Water management entails management (administration) and use, thus it will be necessary even in the field of water management to formalise use as well (water itself, sediments, property – land, buildings, infrastructure). One of the first steps of the state when dealing with its own property according to principles of good management is the establishment of a comprehensive inventory of sea uses, water rights on the sea and functionally connected land. An important aspect is the implementation of principles of sustainable development and the principle of integral dealing with the sea and continent when planning uses for the coastal area. Functional ties between activities on the sea and those on the continent (e.g. manipulation surfaces for mariculture) or vice versa (e.g. water surfaces for bathing) demand harmonised planning of both.

Building an island was proposed because of activities that are in public interest and can be mutually balanced. The programme of functions can nevertheless be enlarged, with some functions being substituted by others if better sites for them are found elsewhere. We have to emphasise that the island restitutes the former natural condition (from which when even the town Izola got its name), while simultaneously bringing significant benefits.

A spin-off result of the analysis where the established consequences of poorly thought out enforced legal regimes, which demand serious recollection about the future granting of special rights or limiting areas with legal regimes. The article proves that we already have at our disposal tools that can be used as the basis for future planning or permitting of uses in the sea and coastal land, with respect to functional ties between the sea and continent. When preparing water management guidelines they can be used as a state of technique or knowledge of the water management profession, although they are not proscribed as such by law. Using these tools benefit other professions as well, although one would hardly expect the legal profession when preparing legal acts to use engineering tools.

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Illustrations:

Figure 1: *Areas with enforced legal regimes – tied to use of the sea or as pertaining functional areas of permitted uses and continental activities (map TK50 – Surveying office of the Republic of Slovenia; data on regimes – KMTe, FGG).*

Figure 2: *Legal regimes on the sea in the Strunjan Bay – because of shell fish cultivation, access to the coastline by boat is prohibited (map DTK25 – Surveying office of the Republic of Slovenia; other data – KMTe, FGG).*

Figure 3: *Position of the island and legal regimes on the sea – there are very few areas (white) where open access to the sea is possible!*

Figure 4: *Programmes on the island (the recreation and maintenance path around the island is not shown).*

For literature and sources turn to page 12

Fedja KOŠIR

The knot of absurdities

1. Introduction

Professor Ravnikar once wrote an article with the futuristic title Ljubljana in 50 years. In view of the date of publication, those 50 years are almost gone. It was published in a magazine that is also long gone (TT, 04. 11. 1954). Let's take a look at what was most urgent – with it he began the article:

»... How will Ljubljana be ... in 50 years? We don't know that precisely, but surely it will be, and that is simultaneously most pleasing and frightening, what we want it to be. In 50 years it won't change into a beautiful city overnight, if we don't build it every day, even with the most apparently unimportant acts that indirectly in various ways affect its future image.

The aldermen of our city comfort us in the papers that everything will flow better and by itself when the railways issue i.e. the infamous Ljubljana knot, is solved. But will it? Aren't these only ... helpless dreams? After all one who thinks like this, only shows that with an important detail, an extremely complicated entity, which we still haven't fully understood, would be solved.

There are many things, which build the future Ljubljana that, have nothing in common with the railway, but we don't tackle them. They are evident, if one ponders for a while, what we could do although the railway issue isn't resolved and is being dealt with by a separate commission. At the end of the day, we should be attentive that valuable elements of the future Ljubljana won't be ruined because of incompetence ... In 50 years maybe we won't ponder about Figovec, but about the whole city instead...«

Similar ideas follow – this one amongst other:

»... We could immediately take care of many more things, but above all we should approach the »relieving« railway knot in a more intelligent way. The knot won't be solved because of the trains, but because of the people. After all even a railway which is smoothly led where it is not necessary, cannot compensate albeit the bad, that benefits the inhabitants. The railway in Ljubljana is an urban planning problem and should be dealt with accordingly ...«

A special virtue of the article is its mocking irony used to construct some purposely awkward sentences: » ... Although the railway issue hasn't been resolved, and is being dealt with by a special commission...« It was published much before the infamous debates about the underpasses began in daily and professional periodicals (1957/1963). We can observe that even today we can, exactly as Ravnikar did earlier when he eventually got involved in the mess, albeit never independently as a planner or designer, but in cooperation with students, say that in the last 50 years absolutely nothing happened, that could change the issue.

It is an example of true, not even literary nor comical absurdity! Especially because since then, but mainly in the last twenty years, an insurmountable pile of competition projects, supplementary reports and proposals has been gathered, all of which are inadequate and useless. If they could serve any purpose they would have moved the issue from its moorings. Another one would be unnecessary, even maybe one definitely last competition for the Ljubljana railway knot or Passenger centre Ljubljana (PCL 2002). For the last fifty years we have unbelievably incessantly confused by want-to-be phantoms, but still haven't learned anything.

2. Concept

Practise is a merciless measure of theory. On this real example I will emphasise it once again and illustrate it with several recent models, whereby I will describe the reasons that have in my opinion lead this affair into a dead end and are being repeatedly rectified and point out some of the urbanistic characteristics of Ljubljana. The deadlock wouldn't be so hopeless if advise and proposals would have been heard on time, all of which have all along pointed out these characteristics as guidelines for future development of our capital city. I will illustrate these as well.

I will not stir the debates about the underpasses – spilled milk. The underpasses weren't the fatal decision, as could be read in the documentation for the last competition, but (simply) the wrong one. However the meritorious and distinguished that took it (at the expense of the community) are even today meritorious and distinguished and dealt with very gently. Apparently even when another 50 years pass the circumstances won't be very different, except for the meritorious and distinguished, they will be different, albeit of the same colour.

After all Ljubljana is different than Lille. We are suspicious whether what they will surely manage to achieve there, would work here. The TGV was given a completely new route. Lille lies in the centre of the triangle of metropolis Brussels–London–Paris. Even examples from Germany, about which I will write later, are different. In fact, all these urban agglomerations are wealthier than Ljubljana. So be it. Apparently even after another fifty years, it won't be different.

Or maybe not? Despite the numerous proposals for the railway knot presented so far, until this day we still haven't said anything honest, smart or modern. We should build on what is typical and nevertheless established and with relatively high quality, especially in the last period of the city's growth.

What is most typical for Ljubljana? The nineteenth century left us a legacy of a rational orthogonal road network in the city centre. It is mastered by a cross motif of two fantastic longitudinal views. The first one opens along Miklošičeva Street and ends in the left bell tower of the Franciscan Church, the second ties the Tivoli Castle and right bell tower. In reality we don't know whom to praise for this undoubtedly majestic urbanistic concept. Fabiani is not the man. It was given to him, so to speak, in his lap.

Furthermore, Ljubljana is after all the country's capital city – the consequence is inherent, it's symbolic is almost compulsory. That is why we should have (as should every capital city aware of the fact) a terminal railway station. In Germany even provincial capitals have them. The reason why it wasn't built so far is evidently simple and speaks for itself: neither in the former Yugoslavian monarchy nor the recent federation was Ljubljana seen as a capital city, but instead as the seat of the province or one of the Republics. If the railway station remains a transit node, as it is today, it won't represent a state, but province. Just like Lichtenstein: Vaduz doesn't even have one. The nearest stations are in Schaan or Feldkirch (both in Austria). Anyway, *ce sera sera*. If not, so be it. Then we will exclaim, as general Golz did in the Spanish civil war (For Whom the Bell Tolls, 1940): »... *Bon. Nous ferons notre petit possible...*«

The fate of Ljubljana's railway station is at present cast by two planning documents: the development plan and the technological project of the new knot. Both earned rather cynical commentaries in the competition project, namely »after reviewing both hefty products we can only establish that there are no issues that haven't been (very) rigidly addressed...« The commentator unfortunately didn't state, whether the answers were correct (i.e. useful).

The obvious reserve isn't surprising. Mušič's project was in fact with substantial assistance once accepted and adopted with such a spontaneous applause that a well-known historian and art critic wrote about the plan »... in it we have to see one of the most important urban planning acts of several decades, since with it century old problems brought to Ljubljana with the railway will be resolved... and be convinced that certain problems, seen until recently as unsolvable, would be resolved in their own stride...« (Krečič 1983). In view of such typical socialist zeal today we can already establish that these problems weren't resolved and that the project was stillborn, mainly because of three reasons: its megalomania, technological problems, but also over-design.

Typologically it was an example of a hybrid functionalistic mega-structure. When presented (1978/1979), these design principles were already on their death bed, therefore the proposal, if the author would have been more sensitive to new trends, could have been the first example of a post-modern architectural concept – but even such endeavour would probably be pointless. Under pressure by the post-modern atmosphere our critical elite defined his personal artistic expressions as »culturalistic«, only proving its poor theoretical orientation.

The most significant technological problems of the mentioned development plan are de-nivelation (split levels) and de-concentration.

The problem of de-nivelation is most clearly illustrated with the trivial saying: »with suitcases up, with suitcases down«. The axis of Miklošičeva Street is overly emphasised – in reality it doesn't have any logical continuation on the North side. This street has always been (and will remain) a link between the railway station and the city centre because it is completed with typical shopping streets and passages crossing running across (Knafelj passage, Nazorjeva Street etc.). Even a park designed with several levels by the (former) Titova Street is nothing but a misconception: a pasture where a square should be.

The second obvious mishap is de-concentration of traffic (especially inner city traffic): in the plan the railway station is truly poorly tied to the system of collective passenger trans-

port (serviced by buses); with the new concept, whereby this role will be taken over by a light rail system, there is no logical connection between one type of transport to the other.

And finally: such an exceptionally design oriented mastodon cannot be built in phases; any partial solution would appear desperately improvised.

One of the public reactions to all the stated problems was the project presented by architect Grega Košak (2000/2001). The author coined his alternative plan as an »urban city stitch«. The main difference from Mušič's solution is that it is less personal and much richer in programme, a correct observation since Košak dealt with a much wider area. The routes and levels of the railway tracks weren't touched. They were however covered with artificial surfaces covering all available surfaces, if the railway company would (also) agree. It is a clone of the solutions presented by Meinhard von Gerkan (1993/1996) on initiative by the German state railway (Deutsche Bahn). Here the difference is in architectural scale. Von Gerkan still designs his projects with consistent post-modern mannerism. Košak solves the problem with monotonous serial addition, similar to the composition approach of the famous Dutch architectural van den Broek and Bakema: a substantial investment endeavour for relatively conventional artistic effect. In view of the programme it is still over-determined and »de-concentrated« to cover all the vacant surfaces, that are, as can be clearly seen, too many!

Therefore it isn't excessive if we look into the way in which Meinhard von Gerkan deals with the issues in three cities: Stuttgart (1993), Munich (1995) and Frankfurt (1996). The commentary is taken from a presentation by Hans-Eckhard Lindemann, Stadt im Quadrat (Bauwelt Fundamente, 121, 1999). Comparison is surely interesting – and for us utterly unpleasant. German professional critique justly evaluated the proposals as very positive:
- they integrate very harmoniously into the exceptionally mosaic structures of traditional urban landscapes;
- the land can be subdivided into plots, which can be sold as building plots of varying size;
- programmes are neutral and suited for any content (from public functions to housing);
- a diverse span of architectural particularities pertaining to various authors is enabled
- they can be built in phases.

In short: *Es sind zukunftoffene, robuste Konzepte im besten Sinne ...*

All these features are totally unachievable in Ljubljana's circumstances. Numbers give proof: the three cities are centres of very intensely settled regions (with concentrations exceeding several million inhabitants). Frankfurt functions as the third largest airport in Europe, an expansive river port, international stock exchange and a financial centre. Stuttgart and Munich have, if nothing else, a globally renowned industrial tradition (everybody has heard of BMW or Mercedes). The railway station in Frankfurt dispatches 1.500, Stuttgart 1.000 and Munich 800 trains per day.

And us? Industry is collapsing. The banks will be given away. The population (in the city) is decreasing, which is not an indicator of our love of nature and the flight to the countryside, but the true and undeniable proof decreasing birth rates and diminishing work force of adult Slovenians (who already don't have enough critical mass to enable real parliamentary democracy or to adequately and professionally restore Ljubljana's most important fountain). However it seems that nobody is really worried about such state of affairs, but we rather daydream about some phantasm. Thus when somebody speaks about the quality of life in this context, or even with more wisdom, about the quality of existence, one proves that one doesn't have a clue about the subject and what kind of perseverance is needed to reach it.

3. Traffic

Lets delve into real issues! I will deal with the traffic problem, probably a must after the presented smattering on urban planning, problems of function, programme, whereby the most interesting question is, what does in fact define it, and finally, the *forma urbis*, that could theoretically be the resultant of both considerations.

Questions about traffic in Ljubljana were raised on numerous occasions. The last one was the public hearing about the municipality's physical development concept (2001/2002). Here five systems intertwine:
- international railway (TGV and national or normal intercity);
- the highway ring (part of the international network);
- city streets for automobiles, also forming a ring;
- public transit (where buses appear as the mainstay and classical mode and light rail relieving pressure on buses as the pre- and post-classical mode);
- cycling and pedestrian traffic.

The problem exceeds the topic (PCL), but since it continuously and decisively affects the logic of its rationale, I will analyse it *in extenso*.

Guidelines for proposals about the traffic arrangement have been so far rather technical (mode of transport, number of vehicles, traffic statistics etc.). I will assume a different viewpoint: how did the network evolve in time (as seen on old and new maps).

Medieval circumstances are well manifested in Austrian military maps, which were produced between 1763 and 1787 (the oldest accurate and comprehensive evidences about Slovenian territory). Ljubljana is the core, positioned in the strategic gravity centre. Surrounding villages are logically positioned on edges where agricultural surfaces in the plain meet with forested hills or riverbank groves. Roads following the dykes or forest edges on the plain link them. There are only four (relatively straight) exceptions: the »provincial roads« (to Graz, Trieste, Klagenfurt and Karlovac), in fact built in Roman times. The fifth »access road« running from the medieval core to Zalog, was used for carrying freight to Croatia, as put in the protocol: *»... Die Waren, welche von Triest ... nach Croatien entlangst der Sau geschafet werden, werden ... in einer Arth kleine Fahrzeuge beladen und so transportiret bis Zalog ...«*. The physiognomy of the countryside was therefore mainly formed by a feudal agrarian economy. It is still a subject of admiration, although it cannot and will not be able to sustain dignified existence. The stated logic can in principal be applied even to Northern areas along the Sava River or the Southern marshes.

The system of village paths and commercial roads was maintained without dramatic changes until the mid-nineteenth century. With the industrial revolution and advent of

the railway it lost in significance and gradually collapsed. The central position of the city and access roads prevailed completely thus also decisively affecting suburban development. Thus the prominent five-pronged star pattern of suburbs was formed around the traditional gravitational core, to which were added (mostly after the earthquake in 1895) separate blocks (*insula*) on the remaining vacant surfaces according to the principles of orthogonal grids.

A ring of tangential roads enclosed the city core. Typically the ring is becoming wider. Fabiani planned the first one (1895). In the mid-nineteenth century it included the Masarykova, Prešernova and Aškerčeva Street and tunnel below the Castle hill. Later it was extended northwards to Celovška, Drenikova and Topniška Street unto Roška Street. The concept was adequate for the late nineteenth century, but today for obvious reasons cannot cope with the pressure of individual car traffic of the late twentyeth century. Thus the recently built highway ring with four main access routes (towards Notranjska, Dolenjska, Štajerska, and Gorenjska) and a fifth one towards Trzin, Mengeš and Domžale (being built under severe pressure and incompletely because construction of the highway to Štajerska is proceeding very slowly).

The ring of tangent roads around the city centre and highway ring only appear coordinated. The highway ring does carry transit traffic, thus releiving the city centre... OK, but unfortunately that is not enough; it should also provide adequate feeding. This is why relief doesn't only apply to traffic, which is not negative, but also to content – which could have been expected, but wasn't. The postal centre, until then always a part of the railway entity, was quickly moved to the South, to Barje. The traditional city centre literally and phenomenally lost a large part or even most of its traditional attractions. This is also the reason for the unimaginable shock when the BTC shopping and leisure centre ballooned (an efficient competitor or maybe even temporary alternative commercial gravity centre of the whole city). At the end of the day, we will maybe get the precise kind of Eurolille that we deserve: truly in our own scale.

The recently completed highway ring doesn't (yet) have its own physiognomy, which could be provided by urbanistically well-balanced architecture. We can perceive that it attracts larger contents, which exceed ordinary human or so called urban scale, such as industrial areas, shopping centres, leisure and sports complexes etc. (as well as communal refuse dump and graveyard).

The main issue in the city's road network for individual or collective traffic is its hierarchy, independent of the highway ring. As said earlier, the systems aren't (schematically) geometrically coordinated, but only overlap, which isn't really a malady. The highways are where they are, while the urban roads network should conform to the nature of the city's geomorphologic characteristics. Golovec and Rožnik act as green wedges and divide the city's territory into two structurally very different parts: the marshes (Barje) and fields (Polje). Only in the South does the city end with the highway, while in the North it will soon be the Sava River – meaning that the city territory already significantly exceeds the limits of the highway ring. The only constant, functioning since time immemorial as a traffic route, is the line of the main road (Slovenska and Dunajska Street), an ancient Roman road, which are town planners often don't know what to deal with. Once it is the main traffic route for cars, then again as a pedestrian surface (or wide tree-lined alley) devoid of traffic.

The pedestrian should surely be given the advantage: the pedestrian as a *flaneur*, cyclist or passenger (using public transport). Then come the taxis and private cars, which doesn't imply their expulsion from the system.

4. Programme

The programme should be dealt with more flexibly, similar to findings in deconstructivist theoretical discourse. Function, the fetish driving modernism to absurdity, is nowadays viewed from a critical distance. In reality architecture isn't determined by function. On the contrary, architecture itself and only architecture can really enable various changes in use. This is why it should define masses adequate to the site, what they should contain is a matter of later choice and decision by day-to-day life (or if put poetically: time). We all know that old palaces were built for living and showing off aristocratic strata. After the aristocracy was dethroned they were used for all kinds of functions: schools, prisons, institutions for the insane, housing for the poor etc. Today they are again museums or galleries.

In short: architecture determines volumes into which one can place almost anything – functionalist zealots can turn in their graves as much as they like.

Concerning urban form (forma urbis), whatever that means, I will allow myelf to construct an organon, as Brecht would put it: a description of principles and tasks that are an alternative for both vital traditionalism and moribund functionalism. Today we have a much wider spectre of possibilities, than offered yesterday by missionary postmodernism. The example of La Villette is very educational: Leo Krier (1976) versus Bernard Tschumi (1982). Or: postmodernism versus deconstructivism – so yet another analysis *in extenso*.

Instead of normative mimetics, clinging to recipes in the name of traditional architectural values, the decostructivist theory actually and not only rethorically asks itself a metaphorical question about fundamental issues of urban and architectural design, whereby it intentionally gives relativity to three traditional starting points or »eternal truths«:
- the absoluteness of the vertical and horisontal,
- the singular value of the right angle (in layouts, sections and elevations),
- the dictate of traditional architectural volume, disected into the elementary Hegelian triade point–line–plain (as a dynamic picture).

The reference is in basic concepts from exact mathematics, similarly as Piet Hein stated when he constructed the supercircle: the zigzagging edge and infinite loop. Both are interesting design alternatives to the »strip«: the first forms a rigid geometry and the other a softer one. Today both are subject to experimenting (in theory and practice).

With the task at hand, how to design a railway station's architecture, to make it legible and understandable or maybe even audibly symbolic at first glance, a short discourse on certain essential dimensions of the development of contemporary traditionalist and functionalist building is useful.

The modern era put on architecture's agenda a special problem: a roof over very expansive, theoretically even infinite halls. These aren't classical halls provided in theaters, library reading rooms or chambers in parliaments,

but roofs and vaults over truly new programmes, engineering products of the industrial revolution: membranes over large single-floor production spaces, exhibition halls for attractive products and transport engines (railway stations for example).

In traditional architecture the problem of covering larger dimensions was solved with basilical structures, domes or additively, even with the so called shed roof. Functionalism offered an extremely unconventional array of rather interesting constructions: from frames, wrinkled plates, shells and nets to membranes hanging from cables and finally pneumatic structures.

Typologically speaking railway station complexes are unusually interesting. Their architectural layout usually consists of two parts. They are the portal (gateway) and tier unit: the tiers are most often covered with a large uniform roof in front of which is the portal unit used for office space and the entrance hall (for passengers). After short recollection we find that Venturi dealt with the same question when commenting the Decorated shed in Las Vegas. The portal building, functioning as a relay (interface between the street and railway or road and railway traffic), has on the wider front a perforated or transitory fasade, often with a shed. Railway stations are therefore truly composed of three functional links: the shed, ticket booths and tiers. The tiers are most often covered with a glass roof, while the sheds assume any form, built either as classical collonaded stoas or cantilever plates hanging on cables.

As Pevsner observed (as early as 1976), planners and designers of railway stations are attracted to the problem of designing archec over tiers, whetehr the building itself should hide or emphasise them. A portal (terminal) building is then either axially symetrical in an orthodox, classist fashion or asymetrically balanced bynom of vertical and horisontal masses. In traditionalist symetrical layouts the arch can manifest itself on the main fasade as a symbolic triumphal arch motif, while zealots of modernism, apparently the Italians were most ardent, would scrap it alltogether. Sant'Elia came up with such a scheme in Milano (1914), causing the main railway stations in Florence and Rome not to have one; for everybody who saw the film Stazione Termini directed by DeSica (1953) this is common knowledge. The railway station in Helsinki (1904/1914) is elegantlly asymetrical, whereby the elder Saarinen, inspired by Flemish city halls, added a clock tower to its seccesionist main fasade.

Anyway, today when aspiring to non-traditional and non-conventional architectural expression, one has three possibilities. One can root for High Tech à la Norman Foster or Richard Rogers, constructional mastery à la Renzo Piano or Santiago Calatrava or for shocking exhibitionism à la Michael Graves.

When speaking about Graves, a digression in a digression is not excessive. The Bilbao ideal can fascinate many uncritical hill-billies. What world-class architecture have the, until recently utterly anonymous Basks, come up with! And if they did it, then we should as well – a possibility that can become flesh very soon: although in our case we would be importing third class foreign goods. For the Basks products of non-Spanish international architects are a logical manifestation of autonomism ... if I'm challenged to point out the true meaning of these unique monuments.

5. Conclusion

So what could the area's urbanistic and architectural composition dealt with be like? The proposal isn't a rapport with the valid development plan, a stillborn child right from the start of its adoption, but one of the possible alternatives for an urban stitch (resplendent in its good will, without knowing how to tackle the problem in reality). These are not pessimistic prophecies, but well intended warnings.

In a manifestatively Laconic way I will summarise them:

a. The starting point should be the ideal entity of the metropolitan region or unique logical entity of the city to which all traffic networks of all users should adapt (from the railway and motor car to pedestrians).
b. A capital city, aspiring to be a real one, needs a terminal railway station that will be as simply as possible connected to the city's traffic network; this is not only a symbolic solution, but also an econimically viable one.
c. Anachronistic advocating of deepening would be hopeless and truly outdated. Simple abandonment of railway tracks seen as obstacles is not uninteresting. Fantastically precious commercial surfaces could be unleashed (if the railway company marketed them they could earn much more in the long run, than if they sell only the edge of Vilharjeva Street).
d. The only logical and simple connection of all traffic regimes into a »natural« comfortable entity is one, which gives pedestrians the surface of the squares and pavements on the level of the tiers.
e. Urban transit traffic runs above this level, while standard car and bus traffic runs below it (on existing ramps of the underpasses). All particular traffic modes need space without obstacles.
f. The railway station and central light rail station could thus be logically and simply integrated. The light rail connects all areas from Kamnik to Vrhnika (and not only Domžale and Brezovica) and from Medvode to Stična (and not only Šentvid to Fužine).
g. More than enough parking spaces could be gained in the subterranean floors (where the bus terminal should also be) – not only for the railway station, but also functions in the neighbourhood, making them as attractive as the railway wants them to be.
h. The long straight bridge, a traffic backbone and leading motif, running above the tiers from East to West isn't intended only for pedestrians. It has in fact the capability of accommodating cyclists as well. On one side it can end in an interesting recreation or leisure centre and in the hospital centre on the other.
i. The whole area needs a relatively uniform height, without endangering its design or programmes. There is no need for volumes to jut out (such as in Eurolille): even without them enough space can be gained.

These points are very short, which doesn't mean that I am light-heartedly challenging the issues put before us on the agenda. It seems that they will in reality remain there for a long time – so long that one cannot remain silent.

Dixi et salvavi animam meam

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Illustrations:
For sources and literature turn to page 21