

INVESTORENARCHITEKTUR or (UN-)HAPPY MARRIAGE OF REAL ESTATE AND ARCHITECTURE

Paulus van der Kuil | FG Planning & Construction Economics – Real Estate | PHD Panel ERES Conference 2022



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About Paulus van der Kuil

1976	Rotterdam
2001	Architecture TU Delft, ir. / MSc.

2010 Real Estate Management TU Berlin/ MSc.

2001 - 2006	Residential Development - NL
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2006 - 2016 Residential Investment Management – DE/ FR/ SE/ DK/ NO/ LU/ ES

2016 – 2022	TU Berlin – (guest) Lecturer Real Estate Finance & Interdisciplinary Projects
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2017 - 2022 Campus El Gouna, TU Berlin, El Gouna (Egypt) & Berlin

Lecturer Real Estate & Interdisciplinary Projects, PhD Candidate

2022 – 2023 TU Berlin – Institute of Architecture - Chair of Real Estate (Prof. Dr. Wellner)

Research Associate, PhD Candidate

Languages Dutch, English (C2), German (C2), Italian (B2/B1), French (A2)



Introduction to the (un)happy marriage





Research Question

FAZ Sonntag/ 27-04-2017

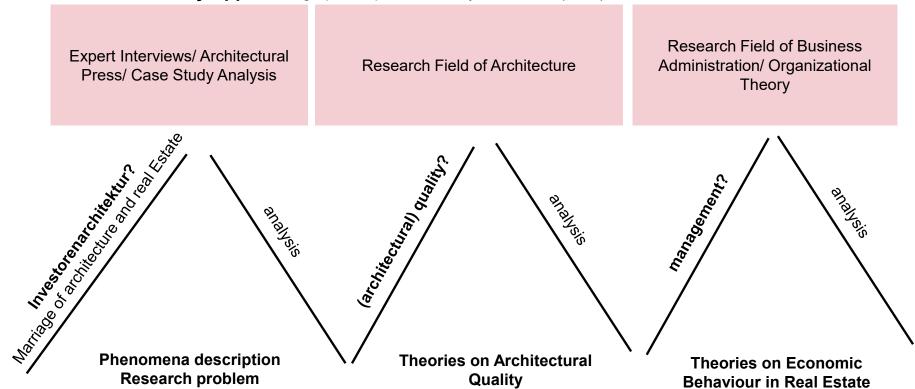
Oberhuber: why is it necessary that everywhere appear the same sad building blocks?





Methodology and Research Steps

Grounded Theory Approach graph adapted from Mey and Mruck (2011)





(preliminary) Data Analysis Result

Phenomena Description

- Language problem
- Asymmetry of knowledge and interest
- Principal agent conflict
- Unclarity in concept of architectural quality

Theories on architectural quality

- Architectural aspiration is an essential quality in Architecture
- Architectural quality is a transcendental of type quality
- Architectural quality is depending on the exchange between designer (architect) and client

Theories on economic behaviour in Real Estate

- Choices on architectural quality depend on managers' discretion
- Architectural does not require additional financial investment
- Architectural exchange is in jeopardy with principal agent conflicts



(preliminary) Conclusions

Two clustered concepts out of staged data coding.

Cluster 01 Quality in Architecture

Architecture is "aspirational" (Scruton et al, 2020), an "essentially contested concept" (Rönn, 2011) that thrives on exchange of thoughts with users (De Ru in Hulsman, 2021). It is a form of "social art" (Cuff,1993). Architectural quality is a transcendental type of quality, "it cannot be defined precisely, [...] it is an unanalysable property we learn to recognize only through experience" (Garvin, 1988). The valuation of architectural quality therefore is depending on a continuing exchange between the designer (architect) users and client.



(preliminary) Conclusions

Cluster 02 Economic Behaviour in Real Estate

Economic behaviour in real estate can be best understood in the light of **new institutional economics**, more specifically **transaction costs economics**. "A common characteristic [...] is that
the concept of the firm as production function is augmented by the concept of firm as governance
structure" (Williamson, 1985). Real Estate managers are operating within a complex network of
internal and external (contractual) **relations** that need **to be managed towards the achievement of the economic objective of real estate; an exploitation that produces a positive return on investment**. Non economic issues depend on manager's discretion but are obstructed by **principal agent conflicts**, or the **supposed existence** of those.



(preliminary) Thesis to be defended

- The objective of architectural design is to fulfil the practical needs of and represent aspirations of societies (Scruton et al, 2020).
- Urban design and architecture are essentially contested concepts (Rönn, 2011) and forms of social art (Cuff, 1993).
- The quality thrives on reflection and exchange of thoughts with users (De Ru in Hulsman, 2021).
- In Real Estate direct exchange with users is absent, Real Estate instrumentalises architecture and urban design for purpose of financial return.
- The exchange on aspirational objective of architecture is from an economic and technical point of view not necessary and easy to be jumped in the design process.
- The power imbalance of stakeholders involved enhances this (McGlynn, 1993). The "aspirational exchange" is obstructed by principal agent conflicts and obscured by managers' discretion (Williamson, 1986).
- The building is nevertheless constructed but the architecture remains poor.



Closing Remarks (outside PhD research)

What can ESG do in this?

Especially social and governance considerations could ignite a substantial change. But requires architectural training and sensibilisation of real estate professionals.

What about architects?

They need training in value creation and less in costs calculation.

How can architectural quality be managed in the real estate organization?

Engage with the architect, but find a competent one. Formulate your aspirations.

Last but not least:

➤ I am soon looking for an academic teaching and research job in the EU! ☺

Thank you!



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Thank you