



## Editor's comments, NJAR 2020-1

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# NORDISK ARKITEKTURFORSKNING

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## **EDITORS' NOTES**

**MADELEINE GRANVIK, DANIEL KOCH AND  
MAGNUS RÖNN**

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This mixed issue of the journal is made up of five scientific articles and one review of a dissertation.

Two of the articles discuss architectural competitions in Finland; the author of both of these articles is Tiina Merikoski and they will be included in her dissertation. "Reading the image—Endorsing Co-Creation in Planning Competitions?" deals with the architectural knowledge produced by means of design and visualization, and the need for multidisciplinary design teams in finding solutions to complex tasks. The author identifies a series of gaps in the fundamental understanding of knowledge in the building sector that must be bridged. Merikoski's findings are based on an open, international planning competition in Finland that sought sustainable solutions in a future-oriented context. Both the client and the scholars involved in the competition had high expectations. Design proposals were presented in the form of drawings, illustrations, and graphical diagrams, as is typical in architectural competitions. The competition was organized in line with the tradition of architectural competitions, and experts in other fields had difficulty in reading and understanding the knowledge that was transmitted in the visual material.

The other article by Merikoski, "Seeing Beyond Illustration: Towards Commensurable Competition Proposals," is based on a competition that was staged in the north-west of Finnish Lapland. In this case, a public local planning competition was organized in co-operation with stakeholders. The goal was to find new solutions and concepts for a sustainable tourism resort. The research included developing a method to analyze



the different designs, which framed them as *layers* and set them against each other. The objective was to make credible comparisons of land use, buildings, and road connections. Merikoski's conclusion, following this experiment, is that both the competition tradition—as it is expressed in approved competitions that are organized according to the competition regulations—and design practices needs to be adjusted to better suit the requirements of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The next article returns to architectural history, looking at two very famous architects. The aim of “Aalto Through Young Utzon’s Eyes: The Role of Alvar Aalto in Developing the Artistic Maturity of Jørn Utzon,” written by Chiu Cheng-Yu, Anino Niskanen, and Nur Yıldız Kılınçer, seeks to reconstruct and discuss the relationship between Aalto and Utzon during the late 1940s and the early 1950s, by comparing architectural collections, anecdotal evidence, and interviews with former colleagues. Exploring the nature of the influence of the older Aalto on the young Utzon, the authors take up the example of the famous Sydney Opera House to show how Utzon’s personal interpretation of Aalto’s work is present in his architectural expression.

“Architectural Repertoire and Daylights” is an article by Malin Alenius and Marja Lundgren. The background for their contribution is a 2016 exhibition at the Swedish Architecture and Design Museum. Alenius and Lundgren present five case studies on daylight in architecture. The first case is an urban block from 1919, the design of which was regulated by Sweden’s Building Act of 1874. The second case is from 1952, addressing a revision of the National Building Charter of 1931. The third case represents modern architecture from 1960, using free building heights. The fourth case is from the 1980s, when the building code moved towards a performance-based regulation. The fifth case is from the 2010s, and it focuses on issues of density, which became a strong force in city planning at that time. The authors find the case study methodology useful in developing new architectural knowledge on daylight in relation to environmental control and building regulation.

Ranja Hautamäki is the author of the final article of the issue, “The Encounter Between Manors and the City: Manor Landscapes in Urban Planning in Helsinki.” The article examines the encounter between historical manor landscapes and urban development in Helsinki, from planning, conservation, and management perspectives. Four case studies elucidate the evolution of the manor landscapes from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to the present. The article emphasizes the interaction between conservation, urban planning, and the adaptive reuse of historic environments to support the integrated management of historical landscapes. It contributes to a deeper understanding of landscape heritage in the context of strategic planning and suggests how such landscapes can be meaningfully integrated into urbanized societies.



In the section *Forum*, a separate section reintroduced into the journal in no. 2019-2, we publish one dissertation review in this issue. The chief editors qualify the contributions published in *Forum*—as such, they are not part of the double-blind peer review process used for scientific articles and essays. In this issue, Dr. Marianne Abramsson review a dissertation conducted by Ira Verma at Aalto University in Helsinki, Finland. Verma’s successfully defended PhD thesis, “Housing Design for All? The Challenges of Ageing in Urban Planning and Housing Design—The Case of Helsinki,” demonstrates that architecture and urban design for ageing societies presents challenges not only for the architect profession in Nordic welfare countries, but the whole world.

As editors, we would like to publish many more reviews of dissertations in the journal. We therefore would like supervisors to encourage opponents, external reviewers, and members of examination committees to write reviews. Even if contributions to *Forum* are not considered to constitute scientific contributions, they are activities of great importance for architectural research and for the journal.

