



title: Contemporary Buildings in City Promotion:
Attributes and Foundation of High-Profile Structures.
The case of Prague and Helsinki

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Abstract

This paper develops the idea of high profile buildings. Drawing on contemporary construction in Prague and Helsinki I follow two purposes. The first is to discuss what kind of contemporary buildings is employed by local, regional and central governments in city promotion and image creation. Three buildings' attributes are highlighted in regards to place promotion: high profile function, landmark architecture and visual distinctiveness and finally potential to attract attention and earn publicity. The second purpose is to examine who are the founders of high profile buildings. It is shown that those who promote high profile buildings do not necessarily stand behind the production of high profile environment. The paper concludes by saying that promotional potential of high profile buildings lies in supply of incentives for circulation of attractive narratives which helps to attach the buildings and thus also the places to internationally flowing discourse.

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Jana Temelová, Contemporary Buildings in City Promotion

1. Introduction

In response to globalization urban, regional and national entities compete with each other driven by the ambition of an effectual integration and participation in international production. In return they hope for influx of capital, creation of new jobs and generation of wealth. The mode on which nowadays world operates obviously brings considerable consequences for economic, social as well as physical development of contemporary cities.

Various assets from cultural resources to economic success stories happened to play more or less prominent role in aspirations of cities, regions and nations to make a mark in wider international arena. Apparently architectural artefacts got involved in struggle for place recognition too. Many urban scholars have argued that local, regional as well as national decision makers employ qualities of built environment in city-marketing and image-building strategies (Hubbard 1995; Zukin 1995; Greenberg 2003). As Hubbard (1995, 244) put it down "promotion of environmental quality is just one of the strategies used by urban governors in an attempt to make the city more attractive to potential investors". In this paper I intent to investigate what kind of buildings is recognized by public decision makers as worth showing-off when it comes to promotion of capitals in global pool of cities, regions and countries.

2. Research objectives and questions

As suggested above in the context of international competition certain kind of buildings picks up a prominent position in place-promotional and image-building efforts of cities. The objective of this paper is to explore what kind of buildings these are. In particular I will investigate to what kind of contemporary buildings governments at local, regional and national level attach the prime importance in marketing of two capital cities, namely Prague and Helsinki. I chose to call these structures

high profile buildings since I suppose that decision makers believe in their agency in shaping a favourable image and thus by promoting them they hope to raise the international profile of the city (with desirable consequences for local economy, quality of social life, physical value of urban space etc.). With that my further aim becomes to find out what common features contemporary high profile buildings share in the case of two researched cities. Approaching high profile buildings as physical assistants in marketing practices of local, regional and national authorities I will also discuss whether they actively develop them (as developers, investors) or whether they just take for granted what the existing built environment offers.

In short within the scope of this paper I will address one main followed by two specific research questions:

- Which contemporary buildings are used in place promotion and image creation of Prague and Helsinki?
- What makes a contemporary building the high profile building?
- Who are the founders of contemporary high profile buildings in Prague and in Helsinki?

3. Cities in competition and what buildings can do

The global competition for capital, resources and jobs has become a discussed theme among urban scholars as well as growing policy concern of urban practitioners. As Castells (1996) outlined in his concept of network society the internationalised urban hierarchy is unstable and thus a subject to fierce inter-city competition. Moreover the increasing interconnection of the world economic system causes an evident division between those cities and regions, which are able to integrate to the system and those, which so far have not been successful (Hall 1998). The competitiveness at global scale prompts local, regional

and central governments (and companies alike) to fight for a favourable position in internationalized economy in hope for prosperity and economic affluence. Accordingly Thronley (2002) pointed out that many city leaders nowadays hold the attitude that taking a proactive role and promoting their cities is essential to keep up with the ongoing competition.

Castells and Hall (1994) argued that image creation happened to constitute an essential basis for successful competition. Also Harvey (1989a, 288) believes that “image becomes all-important in competition, not only through name-brand recognition but also because of various associations of ‘respectability’, ‘quality’, ‘prestige’, ‘reliability’ and ‘innovation’”. By the same token Zukin (1997) pointed out that image making is a key element of international competition among cities. She brought forward that cities in the transition from industrial to service based production “emphasise their *symbolic economy* in both material alternations that ‘upscale’ the built environment and symbolic representations focusing on image” (Zukin 1997, 206). Though Zukin (1995) conceded that cities have always had *symbolic economy* she emphasised that in the last three decades it has risen to prominence.

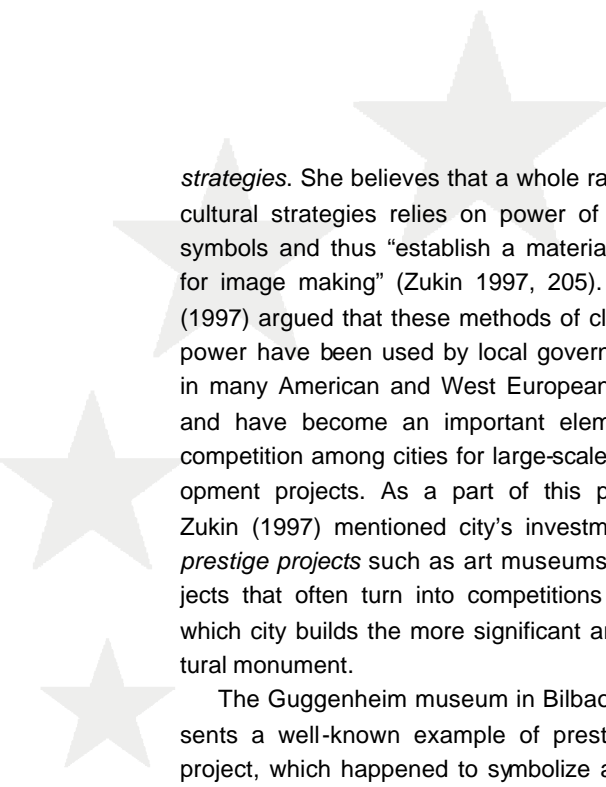
Since physical structures enable to carry symbolic forms and cues they can as well acquire an operative role in image creation and place marketing. In the concept of *buildings as signs* Haila (1997) suggested that the investment to prestigious and landmark structures represents one of the promotional and image-making tools, which is used by both private and public investors. She distinguished three types of sign buildings: *trophy buildings*, referring to Zukin (1991), give name, fame and prestige to their owners, *exclusive buildings* aim to exclude and segment the market and at last *image buildings* promote a favourable investment climate in order to attract foreign investors (Haila 1997). Similarly it is appropriate to appeal to Zukin’s (1991) idea of *signature (trophy) buildings*. In her words “signature or trophy buildings link the cultural value of architecture with the economic value of land

and buildings” (Zukin 1991, 45). Although neither signature and trophy nor image buildings directly produce money they are supposed to have an indirect effect on profit making by creating a flourishing image of companies or places. They can serve as “means of enhancing commercial success” for adjacent building development (office, shopping, residential, entertainment) and in long-term run they can support generating of investment by making places more noticeable and by attracting outside activities (Logan and Molotch 1997, p. 311). Thus symbolic buildings (signature, trophy and image) may perform an eligible role as signs of certainty and attractiveness, which investors and tourists are looking for.

Understanding architectural structures as assets to promote places brings high profile buildings to the play. In the same way as signature or image buildings also high profile buildings get a word in portraying places as attractive for investment, for tourism and for living mainly through induced associations of wealth, cultural richness, technological and civic advancement etc. Obviously marketing strategies of cities (countries) target primarily mobile population, especially tourist and business audience for whom the decision makers seek to create a notion of attractive, desirable and pleasant destinations for realizing leisure and commercial needs. I assume that also in the case of Prague and Helsinki public representatives believe in favourable agency of architectural structures in city promotion and accordingly advertise certain buildings in urban guides and promotional brochures. However only a few structures from the pool of contemporary buildings come up to suit this purpose, the buildings whose high profile features remain to be explored further in the paper on example of Prague and Helsinki.

4. Architecture, urban landscape and creation of city image

In relation to *symbolic economy* Zukin (1997) put emphasis on the role of *cultural*




strategies. She believes that a whole range of cultural strategies relies on power of visual symbols and thus “establish a material base for image making” (Zukin 1997, 205). Zukin (1997) argued that these methods of claiming power have been used by local governments in many American and West European cities and have become an important element of competition among cities for large-scale development projects. As a part of this practice Zukin (1997) mentioned city’s investment in *prestige projects* such as art museums – projects that often turn into competitions as to which city builds the more significant architectural monument.

The Guggenheim museum in Bilbao represents a well-known example of prestige-like project, which happened to symbolize an economic regeneration of declining industrial Basque region. In the late 1980s Bilbao city officials adopted a revitalization strategy in order to entail regeneration of city’s economic base and to enhance the urban infrastructure, cultural resources as well as the international image. The strategy planned for realization of several projects including new airport, bus terminal, subway system, museum, performing arts centre, convention centre and industrial park. In order to focus the world attention on activities in Bilbao the involvement of internationally reputable architects has been seen as an essential factor of successful revitalization process (Rauen 2001). Accordingly the Basque government agreed to finance the entire construction of an extraordinary structure of Guggenheim museum proposed by the competition winner Frank Gehry. Apart from Frank Gehry a roster of world-class architects signed in Bilbao projects; Norman Foster completed the subway system and Santiago Calatrava designed the international airport and a pedestrian bridge. An immediate success and enormous publicity of Guggenheim museum surely contributed to international visibility of Bilbao as well as its recognition as a reinvented actor on the world scene. After all Bilbao is just one example of cities which decided to use “architecture and urban design to pro-

mote the image and game plan of emergent city-state” (Giovannini 2001). Bilbao in a way followed the example of Barcelona whose successful bid for 1992 Olympics fetched huge investment in infrastructure and architecture and resulted in creation of landmarks such as two communication towers designed by Norman Foster and Santiago Calatrava (Giovannini 2001). Nowadays, especially in South East Asia the spectacular high-rise structures represent a common tool of city’s progressive image as emergent world cores.

Since the notion of buildings as feasible city-marketing instruments represents the primary view going with the paper it should not be seen in isolation from more general trends in governance of Western cities. Harvey (1989b) proposed that as a consequence of changes in global economy a shift from managerial practices (provision of services and benefits to local population) to entrepreneurial strategies focusing on local economic development and speculative projects carried on by public-private partnerships has emerged in urban governance since the recession in 1970s. Bradley et al. (2002, 61) brought forward that “the transformation, enhancement and promotion of urban image have emerged as central planks of the entrepreneurial governance of western cities”. The physical environment and in particular the creation of new urban landscapes has been not once recognized as an important element in city promotion and entrepreneurial practices. Harvey (1989a, 91-92) emphasized that nowadays cities and places seem “to take much more care to create a positive and high quality image of place, and have sought an architecture and forms of urban design that respond to such need.” He further remarked that “imaging a city through the organization of spectacular urban spaces became a means to attract capital and people (of the rich sort) in a period (since 1973) of intensified inter-urban competition and urban entrepreneurialism” (Harvey 1989a, 92). Moreover a lot of debate concerning the improvement of city image and production of new urban landscapes appears in relation to pro-



growth local economic development strategies adopted by many industrial cities as a response to their decay. Drawing on the work of Loftman and Nevin (1995; 1996) the development and promotion of *prestige projects* has become a key component of urban regeneration initiative in Britain (and beyond) in 1980s and 1990s. These large-scale high profile developments targeted at national and international image were seen by local governments and urban development corporations as essential mechanisms for physical regeneration of declining urban areas and as important city promotion devices in inter-urban competition (Loftman and Nevin 1995).

In somewhat similar way Hubbard (1995, 244) pointed out that “the attempt to construct a new urban image is not merely limited to the launch of an advertising campaign, but frequently goes hand in hand with the creation of a new urban landscape.” He offered an example of Birmingham where the city council pledged itself to continual environmental improvements since the local representatives believed that “an attractive environment will improve the quality of life for the city’s residents as well as stimulate investment” (Hubbard 1995, 246). Accordingly the local authorities actively participated in production of distinct new urban landscapes in pursuit of image enhancement and local economic rejuvenation. In line with this effort Birmingham City Council founded the International Convention Centre (opened in 1991), a futuristic structure which won a number of architectural awards. As Hubbard (1995, 249) suggested, although the International Convention Centre may fit in the category of entrepreneurial prestige projects with no guarantee of long-term economic success “the city council decided that the physical presence of these facilities would be an important demonstration of the city council’s determination to rejuvenate the city image.”

Although the changes in global economy, inter-urban competition and entrepreneurial approaches adopted by many urban governments as a response would suggest that public authorities get widely engaged in foundation

and development of buildings dedicated to international promotion I do not think that local and central governments generally perform so activated attitude to production of high profile built environment. I rather expect that public decision makers take advantage of buildings developed primarily for other purposes and advertise them to promote cities, in this case to sell Prague and Helsinki.

5. Methodological approach

5.1 Selection of high-profile buildings

Which contemporary buildings were recognized as important for promotion of Prague and Helsinki and therefore were chosen by appropriate decision makers to advertise the capitals in the international context? In this paper I selected the high profile items of built environment in each of the researched cities according to their occurrence in capital-marketing materials produced by relevant public authorities. Nonetheless I admit that various paths through which physical structures embrace a high profile label may exist, for example a building can be spontaneously perceived as high profile from outside without any official marketing push.

Here I took into account promotional materials produced at three administrative levels, namely at local (city), regional (region, metropolitan area) and national (state). I ought to emphasize that governmental bodies or institutions needed to be the agents promoting and advertising the buildings. Since I aimed to pick up those contemporary structures which were regarded as significant especially in relation to outward promotion of capitals, it means those targeting primarily tourists, business community and other people coming from outside the country the availability of marketing materials in English language was required. In order to select high profile buildings in Prague and Helsinki I considered the following sources:

1. Official website of local authorities - the City and its departments (e.g. tourist bureau, convention bureau, chamber of commerce).
2. Official websites of government bodies and institutions (e.g. ministry, tourist board, convention bureau, trade promotion agency, investment promotion agency).
3. Official websites of regional or metropolitan authorities and institutions (e.g. regional council, metropolitan council, marketing agency, regional development agency).
4. Printed and online tourists brochures and guides (produced by local, regional or national bodies).
5. Printed and online business marketing material (produced by local, regional or national bodies).
6. Paid advertisement and image marketing campaigns (e.g. magazine advertising, billboards, involvement of internationally recognized architect).

As to the advertised buildings I introduced several restrictions concerning their attributes (type of construction, location, year of completion) as well as the mode and frequency of their occurrence in capital-marketing materials:

New construction

- Newly constructed buildings.
- Redevelopments, which resulted in a remarkable and overall change of the original architectural form of building.
- Additional extensions to already existing buildings (insertion of a new structure) if the attached part represented the focus of promotional efforts.

Territorial restriction

- Buildings located within the administrative boundaries of the City of Prague and the City of Helsinki).

Year of building completion

- Buildings completed in or after the year 1990. I picked up particularly this year

with respect to the political turn in the Czech Republic at the end of 1989 and the resulting change of the social, economic and institutional context.

Mode of promotion

- Buildings promoted as decoys, attractions, points of interest or tourist sights in the city that drew attention not solely as utilitarian shells accommodating activities and services but also as architectural artefacts embracing symbolical and prestige value. For that beside the function also the physical structure which houses it needed to be advertised, both in textual and image form.

Frequency

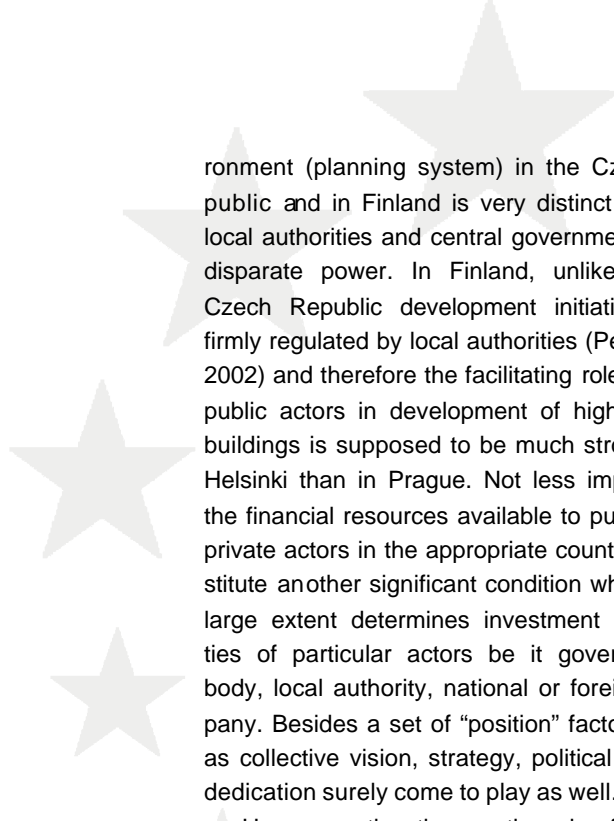
- Buildings which appeared in more than one promotional brochure/ site.

Based on the criteria and restrictions listed above I acquired the following seven buildings for further investigation.

Prague	Helsinki
Dancing House	Opera House
Golden Angel	High Tech Centre Helsinki
TV Tower Zizkov	Kiasma
	Sanoma House

5.2 High-profile buildings' founders

The engagement of private and public players in production of high profile built environment evidently depends upon a number of factors and conditions including financial means, distribution of power, local policy and practice, quality of leadership etc. The institutional context provides a framework within which private and public actors operate and thus affects the entire process of building development including the participation of private developers. Obviously the institutional envi-



environment (planning system) in the Czech Republic and in Finland is very distinct leaving local authorities and central governments with disparate power. In Finland, unlike in the Czech Republic development initiatives are firmly regulated by local authorities (Pennanen 2002) and therefore the facilitating role of local public actors in development of high profile buildings is supposed to be much stronger in Helsinki than in Prague. Not less importantly the financial resources available to public and private actors in the appropriate countries constitute another significant condition which to a large extent determines investment possibilities of particular actors be it governmental body, local authority, national or foreign company. Besides a set of "position" factors such as collective vision, strategy, political will and dedication surely come to play as well.

However rather than on the role of various institutional and economic circumstances I will focus on direct participation of local, regional and central governments as well as private actors in development of high profile buildings in order to find out how much activated the public authorities were as founders of those buildings which they initiatively promoted. By founders I mean those who finance and develop high profile buildings and thus represent the crucial driving force behind their raise. Accordingly I will follow the actors who operated as investors, developers or project managers in development of selected high profile buildings in Prague and Helsinki. On the other hand by project founders I do not refer to those who set the rules of game or who influence the construction process in other rather circumstantial ways.

6. Methods

For the purposes of this paper I made a selection of high profile buildings in Prague and Helsinki based on the buildings' occurrence in promotional materials produced by appropriate bodies on local, regional and national level. Presumably thanks to their advertising poten-

tial these buildings were employed by decision makers in believe that as marketing devices they help to enhance global profile, attractiveness and competitiveness of the studied urban areas. As already mentioned I expect that a particular set of features makes high profile buildings especially apt for advertising of contemporary cities. Drawing on the examples of high profile buildings identified in Prague and Helsinki I will now pay attention to attributes which I find rather distinct and at the same shared by all of them, namely to their function, architecture and publicity.

6.1 High Profile Function

In the concept of transformation from *managerialism* to *entrepreneurialism* Harvey (1988; 1989b) proposed that entrepreneurially thinking urban governments emphasise the city's advantages for production of goods and services by stimulating the invention and application of new technologies, they seek to attract consumers by enhancing the quality of life (investment in culture, environmental upgrading) and they focus on infrastructural provision for control and command functions by investing in transport, communications and adequate office space. I anticipate that high profile buildings adhere to promotion of widespread awareness of favourable cultural, economic and innovative milieu and thus they actuate especially in the above mentioned realms depicted by Harvey (1989b) as relevant for urban entrepreneurialism. Table 1 introduces the building types and primary functions (activities) that high profile buildings selected for Prague and Helsinki accommodate. The overview indicates that buildings maintaining the promotion for capitals relate to the purposes of culture, advanced services, communication, knowledge exchange, high-technology and innovations.

Table 1. Building types and functions of selected high profile buildings in Prague and Helsinki

Name of building	Building type	Function
PRAGUE		
<i>Dancing House</i>	office building	professional services (financial)
<i>Golden Angel</i>	office and shopping centre	professional services (mixed) and retail
<i>TV Tower Zizkov</i>	TV transmitter	communication, broadcasting
HELSINKI		
<i>Opera House</i>	opera house	arts, opera
<i>HTC Helsinki</i>	office and conference centre	IT services and innovation, knowledge exchange
<i>Kiasma</i>	contemporary art museum	arts, museum
<i>Sanoma House</i>	office building	professional services (media)

A variety of office and multifunctional buildings accommodates professional or advanced services. Sanoma house is a new headquarters of Sanoma Group, publisher of the major Finland's newspapers and provider of a range of financial information services. Dancing House is an office building owned by insurance company Nationale–Netherlands (a member of multinational financial corporation ING Group) and rented to multinational management consulting company Accenture. Beside the spectrum of retail facilities, commercial complex Golden Angel gathers offices of several companies operating in advanced services sector, including ING Group head office (owner of Golden Angel) and other financial and legal firms.

High Tech Centre Helsinki functions as office and conference centre akin to a technology park providing not only top-class congress facilities but also work community and services to IT and media companies. TV and radio transmitter in Zizkov constitutes a part of infrastructure serving to the needs of telecommunications and broadcasting. According to Castells (1996) the role of so-called *circuit of electronic impulses* (microelectronics, telecommunications, computer processing, broadcasting systems and high-speed transportation) is

nowadays fundamental in the functioning of network society since it forms the material base for strategically important processes.

Hall (2000) outlined that cultural and creative industries may provide a basis for economic regeneration by creating new urban images that help to make city more attractive to mobile capital and professional workers. Thus the cultural role of cities brings about a demand for museums, galleries, operas, theatres, concert halls, cinemas and sport venues which satisfy the art consumption of international as well as local population. The Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma and the Opera House belong to the amenities, which enhance cultural as well as social attractiveness of the place.

As showed above the high profile buildings in case-study cities relate to the functions, which seem to be of a particular importance in global competitive environment. Thanks to the associations of these activities with economic progressiveness, technological advancement and cultural richness high profile buildings belong to the built items likely to be picked up for marketing and promotional purposes of contemporary cities.

6.2 Landmark Architecture

A wide range of physical structures accommodates high profile functions but obviously not all of them deserve the label high profile buildings. Zukin (1991) pointed out that an emphasis on individualized architectural products has emerged as a result of intensified market competition in real estate. Similarly Harvey (1989a, 77) conceded that while new patterns of conformity in urban landscapes occurred (e.g. shopping malls, atria) at the same time architects and urban designers have re-emphasised the production and consumption of *symbolic capital* that is “the collection of luxury goods attesting the taste and distinction of the owner”. Therefore I expect that beside high profile function also architectural and contextual peculiarity constitutes an important feature of high profile buildings.

To produce some kind of symbolical message in the sense depicted by Zukin (1991) in the concept of *signature buildings* clearly poses certain challenges on symbolic and architectural expression of buildings. Similarly Haila (1997) described *image buildings* as landmarks, visible signs that lend to a city the appearance of global city. The notion of *landmarks* formulated by Lynch (1960) appears to be helpful in approaching the contextual distinctiveness of buildings. According to him the key physical feature of landmarks as the most visually significant elements creating the city image is their singularity, “some aspect that is unique or memorable in the context” (Lynch 1960, 78). I will show that the selected high profile buildings in Prague and Helsinki fit to greater or lesser extent the idea of visual distinctiveness. Mainly through the visual and contextual efficiency in urban physical space high profile buildings remind a particular kind of landmarks symbolizing contemporary epoch.

Dancing House designed by a world-known architect Frank Gehry (in cooperation with locally based Vlado Milunic) represents the best example of post-modern architecture in Prague which is still rare in the Czech environment

(see figure 1). The two playful towers reminding of a dancing couple gave the building its characteristic name. The glaring expression of contemporary architecture made the Dancing House very recognizable in its local historical context.

Figure 1. Office building Dancing House in Prague



Source: www.pis.cz

The structure of Golden Angel designed by another celebrity architect Jean Nouvel (in cooperation with local architectural firm A 8000) is an extraordinary building set in a former industrial Prague's neighbourhood (see figure 2). The glass facade with a motif of angel and fragments of poetry from the texts of Prague-linked famous authors are the most eye-catching features of the whole complex.

Figure 2. Commercial centre Golden Angel in Prague



Photo by Jana Temelova

The TV tower in Zizkov is at its 216 metres the tallest building in Prague and thanks to its visibility from far away a true landmark of the city (see figure 3). Many consider the futuristic high-rise structure as one of the capital's most emphatic dominantes.

Figure 3. TV transmitter Zizkov in Prague



Source: <http://www.radio.cz/en/article/33525>

The Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma is probably the best known and the most extravagant contemporary building in Helsinki (see figure 4). It is a masterpiece of internationally reputable architect Steven Holl and locally based Juhani Pallasmaa. The imaginative combination of curvilinear and trapezoidal forms means a completely new architectural addition to a historically important site surrounded by significant public and cultural institutions.

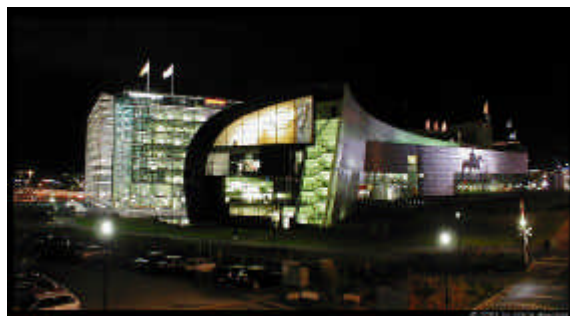
Figure 4. Museum of contemporary art Kiasma in Helsinki



Source: <http://photoweb.lodestone.org> (Maria Haanpää)

Sanoma headquarters is a neighbouring building to Kiasma. The rational and functional glass cube of the office building creates a pronounced contrast to rather post-modern shape of the art museum (see figure 5).

Figure 5 Sanoma headquarters and Kiasma museum in Helsinki



Source: <http://photoweb.lodestone.org> (Maria Haanpää)

The glass façade of Sanoma House gained a special attention among architects and was even seen as a forerunner of a new trend of glass architecture in Finland (see figure 6). Similarly the pedestrian passages cutting diagonally through the building and forming an internal public square were seen as a novelty in office architecture.

Figure 6. Sanoma headquarters in Helsinki



Source: www.navalarch.com

The Opera House, sometimes nicknamed the monument of 80's, continues a series of Helsinki's public buildings along Töölö Bay. While a white colour and a long glass-walled foyer of the Opera House contribute to the unique exterior as well as interior of this cultural landmark the unusual tiled facade made critiques to call the building "bathroom" (see figure 7).

Figure 7. The Opera House in Helsinki



Source: <http://photoweb.lodestone.org> (Maria Haanpää)

The architectural expression of High Tech Centre Helsinki leans out from the other constructions in a redeveloping industrial area (see figure 8). Building's design is based on variation of materials, colours and textures as well as on integration of industrial elements familiar to former harbour surrounding. The futuristic-shaped structure of HTC certainly

brings a distinct and memorable architecture to redeveloping port environment.

Figure 8. The High Tech Centre Helsinki (HTC Helsinki)

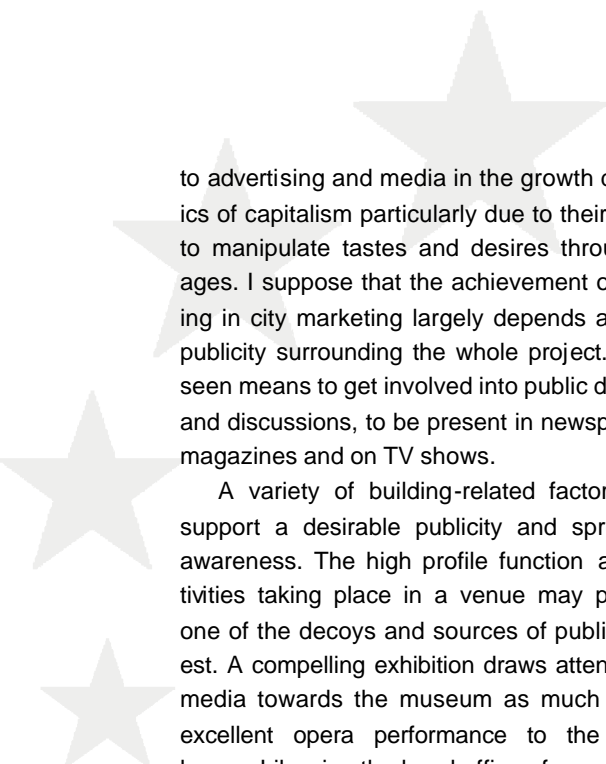


Source: www.juvaeng.fi

I consider visual distinctiveness as one of the more pervasive characteristics of selected high profile buildings. From the architectural point of view I regard high profile buildings as top envoys of contemporary built environment. Accordingly they appear on pages of architectural journals and monographs and their architects often win architectural awards. What however remains important in regard to city marketing is that distinct buildings, moreover designed by architects of global fame help to focus the public interest. As popular targets of media high profile buildings contribute to worldwide publicity and spread awareness of a place. After all even people who have never visited the city have some kind of virtual perception of it from the advertised buildings. Here I just tackled the topic of publicity which I will discuss in more detail in the following chapter.

6.3 Attracting attention – gaining publicity

Most of the contemporary constructions are rather average, do not lean out from the main stream and thus not many discussions accompany their rise. Plenty of buildings just grew up without the majority of people even noticing them. On the other hand global competition challenges to contest for recognition and calls for projects provoking international attention. Harvey (1989a) assigned a greater importance



to advertising and media in the growth dynamics of capitalism particularly due to their ability to manipulate tastes and desires through images. I suppose that the achievement of building in city marketing largely depends also on publicity surrounding the whole project. To be seen means to get involved into public debates and discussions, to be present in newspapers, magazines and on TV shows.

A variety of building-related factors may support a desirable publicity and spread of awareness. The high profile function and activities taking place in a venue may provide one of the decoys and sources of public interest. A compelling exhibition draws attention of media towards the museum as much as an excellent opera performance to the opera house. Likewise the head office of a prominent media company or large multinational corporation serves as an international advertisement not only for the private enterprise but also for the whole city.

Similarly the participation of a world-famous architect helps to target the focus of local as well as international scene and usually guarantees that a new structure and by extension also the city and the country will occupy pages of newspapers, magazines and journals of various kinds. In the case of Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao Rauen (2001) pointed out that the involvement of a prestige architect with international reputation (Frank Gehry) was one of the essential elements in focusing world attention towards the city. Two of the selected high profile buildings in Prague and one in Helsinki were designed by international celebrity architects, which made the structures admired and hated at the same time. Frank Gehry, Jean Nouvel and Steven Holl belong to globally active designers who leave their signatures on landscapes of cities all over the world. Their names lend credibility, prestige, power and publicity to their clients as well as to the projects. The engagement of top-class architects earned a great deal of publicity and popularity surrounding Dancing House, Golden Angel and Kiasma. I believe that in part at

least it added to international visibility of Prague and Helsinki as well.

To situate a modern building in prestige or somehow exceptional area and thus create a contrast to local context can mean an intended answer to the challenge of a place. At the same time such a step is likely to become a source of public polemics leading to presence in media. Especially the projects located in historically significant sites tend to appear controversial. Due to an exposed location in the heritage conservation area as well as due to the prominence when viewed from Prague Castle Dancing House has become a part of an open debate among professionals as well as laymen. Even before the opening the structure attracted a considerable share of opponents who criticised its extravagance and impropriety for the character of historical neighbourhood. Alike the construction of Kiasma was an object of vehement dispute, which at that time threatened the entire project. Probably the most of public emotions came out from the architect's original proposal to relocate the statue of national hero Marshall C. G. Mannerheim. One of the museum's designers, Juhani Pallasmaa, even declared that Kiasma might be the most controversial building in Finland ever (Lord 1998). Although not in historical core the domination of high-rise TV tower over the Prague's cityscape was not accepted smoothly either. Already in the initial phase the project raised many negative reactions criticizing almost everything; the purpose, the appearance, the location as well as the harmful effect of electromagnetic radiation emitting from the transmitter. After the political turn in 1989 many people claimed demolition of the unfinished dominant. Recently plastics of climbing babies attached to the corpus of the tower made the structure a debated issue once again.

Obviously architecture is an important tool through which many elements project to final appearance of a building. The use of extraordinary shapes, materials or colours may draw attention and publicity even without being strictly controversial or signed by a name of

global architect, just purely for being different in its setting. High Tech Centre Helsinki certainly brings a distinct and a memorable architecture to the redeveloping port environment. Similarly Golden Angel with its emphatic façade and glittering materials means an entirely new architectural expression in former industrial Prague's neighbourhood. The innovative conception of semi-public passages cutting through Sanoma headquarters distinguishes it from other office buildings in Helsinki. Likewise the nicknames "greenhouse" and "bathroom" indicate that Helsinki scene did not stay apathetic neither to Sanoma nor to Opera House. Moreover the exceptionally long duration of Opera House construction as well as the enormous costs had kept it a debated issue.

In the main all of the selected high profile buildings in Prague and Helsinki appear to be somehow special, distinct or controversial. This feature made them to succeed in capturing minds of wide audience and contributed to the publicity crucial in regard to promotional and advertising role of high-profile buildings.

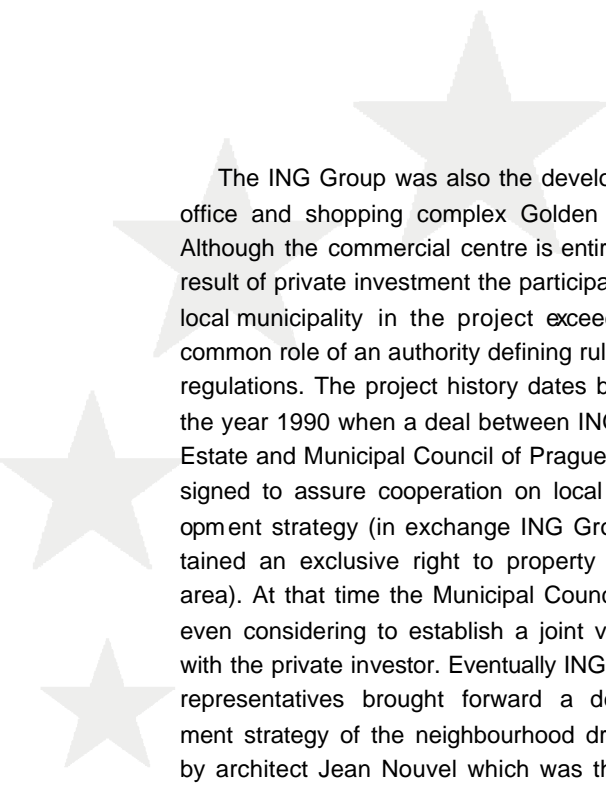
7. Public and private actors in production of high profile buildings

The participation of different actors in production of high profile buildings may acquire various forms. Here I will focus on the point whether those who promote and advertise high profile buildings, that are local, regional and national authorities, also participate in their actual financing and development (which may for example be the reason why they promote them afterwards). Table 2 presents high profile buildings in Prague and in Helsinki together with their founders – investors, developers or project managers of each project.

The insurance company Nationale-Nederlanden (a member of ING Group) raised Dancing House as a rental office building. The intention of Nationale-Nederlanden was to create an exclusive structure that would not only represent the company status but that would be lucrative enough too (Kratochvíl 1998). To fulfil this demand Nationale-Nederlanden hired a world famous architect as one of the building's designers.

Table 2. Public and private-sector founders of high profile buildings in Prague and Helsinki

Name of building	Investor	Developer/ Project manager
PRAGUE		
<i>Dancing House</i>	ING Real Estate (multinational corporation)	
<i>Golden Angel</i>	ING Real Estate (multinational corporation)	
<i>TV Tower Zizkov</i>	Ministry of Transport and Communications	Správa Radiokomunikací (state-owned company)
HELSINKI		
<i>HTC Helsinki</i>	SRV Viitokset Oy (private company)	
<i>Sanoma House</i>	Sanoma Corporation (private company)	
<i>Opera House</i>	Ministry of Education, Science and Culture	National Board of Public Building
<i>Kiasma</i>	Ministry of Education, Science and Culture	PWD Construction Management, City of Helsinki



The ING Group was also the developer of office and shopping complex Golden Angel. Although the commercial centre is entirely the result of private investment the participation of local municipality in the project exceeded its common role of an authority defining rules and regulations. The project history dates back to the year 1990 when a deal between ING Real Estate and Municipal Council of Prague 5 was signed to assure cooperation on local development strategy (in exchange ING Group obtained an exclusive right to property in the area). At that time the Municipal Council was even considering to establish a joint venture with the private investor. Eventually ING Group representatives brought forward a development strategy of the neighbourhood drew up by architect Jean Nouvel which was then approved by local authorities and opened the way to construction of Golden Angel.

Already in 1981 a decision was taken that the new TV and radio transmitter for Prague will be built in Zizkov. Deep in the socialist era the tower had besides its transmitting function also a political purpose of disturbing foreign radio stations in Prague (Augusta 1998). As the public-state investor was basically the only practicable option in the centralized regime the TV tower was financed by a state-owned radio communication company (Správa Radiokomunikací) under the institutional roof of former Federal Ministry of Transport and Communications.

The development of building for Finnish National Opera turned into a long-duration project. The Opera House fits in the plan of series of cultural institutions in parkland area drew up by a Finnish architect Alvar Aalto more than thirty years ago. Although the design proposal for the Opera House was approved already in 1977 it took 16 years to get from there to the completion of the building. Eventually the Opera House was realized and financed as a state contract with National Board of Public Building who took charge of the scheme.

The projects of Sanoma House as well as the one of Kiasma fit to a wider urban strategy

aiming at redeveloping of the city-central zone in Helsinki. Despite a favourable location the site surrounding the two buildings belongs the southernmost tip of a large under-used area where until recently not many new developmental activities were taking place. The contemporary art museum and the headquarters of leading newspaper publisher represent the first two projects realised in the area. In the initial phase of Kiasma genesis the Finnish government agreed with the City of Helsinki on giving the land for residential construction in exchange for city's commitment to build a new facility for Finnish National Gallery. Thus while the government financed the new museum the city-run PWD Construction Management developed the whole project. Sanoma House is a private investment of Sanoma Corporation however fitting to the scope of wider strategy of local authority.

Since the beginning of 1980s the waterfront in Ruoholahti area has been the focus of redevelopment initiative administrated by the City Planning Department who decided to move the port and warehousing activities to eastern part of the city in order to convert the existing land for housing and work purposes. As Pennanen (2002) pointed out the local planning authority have been the dominant actors strongly controlling the involvement of private actors and holding the main leads of waterfront development in its hands. Although the basic form of HTC was defined in town plan a private developer SRV Viitokset Oy bought a waterfront site in 1998 and took on the initiative of High Tech Centre Helsinki.

Save TV Tower Zizkov which grew up under non-capitalist condition neither local nor central government assumed the initiative to develop or finance high profile buildings in Prague. It suggests that public decision makers rather utilized the architectural products of other founders in promotion of the capital. In Helsinki on the other hand local and central government seemed to be more activated in this sense. Recently they gave raise to two cultural institutions, which were afterwards used in promotion of Helsinki. Considering that

the involvement of particular actors in project development depends beside other on power and resources they can bring in it is not too surprising that the participation of public authorities in production of high profile buildings is much less explicit in Prague than in Helsinki.

8. Conclusion

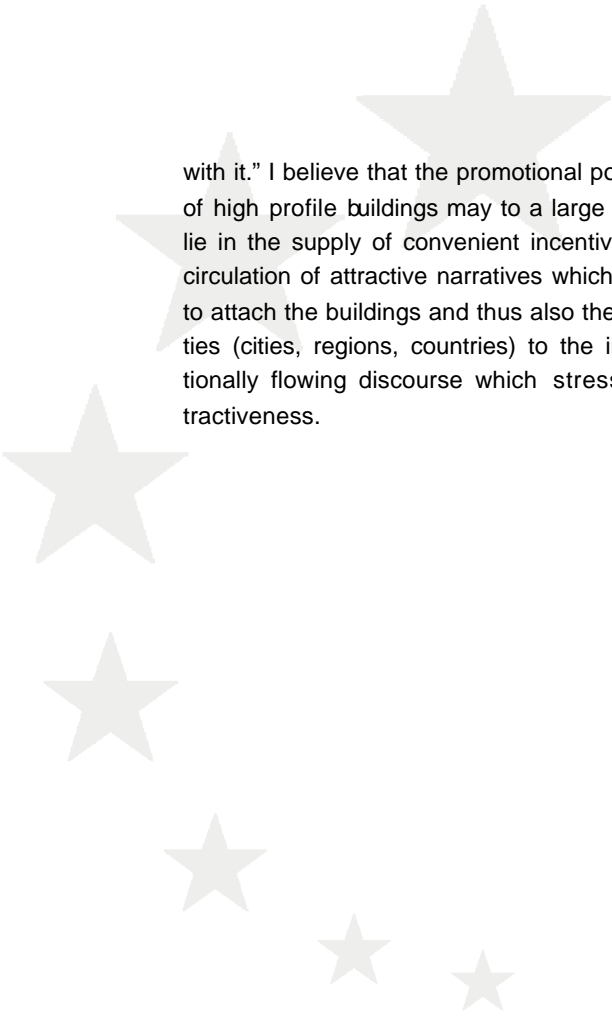
The purpose of this paper was to discuss what kind of contemporary buildings is employed by local, regional and central governments in external marketing of Prague and Helsinki and further who participates in actual financing and development of this kind of buildings which I chose to call *high profile*. I framed the idea of high profile buildings into the context of global competition and the resulting shift to entrepreneurial approaches in urban governance as well as into the theoretical assumptions regarding the value of buildings and architecture in image making and city promotion. By examining seven contemporary constructions in Prague and Helsinki I tried to suggest some characteristics which may be important for the role that high profile buildings fill for capitals in the international marketplace.

The cases of Prague and Helsinki indicated that selected high profile buildings share a convenient set of functional and architectural (contextual) features that makes them forcible in advertising of urban areas. High profile buildings gather functions (communication, knowledge exchange, high-technology, advanced services, culture) which seem to be important for the mode on which nowadays world operates. As to the architectural attributes the visual distinctiveness in local setting seems to be one of the more pervasive characteristics of selected high profile structures. Thanks to these two main features and with them interrelated issues (e.g. involvement of global architect, controversial manner, contextual significance, architectural appearance) high profile buildings tend to evoke local as well as international interest. I believe that publicity surrounding the construction and after-

wards the existence of high profile buildings play a notable role in shaping favourable international image and in maintaining mental awareness of a city. However since I carried my investigation only on a sample of buildings in two case capitals I do not claim that the above-mentioned conclusions are generally valid for high profile buildings in every urban area.

Despite the contextual differences in the two case-study cities (and countries) it appears that those who promote high profile buildings do not necessarily stand behind their foundation. Contemporary buildings employed in promotion of Prague were raised for other purposes than city marketing and were developed except the TV tower established in centralized socialist regime by private enterprises. The production of high profile built environment by public authorities was rather indicated in Helsinki where national and local government took charge of two cultural institutions. I however do not argue that these facilities were produced purely or primarily for the purposes of city marketing (though it becomes rather expected that publicly founded museum and opera appear in promotional materials produced by city and state officials).

In a way the conception of high profile buildings as marketing assets pulls them out from their particular locality and attaches them to what Castells (1996) described as a *space of flows*. As Castells (1996, 398) put it down "interactivity between places breaks up spatial patterns of behaviour into a fluid network of exchanges that underlines the emergence of a new kind of space, the space of flows". Obviously buildings are in their physical essence still set in places; however the discourse surrounding them makes their stories and images to flow through international magazines, web pages, TV and radio shows, guides, exhibitions as well as through spoken language. In analysis of the role of language in the process of producing buildings Markus and Cameron (2001, 93) pointed out that "the value of a building has been constructed for the tourist in discourse in advance of any actual encounter



with it." I believe that the promotional potential of high profile buildings may to a large extent lie in the supply of convenient incentives for circulation of attractive narratives which helps to attach the buildings and thus also the localities (cities, regions, countries) to the internationally flowing discourse which stresses attractiveness.

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