Thank you

Sandra Laksjö Svensson
Magdalena Elfström Berg
Magdalena Bjerkefors
Marion Moutal
Adam Söderblom
Friends at the atelier

2021, Elin Laksjö Svensson
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Elin Laksjö Svensson
Directeur Pédagogique Luca Ortelli
Professeur Jo Taillieu
Maître EPFL Vinh Linh
Énoncé Théorique 2020 / 2021 Master in architecture EPFL

The artist plunges into the depths of human experience, just like the psychologist.[2]

2. Sigfried Giedion, *Space, Time and Architecture: The Growth of a New Tradition*, 5. ed., rev.enlarged,5. print, The Charles Eliot Norton Lectures 1938/1939 (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Univ. Press, 1974), 10.

Content

Someone feels the world with the work like a glove. Resting for a while at mid-day having laid aside the gloves, on a shelf.
There they suddenly grow, spread, and black out the whole house from inside.
The blacked-out house is away out among the winds of spring.
Amnesty, runs the whisper in the grass, amnesty.
A girl sprints with an invisible line slanting up in the sky, where her wild dream of the future lies like a kite bigger than the suburb.
Further north you can see from a summit the blue endless carpet of pine forest, where the cloud shadows are standing still.
No, are flying.[1]

1. Tomas Tranströmer, *Open and Closed Spaces (Öppna och Slutna Rum),* 1966 (Translated from Swedish by author).

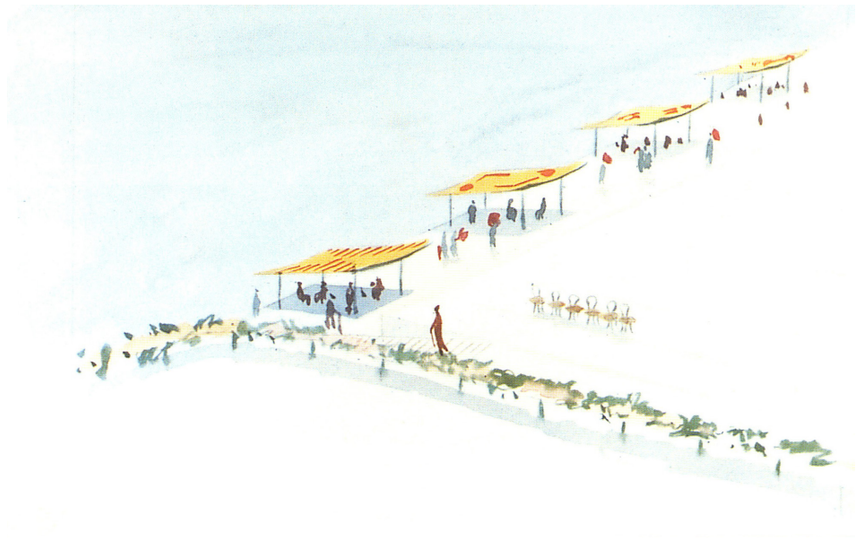


Figure 1 *Sun Tents*, Gunnar Asplund. Watercolor.

Introduction

Each travel is a return, and one can learn how to inhabit a living space in a more free and poetic way. For me, it means returning to Sweden, while I am living in Switzerland. The travel relates experiences to the background of a Nordic culture and a climate at high latitudes. Stories about the great melancholy[3] pass by, and from the sea a cold grey wind blows in, talking about the midnight sun that came to stay. Then, when midsummer comes, the light changes again, to be almost infinite.

Stories from before also talk about the people and the forms of life taking place in the Nordic landscape. Contrasts influenced how people lived, in open and closed spaces, indoors and outdoors, collectively but independently, with and within the landscape. During the winter, people tended to occupy themselves while staying indoors, gathering together, giving time for arts and crafts. The severe half of the year can therefore explain how people would inhabit spaces together, initially around the fire and later in centralised heated homes. Then, when the light returned towards the later half of the year, people became part of the outside life again. The homes could thus be seen as indoor bases for outdoor activities.

The darkness of the winter was followed by traditional rituals, which also affected the architecture to a certain extent. The sunless length of winter called for fairly enclosed architectural forms, with smaller openings that kept the heated air inside, for the indoor shelter, a haven for rest. Then, with the bright summer light came fresh air, and a constant flux of people, moving, like visitants that arrive in warmer climates. Now, the architecture issued modest forms that could reflect the setting in nature. It has been argued that the lingering sun made the ground ready for the seeds of modern architecture.[4]

Scholars have related the notion of form to different perceptions of space. Some write about infinite spatiality, and the dissolution of space which “does not seek to delimit space from the world around, but it opens out to

3. Refers to the lyrics of the song *Vintersaga* or “Winter story” by Amanda Bergman from 2015.
4. E. Kidder Smith, *Sweden Builds: Its Modern Architecture and Land Policy Background, Development and Contribution*, (New York, NY: Bonnier, 1950), 11.

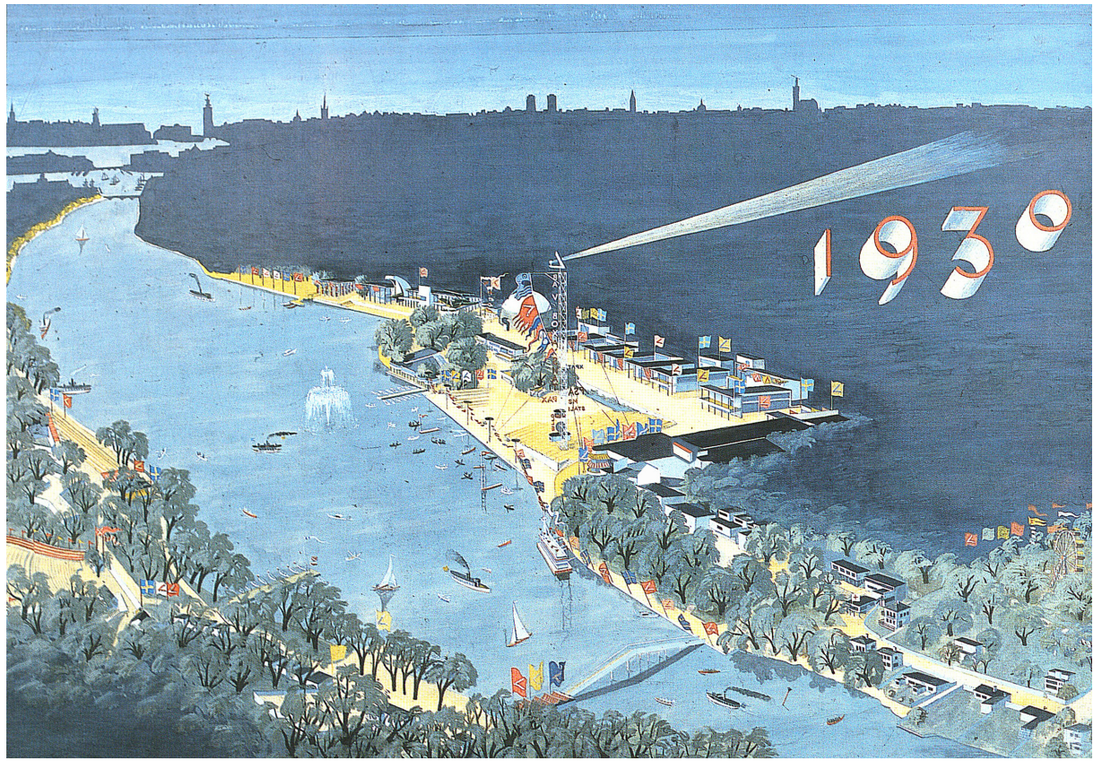


Figure 2 The Stockholm Exhibition in 1930, dissolution of space.

it instead.[5]" Others describe a space conception which is part of an emotional attitude for the organisation of forms in space. The latter idea has to do with local conditions of a particular place, and how to cope with regional premises at the same time.[6]

What the space perceptions have in common is the notion of lightness. What came to be the Swedish answer on both a national and international level was the 1930 Stockholm Exhibition. The slenderness in the exhibited halls were pioneering for the time, showing the relevance of industrial and prefabricated materials. At the same time, focus was on traditional arts and crafts that was exhibited in the halls and pavilions, to demonstrate the standardised in coherence with the personalised. The exhibition called for an architecture that could enable the continuous movement of people, for light and fresh air, for a modern realm. The desire of the exhibition was to achieve a lightness on both a structural and spatial level.

Another aspect was the reinterpretation of architectonic models of the past. Here, one notable detail must be mentioned. What might have disturbed the festive realm for some, while being bypassed by others, was the small red cottage next to one of the exhibition halls at the shoreline. The building was in fact not very visible because it was covered with an additional facade, showing how it wanted to hide or just 'fit in' within the modern realm. But from a higher point, one could not be mistaken to see the original red timber façade and the mansard roof sticking up behind the back drop. Was it intentional that some symbolic meaning could be understood from the facadism? Sweden was in reality perhaps not (yet) as modern as the exhibition wanted to tell.

On the other side of the water from the exhibition ground, another type of housing on display took place. Here, at Skansen open-air museum visitors could experience vernacular farmsteads and traditional red cottages, staged as full scale models. The architecture on show demonstrated traditional timber frame homesteads,

5. Gunnar Asplund, "Our Architectonic perception of space", in: Michael Asgaard Andersen, ed.,1931, *Nordic Architects write,* (Routledge, Abingdon, 1996), 326.
6. Sigfried Giedion, *Space, Time and Architecture: The Growth of a New Tradition, 5.* ed., rev.enlarged, 5 print, The Charles Eliot Norton Lectures 1938/1939, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Univ. Press, 1974), 37.

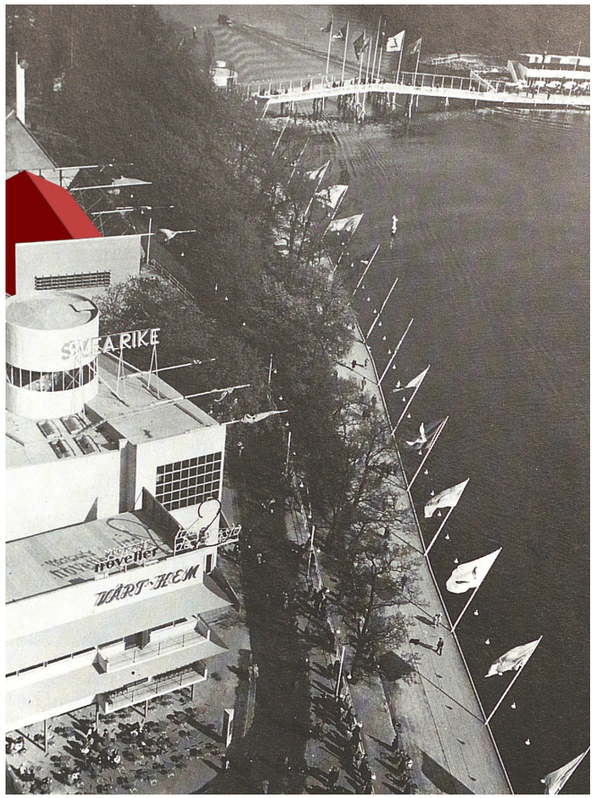


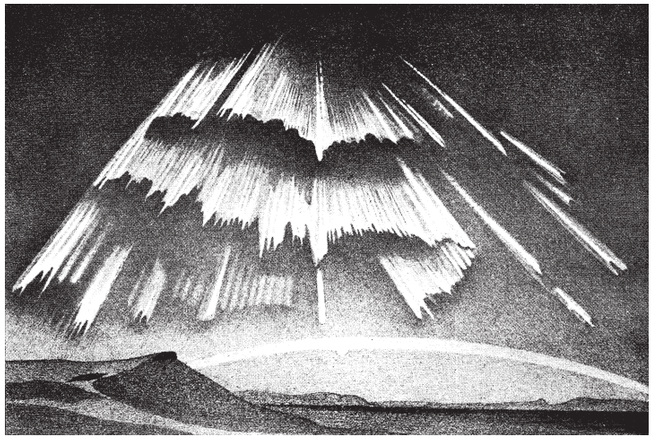
Figure 3 The Stockholm Exhibition. In the background, the pre-existing cottage with its fake facades.

an archetype of vernacular domestic form in Sweden, in a pre-industrial fashion. How did the architecture of these fairly different exhibitions interrelate with each other? The collective memory brings us back to the narratives again, to address some moments before the turn of the century when Sweden was about to cope with modernity.

The project deals with the contemporary issue of forms for shared domesticity. In a country where many people live alone,[7] civic responsibility can perhaps only emerge by reconsidering history. Therefore, it seems fair to look at what has already been there but through the lens of the modern. The particular context is Sweden, to modernise Sweden. While being a relatively small and slow country to evolve and to be developed as evolution rather than revolution, things were first not seen to be that radical. On the contrary, developments came to be more rapid and progressive with the modernisation. In that sense, the focus will be on to what extent the modernisation affected architecture, to see the friction between something which tries to be modern, but at the same time is a bit slow to cope with. The friction is about an architecture that shows a certain resistance towards time, while also accepting that very same time. One focus has been to understand how the tension took form, by looking at a set of projects that were dealing with acceptance and resistance. The argument will then be that it is in the very confrontation between the two where one can explain the potential of a vernacular modern architecture for domestic form. Here, the kitchen will be a central element.

With the perception of dissolute space as guidance, the study will examine how it can be related to domestic form, and how it took form on tectonic and spatial levels, as well as social ones. Taking the existing as starting point for the present, vernacular architecture can then, perhaps be the reference for a Swedish model. Or, a vernacular modern that neither becomes outdated nor completed, neither vernacular nor modern, always in movement but sometimes also without even moving.

7. Refers to statistics from Eurostat, addressing that among the Member States in EU, over half of all households in Sweden (52 %) were one person households in 2016.



Figures 4 to 5 Arcs of northern lights or *aurora borealis* with projecting rays and dark segments. Acceptance and resistance.

Nordic thresholds

The high thresholds that are used so often in all the houses built in Sweden, often have a disastrous impact on the link between house and garden when they rise abruptly half or a whole story above the ground.[8]

8. Nils Ahrbom, "Spatial Design: Philosophy or Architecture?", In: *Nordic Architects write*, Michael Asgaard Andersen, ed., (Routledge, Abingdon, 1996), 344.

Figure 6 Meta Isaeus-Berlin, collections of memories from the past, *A Real Home*, and *The transparency of looking back*.

When the Artist Meta Isaeus-Berlin curates the installation 'A Real Home, The Transparency of the Past'[9] she makes a collection of suspended chairs and tables, a set of everyday objects made of light fabrics, flying weightless in the air. In another exhibition 'What Memory Selects,[10]' she dissects several domestic furniture by cutting them in three before she reassembles them in two. The middle parts disappear.

It has been said that every time has its own character. It has also been said that the new and the old, always have influenced each other. People have constantly been in movement. Moving, as they learn to walk, learning as they get to know new things. The visitants that were mentioned earlier, came to stay before they left again. People have also been resistant to the movements in many ways. Observant, to things that change in life, thoughtful to different forms of living. The building-art was showing some resistance as well, which in fact has been understood sometimes as more resistant than life itself. Domestic form has been called 'petrified', while the life around constantly changes.[11]

If architecture can be seen as the materialised expression of the culture of a people, then, that architecture is subject to change based on given historical and material circumstances.[12] In that sense, architecture can never be without traditions. Looking at links between the current time and previous periods is therefore meaningful. The very same idea can also be related to architectonic perceptions of space. Now, if one tries to look into the depths of a cultural form, what is there to be seen? Most likely a unity of everything that surrounds us, with the daily needs for light and fresh air, mobility related things, how we look at rooms and spaces and how architecture can cope with all that. In the case of Sweden, it deserves some attention for a set of reasons.

9. Refers to the exhibition "A Real Home, The transparency of looking back" by Meta Isaeus-Berlin, Stockholm (2004).
10. Refers to the exhibition "What the memory selects" by Meta Isaeus-Berlin, Stockholm (2001).
11. Åhrén, Uno, Creagh, Lucy, and Frampton, Kenneth. *Modern Swedish Design: Three Founding Texts*. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2008), 164.
12. Nils Ahrbom, "1945, Spatial Design: Philosophy or Architcture?" In: Michael Asgaard Andersen, ed., *Nordic Architects write*, (Routledge, Abingdon, 1996), 336.

Figure 7 Meta Isaeus-Berlin, collections of memories from the past, *A Real Home*, and *The transparency of looking back*.

Swedish architecture came to be well-known for the years of functionalism or *funkis* in Swedish, in the early twentieth century. At that time, Sweden was prominent in the international setting with an architecture of quality and artistic sensibility. Described as a 'civilised' architecture made for its users,[13] the emphasis was on the people and their culture. With culture, meaning the shared values and practices that makes collective life possible. The building of the people's home, or *folkhemmet,* followed the same spirit. But, the development of the industrialised society brought a cultural divide for the Swedish architecture. The smaller artistic sector became polarised from the larger one for production which resulted in a distant relation between the architect and the building process. Practical responsibility came before artistic refinements.

The polarisation also had an essential social dimension for the Swedish culture. In relation to the postwar period in the mid-twentieth century with the emerging housing shortage, functionalism became a social dilemma as ideology rather than formative tool.[14] The Swedish welfare state shared a central role, giving social security in the collective. Beyond the relation to the centralised planning, the ideology also opened up for capitalistic ideas of making production rational. Architectonic space became a matter of mechanisation, which also affected other aspects of life. The collective became analogous to the mass which to a certain extent made people experience severance and loneliness.[15] Different nuances such as personalities were reduced by the new schematic features of architectonic space.[16] This consequently generated frames for individual life, beyond the collective realm that was thought to be the Swedish way of living.

As a counter reaction, or even something which happened parallel to the Swedish modernisation, the polarisation became divided in two main directions. On the one hand, the 'haven of beauty' which was driven by the architects own values and exemplified by the building of

13. E. Kidder Smith, *Sweden Builds: Its Modern Architecture and Land Policy Background, Development and Contribution*, (New York, NY: Bonnier, 1950), 15.
14. Per I Gedin, *När Sverige blev modernt: Gregor Paulsson, Vackrare vardagsvara, funktionalismen och Stockholmsutställningen 1930*. (Albert Bonniers Förlag, 2018), 243.
15. Claes Caldenby,"*Den dubbla rörelsen. Arkitekterna, byggbranschen och 1960-talet"*, in *Kortrapport om forskning no. 1,* (Chalmers, CMB, 2013)
16. Gunnar Asplund, "1931 Our architectonic perception of space*",* in: *Nordic Architects write,* Michael Asgaard Andersen, ed., (Routledge, Abingdon, 1996), 332.

Figure 8 Meta Isaeus-Berlin, collections of memories from the past, *A Real Home*, and *The transparency of looking back*.

The home can be remembered as open or enclosed, as permanent or temporary, as fragments in the dissolution of space.

single buildings such as private villas.[17] On the other hand the more out-side driven government which could be related to production. Autonomy and heteronomy became here a double movement. The polemic situation reveals a dilemma between a democratic society where the need of the user orders the building logic, and an architecture which is ordered by a building logic of its own. One should have the two aspects in mind while looking at architectural form in relation to today's need of claiming one's own influence on things.

The double movement was of course not unique for Sweden, rather a universal consequence of the modernisation, but it has been argued that went further there than other places. Not least due to the fact that Sweden was modernised quite rapidly, even if it happened a bit later than other places. One reason was that Sweden was not as much affected during the post-war period as many other parts of Europe, so the country did not need to reconstruct the society to the same extent as many other countries. Here, the technical progress that followed the modernisation in Sweden became central.

It has been said that there are ambiguities around modern architectural form, and a following need to reconnect architecture with history, to search for a continuity of form. Referring to the observations by Gunnar Asplund on the subject,[18] each culture has its own means of expression, which again has to do with perceptions of space. For western culture, the functional and infinite spatiality has been defined as present. It has also been translated to the dissolution of space which, Asplund argues, characterises the architecture in the modern age.[19] Moreover, one can argue that it is relevant to look at the spatial conceptions in a broader sense, instead of making the limitation to the specific context they are placed within. There are for example forms that coincide, which means that the conceptions share certain features which makes it difficult to differentiate between them.

17. Claes Caldenby, "The building's own logic" *("Byggandets egen logik")*, https://www.wbw.ch/de/heft/artikel/original-texte/2014-12-byggandets-egen-logik.html (retrieved 2021-01-09).
18. Gunnar Asplund, "1931 Our architectonic perception of space", in: *Nordic Architects write,* Michael Asgaard Andersen, ed., (Routledge Abingdon, 1996), 325.
19. Ibid., 337.

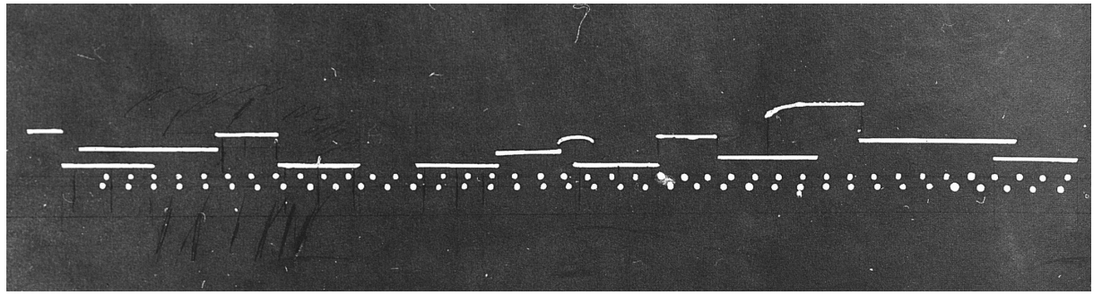


Figure 9 Lighting scheme for the Stockholm Exhibition, gouache on gray cardboard. Gunnar Asplund. Dissolution in space.

Here, one can argue for the relevance of rather looking at the similarities between the conceptions, on the basis of what forms the foundation of a culture, hence structural possibilities, access to material, ways of living, climate and forms of government.[20]

Asplund refers to the philosopher Oswald Spengler who can be mentioned for his studies on the subject. Spengler has focused on various expressions of cultures in history, including the architectonic concept of spatiality, defining how primordial symbols of different cultures are related in specific spatial concepts. For Western cultures, the dissolution of space and the functional has been defined as most prominent. Yet, it must be mentioned that a critical reading of his work is necessary, in a reality where his theories have been perceived as bold for many. Thus, one can draw attention to the fact that scientific objectivity can be in conflict with moral thoughts and ideas. At the same time, one should also accept that the history is there and that we probably need to understand it in order to deal with it. We need to accept the time, as it was stated in the manifesto *Acceptera.*[21] The Swedish modern architecture manifesto was written by progressive artists and architects that addressed the need to connect building art with social and technological progress that was characteristic for the modernisation.

To reconnect to Meta and her flying furniture, can one understand architecture on a universal level while at the same time treating different parties' collective memories and perspectives?

20. Ibid., 338.
21. Gunnar Asplund, et al., *Acceptera.* (Tidens förlag, 1980), 197.

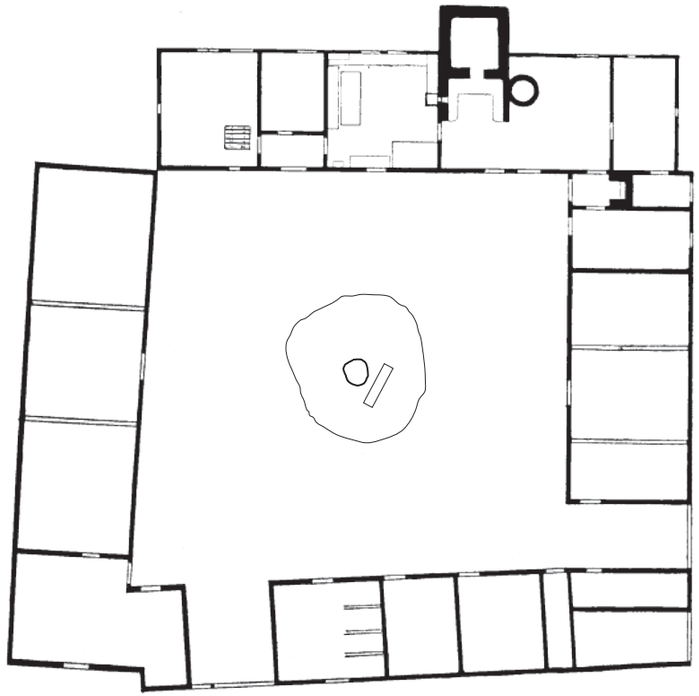


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Figure 10 Plan of homestead in Sweden. The enclosed form with attached corners can be seen as a gesture of solidness.

Here in the middle of the court, one should plant a tree and make a bench around where people of the yard can gather together, during calm and beautiful evenings off. The tree will grow as old as the yard, and evoking thoughts of bygone times. There on the bench, one can hear the humming in the summer evening, about memories from the past, destinies and happiness. The tree itself tells them.[22]

22. John Åkerlund, "How peasant's homes should be built" (Hur allmogehem skola byggas), In: *Svenska Allmoge-hem*, Gustaf Carlsson, ed., (Centraltryckeriet Stockholm, 1909), 205.

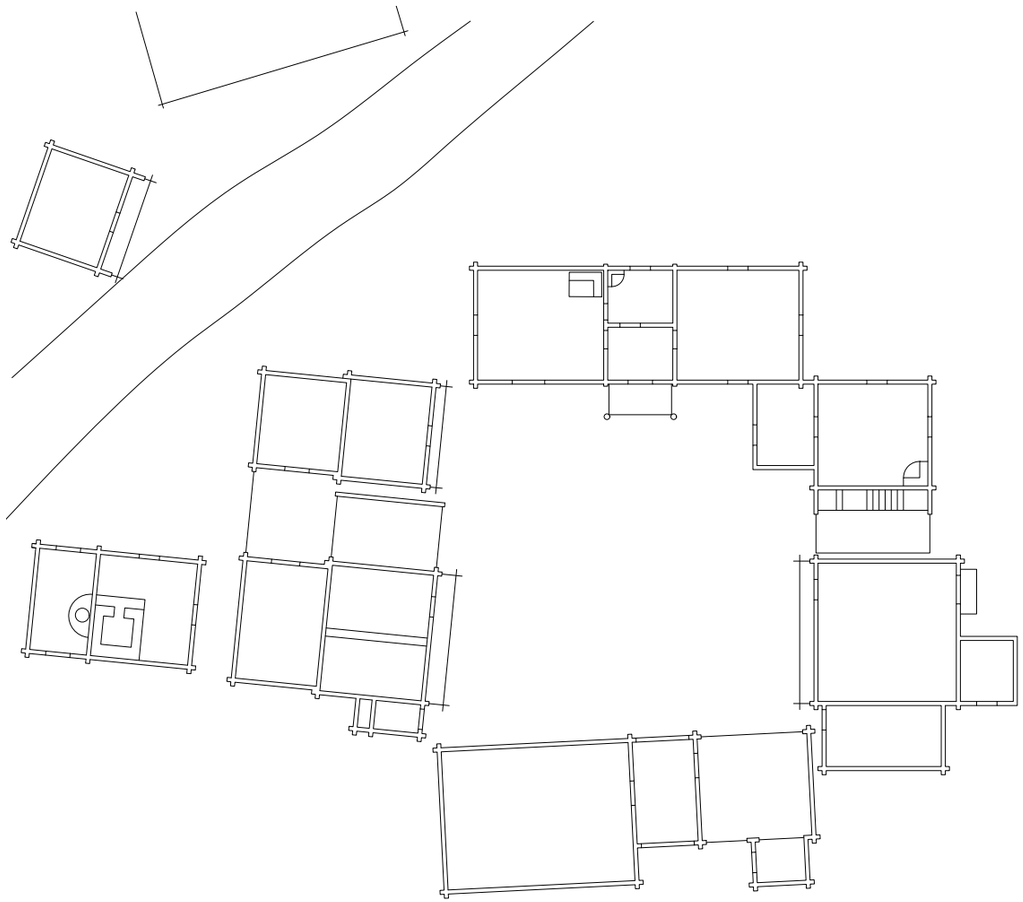

Figure 11 Homestead in Sweden with ensemble of semi-detached log constructions where each form serve for a specific function. A will to achieve spatial lightness can be seen in the generous common room of the court.

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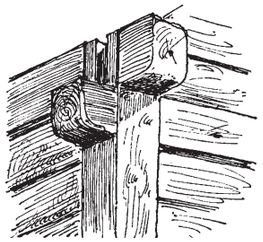
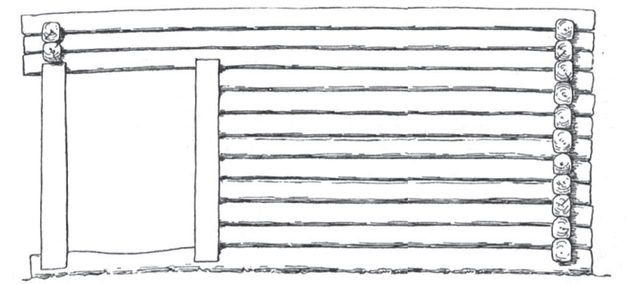
Sweden-then

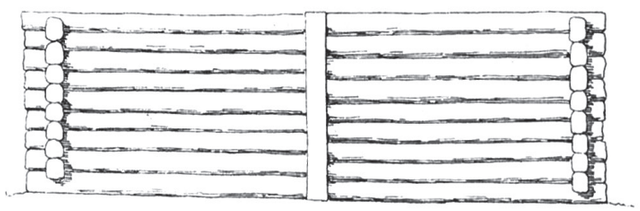
Stories are taking us further back in time. They describe the life in Nordic homesteads, whose architectural form reflected a culture that was closely related to collective activities, with and within the nature. The domestication of nature derives back to when people started to dwell. On the one hand by hiding under a tree, a tent or a roof, or on the other hand, trying to cope with the climate by gathering around a camp-fire. The process of domestication and the building of homes dates back to the palaeolithic period, where hunter gatherers lived a nomadic life highly dependent on nature. Here, the different seasons would direct the movements of the people, and tell whether different ways of life took shape in temporary, or later, more permanent forms. The transition from non-domestic cultures to sedentary forms of life followed the same spirit, hence also the development of homes into households and houses. Yet, it has been noted that the beginning of sedentary form of living was a fairly recent construction in relation to the long existence of human beings.[23]

An early form of a Nordic home derives back to the log cabin. The form was given accordingly the length of the wood stocks, mainly because the working tools were not yet sufficient to enable customised sizes of the building material.[24] Therefore, the functions followed the forms given by the forest. A set of log cabins were first organised in a free standing configuration, where each house inhabited a separate function. When the household grew with the increased accumulation of things, the need to build more buildings became a fact. The layout with the free standing buildings came to be more dense when additional houses were built, all organised around a common courtyard. With small distances between the houses, the courtyard was protected from wind so that the activities taking place there were sheltered, as an open air room with the sky as ceiling. We shall see how the farmsteads developed with the time, into more enclosed forms.

23. In the seminar “Theory and criticism of domestic space”, Pier Vittorio Aureli argues that the beginning of sedentary life happened in 15/10.000 BP, in relation to when the first Homo Sapiens dates back around 300.000 BP, while referring to BP as the year before present. (EPFL, 2020).
24. John Åkerlund, “How peasant’s homes should be built” (Hur allmogehem skola byggas), In: *Svenska Allmogehem*, Gustaf Carlsson, ed., (Centraltryckeriet Stockholm, 1909), 168.







Figures 12 to 15 Log constructions of corners that are interlocked with *Mesula* poles. Blockhouse wall, blockhouse wall with door, combined blockhouse wall with timber frame construction.

Later, when the peasants cultivated more land to liberate the ground for the fields, the consumption of the forest also increased. At the same time, technical advancements developed the working tools which made it possible to build more material efficient constructions.

The log cabins were initially built as blockhouses with horizontal timber logs, interlocked at the corners by notching. The construction was preferred to be built as separate units, still following the sizes of the wood stocks. From gable to gable went the ridge which functioned as support for the pitched roof. When the peasants needed to economise with the wood, a set of poles were raised in between the horizontal timbers, for a timber-frame construction. By using wide planks or boards of wood stocks in between the frames, the walls could become even more timber efficient, by leaving more space for other materials to isolate the wall. The construction resulted in the so-called post-plank framework, or *skiftesverk* in Swedish. Here, the walls could also be extended more flexibly as the length was not limited to the wood stocks anymore. To be frank, it showed a close relationship between nature resources and form and can be seen as an early sort of personalised standardisation.

A prerequisite for building blockhouse constructions was the use of straight wood stocks, which was best realised with pine trees, compared to the less suited oak and beechwood.[25] For the timber frame construction, the choice of filling material became more flexible, as bricks for example started to be commonly used. And so became the timber frames less and less visible, to instead make the filling materials more present. The interlocked corners of the log buildings became eventually covered by wood planks, to protect them from rot. On the corresponding side where the wind was strongest, the facade could also be covered by vertical planks, and later also the rest of the facade. The facade was either left to grey with natural impact from the climate, or painted in red with window frames and gable corners in white. The model represent

25. Axel Nilsson, “Öfvergångsformer mellan blockhus och korsvirke”, Translated from Swedish by author, In: *Studier tillägnade Oscar Montelius 19 9/9 03 af lärejungar, (*Stockholm, 1903), 168.

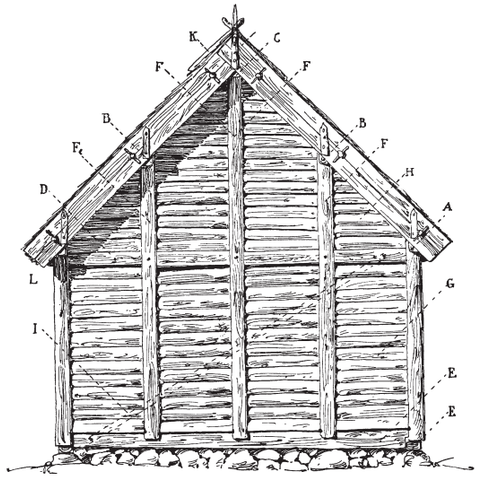


Figure 16 Elevation 1:100. Timber frame construction *(Skiftesverk)* with *Mesula*s.

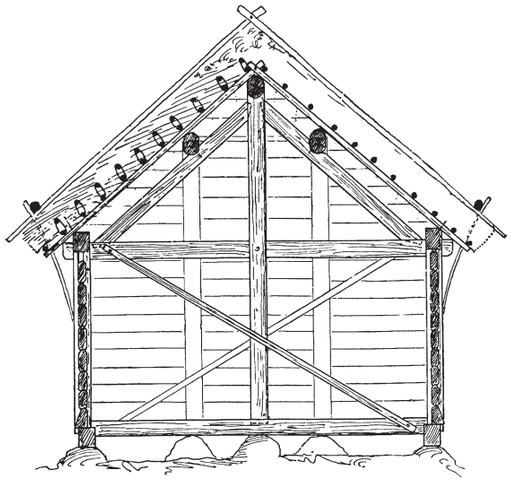


Figure 17 Section 1:100 *Mesula* construction with mid pole.

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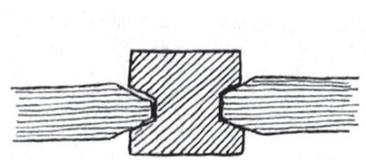
what became the traditional Swedish red cottage, which we saw in the exhibition in Stockholm in 1930.

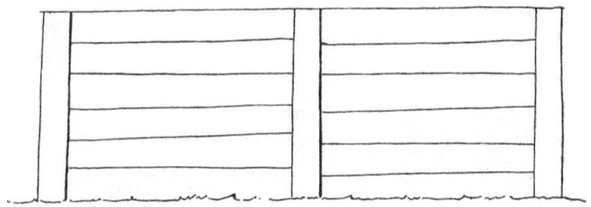
A version of the post-plank method was the so-called *Mesula* construction. The name derives back to the compound word of '*me*' and '*sula*', whereas the former means wood or middle, and the latter pole.[26] Two main types of *Mesula* constructions were mainly used, either with mid-poles as centralised supports from the base to the ridge or with poles in the perimeter of the facade. The former variant required less comprehensive ceiling constructions in order to tackle loads, as the mid pole relieved some of the forces. Since the post-plank construction could economise the use of material, it was common for buildings that were not being heated up, as barns and other economy buildings. Another advantage with the post-plank construction was the possibility to achieve open spaces with generous floor to ceiling heights, a functional quality for economy buildings.

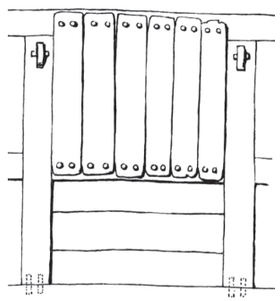
Even when the gable consisted of several *Mesula*, as figure 17 demonstrates, only one pole was used for the interior space. It seems like the aim was to use as few supports in the interior as possible, to not set back the flows of movements. Solid walls that used to subdivide a space were replaced by lighter structures that enabled movements in a more free way. It also removed the more classical notion of materiality with a certain solid-ness. Instead, the weight was directed through compres-sion lines, enclosed within the supporting pillars or poles, and the *Mesula*. Here, the limit between inner and outer space could simultaneously also be perceived almost as dissolved. When the wooden planks filtered the light from outside, the space could give a ceremonial experience similar to the atmosphere inside a Gothic church. An economy building represented a sort of life insurance for the farmers for its function as a storage for grain and seeds, so the comparison with a temple seems to be relevant.

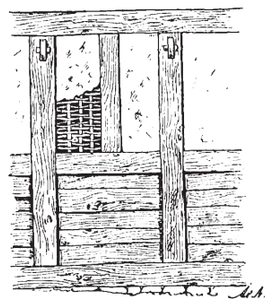
The economy buildings were built to serve for functional needs, such as storages, constructed by carpenters

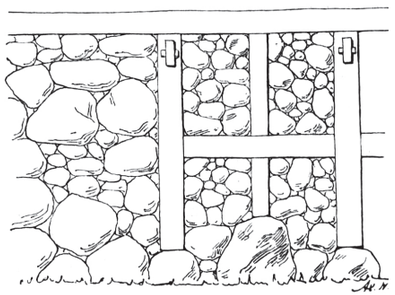
26. Sula translated as *stolpe* in Swedish, *sölje* in Danish and *säule* in Roland A German, "Mesula-konstruktioner", in *Fataburen: Kulturhistorisk tidskrift*, (Stockholm: Nordiska museets förlag, 1906), 38-44.











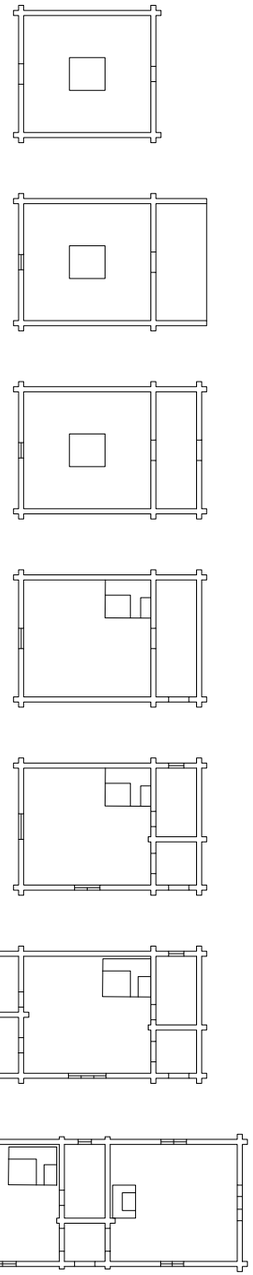
Figures 18 to 22 Timber frame constructions with different filling materials.

with local skills. Therefore, the architecture reflected the place and the people who worked there. The used materials were also local and had therefore unique attributes which enabled customised details for particular needs. *Mesula* constructions were as mentioned, mainly used for economy buildings, while houses for dwelling preferable were built as blockhouse constructions. The initial issue was that of finding sufficient material that could substitute the timber stocks, to be placed in between the vertical poles.

The interlocking corners in the log house can be seen as a gesture of a community, and an awareness for the elements that derive from nature. The joints between the wood stocks almost reflect a set of hands, closed in each other as an action of cooperation.

Going back to the form of the cottage, it is relevant to have a look at an early form of Nordic homesteads.[27] On the inside, the open fire hearth or *Äril*, took place in the very centre, surrounded by wall-benches for rest and sleep. The hole in the ceiling could invite some light into the otherwise quite shielded and dark interior. Here, the free standing hearth functioned both as heating and lighting systems and for food preparations, but also as a common place where the household could move around and gather together. In order to protect the hearth from wind, the woodcuts and the roof could be extended in the gable direction, giving an intermediate veranda or *svale* between interior and exterior. Eventually, the veranda was not sufficient enough for wind protection, so another gable wall with a door was inserted. Here, the vestibule was introduced. Yet, the wind could still find its way into the main room, so the position of the door was to be changed to the longer side. The farther part of the vestibule came to be used as storage, which later emerged into a separate small room, a so-called *kove.*[28] Notably, at the same moment as the *kove* was introduced, the middle hearth disappeared. Instead, a combined stove with an oven entered the house, taking place in the corner of the room.

27. It has been estimated that the first oven with chimney dates back to the end of 1000 century.
Axel Nilsson, “Åril, Spis och ugn”, In *Ymer tidskrift, Årgång 25. Svenska sällskapet för antropologi och geografi*, (Centraltryckeriet, Stockholm, 1906), 207.
28. John Åkerlund, “Hur allmogehem skola byggas” In: *Svenska Allmogehem*, Gustaf Carlsson, ed., (Centraltryckeriet Stockholm, 1909), 170.



Figures 23 to 29 Log constructions, development from one room to multi-room unit.

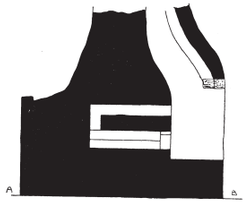
The object was still detached from the walls but with a small air gap between the woodcuts and the mortar, to protect the wall in wood from fire. Here, the stove with the oven could both serve for food cooking and to heat up the house. The tiny and fairly dark *kove* became the pantry for food storing. It has also been argued that the *kove* was the forerunner for the small kitchen.[29] Yet, since the *kove* commonly was a cold, non heated space, it was not so usual to integrate the oven to the small space, even when the stove was still in the same unit but turned towards the living room instead. Here, it was rather seen as an influence from the cities or the manors by means of posture and functionality, that confronted the peasantry character by separating the kitchen from the living space.[30]

Later extensions of the house came as results of increased needs, when the household grew and more things were accumulated to the homestead. Other domestic functions started to be more and more separated from the main living space into other units.

What followed the *Äril* came to be the open fire hearth with chimney. It was first separated from the living space into another separate building, the cooking house or kitchen, before being integrated with the living space. Here, the cooking activities also required a long-lasting, even heat which paved the way for the development of the oven. The semi enclosed object combined an oven with a stove and a semi-open fireplace or mill. Eventually, when the kitchen came to share the space with the living house, the new oven would also replace the former fire hearth. The position of the oven would then also change, from the middle part towards a corner of the room. Yet, the aim was to not place the oven too far from the middle, remembering the centralised hearth.[31]

The former hearth of the *Äril* could still be found in cottages that were used for more temporary living, related to seasonal work with agriculture. In contrast, the homesteaders of more permanent character rather used the combined oven that was built with a stove and a pallet

29. Axel Nilsson, "Äril, Spis och ugn", In *Ymer tidskrift, Årgång 25. Svenska sällskapet för antropologi och geografi*, (Centraltryckeriet, Stockholm, 1906), 207.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid., 203.



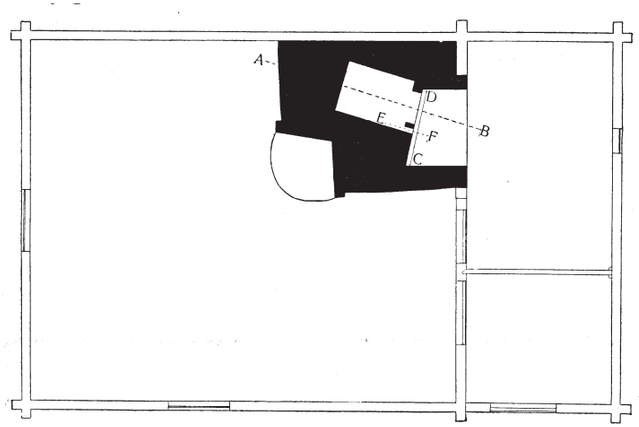


Figure 30 to 31 Section and plan of oven in Nordic homestead.

or mine in the front and a common chimney leading the smoke outside. It has been argued that the displacement of the hearth towards the corner was foremost due to practical concerns, on the one hand to even out the heat radiation, on the other hand to liberate the space around. Another reason was to enable subdivision of the space into smaller rooms as a way to control the household better and build storages. The latter was foremost due to the increased accumulation of things, when the household grew.[32]

It is almost contradictory to study the new configuration of the former single-room-house when it became the multi-room-house. Here, the functions in the household came to share the space instead. With the built-in beds, bench, table and shelf, the overall appearance was to be seen as purposeful, durable and tasteful, with not much of unnecessary things.[33] When the kitchen became integrated within the dwelling house, the physical limit between the functions were sometimes vague, except for a bar that used to subdivide the space.[34] The bar went from the protruding part of the stove across the room, which had been covered by a wall earlier on. During festive occasions, the beam could also function as support to hang up different utility things and fabrics, as decoration or to subdivide the space. The pavement of the floor would also differ between the kitchen part and the rest of the cottage, as stone was more resistant than the surrounding wood floor. Here, the stove with the oven became a multifunctional asset for the combined kitchen and living room as it was used for both food preparation and heating source for the space.

So, the fire source of the kitchen which in the common form was the baking oven, and the fire source of the cabin became integrated, and simultaneously also the masonry between the oven and stove was gone, so that the plate for the stove and the pall for the oven shared the same form. When resources of wood was limited, when the peasants could not use so much of it for heating up the space, they introduced the lighting stove (*lysspis*).

32. Jerry Moore, “Sedentism and domestication developed when people had too much stuff”, in *The Prehistory of Home*, 2012, from the seminar “Theory and criticism of domestic space”, Pier Vittorio Aureli (EPFL, 2020)
33. Helena Mattsson and Sven-Olov Wallenstein, eds., *Swedish Modernism: Architecture, Consumption and the Welfare State,* (London: Black Dog, 2010), 140.
34. Axel Nilsson, “Åril, Spis och ugn”, In *Ymer tidskrift, Årgång 25. Svenska sällskapet för antropologi och geografi*, (Centraltryckeriet, Stockholm, 1906), 207.

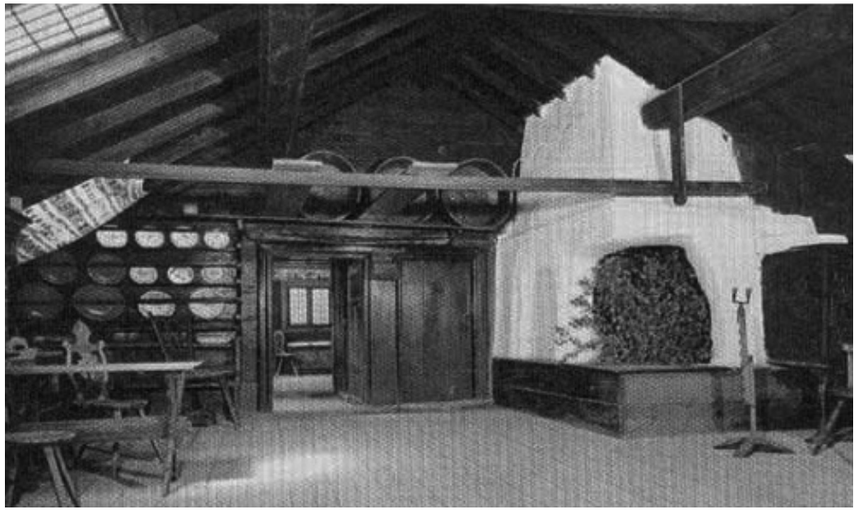


Figure 32 View of living room in homestead at Skansen, Stockholm.

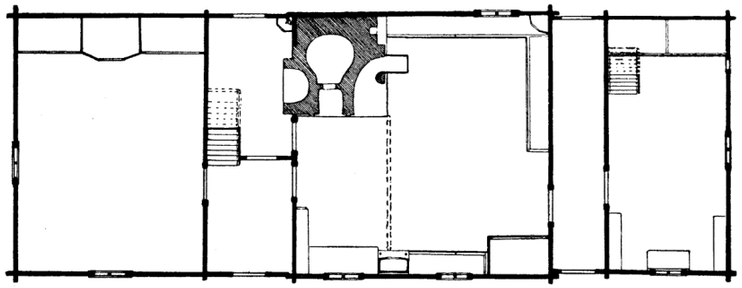


Figure 33 Plan of homestead cottage at Skansen, 1:200 Stockholm.

The intervention came into place by taking away three or four bricks from the masonry, giving a special light for dark evenings.[35] The combined kitchen came to stay for long in the peasant homes. It is notable how the presence of the masonry was of value, both for functional reasons but also spatially. The kitchen could even take up a majority of the living space, serving as a midpoint for the whole household. It becomes evident how one could achieve a spatial lightness by going beyond the separation of functions into different buildings, and instead share spaces in a broader sense. Here, one can also imagine how the beam that was subdividing the space became functional in its tectonic form. The room gives the impression of being solid but light, and it seems to resist the separation of spaces for different functions, which would become a central theme, analogous to the modern.

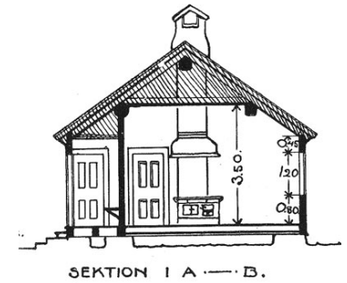
> *So shall also the kitchen and the living space be integrated into the same room, so that the fire hearth of the kitchen, the baking oven, becomes integrated with the fire hearth of the cottage, the stove, into one single form. The very form should always be placed with the opening towards the room, from where its fire should be able to serve as well for lightning.*[36]

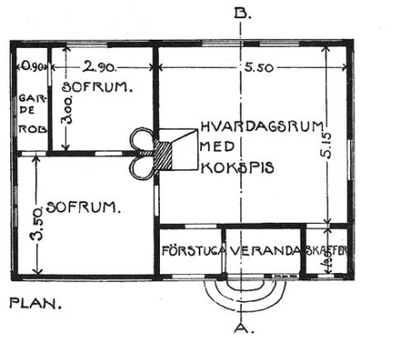
35. Ibid., 209.
36. Ibid., 207.

Figure 34 Friends in conversation in a living room. A warm and pleasant light, while the Nordic night outdoors is depicted as cold.

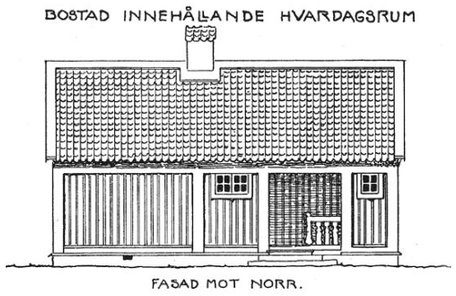
In a climate where culture becomes a global concept (...) certain forms of resistance seem to develop that find added value in the locality of given.[37]

37. Kenneth Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six points for an Architecture of Resistance" in: *Hal Foster (ed.), The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, (Washington: Bay Press, 1983), 16-30.





Figures 35a to b Floor plan and section 1:100, by Ragnar Östberg. Notice the generous floor to ceiling height in the room, measuring up to 3.5 meter, as well the centralised fire place which becomes a place to circulate and gather around.



Figures 35c Facade elevation 1:100, by Ragnar Östberg. The framed timber facade of the exterior is designed accordingly the interior, and not to achieve a certain symmetry.

A home

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, the Swedish architecture debate focused on how to establish an everyday culture that was rooted in national values. In the front stood a group of architects with Ragnar Östberg amongst others. Östberg was one of the first to react towards the international eclectic tendencies of the nineteenth century, by questioning cosmopolitan architecture. Instead, he addressed the need for Sweden to rediscover vernacular and traditional architecture, which until the late 1880s had been observed as almost untouchable.

In the small book *A Home*, Ragnar Östberg presents five small projects of homes in vernacular settings. They are directly inspired by traditional rural constructions, built with local materials in modest forms. Östberg talks about the close relation between interior intimacy and the outer openness, with particular emphasis on light conditions for the setting in the Nordic landscape. Perhaps, also echoing the home of his own, remembered as open and light with furniture from older epochs, including a stunning sky-bed with dark velvet drapes; “a small enclosed room within the larger one.[38]“ Östberg introduces the compass as the most valuable device to set out the direction of the home. Once the location is set, one must think about the interior.

Östberg stresses the value of always building accordingly the sun, especially with the dark Nordic winter in mind. If the site allows it, even surrounding infrastructure and views are subordinated to the light. Towards the south-west direction, one should layout the spaces which correspond to the living room of the home. East is the preferable direction for sleeping, thus, who would not mind, especially during winter, to wake up with the sunrise. Furthermore, Östberg argues on the layout towards north, as the preferable direction for utilitarian and economy rooms such as kitchen, storage and vestibule. He thoroughly investigates and describes all parts of a home, stretching from the roof construction to the facade.

38. Ragnar Östberg, *A Home (Ett Hem)* (Albert Bonnier Förlag, Stockholm, 1906), 2.

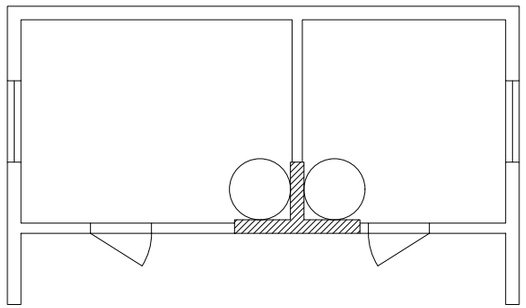


Figure 36 Floor plan layout of first small room, 1:100, by Ragnar Östberg. An interior which has solid surfaces with occasional windows is more beneficial for the eyes, because of the contrast which emerges between the broken part of the wall and the opening.

0 2

Östberg emphasizes the importance of making the home of one's own personal, and not neglect the spaciousness and comfort of living room with kitchen and bedrooms for the sake of posture.[39] The kitchen would be the most essential, serving as the living room and would therefore have a generous size, not less than twenty-five square meters. Some would insist on keeping the parlour before making a living room out of it, as it could save money to not heat up the space while there were no guests there. Others would argue that the kitchen should not be exposed for visitors, therefore a smaller size was sufficient enough for the one person working there. Östberg argues for neither the former nor the latter. The ideal layout of the small cottage was rather based on two generous rooms, one for food and another for rest. The position of the stove had to be organized well, thus to optimize air exhaust of smells from food. The second room would be planned accordingly to the amount of beds that the household needed.

The amount of windows would preferably be reduced for functional reasons. Many openings make the room windy and therefore also expensive to heat up. Here, the old farms and timber-framed houses can be seen as forerunners for their sparingly light transmissions from the outside. The form of the windows should follow the overall character of the building, thus, low windows for low buildings and reversed for higher forms. With openings on each wall, the illumination can become unpleasant, giving no calm for the eyes. One should likewise remember that windows are there to light up a room, and not to decorate a façade.[40]

The modest rooms (figures 48 and 49) demonstrate a first and a second version of the same floor plan model. Whereas the former is less successful according to Östberg with the double doors that interconnect the rooms and windows on each side, the latter is preferable with liberated walls for less openings. Hence a strict economisation of doors makes the room perceived as more spacious

39. Ragnar Östberg, *Ett Hem,* (Albert Bonnier Förlag, Stockholm, 1906), 7.
40. Ibid, 8.

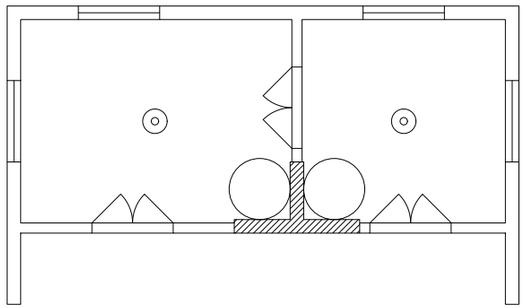


Figure 37 Floor plan layout of first small room, 1:100, by Ragnar Östberg. An interior which has several openings can evoke a discomfort and also bring a fragile and vacuous impression of the building.

and gives it a calmer feeling, counteracting the anxiety of a room that can be passed through.[41] And the roof hook, which is not useful anymore, can be taken away along with its "unsightly plaster rosette.[42]"

Learning from the cities, where the living conditions had decreased with the rapid growth in population, Östberg sees the critical outcome for the generous chimney room and the chamber, when the dense and overcrowded city-life starts to influence the countryside. Whereas the speculative market of the city dwellings made each square meter valuable, it also paved the way for subdivision of space into smaller rooms. Here, Östberg takes a stance, towards greed and the cosmopolitan. Therefore, his "guidebook" is rather intended for the more modest way of living and demonstrates how a building can attain expediency even by small, but thoughtful means. Despite the modest gesture of the home of two rooms, it address a particular consciousness, of flexibility for different forms of life that can take place there. With the advice to think about beauty as something which is as much rooted in the purposeful as when things are made with pleasure, Östberg refers to Ellen Key, recalling what would be the main slogan in her manifesto Beauty for everyone.[43] Key would addresses the two terms "Everyday beauty" and "Festive customs" which was rooted in the Arts and crafts movement at the turn of the nineteenth century, to be expressed within the homes of people. By designing the home personal for one's own, one could develop taste and artistic sensibility, hence the slogan by Key.

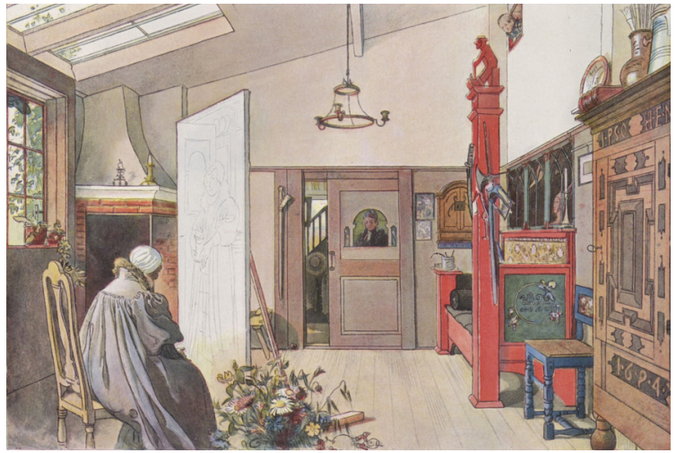
Even if the pastoral idyll of the cottage life on the countryside can be seen as one resistance towards the industrialisation, with focus on individual spheres of life, the vernacular came to be the forerunner for urban settings as well. As a matter of acceptance, a following issue was of course how to make the national cope with the universal. Here we shall see that national values could serve as a guide for a new, everyday modern vernacular.

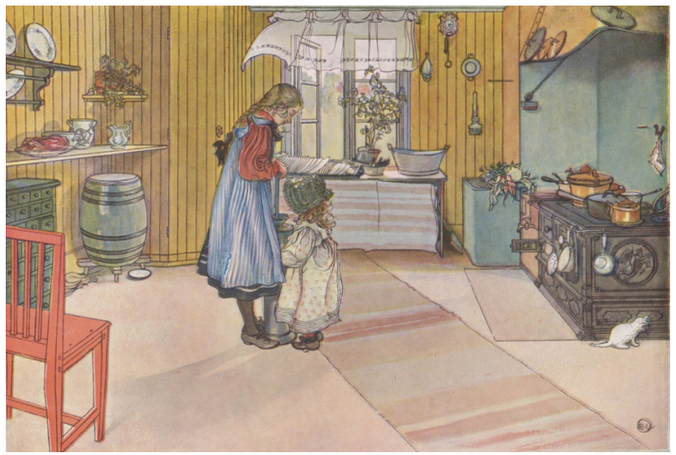
41. Ragnar Östberg, *A Home (Ett Hem)* (Albert Bonnier Förlag, Stockholm, 1906), 11.
42. Ibid., 10. Translated from Swedish by author:*"Varigenom takkroken, för vilken ej längre någon användning finnes, kan bortfalla jämte sin vanprydande gipsrosett."*
43. Ibid., 13. (Translated from swedish by author: "*Glöm inte att det vackra ligger lika mycket i det fulländat ändamålsenliga som i det enbart för behag tillblivna")*

Figure 38 Midsummer dance 1987, Anders Zorn. The festive occasion celebrates the midsummer light, with dance around a decorated pole. It can be seen as a tree, or reminiscent of the mesula, but a free standing one.

Above us the sky, as clear and deep blue as I have ever seen it, such a timbre about that colour, I had the constant impression of the sky as a vault, a tremendous blue-painted dome.[44]

44. "E. G. Asplund, Travel Sketchbook, March 4th 1914. The English translation is taken from Elias Cornell, *The sky as a vault...,"* In: Luca Ortelli, "Dissolution of Architectonic Space" in *Swedish Grace. The forgotten modern. (*Stockholm, Axel and Margaret Ax:son Johnson Foundation, 2015), 78.





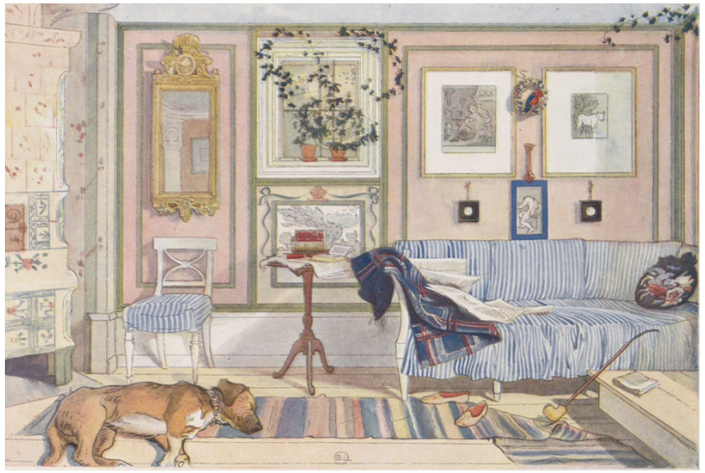
Figures 39 to 41 Paintings by Carl Larsson. Open air atelier, Workshop atelier, the kitchen.

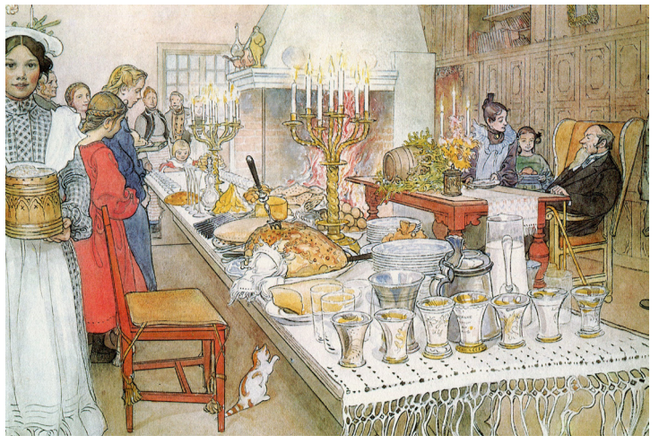
Hyttenäs

In a northern town in Sweden, one finds a vernacular project of domestic form. *Hyttenäs* was the home of the artist couple Larssons and their family at the turn of the nineteenth century. The house has in fact been a reference for many people since then, as a discovery for domestic interiors through the several paintings of the family and the house. The paintings depict a vernacular home, whose architectural forms reflect a setting in nature with indoor and outdoor rooms in correlation, a sort of dissolution of space. The house demonstrated the value of making the home personal, and not for the sake of posture or representative aims. It was also caring for the living to not be uncomfortable, which simultaneously could affect the working activities in a negative manner. Hyttenäs became analogous to the confrontation between the national and nostalgic vernacular with the openness and progress of the new modern. As an answer to the particular time, the household found expression in arts and crafts.

At Hyttenäs, common spaces for both leisure and work shared a central part of the house. *Hyttenäs* was thus a place where household work was seen as natural actions. As the Larssons' were artists, their daily life focused around work in ateliers. The work could take place both inside and outside, as the place in the garden underneath the tree offered as much daylight as the indoor atelier next to the vestibule. Indeed, the generous light on the inside had to do with the new large windows on the pitched ceiling where much light could enter. Here, other notable details could be seen such as the sliding door towards the vestibule, making it possible to open up the atelier almost seamlessly towards the other room. Another detail was the pole of the couch, functioning both as a support and colour cabinet.[45] Yet, when the new and larger atelier came to replace the old one, but in the opposite part of the house, the former atelier could function as a workshop for the children. The kitchen is depicted as a separate but generous room.

45. Carl Larsson, *Ett hem: 24 målningar*, (Albert Bonniers Förlag Stockholm, 1899), 11.



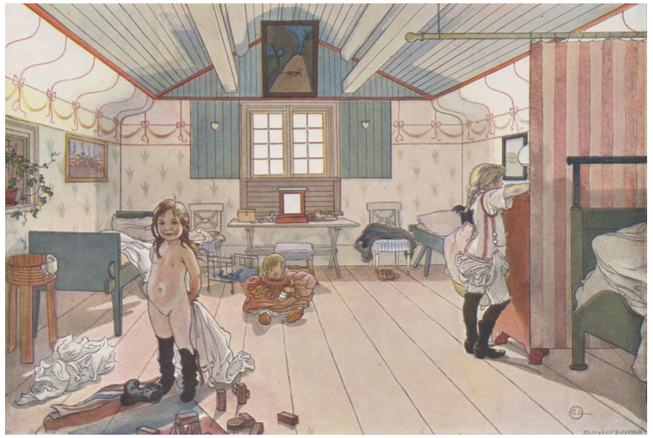


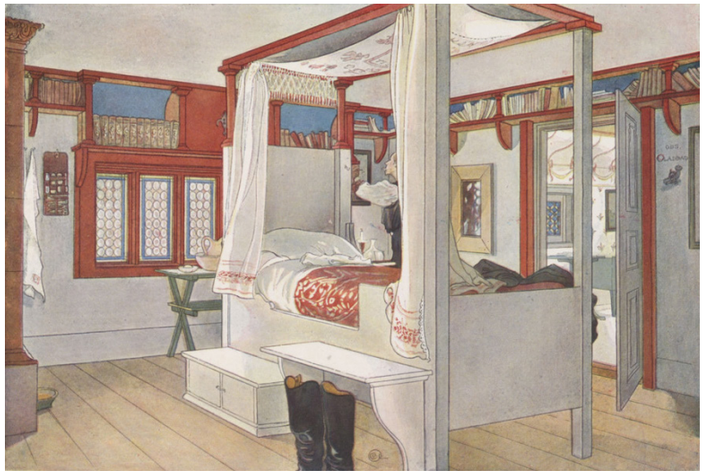
Figures 42 to 44 Paintings by Carl Larsson. The sleeping corner, Christmas dinner, Breakfast underneath the tree.

One winter, during our absence, the kitchen was to be refurbished and then they took the opportunity to remove the old stove (the one by huge boulders) and in its place came that ridiculous pathetic iron box, adorned with these engineering ornaments, these horrible insensitive scrolls, which you see everywhere and on everything. The sheet metal cover replaced the old masonry mantle. When I first saw the vandalism, I was not glad. To save the sacred stones of the hearth, I constructed between the cherry bushes, a bench and a table, where in the summers we could drink our afternoon coffee.[46]

Here, it is clear how modernity entered the house without being able to cope with the trust of the household. One can interpret how the old stove used to be of value, perhaps on a symbolic as much of a functional level. When the stove became reduced to only serve for one function, as that of food preparation, the former hearth was probably missed for its comprehensiveness, where the heating aspect had been as much of value as the cooking function. Thus, the modern iron stove became analogous to the new modern that focused around specialised instead of universal tools. Indeed, if one considers the fact that the stones from the hearth were reused for another purpose as a place for gatherings, the loss of the stove was probably even more related to emotional feelings than functional ones. Their consciousness of a certain backwardness became a fact. In other words, a small collective in the form of a household which showed resistance to not be dissolved, by rejecting the modern. As a compromise towards the resistance, the household came to introduce quite original spatial methods, to accept the modern openand lightness and to make the space infinite to a certain extent, but delimited at the same time.

46. Carl Larsson, *Ett hem: 24 målningar*, (Albert Bonniers Förlag Stockholm, 1899), 12.





Figures 45 to 47 Bed rooms on second floor. Notice the free standing bed in the middle of the room, a small room in the larger. Festive moments are depicted in the summer room at the storage house.

It's supposed to be healthy having the bed on the middle of the floor, which I did not know until later, in fact when the position was already decided. We cover the walls of the room from time to time with chalk and glue water in order to make them as clean and shiny as if the room was in heaven. But look, in the other room you will find the children. The most delightful living takes place there, so it is not for nothing that Karin made the comparison with a theatre. Even if the former flat roof was nice, I had to cut it down anyway to make place for more air to circulate. We also replaced one of the side windows with smaller ones in the fond.[47]

The upper rooms address another level of spatial conception than on the floor below. Here, heaven is invited to take part of the room, to give the experience of sleeping underneath an open sky. One can imagine that the atmosphere got stronger by the contrasting colours between the plain walls and the roof ridge, turning from white to velvet blue. Thus, even if a building may not have a visual contact to the outside, it can likewise open out to the sky and its light in other ways.[48] In the second room, the canopy or sky bed with home-woven curtains, seems to give the same experience. The free standing position could reasonably also take part of the space conception, in addition to the desire of making the room airy and healthy. In contrast, the other beds are all wall-mounted, which gives the illusion that the walls disappear, or become more solid as if they were inhabited. The gable room of the house became transformed from a woodshed into a storage house *(härbärge)* and a summer room for the children, constructed by modest planks and wall-mounted beds along the walls. Here, festive holiday moments influenced the daily life, all depicted in the paintings.

47. Carl Larsson, *Ett hem: 24 målningar*, (Albert Bonniers Förlag Stockholm, 1899), 13.
48. Gunnar Asplund, "*1945, Nils Ahrbom, Spatial Design: Philosophy or Architecture?*" In: Nordic Architects write, Michael Asgaard Andersen, ed., (Routledge, Abingdon, 1996), 326.

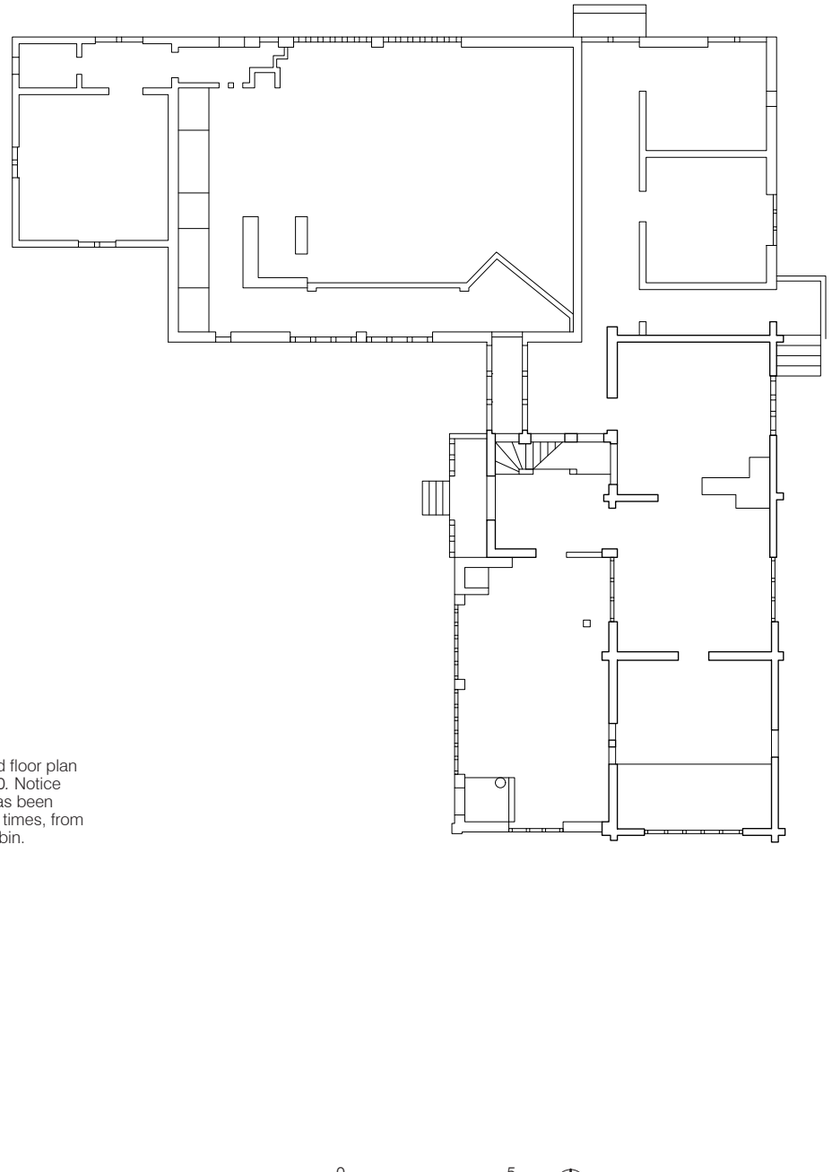


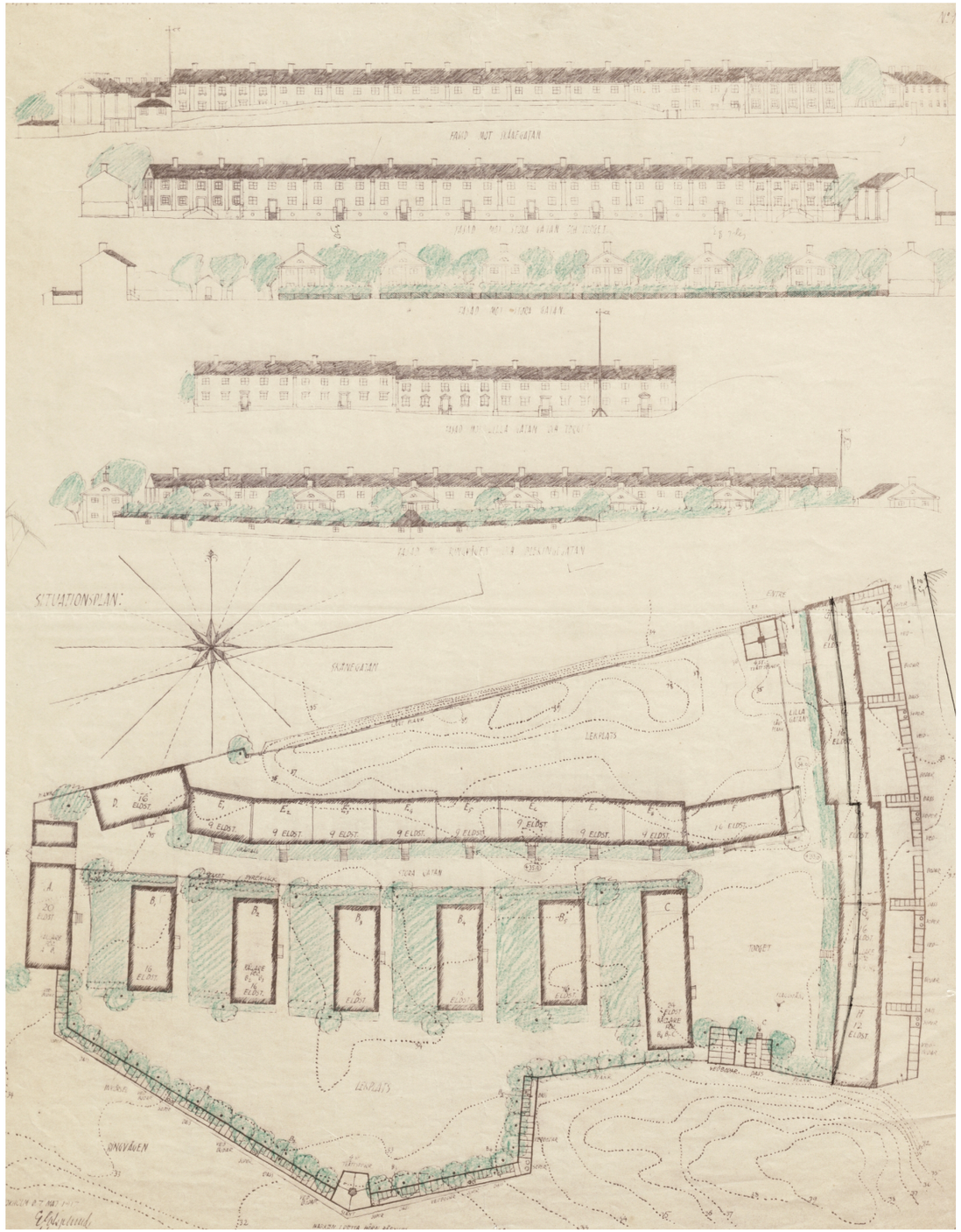
Figure 48 Ground floor plan of *Hyttenäs,* 1:200. Notice how the house has been extended several times, from the former log cabin.

Taking a closer look at the architectural form, other spatial ideas become visible. The floor plan shows several layers of different times in the organisation of the house. Hyttenäs was in fact built on and re-constructed by the family each summer. From being a modest, fairly solid log cabin with three parallel rooms and vestibule, the cottage became much more loose in its direction, almost dissolved while being transformed. The gradual transformation reflected changing circumstances of the family and the setting around, and responded to functional and personal needs, in "festive moments and through joyful efforts.[49]"The house can therefore be interpreted almost as a movement, while at the same time being very permanent.

The will to open up the solid walls to let in the light reflected the movements as well. Notice the sequence from the vestibule, going to the new atelier space in the north. The opposite opening for the stair leads to the small corridor in light where one can reach the second corridor that functioned as a walking library. The turning point became the inclined wall, standing in the new atelier room with double ceiling height. Here, the corner disappears which increases a sense of another space beyond the wall, which is the atelier space that follows behind the walking library.

The whole project becomes a rejection towards "unbearable alignments," in Larsson's own words.[50] With the stories from the paintings in mind, one can understand how the space conception reflects the changing circumstances for both the family and the setting around. However, It was thought by some that the paintings depicted more rooms than they actually did, whereas Larssons' pointed out that they were just made from different points of views but often from the same rooms. A rich variety of space perceptions could therefore be experienced. The paintings become representations of a shared domesticity, depicting the household whose daily lives occupies the whole frame. The particular realism is represented without filters, showing a reality of a house and its daily life.

49. Ellen Key, "Beauty for all", In: *Modern Swedish Design: Three Founding Texts*, Uno Åhrén, Lucy Creagh and Kenneth Frampton, ed., (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2008), 52.
50. Carl Larsson, *Ett hem: 24 målningar*, (Albert Bonniers Förlag Stockholm, 1899), 3.



Stativet and Tumstocken

At the turn of the twentieth century, the Swedish living was still very rooted within rural settings of the countryside. Half of the population was active with the agricultural industry, where living and working were still closely linked on a spatial level. Others would earn their living by working in factories, where the living and working activities started to become increasingly separated. Many people had searched their way into the cities, with the hope to fulfil dreams about urban experiences and to find unknown but promised freedom. One can read in the novel *The city of my dreams (Mina drömmars stad)* about the turn of the century, how the young boy Henning walks on the muddy roads from the countryside towards Stockholm.[51]

With the urbanisation came the issue of how to deal with the rapid growth of the population, as the housing shortage could not provide enough homes for the people. Essential to mention is how desperate the housing situation was. It has even been described as the worst anywhere in Europe at that time. For instance, the average size of all homes in Stockholm consisted of one room with a kitchen, and 60 percent were missing central heating.[52] Therefore, the living conditions for the workers became an urgent issue to deal with. People lived in overcrowded apartments, most often sharing a tiny space with several others of a household. The cities initiated projects for emergency housing, as a way to tackle the housing issue. *Stativet och Tumstocken* came to be one answer, designed by Gunnar Asplund and built in 1917-1918 at Södermalm in Stockholm. The very name of the project was perhaps echoing the particular time, as the tripod for *Stativ* could stand for the artisan, while the meterstick for *Tumstock* served for calculations. In other words, the customised and personalised next to the standardised. However, the manner in which the housing project was developed gave each of its parts a personal character, without being intuitively related to standardisation. Described as a small idyll derived from the pattern of old houses and valleys, the

51. Refers to the series *The city of my dreams Mina Drömmars Stad* by Per Anders Fogelström,1963.
52. Atli Magnus Hubertsson Seelow, et al., *Reconstructing the Stockholm Exhibition 1930 = Stockholmsutställningen 1930 Rekonstruerad. 1st ed.* (Stockholm: Arkitektur Förlag, 2016), 122.

Figure 49 (previous page) Stativet and Tumstocken in Stockholm, Gunnar Asplund. Elevations and plan. Notable is how the buildings are defined on the plan according to the amount of fireplaces in each house.

Figure 50 Stativet and Tumstocken in Stockholm, Gunnar Asplund. View from the western entrance. Liliac bushes are planted between the “big street” and the gables of the houses.

Figure 51 Stativet and Tumstocken situated in the landscape. Notice the uneven ground, and the bases of the houses relate to the ground. Textiles are drying, close by the common laundry facility in the service buildings.

project could be related to a rural setting, but within the more urban context of a city.[53] Even if the physical existence of the project did not last for long (in fact less than fifty years due to a devastating fire in 1965, which led to the demolition of the buildings shortly after) the very project deserves attention for its relevance in the modern vernacular sense. One can notice how Asplund paid attention to the subtle refinements of everyday life, yet with a rational sense, to enable the apartments to be built efficiently, for the people in need. The quarter took part of the surrounding fabric, yet with a personal gesture as the positioning of the houses did not imitate the neighbours. Instead, the ensemble was organised according to the sun, with the longest ‘back’ building as a front towards the secondary street in north, and the perpendicular bars directed with the gables towards south. Thus, even if Ringvägen towards south can be considered to be the main street, it served of secondary importance, to welcome the light to enter between the bars instead. Indeed, the definition of the project as “anti-urban[54]” seems to be relevant, for the rejection of planned alignments. Instead, the relation with nature was the one preferred to be maintained. The generous greenery in between the houses also demonstrated how Asplund paid attention to the relation with nature.

With the base in concrete, the houses could adapt to the uneven topography that mainly consisted of stones, while shifting in levels depending on the location of each house. The concrete also prevented moisture from reaching the upper levels, where the facade changed into a standing wooden panel. An advantage with the wood construction was that it could be assembled as well as dismantled efficiently. The wood panel differed in subtle nuances by mean of colours and detailing, while maintaining an overall coherence in gestures and forms. Another notable detail was the white pilasters that separated some of the blocks, that gave a classical rhythm to the facade. Classicism had gained a new relevance which was based on the relation between the bearing and the supported

53. Sven Wallander, “About the construction of housing during crisis” (Om kristidens bostadsbyggen) Arkitektur, 1920, n.3. In: “Stativet och Tumstocken. Un projet de logements d’urgence d’Erik Gunnar Asplund”, Luca Ortelli, in *Matières n. 14,* (EPFL, 2018), 156-165.
54. Luca Ortelli, “Stativet och Tumstocken. Un projet de logements d’urgence d’Erik Gunnar Asplund”, in *Matières, n. 14,* (EPFL, 2018), 3.

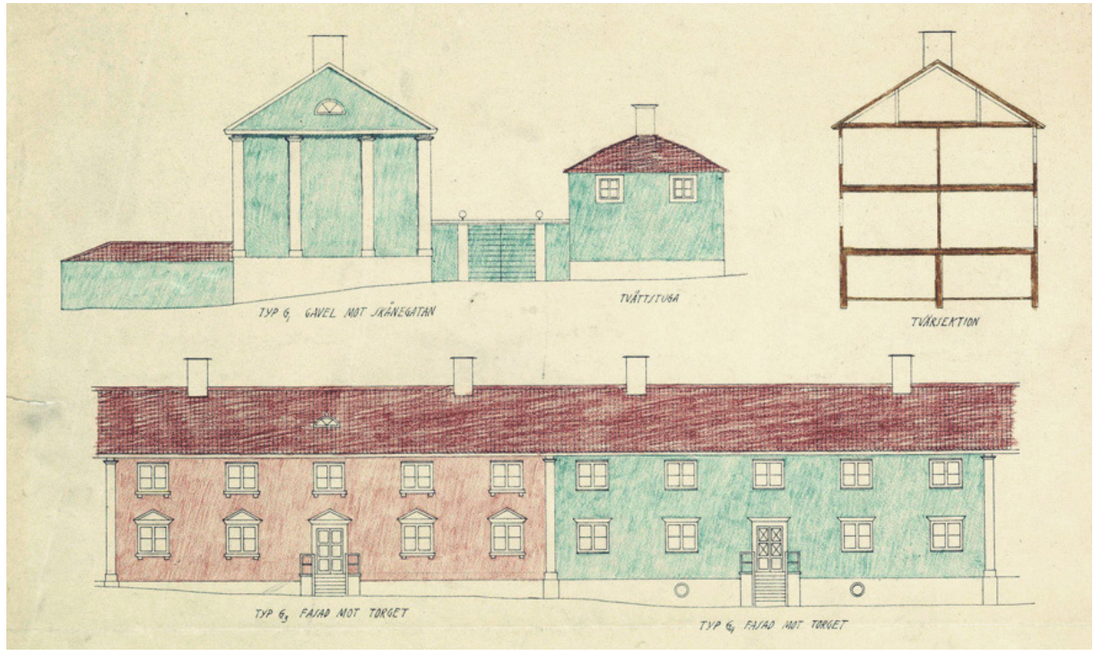


Figure 52 Stativet and Tumstocken in Stockholm, Gunnar Asplund. Floor plans and elevations, 1:400.

which was referred to in the context of modern technological developments.[55] Here, the pilasters also underlined the presence of the square towards the east.[56] It was almost as they recalled the gesture of a timber frame construction, with the vertical supports visible to determine the joint before a new timber stock. The pilasters also enhanced the positions of the apartments.

Common facilities such as collective laundry, dry toilets (which were determined by economic reasons and not a matter of choice by Asplund,[57] but simultaneously solved by Asplund in a relevant manner), garbage and storages for wood were located towards south, where their low but solid forms sheltered the garden from the street. Yet another trace from the vernacular, where functional utilities could be focused in common spaces, to be shared by the inhabitants.

While looking more closely at the floor plans, one finds the basic disposition of two room apartments. Their forms are generous with an average size of 14 square meters and floor to ceiling height of 2.85 meters. The living room and the kitchen shared the same space which also was the first room to be entered in the longitudinal types. Here, one can recognise the small room layout made by Östberg, reminiscent of the vernacular types. In the transition between the rooms, one could find the only masonry element including hydraulic pipes and stove chimneys, closely accessible to both of the two rooms. Notably was the small kitchen niche for food preparation, which was not enclosed but sharing the space with the rest of the room. The position of the masonry enabled a certain freedom for the facade, while taking care of the loads from the floors above. In that sense, it recalled the *Mesula* on a vernacular level. At the same time, the masonry was also reminiscent of the centralised fire heart of the *Äril*, where activities of daily life were to be focused around. It was therefore serving as a multifunctional asset for the living room while also heating up the space. Yet, the masonry had a modern touch as the stove with oven were not included but

55. Claes Caldenby and Erik Nygaard, *Arkitekturteoriernas historia* (Stockholm: Formas, 2011), 236.
56. Luca Ortelli, "Stativet och Tumstocken. Un projet de logements d'urgence d'Erik Gunnar Asplund", in *Matières, n. 14,* (EPFL, 2018), 7.
57. Ibid.

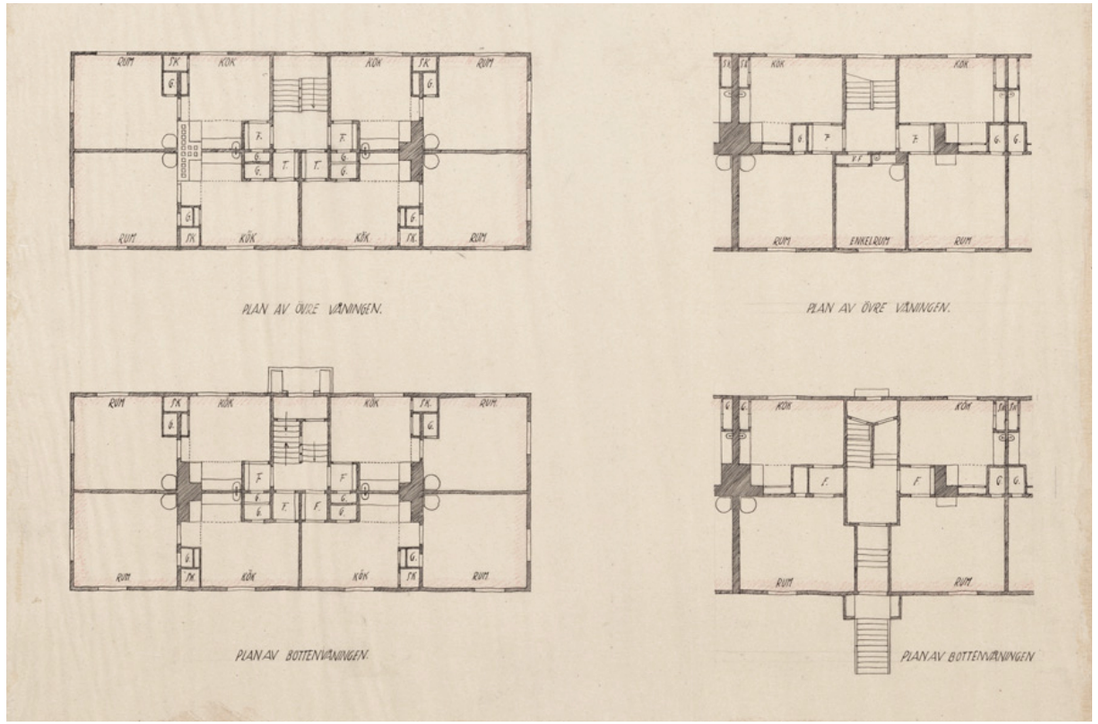


Figure 53 Stativet and Tumstocken in Stockholm, Gunnar Asplund. Floor plans of two different housing types 1:400.

separated from the chimney. Instead, the niche was equipped with a modern gas kitchen, still keeping the position close to the heating source of the fireplace. *Stativet* and *Tumstocken* are certainly relevant in the modern vernacular sense. It was noticed how Asplund cared for the interior as a starting point for a coherence with the exterior, so that the inside and the outside could be perceived as "one single whole.[58]"Perhaps also recalling the words of Asplund himself, being "dynamic by nature.[59]"

Asplund would demonstrate the idea of the combined living room with kitchen in the Home Exhibition in 1917, being more described further on. Yet, the kitchen home got criticised for its "false idyll[60]" by some people who believed that it was not relevant to socialise the kitchen into a living room as such. A visitor of the exhibition complained that it most likely would contribute to an "obscuring reality" that was unacceptable.

Of course, the critique needs to be put into a larger context on both a constructive and social level. Firstly, the introduction of the gas stove which later came to be electric, still implied fumes and noises which was considered to be disturbing for the comfort of the living room. Especially when it came to smaller, overcrowded apartments, where people often had to sleep in the kitchen on a pull-out sofa, as a result of the limited space.

When the industrialisation pushed modernity forward, the separation between living and working space increased as mentioned before. Workers left their homes to earn money somewhere else, before coming back home again. The home was thus being seen as a place for rest. Meanwhile, another part of the daily work was forced to stay at home, since the home could not take care of itself. The household work in the home became privatised and seen as a natural duty, or a "work of love.[61]" Others would define the household work as being unpaid labour, addressing the need to introduce wages for housework. Here, the modern vernacular with the combined living room with kitchen came to meet resistance.

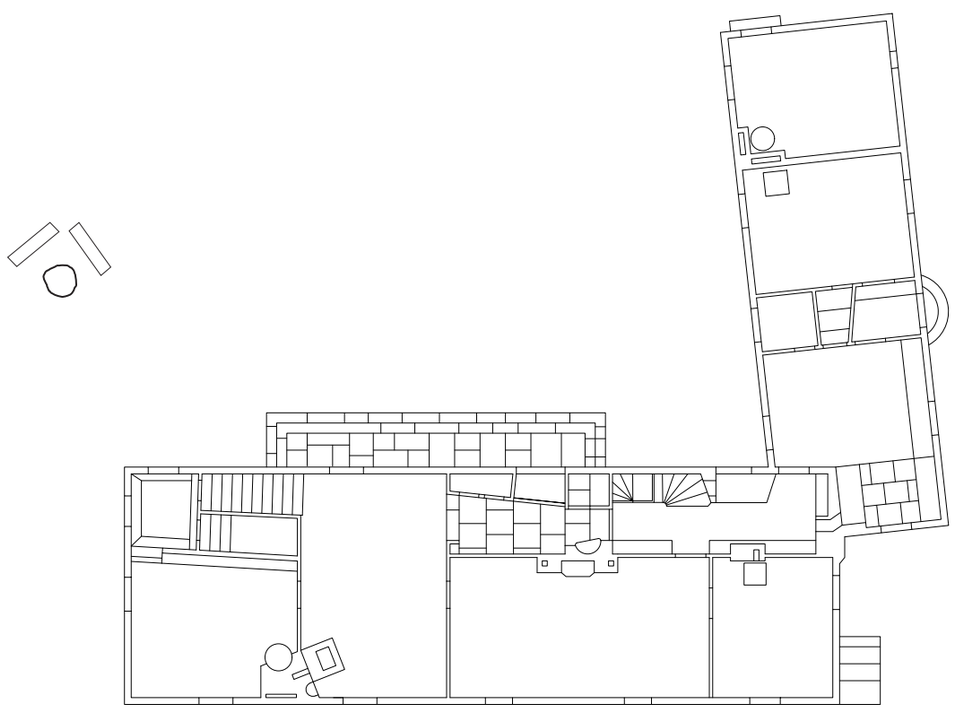
58. Nils Ahrbom, "1945, Spatial Design: Philosophy or Architecture?", In: *Nordic Architects write,* Michael Asgaard Andersen, ed., (Routledge, Abingdon, 1996), 326.
59. Ibid.
60. Per I Gedin, *När Sverige blev modernt: Gregor Paulsson, Vackrare vardagsvara, funktionalismen och Stockholmsutställningen 1930,* (Albert Bonniers Förlag, 2018), 75.
61. "Work of love" refers to the emotional work in the home while raising children and taking care of the household.

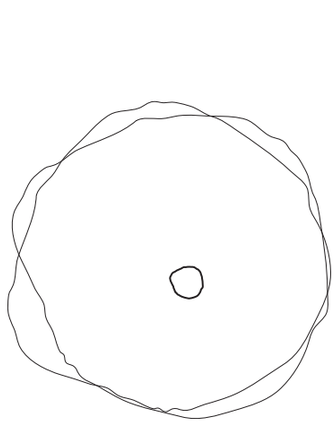
Figure 54 Villa Snellman, Gunnar Asplund. Illustration. Notice the presence of the trees with the bench below the leafs, as if the visitor would enter the house through the door of the forest.

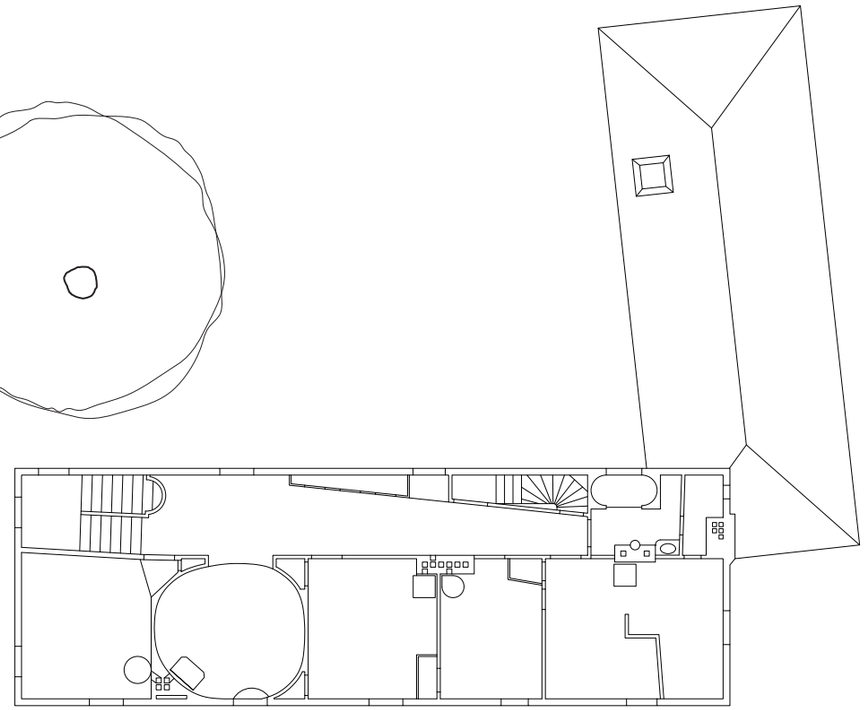
Villa Snellman

The same period of time as the project Stativet Tumstocken was built, Asplund also realised another housing project, *Villa Snellman*. Yet, in another scale for a private client, but the form is relevant to mention in the modern vernacular sense. The building rejected the villa width of two rooms, for one and a half room instead[62]. The light conditions were then improved, thanks to the slender form and airy interior. Asplund most likely had the peasant homesteads in mind with the sequence of rooms in a row that could be extended lengthwise. The centralised heat sources of fireplaces with unsymmetrical positions can also be seen as expressions of the same tendency. Also, the organisation of domestic functions is similar to the vernacular, with a separation of functions into different rooms. Yet, since the rooms share the same form, one can imagine them being used in different ways. Even the broken corner between the two buildings, follows the unsymmetrical angles of how vernacular homesteads were grouped around a courtyard. Here, the angle between the two forms is more closed than open. Perhaps, the gesture holds the building together in a more intimate manner, as with the benches in the waiting room of the crematorium chapel. The point where the two buildings meet is in the joint of the half room corridor, so that it opens up in the corner, giving an intermediate connection. In the vernacular farmsteads, the joints were to be found where the wood stocks were interlocked for constructive reasons, so that movements had to take place outside if one wanted to go from one building to another. In the Asplund project, the enclosed courtyard is however missing. Maybe the reason has to do with the rather modern way of perceiving space, about the need to move within a dissolved space, while staying within the same form and not being delimited or enclosed by other forms around. Asplund thus demonstrated how infinite space was a primordial symbol for Villa Snellman, as for Stativet and Tumstocken.

62. Gustav Holmdahl, et al., *Gunnar Asplund, Arkitekt : 1885-1940 : Ritningar, Skisser Och Fotografier.* Second edition ed. (Stockholm: Byggförlaget, 1981), 38.

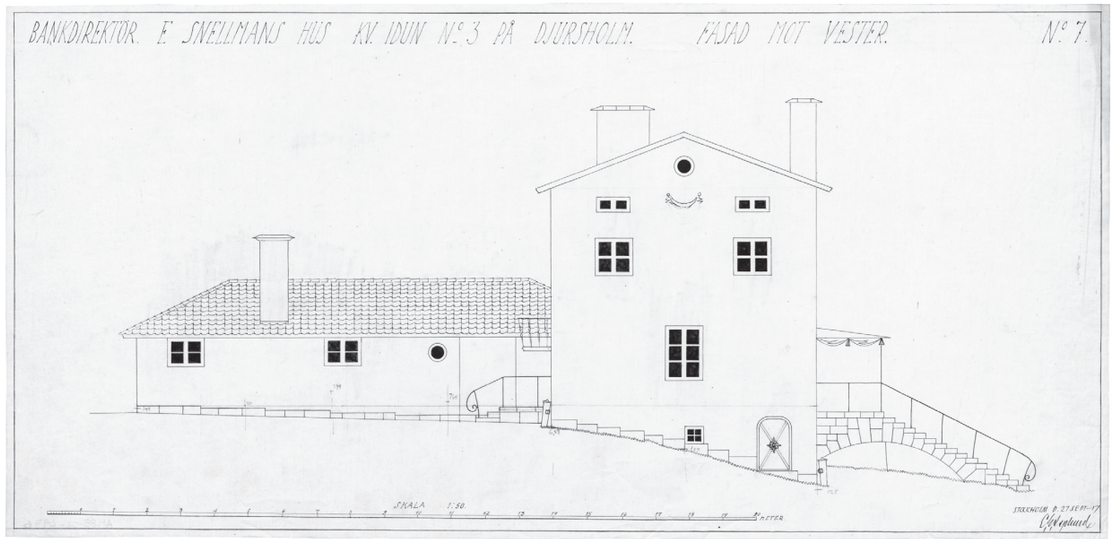


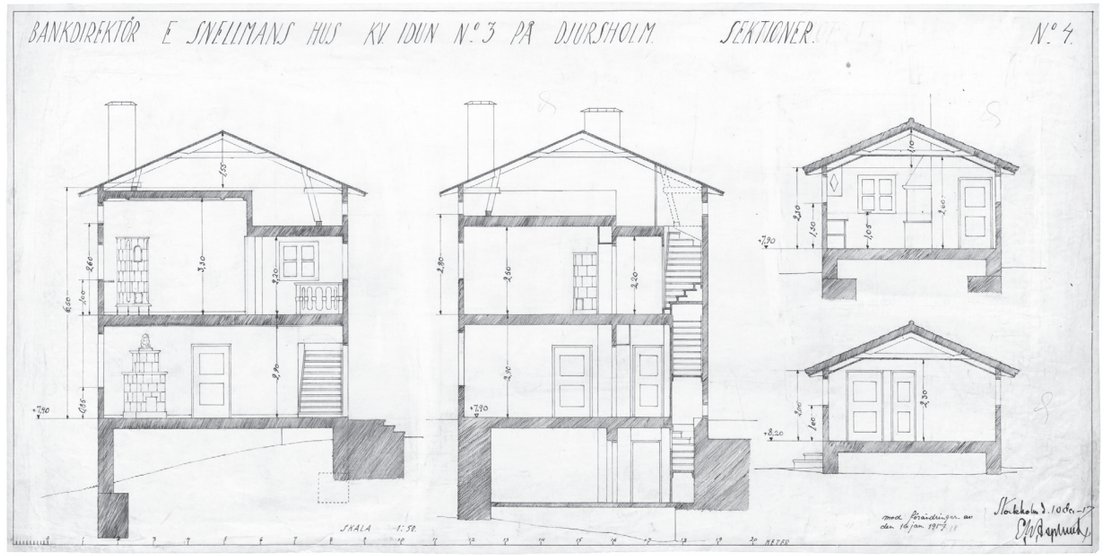


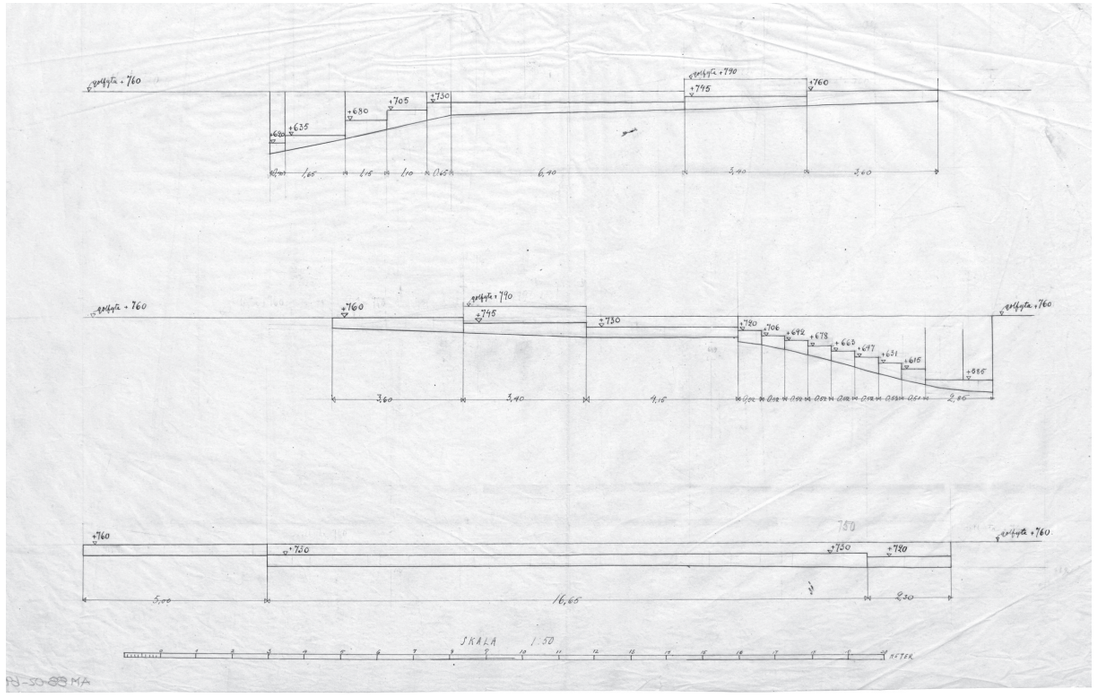


Figures 55 Floor plans, Villa Snellman, Stockholm. Gunnar Asplund.

The house was supposed to be built in stone, but the construction changed to be in wood with a stucco facade, for a classic and solid look, giving another organic freedom for the organisation of the interior. The broken corner between the service wing and the main form is slightly shifted, as a gesture to hold the forms closer. The joining moment is the kitchen.







Figures 56 Villa Snellman, Stockholm. Gunnar Asplund. Facade elevation towards west. The building is landing light on the ground.

Figure 57 Villa Snellman, Stockholm. Gunnar Asplund. Sections. The broken slab in the attic becomes a compromise between functional needs of the organic interior and the rigid exterior.

Figure 58 Villa Snellman, Stockholm. Gunnar Asplund. Details of how the building meets the ground.

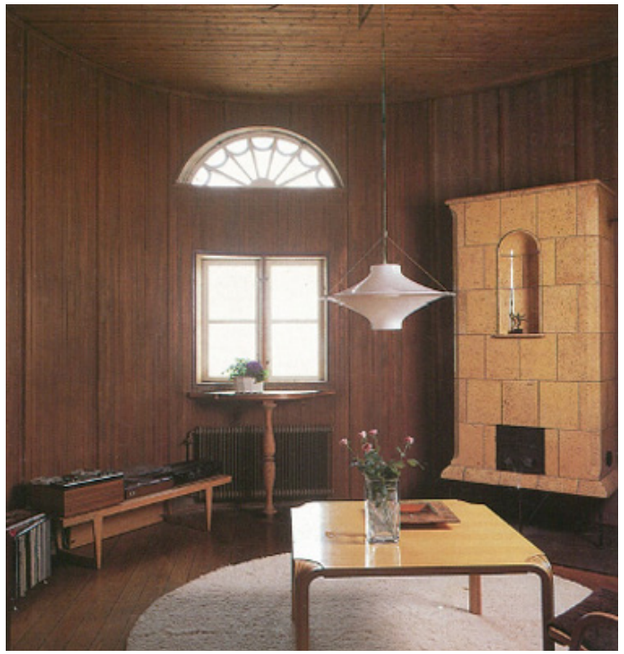


Figure 60 Round room in Villa Snellman, Gunnar Asplund. Notice how the fireplace can be perceived as a floating object in the space.

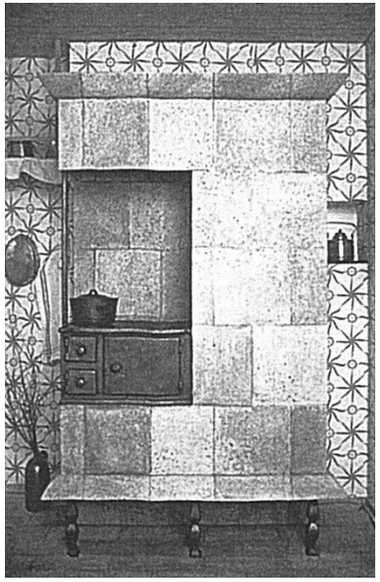


Figure 59 Gunnar Asplund, Stove in Home Kitchen, 1917 Displayed in the 1917 Home Exhibition, Liljevalchs konsthall, Stockholm.

We return to Stativet and Tumstocken again. Since the project was situated in the turning point of modernity, it was also relevant in a technological traditional sense. The kitchen kept the position close by the fireplace, even if the gas stove could function independently. Indeed, one could imagine the spatial value of integrating the stove with the wood oven that still served as a central point to gather around for its function to heat up the place. Maybe Asplund had the idea in mind, while designing the stove that was displayed in the 1917 Home Exhibition. The combined oven and stove was made to demonstrate the value of local manufacturing, made with rational mass-production methods.[63] The form resembled in fact a traditional, solid fireplace, but placed on slender supports in iron as to make the solid and permanent challenge the modern constructive possibilities. The corner of the object was giving place for the stove, as in the old vernacular kitchens. Visitors could experience the small apartment that consisted of one room with the stove. The thought behind was to demonstrate a so-called kitchen home *(bostadskök)* which was a combined living and kitchen room.[64] The social aspect here deserves to be mentioned, as the fire attracted attention for its heat, and perhaps also for a certain cosiness. For the very same reason, the kitchen could take part of the social realm in the room, and the domestic work of food preparation could simultaneously also be socialised. Functionalism could thus be experienced as a continuation of the rational thinking already present in vernacular Swedish building and handicrafts.[65] Here, the technical advancements of the time coped with traditional forms on an almost “non domestic, domestic level.[66]” But as we shall see, the situation was about to change.

63. Helena Kåberg. “An introduction to Gregor Paulsson’s Better Things for Everyday Life”, in: *Modern Swedish Design: Three founding Texts*, (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2008), 65.
64. Per I Gedin. *När Sverige blev modernt: Gregor Paulsson, Vackrare vardagsvara, funktionalismen och Stockholmsutställningen 1930,* (Albert Bonniers Förlag, 2018), 74.
65. Lucy Creagh. “An introduction to Accepera”, in: *Modern Swedish Design: Three founding Texts*, (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2008), 131.
66. In the seminar “Theory and criticism of domestic space”, Pier Vittorio Aureli argues for the necessity of pushing forward alternative models of domestic space so that household work can become socialised within a household. (EPFL, 2020).

Figure 61 The Stockholm Exhibition, the halls at the entrance, painting in gauche. Here, the ground is depicted as festive and light as the lingering sun.

Figure 62 The Stockholm Exhibition Entrance hall, painting in gauche. Towards the night, the hall is lighting up the Nordic dawn, by means of artificial lights.

A modern

Our times have of course brought many new needs and many new means to satisfy them. It would therefore be as tasteless as it would be foolish to imitate the old cottages at Skansen.[67]

67. Ellen Key, "Beauty for all", In: *Modern Swedish Design: Three Founding Texts*. Uno Åhrén, Lucy Creagh and Kenneth Frampton, ed., (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2008), 38-39.

Figures 63 to 65 Poster by Sigurd Lewerentz for the Stockholm Exhibition, 1930. Wings or razor address the modernisation, as a cut towards old stagnated forms.

The Swedish model

The year was 1930, and the air was festive at the Stockholm Exhibition ground. Part of the atmosphere had of course to do with the temporary character of the event, as the exhibition would be gone at the end of summer. In fact, it was also one of the purposes of the exhibition, to demonstrate the great freedom of building standardised and functional homes while being able to dismantle them later on. It was described as a summer tale.[68]

For one of the main posters of the exhibition, the architect Sigurd Lewerentz illustrates the wings of an ancient Egyptian god from pharaonic deities (figures 56-58). The abstraction symbolised freedom, announcing the new architecture that was about to come. The wings could also be interpreted as a razor, whose sharp edges were cutting away obsolete forms to make place for modern ones.[69] Here, the housing section was rendered visible in the back of the wings on the poster. Was it an intentional gesture by Lewerentz?

The housing section was in fact sharing a fundamental role with the halls and pavilions on the exhibition ground. The model houses and apartments on display attempted to tackle many social issues that were raised concerning architecture of domestic form. To a high extent the housing section succeeded to prove its relevance, while at the same time being quite controversial, or perhaps 'too modern', for some. The critique was foremost focused on the appearing lack of architectural roots in Swedish tradition.[70] Or, was it the lightness in the architecture that could not cope with the trust of people?

Firstly, it is necessary to understand the particular context behind the Stockholm Exhibition. The event was organised by the Swedish Arts and Crafts Society and foremost designed by Gunnar Asplund, who put the concept of "beauty and festivity" on display. However, the concept was also as much rooted in the term functionalism, or *funkis* in Swedish, but defined as a new working method rather than a style. The method was foremost rooted in

68. Fredrik Nilsson, "Forward - Exploring architectural knowledge by making and reconstructing historical artefacts", In: *Stockholm utställningen 1930 reconstructed.* ed., Atli Magnus Seelow, (2016), 10.
69. Eva Rudberg, *The Stockholm Exhibition 1930: Modernism's Breakthrough in Swedish Architecture* (Stockholm: Stockholmia Förlag, 1999), 79.
70. Näsström, Gustaf. *Svensk Funktionalism* (Natur och Kultur, 1930), 1.

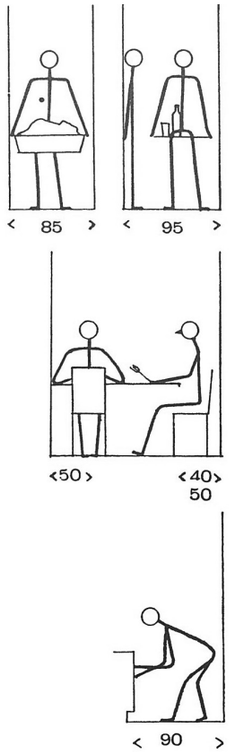


Figure 66 Kitchen studies of how to optimise the cocking activities to a minimal surface.

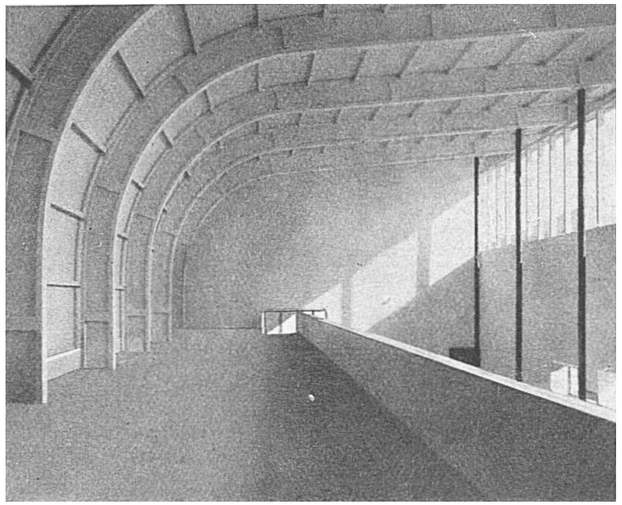


Figure 67 Free bearing timber frame construction in Hall 11 at the Stockholm Exhibition in 1930. Notice how they seems to pass throughout the wall towards the light outside. The slender pillars support them, leading the loads down in the spacious hall.

studies[71] of the functions of a building and the rational organisation of the activities taken place inside, in particular the home. Emphasis was laid on the organisation of the kitchen, by functional studies within a standardised framework.[72] Figure 66 shows one of the kitchen studies.

It is clear how focus was on how to make the home as efficient as possible in terms of space. The efficiency was thus a direct translation of how minimal a space could be in size to serve for specific activities and functions. Another possible reason for the limited sizes was that people were expected to be at home only for rest and sleep to a certain extent, with leisures focused outside the home.

On the contrary, public spaces on the exhibition ground were rather showing the opposite. Here, focus was instead on how one could make a space as generous as possible by means of new construction methods and materials. For instance, the hall for new vehicles for commuting could be experienced almost as infinite space. Figure 67 shows the hall, demonstrating how free bearing wood constructions could enable a spatial lightness. The wood constructions were also standardised, and used in different configurations for most of the halls at the exhibition. Indeed, one can draw a parallel between the lightness and the movement of people, so that citizens could gather in the public realm, almost as an enlarged, urban living room. The lightness was thus focused on the public space in the exhibition, while the model homes remained rather delimited and private. Yet, it is clear that some of the homes at the exhibition paid more attention than others to common spaces within the apartments, some with more emphasis on posture than others. The apartment designed by Sigurd Lewerentz for instance, demonstrated the latter with a public touch on the living room. While the bedrooms were reduced to the minimum, as well as the kitchenette with a connected room for a servant, the living room had more of a generous presence.

Even the free standing service area of the toilet unit, paved the way for a flow of movement by the rounded

71. Eva Rudberg, *The Stockholm Exhibition 1930: Modernism's Breakthrough in Swedish Architecture,* (Stockholm: Stockholmia Förlag, 1999), 27.
72. Ibid.

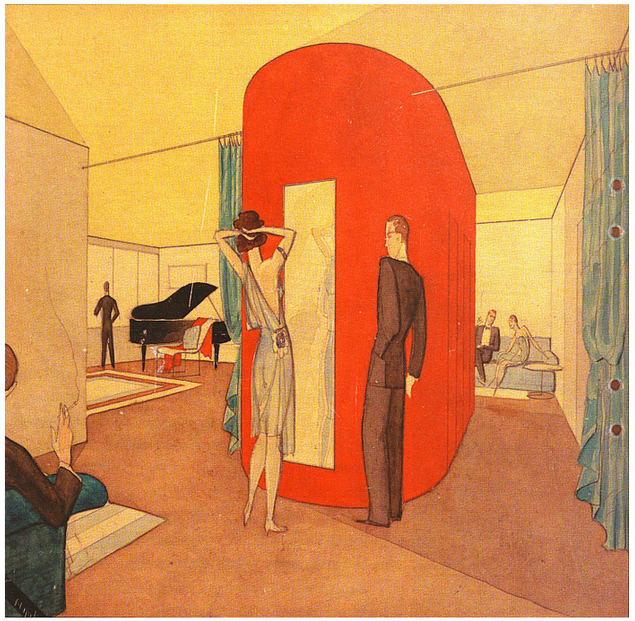


Figure 68 Sigurd Lewerentz, illustration of household type, at the Stockholm Exhibition in 1930. Notice the curtains which can subdivide the living space from the other rooms.

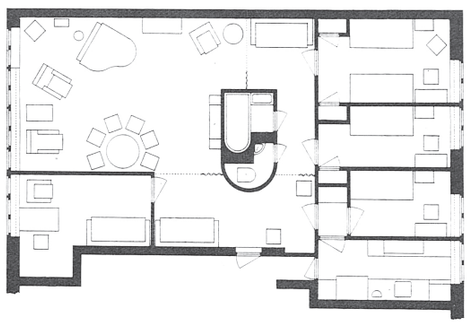


Figure 69 Drawings of household type at the Stockholm Exhibition in 1930, Sigurd Lewerentz. Service unit as core for an open continuous space around. The form has rounded corners to enable movements around.

corners, depicted by Lewerentz himself through an illustration. The corners can simultaneously be perceived as dissolved.

Other interventions at the exhibition included new materials, with Eternit as one of the popular newcomers. Eternit was a composite material, appreciated for its long duration and flexibility, used as plates to cover both ceilings and facades. The seamless feature of the plates was perhaps another reason why the material became popular, almost resembling a certain solidness.

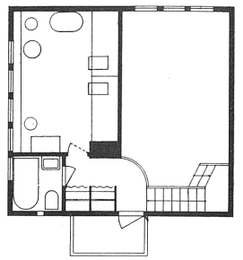
With the lightness came also problems how to deal with insulation, since the mass of the buildings had decreased. Heat loss was less of a concern, but sound problems became an issue for light constructions. Thin floor slabs were also considered to be critical for the very same reason. When the mass of the structure decreased, the filling required more attention but it was anyway common to use porous materials for floor filling so the issue remained. However, the faith was in the constantly evolving industry with the production of several different materials, so that the factories could be run as large industries. It was a fundamental change from former, rather small scaled methods of manufacturing.[73]

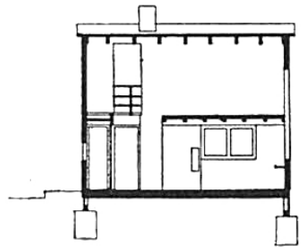
The development of the industry also reflected the society on a cultural level, when many different materials developed with particular attributes. It can be interpreted that materials presented a relatively low degree of organisation while being isolated, but together with other components they became a whole. In the sense that structure and material became differentiated, it reflects the specialised society to a certain extent with experts for different purposes. Even if wood was used for its structural capacity even as an organic material, a beam was for instance perhaps seen as something less structural than the composition of a Mesula construction.

The new ideas were demonstrated in full scale at the exhibition, within several halls and model homes. The traditional was displayed next to the industrialised.

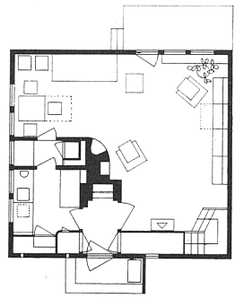
73. Axel Eriksson, “New building materials” (Nyare byggnadsmaterial), In: *Stockholms utställningen 1930 av konstindustri, konsthantverk och hemslöjd: Katalog över Bostadsavdelningen,* (Utställningsförlaget, Stockholm, 1930), 48.

Figure 70 Interior photos of household type at he Stockholm Exhibition in 1930, designed by Carl Hörvik.





Figures 71 to 73 Drawings of the latter household type at the Stockholm Exhibition in 1930, designed by Carl Hörvik.

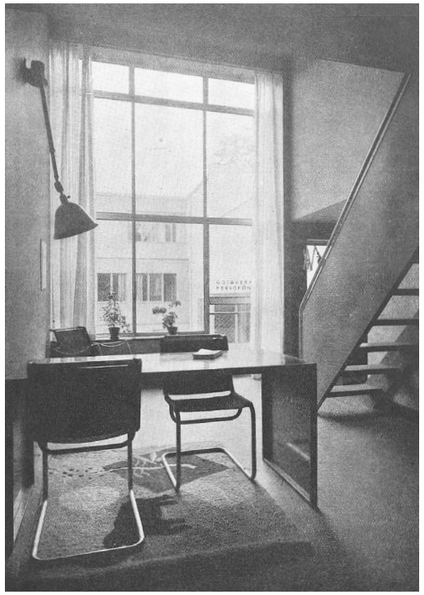


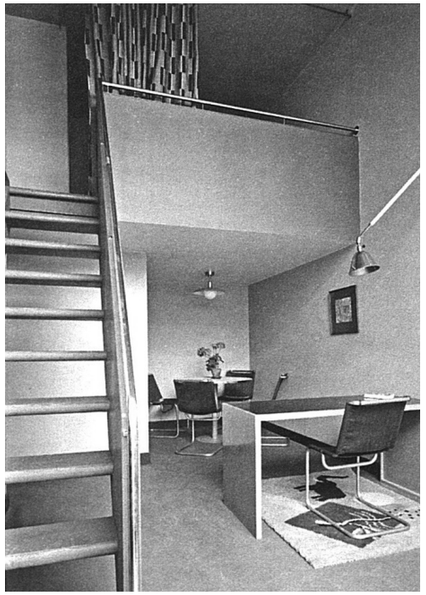
Duplex layout with generous floor to ceiling height. Turning from open to closed room with a curved wall, including a fireplace to circulate around. The wooden beams in the ceiling address the structure.

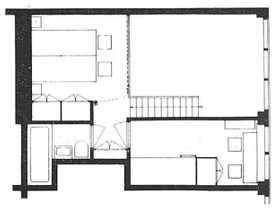
As the need of solving the housing issues was of high priority, a call for cooperation had emerged. The faith was in the diversified population, whose ability to cope could make the living conditions better by means of social, economic and technical matters. A central question was how to achieve functional housing without compromising on factors such as hygiene and comfort. Another fundamental aspect was the changing approach of the individual towards the family and the household of domestic space. The modern home as self-sufficient unit was predicted to be replaced by community associations, factories and institutions whose capacity of taking over the various workforces of the homes could give independence to the people in the household.[74] Instead, the independent worker could gain economic benefits of working outside the home.

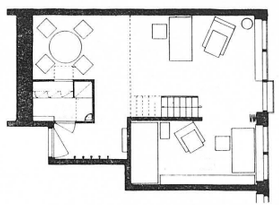
The period came to influence the concept of the collective house. One related aspect was that household work that took place in the home could preferably be carried out in minimal spaces, given that the layout of the interior was well planned. Also, since the various goods that used to be produced at home before, could now be made by industries so that less space was needed in the home for working activities. Other modern amenities such as access to hot water, fridge and ceiling radiators helped to limit the size and separate the kitchen from the living space on a spatial level. Modest kitchenettes or ‘cooking corners’ as the Swedish equivalent, were expressions of the same tendency.[75] The mentioned ceiling radiator had a fundamental impact as it could liberate a space from other heating sources, like separate radiators standing on the floor or tile stoves for instance. The latter radiators were in fact criticised in the exhibition catalogue for being inappropriate collectors for dust while also making the air dry for breathing, and for the concentrated heat.[76] The ceiling radiator would thus avoid direct heat radiation and simultaneously also make the air cool, alike the conditions in nature. Indeed, the centralised fire hearth seems to be

74. Sven Markelius, “The floor plan issue of small apartments”(Smålägenheternas planlösningsproblem), In: *Stockholms utställningen 1930 av konstindustri, konsthantverk och hemslöjd: Katalog över Bostadsavdelningen,* (Utställningsförlaget, Stockholm, 1930), 31.
75. Ibid., 32-33
76. Ibid., 11. “Takstrålare” in Swedish. See advertisement about “System Heineman”.









Figures 74 to 77 Photos and drawings of household type at the Stockholm Exhibition in 1930, designed by Sven Markelius.

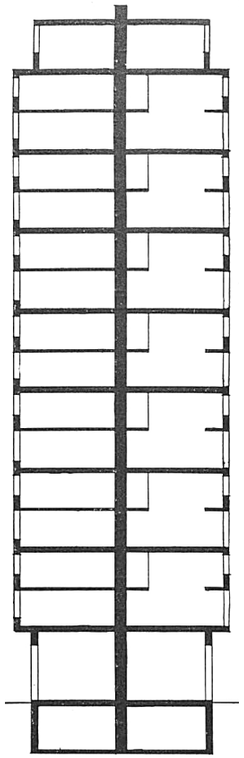
Total area of 55 square m. Duplex with generous living space, with floor to ceiling height of 4.35 m. Despite the modest floor area, the living room can be experienced as spacious for the generous height.

very distant at this event. It was addressed later, how the remarkable level of scientific methods and management were taken from industry to be applied on household work, not so different from Taylorism.[77]

In order to give the members of a household the possibility to rest after coming home from work, attention was put to give each individual private space, even if the common spaces were more in focus. Therefore, it was positive if the apartment could be subdivided as much as possible by means of thin walls or even curtains. The kitchen for instance could preferably be divided into smaller units where the space closest to the facade would function as a dining room, while the inner space included the kitchen with all the necessary equipment. During daytime, the extra space could also offer a small workplace, given that it was not needed as a dining area. The glass wall in between gave a visual contact. The relevance of having windows to the exterior for the kitchen space was therefore not so much of priority. And one was not supposed to work there for much time anyway, the collective kitchen some floors beneath was meant to serve for that. Eating could also take place in the public dining room in the restaurant, at the ground floor or in the city. The *Kollektivhus* by Sven Markelius and Alva Myrdal expressed the latter concept, with apartments reduced to minimum sizes and the living room at the restaurant or the bar downstairs. Here, the inhabitants even had the possibility to order up food from the restaurant in small food elevators.

There were of course also cases when people would not like to rely on collective kitchens or restaurants. In fact, quite many cases. A lot of time was also spent for people going back and forth to work, so there was not much time left for household activities. Then, one would preferably hire servants that could even have their own room in the apartment so that the distance to *their* work was decent. However, when there was a separate space next to the kitchen, it could also serve as a sleeping alcove at night. The concept came foremost from the fact

77. Claes Caldenby, *Vad är ett kollektivhus* (Graphic systems, Göteborg, 1992), 91.



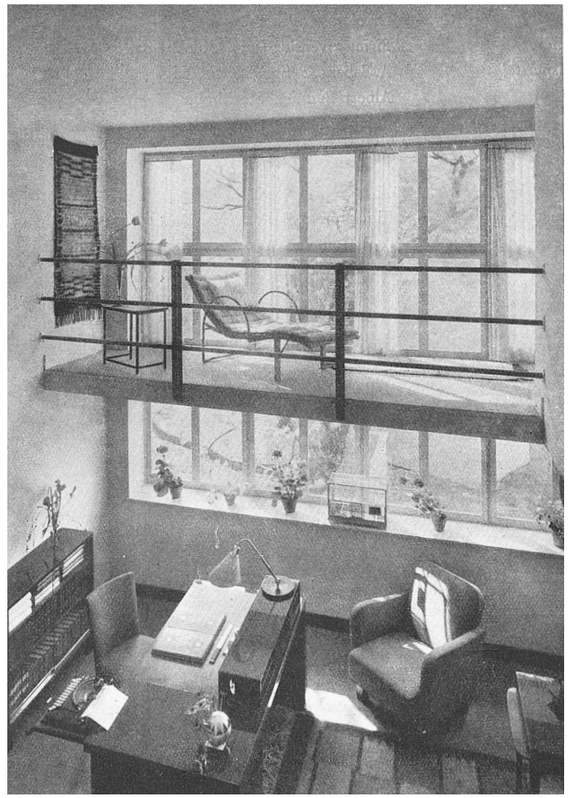
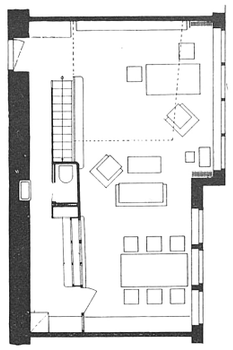


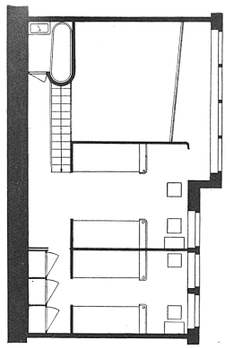
Figure 78 Section 1:400 of housing block.

Figure 79 View towards interior balcony. Notice the office space for work, placed in the light generous space of the living room.

Figure 80 to 81 Floor plans 1:200, according to ruler.

Photos and drawings of household type at the Stockholm Exhibition in 1930, Architect Kurt von Schmalensée. Total area of 86 square m. Duplex with generous living space, small passage that frames the small niche below. Notice the kitchenette with no direct daylight as contrast.





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that many people until this point had been sleeping in the kitchens of their homes, especially since people often lived in tight limited spaces together. Here, the reduced size of the kitchen to a minimum could not allow other activities then just food preparation.

Where it was possible to combine different heights of rooms, a lower height could preferably be used for some parts of the apartment which could economise the floor area but increase the comfort. The subdivision could as well function as subdivision, where the alcove-like space underneath a lower level could be used as a separate room. The particular solution could be experienced in a few model homes, which demonstrated some possible options. One can argue that the duplex solution belonged to the more successful spatial solutions at the exhibition, yet with kitchenettes reduced to their minimum (some were even situated without windows.) The critique that had been addressed towards the model homes at the exhibition was thus probably not directed towards the lightness of the architecture itself, but rather to the lack of spaces with more collective values which could be functional for more than one purpose. Here, spaces for household work becomes fundamental. The housing situation became critical in particular for families with many children. The movement H.S.B of the tenant's saving and building association initiated in the early 1920s new collective ways to share the household work amongst families, such as common laundry facilities. The first kindergarten or playhouse was introduced in 1929, in one of the H.S.B properties.[78]

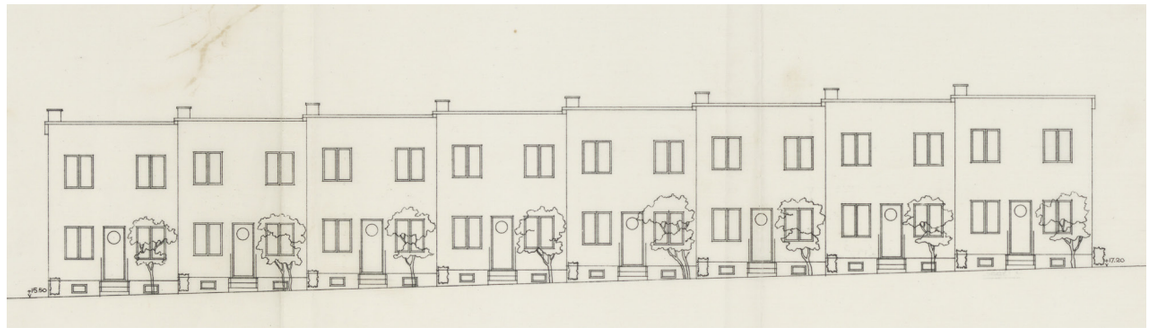
> *Through these changed conditions, the individual's independence, even within the walls of the home, becomes both a psychological and a practical matter. A forced dependence in different situations becomes not only an annoyance but also, more than ever, an obstacle to the personal development of the individual.*[79]

78. Alva Myrdal, *Ideas of cooperative and collective forms of housing (Idéer om kooperativa och kollektiva bostadsformer)*, (Stockholms stadsarkiv, 1935).
79. Sven Markelius, "The floor plan issue of small apartments"(Smålägenheternas planlösningsproblem), in: *Stockholms utställningen 1930 av konstindustri, konsthantverk och hemslöjd: Katalog över Bostadsavdelningen,* (Utställningsförlaget, Stockholm, 1930), 32-33.

Figure 82 Interior of common room in the collective of Elfvinggården. Notice the presence of the fireplace, as a common place for gatherings.

Figure 83 *Villa Kevlinge*, Sven Markelius, Stockholm 1945. View of living room with fire place. Notice the inclined bricks in the masonry, as a gesture to open up towards the living space, to reach the trust of people.

The home as an organisation, has gradually changed throughout the industrialisation. Most of the work that used to make the home an independent unit for the production of the necessities of life, has been taken over by the factories. Clothes, food, household utensils, tools and to a large extent also the unproductive housework (laundry for instance) are no longer taking place to the same degree as before with financial benefit in the home through cooperation of the family members.[80]



Figures 84 Row houses at Ålstensgatan, Stockholm, 1932. Paul Hedqvist. Elevations from the street.

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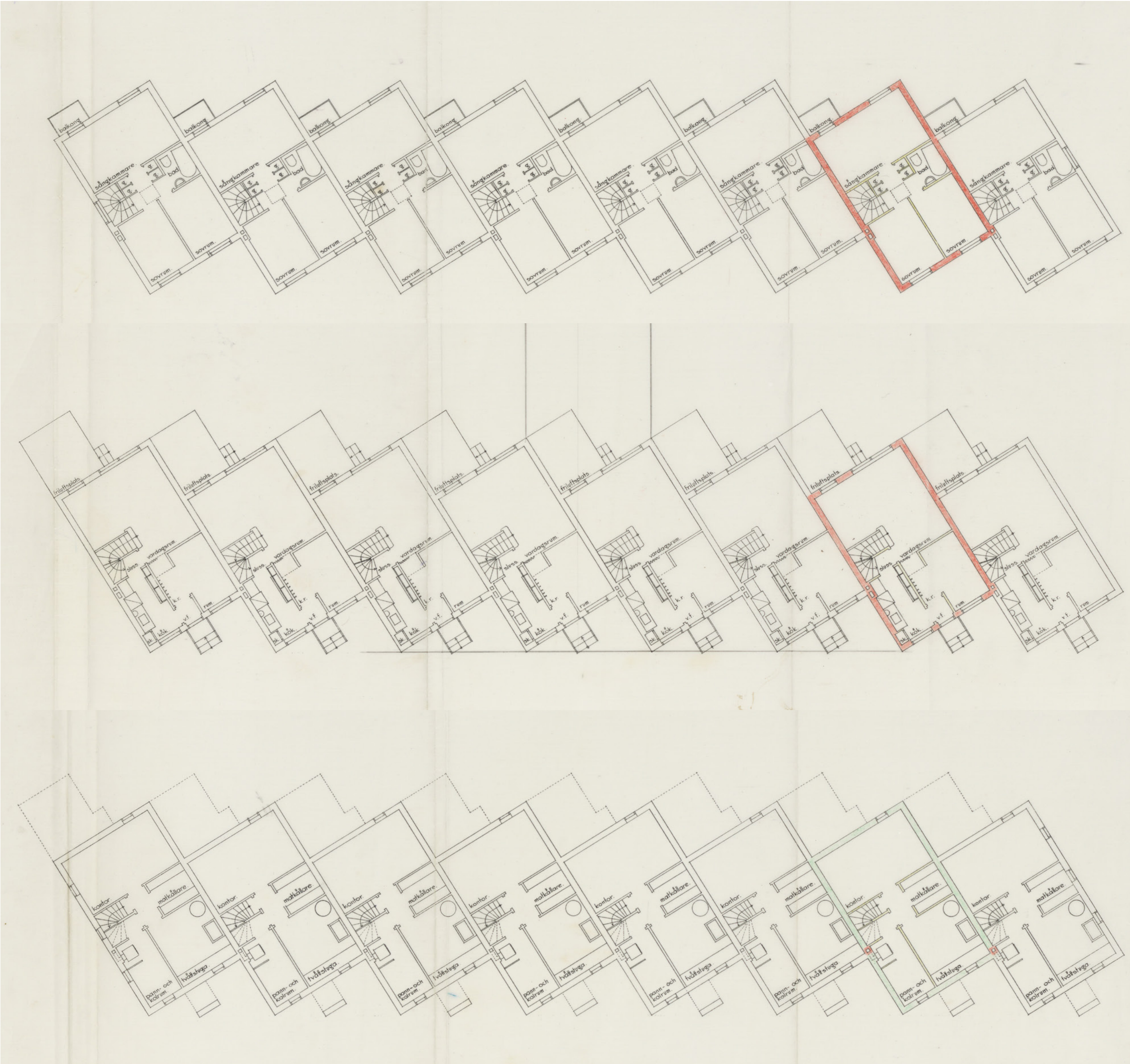
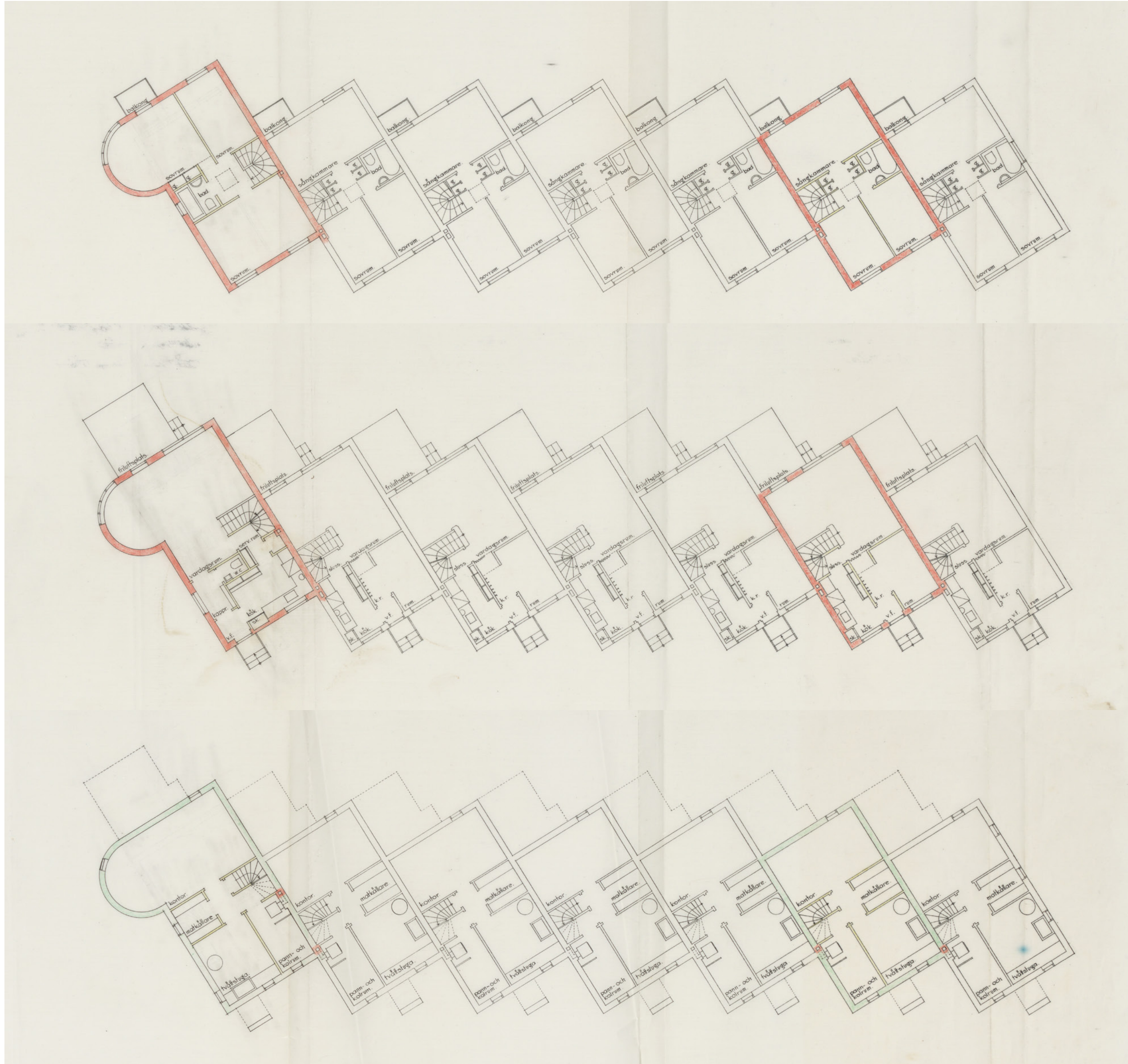
80. Sven Markelius, "The floor plan issue of small apartments"(Smålägenheternas planlösningsproblem), in: *Stockholms utställningen 1930 av konstindustri, konsthantverk och hemslöjd: Katalog över Bostadsavdelningen,* (Utställningsförlaget, Stockholm 1930), 32-33.





Figures 85 Row houses at Ålstensgatan, Stockholm, 1932, Paul Hedqvist. Floor plans.

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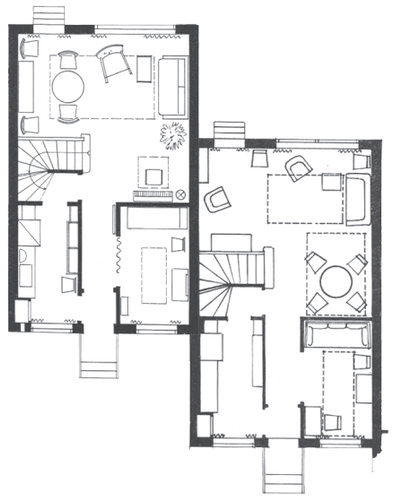

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Figures 86 Row houses at Ålstensgatan, Stockholm, 1932, Paul Hedqvist. Floor plans of the same type but organised in different ways for the Modern Home Exhibition.

Model homes

Three years after the Stockholm Exhibition, The Swedish Society of Arts and Crafts initiated a new exhibition in 1933 in the outskirts of Stockholm city. This time, focusing on the modern home in the garden city.[81] The white *funkis* cubes or row-houses were designed by Paul Hedqvist in 1929. At the front page of the brochure, one could read the advertising for building cheap with highly porous bricks, which would offer a warm, solid house in one or two floors. The costs would even be the same as for a corresponding villa in wood. Built in a strict symmetry, the row house followed the street with shifted positions so that they all got small private entrances and a little plot next door, maybe reserved for a little tree. Another advantage with the shifted positions was the light conditions, as the positions opened up towards the light in an efficient manner. The small villas were all attached in one and another, but with two corners left free. Perhaps it was a gesture to show that the houses were almost independent, yet still with the faith in the collective which consisted of the semi-attached neighbours.

Here, the floor plan organisation was the same in all apartments, with different layouts of standardised furniture inside. The aim was to educate the sustainable consumer how a generic framework could enable different and relevant options of how to furniture. The exhibition addressed the advantages of using mirrors on the interior as a way to enlarge the room, or giving the illusion of a dissolved space. The kitchen and living room are here in correlation with each other, as the first rooms to enter at the ground floor plan.

A People's Home, situated in a garden setting. Even the prime minister at that time, Per-Albin Hansson, chose to take part of the row house realm. Yet, while inhabiting one of the ends parts, where also the apartment had a particular and more generous form with only one wall attached to a neighbour.

81. Gotthard Johansson, "The modern Home, Live in Stockholm's garden cities" (Det moderna hemmet, Bo i Stockholms Trädgårdsstäder), in: *Form n.3,* (Svenska Slöjdföreningens tidskrift, 1933), 49.

Figure 87 Film still from *The Autumn sonate (Höstsonaten)* Ingmar Bergman, 1978. Delimited space

It is an interest and a pleasure to affirm the features of the present that differ from other eras and to fearlessly allow new ideas of form to emerge.[82]

82. Gunnar Asplund et al., “Accepera”, in: *Modern Swedish Design: Three founding Texts*, Uno Åhrén, Lucy Creagh and Kenneth Frampton, ed., (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2008), 154.

Figure 88 Film still from *The Autumn sonate (Höstsonaten)* Ingmar Bergman, 1978. Dissolution of space

Acceptance and resistance

With different perceptions of space as guide, the study examined whether the concept of dissolved space could be related to domestic form, on spatial and tectonic levels. What was then characteristic for Swedish vernacular architecture? Primordial domestic forms could give a first understanding of how the architecture came to cope with the Nordic climate. A central aspect was to build with care for nature and the seasons, always with an aim to be where the light was. Peasants lived and worked together in homesteads, where nature decided the functional premises for the domestic forms. Therefore, the architecture came to reflect the place and the people who lived and worked there. By means of local materials with special attributes, customised details could be made for particular needs and places. The log corners can be seen as a cooperative gesture, with the wood stocks interlocked as a set of hands. When the resources were limited, people had to build lighter constructions, to save material and to think of how one could construct more efficiently. The transition from blockhouse to post-plank constructions with timber frames and *Mesulas* became the constructive answers. While being aware of the potentials of making a structure possible to be dismantled, the methods that were used came to focus on the joining moments between elements. The very lightness also opened up the constructions, and enabled the light to enter into the houses. Maybe it was here the opening up of rooms became a spatial potential, towards nature or even upwards with the ceiling as an open sky. The limit between inner and outer space could simultaneously also be perceived as almost dissolved.

Another way to achieve a spatial lightness was to go beyond the separation of functions into different buildings, and instead integrate spaces in a broader sense. Thus also to see the potential of sharing spaces for different activities related to living. The modernisation brought new technical advancements that could integrate functions to serve for different needs. A fire hearth could keep the

purpose of heating up a house, while also functioning as a stove and a oven or even as a light source. Or perhaps, even more as a place to gather around with others. Then, when the fireplace eventually became challenged by new technical tools, it lost its multifunctional purpose. The heating was managed by radiators on the walls, or even in the ceiling. At the same time, the kitchen became separated from the living room, with the practical stove and oven that could be placed somewhere else. Maybe it was here, in this particular transition where the development of the subdivided home became most evident.

By examining some projects from the previous century, I came to understand the common aim of how to make the architecture deal with modernisation. On the one hand, by accepting the present time, and on the other hand by showing a certain resistance to that very same time. What the case studies had in common was that they all happened around the home. The acceptance had to do with constructive possibilities to adapt spaces for different needs. As described, it was evident that the knowledge of local people and the amount of skilful workers made possible modernity. It was widely encouraged how one must make the home personal for one's own, to think about the home as something purposeful but also beautiful, that should be organised by oneself, with pleasure. Then, when modernity gave new constructive possibilities, specialised professions and building methods also emerged. It became a matter of how to deal with materials, as the mass of structures came to be reduced while filling materials were added on, as a compromise, or a sort of layering principle.

Modern living was expected to be met with both doubt and mistrust by people so there was a need to convince the population. Here, it also became clear how the aim to educate the reasonable consumer was one driving force for the modernisation. In other words, when the specialist came to be increasingly influential in the planning of how people should live their lives.

If the vernacular can be seen as the functionalism

per se, while showing respect towards nature and its resources and local conditions of a place, the earliest forms of Swedish *funkis* came to be the modern vernacular in a sense, by making the handicraft cope with technological advances, into a sort of social engineering. With a voluntary gesture of blending into nature but with an openness towards the surrounding, modern vernacular architecture could also be perceived as living spaces underneath the tree crowns.

So what would then be the characteristics of the vernacular modern? Firstly, and perhaps also foremost, it would reconnect to collective values that the modern somehow forgot about. A present state in Sweden, which with its large amount of single homes, might have forgotten a sense of community and belonging, so evident in the vernacular tradition. The vernacular modern as model might be an answer to that longing. In the context of domestic form, spaces for household work becomes crucial. If one objective was to not sleep in the kitchen one century ago, perhaps it is exactly what must be possible today. With the belief that the spaces for household work must be socialised, it also seems highly relevant to question stagnated forms, as when the small *kove* came to be a forerunner for the kitchenette. Other predecessors that demonstrated the opposite, such as Asplund's kitchen home would rather serve as models for its relevance in a vernacular modern sense. It could also lead to the reversal of the modern separation of working and living, which we all, at this present and quite particular time, had to experience in one way or another.

The vernacular modern can somewhat be an answer to an approach that tries to deal with these aspects in a contemporary manner. It becomes a matter of showing an awareness towards local conditions, as much as an acceptance of global possibilities. In the case of Sweden, a vernacular modern would look for an architecture that is solid and light, perhaps also delimited but at the same time almost infinite to not set back the movements of people.

The visitants left, to return again.
In fact, they are already back.

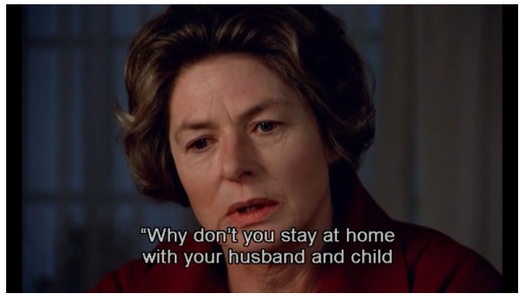
Figures 89 to 92 Film stills from *The Autumn sonate (Höstsonaten)* Ingmar Bergman, 1978.
The scenarios portrays a difficult relation between a daughter and a working mother which can be seen as a critical interpretation of the Swedish Welfare State. The separation of living and working spaces challenges the family for being a separate unit.

Notice how the room of the mother is depicted as light and spacious while the inner corridor of the home has a rather opposite ambience. The perception of space turns from enclosed towards dissolved.

Epilogue

There is a crisis behind the discussion of domestic form, which is the crisis of the family. Today, the family has lost many of its traditional functions in the society, becoming more of a low functional unit that is reduced to serve merely for emotional functions. By contrast, the peasant society viewed the family in a different way, as a productive unit where work and living were closely related, both spatially and functionally. The family has instead given way to the individual as a social unit.[1]

1. Claes Caldenby and Åsa Walldén, *Kollektivhuset Stacken*. (Bokförlaget Korpen, 1984), 31.



Figures 93 to 100 Film stills from *The Autumn sonate (Höstsonaten)* Ingmar Bergman, 1978.

I just listened to Bergmanpodden, when they talk about Höstsonaten. I found it meaningful what they addressed on many levels. On the one hand, about the tense relation between a mother and a daughter, on the other hand, about the confrontation between a home as a place for emotions rather than working activities. It's a difficult double that Bergman addresses in the film, about a daughter and her desperate longing for her mother and a mother who tries to be a mother and a pianist at the same time. The daughter is described as weak, not at all as independent as her mother, and quite desperate for care while the mother is a full flare, an absent mother but successful pianist, in a red dress that is so red. She is the star when she comes to the house, maybe for her acting but also for the role she takes. The message of the film is very fundamental, and clearly rooted in what the Swedish Welfare state has addressed; how the women could be liberated from household work to earn money instead outside the home. What I found problematic is the lack of understand why the mother becomes absent in the role of the pianist as a consequence of being a career woman. The conflict between the daughter and the mother is present all the time, one can follow how the one confrontation is followed by the other, by changing camera angles in-between the two. When they play the piano, the glance is first directed on the mother while she listens to the daughter, one can see in her eyes how proud she is, her happiness about the two of them sharing the reading of the piano notes. Then, when the camera turns towards the daughter, the perceptions get reversed. The mother suddenly becomes critical, she criticises, corrects the daughters,

Not least with the first scene in mind, when the husband describes the case of the daughters life, or the wife of his.

The very drama or confrontation was also somth. I noticed particular for persona, or this kind of scene which builds up for the confrontation to come in the end.

piano playing: Another confrontation between them and their different perceptions is when the daughter visits the mother in the salong, during a backward looking scene. The quite obscure corridor with dark wooden panels and deep light (the space of the daughter) gets illuminated by the light from the salong, flooding in through the generous windows (the space of the mother) a dissolution of space. Here, the mother is back from one of her tours, and she encourages the daughter to go out in the sunlight. What the film scenarios have in common, is that they all depict a mother who tries to be both emotional and present for the daughter, while at the same time making a career parallell to family life. One can criticise the reality that Bergman addresses, while sympathising with the daughter and her emotional longing for a mother. One can as much pay attention to the very reality that Bergman addresses while understanding the mother who just plays her role in the particular time, which not least could be the current one. It's a time when it seems to be complicated to integrate professional work with the sphere of the home and family life. Therefore, it seems to be relevant to question that kind of confrontation or separation, between home and work, between emotions and work, between care and flare, to perhaps look for ways of integrating things in a broader sense. It's in the joining moment of things, where life can happen and take place, in a more free and (perhaps) poetic way.

There are also other scenarios which depicts the home, in particular the sequence of rooms in the living room (going from darker, framed(?) towards lighter!

Figure 101 "Will you be profit-driven, little friend?" (Blir du lönsam, lilla vän?) Peter Tillberg, 1972. An ordinary school day in Sweden, with students in a classroom in 1950. The space seems to be quiet.

This interest, this endeavour to express the face of our age as its theme, itself makes demands that we attempt to fulfil. We cannot be inspired by an age if we feel no loyalty to it. We must place ourselves at its service, we must help to solve its problems.[83]

83. Gunnar Asplund et al., "Accepera", in: *Modern Swedish Design: Three founding Texts*, Uno Åhrén, Lucy Creagh and Kenneth Frampton, ed., (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2008), 154.

Figure 102 *In the middle of Sweden (I mitten av Sverige),* Peter Tillberg, 1970.

An ordinary day in suburban Sweden, with detached houses from the 1920s. A hole is rendered visible in the middle of the street. Is it a paradox of the Swedish Welfare State, or another reality of the People's Home than the one that was thought to be the Swedish way of living?

Prologue

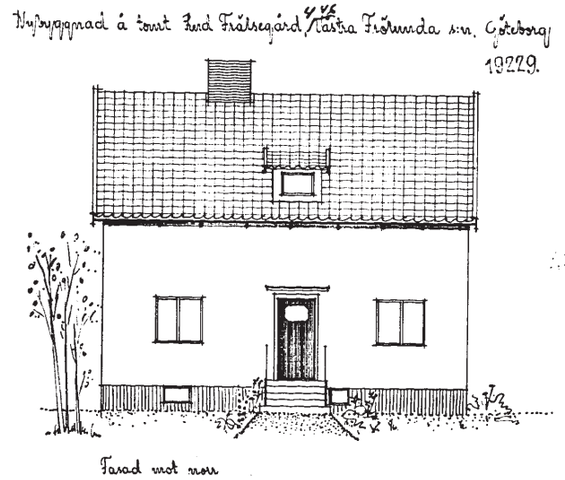
Stories take us forward again. Here, we arrive in a setting which could be situated fifty years ago, or in fact even today. The scenario is a cloudy suburb, in the middle of somewhere in Sweden. The wide street is as empty as during an ordinary day of the week, when people left their homes for going to work somewhere else. The houses seem to be of the own home's type *(egnahem),* built around the year of 1920. Some of the houses have facades in plaster or brick, some others in eternit, after being modernised at some point. The forms of the houses are following the same type, with pitched roofs of the steep sort. Standing parallel with the street, the houses are having their gables in a line, almost in an autonomous, if not introverted manner. One can think that the houses were told to stay in a context that they already turned their glance away from. The thresholds seem to be higher than ever.

It has been said that many people who grew up in a Swedish suburb can relate to the particular setting.[84] The character is quite generic, in the outskirts of a town where the ground used to be an empty field in clay one century ago. Workers left the crowded living conditions in the cities, to build homes for themselves. There on the clay, by means of advantageous loans from the state and some help from neighbours, the workers could build themselves homes, based on standardised but customised models provided by the state. Many houses were built for several families, as small cooperatives. Later, they were commonly transformed to single family dwellings instead. Perhaps it is here, in the pastoral dream where common spaces have been reduced to merely serve for vehicles, another, rather alienated, reality of the People's Home is put on display. Perhaps it is also here, where the need is strongest to suggest alternative forms of domestic space, so that collective spaces can overcome the Swedish, not least individualistic theory of living. Thus, "enthusiastic human presence must reanimate spaces with new imagination.[85]"

84. Dan Hallemar and Håkan Forsell in a conversation about current realities of "the People's Home" (folkhemmet) in the podcast *Staden*, (2020).
85. Rem Koolhaas, "Introduction", in: *Countryside : A Report : AMO, Rem Koolhaas,* Richard Armstrong, Troy Conrad Therrien and Amo ed., (Köln: Taschen, 2020), 1.

On the threshold, always homeward bound.[86]

86. Claudio Magris's European journey



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solid and light