

Zeitschrift: Trans : Publikationsreihe des Fachvereins der Studierenden am Departement Architektur der ETH Zürich

Herausgeber: Departement Architektur der ETH Zürich

Band: - (2017)

Heft: 31

Artikel: The fox and the lion : or the perpetual habit of ETH students to romanticise the past

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-918712>

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The Fox and the Lion

or the Perpetual Habit of ETH Students to Romanticise the Past

Up on the hill lived a great lion, casting his shadow on the woodlands below. In these woods lived a quiet community of animals of all shapes and sizes. There were badgers, squirrels, wolves, rabbits, sheep, owls and many others. It was well known that the climb to the top of the hill was treacherous, and none dared undertake it. Their days were spent in solemnity, in stubborn worship for the great lion on the hill. They looked up to him for guidance and direction. It was not always an easy way of life, with many cumbersome traditions and customs. Each of these animals wore their own lion's mane, a sign of respect for their leader.

There was one disruption in their small community; the fox. Always a little different, always a little difficult. He did not hunt the same way as the others, did not eat with them, did not follow their lifestyle. But most of all, he showed a flagrant disregard for the worship of the lion. He did not wear a false mane. He did not strive to become the lion. For he was the fox, and such was his nature. The fox was perceived as cunning and arrogant by the other animals. They did not understand why he could not just follow them in their worship. Everyone wore the prescribed costume, they all looked alike and lived alike.



One day, the bravest of the group decided to confront the fox about his wayward ways. «Why do you not wear the mane of the great lion?» asked the badger. The owl added, «Why do you flout convention?» The fox replied, «You all look ridiculous with your false manes. You are neither a badger nor a lion, just bastards. You let your worship for him cloud your judgment—do you even know the lion?» Angered by his answers, the badger threatened the fox to tell the great lion of his disrespect and arrogance. The fox boldly laughed at his proposition, «Go ahead».

The badger plucked up all his courage to embark upon the journey. To his surprise, the crest of the hill was closer than what he had been told and he reached it with barely a drop of sweat on his brow. He squinted his eyes, excited to finally meet his master. As he approached he saw to his dismay, that the great lion was indeed not what they had expected. His mane was a mass of ragged, overgrown hair. Their deity had never been a lion, but simply an old fox.



by Axel Chevroulet and Anna MacIver-Ek