

## The Storage of Undesired Functions

With its immense size and generic, modernist expression, the Jelmoli storage building in Otelfingen is one of the most iconic logistics centres in Zurich's agglomeration. Only partially used, it lies in the periphery of the city as an enormous reservoir of space. The inner city outsources undesired, spatially extensive functions, such as logistics, production, and storage to the suburbs. In turn, the villages of the agglomeration confine these monstrous volumes to industrial zones. This leads to the formation of clusters of buildings, which programmatically, architectonically, and volumetrically break ranks with their surroundings, because they factually belong to the city. Yet, as outsourcing becomes an ever more global phenomenon, many of these infrastructural buildings and areas are now vacant or under-occupied.

## The Central Counterpart

In stark contrast to the Jelmoli storage hall, the Papierwerd area in the heart of Zurich is under great pressure; Visibility, density and its historic meaning have polemicized the discussion over how to use the scarce space. The task of building a convention centre here contradicts the location's inherent urbanity.

## Crossing-Over

By combining the two diploma topics A and B, both sites can function in symbiosis and can be read as two poles of the same urban system. The congress centre desired in Zurich can be realized by taking advantage of the fundamental relationship between city and periphery. The lion's

share of its program is realized in Otelfingen, leaving only the representation - address and entry façade - in the inner city.

In 'Bigness (or the problem of Large)', Koolhaas explains the involuntary dualism of core and envelope in big buildings:

"(...) the distance between core and envelope increases to the point where the facade can no longer reveal what happens inside. The humanist expectation of "honesty" is doomed: Interior and exterior architectures become separate projects, one dealing with the instability of programmatic and iconographic needs, the other – agent of disinformation – offering the city the apparent stability of an object. (...)"<sup>1</sup>

In the Zurich Congress Centre, this fracture is amplified until the internal and the external are spatially disconnected. Held together only by the train line, they are realized as two projects in two different locations.

The Jelmoli storage hall is re-established as a servant of centrality, supplying the city with space. In this way, both sites can resolve their weaknesses, utilising the strengths of the other.

<sup>1</sup>Rem Koolhaas, "Bigness (or the problem of Large)" in S, M, L, XL, Eds. OMA, Rem Koolhaas and Bruce Mau (New York:Monacelli Press, 1995), pp. 500-501.