

# THE CARRIAGE IN THE NEEDLE: BUILDING DESIGN AND FLEXIBLE SPECIALIZATION SYSTEMS

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This paper examines the distribution of design responsibilities in the building process, focussing on the multiplicity of professional actors vis-à-vis the growth of consulting profiles, and the expanding role of trade specialists and components suppliers. The objective is to discuss the impact of this evolving scenario over nature and structure of the design work, as well as its possible implications for the role of the architect.

In addressing the topic, building design is considered as a system of production, and industrial organization theory used to discuss characteristics and transformations of its 'division of labor.' The argument developed indicates that the fragmentation of the design task can be explained in light of the convergence of two production paradigms: craft and industry. The paper shows the ambivalence of this situation, which may enhance architecture's expressive potential, but requires a conceptual restructuring of "building design," and a careful reconsideration of the notion of "professionalism."

*Editor's note: The full text of this paper was not available at the time of publication.*