

auri research brief

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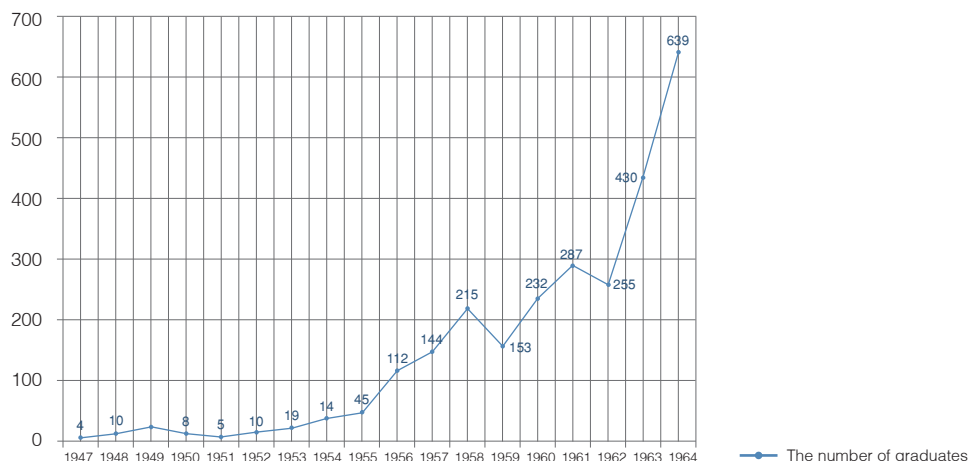
On the Institutional Formation of Appellation and Profession of the Korean Architect

This research is designed to reveal the ambivalent concept of the modern architect, the origin of the East Asian conflict among appellations to the architect, and the institutional problems of the boundary of architects' services by the philological and comparative study on the institutional formations of the modern architect in various countries. The formation of the East Asian appellation of the modern architect was analyzed in respect of the translation of Western civilization and the boundary of architects' services professionalized during the global industrialization was compared among nations. The conclusion was made as follows:

In late 19th-century Japan, "architecture" was mostly translated into two different neologisms, irrelevant of the original meaning. The first one, *Jou-ka* (造家: to build a house) specified the subject and the latter one, *Ken-chiku* (建築: to erect and stack) emphasized the act. Combining vague concepts of architecture with familiar Chinese characters, various interpretations of "architecture" were made, and confusion of the meaning had been stretched. In the appellation of *Kenchiku-ka* (建築家) proposed by Japanese scholar *Chuta Ito*, the state of the architect had been equal to that of the artist, detached from that of the traditional builder. The suffix "-ka," which expressed the specialty and social status, was added. By establishment of the appellation of the architect, *Kenchiku-ka*, the superiority of the designer among other groups related to architecture was

formalized and the other groups like builders, engineers, etc. were excluded from the *Kenchiku-ka*. This formation and formalization of the appellation to the architect brought similar awareness and usage of the word that was similar to the Western concept of the architect; however, it aggravated the conflicts between various groups in the field of architecture.

Although architectural history has existed throughout human history, the appearance of the architect as a professional was a product of modernization. Through modernization, just as the doctor and the lawyer who would be understood as representative of professionalism, the Western architect acquired an exclusive field of services and established a new professional class. The Western architect consolidated professionalism and emphasized occupational ethics by founding schools and associations. Through systematic materialization of the professional properties including methodical theories, authorities, ethics codes, qualification systems, etc., the design and construction supervision over the building process were monopolized. Processes of professionalization in each country, however, had been differentiated for leading groups of professionalization (e.g. the academia versus the association, or the government versus the private sectors), pursuits of education (e.g. the artist versus the businessman, or the artist versus the engineer), and systems of qualification. Institutional development of the East Asian professional architect was specialized as well: 1) Unlike the idea of the conventional occupations of building, the new concept of the architect was brought afresh, 2) Being defined by government, the early modern architects were raised as government officials. The result of such institutional development of the East Asian professional architect was also observed in coinages: *Kenchiku-ka*, representing the class or the status, and *Kenchiku-gishi*, the government official rank. With the growth of the private market, the appellation of *Kenchiku-shi* came out at last, meaning the professionalism of the architect by the suffix “-shi.” In order to institutionalize the appellation “architect”, it was crucial to prove the need for the administrative and governmental affair.



The Number of Graduates in the Department of Architecture(1947 to 1964)

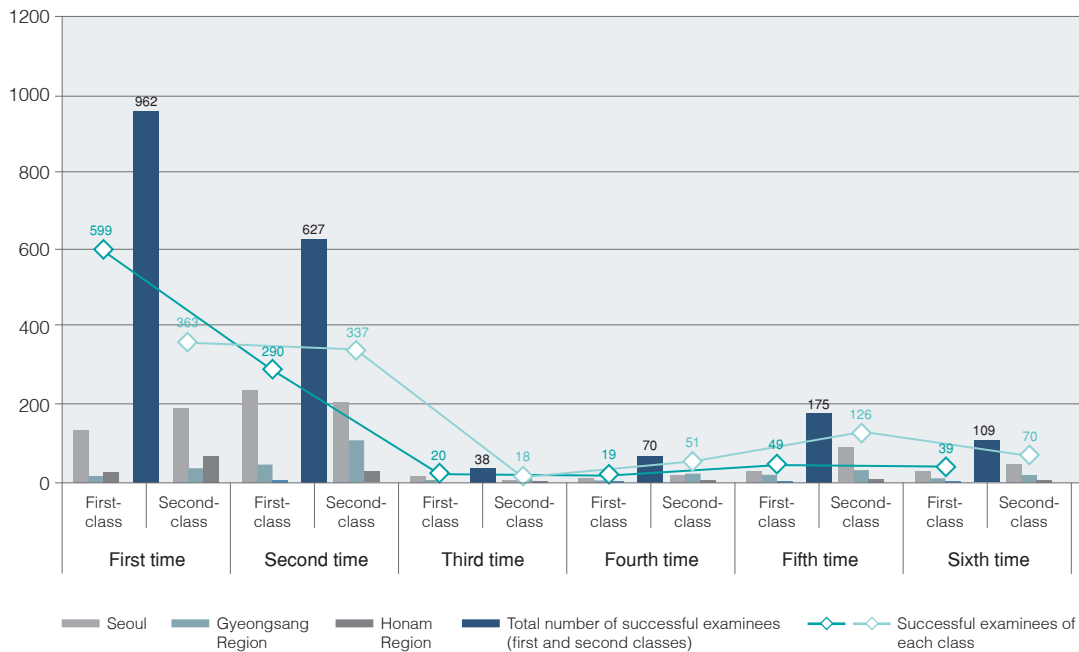
(Source: List of graduates of eleven universities establishing the Department of Architecture before the 1960s.)

The qualification system the nation certified was the final step to exclusively guarantee the architects' services, generally rendered by design and construction supervision of a building. The certificate of the architect had been institutionalized through at least tens of years' endeavor. The qualification system of professionalism can be approved when a service has independence and specialty in a society, and furthermore when it is recognized as a service to selflessly serve the public. In East Asia, mental and physical labor were not distinguished from each other in the area of the building process. Therefore, it took more time to adopt the indispensable, superior role and status of the architect.

It is extraordinary to see that the modern roles of the architect, such as managing business licensing with government agencies in place of the construction company and managing legal compliance at construction sites, have become far more important than the traditional roles of the architect. After 1965, the above dispute of the identification and system of qualification for architects mostly occurred in South Korea.

Issue of Draft of Certified Architects Act (1962) and Result of Final Enactment (1963)

Classification		Ministry of Construction	Korea Institute of Registered Architects	Korean Institute of Architects	Architectural Institute of Korea	Certified Architects Act	
Required year of acquisition of first-class architect qualification	Bachelor's degree	8 years (including experience in civil engineering)	8 years (including experience in civil engineering)	4 years	4 years	5 years	Article 14
	Associate's degree	10 years	10 years	7 years	6 years	7 years	
	High school diploma	13 years	13 years	10 years	—	10 years	
	Bachelor's Degree of Self-Education	20 years	20 years	—	—	17 years	
	Second-class architect	4 years	4 years	4 years	3 years	3 years	
Required year of acquisition of second-class architect qualification	Bachelor's degree	4 years (including experience in civil engineering)	4 years (including experience in civil engineering)	Immediately	1 years	2 years	Article 15
	Associate's degree	6 years	6 years	3 years	3 years	4 years	
	High school diploma	9 years	9 years	6 years	5 years	7 years	
	Bachelor's Degree of Self-Education	16 years	16 years	—	10 years	14 years	
Second-class certified architect's services		Less than 600 ^{m²} total floor area; Less than three floors	Less than 600 ^{m²} total floor area; Less than three floors	Classification based on the purpose of building, structure, and the size of the total floor area.	Classification based on the purpose of building, structure, and the size of the total floor area.	Separately specified	Article 5
Copyright registration		Registration at Licensed Architects Association	Registration at Licensed Architects Association	Not applicable	Not applicable	Registration at Licensed Architects Association	Article 22



Trend in number of Successful Examinees of early Architect Qualifying Examination

The architect's superior status in design and construction supervision of buildings is legally protected. The Architects Act preserves the services of qualified architects and limits the business and use of the appellation of the architect for unqualified individuals. In the Korean legislative system, however, the system of architect qualification does not follow the license system used for qualifying doctors or pharmacists; rather, it follows a certificate registration system as used for qualifying lawyers or patent lawyers. This shows clearly that the architect's monopolistic status is not about the act but about the responsibility. For example, the Architects Act does not preserve the sole right to design buildings. Rather, it only preserve the monopolization of the legal effect of the building design. In other words, anyone can produce a design document. Yet, the design document under the responsibility of the architect who is in charge of constructing the building, is only valid for the related construction. This property of the architect qualification system is not limited to South Korea but is a general truth in most countries that reflects the limitations of the architect qualification system.

Due to the non-departmentalized architectural education and delay of the institutionalization of the professionalism of architects in most East Asian countries, builders or engineers had been in charge of supervising both design and construction. In order to secure the architect's role, legal guarantees about limitation of services and prohibition of employment by others were simultaneously needed. Accordingly, since the enactment of the Architects Act in early 20th-century Japan, the article to protect the architect from being hired for other work was claimed.

The builders and the materials companies were opposed to this claim; however, the issue of the services degraded to the issue of the appellation. The conflict ended with the conclusion that unqualified individuals could not design a building with the title of the architect appellation. In Korea, after 1978, the article for protecting the architect profession from subsidiary businesses was legislated; however, unlike its original intention, this institutionalization functioned as a restriction and prohibition of qualified architects from performing other businesses.

To sum up, the various arguments over the architect system are often the common issues of the architect profession all around the world. In the process of the professionalization of the architect, coinciding problems have developed in different countries, and concluded with various institutionalizations of the architect depending on the way they have been solved. In the case of East Asia, the misunderstandings over the appellation of the architect, bureaucracy, and governmentism have resulted in unique systems of the architect. In addition, passive and artificial formation of associations and markets in the colonial era and strong administrative needs in the national reconstruction period introduced another feature of the Korean architect system. Therefore, to improve the Korean architect system, it is first necessary to distinguish between general problems and particular issues with a comprehensive understanding of the architect profession.

Key words : Korean Architect, Appellation, Profession, Institution of the Architect

