

Review Article

The Hannes Meyer Seminars at the Bauhaus Dessau (1980–1986) as a Contact Zone for Finnish and East German Architects

Torsten Lange

Late-socialist East Germany may not be the first place that springs to mind when thinking of either international architectural competitions or contact zones. This is hardly surprising. Politically and diplomatically isolated during the formative years of the Cold War, the country strove to build international relations after its recognition in 1973.¹ Prior to that, the 1956 architectural competition for the Fennpfuhl area in East Berlin – won by Ernst May from Hamburg – was the last to cut across the East-West divide, which was to become literally cemented four years later, in August 1961. But did that mean that there was no contact between East German architects and their colleagues abroad?

According to the East German architectural theorist Bruno Flierl, the relative sense of isolation was primarily a result of the tightly confined space of public discourse. Discussion of international projects, especially those by architects from the West, usually had to be kept to a minimum both in mainstream architectural media and professional debates.² That is not to say that architects had no access to these projects. Quite the opposite. Most research and university libraries as well as nationally-owned construction enterprises subscribed to a range of international professional journals and held copies of relevant books. But mostly, ideas were received second hand, in mediated form. Direct contact and exchange remained a rare occurrence, despite the trips to East Germany of such influential

figures as Aldo Rossi and Carlo Aymonino in 1961, Richard Neutra in 1967, or Konrad Wachsmann in 1978.

At the same time, East German architects' ability to travel freely was seriously hampered (in contrast to functionaries, sportsmen and artists), preventing them from visiting buildings as part of their education – a fact that Flierl links to the profession's increasing proletarianisation and the poor recognition of its cultural contribution. He remarks:

Between Moscow and Prague, Leningrad and Tbilisi, GDR urban planners and architects knew almost everything that was of any interest for them. Yet, with few exceptions, they saw neither Paris nor London, Sienna nor Barcelona, least of all New York or Chicago. They were not even in Munich or Hamburg.³

Flierl's list of places admittedly reproduces a centre-periphery logic that we should treat with caution today. Recent research has uncovered the extent to which architects from socialist countries were involved in construction projects in Asia, the Middle East and Africa, thus highlighting the significance of the 'Third World' as a space for transnational exchange in the second half of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, the fact remains that such instances of contact remained the exception rather than the norm.⁴

Prompted by this special issue's theme, the following article discusses a particular and little-known contact zone within the GDR itself: the Hannes Meyer Seminars held annually between 1980 and 1986 at the newly restored Bauhaus building in Dessau. Stressing mutual exchange and collaboration, these intensive week-long seminars had the character of a design charrette more than an architectural competition. Their goal was to adapt industrialised housing to urban contexts, by developing new residential and mixed-use building types for historic cities. Typically, about forty planners and architects worked in small teams, assisted by technical and economic consultants. Different local stakeholders such as representatives of the public administration or construction industry were also present. The resulting proposals, while identifying potentials, had to remain technically and economically feasible to ensure their implementation by local district construction offices. They sought to instil debate, especially among decision-makers.

Through the participation of Finnish architects in three successive years from 1982 to 1985, the design seminars developed into a site for the transfer of ideas.⁵ As East German architecture – mass housing, in particular – underwent a crisis, Finland seemed not only to offer a more humane modernism along with the technology and expertise to develop variable building solutions, it also was perceived as not ideologically opposed to socialism. The Hannes Meyer Seminars paved the way for further design workshops that hosted mixed teams of architects and industrial designers from such countries as the Netherlands, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Finland, Sweden, Luxembourg and West Germany.⁶ For their younger participants – most of them advanced architecture students at the College for Architecture and Civil Engineering (HAB, *Hochschule für Architektur und Bauwesen*) in Weimar – the seminars also became a place to test concepts that were later submitted to international competitions such as the UIA Young Architects'

Award, where East German entries received several prizes.⁷ The Finnish architects, funded by their professional association as well as industry partners, likewise took their designs to the technical detailing stage (with the assistance of students), and presented them not only to international audiences at the Leipzig trade fair, but also in the national architectural press.⁸

Establishing common ground

Scant information has survived about the origins, aims and composition of the first two design seminars in 1980 and 1981. While the inaugural workshop was organised by Joachim Stahr, professor of housing design at HAB Weimar, the second iteration was led by Joachim Bach, professor of town planning in the same department. In both cases the goal was to develop new housing solutions for the city of Dessau. The broader aim was thus to actively engage with the local context by proposing alternatives to construction projects overseen by the municipal planning and regional district construction offices. The 1980 seminar, for example, strongly criticised a new satellite district southwest of the historic centre – the largest in Dessau, comprising 2 400 residential units. Building on this critique, the following summer's design workshop argued for intensified land use in the historic city centre, thus continuing to challenge established principles of the socialist leadership's mass housing programme. While bureaucrats and construction officials alike recognised the high standard of the results of these two seminars, they nonetheless dismissed them as 'unfeasible'.⁹

This didn't change significantly when Bernd Grönwald, professor of architectural theory and director of the Architecture Department at HAB Weimar, became responsible for the coordination of the Hannes Meyer Seminars in 1982. An advocate not only of utilising the Bauhaus building following its restoration in 1976,¹⁰ but also of updating the school's legacy in line with



Fig. 1: Cover page of the design portfolio 'Musterhäuser für Ergänzungsbauten Muldvorstadt/Dessau' (Model houses for infill building Muldvorstadt/Dessau), third Hannes Meyer Seminar, Bauhaus Dessau, May 1982. Source: Pertti Solla.

present-day material conditions and qualitative problems of design, Grönwald was appointed in 1981 to oversee the establishment of the Bauhaus Dessau as a centre for design with subdivisions for architecture and town planning, industrial and environmental design, fine arts, culture and media, as well as research and collection.¹¹ The centre's objectives were, among others, to improve the aesthetic quality of the city as a whole, to elevate East German construction to the international state of the art, including the use of CAD/CAM, and to increase designers' competitiveness by promoting experimentation and innovation.

Grönwald believed that fostering transnational dialogue was the best way to achieve these goals. For that reason, he invited the Finnish architects Pertti Solla, Jaako Laapotti and Eero Valjakka to participate in the third design seminar, which sought to develop new urban housing models based on industrialised building systems. All three had contributed to prestigious Finnish welfare state projects over the course of the 1960s and 1970s, and through this work were familiar with industrialised construction.¹² Working in Aarne Ervi's studio, Solla was among the architects who designed the commercial and cultural infrastructures in the Tapiola garden city. Valjakka, along with Simo Järvinen, was the architect of the award-winning Olari housing district (1969–73) in Espoo. Laapotti also specialised in housing, and held the Chair for Housing Design at the Technical University Helsinki for nearly two decades from 1975. Prior to that, he had been involved in the production of the Finnish Association of Architects' (SAFA, *Suomen Arkkitehtiliitto*) report on the lack of adequate housing, which had formed the basis for the parliament's so-called half-million programme of 1966.¹³

Their experience aside, what secured these architects' involvement in the Bauhaus Dessau exchanges until 1989 was an agreement for scientific and technological cooperation that Finland

and the GDR had signed in 1976.¹⁴ This agreement established relationships between various chairs at the Technical Universities of Tampere and Helsinki and the HAB Weimar – among them Fred Staufenbiel's Chair of Urban Sociology, Bach's Chair of Town Planning, Stahr's Chair of Housing Design, and, not least, Grönwald's Chair of Architectural Theory. The partnership began with a symposium on 'way of life and living standards: housing and the living environment' held in Weimar in 1979.¹⁵ This was accompanied by an exhibition featuring Finnish residential and interior design.¹⁶

The discovery of Finnish design resonated with the revision of modernism under way in East Germany, as it seemed to offer an alternative to the forbidding rationality and productivist logic of German functionalism. According to Grönwald, the problem of mass production that was so central to modernist discourse had largely been solved, but economic concerns continued to influence creative thinking, calling for a reorientation of architecture and design towards individual needs and greater quality.¹⁷ In addition, the analyses of living standards by social scientists in Finland and the GDR equally highlighted parallels between the countries, especially with regard to the larger socio-economic challenges faced by developed industrial societies: urbanisation, the improvement of infrastructures and the quality of the residential environment.

Lastly, among architects and planners on both sides there appeared to be great openness, even affinity. Many Finnish practitioners identified as left-wing, and believed that 'all social issues are ultimately related to a political struggle for power', and that 'in the socialist countries the political power of the working class has provided planning and architecture with unforeseen prospects'.¹⁸ While helpful as a basis for cooperation, Finland and East Germany also sought to strengthen their cultural and economic relations beyond mere affinities.



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

Fig. 2: Kurt Lembcke, Pertti Solla, Eero Valjakka and Bernd Grönwald (from left) during the third Hannes Meyer Seminar, Bauhaus Dessau, May 1982. Source: Bernd Grönwald, 'Architekturfortschritt heute und für morgen', *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der HAB Weimar* 29, no. 5/6 (1983).

Fig. 3: CAD/CAM suite at the Bauhaus Dessau, 1987. Source: BArch DH 1/36110



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

Fig. 4: Cover of *Finnischer Wohnungsbau*, 1979.

Fig. 5: Page showing tableware from *Wohnumwelt Finnland*, 1979.



Fig. 6

MUSTERHÄUSER II ERGÄNZUNGSBAUTEN IM MITTELALTERLICHEN ZENTRUM VON ERFURT

Als WZJ-Arbeit zwischen Finnland und der DDR ausgearbeitete Vorschläge der finnischen Teilnehmer am 4. Hannes-Meyer-Seminar im Bauhaus zu Dessau, Juni 1984
Ausgearbeitet mit technischen und materialökonomischen Daten in Zusammenarbeit mit der Fa. Oy Partek Ab.

VORBEREITUNG UND PLANUNG der Musterhäuser im mittelalterlichen Zentrum von Erfurt
Leitung des Gesamtprojekts: Pertti Solla, Architekt SAFA
Planung der Musterhäuser: Jaakko Lapotli, Architekt SAFA, Professor für Wohnungsbau an der TH Helsinki
Pertti Solla, Architekt SAFA
Eero Vajjakka, Architekt SAFA

An der Ausarbeitung der Vorschläge waren außerdem folgende Studenten der TH Helsinki beteiligt: Sata Rjöcklund, Eda Davidodottir, Firkko Eskola, Timo Jeskaren, Teo Kollar, Markku Luopajarvi, Tuula Lind, Siniikka Maurinmäki, Dilla Nohola und Tiina Rasi sowie die Architekten Leo Mitronen und Rurik Vassantjerka.

VORBEREITUNG UND AUSARBEITUNG der technischen und materialökonomischen Daten und Ausführungspläne des Beispielobjekts
Leitung der Vorbereitungen und Ausarbeitung: Kai Laikko, Technischer Leiter der Zentrale Engineering Division unter Hilfe von Projektleiter Martti Vuolilainen, beide von der Fa. Oy Partek Ab.
Ausarbeitung der technischen Daten: Rie Fallström, Ingenieurbüro Magnus Hainberg

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SEILAGE: Zusammenfassung des BES-Bausystems erarbeitet aus der von Zentralverband der finnischen Betonindustrie herausgegebenen Schrift "NKS - Untersuchungen zur Entwicklung eines offenen Baulelement-Systems" (1970). Detaillierte Herdferntigungen gibt das Institut für Bauforschung, Helsinki heraus.

ÜBERSETZUNGEN: Gisbert Jänicke, Helsinki

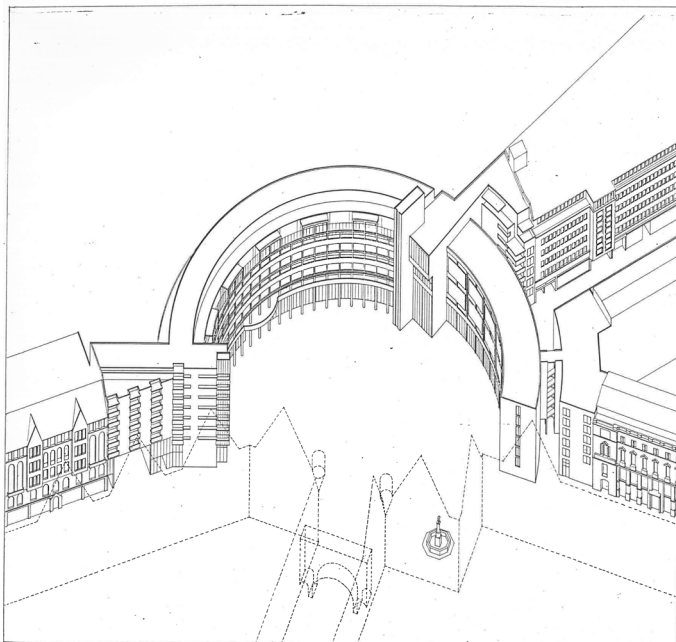


Fig. 7

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MUSTERHÄUSER III ERGÄNZUNGSBAUTEN IM HISTORISCHEN STADTKERN VON LEIPZIG FÜR BURG-PLATZ UND PETERSSTRASSE

In Finnland bearbeitete Vorschläge der finnischen Teilnehmer für das 5. Hannes-Meyer-Seminar Mai/Juni 1985

Burg-Platz
AKSONOMETRIE VOM KATHAUSTURM AUS GEGEHEN

Fig. 6: Cover page of the design portfolio 'Musterhäuser II – Ergänzungsbauten im mittelalterlichen Zentrum von Erfurt' (Model houses II – buildings in the medieval centre of Erfurt), fourth Hannes Meyer Seminar, Bauhaus Dessau, June 1984. Source: Pertti Solla.

Fig. 7: Cover page of the design portfolio 'Musterhäuser III – Ergänzungsbauten im historischen Zentrum von Leipzig' (Model houses III – buildings in the historic centre of Leipzig), fifth Hannes Meyer Seminar, Bauhaus Dessau, May/June 1985. Source: Pertti Solla.

As early as 1955, Finland had become a regular participant in the above-mentioned Leipzig trade fairs. Contacts in architecture and construction can be traced back roughly to the same time, but remained isolated attempts until the end of the 1960s, when formal cooperation between the Finnish and East German architects' associations, SAFA and BdA/DDR (*Bund der Architekten in der DDR*), commenced.¹⁹ That said, Finland remained neutral during the Cold War, not least because of its historic relationship with (Soviet) Russia. And contrary to other Western nations, it recognised neither the Federal Republic of Germany nor the GDR until 1973. Thus, any economic and cultural relationships that it maintained with both German states were kept below the level of formal diplomacy.²⁰

Exchanging (between) systems

Since the beginning of the 1970s, contacts between the Finnish and East German (as well as Eastern European) building industry steadily intensified. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the gradual removal of trade barriers in the wake of peaceful coexistence came at exactly the right time, when the construction market in the West was in the grip of an economic crisis. By 1978, Finland's exports to European Comecon states amounted to approximately 20 percent. A similar outward expansion characterised Finland's largest corporation in the construction sector and main industry partner in the Hannes Meyer Seminars: the building materials manufacturer Paraisten Kalkki Oy, renamed Partek Oy in the mid-1970s for marketing reasons. As construction in Finland began to slow, the company drastically increased its export activities to the Eastern Bloc (later also the Global South), leading to the growth of foreign sales to 40 percent of the company's overall share within just five years.

In 1974, Partek Oy signed its first export contract with the GDR. The company's main export products were cement, concrete prefabrication technology

and heavy machinery. Thus, it delivered two highly efficient, partially automated panel factories able to produce dozens of residential units each day for what was the largest building site of the socialist leadership's housing programme: Berlin-Marzahn. For the two partners this deal was not only a major investment; the plant added a whopping 620 million marks to the mounting costs of the East German policy shift towards consumer socialism. It also marked a diplomatic breakthrough of such magnitude that the Finnish president Urho Kekkonen attended the panel factory's opening ceremony shoulder to shoulder with East German bureaucrats and four thousand construction workers.²¹

From a technical perspective, the export of these factories was only possible because of the high compatibility between the Finnish and East German prefabricated concrete construction systems – BES (*Betonielementtistandardi*) and WBS 70 (*Wohnungsbauserie 70*). Both countries had seen a huge spread of industrialised building over the course of the 1960s. In Finland, the concrete prefabrication industry had successfully lobbied municipalities to designate land for large-scale projects to address the urgent need for housing. But the prevalence of different building systems reduced the speed and efficiency of construction. Between 1968 and 1970, the organisation of the Finnish concrete industry therefore took steps towards the production of a unified open construction system – the BES study. The BES system consisted of load bearing wall panels, based on a 3x3m square module, and hollow slab floors. Although a second construction kit called PLS, which combined prefabricated floor slabs with in-situ concrete pillars, was developed in parallel to maintain greater flexibility, the industry's high investment in the production of BES meant that it became the dominant system, employed in the majority of 1970s housing projects. Developments in the GDR in many ways mirrored those in Finland. At the end of the 1960s, in the context of a centrally managed economy, similar

efforts were made to develop a unified construction system for housing, thus rationalising production by narrowing the palette of previous, at times locally developed, panel systems. Here the result was the infamous WBS 70, which came to be employed in the vast majority of mass housing projects of the 1970s and 1980s.²²

However, the agreement between Finland and the GDR had barely been signed, as criticisms of prefabricated mass housing began to emerge in both countries. Yet, while in the former, under market conditions, the intersecting crises of late modernist mass housing and the economy became a cause of nervousness for developers, construction officials in the GDR pursued industrialised construction in vast satellite districts largely undeterred as the demand for housing remained grossly unmet.²³ To counter the increasingly negative image of prefabricated system housing, and to address users' requirements for greater flexibility and variation, the Finnish concrete industry tasked a team of architects with improving the BES system both in terms of its technical and thermal performance and its adaptability. The result was the *Asukas-BES* system (user-BES system), presented in a study that was published by Laapotti in 1979.²⁴

The standardised BES-system remained the basis for all proposals by the Finnish architect-led team in the three Hannes Meyer Seminars of 1982 (Dessau), 1984 (Erfurt) and 1985 (Leipzig). In so doing, above all they wanted to test the system's limits and, at the same time, showcase its versatility across a great variety of contexts and different typologies – whether these consisted of small-scale infill housing into the heterogeneous fabric of single- to two-storey eighteenth-century craftsmen's and three-storey nineteenth-century workers' houses in Dessau's Muldvorstadt, or a scheme consisting of different types of three-storey townhouses, an infill type, a multi-storey residential and commercial building, and a hotel in the medieval centre of

Erfurt, or the mixed-use residential and commercial building, hotel, and exhibition building proposed for Leipzig's historic centre. Each of the three schemes and its constituent elements was developed in detail as model projects, and presented to an international audience and the East German public at the Leipzig trade fair in 1984.²⁵

Conclusion

As previously mentioned, despite the organisers' ambitions to implement the projects of the Hannes Meyer Seminars, the Finnish-led team's designs remained paper proposals, as responsible administrators and construction officials dismissed them as unrealistic. Archive documents bespeak the scepticism among party leaders and bureaucrats toward the Finnish partners and their motivations. In the end, not a single project was ever executed. The reasons for this might be found in the very economic basis of the cooperation: the East German side struggled not only with escalating costs for Finnish equipment (which increased by about 70 percent – an annual inflation of 12 percent to 15 percent), but also with rising loan interest rates, meaning that the leadership had to keep renegotiating repayment terms with their foreign creditors.²⁶ This may be why Grönwald had to keep insisting that the Finnish partners had no vested interests in the exchange.²⁷

Undoubtedly, at least for the Finnish industry partner, Partek Oy, this wasn't true. But for the East German organisers of the Hannes Meyer Seminars, immaterial rather than material aspects predominated. Their main interests were to improve architects' design skills as well as their technical competence, including the ability to use state of the art tools such as CAD/CAM. It would be a mistake, however, to depict this knowledge transfer as a one-way process. Finnish architects likewise learned from the East German approach of working with the historic urban fabric, and sought to apply this expertise to redevelopment plans for the former industrial harbour in Herttoniemi, Helsinki, in the

late 1980s.²⁸ Regardless of their modest outcomes, the Hannes Meyer Seminars require us to move beyond the figure of the Iron Curtain, and to think through the complex entanglements between late socialist and late capitalist worlds instead.

Notes:

- Both the GDR and the FRG joined the UN on 18 September 1973.
- From 1962 to 1964, Flierl was editor-in-chief of *Deutsche Architektur*, the GDR's only official architectural magazine. For an autobiographical assessment of his editorship in the context of the periodical's history see Bruno Flierl, 'Anspruchsvoll und waghalsig? Die Zeitschrift *Deutsche Architektur/Architektur der DDR* (1952–1990)', in: Simone Barck et al. eds., *Zwischen 'Mosaik' und 'Einheit': Zeitschriften in der DDR* (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 1999), 252–7; Bruno Flierl, *Kritisch Denken für Architektur und Gesellschaft: Arbeitsbiographie und Werkdokumentation, 1948–2006* (Erkner: IRS, 2007), 23–27.
- Bruno Flierl, 'Stadtplaner und Architekten im Staatssozialismus der DDR (1993)', in: Flierl, *Gebaute DDR: Über Stadtplaner, Architekten und die Macht* (Berlin: Verlag für Bauwesen, 1998), 68.
- The Journal of Architecture* 17, no. 3 (2012) 'Cold War Transfer: architecture and planning from socialist countries in the "Third World"', guest edited by Łukasz Stanek; Łukasz Stanek, 'Socialist Networks and the Internationalisation of Building Culture after 1945', *ABE Journal* no. 6 (2014), <https://journals.openedition.org>; Łukasz Stanek, *Architecture in Global Socialism: Eastern Europe, West Africa and the Middle East in the Cold War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020).
- For reports of the seminars in the East German professional and academic press see: Hans Goetze, 'Das 6. Hannes-Meyer-Seminar am Bauhaus Dessau', *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der HAB Weimar* 33, no. 4/5/6 (1987): 340; Bernd Grönwald, 'Entwürfe zur Stadterneuerung – 4. Hannes-Meyer-Seminar', *Form + Zweck* 17, no. 1 (1985): 35; Bernd Grönwald, 'Das 4. Hannes Meyer Seminar im 35. Jahr der DDR – Ein Beitrag zur Lösung neuer Aufgaben des Wohnungsbauprogrammes der DDR', *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der HAB Weimar* 30, no. 4 (1984): 199–208; Bernd Grönwald, 'Architekturfortschritt heute und für morgen', *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der HAB Weimar* 29, no. 5/6 (1983): 351–5; Bernd Grönwald, 'III: Hannes Meyer Seminar am Bauhaus Dessau', *Architektur der DDR* 32, no.8 (1982): 509.
- Following the Bauhaus Dessau's administrative restructuring in 1986, the design seminars were continued under the name Walter Gropius Seminar between 1987 and 1991. They were coordinated by new Bauhaus Dessau director Rolf Kuhn, urban sociologist Harald Engler and architect Dieter Bankert. Their focus, however, gradually shifted from urban housing to the surrounding territory. See chapters by Harald Kegler and Harald Bodenschatz in: Christoph Bernhardt, Thomas Flierl and Max Welch-Guerra eds., *Städtebau-Debatten in der DDR: Verborgene Reformdiskurse* (Berlin: Theater der Zeit, 2012). On the Bauhaus institutionalisation in East Germany see: Wolfgang Thöner, 'Bewahren und Aktualisieren: Bauhaus-Institutionalisierungen in Dessau von 1945 bis 1994', in: *Bauhaus global: gesammelte Beiträge der Konferenz bauhaus global vom 21. bis 26. September 2009* ed. Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 2009), 217–26; The results of the first Walter Gropius Seminars were documented in detail in: *Bauforschung – Baupraxis. Bauen in der Stadt*, no. 252 (1989). For a shorter summary, see: Jos Weber, 'I. Internationales Walter-Gropius-Seminar am Bauhaus Dessau', *Architektur der DDR* 38, no. 8 (1988): 43–46.
- One example would be the diploma project by Ralf-Rüdiger Sommer and Fred Jasinski from 1983, based on the third Hannes Meyer Seminar in 1982, which won an UIA award. See: Grönwald, 'Das 4. Hannes Meyer Seminar', 199.
- Three design brochures were produced for the projects developed by the Finnish team during the third, fourth and fifth Hannes Meyer Seminars in Dessau, Erfurt and Leipzig. Private archive of Pertti Solla.

9. Grönwald, 'Das 4. Hannes-Meyer-Seminar', 199.
10. Grönwald observes how the East German Bauhaus reception had gradually shifted from arguing 'against the Bauhaus' in the 1950s towards arguing 'with the Bauhaus'. He continues that raising the quality of design – of commodities and buildings – on the basis of contemporary conditions of production as well as social needs would be the main task of an updated Bauhaus. Bernd Grönwald, 'Kulturpolitische Bedeutung und gesellschaftliche Wirkung der Pflege und Aneignung des Bauhauserbes in der DDR', *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der HAB Weimar* 26, no. 4/5 (1979): 309–12.
11. Prior to its institutional alignment with the construction sector through the opening, in December 1986, of the Bauhaus Dessau – Zentrum für Gestaltung, the building had operated as the so-called Wissenschaftlich-Kulturelles Zentrum (WKZ) since 1976. For the first decade, both the *Amt für industrielle Formgestaltung* and HAB Weimar occasionally used the school as a professional training facility, hosting workshops in collaboration with organisations such as the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design, ICSID (1979). However, plans to restore and reuse the Bauhaus building date back to the end of 1962, after a first attempt by mayor Fritz Hesse and former Bauhäusler Hubert Hoffmann to re-establish the school in 1946 had failed. See: Thöner, 'Bewahren und Aktualisieren', 217–26.
12. On the welfare state in Finland see: Pauli Kettunen, 'The Nordic Welfare State in Finland', *Scandinavian Journal of History* 26, no. 3 (2001): 225–47.
13. Erkki Helamaa, 'Building Finland: Housing architecture 1940–1980', in *The Work of Architects: The Finnish Association of Architects 1892–1992*, ed. Pekka Korvenmaa, (Helsinki: The Finnish Building Centre, 1992), 147.
14. Because of his knowledge of German, Solla became responsible for coordinating those exchanges on behalf of the Finnish side from the late-1970s. In the mid-1950s he had worked as a builder in Cologne before studying architecture at TH Karlsruhe and becoming an assistant of Egon Eiermann until 1961.
15. About forty Finnish delegates from disciplines such as sociology, planning, landscape, architecture, and product design were part of the event organised by Ekkehard Bartsch from East Germany and Solla from Finland.
16. Briitta Koskiaho et al., eds., *Lebensweise und Lebensniveau: Wohnen und Wohnumwelt* (Tampere: Finnpublishers, 1979); *79-Finnischer Wohnungsbau* (Helsinki: Institut für Bauinformation, 1979); *Wohnumwelt in Finnland* (Helsinki: Finnisches Architekturmuseum, 1979).
17. In my interview with him, Solla also stressed the importance of design as a 'door-opener' and key driving force behind the later architectural design exchanges. This is confirmed by the fact that the East German Office for Industrial Design had established a cooperation with the Finnish designers' association Ornamo in the mid-1970s, and that the latter was a partner organisation in the Weimar symposium in 1979.
18. Ilkka Holmila and Jukka Turtiainen, quoted in Jere Maula, 'Architects and urban development in the 1960s and 1970s', in Korvenmaa, *The Work of Architects*, 188.
19. The most immediate outcome of that cooperation was the exhibition 'Architektur in Finnland: eine Ausstellung veranstaltet von dem Museum für finnische Architektur und dem Bund Dt. Architekten der DDR, Deutsch-Nordische Gesellschaft der DDR' at the Internationales Ausstellungszentrum Berlin, 4–28 June 1970.
20. Seppo Hentilä, *Neutral zwischen den beiden deutschen Staaten: Finnland und Deutschland im Kalten Krieg* (Berlin: BWV Berliner Wissenschaftsverlag, 2006); Dörte Putensen, *Im Konfliktfeld zwischen Ost und West: Finnland, der Kalte Krieg und die deutsche Frage 1947–1973* (Berlin: Berlin Verlag, 2000).
21. Eli Rubin, *Amnesiopolis: Modernity, Space, and Memory in East Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 61–62.
22. Christine Hannemann, *Die Platte: industrialisierter Wohnungsbau in der DDR* (Berlin: Schiler, 2005), 96–106.
23. The ongoing decay of the largely nineteenth- and

twentieth-century urban housing stock in East German city centres did little to help this problem.

24. Jaako Laapotti, *Asukas-BES* (Helsinki: Suomen betoniteollisuuden keskusjärjestö, 1979); see also: Marja-Riita Norri, 'Prefabricated Madness: Housing Construction in the 1960s and 1970s', in *Concrete in Finnish Architecture*, ed. Juoni Kaipia, trans. Pirjo Kuuselo (Helsinki: Suomen Betoniteollisuuden Keskusjärjestö, Museum of Finnish Architecture, 1989), 57.
25. The Leipzig project is developed in less detail, however, because the Finnish team was unable to attend the seminar in Leipzig in May–June 1985.
26. B-ARCH, DH1-29131, 'Information zum Plattenwerk Vogelsdorf, 26. August 1977'.
27. Archiv der Moderne Weimar, 3. I/20/143, 'Wiss. Zusammenarbeit der HAB Weimar mit TH Tampere'.
28. *Herttoniemen Keskus Ja Satama-Alue, Osayleiskaavaluonnos* (Herttoniemi Center and Harbour Area, Local Master Plan Draft), City of Helsinki, City Planning Department, Master Plan Department (15.5.1987). Private archive of Pertti Solla.

Biography

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