehartman.nl

Graduation Committee:
dr. ir. J.G. Wallis De Vries
ir. W. Hilhorst
ir. J.J.P.M. van Hoof
ir. R.T. Willemsen
For my lovely parents,

Josephine & Jan-Peter

Who have taught me the values of hard work...
At the head of Stockholm’s Kungsträdgården rises a beacon of light. Inside, the stock-broker finishes his last deal, the councillor sends out his final remarks on the latest economic legislative proposal, and the Normalm Entrepreneurs meeting has just ended. Once outside they all join the crowd of proud Stockholmare’s who are enjoying the organized event at the base of the Global Economy and Trade Center.

Capitalism has spread globally and has caused the architectural identity and the representational aims of buildings and cities to homogenize. This has contributed to the process of bringing the western world to today’s living standards, but disunity on its level of success prevails. As architecture represents the social system behind it, today’s built environment represents the exact same flaws that are key to the existence of the capitalist system.

Kungsträdgården is an example of a place that has suffered from the influences of capitalism on the built environment. The once private pleasure gardens of the Swedish Kings, today remain with only one purpose; hosting as many public events as possible. As a result of its own success, Kungsträdgården has experienced decades of decay and became the large neglected graveled square that is visible today.

This research questions the future existence of the capitalist architecture identity and centralized the capability of architecture itself to contribute to shaping that future; How can a new economic institution deal with the capitalist system such that it remediates the years of decay taking place at Stockholm’s Kungsträdgården?

Case studies have revealed the common desire of economic and financial institutions to represent themselves as an utmost important part of society, yet also their imagined immunity to societal unrest. The representation of these stable world forces that was ought to acquire societal confidence. This desire has resulted into the countless designs of heterotopic urban objects that facilitate these institutions. They act as introvert events within the society it owes its existence to.

The Global Economy and Trade Center, is a new kind of institution that facilitates both the theoretical research on economy and the practice of the actual markets under one roof. Standing on the border between chaotic city life at the northern end of Kungsträdgården, and societal events taking place within the garden itself, the design represents itself as part of both worlds. It does not dictate specific changes to the traditional functions that it houses, but rather facilitates the opportunity for different levels of the economic system to share and gain knowledge, and represents the societal accessibility of this goal. The design therefore expresses spatial interaction, both inside between its different functions and users, as well as outside between the largely differing atmospheres of its surroundings.

The building is designed to celebrate the opportunities that the globalization of the capitalist system has brought about and strives to translate those into a remedy for the harm done to Kungsträdgården by the capitalist system.

Abstract
Three years ago I moved from a small town near Arnhem to Eindhoven and I prepared myself for the cultural shock of life in the Dutch province of Brabant. That shock never came. As it turns out, Dutch cities have their charming differences and uniquenesses, but their systemic functioning is the same. Eighteen months ago I moved from Eindhoven to Sydney and prepared myself for the cultural shock of life in Australia. Again, that shock never came; The western-world has irrevocably globalized, and is expanding. The "ID" studio has centralized the question of identity and representation in architectural context, and offered me a chance to further explore the effect of globalization on architecture.

The inquiry of globalization in architecture has confronted me with architecture’s subjection to, and even dependence on forces outside of our discipline. It has been of exceptional value for my conception of the position of architecture in society, and its abilities as well as impotence to live up to the expectations that result from that position.

In that context it can be perceived as daring to publish a thesis under the name “Toward a Remedial Architecture.” These words are, however, carefully chosen. They represent the exploration of architecture’s abilities within the current trend of globalization, as well as the pursuit of its extremes in the design of a “Global Economy and Trade Center” in Stockholm. I can only hope that this book will be read with as much excitement as I have experienced during that exploration.

Teije Hartman
Eindhoven, August 2015
The studio "ID" was divided in two semesters; one for research and one for design. This graduation rapport is divided in six parts.

Part 1 describes the research done in the context of the first semester of the graduation studio. It questions the trend of globalization in architecture and its affect on the phenomena of identity and representation, and concludes a strong relation with the capitalist system.

Part 2 examines the aesthetics of capitalism in architecture, and explores possible building functions that may contribute to a positive intervention in today’s rather negatively perceived trend of globalization and capitalism in architecture. This results in the aim of designing a Global Economy & Trade Center.

Part 3 describes the chosen building location and motivates this choice with correlation between the site-specific problem and the theoretical dilemma as described throughout parts one and two. This is then translated in the central design question.

Part 4 explains the design strategies that are used to deal with the representation of a new kind of monetary and economy related building and how from an urban to a detailing scale theoretical ambitions are translated into form making.

Part 5 displays the result of these design strategies using situation, floor plans, sections, elevations, detailing, models and artist impressions, and ultimately concludes on the thesis.

Part 6 contains all consulted and used literature.
# Content

## Introduction

**Part 1: Research**
- The Dilemma of Globalization in Architecture
- Globalization in the History of Social Control & Architectural Identity
- The Ethics of Architecture & Capital
- The Aesthetics of Architecture & Capital
- Speculations of a Remedial Architecture

**Part 2: Inquiry**
- Programming a Public Global Economy & Trade Center
- The Architectural Representation of Confidence and Trust
- Global Economy & Trade Center, Overrated or Revolutionary?

**Part 3: Location**
- A Profitable Environment, Localizing the GETC
- Kungsträdgården, Product of Power and Capital

**Part 4: Design**
- Finalizing the Building Program; the problem statement
- Constructing an Urban Footprint
- Internal Spatial Interaction by Arranging Functions
- External Spatial Interaction by Facade design

**Part 5: Results**
- Situation
- Model
- Visualizations
- Floor plans
- Sections
- Elevations
- Details
- Reflection

**Part 6: Sources**
- Acknowledgments
Introduction

This book is the product of a year long graduation project at the University of Technology in Eindhoven. It is a manifesto for the future of the globalized capitalist architecture identity and its effect on urban environments. It centralizes the question what architecture itself can contribute to the future progression that is so reliant on multi-dimensional forces.

The research started with an exploration of how the capitalist system influences architecture and has been able to cause globalizing architectural identities and representational aims. Followed by the chosen building location at Stockholm’s Kungsträdgården the desire for designing a public Global Economy & Trade Center emerged.

Kungsträdgården has suffered from the capitalist effect on urban environments and has within 200 years transformed from the private majestic royal pleasure gardens of the King into a highly neglected graveled events square. The Global Economy and Trade center aims to deal with the capitalist system such that it remediates the years of decay that took place at Kungsträdgården. The solutions for this dilemma have been found in the use of the site specific qualities that facilitate an architecture that expresses interaction on a range of levels, taking place in both introvert as well as extrovert levels.
Part One

Research
The Dilemma of Globalization in Architecture

July 17th 2014. The sun is about to set behind the mountaintops. We left the coastline behind us and drove uphill towards what is likely the whitest building I have ever seen. There is not much around and its appearance starts to show more and more resemblance with the style of Solomon's temple. Surprised I let go of the gas and the car slowed down. It was a comfortable car, Japanese brand. My two Canadian friends and I got out and started walking to the front of the building. We passed a small information kiosk and it turned out that this whiteness we were witnessing was indeed a temple. A temple for the Christian Restorationists Church to be exact. Back in the car and I pushed the key into the dashboard. The radio switched on. Breaking News. While we were admiring this geographically misplaced work of architecture, the daily Malaysia Airlines flight between Amsterdam and Kuala Lumpur had crashed on Ukrainian territory. It would soon turn out that this was not at all a regular crash. The airplane was shot down by Ukrainian Separatists who, in the hustle of their conflict with Russia, thought they were downsing a Ukrainian military transport plane. I drove back to the coastal road looking over the ocean while the sun set behind Hawaii's green mountaintops...
I hold this memory dearly. Not because I knew anyone on that flight nor because I was so impressed by the Laie Hawaii Temple, but because it constitutes an impeccable resemblance of how the world we inhabit today has become one of global events. Environmental issues, economies and politics have fused to the extent that even simple changes have worldwide impact. We call this trend “globalization”.

Globalization is a rather controversial twenty-first century topic, as it affects a world-wide spectrum of stakeholders. Nobel prize winner and former Chief Economist at the World Bank Joseph Stiglitz has argued that, “Globalization can be a force for good: the globalization of ideas about democracy and of civil society have changed the way people think, while global political movements have led to debt relief and the treaty on land mines. Globalization has helped hundreds of millions of people attain higher standards of living, beyond what they, or most economists, thought imaginable but a short while ago... But for millions of people globalization has not worked. Many have actually been made worse off, as they have seen their jobs destroyed and their lives become more insecure. They have felt increasingly powerless against forces beyond their control. They have seen their democracies undermined, their cultures eroded.”

1 - Architecture is a Representation of what Concerns Man

Architecture is no autonomous discipline. Its artistic, sociological and technological nature makes it sensitive to globalization in many ways. As a result, the exact effect of globalization on architecture is hard to measure. However, a worldwide indicated result of globalization on architecture concerns the phenomena “identity” and “representation”. The consequence of this observation evolves rapidly, mostly at the expense of a more traditional architecture, today’s architecture represents a globalized identity. Simply said; the built environment starts to take on a generic appearance. Though that trend may readily seem doubtfully desirable, the dilemma becomes more frightening. As the phenomena “identity” and “representation” are key ingredients of architecture, globalization affects architecture on a more fundamental level. Due to this direct imposition, globalization has the power to fundamentally change architecture as a discipline. In order to approach this dilemma I wish to make two assumptions.

2 - Architectural Identity is Significantly Directed by Parties with Social Power

This introduces prolific soil for a second assumption; What concerns an individual is significantly influenced by what concerns an entire society; culture. Everything, and everyone is always exposed to- and influenced by some level of culture, in the same way that culture is always exposed to- and influenced by everything and everyone. They determine each other’s course of progression. As explained in the first assumption, architecture represents what concerns man and is thus dependent on this remarkably ductile interaction of culture and society.

Craig Owens, professor of Art History at Yale University wrote that; ‘Representation (...) is not — nor can it be — neutral; it is an act of power in our culture.” This view is empathized by Paul Jones, professor Sociology, Social Policy and Criminology at Liverpool University, when he writes; “Edward Luytens reputed to have remarked that “without great patrons there would be no great architecture,” and Frank Lloyd Wright noting three things every architect should learn: one, how to get a commission; two, how to get a commission; and three, how to get a commission.” I therefore assume that the progression of architectural identity is largely determined by parties with significant influence in the progression of culture; parties with a certain amount of social power.

Interpretation and Structuring of the Research Dilemma

These two assumptions imply that architectural identity and social power are interconnected. In the context of the current globalizing architectural identity this would mean that someone, or more likely something, is deliberately provoking this trend. The following question then emerges:

What is causing today’s often observed globalizing architecture identity, and how should we - in architectural terms- respond to this trend?

It is important to stress that this research question balances between an objective research followed by the distillation of that research into a subjective belief. This research can therefore be largely separated in two parts.

The first part questions the earlier described assumptions, by researching the history of social control and architectural identity in the process of globalization. After finding that capitalism is the force behind today’s globalizing architecture, the research resumes by analyzing the balance (both ethically and aesthetically) between capitalists- and architectural objectives in today’s built environment.

The second part then aims to position today’s architecture within the last decades of globalization by drawing future objectives that result from the first part, ultimately concluding that we are in need of a “Remedial Architecture.”
So far the viability of this research relies on two assumptions; Architecture is not an autonomous discipline because professional progression is bound up with social power, which in turn implies that the current trend of a globalizing architecture identity is the result of social change. Examining whether these assumptions are true requires to research the history of social control and architectural identity in the process of globalization. This chapter aims to do so, and is compiled from architectural, philosophical, economic and historical perspectives. All of these disciplines have their own rendition of the history of globalization, which differ remarkable in their time frames. Since the research attempts to connect a range of multi-dimensional phenomena that have effected the complete history of the civilized world the widest spectrum of this history will be of most value.

The Start of Globalization; a process of disconnecting

This history starts somewhere between 75- and 70-thousand years ago, when the ancestors of today’s human beings started the process of globalization by leaving their original territory somewhere on Northern African soil and headed for South-East Asia. From there, within about ten-thousand years, our species spread over the entire African and South-East Asian continent, after which we started civilizing Europe, Northern Asia and Australia. About 25-thousand years ago we managed to cross the Bering Plain, which then still formed the refractory land bridge between Siberia and Alaska. Once on Northern American soil we spread fast and within roughly 5,000 years we had populated the entire Americas.

Globalization in the History of Social Control & Architectural Identity
Ironically, one of the typical building typologies that represents modern globalization is the airport, from where people spread all over the globe in a matter of hours. In that sense, the achievement of worldwide human life in 60-thousand years may seem obscure. However, as this period was more than sufficient for the evolution of different lifestyles and cultures to emerge, it is extremely relevant to today’s phenomenon of globalization. As the materialized expression of these cultures, also a variety of architectures emerged. The America’s created igloos and tipi’s, Europe lived in stone cottages and Africa resided in straw-huts.

Reconnecting the Arisen Populations; the rise of empires and nations
The process of reconnecting the arised variety of population and its lifestyles started 10.000 years ago, during the Neolithic Revolution. Robert Adam, a British architect who has researched the impact of politics, economy and social change on architecture in his book ‘The Globalization of modern Architecture’, states about this time-age; ‘The Neolithic revolution established levels of organization and a concentration of power that facilitated the creation of empires. The Persian, Roman and Han Empires are principle examples of how great connected continental areas emerged. The scale on which social power affected societies grew larger and larger, from tribes to complete empires, and fell mostly under the command of an individual. To retain their social control they often imposed social policies based on religious values, and their continents therefore became an interconnecting area of Christian, Islamic and Taoist worship. As a result, religions of their continents therefore became an interconnecting area.

Colonization and Industrialization; the introduction of the free market
With a clear separation between religion and nation, and with new technologies due to industrialization, the European countries started colonizing the newly discovered world with the purpose of globalizing the “free markets”; the rise of modern capitalism had started. The Americas, Africa and Australia, were rapidly conquered for trading purposes as they were all far behind on material development compared to much of the Asian continent. Soon the Americas would become a resemblance of Spanish, Portuguese and French culture, and Australia and New Zealand of British Culture. Prevailing architectural styles followed the spreading of these cultures and were thus introduced to the distant corners of the globe. Hayes writes; ‘as with all colonial adaptations, a local vernacular was usually formulated from available materials and techniques.’ However, Adam argues in his book; ‘Globalization of Modern Architecture’ whether this development was a pure global phenomenon when he states that in the Dutch and French colonies ‘directly imputed classicalism and Gothic revival competed with established architecture.’

For the majority of colonized lands the European aim for worldwide trade of goods went at the expense of traditional language, beliefs and architecture. Indigenous populations all over the world would suffer banishment, slavery or eradication. Even the Asian countries, with their long sustained policies for isolation, eventually did not manage to escape this European initiated force of globalization when the British started the Opium Wars with China and the USA forced Japan into international trade.
thoughts on architecture, which resolved in new movements; the modernists and the communist.

For the modernists, amongst which the early twentieth century Swiss architect Charles-Édouard Jeanneret-Gris, better known as Le Corbusier, architecture became a discipline with social responsibilities in times of political and economical unrest. With his book ‘Vers une Architecture,’ Le Corbusier sought to define architecture’s unique potential in and for ‘revolutionary’ times. As he wrote; ‘It is the question of building which lies at the root of the social unrest of today; Architecture or revolution, revolution can be avoided.’ This argument can be explained in two ways. The first - perceived in a very literal way - positions le Corbusier’s vision as contradictory to that of the Russians as it can possibly be; ‘an appropriate architecture would combat social unrest.’ However, the second explanation goes even further; ‘he saw the construction and the constitution of new spaces as the most revolutionary act, and one that could “replace” the narrowly “he saw the construction and the constitution of new spaces as the most revolutionary act, and one that could “replace” the narrowly’

the most important step in achieving this was made in 1948 when the UN signed the Universal Declaration for Human Rights. This declaration gave all inhabitants of United Nation countries rights over and above their state. However, a durable peace also required the rethinking of global monetary systems as indicated fifteen years earlier by Keynes. This step was made by the UN through setting up the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. 16

Neo Liberalists Capitalism; the rise of a privatized corporate world

After the world wars, the global economy of the western countries went through a remarkable period of growth. Armed with individual rights superior to those of their state, and a global free market in practice, universal civilizations steamed for post-war societal improvements. Living standards rose and inequities in well being decreased remarkably. This benefited architects such as Walter Gropius, Richard Neutra, Ludwig Mis van der Rohe, Louis Kahn, Frank Lloyd Wright, Eero Saarinen and Charles Eames, as they were asked to design so called ‘trophy houses’; examples of the new and fashionable modern lifestyle, after which ‘public housing and high status institutional buildings turned increasingly to the new style, drawing on the inconspicuous benefits of economy and ostentatious novelty’. In 1953, anticipating on propagandizing the new and fashionable modern lifestyle, the United States Information Agency (USIA) was created in order to ‘promote modernist art and architecture as an expression of free thinking and liberty.’ Combined with the new international free markets this created opportunities for large corporations such as the Hilton hotel chain to internationalize. Hilton has claimed their hotels, wherever on earth, were ‘laboratories to inspect America and its ways at their leisure.’

As the favorable economic status retained, Post-Modernism made its global entry and in 1974 UNESCO warned for; ‘danger that a growing universality of building techniques and architectural forms may create a uniform environment through the world.’ As a response architects aimed for a more local architecture. Theories concerning ‘Critical Regionalism’, a term coined by Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, became state of art.

It is the question of building which lies at the root of the social unrest of today; Architecture or revolution, revolution can be avoided.

Le Corbusier, 1922

Sadly, these collective attempts to avoid the recurrence of a World War failed as after the years of the Great Depression in 1939 the second World War started. In serious need of an allied force the United Nations (UN) for Allies was set up and signed by 13 countries from different continents. Their aim was, and today still is, to defend worldwide life, liberty, independence, religious freedom, human rights and justice. The most important step in achieving this was made in 1948 when the UN signed the Universal Declaration for Human Rights. This declaration gave all inhabitants of United Nation countries rights over and above their state. However, a durable peace also required the rethinking of global monetary systems as indicated fifteen years earlier by Keynes. This step was made by the UN through setting up the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

As the favorable economic status retained, Post-Modernism made its global entry and in 1974 UNESCO warned for: ‘danger that a growing universality of building techniques and architectural forms may create a uniform environment through the world.’ As a response architects aimed for a more local architecture. Theories concerning ‘Critical Regionalism’, a term coined by Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, became state of art.

A growing universality of building techniques and architectural forms may create a uniform environment through the world.

- UNESCO, 1974 -

With the oil crisis of the seventies the postwar economic boom ended. New economic recessions, political instabilities and high numbers of unemployment reoccurred. Living standards decreased and the level of societal income inequities increased. New measures were needed. In 1975, the USA, UK, France, Germany and Japan joined their economic forces when founding the G5, with the purpose of ‘monitoring and controlling of the free-market international economic system.’

In 1981, the G5 decided to ‘set back state intervention and spending in their countries, rejecting the Keynesian economic policies of the post war years,’ ultimately transforming themselves in liberal-democratic governments. The British economist Noreena Hertz explains this as ‘The Silent Takeover’ because the G5 had ‘just inordinate power into the hands of corporations, and gained market share at the expense not only of politics but also of democracy.’

The effect of these measures is perhaps best displayed in texts by the American economist Theodore Levitt. ‘The world’s need and desires have been irrevocably homogenized. The Global corporation operates with resolve consistency, at low relative cost, as if the entire world was a single entity, it sells the same things in the same way everywhere. Ancient differences in national tastes or modes of living business disappear.’

27
Reflected in architecture, Levitts’ argument seems to be true as in their first issue of 2012 the prestigious Economists Journal publishes that; ‘Over the past 15 years striking corporate headquarters have transformed the great cities of the emerging world. China Central Television’s building resembles a giant alien marching across Beijing’s skyline; the 88-story Petronas Towers, home to Malaysia’s oil company, soar above Kuala Lumpur; the gleaming office of VTB, a banking powerhouse, sits at the heart of Moscow’s new financial district. These are all monuments to the rise of a new kind of hybrid corporation, backed by the state but behaving like a private-sector multinational.’

Todays multinationals all seem to require offices all over the world. Ibrahim Mostafa Eldemery, researcher at the National Housing and Building Research Center in Egypt, has described how; ‘Glass, aluminum, stainless steel, copper, titanium, and natural stone are readily available. (...) We can symbolize the accelerated momentum of globalization in architecture by the glossy facades of mega capital.’

Peggy Deamer, architecture professor at Yale School of Architecture has analyzed this development and argues; ‘Transnational corporations like Vodafone, Philips Electronics, Volvo, Nokia and BP make international agreements designed by the World Trade Organization more important than those of any state government.’ Even possible intervention by governments seem to be motivated from a corporate economical context; ‘Politicians like booms and bubbles because they help them to win elections and office.’ Or, as Nobel Prize winner Jozef Stiglitz has written; ‘Economic globalization has galloped political globalization.’ Ultimately we have completely rejected Keynesian capitalism, which implies that social control is now in hands of multinationals and privatized financial corporations.
In his book ‘Building Up and Tearing Down’, Pulitzer Prize winner Paul Goldberger describes; ‘Buildings do not just happen; they are the products of a peculiar combination of artistic vision, money, political wherewithal, and engineering skill.’ In that context, it might be impossible to grasp the exact cause of the globalizing architectural identity.

The previous chapter does however confirm that both of the earlier proposed assumptions are - to a large extent - true. Subjected to societal developments, architecture’s progression has been proved bound up with the social control that has shifted from empires, to religions, to nations, to countries, to economies, to privatized corporations and ultimately to the capitalist system. The research question should therefore be altered to; How should we respond to today’s globalizing architectural identity knowing that it is caused by capitalism?

The Ethics of Architecture & Capital

It is important to recognize the ethical nature of this question. For the majority of professions, the researching of- and giving answers to an ethical question are two distinct activities. For the architect however, they are inextricably linked. As Paul Goldberger explains; ‘the architect has a right, even an obligation, to proceed from a theoretical viewpoint.’ Or as Michael Sorkin puts it into words; ‘how you choose to assail the system is a product of how you understand it.’ The same applies for this research; there is no correct response to the globalizing architectural identity other than the one that we, based on research, believe in - and can give the most steady argumentation for.
Thoughts on Capitalism & Ethics as interfering phenomena

We cannot ignore that capitalism was carefully constructed by man in his pursuit of better living standards, as much as we cannot ignore the widely varying opinions on its level of success in achieving that. Hence there is fierce critique on the basics of capitalism as a social system. To understand these critiques it is important to first consider the basic functioning of the capitalists system.

Capitalism is a system in which the economy is dominated by the pursuit of profit by means of trade, industry and production. The system is centrally kept together by capital accumulation; investing money to realize financial profit, by competitive transfers into Commodity and afterwards back into Money with a surplus value. In other words; we are buying in order to sell.\(^36\)

Thoughts on Architecture & Capitalism as interfering phenomena

The British economist Madison Prie defines the basic nature of capitalism from a more social perspective; ‘We all value things differently, which is why trade takes place. We trade because we each put greater value on what the other person has than on what we are offering in exchange. We look gain more value when we trade, and that’s how we create wealth. We produce in order to trade and to create wealth, and we invest in order to produce.’\(^32\) The systems therefore relies on the aim for money with a surplus value.

Though so far we can detect little malicious aspects in the nature of capitalism, the system has been criticized ever since its emergence. One of the first to specifically criticize capitalism was Karl Marx. Not motivated with representative data analysis, but with the observation of an obvious increase of societal inequities of living standards.\(^38\) He questioned the use of a system that, despite of the industrial developments that it brought about, resulted in no more than miserable living standards and a ban of factory labor for children younger than eight years.\(^41\) In 1848, Marx ultimately predicted that the Keynesian system (…) has promised unparalleled scientific and technical innovation and development — this development has created, perhaps for the first time in history, the means of abolishing poverty. Yet, this striking, indeed unparalleled achievement — the real capacity to feed, house, cloth and educate everybody on the planet — is constantly undermined by the pursuit of profit. This is the bitter paradox of the system.\(^43\)

However, implicitly, also Prie cannot deny capitalisms contradicting nature as in this quote he is forced to use the words “most of humankind”. Kristol argues that the Capitalist system lacks a third cheer because “existential human needs” are not in priority to the system, it threatens social order in general.\(^39\) This argument is more radically presented by Professor Don Milligan of the Manchester Metropolitan University, who writes that; ‘the capitalist system (…) has promoted unparalleled scientific and technical innovation and development — this development has created, perhaps for the first time in history, the means of abolishing poverty. Yet, this striking, indeed unparalleled achievement — the real capacity to feed, house, cloth and educate everybody on the planet — is constantly undermined by the pursuit of profit. This is the bitter paradox of the system (…)’\(^45\)

The real capacity to feed, house, cloth and educate everybody on the planet — is constantly undermined by the pursuit of profit. This is the bitter paradox of the system…

As the capitalist system concerns the pursuit of profit it is likely that architecture acts as the material support for moving Money, Commodity and Money with surplus value.\(^40\) To further elucidate that argument I wish to use John Maynard Keynes theory of the societal demand factor in economy to explain four distinct levels on which capitalism and architecture interfere.

The first two levels comprise ways in which the demand-factor triumphs wealth. The third and fourth level then display, how in certain situations wealth triumphs the demand-factor of society.

The first level is that of the occasional private sector housing design. Though these briefs are commonly commissioned by wealthy clients, they do not necessarily have any social power. Nevertheless, these commissions can be of unrivaled architecture, even on a global scale. mies van der Rohe’s Farnsworth House, Frank Lloyd Wrights Falling Water, Le Corbusier’s Villa Savoye, Leidenveld’s Schöntor House, Richard Neutra’s Kaufman house (1938) and Philip Johnsons Glass House are only a part of the gigantic scope of designs that confirm this argument. All have been advertised, almost propagandaized, as examples of the new and fashionable modern lifestyle.

Omitting the way that these houses were, and still are, products of societal inequities, they were good and appropriate in the sense that they eventually contributed to better living standards for people with lower incomes. Large project developers started to copy what they saw, and offered that to a larger public. These modern day housing projects are the second level in which architecture and capitalism interfere. Complete villages, and sometimes even cities, appear from nothing in no time. Despite that these projects are often initiated by and under control of wealthy corporations, they are still dependent on the demand-factor of society in general.
Houses will simply only sell as long as they satisfy the demands of potential buyers. This has painfully been proved in Nova Cidade de Kilamba in Angola (19) where a group of wealthy Chinese together invested 3.5 billion US dollars to built over 750 eight-story apartment blocks, but ended up selling not even one percent of its total housing offer.46

At the third level (20) the perspective changes; we have reached the level of corporate construction. No longer do wealthy corporations build for the purpose of selling to society at large, they build for the purpose of the corporate world. They build for themselves. Newly constructed real estate will be sold or rented out to corporations, or even worse; corporations venture themselves in the position of building for their own purpose. Either way, they feel themselves to require monumental statements in the built environment.47

Sadly, things do not just end there. On the fourth level, general habitat planning has become the material support for the corporized world - for capitalism. Adam writes that as the globalized trading system has settled, the modern city; ‘must have not only a good workforce, a good transport infrastructure and a favorable fiscal climate, it must also have the right urban ingredients’ 48 A good example of how these cities pursue a position as global player was published by the Sydney Morning Herald, reporting on the current boom of new high-rise projects in Melbourne (21), that are allowed by its Planning Minister Matthew Guy; ‘By several accounts, Mr Guy’s “proactive” approach and willingness to approve projects promptly has helped fuel the current boom; attracting a great deal of international investment, particularly from Asia. However, this has raised concerns that the apartment market is more concerned with meeting the needs of investors rather than the city’s growing population.’ 49 Here all connections to the demands of society have faded. These last two levels, in contradiction to the first and second, imply that the social control of the corporate world completely outperforms any influence of society at large.

The interference of architecture with capitalism therefore experiences a dichotomy; at the one side there is a clear dominance of society, at the other side the evident influential reign of the corporate world. As a result, public opinions on the level of success of today’s built environment are diverse. There are those who believe that the architectural globalizing developments ‘through the years, have led to human progress through material and scientific advances’ 50, but there are those who argue that ‘they brought no quality of life to the individuals that dwelled in them, yet downgraded the quality of the existing cities.’ 51 This represents, indeed, the paradox of the social system that it corporates.

Other than the now busted promise of instant profit these vast spans of new homes sprawling in a boundless territory had no raison d’être. They brought no quality of life to the individuals that dwelled in them, yet downgraded the quality of the existing cities.

Laura Burkhalter & Manuel Castells, 2009
Thoughts on an Accurate Balance
architecture versus or features capitalism

The quality of living standards is one of the most intensely studied dilemma of this time. It is expressed in societal wealth distribution, which is a term mostly studied from economical perspectives. However, as Michael Sorking has written that

“The inevitable nexus of architecture and capital is one of its core fascinations,” 52 and Peggy Deamer observed that; “Because building costs so much money, architecture necessarily works for and within the monetary system,” 53 it is thus likely that these economic theories apply to the inequities of living standards in architecture as well.

The first scenario considers that the system is out of balance. The latest economist who has studied this scenario is Thomas Piketty, following up theorists such as Thomas Malthus, Arthur Young, David Ricardo and Karl Marx. Opposed to the latter, Piketty has benefited from the improved circumstances of doing research in the twenty-first century, and has had access to well kept data on the incomes in western countries kept since the early 1900’s. Piketty argues that the phenomenon of societal inequities is a dynamic process. It always changes and is simultaneously subjected to converging forces (which cause the inequality level to increase) and to converging forces (which cause the inequality level to decrease) and to converging and is simultaneously subjected to converging forces (which cause the inequality level to decrease) and to converging forces which would in turn provoke a process of industrialization and economic development, after which the inequality level would decrease and the curve could start over again. In architectural terms this curve justifies the current globalizing trends as “the road to a better societal future.”

The second scenario responds to more optimistic mid twentieth century theories which explain the occurrence inequality as necessary to eventually achieve rising living standards on a larger scale. Simon Kuznets invention of the Inequality Curve was one of these theories. The curve represents how the world would always first experience an increase of inequality, which would in turn provoke a process of industrialization and economic development, after which the inequality level would decrease and the curve could start over again. 55 In architectural terms this curve justifies the current globalizing trends as “the road to a better societal future.”

As a result the level of societal inequality follows an exponential increase, and in that sense faces the dangers for which Karl Marx warned us when he wrote that capitalism; “…creates a world after its own image.” 54 He meant that capitalism would crush languages, cultures, traditions and even nations in its wake, “and it would not take long for the level of truth in this argument to come to light. During the 1893 convention of the American Institute of Architects, Barre Fereex already explained how; “Current American architecture is not a matter of art, but of business. A building must pay or there will be no investor ready with the money to meet its cost. This is as much the curse and the glory of American architecture.” 55 Today, over a century later the dangers of increasing accumulation of wealth and a growing level of inequality is still recognized as in 2009 Laura Burkhalter and Manuel Castells wrote that; “A shrunk model of capital accumulation in the urban environment may result in retreated urban fortresses surrounded by marginalized settlements rather than in a redvelopment of our ability to live together.” 56

As is Herzog & de Meuron’s Beijing Birdsnest and OMA’s Beijing CCTV tower. Responding to the trend of globalizing architectures, Rem Koolhaas has argued that, simply because it is happening; “it probably means that people want it that way. The fact of the matter is that this equalizing force (...) may nevertheless be thwarted and neutralized by powerful mechanisms that have an opposite effect - in the direction of larger inequality.” 57

“...The fact of the matter is that this equalizing force (...) may nevertheless be thwarted and neutralized by powerful mechanisms that have an opposite effect…”

(Thomae Piketty, 2015)

Kuznets’ theory is popular with many international operating architects, and sometimes their objective even becomes successful. Frank O. Gehry’s design for the Guggenheim in Bilbao is one of the typical examples of how an architectural intervention can lead to societal progression of an area, as is Herzog & de Meuron’s Beijing Birdsnest and OMA’s Beijing CCTV tower. Responding to the trend of globalizing architectures, Rem Koolhaas has argued that, simply because it is happening; “it probably means that people want it that way. It also means that there is an enormous difference, a bifurcation almost, between the ambitions of the architects and the actual ambitions of society.” By saying this, Koolhaas not only justifies the recent developments toward a universal architectural identity, but also expresses a blind faith in society’s capability to regulate itself, following the Kuznets Curve. In this perspective there is no ethical issue in current globalizing developments. There is only the matter of time and society for things to progress and eventually change.

“...There is an enormous difference, a bifurcation almost, between the ambitions of the architect, and the actual ambition of society...”

(Rem Koolhaas, 2015)
It is clear that the social mechanism of Capitalism has guided architecture toward today’s known living standards in dwelling, working and leisure. Our current built environment is the physical expression and representation of that life, and as more countries achieve western levels of living standards, the world experiences a globalizing architectural identity. Ultimately, taking a position in how to deal with this globalizing architectural identity, means taking a position in whether to believe in Marx’s and Piketty’s scenario of rising societal inequities, or in Kuznets trust in a self regulating society. The final step in taking this position requires to explore the current built environment. After all, what can better present to us the actuality of today, than the built environment; the architectural theories and designs that actually made it through the capitalist system.

Pre-Recession Capitalist Architecture

contradictory and in denial of social change

Vladimir Nabokov has argued that the keystones of the capitalist system, labor and power have attempted to be incorporated by the urban grid system. Nabokov wrote; ‘It was considered an agent of democratization, and urban premonition for what would become laissez faire capitalism. An urban model emblematic of the values enshrined in American folklore, of which promotes “liberty and justice for all” ’ Concerning the scale of the individual buildings within the urban grid, Nabokov advocates they are designed as unique events within a system that aims for equity again, the paradox of the capitalist system. Siegfried Giedion wrote that these building types should by its “mass and proportion convey in some large elemental sense an idea of the great, stable, conserving force of modern civilization.”

The Aesthetics of Architecture & Capital
other words, the construction of today's skyscraper is merely considered from representational prospects rather than as solution for building large amounts of floor surface on small plots of land. It has led to somewhat of a corporate battle; who has the highest skyscraper - denying the conditions in which they are built.

Todays highest skyscraper is the dazzling 828 meter high Burj Khalifa that rises from the Dubai desert, surrounded with a great availability of land. But its height record is already being threatened by the current construction of “King Tower” which is to become the first man made structure to master the height of one kilometer. Surprisingly, also King Tower finds itself in the middle of a desert surrounded by anything but a shortage of land. No longer is the skyscraper of value because of its large amount of surface on a limited parts of land, its representation has as become its prior surplus value.

The global scope of buildings which incorporate capitalistic representational design aims is as good as endless. Minoru Yamasaki, architect of the former New York World Trade Centre, said that; ‘The World Trade Centre should, because of its importance, become a representation of man’s belief in humanity, his need for individual dignity, his beliefs in the cooperation of divergent values, and through cooperation; his ability to find gratification.”

The WTC however, is an example of a collective image for several corporations, but some of these corporations figured that an individual image would be of even more benefit. In 1979 Foster and Partners got commissioned to design the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank headquarter. The design brief was little concealing as the bank described their objective as a ‘statement of confidence’ by creating ‘the best bank building in the world.’39 About this commission Foster himself has said that; ‘Many buildings are statements of confidence in the future, so they are inextricably linked to the political processes which generate their need, and some of that is really highly symbolic. The Bank was certainly no exception. It was a very considered move, as a vehicle to enhance the prosperity of that particular bank, which has since moved dramatically into the world league.’

A successful strategy, so it seems, as the bank still houses in Foster’s tower and the tower itself has become an icon of Modern day banking. The towers were ‘Twin Towers’.

Many buildings are statements of confidence in the future, so they are inextricably linked to the political processes which generate their need, and some of that is highly symbolic...

‘Sir. Norman Foster, 1997’

This strategic use of architecture is more than occasional. In Manhattan alone we can already find endless buildings with such objectives: The Chrysler building, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Headquarters, the Equitable life building, the Woolworth Building, Singer Building, General motors Building, National City Bank and the Bank of America Tower.

Architect Roberto Meyer has perfectly described this trend when looking back on his commission to design the new headquarters of the ING bank: Meyer said, ‘It was a time in which all kinds needed architecture as a way of profiling themselves on a global scale.’47

In 1997 three private Dutch banks merged into what then became ING Bank. ING quickly got contaminated with the ambition to become a global player and hence, they required a new headquarters. Once Meyer’s design was finished it became clear; the new Headquarters of the ING Bank -which carries an orange lion as their logo- was to be the house of an untameable animal. Literally, as ING rented two lions in order to create a promotional movie for their new headquarters.

Similarly to HBSC’s rapid international expansion after opening up Foster’s Hong Kong design, ING grew remarkably fast and in 1997 three private Dutch banks merged into what then became ING Bank. ING quickly got contaminated with the ambition to become a global player and hence, they required a new headquarters. Once Meyer’s design was finished it became clear; the new Headquarters of the ING Bank -which carries an orange lion as their logo- was to be the house of an untameable animal. Literally, as ING rented two lions in order to create a promotional movie for their new headquarters.

In other words, not only has post-recession architecture been used to facilitate the contradictions of capitalism, it also completely denied any engagement whatsoever with social change.

Post-Recession Capitalist Architecture

These developments suffered little resistance at times of flourishing economies, but when in 2008 the real estate bubble burst and the mortgage market collapsed things changed. The worlds largest financial institutions suddenly filed for bankruptcy. To prevent entire countries from going bankrupt several governments cut their societal expenditures to save their country’s private banks. Tristan Hunt has argued that; “the forces of collectivism have saved capitalism.”50 The exuberant and irresponsible acting of the financial sector became daily news. As a result a collective awareness about the capitalist system hit....
society. To prevent gold rushes that would drive banking stocks into the ground banks had to rethink the way they used their image as a corporate strategy; it changed from a business card to that of a life buoy.

Ever since financial institutions have focused on ‘cleansing their “toxic assets” and bringing their books in order’ HSBC suffered rumors to be at the edge of bankruptcy. ING needed state intervention and was forced to leave their precious headquarters in Amsterdam. Ironically, today it is rented out to a law firm that is specialized in the post-recession laws that are constructed to help capitalism to a stage in which privatized organizations have less power. But the 2008 crisis initiated more than just a change of corporate direction and national law. Pirie has argued that; ‘the current crisis is not just economic. It is a social, environmental, spiritual and spatial crisis that has resulted in an economic collapse, and may usher in a number of ominous developments.’ Though this may sound like the collapse that Marx predicted, it can just as much be a part of the Kuznets Curve as Pirie continues; ‘Capitalism certainly faced a crisis in 2008, but it is still with us, as yet uncollapsed. It is evolving and responding to the changes that are needed and, as before, when the dust of crisis has settled, it will be a new version of capitalism that goes on to generate more wealth and to expand the opportunities open to humankind’ As this crisis has changed peoples needs and their desires it is likely that capitalism is forced to change along, and that eventually architecture has to follow.

It is hard to say at this point whether or not architecture is responding to these changes, and if post-recession architecture has any effect on the globalizing architectural identity. The economy has only just shown slight recoveries, and thus the real post-recession architecture will only become visible within the next few years. However, there are lots of signs implying that nothing has changed since the 2008 crisis yet. Deceptive architectural visions continue the formerly capitalist architecture. In the promotion video of the new Bank of America Tower at One Bryant park in Manhattan, architect Richard Cook has argued that ‘We Americans are less than 5% of the worlds population. Yet we consume almost 25% of the worlds resources. We have set an unsustainable pattern for the developing world. We cannot deny them the very things that we value. We therefore need a new standard.’ He then resumes by explaining the ancient stone with a high fossil content that is used throughout the tower and the fully high quality leather clad elevator lane that sits there to make you feel warm while waiting for ‘the magic box of the elevator.’ So though the awareness that something needs to change is present, the actual necessary measures to meet this change is still undermined by the aim for profit.

The current crisis is not just economic. It is a social, environmental, spiritual and spatial crisis (…) and may usher in a number of ominous developments.

Clearly, this is just one building with a doubtful design motivation, but it certainly has not been the only one during my analysis of post-recession architecture. I wish to move forward to the most extreme that my research has revealed. On October 2010 the New York Times published an article which described Mumbai’s latest finished skyscraper(722): “There are nine elevators, a spa, a 50-seat theater and a grand ballroom. Hundreds of servants and staff are expected to work inside. And now, finally, after several years of planning and construction, the residents are about to move in. All five of them…”

Indeed, a 27-story skyscraper that houses just a family of 5 people, standing right next to Asia’s biggest slum called Dharavi, which houses over a million people. The family owns the worlds largest polyester fiber factory and is currently amongst the richest in the world. Quite a difference from their situation just over 50 years ago, when they themselves were living in the Dharavi slums.

The article then displays some of the responses of passers on the tower. A woman called Sushala Pawar comes to word, and starts comparing her life to that of the “skyscraper family.” She explains how she and her entire family live in a small apartment, living of only $90 USD per month and sleep on the floor. She confesses that she does sometimes feel bad about the large inequities between rich and poor families in her city. The article then finishes; “But then, nodding toward the building, she perked up. Maybe, she said, I could get a job there…”

‘There are nine elevators, a spa, a 50-seat theater and a grand ballroom. Hundreds of servants and staff are expected to work inside. And now, finally, after several years of planning and construction, the residents are about to move in. All five of them…”

Indeed, a 27-story skyscraper that houses just a family of 5 people, standing right next to Asia’s biggest slum called Dharavi, which houses over a million people. The family owns the worlds largest polyester fiber factory and is currently amongst the richest in the world. Quite a difference from their situation just over 50 years ago, when they themselves were living in the Dharavi slums.

The article then displays some of the responses of passers on the tower. A woman called Sushala Pawar comes to word, and starts comparing her life to that of the “skyscraper family.” She explains how she and her entire family live in a small apartment, living of only $90 USD per month and sleep on the floor. She confesses that she does sometimes feel bad about the large inequities between rich and poor families in her city. The article then finishes; “But then, nodding toward the building, she perked up. Maybe, she said, I could get a job there…”

Indeed, a 27-story skyscraper that houses just a family of 5 people, standing right next to Asia’s biggest slum called Dharavi, which houses over a million people. The family owns the worlds largest polyester fiber factory and is currently amongst the richest in the world. Quite a difference from their situation just over 50 years ago, when they themselves were living in the Dharavi slums.

The article then displays some of the responses of passers on the tower. A woman called Sushala Pawar comes to word, and starts comparing her life to that of the “skyscraper family.” She explains how she and her entire family live in a small apartment, living of only $90 USD per month and sleep on the floor. She confesses that she does sometimes feel bad about the large inequities between rich and poor families in her city. The article then finishes; “But then, nodding toward the building, she perked up. Maybe, she said, I could get a job there…”

Indeed, a 27-story skyscraper that houses just a family of 5 people, standing right next to Asia’s biggest slum called Dharavi, which houses over a million people. The family owns the worlds largest polyester fiber factory and is currently amongst the richest in the world. Quite a difference from their situation just over 50 years ago, when they themselves were living in the Dharavi slums.

The article then displays some of the responses of passers on the tower. A woman called Sushala Pawar comes to word, and starts comparing her life to that of the “skyscraper family.” She explains how she and her entire family live in a small apartment, living of only $90 USD per month and sleep on the floor. She confesses that she does sometimes feel bad about the large inequities between rich and poor families in her city. The article then finishes; “But then, nodding toward the building, she perked up. Maybe, she said, I could get a job there…”

Indeed, a 27-story skyscraper that houses just a family of 5 people, standing right next to Asia’s biggest slum called Dharavi, which houses over a million people. The family owns the worlds largest polyester fiber factory and is currently amongst the richest in the world. Quite a difference from their situation just over 50 years ago, when they themselves were living in the Dharavi slums.

The article then displays some of the responses of passers on the tower. A woman called Sushala Pawar comes to word, and starts comparing her life to that of the “skyscraper family.” She explains how she and her entire family live in a small apartment, living of only $90 USD per month and sleep on the floor. She confesses that she does sometimes feel bad about the large inequities between rich and poor families in her city. The article then finishes; “But then, nodding toward the building, she perked up. Maybe, she said, I could get a job there…”

Indeed, a 27-story skyscraper that houses just a family of 5 people, standing right next to Asia’s biggest slum called Dharavi, which houses over a million people. The family owns the worlds largest polyester fiber factory and is currently amongst the richest in the world. Quite a difference from their situation just over 50 years ago, when they themselves were living in the Dharavi slums.

The article then displays some of the responses of passers on the tower. A woman called Sushala Pawar comes to word, and starts comparing her life to that of the “skyscraper family.” She explains how she and her entire family live in a small apartment, living of only $90 USD per month and sleep on the floor. She confesses that she does sometimes feel bad about the large inequities between rich and poor families in her city. The article then finishes; “But then, nodding toward the building, she perked up. Maybe, she said, I could get a job there…”

Indeed, a 27-story skyscraper that houses just a family of 5 people, standing right next to Asia’s biggest slum called Dharavi, which houses over a million people. The family owns the worlds largest polyester fiber factory and is currently amongst the richest in the world. Quite a difference from their situation just over 50 years ago, when they themselves were living in the Dharavi slums.

The article then displays some of the responses of passers on the tower. A woman called Sushala Pawar comes to word, and starts comparing her life to that of the “skyscraper family.” She explains how she and her entire family live in a small apartment, living of only $90 USD per month and sleep on the floor. She confesses that she does sometimes feel bad about the large inequities between rich and poor families in her city. The article then finishes; “But then, nodding toward the building, she perked up. Maybe, she said, I could get a job there…”

Indeed, a 27-story skyscraper that houses just a family of 5 people, standing right next to Asia’s biggest slum called Dharavi, which houses over a million people. The family owns the worlds largest polyester fiber factory and is currently amongst the richest in the world. Quite a difference from their situation just over 50 years ago, when they themselves were living in the Dharavi slums.

The article then displays some of the responses of passers on the tower. A woman called Sushala Pawar comes to word, and starts comparing her life to that of the “skyscraper family.” She explains how she and her entire family live in a small apartment, living of only $90 USD per month and sleep on the floor. She confesses that she does sometimes feel bad about the large inequities between rich and poor families in her city. The article then finishes; “But then, nodding toward the building, she perked up. Maybe, she said, I could get a job there…”

Indeed, a 27-story skyscraper that houses just a family of 5 people, standing right next to Asia’s biggest slum called Dharavi, which houses over a million people. The family owns the worlds largest polyester fiber factory and is currently amongst the richest in the world. Quite a difference from their situation just over 50 years ago, when they themselves were living in the Dharavi slums.

The article then displays some of the responses of passers on the tower. A woman called Sushala Pawar comes to word, and starts comparing her life to that of the “skyscraper family.” She explains how she and her entire family live in a small apartment, living of only $90 USD per month and sleep on the floor. She confesses that she does sometimes feel bad about the large inequities between rich and poor families in her city. The article then finishes; “But then, nodding toward the building, she perked up. Maybe, she said, I could get a job there…”

Indeed, a 27-story skyscraper that houses just a family of 5 people, standing right next to Asia’s biggest slum called Dharavi, which houses over a million people. The family owns the worlds largest polyester fiber factory and is currently amongst the richest in the world. Quite a difference from their situation just over 50 years ago, when they themselves were living in the Dharavi slums.
Ever rising levels of societal inequities? Or a self regulating curve of increasing and decreasing levels of societal inequities? The question whether a globalizing architectural identity as the result of capitalism is justified, depends on which one of these two we choose. Yes, choose. It all depends on how we choose to act right at this day. The period of economic recovery that we are currently experiencing can either become an accelerator for high levels of societal inequities, or be the turning point of the Kuznet Curve, leading to times of less societal inequities.

Burkhalter and Castells have argued that; “we may enter a time of renewed experimentation. It may even be feasible that entire communities, especially the most financially damaged ones would willingly adopt new urban policies to help them recover from the current multi dimensional disaster.” Ultimately, we have reached a climax that is comparable to that of the times in which Le Corbusier wrote; “Architecture finds itself confronted with new laws,” meaning that indeed at this point, again, “the human animal must learn to use his tools.”

There are widely differing opinions on architecture’s abilities to act as a societal mediator, and its abilities to teach human beings how to “use their tools.” There are those like Herman Czech who believe that “Architecture is Overrated,” and plead for an architecture that only speaks when it is asked to. A “quiet” architecture. Then we have those like the Russian Post-Revolutionary architects, believing that architecture can be key in Revolution. Of course there are those like Le Corbusier, who believe that architecture, by being revolutionary itself, can prevent revolution. And lastly, there are those like Paul Goldberger, who believe a bit of everything; “Architecture does not cure cancer, and it does not put bread on the table.”

Speculations of a Remedial Architecture
it is not justice in the courtroom, or peace on the battlefield. (...) Architecture does not solve all of our problems, it does not sustain life, but it can make the already sustained life much more meaningful, much more pleasant."

Manfredo Tafuri has argued that a successful building tries to ‘resolve those contradictions of capitalism through more or less ingenious formal and stylistic innovations.' However, Nabokov argues that such a solution focuses too much on the aesthetic, whereas it should ‘induce critical awareness; an architecture that defies the logic of capital.'

Thomas Dutton and Lianne Mann in their turn, warn for architectures capabilities of facilitating inequities in its aim of this critical awareness; "When the distinction between form-making and meaning making is collapsed; when a critique of architecture replaces a critique of society; and when radical academic theory replaces radical social action and engagement with projects of social change, including through new social movements." So really, what are the options when the issue is this dynamic and multi-disciplinary?

Our Options
rejecting, embracing or dealing with the system

In a most basic sense, our options are simple; We either reject the system - hoping that its replacement has better results, we can embrace the system - and wait to see what its effects on architecture and living standards turn out to be, or we can deal with the system - ultimately aiming for less societal inequities.

The first, rejecting the system, is a rather problematic one. Even if it would actually be possible to reject the capitalist system in the first place, it is not said that its replacement has better results. Let's take a short walk through the land of speculation, and imagine that the communist system would have defeated the capitalist system. It is rather questionable whether that would lead to less of a generic architectural identity, as at its very nature the system aims for collectivity and social gain over individualism and individual gain.

The second option also requires a somewhat hypothetical approach. Thomas Piketty has argued in his "Capital in the 21st century" that, in the current economic system, the interest on capital is larger than the growth of the economy. This implies that embracing the system, without making any changes to it, will result in a world of large inequities of living standards. Capitalism would completely gobble architectural identity and spit it back out as a uniform generator of financial profit. Piketty does however give the side note to his theory that economy never lets itself be correctly predicted. The level of inequality in living standards has been at today's level before, but has always decreased again. Not necessarily because of Kuznets' theory of industrialization and economic growth, but because of events like the world wars. So let's ask ourselves the question; do we dare to wait and see whether a third world war, another economic meltdown, or perhaps some unexpected environmental disaster results in enough societal chaos to cause the so badly needed decrease of social inequalities. And may you be mad enough to dare answer this question with a "yes," then let me ask you what the last decades of globalizing architectural identity have been good for.

I believe my opinion has become clear by now. What the world is really in need of is are those measures that make today the turning point on the Kuznets Curve. We need to deal with the system. Not just reject it, nor just accept it, but use its strengths in combination with altering its weaknesses to achieve societal progression. And today's architecture should not just respond to those multidimensional changes, it should facilitate, even encourage them. Only by achieving this kind of architecture, can the last years of questionable progression of a globalizing architectural identity be justified. Only then has it served its right of existence. That is why I say, "Toward a Remedial Architecture..."

I realize it is rather daring to publish a thesis called "Toward a Remedial Architecture." It is likely that most of the necessary measures concerning the recovery of the economy and the decrease of societal inequalities will have to come from the political and financial sector. I would be wrong to think that architecture can provoke these measures to be taken, and mad to think that I am even partly capable to contribute to them. However, it is good, and in my opinion even necessary, to explore the abilities of architecture within these times of extensive changes, and to pursue its extremes. That is what the rest of this book is about.
Part Two

Inquiry
The necessary interventions of the future are reliant on changes in several disciplines. Thomas Piketty has argued that; ‘Whichever way it goes depends on the image societies have on inequalities, and the policies and institutions they call to life in order to shape and to transform that image.’

The only way to grasp the possible measures that the future holds for us, is to delve into the many opinions and advices of academics, researchers and journalists. From these it should be possible to construct a building program that incorporates and facilitates these measures, and may even result in the rise of a completely new kind of institution. The architecture that results from this program and its ambitions, should enter a dynamic relationship with its theme, and allow for this theme to evolve over time. Because, just like the system’s necessary interventions do not let themselves be categorized within one discipline, they cannot be resolved within a single building design - it can only give an acute contribution to the larger picture of remediation.

As explained throughout Part I, today’s capitalism - and thus today’s process of globalizing architecture - faces two mayor dilemmas; reformation of the system after the economic collapse of 2008 and the rising level of societal inequalities. The mostly adduced interventions for these two can be summarized as the need for extra monitoring of the financial sector and its movements, and the need to spread acquisition and knowledge of this system.
To understand the most advised post-recession interventions, it is important to understand the system that got us into recession in the first place. Before the deregulation acts of Thatcher and Reagan, the financial system consisted of roughly two parties; the home-buyers and the money-lenders. To buy a home, people would request for a mortgage at their local bank, which would carefully evaluate the request. As a possible loan was paid from money the partners invested in the bank, they were spending their own money and would only provide an actual loan when their customer seemed credit worthy. These home-buyers would then spend their lives paying back their debts and interest to the bank.

After deregulation money-lenders were able to sell their provided mortgages, loans and debts to larger so-called “investment banks.” These investment banks would then combine these into CDO’s; Collateralized Debt Obligations, and in turn sell these products to investors. The money that home buyers now paid on their mortgage and interest, went through the investment banks and from there spread worldwide. This is how the financial system internationalized. CDO’s were complicated products. They consisted of thousands different kinds of loans provided to millions of people spread globally. In order make CDO’s attractive to investors, worldwide rating agencies were paid by investment banks to rate the their product’s risk-factors. Investors started to buy these CDO’s and insured themselves with global insurance companies in case their CDO products lost value. Each quarter they would pay a premium over the value of their investments, and in return the insurance companies would guarantee to pay whenever the debts included in a CDO would not be payed and its value collapsed.

The insurance companies in turn sold CDO speculations, called “derivatives”. Because of the markets deregulation acts, investment banks were allowed to buy these speculations. Similar to the investors, the bank would pay the insurers as long as the CDO had value. For the insurance companies the selling of these derivatives meant that they were earning several times the fees on one insurance. However, it also meant that whenever a CDO lost value they not only had to pay of the investor that owned it, but also the banks that speculated on it. It was possible that they had to pay numerous parties with the loss of value of only one CDO. In other words; selling derivatives would only be interesting for the insurance companies whenever they were likely to keep their value, whereas they were only interesting for banks to buy whenever they were likely to lose their value.

The International Monetary Fund is positioned outside of these systems, and studies it in order to ensure stability of the monetary system. Advice of the IMF is used by governments and the world bank to base their policies on. IMF consists of 188 countries, but these don’t have equal levels of influence. At IMF, voting power is dependent on the amount of money a country pays to IMF’s quota system. Currently that makes the USA, Germany, France, Japan and Great Britain the most powerful countries- all which are western.

This basic explanation of the system already presents the majority of its flaws. First of all, investment banks were selling products rated by “independent” and “objective” rating companies, which were paid by the investment banks themselves. Joris Luyendijk, a Dutch journalist wrote about this;
Imagine that the inspectors of the Michelin Restaurant Guide would not visit restaurants and taste the quality of their food anonymously, but were paid by the chef himself. Guess how many stars restaurants would rate then... 52

Another flaw of the system is the double objective of the investment bank on their CDO sells. On the one side, the investment banks would make their CDO’s be rated by agencies they paid, in order to sell them to their investors and make money out of that. But on the other side, investment banks were buying derivatives from the insurance companies, which were constructed of their self-sold CDO’s. As long as a CDO would be stable, the banks paid the insurance company. Whenever a CDO’s value collapsed, the insurance company paid of the banks. In other words, their product - though worthless - would be profitable for them at least twice, at the cost of their investors and the insurance companies.

Governments allowed these dangerous products to be sold, as they fell under the deregulation acts. The IMF was aware of the possible danger CDO’s could do to the economy, but as IMF is controlled by the most wealthy countries, the advice of regulating CDO sells never made it into actual policy. People were supposed to know what they are buying, despite the low risk factor a rating agency gave to banking products.

This is all to say that overtime we fabricated a system that is only doubtfully fair. Some even like to describe it as ‘corrupt,’ which were constructed of their self-sold CDO’s. As long as a CDO would be stable, the banks paid the insurance company. Whenever a CDO’s value collapsed, the insurance company paid of the banks. In other words, their product - though worthless - would be profitable for them at least twice, at the cost of their investors and the insurance companies.

The discipline of economy should never have been allowed to disconnect from other social sciences and that it can only develop when accompanied by them.” 53

What the system seems in need of today, is a new and autonomously maintained institution that monitors the international financial markets and advises on its progress, its policies and its products. This is where I would like to purpose the birth of a new institution; the International Monetary Survey Organization; IMSO.

In the context of globalization it is desirable that the IMSO will monitor the financial system on several levels - varying from local markets to global markets - searches for the relation between them and bases their advice on those findings. It is therefore necessary that the IMSO also features a conference center, where all levels of the global financial- and trade market can meet.

The discipline of economy should never have been allowed to disconnect from other social sciences and that it can only develop when accompanied by them.” - Thomas Piketty, 2015 -

Piketty describes the spreading and acquisition of knowledge as the most powerful convergent power, and the only one capable to some extend to counter the diverging forces, and ultimately lead to less inequality; The spreading of knowledge and skills is the most important mechanism that enables growth of productivity and decreases inequalities, both within a country as on an international level. 54

The earlier introduced “International Monetary Survey Organization” and its Conference Center do to some extend, contribute to the spread of knowledge and skills, but it is questionable whether an institution like this suffices to reach a large part of the existing societal levels. It would not be hard to imagine it becoming an organism that functions autonomously; withdrawn from its surrounding. Without interaction, and much individualistic. It would therefore be good to gather several levels of the system within one building, ultimately forming an "economy and trade knowledge-center." Somewhere where theories about progress and policy meet the hard truth of the real practice. A place where the science of economy reconnects to the larger societal scope; where local, regional, national, international and global operating parties meet.

The IMSO should therefore only be a small part of the building program, and be accompanied by; a Stock Exchange, which acts on a national level - an Entrepreneurs Center which functions regionally - and lastly some kind of a public function that interacts on a local level; preferably highly attractive to visit for lots of people. The exact context of this function, however, depends on the location of the building.
Building an institute that houses financial and economical organizations which are usually accommodated in separate buildings, imposes the inquiry of economy and finance represented in architecture.

In 1989, the Italian-American artist Arturo di Modica secretly placed a bronze sculpture of a bull on Broad Street in New York. (23) In general, the bull is depicted as the symbol for aggressive financial optimism and prosperity. This particular bull is leaning back while keeping his head down, which creates an image of strength. By positioning its feet asymmetrically, and constructing the belly muscles such that there seems to be more pressure on the front legs then the back makes the bull seem to suddenly turn, which is a representation of the unpredictability of the stock markets. The twist in its tail then stresses this image of energy and motion. (23)

Over the years the bull has become one of the most famous representations of capitalism. In 2010 di Modica repeated his 1989 installation, this time in Shanghai. The new bull, similarly in size to the one in New York, seems younger but also stronger, representing the young but powerful progress of the Chinese stock markets. And in 2012 di Modica placed another bull statue at the Amsterdam Beursplein.

Though these bull’s are no more than a one man opinion of the system, the architectural representation of financial institutions and organizations are commonly using somewhat comparable principles; expressing strength and power. This chapter approaches five buildings that do. They vary in their location, function and age, and were selected on their representation of a certain time or phase in the economic progression of the last 250 years.

The Architectural Representation of Confidence and Trust
George B. Post’s Representation of Fortitude

The New York Stock Exchange Building (1903) is just meters away from Di Modica’s Charging Bull. NYSE was founded in the early 1700s and until 1865 had no permanent home. The trade of wheat, tobacco, coffee and spices moved around. When in 1865 the so called “Gilded Age” started, both trade and wealth exploded. Until World War One, the American economy grew as never seen before, and as a result the first stock exchange that was built in 1965 plus its two neighboring buildings, had to make way for a larger stock exchange building in 1901.

George B. Post is considered one of the most typical “Gilded Age Architects” because of his designs for the Equitable Life Assurance Building, the New York Produce Exchange Building and of course, the New York Stock Exchange Building. Post was considered a highly determined realist as all of these buildings were designed to express stability and confidence, but were also pushing the boundaries of engineering - making them the perfect representation of how at the time technical innovations were thriving an unprecedented economic growth.

Over the last 100 years the NYSE building has become one of the most famous representations of finance and economy. Its ten story facade consists of a forward positioned seven-bay-wide podium, on which six columns carry a pediment, based on the Roman Pantheon. The later added recessed part of the facade however, blends in with the neighboring buildings because of the rationally positioned and not ornamented squared windows (1901). This causes Post’s central part of the facade to be extra notable in the image of broad street.

The artwork within the pediment was made by John Quincy Adams and is called “Integrity Protecting the Works of Man.” It displays the sources of American prosperity; agriculture, mining, science, industry and invention. Though the facade may imply different, Post’s design is in fact a product of science, industry and invention. At the time of construction the trading floor was the largest volume space in the city, as well was the above roof skylight.

The combination of closed street levels consisting of mainly large marble blocks and the more opened and extensively ornamented higher levels, creates both a majestic image, as well as it implies the sequestered functioning of the building. Aaron Rasmussen of the New York Magazine has argued that perhaps as volatile stock prices rise and fall, maybe the solidity of the building itself makes it easier for traders to stomach the fortunes lost and gained on any given day.
George & Moorehouse’s Representation of Progression

Not too far away from the NYSE another stock exchange profited extremely during the gilded age; the Toronto Stock Exchange. After years of market progression the TSE built their own building in 1913 and though after its opening TSE experienced turbulent market times due to the First World War, its value over the years kept increasing. When during the thirties the Great Depression hovered across the world, over 2,000 brokerage firms closed in New York, but in Toronto not one did. In fact, TSE merged with their greatest competitor, making them the third biggest stock exchange. As a result the TSE building needed a great amount of additional floorspace, which resulted in the 1937 design that is still visible today.

Built in a completely different style, the design by Toronto based architecture firm George and Moorehouse does show similarities to the NYSE Building. The facade combines horizontal and vertical openings with horizontally orientated ornamentations. The vertical orientation of the deeply recessed windows is, however, visually more present. Stretching from the first to the third floor they create a seclusion from the street similar to that of the NYSE building. Opposed to the pediment artwork of NYSE, the TSE has a frieze artwork by Peter Schoen which displays in a modern heroic style the industries whose stocks were traded inside the building. The inside trading floor was free of columns which optimized its use. The building was the first in the city to have air conditioning and a elliptical tube mail system. When opened in 1937 the building was considered as one of the most up to date trading buildings in the world.

The stock exchange generated success for Toronto, and in 1967 the German modernist Ludwig Mies van der Rohe was appointed to design a new financial center called “Dominion Center.” Van Der Rohe’s master plan included six towers, of which one was positioned on the plot of the Stock Exchange building. When Van Der Rohe died before completion of the plan, construction was delayed. By the time construction was ready to built the TSE plot tower, the TSE building had been appointed as cultural heritage. As a result, the tower was placed over the old TSE building, leaving it completely intact and making it a decorative, built-in fixture: a lovely ornament to a massive, sleek and gleaming environment.

Ultimately, the TSE building and Dominion Center became a representation of the prevailing twentieth century trust in the economic system and the progression that this provoked.
Office for Metropolitan Architecture’s Representation of Speculation

The 2006 design for the Shenzhen Stock Exchange Building, has been argued by OMA to be ‘a financial center with civic meaning. Located at a new public square (…), it engages the city not as an isolated object, but as a building to be reacted to at multiple scales and levels.’

In 1992 the city of Shenzhen was no more than home to 30,000 people, but it was still chosen as the first Special Economic Zone in China. Within twenty years, the population grew to fourteen million. The architectural review has argued that ‘this was economic growth and urban expansion in a dialectical relationship: economic liberalization created the productive engine for the city’s growth, but urbanization was the necessary precursor to profitable development.’ This urbanization also led to the need of a new Stock Exchange building.

For the new SZSE Building, OMA took the conventional tower with base and lifted up that base ten stories from the ground. OMA says about this that the base, as if lifted by the same speculative euphoria that drives the market, has crept up the tower to become a raised podium. The tower is mainly used for lease, whereas the raised podium houses most of the Stock Exchange functions. OMA has deliberately designed the tower as a generic object, making the cantilevered volume a more explicit part of its surroundings: ‘at times appearing massive and at other times intimate and personal.’

The societal civic meaning of the building is perhaps best represented outside of it, where a large public square has been created underneath its cantilevered volume. However, it is often argued that China has no civil society and thus the value of such a public square becomes questionable. But in fact, it might be a valuable test-case to see what a work of architecture, especially one housing mainly an economic and financial institution, can possibly provoke on a civil level.

Comparable to the much older designs for the NYSE and TSE buildings, the Shenzhen building functions as a gesture to its surrounding and is argued to be ‘credit worthy primarily because of its simplicity and restraint in the face of audacious GDP growth and fiscal confidence.’ But also quite similar to the earlier discussed buildings it seems likely the building will function autonomously because all main functions have actually be lifted up, away from the civic world. OMA’s design for the SZSE thus represents mostly, like argued by themselves, speculation.

So far it seems like all three buildings (NYSE, TSE & SZSE) had as main objective to generate an image of stability and confidence and because of that seem to struggle with the tension between willingness to be part of society, yet being superior to societal unrest by expressing prominence and loftiness.
Sir John Soane’s Representation
Of stability

The American Landmarks Preservation Commission has argued that during the Gilded Age banks were designed ‘to attract depositors,’ and to do so they favored traditional architectural imagery (...) that signaled financial stability and integrity. These structures, whether located in small towns or large cities, projected a strong civic presence and many became centerpieces in their communities (...) Many important examples were constructed in busy commercial hubs, within walking distance of residential neighborhoods.108

The question thus rises whether the urge of an image of stability and trust has always emerged from the objective of a growing business, or even a growing economy. Sir John Soane’s design for the bank of England was made long before the Gilded age, and at a time when economic growth was quite unlikely. England had been in war with France for years and London was plagued by disunity and experienced countless riots. As a result, London’s Bank of England building merely had to represent stability and trust because of the prevailing political and societal unrest, and not because it was aiming for economic growth.

Soane was surveyor for the bank from 1788 until 1833 and therefore had sufficient time to rebuild the complete bank, and expand it to twice its original size. As the bank had to be secured to invasion as well as fire, Soane designed his famous fortified windowless walls (...) that enclosed a large and high single floor area.110 The only interruption of the continuous walls were the monumentally high doors, which stressed the transition from outside into the trustworthy environment of the bank.

Though there were legitimate reasons for the design of the fortified wall, it made the bank function as an introvert city. The outside gave away little information of the happenings taking place inside. This autonomous character enhances when we take in consideration that many bank employees had residences within the building, only the large banking halls were accessible to the public, and only when they came to for trading purposes.111 The inside of the bank consisted of much corridors and halls, all lit by the glass opening in the high domes above, and in turn making a perception on the outside world nearly impossible.112
I think by now it’s allowed to argue that generally the architecture of financial and economy-related institutions aim for the representation of stability, trustworthiness, prosperity and progression. And I wish to imply that this is fair. Banks function as long as people store their money with them, and people are not likely to do so at institutions that represent themselves as on the edge of bankruptcy. But the question should not be whether or not this is fair. It is significantly more important to question to what extent this architectural representation has influenced the taking of risks that contributed to the problems we are faced with today, as described throughout Part One.

For the answer I wish to look at the London of 200 years after Soane’s time at the Bank of England.

Typically for the globalization of finance, this London building was commissioned by a large Swiss Reinsurance company, and was assigned to the British firm Foster+Partners. The design itself, named 30 st. Mary Axe (33), can be categorized within the quintessential styles of international banking offices; glass, steel, concrete and aluminum. Foster+Partners describes it as “an instantly recognizable addition to the city’s skyline.” It sits at the London’s financial district, and acts as one of many so-called “Starchitects Landmarks,” which seems to generate representational values for the company housing within it.

However, author Jonathan Massey has introduced the concept of “Risk Design,” which explains how the Gherkin leveraged perceptions of risk to generate profits, promote economic growth, and raise the currency of design expertise. In 2004 London was lobbying to host the 2012 Olympic Games and needed a positive vote of its citizens to risk public money on the organization. Therefore, the city published several posters and commercials that used, amongst others, 30 st. Mary Axe as evidence that London possessed the expertise and daring to handle that risk - to manage the complex investments and construction projects in infrastructure, architecture, and landscape needed to host an Olympic games.

Massey also describes; “Constructing affinities between body and building (...) the poster associated British athleticism and architecture as complementary manifestations of daring and skill.” Not only did the firm within the tower profit of its representation of trustworthiness and stability, it was socially noticed after which it influenced the general perception of risk and affected the societal choices that were made. In this sense, architecture does actually seem capable to interfere in societal progression.
Global Economy & Trade Center
Influential or Pointless?

These case studies reveal the desire of financial and economic institutions to use their architecture as generators of confidence. That confidence must firstly be transferred to the outside world, so customers will feel safe entrusting their money to the care of these organizations. Therefore institutions tend to aim for designs that present immunity to societal unrest or other outside forces. However, its architecture must also provide confidence to its employees, and make them feel that the work they do is of importance to society at large and that they matter as individuals within maintaining the system.

More often then not, this results in buildings that act as urban heterotopics. They aim to represent themselves as an important part of society, yet also as superior and independent of it. They are not here, nor there. These case studies imply that this architecture has been able to provoke confidence in the system amongst its users. If architecture actually has the power to influence people in this way, then what is to say it is not also able to influence the choices that people make based on their confidence?
Part Three
Location
The graduation studio offered limited options for choosing a location for the design; it either had to be Istanbul in Turkey or Stockholm in Sweden. For this project that limitation was a gift, because the possibilities for locations of a Global Economy and Trade Center would have been endless.

The most important consideration to choose between these two cities was the presence of a financial district. Istanbul has one, and is currently expanding it, whereas in Stockholm the financial institutions are scattered over the city. As the objective of the Global Economy & Trade Center is to bring together several levels on which the economy manifests, including the ones that are not directly involved at a financial district, it would be better not to built somewhere where corporate elites are clustered into one district. Therefore I chose to further research the possibilities in Stockholm, and not Istanbul.

The main commercial Area of Stockholm is to be found on the northern mainland, surrounding a square called Norrmalmstorg. Because the function of the Global Economy & Trade Center relies on people active in the commercial sector, this seemed like a good place to start the search for a location.

It will be better not to built somewhere where corporate elites are clustered into one district.
Stockholm began as a small town on the island of Gamlastan around the thirteenth century. The island was a strategic choice, as its location was at the border between the sea and the inland lakes. Either, the copper and iron that had to be transported over sea had to be reloaded, or ships had to pass the line of tree trunks between the island and the mainland, both of which Stockholm lifted fees for. The name Stockholm means “tree-trunk-islet” and is likely to be a result of this.

The Kalmar Union
the inducement of an independent Sweden

Because of its location, Stockholm became one of the largest merchants of the Kalmar Union. However, due to the Unions frequent wars against areas that were important for the export of iron into the European continent, Stockholm’s trade regularly got notably disturbed. An independence movement followed in the sixteenth century after which the Kalmar Union fell apart.

In 1523 Sweden established a royal power. King Gustav Vasa ruled with heavy hand, resulting in less power of the church and a decrease of trade. In the opinion of the King, the country’s military force and the great power of royal family was of main importance. The “Tre Kronor” palace got built at the northern banks of Gamlastan, from which the king was able to overlook the northern mainland. Besides some small farms and an occasional countryside church this mainland gave little signs of human settlement as most of the land was used for agricultural purposes. Part of this agriculture was Kungsträdgården, which translates into “Kings Cabbage Gardens.” As the name implies, these gardens grew food exclusively for the Royal Palace.
The Great Power of Sweden
Stockholm's flourishing 17th century

By the seventeenth century, still under command of the royal family, Sweden had become one of Europe's great powers and was almost similar to the size of the earlier Kalmar Union. Stockholm experienced an extraordinary growth of prosperity and the city expanded onto both the northern and the southern mainland.

When during the 1620's Stockholm was ravaged by a city fire that ruined most of western Gamlastan, the King decided that, along with the growing number of inhabitants of his country, the time had come for a new urban planning. Architects from all over Europe came to Stockholm to design the gridiron plan that is still visible today. Early maps of this grid firstly introduce the in size reduced Kungsträdgården. The east side of the garden was now limited by the relocated banks of Nybroviken, which had undergone extensive land changes. At the southern end of the gardens the Makalös Palace - home to the noble Swedish family De La Gardie - enclosed the gardens from the waterfront.118

In 1697 the royal Tre Kronor palace burned down after which the urban developments mainly focused on restoring of the royal properties. Kungsträdgården was part of these properties and was gradually transformed into the enclosed Royal Baroque Pleasure Garden. In 1821, king Charles XIV chose to open up the garden to the bourgeois life, and graveled the center of the garden such that it became an open space. The gardens were used to discuss politics and sometimes even for military trainings. Kungsträdgården therefore became of representational value of Sweden's greatness.

In 1825 Stockholm was again faced with a large urban fire, this time at the cost of Makalös Palace, Stockholm once again lost one of its great iconic buildings. Little remained of the palace, and therefore city counsel decided to demolish what was left so they could extend Kungsträdgården toward the waterfront. The park was then opened up to the public.119

To celebrate King Charles XIV's 25th anniversary in 1643, a new bridge was planned across the bay of Nybroviken between Blasiholmen and Normalm, creating a better connection between the Royal Palace and the Royal Theatre. On royal request the resulting inland lake was filled with land, which changed the bridge into a quay. The new land was planned to be made a green park under the name of Berzelii Park, but for unknown reasons the plan was not carried out and the landfill ended up as a collection of weed and sand hills.

The end of a Great Power
the rise of societal gain

This changed in 1866, when a new urban plan was made by Stockholm's city planner Albert Lindhagen. By that time most of the Kungsträdgården had become mainly a graveled square known as "Square of Charles XIII" and Lindhagen therefore proposed Berzelii park. The Nybroviken bay would be reduced significantly by further landfills, after which the park would be extended, allowing the design of a new and modern residential park. A green park, functioning as a counterpart to the continuously urbanizing Kungsträdgården.120

Shortly after Lindhagen's new planning a new building code was introduced to regulate the excessive population growth ahead. With the new industrial possibilities the city also introduced...
its first railways, one of which passes Kungsträdgården and Berzelii park on their north-side and crossed another line at the square of Norrmalmstorg. Though the Norrmalmstorg square was intended to have a green image it became ended up as the transitionspace for passengers riding the tram, and thus an important place in the city.39 As a result, new commercial buildings and banks were built and the northern end of Kungsträdgården became the center of consumerism. Over the years, with Berzelii Park only meters away, the northern end of the Kungsträdgården completely lost its impressive majestic character.

Modern Capitalism in Kungsträdgården — a public events park

So what does this part of Stockholm look like today? Norrmalmstorg still exists as one of the most commercial parts of Stockholm, but is less lively as main public transport has been moved from above ground to the underground.

Berzelii Park has become the Park it was once intended to be; green and seemingly disconnected from the city life. However, the park does lack interaction with its surroundings and comes across as somewhat of an abandoned part of the city.

The ongoing trend of Kungsträdgården to become less of a garden and more of a square prevailed. Today it little of Kungsträdgården’s historic majestic image remains, and it has reached a point at which its main purpose has become to host as much different kind of events as possible. In 2015 this has grown to a yearly calendar consisting of 150 stage events, 100-150 exhibitions, Christmas markets and large national events. Several either cheap looking or aged restaurant buildings have been placed throughout the park, the most obvious of which is TGI-Friday’s right in the middle of the northern end of the park. Because of the ongoing events a permanent stage has been constructed right in front of the only remaining parts of the old pleasure-gardens of the king, parting it from both the happening events as well as of the city.

Together, Norrmalmstorg and Berzelii park physically embody the way in which capitalism and the shifts of powers have influenced the progression of the built environment. There is, however, another to the story. The maintenance responsibility of Kungsträdgården falls upon a special department of the Stockholm municipal, called “Park & Events.” Ultimately, this organization is responsible for both the use of the park as well as maintaining it. Profits that are made by the organization of events are used to invest into the organization of new events, as well as keeping the garden’s fit for these events. It is a perfect resemblance of how public money is transferred into a commodity, and in turn back into money with a surplus value. Both the commodity and its resulting surplus value contribute to a societal gain, but also in the garden’s decay of the last decades. (39-42)

Image 35: Kungsträdgården in 1700

Image 36: Stockholm based on maps dating 1716

Image 37: Kungsträdgården in 1890-1900

Image 38: Kungsträdgården in 1890-1900
In 1697 the royal Tre Kronor palace burned down after which the urban developments mainly focused on restoring of the royal properties. Kungsträdgården was part of these properties and was gradually transformed into the enclosed Royal Baroque Pleasure Garden.

In 1821, king Charles XIV chose to open up the garden to the bourgeois life, and graveled the center of the garden such that it became an open space. The gardens were used to discuss politics and sometimes even for military trainings. Kungsträdgården therefore became of representational value of Sweden’s greatness.

In 1866, when a new urban plan was made by Stockholm’s city planner Albert Lindhagen, most of the Kungsträdgården had been replaced by a graveled square known as “Square of Charles XIII”.

Today little of Kungsträdgården’s historic majestic image remains, and it has reached a point at which its main purpose has become to host as much different kind of events as possible.


Images


Illustrations


Part Four
Design
Finalizing the Building Program

The Problem Statement

The choice to use Kungsträdgården as the location to design a public Global Economy & Trade Center has finished the earlier introduced building program. The parks stage and restaurant buildings are of high disturbance to the parks spatial qualities thus they will be demolished. This clears the location for the building intervention of the public Global Economy & Trade Center. This building should, however, contain replacements for the demolished facilities. In other words, the aimed public part that attracts non-destination visitors into the building now consists of a restaurant function. Also the outside stage is required to be replaced and will be included in the building’s ambition to announce its economy related functions to the public.

Together with the introduced site specific problems that Kungsträdgården experiences because of the pasts capitalist influences, has resulted in the following problem statement:

How can a new economic institution deal with the capitalist system such that it remediates the years of decay taking place at Kungsträdgården?
Kungsträdgården in its current state can roughly be separated into two parts; at the south the last remains of the majestic Royal Pleasure Gardens this place once was, and at the north - separated by a large event stage made out of metal scaffold pipes - the large and graveled public square. Stretching from one to the other end of the park, both sides have the main tree-lines that Kungsträdgården is famous for. On the west-side however, these trees have already been intervened by the construction of a building dating from the 1970’s.

As the design strives to counteract on the decay of Kungsträdgården, it would not make sense to intervene in the preserved part of the gardens at its south end. Therefore, the northern end has temporarily been studied as an autonomous event within the urban fabric. When passing this part of the gardens along Hamngatan, Kungsträdgården acts as one of three “urban rooms”; Berzelii Park, Norrmalmstorg and finally Kungsträdgården. This sequence provides a quality to the street image of this part of Stockholm, and therefore several possibilities for the urban footprint of the building come to mind. It can be a single building consisting of one volume, a single building consisting of several volumes as well as several buildings spread over the gardens.

The qualities of each of these possibilities have been studied in over 200 variations of different shapes and positions. Eighteen of the most enlightening options are presented on the following page. These led to the conclusion that Hamngatan’s sequence of open spaces somehow needs to be retained, that the street image of the building that intervenes the western tree-line on the north side needs to be finished in the new design. Also the primary center axis of the park needs to remain.
Counter the Decay
creating transition between park and city

The main figureheads of Kungsträdgården’s decay are constructed in service of the park’s yearly events; the large podium that forms a strict separation between the last remains of the Royal Pleasure Gardens and the public square, the TGIF restaurant at the northern end of Kungsträdgården and the three small tea and coffee pavilions that intervene in the majestic tree-lines at the east side of the park. These main figureheads will be demolished, after which the park will be divided in three zones; the old park with its green image, a transition space that uses the position of the kings statue to maintain the most used pedestrian walking routes, and the start of the urban tissue that will form the building location for the public Global Economy and Trace Center. Together these zones will form a pedestrian transition between park and city.

Connecting the Urban Tissue
Defining the new borders of Kungsträdgården

The urban tissues on both sides of the park will be connected by the newly introduced plot. The southside of the plot finds its border aligned with its two neighboring buildings. This creates a somewhat continues line of building volumes that define the edges of the park. At the opposite side of the plot it is desirable to “finish” the intervention that has already been made to the western tree-lines. Therefore the plot will continue the path of its neighboring building for the same distance as its neighbor is wide. After that the border is set back in order to remain the sequence of open spaces along Hamngatan. This also creates an urban square for the use of the existing public transport hub that sits on the corner of Hamngatan and Kungsträdgårdsgraven.
Also this curve defines the new borders of the events square. This square has now moved from one side of the King’s Statue to the other, allowing the potential design of the building to orientate itself toward the events held at this position. As this facade faces the south side of the park, this curved shape also offers possibilities for multi-usage of daylight.

After removing the obstacles in the existing Kungsträdgården, the main pedestrian lines over the square will all at some point meet the central part of the garden. From this position to the northern end of Kungsträdgården the emphasis will be on the distribution of people at the urban public transport square. The building plot is therefore cut in two, respecting the existing central monumental sight line, and enhancing the visual connectivity of Hamngatan’s sequence of open spaces with the central part of Kungsträdgården. On top of these two separate volumes the shape is placed that connects both urban tissues to each other. In other words, on pedestrian level the building answers to the flexibility and dynamics of city and park, on the upper levels it answers to the static urban environment and acts as a follie when seen from further away in gardens.
Balance between Public and Semi-Public function positioning following urban intention

This separation of building volumes connected by one overhanging volume meets the desires to connect several public functions to several semi-public functions. Horizontally, the building separates between public functions with a work intention (the Entrepreneurs Center) and public functions with a recreational intention (the restaurant). This responds to both geographical orientation - the restaurant receives afternoon and evening sunlight - as well as to the urban orientation - the east side of the gardens contain mostly recreational and consumer functions, whereas the west side mainly houses offices. In the upper volume, the Stock Exchange then connects the restaurant and Entrepreneurs center, and presents itself to both traffic square as well as the events square. IMSO & GECC are then positioned on top, orientated to the Stock exchange.

Building versus Follie city versus gardens

The building shape that these design aims have led to stands on the border between the city and Kungsträdgården. The atmosphere that the northern facade faces to is substantially different from the one of the southern. The underpass of the building thus acts similar to the King’s portal that led to his enclosed pleasure gardens. This results in the building’s double objective; at the one site it attempts to be a follie, visible from the far corners of Kungsträdgården’s, but at the other side it attempts to be an integrated part of the urban tissue. This allows possibilities for the design aim of both internal as well as external interaction of the functions that this building houses.
The internal structure of the building consist of a range of functions that intertwine. The prior connecting function between all parts of the building is the Swedish Stock Exchange, that sits on top of the Stockholm Entrepreneurs Center and the Restaurant. The Stock Exchange has facades facing each side of the plot which allows it to present itself to the outsides of the building. By raising the ceiling of the middle part, the Stock Exchange experiences an enhanced internal interaction with the International monetary Survey Organization and the Conference Center. The conference center is placed symbolically on the edge of the inside and outside facade, overlooking the real world of Kungsträdgården, and the chaotic financial world through the void of the Stock Exchange. On each side of the building a facility core is introduced that contains toilets, elevators, escape routes and facility spaces and provide entrance to the parking garage underneath the building. At the edge of the Stock Exchange and facing Kungsträdgården, an auditorium and TV/radio broadcasting space has been positioned above the restaurant. This allows financial and economic news to use both the public Global Economy & Trade Center as well as Kungsträdgården as the new icon of post-recession economy, and brings back times in which Kungsträdgården mattered in the bourgeoisie life. At the outside of building on the ground floor a raised podium provides a good view over the public events space and contributes to the orientation of pedestrians arriving at the transport hub in front of the building.
Visitors Perspectives  

As it is the buildings aim to attract both destination- as well as random and accidental visitors that pass the building by chance, the building has two entrance at the ground floor, but both are open to the public. The restaurant has its entrance faced toward Kungsträdgården. A large glass facade with harmonica doors can be opened fully during events, after which the raised podiums inside the restaurant form an extension of the public events square.

The entrance to the Stockholm Entrepreneurs Center is positioned across from the restaurant, underneath the overhang of the above Stock Exchange. This provides a snow free entrance during the cold Swedish winters. Once inside the building, visitors are confronted with the entrepreneurs help-desk immediately. A void provides a view onto the first and second floor, and stands in direct contact with the reading room of the entrepreneurs center, and the Stock Exchange floor on the second level.

Arrived at the first floor a separation is made between the building’s visitors. Visitors of the Entrepreneurs Center can, but are unlike to go further into the building. Employees of the Monetary survey organization take the stairs at the center of the building’s front part. This stairway differs from the stairs that lead to public parts of the building, and don’t invite to be taken unless someone knows he or she has to be up that stairs. Going up, the employee rises two levels, to the third floor, and experiences the moment he or she walks through the ceiling. The atmosphere changes; light and reflecting materials become dominant. The floor provides private, as well as flexible workplaces, and the centrally positioned
stairvoid invites interaction between the several levels of the International Monetary Survey Organization. From the flex workspaces a large glass wall provides a view on the trading floor of the Stock Exchange. Stock Exchange visitors are taking the stairs to the second floor, that provides a good view over Kungsträdgården. The trading floor is placed between the two wings of the building. Of its four facades, the void uses two to interact internally with the IMSO and the Conference center. The other facades, the north and south ones, are used to connect the vibrant activity of the trading floor to both the traffic square and the events square in the park. The overhang of the above floor prevents the floor to be receiving to much sunlight. The central part of the Stock Exchange offers place to the selling modules, whereas the secondary space surrounding the central void is used for flex working places.

The entrance of the auditorium is positioned the edge of the trading floor. Entering the auditorium provides a view over Kungsträdgården, whereas the seats inside the auditorium provide sliced views of the trading floor, depending on the exact location.

The TV and Radio broadcasting rooms are positioned behind the auditorium, away from the unrest of the trading floor, but suited with an excellent view over Kungsträdgården. The balcony above the trading floor can be used for specific life reporting.

The Conference Center is reached by the bridge that crosses the void above the Stock Exchange on the fourth level. Visitors are thus always confronted with other activities taking place inside the building. Members of the conference taking place enter the conference room on the fourth level, whereas the press balcony is reachable on the fifth level.

Because a large amount of the internal interaction between different spaces and different functions of the building rely on spatial connections between different floor heights, the design of balustrades is of crucial importance. The Global Economy & Trade Center uses three different designs, varying from enclosed, to semi-transparent and highly transparent. Depending on its position either one of these three has been applied.

Materializing Spatial Interaction
the difference between public and semi-public:

As seen with the difference between stairs to public parts of the building and stairs to semi-public parts of the building, the materialization could be a tool to communicate a difference between areas. This is the main argument to make a clear difference between the materialization of public spaces and semi-public spaces.

When spatial interaction is such an important concept of design, many design decisions depend on their influence on the distribution of light. The used materials can be separated between light absorbing materials; such as concrete and plaster walls, light distributing materials such as and mat finished concrete screed and the white oak wooden floors, and light reflecting materials, such as brushed steel and sandblasted glass.

A difference in the composition of light absorbing, distributing or reflecting materials on wall, floor, ceiling or outside facade, can cause a difference in atmosphere, and this way communicate a difference between two neighboring functions without having to enclose them from each other.
Like the shape of the building, the facade can roughly be separated in two elements. The lower levels aim to display the building’s main functions, whereas the upper levels mainly function as continuous volume that finishes the urban tissue. A study of variations has shown that both these aims are more likely to be successful when their facades are different, yet their underlying system is the same in orientation.

This aim correlates with the surrounding buildings. These mainly consist of vertical repetitions, and horizontal sequences. The analysis of the facades revealed a system in the size of the repeated facade elements as well as the amount of repetitions within one facade. With an occasional exception, the size of the facade repetitions becomes smaller when approaching the northern end of Kungsträdgården, and the number of repetitions within one facade increases as displayed on the next page. This applies for the facades that face Kungsträdgården, the facades on Hamngatan and the facades on Kungsträdgårdsgatan. In order to connect these urban blocks the facade of the public Economy and Trade Center should consist of a number of facade repetitions. However, the design of these repetitions should be of a size that maintain the volumes character of a singular object.

“With an occasional exception, the size of the facade repetitions becomes smaller when approaching the northern end of Kungsträdgården,”
The difference between the lower facade and the upper facade is clear; the upper facade has an urban objective, whereas the lower face functions mainly for the dynamics of the busy traffic square and the pedestrians going in and out of Kungsträdgården. It would therefore make sense that the lower facade has a larger repetition dimension than the upper facade has.

The facade design fulfills five purposes. First of all, the desire for a transparent facade represented itself as the aim to avoid large load bearing structures inside or outside of the glass that disturb this transparency. Therefore, more, but smaller columns have been integrated within the facade.

Secondly the difference between the main internal interaction on the upper levels of the building, and the external interaction on the lower levels, were translated into a dimensional system. This system allowed to vary the size of the facades segmentation depending on the function that houses behind it. This also allows the facade segmentation to reply to the events in the facades of surrounding buildings.

The facade plays a key role in the distribution and blocking of direct sunlight. Placed within the facade elements are sandblasted glass elements that transform direct bright sunlight into diffuse and well distributed light before entering the building. At night time these elements will light up, which causes the upper volume to present itself as one object, even when the gardens are dark.
44. Urban mass study. March 7 - 2015 by Teije Hartman.
61. Light Concrete. n.d. by Teije Hartman.
64. Dark concrete. n.d. by Teije Hartman.

Images

part one - research


Illustrations

part one - research

Part Five
Results
From a distance, the public Global Monetary Stock Exchange acts like a follie. Its monolithic shape overlooks Kungsträdgården and defines its edges...
At Hamngatan - the street north of the building - it is desirable to remain the sequence of open spaces. This creates an urban square for the use of the existing public transport hub that sits on the corner of Hamngatan and Kungsträdgårdsgatan.
The restaurant has its entrance faced toward Kungsträdgården. A large glass facade with harmonica doors can be opened fully during events, after which the raised podiums inside the restaurant form an extension of the public events square.
Once inside the building, visitors are confronted with the entrepreneur's help-desk immediately. A void provides a view onto the first and second floor, and stands in direct contact with the reading room of the entrepreneur's center, and the Stock Exchange floor on the second level...
A difference in the composition of light absorption, distributing or reflecting materials on wall, floor, ceiling or the outside facade, can cause a difference in atmosphere, and this way communicate a difference between two neighboring functions without having to enclose them from each other...
The difference between the lower facade and the upper facade is clear: the upper facade has an urban objective, whereas the lower face functions mainly for the dynamics of the busy traffic square and the pedestrians going in and out of Kungsträdgården.
The entrance of the auditorium is positioned on the edge of the trading floor. Entering the auditorium provides a view over Kungsträdgården, whereas the seats inside the auditorium provide 'sliced' views of the trading floor...
The trading floor is placed between the two wings of the building. Of its four facades, the void uses two to interact internally with the IMSO and the Conference Center. The other facades, the north and south ones, are used to connect the vibrant activity of the trading floor to both the traffic square and the events square in the park.
The conference center is placed symbolically on the edge of the inside and outside facade, overlooking the real world of Kungsträdgården, and the chaotic financial world through the void of the Stock Exchange.
Illustration 51: Ground Floor

1. Entrance hall
2. Locker room
3. Chamber of Commerce helpdesk
4. Kungsträdgården waiting room
5. Kungsträdgården meeting room
6. Kungsträdgården Events Offices
7. Restaurant
8. Reception
9. Kitchen
10. Office
11. Employee entrance
12. Parking garage

Illustration 52: First Floor

13. Meeting Lobby
14. Flex work
15. Auditorium
16. Restaurant-bar
Illustration 55: Fourth Floor
14060mm + P

0m 5m 10m 20m

25. Meeting rooms
26. Private offices
27. Flex workplaces IMSO
28. Congress room

Illustration 56: Fifth Floor
17575mm + P

0m 5m 10m 20m

29. Meeting rooms
30. Private offices
31. Flex workspace IMSO
32. Congress press room
Results

Illustration 57

Section A

Illustration 58

Section B

18.575 mm²
Illustration 63:
Elevation Kungsträdgårdsgatan

Illustration 64:
Elevation Hamngatan
Illustration 65: Upper facade detailing

Illustration 66: Lower facade detailing
Reflection

The first semester offered the possibility to study the phenomena "identity" and "representation" in architectural context. These notions are far reaching within architecture, but have specifically led me to research the event of globalizing architectural identities and representational aims. It did not take long to find its main cause; capitalism. As architecture represents the social system behind it, it also represents the flaws of that system, which explains why such negative conceptions on the word "globalization" currently prevail. Over the last centuries, capitalism has spread worldwide. The systematic use of architecture has globalized, resulting in countless works of architecture shouting "generator of profit." This happens on several scales; varying from large housing developments to the offices of multinationals. It affects a large number of people worldwide in both positive and negative sense and has thus imposed the question of how to react to such a substantial trend.

In searching for the answer, the capitalist system has been examined. It revealed that the system is currently facing two main challenges; the after-pains of the worst economic meltdown the western world has ever seen, and the threat of an irreversible increase of societal inequalities. Interventions for these dilemma’s merely rely on measures that need to be taken in the financial and political sector, but as these changes affect society at large they need a new architectural representation. The question rose as to what role architecture itself could have in facilitating these multi-disciplinary changes, and in remediating the common negative perceptions of the globalizing capitalist architectural identity. This introduced the desire to design a Global Economy & Trade Center; a building typology in which theoretical economic research meets the actual field practice of the financial market, and its policy making- both local to global.
Both the program of the building, as well as the aimed design solutions embrace theories by the French economist Thomas Piketty concerning the increase of inequalities, as well as the suggestions for theoretical post-economic measures by the Dutch writer Joris Luyendijk. This resulted in the continuously implemented objective of facilitating the exchange of knowledge and skills, as well as creating a transparent and welcoming environment that represents a better monitored capitalist system.

Though this building program and its design aims can be generic for achieving a fairer capitalistic architectural identity, the explicit translation of these aims into the design solutions described throughout this thesis are not, because they are inextricably linked to the site specific problems of Kungsträdgården.

The building of this new Global Economy & Trade Center is designed to act as an important element that is part of society, rather than a heterotopic urban object that represents a misleading image of being immune to societal unrest. Ironically, opposed to rejecting globalization the building celebrates the opportunities that emerge from it, in order to remediate the harm that the capitalist system has done to Kungsträdgården.

So can architecture in fact be remedial? Basically it comes down to the philosophical dilemma of product and maker; Do guns kill people, or do people kill people? The answer seems simple at first; of course people kill people. A gun does not fire by itself. But it should not be underestimated that the gun is a tool that may entice people to murder. An object that has been designed because of a certain urge, and thereby can effectively seduce its user to use it in a certain way. In the context of architecture this is the same. Architecture does not have the power to make policy, just as a gun cannot murder by itself. In that perspective, architecture may sometimes be overrated. However, designed from a certain urge, architecture also is quite able to encourage a certain use. Not the architecture, but the results of that particular usage and the following behavior might in fact be revolutionary. The question whether that makes the architecture itself revolutionary as well, is as unsure as it is subjective. What is sure is that architecture’s capabilities should not be underestimated, nor should they ever be given up on; Toward a remedial architecture.


Part Six...

Sources
Condorcet, N.A. (1796) Outlines of an Historical View of the Progress of the Human Mind.
Foster + Partners (nd.) Hongkong and Shanghai Bank Headquarters.
Foster, N. (1997) About the Hong Kong Shanghai Bank HQ.
Milligan, D. (2010) What’s Wrong with Capitalism?
Ricci, C. (2014) Melbourne is going skyhigh but so are complaints about planning.
• UNESCO (1976) Recommendation concerning the Safeguarding and Contemporary Role of Historic Areas.
• Williams, A. (2013) Shenzhen Stock Exchange by OMA.
• Yamasaki, M. (1973) Remarks at opening ceremonies and dedication of the NY WTC.
• Yardley, J. (2010) Soaring Above India's Poverty, a 27-Story Home
There is a number of people to whom I wish to express my gratitude. This graduation project would not have turned out as it has without their contributions.

My graduation Tutors; Gijs Wallis-de Vries, Wouter Hilhorst, Sjef van Hoof & Rob Willemse, for sharing their valuable thoughts.

My fellow students in this graduation studio; in particular Rob Hopstaken, Wouter Habets & Jeroen Geerards, who helped me see clear, laugh, and progress at times it seemed absolutely impossible.

My study friends; Thijs Frijters, Paul Kersten, Jos van der Linde, Gijs Loomans, Rutger Rouwendal and Geert-Jan Stoop, who have been there since the beginning, and I hope to run into often during our exiting careers.

My brother and sister, from who I learned how to study, and without who’s help during high-school’s biology and IT class I would have never made it to university in the first place.

My dear Michelle, for our inspiring conversations, for traveling the world with me, for her determination to correct my persistent grammar mistakes, for spending days in bookstores and museums with me and for having unconditional faith in my abilities.

And lastly, my parents whom have taught me the values of hard work, and to whom I wish to dedicate this book as the product of all of their wise lessons.