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ANÁLISIS Y PROYECTOS
AVANZADOS

ANALYSIS AND ADVANCED PROJECTS / ANÁLISIS Y PROYECTOS AVANZADOS

ARCHITECT, WORK AND METHOD
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Abstract: This thesis approaches the question of Method in architecture by focusing its analysis on 5 specific contemporary projects, trying to unveil their underlying constitutive motivations.

KAZUYO SEJIMA (AND SANAA AND RYUE NISHIZAWA), House in a Plum Grove in Tokyo.

FRANK O. GEHRY, Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles.

ÁLVARO SIZA, Mimesis Museum in Paju Book City.

REM KOOLHAAS, The Dutch Embassy in Berlin.

PETER ZUMTHOR, Kolumba Museum in Cologne.

Thus, architectonical object and work are considered the susceptible elements that provide the material knowledge that unravels the manner and the methodology by which they were conceived.

With this particular approach, this thesis challenges other traditional studies, those that regard the Method in architecture as a regulated or universal systematic procedure. On the contrary, the purpose of this thesis is to clarify the foundations and principles that underlie each specific architectonical object.

Meanwhile, the conclusion of the thesis (which is the object of this paper) shows a position that complements the specific character of the previous chapters, since it dares to move forward conclusively towards the definition of the essential principles of the Method in architecture today.

The thesis differentiates itself from the scientific-historical researches, having them as a support, it opens a new way for future researches which can be specifically focused on the architectonical project's methodology.

Keywords: Process, Conceptualization, Method, Creation, Architecture.

1. Introduction

The present text is an extract of the conclusion of the doctoral thesis of the author, (http://oa.upm.es/38053/), which, with the same title, deals with the method in architecture.

Far from being historical research, or a technical-constructive analysis, the thesis aims to reveal the instruments and the basic tools of the discipline of designing architectural projects from its own hermeneutic understanding.

To achieve this, it focuses on the analysis of five specific buildings: Sejima, Gehry, Siza, Koolhaas and Zumthor are the protagonists of the study, one for each chapter of the thesis, each one with its corresponding conclusion.

From there on, it follows the epilogue that is included within this paper. This can be read independently of the thesis, skipping over and abstracting the references (always in parentheses), since the principles of this paper take on conclusive character beyond the singular references that they are drawn from.

As the reader may notice, this synoptic and conclusive character of the present text does not embody an analytical summary of the results of the thesis. This is because the summary, together with the assessment of the approach of the research, is already reflected in the conclusion of each chapter. Thus, each mentioned chapter could be considered as a 'mini-thesis' in itself.

On the contrary, this text, rather than a conclusion, has been treated as an epilogue. This is because, based on the detailed analysis of the works mentioned above, as well as being grounded in the many comparisons that extend this analysis to a large number of works by the same and other authors, this epilogue advances toward the introduction of the difficult question of method from a more poetic and artistic approach which is also characteristic of our discipline. Thus, it offers an insight that

complements the purely analytical scientific research with another hermeneutic line that attempts to approach the method by aiming to provide a route that allows the reader to experience first-hand the thought process of the architecture.

It would not be fair to offer such an approach without reference to the ground that supports it. Therefore, due to the curiosity and intrigue that some suggestions within this paper could trigger, the index of the whole thesis is included next. This index, being a reference to the specific content of the thesis, complements the general character of the present paper, while it also encourages the reading of the whole work at the following link (http://oa.upm.es/38053/).

1. KAZUYO SEJIMA AND SANAA[1], House in a Plum Grove in Tokyo, Japan (2001-2003).
1.0. Introduction.
1.1. The one and the whole.
    Autonomy and continuity in the relation between the element and the group.
1.2. Form (language) and concept.
    A re-conceptualisation of modern formal syntax.
1.3. Structure and enclosing.
    New identity of modern coherent in-coherence.
1.4. Centrifugal-centripetal.
    Tensions that condense the trajectory of Sejima, Nishizawa and SANAA
    in the House of a Plum Grove.
1.5. Abstraction and method.
    Modern abstract condition as a simplifying methodological strategy.
1.6. Form and idea.
    The perception of the idea in the form as a method.
1.7. Conclusion.

2. FRANK O. GEHRY, Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, U.S. (1988-2003).
2.0. Introduction.
2.1. Organic theory and praxis of master Scharoun
    …. and how one thing can be two at the same time.
2.2. The embellished deconstruction
    … and the indispensable consistency of the inconsistency.
2.3. Conclusion.

3. ÁLVARO SIZA, Mimesis Museum in Paju Book City, South Korea (2006-2009).
3.0. Introduction.
3.1. The itinerary.
    An approach to a faraway museum via the architectural *promenade.*
3.2. The continuous autonomy.
    And a mixed fusion of the heterogeneity.
3.3. A pragmatic mixture of historical types.
    From the 'frontal' laterality of the facade towards the access from Seoul.
3.4. The coherent identity of the difference.
    The amalgamated 'complexity and contradiction'.
3.5. The generic singularity.
    Second and first in the process of the project.
3.6. Big and small.
    The relation between the whole and the parts,
    between the scheme and its arbitrary development.
3.7. Language and Style.
    A reformulation of the modernity, unifying the incidentality.
3.8. Interior and exterior.
    The exterior expression of an introverted interior.
3.9. Conclusion.

4. REM KOOLHAAS, The Dutch Embassy in Berlin, Germany (1997-2003).
4.0.   Introduction.
4.1. A 'generic-man' synthesised in Berlin.
    A controversial decision to approach a controversial architect.
4.2. Method of conceptual identity.[2]

Formal identity and its consistent inconsistency.
4.3. Iconographic condensation
…on the way from triple dissociation concept/meaning/image
to the ambivalent in-significant meaning.
4.4. The method, the image and its untruthfulness.
Visual immediacy as a project mechanism.
4.5. Program and method.
Social breakup as a project tool.
4.6. The radical subversion as a method.
Fuck Koolhaas' fucking context.
4.7. Conclusion.

5. PETER ZUMTHOR, Kolumba Museum in Kohl, Germany (1997-2007).
5.0.   Introduction.
5.1. The intimacy of an innermost exterior.
And the itinerary that drills an apparent compactness.
5.2. The perceptual conditions of reality creating method and project.
The ontological turn to the things themselves
that delays the form until the end of the process.
5.3. But… was the form really at the end or basically at the beginning?
Modern heritage and its unavoidable formal apriorism.
5.4. Primeval newness and its archetypical extraordinariness.
The specificity of type and a special typicality.
("Make it typical then it will become special")
5.4. The transcendent immanence.
And it's a-symbolic essence.
5.5. Conclusion.

6. CONCLUSION:

2. Epilogue

The specificity

Despite the numerous comparatives between the chapters in this thesis, each one is presented individually, since each is dedicated to a singular figure in the contemporary architectural scene. This autonomy has also led each chapter to reach a conclusion of its own.
However, this profuse focus on the singular and specific object offers now the material and the support for a general conclusion which condenses and yields the substantive questions about the architectural Method. Nevertheless, in the same way that this lengthy development about the 'specificity' requires us to extract its essential content, it also warns us about a generic or merely classificatory conclusion which would frustrate the indispensable open mindedness required to address the question of the creative Method.
The thesis itself, its organisation into chapters that deal with architects and specific Works, suggests the importance of the uniqueness when we address the question of the Method in architecture; so much so that the conclusion of each chapter has led us to the comprehension of the Method linked to the strategy adopted by each analysed architect.

Personal strategy

Thus, we are linking the Method to the creative verve which necessarily arises from a mainly personal option and position. This is also apparent in the fact that architectural offices are designated by the name of their leading architect (Siza, Gehry, Zumthor), in contrast to other sectors such as engineering. Even the architectural offices that have an abstract trade name or an acronym (OMA) tend to be recognised through individual names (Koolhaas[3]). What is more, these corporate offices often subdivide into smaller studies which allow architects to develop their own personalised work (Sejima + Nishizawa, in addition to SANAA).
Then, this disciplinary status justifies the choice of the thesis to focus on the specific Works and the decision to sort these according to the names of certain architects. This does not imply a subjectivist

'personalism' but a distinct 'particularism' which is also linked to the architectural Work. Thus, Method is not only related to the position and the strategy adopted by each architect, but due to its specificity, it also needs to be rethought in each new project. Method has to be created as well as the Work, to the extent that it is necessary to create a method to create a new work.

Thus, Method can be so specific that each work can even demand a distinct methodological strategy beyond the self-definition of the architect's position (Koolhaas). This is the same specificity of the Method that leads the architectural Work to show –even pedagogically- its methodological starting point (Moneo[4]).

So there are works that find their meaning in the Method by which they have been developed (Moneo) or that find their sense in their sustaining idea (Koolhaas). On the other hand, this specificity of Method can lead us to architectures that, having been conceived from a general scheme – which could be a systemic or generic starting point – end up flourishing and finding their sense in the specific detail through which they are developed (Siza).

These contradictions between different positions show how difficult it is to define the architectural Method, since these irreconcilable references among the analysed architects show the difficulty to enunciate general principles of Method in architecture. Thus, the architectural Method becomes so singular that we find it impossible to define in generic or universalistic terms, since Method is so specific that if we tried to contradict its essence by defining it through generic or universalistic terms, we would arrest Method's potential to face each new problem and situation (methodologies of 60s)[5].

On the other hand, this personal and particular specificity of the architectural Method does not make it subjective and careless, since, in that case, Method's criteria and parameters would end up being of no use. Therefore, what are the definitive overall criteria we can deduce from its specific character without being generic?

Experience

We could answer that one of the points that gives objectivity to the specific character of Method is the experience. So much so that the Method in architecture can not stop being and constituting an experience. In fact, the teaching of Method in schools of architecture has never been detached from its practice in project workshops. In that sense, the Method in architecture is defined as 'The' living experience beyond the dialectical contradictions and beyond the univocal thought that our rationality naturally tends towards. Thus, Method and project workshops train us and introduce us to a less direct and more suggestive thought process, so that this genuine thinking becomes an experience in itself.[6]

This is a way of thinking which, rather than reasoning, is an unprecedented way of living and experiencing what is already known, a disposition that allows us to glimpse new subtleties and hidden nuances in what is already established. Thus, it is an experience which is able to find identities in aspects that until now were contradictory (Siza). In the same way, as Method helps us to get rid of established parameters, it might pave the way for a new experience by adopting a radical rupture with pre-fixed social or cultural stereotypes (Koolhaas).

At the same time, Method is in the first instance an experience, since its resulting architecture is essentially pure phenomenology (Zumthor). For that very reason, Method offers phenomenological tools and procedures to recreate the architectural object from the pure experience of rediscovering it (Sejima).

Furthermore, the architectural Method is constituted by experience insofar as it requires a course and a development that resolves the antagonistic questions, weighs up pros and cons and integrates them into a new solution. Thus, this thesis with its long analytical development has intensified its focus on each ambivalent suggestion of each project, each nuance of each work, progressively bringing the reader into the 'complex and contradictory' argumentation of each studied work. This offers a suitable path and a proper experience of Method for anyone interested in delving into it.

Memory

This matter of the experience and, deep down, the route that is required to grasp the architectural Method, lead us to the subject of memory: historical memory, personal memory and the memory of a specific project. Essentially, a memory that helps us decide, know and understand, a memory that provide us with already tested tools and allows us to learn through past mistakes, while delighting us with its achievements. And so, it is an historical memory that displays a vast legacy of strategies and methodological positions for our use and enjoyment (Moneo). Furthermore, the architectural Method is constituted by a memory that we can integrate and transform (Siza), phagocytise or even subvert (Koolhaas). A memory that often is more than just one, and therefore is a memory that we can syncretise or fuse (Sejima).

In that sense, the experience and its memory are so important that, not only Method's teaching is based on the workshop-type practice, but even its theoretical complement − architecture theory classes − has never lost sight of explanation and interpretation of the built Work, be it recent or historical.

The Work

Thus, the architectural Work, the object itself, is responsible for the concreteness of the architectural Method. Hence, this thesis has tried to approach the question of Method from the interpretative analyses of the architectural object, since the architectural object, in its concretion, forces Method to overcome any theoretical starting position (Scharoun). Also the architectural Work − and in general practice − does not allow self-deception and forces the architects to contradict their own ideological principles, to contravene what they might have vehemently proclaimed at a given time (Koolhaas).

Therefore practice, and also the concretion of the Work, forces the architect to find the way to resolve the ambiguities, the inherent contradictions in any kind of decision making. Because, as we know, the required materiality of the Work and its materialisation have forced architecture over the years to struggle with the internal contradictions that come about from the resolution. Even the works that take on the most categorical absolutist stance have to resolve the intrinsic inner contradictions that arise from their extreme position. Also in the case of architectures that are apparently based on the argument of crystal clear and pure transparency, become mixed and diversified in a in-depth study (Sejima).

Ambiguity

This complex condition of the architectural fact is so ambiguous that some architects decide to openly avoid resolving its 'complexity and contradiction' (Venturi). Their position might be considered far from that of their 'enemies', the architects who have been attached to the cleanest and purest architecture (Mies). Both appear to be distant from each other, but the distance is not so great because the latest architecture was not so immaculate and in some cases it was duping us, since it even marginalised some substantial aspects, leaving them aside unresolved.

Since these historical references, and other experiences, teach us about the impossibility of a complete consistency in architecture, the architectural Method could decide to discard any attachment and any condescendence with regard to the multiple situations that architecture must take into consideration. Thus Method could decide to embark on a unique thought which only tackles architecture from one of its many aspects, such as the image (Gehry). But also, due to the impossible cohesion of all parameters that come into play in a building, Method even claims radical ambiguity as an absolute principle (Koolhaas).

In contrast, we could find some methodologies which find ambiguity as a reference, but in their case not to dissociate or split, but to find relations that combine and associate what was different and disperse (Siza). Nevertheless, this is not only a task of the architectural Work, since certain methodologies are even able to integrate cultural thinking models that have been antagonistic until now (Sejima).

Synthesis of the duality

One could say that one of the main features of the architectural Method could be the necessity of finding a synthesis of the duality and the contradiction. Since the architectural Method forces us to decide and choose, it also requires integrating the aspects that have been left out of the choice that has been made, otherwise the result would yield an option based on a single method, which would be rather obvious and simple. Thus, the architectural Method is not a relativist choice that decides on one or another option in a random or whimsical manner, in fact it is not a mere choice, but rather the Method reveals itself as the search for the strategy that overcomes the inherent contradictions of any option that we could adopt to cope with the creation of architectural object.

Thus, we find methods that have been able to think architecture from one point of view while also conceiving it from the opposite position, hence these methodologies have managed to achieve architectures that are symmetric and 'antimetric', while they are also axial and centralised, formal and amorphous (Scharoun), lateral and frontal (Siza), and also centrifugal and centripetal at the same time (Scharoun, Sejima+Nishizawa, in addition to SANAA).

Dilated and immediate

To reach this synthesis, to achieve the integration of different understandings and diverse perspectives within a same project and enrich the architecture in such a way, thus avoiding simplicity, Method and process of design necessarily need to wait; to wait until all elements are fused or at least integrated. Thus, project methodology is mainly characterised by thinking architecture through the delay of the premature (Zumthor[7], Moneo, Fisac[8]). This implies a wait that is not passive, but rather it is an active compilation and a severe analysis of the whole entanglement of the project, which bides its time until a condensation of a solution that appears through the stroke of an irruptive intuition (Aalto[9]).

But Method not only implements a delay that postpones, but it can also be deployed through an immediacy that anticipates (Koolhaas), or a fugacity that celebrates the most radical episodic incident (Siza). This is a method that seeks the inspiration in newness through the immediate condition of any situation that comes across, however marginal or casual it might be. Thus the Method, rather than being a delay that condenses, can also work seeking a diversified newness which even exceeds the architectural fact and transgresses the limits of the discipline itself (Koolhaas). In this way, avoiding the thinking patterns that are focused on the intrinsic substantiality, this method claims the paradoxical contradiction (Koolhaas) as well as the circumstantial incidentality (Siza).

Method and Time

Thus, the different ways to carry out the process of the project tell us that <u>Method and Time</u> link each other by dilating or concentrating, through two alternatives that might appear contradictory and therefore could yield disparate architectural solutions. While we might believe that condensed thinking can reach complex synthesis of divergent aspects, a frivolous judgment could lead us to consider that its opposite, immediate thinking, risks falling into partial arbitrariness. However, during the development of this thesis many situations that apparently might have appeared as one-dimensional and biased, in a deeper understanding also appeared complex and multiple (Koolhaas).

So, even the methods that show themselves as immediate and direct, if they are really Methods, if they have really tackled the resolution of the architectural object, definitely would have had to struggle with the alternative dialectics that are intrinsic to architecture: interior/exterior, regular/irregular, continuity/autonomy, formal/informal, void/solid and so on. (This list of dialectics comes from the chapter about Koolhaas, but it also strangely concerns the other architects in some way or another.)

Back to the Work

This leads us again to verify the definitive character of the architectural Work, since, as we confirmed during the course of this thesis, different thinking modes, and opposite cultural idiosyncrasies can achieve analogous architectures (Koolhaas, Sejima). This is a fact that does not happen the other way around, since it is quite complex to find identities, related personalities or analogous thinking models among the architects of this study. On the one hand, this highlights the importance of the architect and his/her idiosyncrasy and, on the other hand, the irrevocability and the conclusiveness of the architectural Work.

The architect and the architectural Work

These comments already show us the most substantive questioning dialectic regarding the issue of Method: the dialectic between the <u>architect</u> and his/her <u>Work</u>. This is precisely the same methodological dialectic that is summarised in the title of this thesis '*Architect, Work and Method*'. In fact, architectural Work presents a definitive condition which forces Method to offer a concretion, since all the architectural dialectics must be resolved within a single architectural Work. Thus, the architectural Work itself forces the architect to give a conceptualisation through which all intrinsic disciplinary dialectics of the Work are resolved.

And so, the analysis of such a diverse amount of Works has thrown up considerable conceptual aspects that specifically belong to the architectural fact itself. In fact, and without exhausting the list of concepts that exist and could exist in the architectonic realm, the titles of the epigraphs of this thesis truly embody the diversity that they collect: the autonomy and the subordination, the typology and the specificity, the form and the idea, the structure and the enclosure, the language and the style, the idea and its iconography, the image, the program, the perception, the construction, the interior and the exterior and so on.

However, as we indicated above, this focalisation on the Work itself is at the same time vindicating for its author, the architect. In a way that the extensive list of the concepts we have worked on so far is telling us that the architectural Work takes shape via different conceptual approaches which can be combined (Siza, Sejima), but all these different approaches can also be recreated in an original

solution that paves the way for new concepts (all the architects). However, these dissertations and possibilities deep down reveal that this conceptualisation that characterises the Work demands a singular thought, since, despite the plurality of the approaches above when undertaking the architectural Work, its conceptualisation is at the same time so particular that it returns us to the singular and personal thought that created the Work itself.

Conceptualisation and thought

Thus, a closer analysis of the conceptualisation of the Work reveals the orientation and the bias of the thought that created it. But not in a way in which we find certain personal or psychological features within the Work, even though we are able to find some idiosyncratic ones, such as silent architectures (Sejima), eccentric architectures (Koolhaas), introverted architectures (Siza), hedonist architectures (Zumthor) and complex architectures (Gehry) amongst others. It is not about a relation between the Work and the personality of the architect, since both do not have to match and in fact they do not even coincide.

Rather, when we associate the architect to his/her Work we are wondering about the indispensable thought that creates that work. Thus, when we approach certain architectonic works, we can discover that they have been designed via the concept (Sejima) in opposition to other works that have been thought by way of the form (Gehry). Architectures that have been conceived as a systemic totality (Sejima) at odds with works in which every anecdotal particularity has been prioritised (Siza). Architectures conceived from the interior, and therefore, through introspective processes (Siza, Zumthor) compared to those architectures that have been designed from their exteriority (Koolhaas). Architectures that are generated through an abstract thought (Sejima, Zumthor) versus figurative architectures (Gehry, Siza, Koolhaas). Architectures designed via their own immanence (Gehry, Siza, Koolhaas) compared to architectures that claim their transcendence through their iconic-symbolism (Koolhaas). Architectures that are designed from the context (Siza, Gehry, Zumthor, Koolhaas) versus architectures designed by the program (Koolhaas).

Subject and object

Thus the thought and the conceptualisation of the object, basically the architect and his/her Work, are linked to each other indissolubly, reflecting one of the most basic dialectics that the method needs to face: the dialectic between the object and the subject. This does not mean that we are linking the architect and his subjective preferences, which would represent the relative side of the process versus the objective side which would correspond to the work. It does not need to be so because, as seen above, the architectural Work can not be so radically associated to the objectivity, as it also presents partialities and ambiguous aspects. On the other hand the architect does not need to be linked to the subjectivity, since he/she is the one that confers the objectivity to the process in more than one occasion.

Rather, when we refer to the architect and the Work –in relation to the subjectivity and the objectivity–, we understand Method as a strategy, as a personal position that even finds connections between the subjectivity and the objectivity via the concretion represented within the architectural Work. In fact, Method constitutes a strategic position which, in its particularity, aims to create ties that would overcome the eternal schism between subjectivity and objectivity.

This polarity is precisely the duality that is behind all the dialectics mentioned so far (specifically those mentioned above: idea/object, abstract/figurative, interiority/exteriority, transcendence/immanence and so on). Thereby, if we have verified that Method demands a specific concretion to transcend the eternal dialectical polarities, now we arrive at the conclusion that the architectural Method, above all and principally, requires assuming and coping with the alternative between the objective and subjective side of the architectural Work.

As we know, the alternative between object and subject has been one of the largest, if not the greatest, challenges for philosophy since antiquity (Plato, Aristotle) and even in recent times (Merleau-Ponty). In fact, modernity was the philosophy which opened the widest gap between these concepts, to such an extent that modernity even enunciated the definitive break between them, a break that could have its origins specifically in the focalisation of modernity on the object and its conceptual objectivity, as we have verified throughout the thesis, particularly and extensively in the chapter on Koolhaas.[10]

Therefore, at the same time that the major divisions are rooted in the most radical positions, we again conclude that Method can not be partial, or univocal, since the attitude of being inclined towards one side of the balance, and in particular, its biased tendency towards the object, either towards its formalisation, its objectivity or its systematic apprehensibility, does not end up resolving the matter. Indeed, eluding the conflictive essence of the connotative subjectivity does not solve very much, since

there is nothing, even less in architecture, that can avoid meaning. Everything becomes significant, however neutral it has tried to be (latest Koolhaas, Zumthor)

In the same way, Method can not renounce the task of questioning what lies beyond the object. For that same reason, this thesis has inevitably led us to the ultimate philosophical questions initiating with the analysis of the most positive object, even if that starting point was always the specific object and those conclusions have appeared at the end of each epigraph and chapter.

However, the difficulty of this second part, namely, the conflictive ambiguity of the subjective-symbolic connotation in architecture, more than once makes the architectural Method fail when addressing these controversial topics, to the extent that Method can even surrender and renounce arriving at a synthesis, positioning itself within the open wound, in the breach between form and its meaning (Koolhaas in Berlin).

Thus, this unresolved synthesis makes form and meaning coexist, or even compete in a same building, so much so that we can find buildings in which their conceptual structure is simultaneous with certain individual significant elements. These elements appear and trigger the meaning that their structure could not offer without them; since its neutrality and its objectivity require the compensation of the signification of certain partial episodes (Koolhaas in Berlin, Siza). In many cases, the fight for the signification against the schematic structure is so fierce that some individual specific elements even manage to acquire anthropomorphic features, thus introducing human connotations into the generic system that they overlap (Siza).

Modernity and its mannerism

Thus Method has to face the dilemma between structure and meaning, in many cases seeking the significance through a transformation of modern structures and forms, deforming them, turning them into gestures (Siza), or even recycling modern elements to get a new significant combination (Koolhaas). In sum, Method can even become a mannerism of modernity, what could be an idiomatic use of modern language which pursues the rapprochement between objectivity and subjectivity through a merger, a heterogeneous superposition of contrary elements.

This fusion might be considered heterogeneous, however, a deeper analysis also reveals it as a mixed blend (Siza), an ambiguously insoluble mixture (Koolhaas). This shows us that things are not so simple; modernity itself can not be understood from a single interpretation, since its achievements were enormously complex and intertwined. And so, this is not the first time that Method shows us that there is nothing univocal or straightforward and teaches us that everything is rather more multiple and complex, since there is nothing that means only one thing but rather the connotations are inevitably diverse and plural.

In fact, the ambiguity and the indeterminacy of the connotative aspects of architecture reach such complexity that the architectural Method reveals itself as the quid that finds the indispensable identity within the inevitable inconsistency that is inherent to everything (Koolhaas). Thus, if everything is inconsistent, then the Method can even subvert, it can even find its own legitimacy transforming the most individual elements, the most particular situations, into the conclusive fact of the architecture (Siza). Thereby, what seemed to be a cult of partialities and circumstantialities, a mannerism, is in fact a focus on the most accurate specificity.

And here we arrive at the common ground of all the diversity of the architects studied in this thesis, which brings us again to the starting position of this conclusion and of the thesis, since we discover now that in recent times Method is no longer identified with a generalisation or a systematisation, but rather it finds its sense in the object and its specificity. So much so that the most recent architecture prolongs modern interest in the object and its 'objectuality', however in this case it is not about an objectivity detached from its subjective meaning, but rather, the architecture of recent years has found the meaning identified with the object itself.

If modernity split subjectivity and objectivity, or more precisely, if modernity tried to avoid the inherent conflict of the subjectivity through a focus on the pure objectivity, recent architecture prolongs the interest of modernity in the object, but in this case fusing subjectivity within it. That is, recent architecture has merged the two previously divided entities into one of them.

Immanency

Curiously, this fact represents a junction, a confluence into which all diversity of the analysed architectures converges. Because most of the architecture of recent years showed us the 'thing' itself (Zumthor) or the form itself (Sejima) as its starting point, to the extent that any symbolic signification is linked to the formal or iconic singularities of the object itself (iconic Koolhaas). At the same time, this is the same reason for the recovery of the interest in the beauty of architecture, as well as the identification of the content of architecture with its radical formal expression (Gehry).

Thus, all the methods that we have studied show a drastic return to the 'objectual' condition of architecture, which is telling us that architecture does not lay claim to any subjective symbolic value apart from its own materiality (Zumthor). Because recent architecture has increased its own phenomenological condition, the object has merged with the subject, reaching both a fusion through the single perceptive act (Zumthor), to the extent that the idea of architecture and its content are exclusively restricted to the pure formal condition of the object (Sejima, SANAA), while schematic idealism losses ground in favour of more specific developments (Siza).

And thus, there is no meaning or significance which is not inherently linked to the Work itself. And so, architecture no longer seeks transcendence in ideas or in principles that are superimposed on the Work itself − if that was ever possible or ever completely like that − but rather, transcendence arises from the specific concretion of the architectural Work itself. This is something that frequently happens to Method, since most of the time the creative process experiences the transcendence of being overcome by a project which achieves such autonomy that it seems alive. In that sense, the living character of the Work is such that recent architecture seeks the transcendent subjectivity within the Work itself. If we have understood architecture and Method as the dialog between the architect and his/her Work, between the subject and the object, recent architecture has made the transcendent subjective condition of architecture adhere and cling to the Work itself. This shows that architecture has tried to pursue 'the beyond' in what is mainly 'here'.

Transcendence

However, the architectural Work itself also demands a new key that would unlock a way beyond its ambiguities and contradictions. In fact, the interest in the 'thing itself' of recent architecture might reveal a clamour to transcend the limits and difficulties that we still bear, so that this exacerbation of the object's immanence could be the attempt to transcend modern principles that still prevail. As mentioned above, the analysed architects not only honour the modernity they come from, but indeed all of them also try to overcome it through a concretion of its modern generic principles 'here' and 'now'. Thus, by searching for 'the beyond' in what is 'here', recent architecture brings us the 'immediate future' to the most established 'present'.

Like the architecture of recent years, this thesis in turn also focused its interest on the architectural object, on the most radical immanent fact, in order to bring the imminent future closer. Hence, the study of the latest achievements, the clarification of the most radical ambiguities of the recent work, pave the way to an architecture which could offer new alternatives to resolve the eternal and irresolvable dialectic disjunctives in which we find ourselves.

Imminence…

Thus, despite the risk of conjecturing the paths of the architecture of the near future, those who have been studied in this thesis and in its conclusion, point to the need to work towards future synthesis which could build the bridges that would approximate the abysses that exist between the object and the subject, between the work and its transcendent significance, as well as between the conceptual structure and its symbolic connotation (Ungers, Venturi, Koolhaas).

It is true that this thesis has radically focused on the Work, on the individual architectural fact, following the trend of the same architecture that it was analysing.[11] Nevertheless, the extensive deployments of the intrinsic content of each project have led us to unravel the sense and the personal strategic position that is beyond the immanent exacerbation of the architecture in recent years. That is, the analysis of the Work, through reflexion on its Method, has led us towards its architect.

Hence, this trinitarian triangle, '*Architect, Work and Method*', has been created, in which Method can even restore the inevitably elusive link between the architect and his/her Work. And so, this is precisely how the Method has provided the necessary consistency to the project beyond its inherent ambiguity, which has led us to understand the architectural Method in this thesis as the substantial, as well as the sustaining, aspect of the architecture. To such an extent that Method has achieved an ontological status, a definitive and final consideration in the understanding of architecture.

However, this determinative condition of the understanding of Method is neither absolute nor dominant. In fact, despite the importance given to the conceptualisation and thought that architecture requires, Method has avoided identifying itself with any idealist absolutism. In fact the opposite is true, since our comprehension of the Method has sought to go beyond, trying to find the ultimate reasons that are concealed within the immanence of the project. Thus, the thesis has progressed with the conviction that the Method − if it is really a Method − has had to create a new thought that transcends our own reasoning and thinking.

Hence, the architectural Method has been understood from its most pragmatic perspective, but not in a pejorative or practical sense, but rather in its ability to open new alternatives from the most positive

reality. Thereby, the thesis has avoided any fixed systematisation, since Method has even questioned the sense of the inconsistency itself. Because Method has even been so bold as to challenge architectures that have tried to elude their own essence (Koolhaas, Gehry). Method has even questioned the resources of their indispensable sustainability.

Therefore, questioning the indispensable consistency of the inconsistency, digging into the intricacies that go beyond the apparent immanence of the Work, Method reveals itself as the conclusive key that explains the architecture of recent years beyond its plural diversity. Thus, this substantial and essential approach to the Method that also considers the fugitive diversity that characterises our time, paves the way to new Methods, to new creative positions that will engender the architecture of an already imminent future.

3. References

[1] The chapter is mainly focused on the House in the Plum Grove, designed by the office which is led by Kazuyo Sejima. At the same time, some projects by the office led by Ryue Nishizawa and projects by the SANAA office, which is led by both architects, are also included in the chapter.

[2] The second and third epigraphs of this chapter are translated into English constituting the following two papers:

"Method of conceptual identity and its consistent inconsistency, through the analysis of the Dutch Embassy in Berlin by Koolhaas & OMA."

"Iconographic condensation in the work of Rem Koolhaas, on the way from triple dissociation concept/meaning/image to the ambivalent in-significant meaning."

[3] "At the beginning one of these was the creation of something called OMA, where my identity was submerged in a group, and that's how we've always worked, as a group. But somehow, the world insists on the individual." VERSCHAFFEL, Bart. "The survival Ethics of Rem Koolhaas: The First houses by OMA".PATTEEUW, Véronique (ed.) _Considering Rem Koolhaas and the Office for Metropolitan Architecture. What is OMA._ NAi Publisher. Rotterdam 2003. Pp.153-164. (quoted from page 154)

[4] MONEO, Rafael. _Apuntes sobre 21 obras_. Gustavo Gili, Barcelona 2010.

[5] The literature about project methodology from the 60s and beyond was analysed by the author in a paper during his doctoral program. This paper studied different alternatives and possible guidelines for this thesis. This paper summarised the conclusions of the book by Albert Esteve de Quesada about project methodology from the 60s, it also abstracted the content of some other books quoted in the bibliography: Jones, Broadbent.

This paper also researched the way in which certain treaties and monographs approach the study of architecture. It also analysed the strategy of certain professors and writers on architecture to organise their knowledge and information, in sum, how they classify and distribute the content of their thought, trying to find the way that this thesis could approach the question of method in architecture. Among others, works by Giedion, Rowe, Quaroni, Zevi, Alexander, Montaner, Miranda, Moneo, and so on were analysed. Some conclusions of this paper are summarised at the end of the chapter about Siza, where some images and classificatory charts of this study are also included.

[6] In this way, the Method and thought become themselves the experience of what they are thinking about: "Hacer filosofía o hacer biología nivela una diferencia esencial. El préstamo del nombre que el objeto da al comportamiento muestra la peculiaridad exigida a éste: "estudiar filosofía tiene que ser un real filosofar, lo que quiere decir: con lo que me relaciono, dicho de manera puramente formal, el _objeto hacia el que..._ es tal que, desde su propio carácter, _determina el comportamiento con él_" (GA 61, p. 51)." RODRÍGUEZ, Ramón. "La indicación formal y su uso en Ser y tiempo". En DE LARA, Francisco (ed.) _Entre fenomenología y hermenéutica. Franco Volpi in memoriam._ Madrid, Plaza y Valdés, 2011, pp. 71-94. (Quoted form page 79)

[7] "Meaning of course can never be avoided, but I like to work as long as possible on use and structure and materials, and so on... to avoid premature meaning. Architecture is not about form, first come many other things: light, use, construction, structure, shadow, smell, and so on... form is the easiest to control, we can do at the end. Is the easiest part." ZUMTHOR, Peter. _Royal Gold Medal 2013 Lecture - Peter Zumthor_ from RIBA on Vimeo. http://www.dezain.net/2013/24540

[8] I refer to the study of my doctoral programm which is published in: BESA, Eneko. "_Miguel Fisac. Una metodología proyectual_" Espacio, Tiempo y Forma ISSN: 1130-4715 Serie VII. Historia del Arte. T 20-21. Pp. 393-417.

[9] AALTO, Alvar. "_The Trout and the Mountain Stream_". From: _Alvar Aalto, 1898-1976_. Arno Ruusuvunori, Helsinki 1982.

[10] This aspect was carried out to the extreme by Structuralism. This ceased to understand meaning as something intrinsic to form, but rather the Structuralism pretended to generate meaning through the interaction between structure

and users. In the words of Hetzberger: "The fact that we put 'form' in a central position with respect to such notions as 'space' or 'architecture', means in itself no more than a shifting of accent. What we are talking about is in fact another notion of form than that, which premises a formal and unchanging relationship between object and viewer, and maintains this. It is not an outward form wrapped around the object that matters to us, but form in the sense of inbuilt capacity and potential vehicle of significance. Form can be filled-in with significance, but can also be deprived of it again, depending on the use that's made of it, through the values we attach to, or add to it, or which we even deprive it of, - all this dependant on the way in which the users and the form react to, and play on each other. The case we want to put is, that it is this capacity to absorb, carry and convey significance that defines what form can bring about in the users - and conversely - what the users can bring about in the form. What matters is the interaction of form and users, what they convey to each other and bring about in each other, and how they mutually take possession of each other. What we have to aim for, is, to form the material (of the things we make) in such a way that - as well as answering to the function in the narrower sense - it will be suitable for more purposes. And thus, it will be able to play as many roles as possible in the service of the various, individual users, - so that everyone will then be able to react to it for himself, interpreting it in his own way, annexing it to his familiar environment, to which it will then make a contribution." LÜCHINGER, Arnulf, *Structuralism in Architecture and Urban Planning*, Stuttgart 1980. p. 56. Including original texts by Herman Hertzberger, Louis Kahn, Le Corbusier, Kenzo Tange, Aldo van Eyck and other members of Team 10.

[11] In this way, the working Method aligns itself and links itself with the essential condition of the same object that it analyses. Along the same lines Ramón Rodríguez writes about the methodological strategy of Heidegger: "la analítica existencial presenta un comportamiento fáctico determinado que, por su particular transparencia ontológica, cumple el papel de plenificar una indicación formal en el único modo en que puede ser plenificada: realizando el comportamiento al que apunta y requiere." RODRÍGUEZ, Ramón. "La indicación formal y su uso en Ser y tiempo". En DE LARA, Francisco (ed.) *Entre fenomenología y hermenéutica. Franco Volpi in memoriam.* Madrid, Plaza y Valdés, 2011, pp. 71-94. (Quoted from page 91)