
Editorial: On the art of skipping to the main points

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Why are you reading this? As the oceans are beginning to threaten our coastal areas, it is time to realise that the academic world has long since become flooded, by *words*. Books, journals, preprints, reprints, web documents, reports, proceedings, e-mail discussion lists. All of them potentially relevant and important to one's own work, to one's own production of new words. To survive this global warming of research, one must develop and refine the art of reading selectively and skipping straight to whatever one considers the main points, if any. In my experience, texts are rare indeed, which one has the peace of mind to read from beginning to end – be it for pleasure, enlightenment or criticism. And of the tiny fraction of texts one *has* read in this way, how many were actually *editorials*?

But I am confident that on the following pages, you will find quite a few main points and quite a few readable texts to skip to. I also hope you will feel inspired to engage in discussion with their authors, face to face at the *CEPHAD 2010 Conference*, or in more permanent relations of correspondence or collaboration afterwards. I welcome you to the informal and cross-disciplinary community of *CEPHAD*, the *Centre for Philosophy and Design*, and urge you, as good 'Cephadians', to challenge and inspire the thinking of others, regardless of their subject and style, in precisely the way you would like to be challenged and inspired yourself. For that, more than anything else, is what still makes it worthwhile to write, speak, read and listen to *words*: their ability to stimulate our exchange of ideas, and bring us together. Much as, since days of old, the oceans have enabled us to exchange all sorts of goods, and to explore the world and meet its peoples.

CEPHAD 2010 – The borderland between philosophy and design research

The CEPHAD 2010 conference in Copenhagen (hosted by the Danish Design School, January 26th through January 29th, 2010) was designed to stimulate the flow of ideas between research in philosophy and research in design. Personal and institutional contacts are hoped to grow from the conference as a long-term effect. But why combine philosophy and design? What might they have to say each other? What kind of borderland do they share? – There are, no doubt, as many answers to that as there are contributions to the conference. So let me briefly suggest but one, very general answer; one that I think many of the contributions will exemplify and elaborate in their own ways.

As a field of intellectual inquiry, design operates in another borderland: the one between the possible and the actual. In this light, design may be broadly conceived of as the exploration of the possible, in order to prepare for a change of the actual, serving some human purpose.

This very notion of design poses philosophical challenges: what is the difference between 'the possible' and 'the actual'? What, if anything, can we know about the possible, and how? If we cannot know anything about the possible, how can we change the actual, except at random? What does such change mean to other people, and how does it look and feel? All

of the traditional philosophical disciplines of ontology, epistemology, ethics, and aesthetics are evoked as soon as we begin to take such questions seriously.

And we should take them seriously. As a research-based field of enquiry, design is in the making. Hence, to understand what distinguishes design from other fields of inquiry, designers and design researchers need to address such fundamental and foundational issues. As for the philosophers, worries about the lack of 'practical' applications for philosophical knowledge and skills may not keep them sleepless at night. But for those of them to whom such applications matter, here are challenges to meet.

CEPHAD 2010 documentation

This issue of *Copenhagen Working Papers of Design* (2010, no. 1) constitutes a permanent record of the material accepted for presentation at the 'regular table sessions' and the ph.d. master class sessions of *CEPHAD 2010* (arranged alphabetically by author name). A companion issue (2010, no. 2) features the abstracts and papers presented by invited speakers at the plenary sessions of the conference. Further information is available at the conference web site: <http://www.dkds.dk/Forskning/Projekter/CEPHAD/events/Cephad2010>.

CEPHAD 2010 Organization

- Sponsor: The Danish Centre for Design Research, whose support is gratefully acknowledged.
- Hosts: Centre for Philosophy and Design (CEPHAD) & The Danish Design School.
- Conference organizers:
- Per Galle (Director of CEPHAD), Anne-Louise Sommer (Rector, formerly Head of Research, The Danish Design School; member of the CEPHAD Advisory Board), Nina Lyng (Research Secretary, The Danish Design School), Troels Degn Johansson (Head of Research, The Danish Design School), and Helle Hove (Research Assistant, The Danish Design School).
- Web editor: Kristian Rise (Head of Communication, The Danish Design School).
- Master class organizer: Carsten Friberg (Aarhus School of Architecture), in collaboration with Greg Bamford (member of the CEPHAD Advisory Board).
- Evaluation and selection committee for master class sessions: Carsten Friberg and Greg Bamford.
- Evaluation and selection committee for regular table sessions: Greg Bamford and Per Galle.

A disclaimer on graphics

The *Copenhagen Working Papers on Design* (CWP) usually employs an overall graphic design carefully adapted to that of our publisher, The Danish Design School. However, the school recently changed its visual identity, and a coordinated design for CWP remains to be developed. A professional solution is expensive in terms of time and money, so for the purposes of the conference I decided to throw together a 'quick and dirty' version of CWP in time for us to hand it out to the delegates. While each component of the present issue is based on the new official stationary of The Danish Design School, the overall design of the publication is *ad-hoc* and does *not* represent state-of-the-art graphic design of The Danish Design School.