Improving architectural education.

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Problem statement

Le Corbusier talking to/with
monks at Eveux-sur-l'Arbresle (1959)

Can architects communicate with their clients?
Do architects understand the needs of users?
How relevant is the architectural profession?

1)   Problem description.

In the recent years a number of studies, reports, and essays, that declare, that architecture both as a profession and as the product of the practice is in the state of crisis have accumulated (RIBA 2003, CABE 2002, Hyde , AIA 2014).

Out of the fourty-four services, that architect can provide to his/her clients, listed by Royal Institute of British Architects in the standard form of an appointment thirty-nine can be undertaken by specialists of other fields. Furthemore, the construction technology is getting more and more complex, therefore require a growing number of specialists, consultants, and subcontractors. The impact architects have on the design and execution of a project, and on the construcion industry in general, is diminishing. Moreover, the number of clients, that believe other professionals in construction industry to be more reliable, flexible, easier to communicate, and to be more willing to respond to the needs and requirement of the client/user is growing.

Obviously, the current state of architecture is a function of many factors, most of them reaching far beyond the scope and the time frame of a Master Diploma project. For that reason the project will focus mainly on one of this aspects- the identity and image of architects as a professional group, and the process of educational acculturation in which it is gained.

Addessing and improving this important aspect will let us create a new kind of professional, who is easier to communicate and collaborate with, who understands better the needs of his/her clients, who is more eager to provide them with 'good' architecture, that fits responds to their requirements.

Project goal.

Bijlmer, 1971

What kind of architecture do people want?
Do architects have different taste than the rest of the society?

2)   Project goal.
a)   **Research question:**

How can we change the education of an architect, to get a professional, who is easier to communicate and collaborate with, who focuses on providing "good" architecture, that responds to the needs of client, user, and society?

b)   **Research goal.**
Since the aformentioned problems emerge already in the process of education of an architect, than at least to some extent, they can be fixed through changes in both the curriculum as well as the design of an Architecture Faculty.
Through my project I would like to find out what changes are needed in order for architects to have better interpersonal skills, to put the emphasis on providing good, and comfortable built environment for his/her users, who is better equipped to compete with other construction industry professionals, and who can improve the image that architects have within the society.
To be able to answer this question it is required to respond to many issues listed below as the sub-research question.

- Why do a significant amount of architects currently fail to provide their clients with buildings, that respond to their needs, requirements and taste??
- What kind of features do we want the architect to possess?
- What does 'good' mean in reference to architecture?
- What is the current image and identity of an architect in the society?
- What are the most important aspects of the education process of an architect right now?
- How can the flaws be corrected?

c)   **Design quesition.**

How to design an Architecture Faculty that could enhance the
required features in the future architect?

d)   **Design goal.**
Through my design I want to investigate, how to combine an Architecture Faculty and its neighbor-hood/city in a mutually profitable relationship.
An extroverted approach to design a school, one which encourages a certain permeability with the community beyond the school, one that invites students and members of the community into the school just as it encourages students to interface outward is necessary to provide students with numerous opportunities to interact with non-architect, to enhance in the students their interpersonal skills, communicativeness, and the ability to perceive the built environment through another person's eyes.
On the other hand a school, as the biggest and the most prestigous building within the neighborhood has a potential to create and enhance the spirit of community, excite curiosity and invite people to enter and learn and through that 'refurbish' the society.
However, before I manage to do so I will have to study how to open the school towards the city, which will alter the commonly used model of a school as an almost industrial concentratrion of different activities connected to learning wrapped within one building, to a far more open and outgoing model. Furthermore, I will have to look for solutions in which the school offers its neighbours and a possibility and reason to enter, makes them feel equally welcomed as any student or professor of the faculty, and enhances interaction with students and employees of the university. This will let me put relationships at the center of my design and blure the boundaries between teachers, students, school, and community will create a dialog-based and student-centered school, that will provide the students with numerous occassions to interact with non-architects.

e)   **Design proposal**

An extrinsic model of school.   An extrinsic model of school.
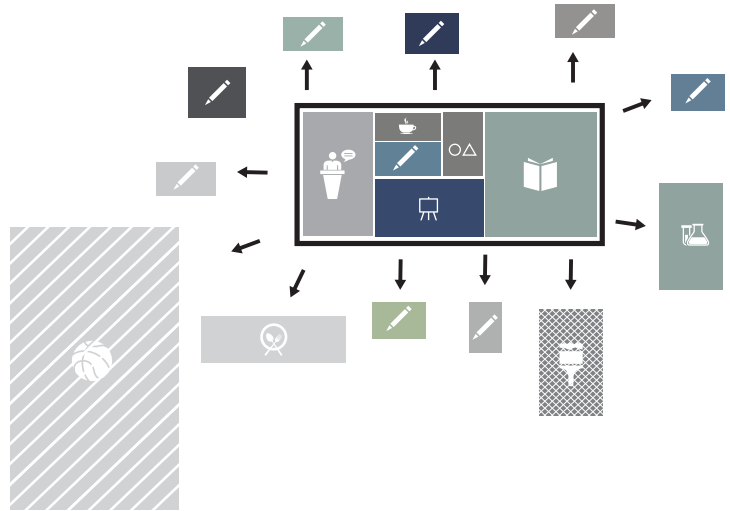
f)   **Design Project Building Type.**
The building that I am going to design will be an Architecture Faculty Building for around fifty students a year, enhanced with additional public facilities, that will help to establish and maintain a relationship with the neighbouring community, and the city in general.

Didactical areas:
-Design ateliers
-Group rooms
-Lecture hall
-Workshop room

Administration
-Offices
-Secretary
-Archive

Other:
-(Book)Shop
-Print Shop
-Cafeteria
-Lounge
-Service Point
-Copy points

Employees areas:
-Offices
-Meeting rooms
-Staff rooms

Additional Public Functions:
-Community design center
-Children workshop area
-Innovation Lab
-?

Additional Educational Functions:
-Library
-Exhibition area
-IT Support center
-Model building room

Technical areas:
-Toilets
-Showers
-Changing rooms
-Storage(s)
-Locker room
-Servery

g)   **Site.**

Upper Silesia is a region in southern Poland, with almost three milion inhabitants.
This area used to be highly industrialized, with culture and lifestyle of its ingabitants re-
volving around work is now. In the recent twenty fife years a significant part of the heavy
industry has moved out of the region leaving not only a considerable number of industrial
buildings and structures, but also the residents of Silesia struggling with unemployment
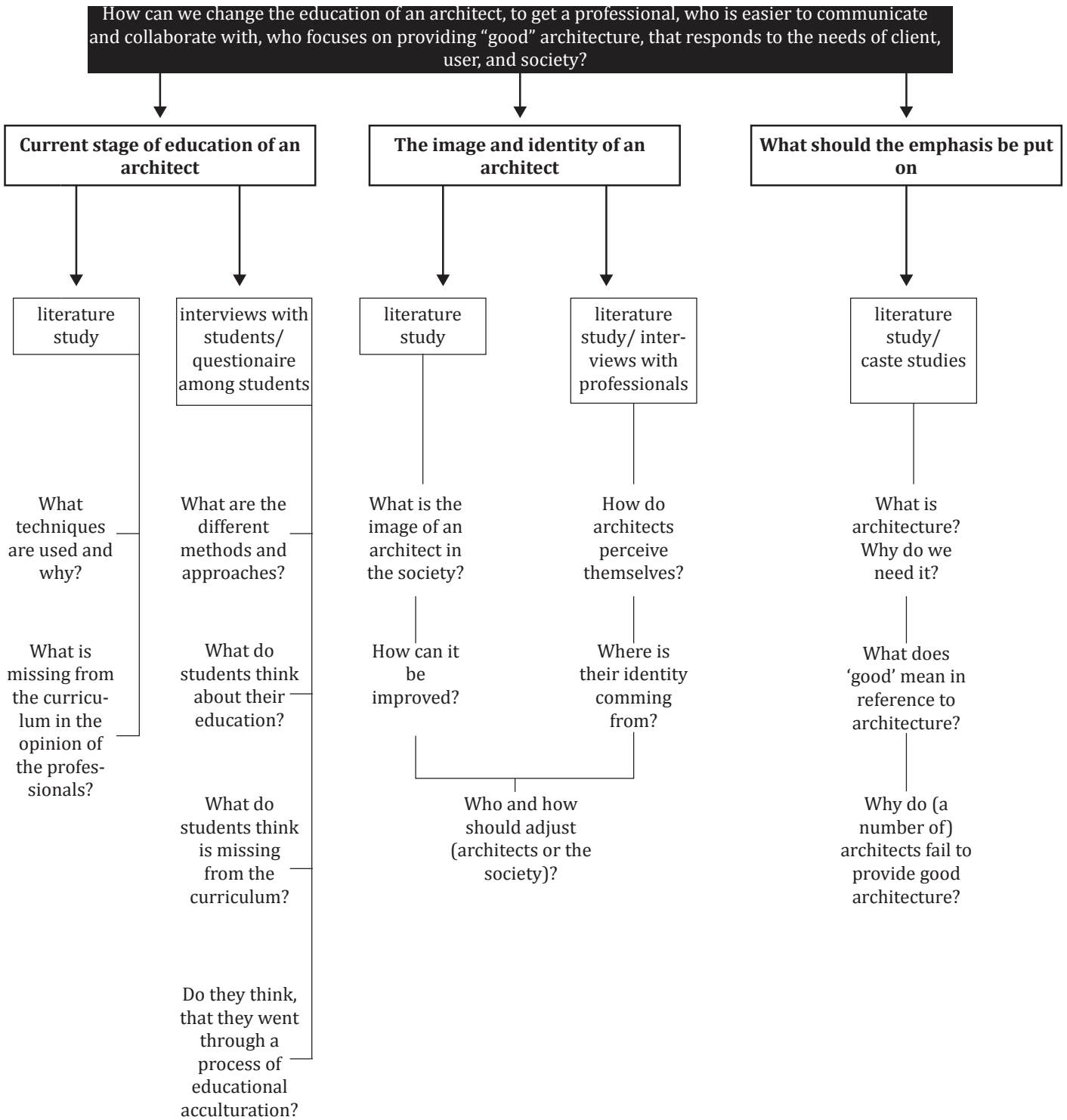and fighting to preserve their unique identity.

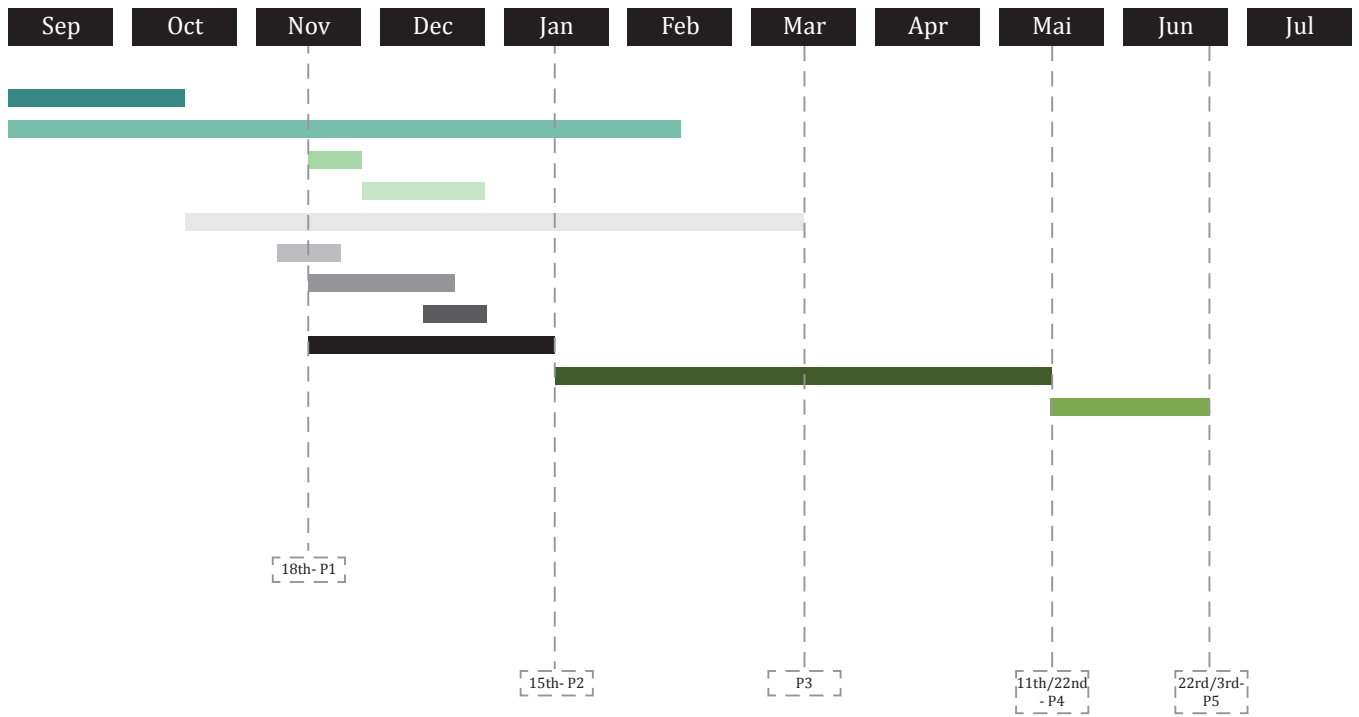

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Methodology, Time Schedule, Bibliography

Nagakin Capsule Tower

3) Methodology

How can we change the education of an architect, to get a professional, who is easier to communicate and collaborate with, who focuses on providing "good" architecture, that responds to the needs of client, user, and society?

Current stage of education of an architect

literature study

What techniques are used and why?

What is missing from the curriculum in the opinion of the professionals?

interviews with students/ questionaire among students

What are the different methods and approaches?

What do students think about their education?

What do students think is missing from the curriculum?

Do they think, that they went through a process of educational acculturation?

The image and identity of an architect

literature study

What is the image of an architect in the society?

How can it be improved?

literature study/ interviews with professionals

How do architects perceive themselves?

Where is their identity comming from?

Who and how should adjust (architects or the society)?

What should the emphasis be put on

literature study/ caste studies

What is architecture? Why do we need it?

What does 'good' mean in reference to architecture?

Why do (a number of) architects fail to provide good architecture?

4)   Time Schedule

| Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | Mai | Jun | Jul |

18th- P1

15th- P2

P3

11th/22nd - P4

22rd/3rd- P5

Research:

- Narrowing the topic
- Literature studies
- Interviews
- Interviews +reference programs analysis
- Writing the thesis

Design:

- Site analysis
- Briefing
- Urban analysis
- First sketches + design proposal
- Design at different scales
- Finetuning the drawings

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4)   Bibliography

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