

12 / Steven Freear in Dana Wiedebossion, *Los tratados de Arquitectura*, Ed. Blume, Madrid, 1988, p.118.
 13 / The durability of the work of Desgodetz is evidenced by the numerous re-editions: Paris 1695, 1697, 1776, 1800, London 1771, 1778, Rome 1822 and 1843. Especially significant was the last re-edition published nearly two centuries after the first edition, corrected and expanded with supplementary surveys by G. Valadier and drawings by L. Canina in the *Appunti e commenti all'opera Sogli Edifici Antichi di Roma dell'architetto A. Desgodetz procurate in parte dal cav. Giuseppe Valadier, compite e dichiarate dal cav. Luigi Canina*, Rome, 1942.

14 / Diana Agrest *The Order of the City*, 1987, En Dillec, E., Lewis, D., Skjapich K., "Education of an architect", Irwin S. Chavin School of Architecture of the Cooper Union, Rizzoli, New York, 1988.
 15 / Diana Agrest, 1987, "The Order of the City", p.171. See Hejduk, Dillec, Lewis, Skjapich: "Education of an Architect", The Irwin S. Chavin School of Architecture of the Cooper Union, Rizzoli, N. York.

quadrants at different levels (following a design previously used by Serlio), he applies a differentiated treatment to the outside and the inside of the building. Whereas the very deteriorated inside, shown in a significant section, is surveyed with all its wear and tear (Fig. 9), the outside façade is shown in the same plate completely reconstructed from the modular repetition of the many parts which were still conserved (Fig. 10). It therefore must be deduced that Desgodetz's recourse to the original reconstruction of the building was assumed fully and with complete normality, and probably continued to be understood as the ideal model for representing Antiquity; however, this idealisation was conditioned (and this was its main novelty) by the quantity of information available and only occurred when the margin of error was acceptable as in the case of the Pantheon and the Coliseum. If the element still intact and the constitution of the building permitted it in the reconstructions, this would be made in a hierarchical order in which the ground plan and the front elevation prevailed and only very rarely, as in the case of the Coliseum, extended to the section drawing.

When the monuments presented many difficulties for being drawn in their original state and being reliably reconstructed perfectly, due to the lack of data or sufficient information Desgodetz only made a systematic survey of what there was. The most significant example, because of the degree of definition of all the details and the quantity of information provided is the *Templo della Pace o Basilica di Massenzio*, the ruins of which were drawn in a floor plan, elevation and section drawing, including ornamental details at bigger scale (Fig. 11). Very similar approaches representing only the conserved ruins were used in the surveying of floor and elevation of the ruins of the *Temple de la Concordia in the Boian Forum* (Fig. 12) and many others such as the *Temple of the Sybil in Tivoli*, the *Temple of Mars in the Forum of Augustus* and the ruins of the *Temple of Minerva in the Forum of Nerva*. Although in some cases he attempted to reconstruct certain elements that had disappeared, such as the supports of the vaults in the floor plan of the Basilica of Massenzio, his attitudes were very timid and graphically differentiated (line drawing without shading) that did not interfere with the knowledge and understanding of the actually existing parts. Despite the number of buildings represented, most of the information provided by Desgodetz continued to be based on academic debate about orders, reflected in the ornamental details of the buildings. For example, compared with the seven plates of architecture used by Desgodetz to define the Parthenon, 16 other plates are devoted only to the details of the order of the portico of the pronaos. None of these details refers to construction aspects, which have nothing to do with the representation which is confined merely to the formal and compositive parameters of

the ornamentation. Moreover, in the representation of the order of architecture there is no reference whatever to the ruin or to the wear and tear of the material as an intrinsic characteristic of the monument. The level of faithfulness in the representation of the buildings (the whole) does not run through to the representation of the parts.

Desgodetz thus initiates a subtle difference between what can be deemed to be history of architecture defined by the remains of historical buildings, and theory of architecture defined by the elements in its composition. The former develops in a particular period and moment, is susceptible to being destroyed by the passage of time and its remains, the ruins, are represented as such. The latter consists of a series of a temporal models and values which configure the ideal of beauty, are immutable and inalterable elements throughout history which must be represented as such in order to be assimilated. By adopting this implicit approach, Desgodetz shatters the Renaissance dilemma between the architectural representation of Antiquity, faithful to the Vitruvian model of unity and the fragmented reality of the ruins thereby opening up a route which clears the conceptually existing (and graphically expressed) conflict between understanding Antiquity as a model for imitation as a reference for inspiration or as archaeological testimony.

The distinction implicitly postulated in the work of Desgodetz between the history and the theory of architecture was explicitly taken up and assumed by Le Roy in 1758 in *Les Ruines des Plus Beaux Monuments de la Grece*, and was to become the basis for the approach to the revision of Antiquity in the 18th century by the European traveller draughtsman on the Grand Tour and on voyages to the Orient; however, when it was published at the end of the 17th century it provoked more criticism than approval as Steven Freear notes:

"Firstly the Academy could not accept that a person as young as Desgodetz should dare to challenge the recognised Masters by revealing significant errors in the works, errors which they themselves, members of the Academy, had overlooked. Secondly, Blondel had used the proportions of the monuments as they appeared in the works of those Masters to justify his theory of proportions. Official recognition of those errors would have destroyed the theory of Blondel". Despite divergences within the Academy, the methodological contribution of Desgodetz and the new philosophy of researching Antiquity with scientific objectivity together with a new kind of scrupulously truthful representation that was respectful with fragments gradually imposed itself as the norm and was adopted in practice by all the books on ruins in the 18th century and was constantly reedited and revised by successive writers until well into the 19th century".

Notes on Conglomerate order

by Antonio Millán Gómez

A modern conception of rationality makes it inseparable from sensitivity in the handling of contingencies, i.e., in the possibility that something might or might not become architecture. If form is the possibility of structure, we are bound to analyze the structure of place and the program on which we operate; we are obliged to be exquisite in the perception of possibilities, so that our project can be viable and take final form.

The so-called reading of place was a widely spread notion, as project attitude or interpretative subtlety with disciplinary relevance for a reading or measured drawing". Diana Agrest said that "in the process of critically reading the urban text and rewriting, not just a fragmentation but also a transformation takes place, generating new configurations linked to the present cultural conjuncture...".

This notion of reading is developed in two ways. First, (it is developed) through the emphasis on the public place, implying a critique of architecture of buildings and monuments. Public place is a positive space and not a leftover space between monumental buildings. The urban project is not a static set of objects on a neutral plane but multiple sequences of public places and spaces, of transitions and articulations between open and closed public and private space, between the existing fabric and the new fabric. The public space, streets, squares, and gates transverse the built volume. In this transverse of urban walls (explicit, implicit) edges become important elements that define and allow for that transition and articulation. Second, the notion of reading is developed through the focus on the notion of typological articulation and transformation by means of (symbolically unstable) transitional types, which emphasize the sequential process of reading. This makes architecture of sequence as opposed to an architecture solely based on geometry or architecture based on the picturesque juxtaposition of fragmented enclosed space".

The reading of complex phenomena, which implied variety of proposal and uses, changes in program, transformations to which any building seemed to resist itself, was treated by several architects, but a previous course of events from several authors appears as evident today.

Precedents

In February, 1986, Alison Smithson reminded a phrase of the Commission at Aix-en-Provence, during CIAM 9: "We fall through the mesh of the four functions".

"... We were interested in training the architect's mind, in a kind of free-fall ordering; an ordering with infinite variations; without imposed boundaries; ca-

3/ Alison Smithson wrote "tube and wire", which offer a multiplicity of meanings, not only fluids mechanics or solids transport (water, gas, telegraph, radio communication, etc.)
 4/ Domus 108, (1937), Casabella 100, (1936). See DPA20, *Imagines of Architectural Project Department, UPCI, MP*
 Pia Fontana and Miguel Mayorga: "Manifiesto de intenciones: proyecto ideal de una casa en el mar"
 Relations between these works and unrealized project by Colchery de Sentmenat for Torre Valentina can establish another bridge which we shall not cross here.
 5/ Aldo van Eyck, *Architectural Design* 12, vol. XXXI, December 1962, p. 560

6/ Sir Leslie Martin: "Speculations" *RIBA Journal*, 1967. See Leslie Martin & Lionel March: « Urban Space and Structures » Cambridge University Press 1972
 7/ Shadrach Woods: "Stem" (*Architectural Design* 5, May 1960).
 8/ *AD Sept 1934*, pp. 573-590
 9/ Alison Smithson: "How to recognize and Read Matt-Buildings", A.D. September 1974, p. 573-590
 10/ F. Maki y Masato Ohtaka: *Collective Form—Three Paradigms*, 1960/ F. Maki: *Investigation on Collective Form* (1964).
 11/ "Master plan", "master program", "master forms" are the terms in the original.

12/ Reyner Banham: "1964, the mega-year", in "Mega-structures", 1976.

able of recognizing unfolding orders; dimensional systems developing naturally out of a sweet resolution of a programme; we were opening our mind to possibilities.

In the mid 1980's the sort of building that appears to suit our needs and responds to the complexity and changeability of its "functions"—offering an ability to include in its order continuous change—the building developed from the inside outwards. So that when it is materialised, our recognition of it is: "so that what it looks like" is the conglomerate building. In many ways, the return of the Conglomerate building—from out of the mediaeval days of no mechanical services—where there were only people carrying, emptying—precedes the invention of services capable of looking after themselves, remotely controlled, space age style: for example beamed electrical power to equipment able to receive, the end of the "tube and wire age".

Architects close to the Smithson had faced the links between program and formal structure, definitively left behind by the CIAM times. The ideas of those cheery colleagues were born from rejuvenated attitudes in front of the new urban reality and the values of architecture without architects, as B. Rudofsky put it. The terms applied had a systemic character, reminiscent of organic processes—growth and form—and of those sciences occupied in describing them, offering at the same time an abstract approach, as if the transmission of concepts was attempted by means of the diagrams necessary to illustrate them. Such diagrams allow us an understanding of the operative logic of the conglomerate and address us to its origins.

Already in the 1930's, Adalberto Libera (in villa Malaparte, Capri, 1930-43), Giancarlo Ponzano and Bernard Rudofsky (in the Villa per Costanzo, 1937), and Villa Oro at Posillipo, Naples 1934-37) adopted an abstract position in front of an exuberant nature: a simple abstraction which pointed at intermediation in the arts. Cosenza treated spatial categories in a dialectical way to synthesize dynamics between inside and outside, between a place and its environment:

- Covered spaces: closed—open.
- Uncovered spaces: closed—open.
- Exterior spaces: limited—extended.

In a similar way Aldo van Eyck would take position, defending architecture "as a configuration of intermediate places... where conflictive polarities can be twin phenomena".¹ But Van Eyck was a good connoisseur of primitive cultures which provided resources for his work, and for the primitivism which inspired Modern architecture.

We can follow the notions which guided towards conglomerate by blocks, according to the evolution of concepts between members of Team X or architects close to them:

A- Clusters, stem/web, matt-buildings
 Concerning "clusters" (blocks with common high raised spaces, around a shared public domain) as advanced by the Smithson and Candilis/ Josic/ Woods to formalize urban growth, Sir Leslie Martin² would point out that building in height or in insulae was not a matter of form or typology, but of density. One could neglect small insulae, even use its shared internal area for agricultural purposes, but continuous expansion increased the cost of infra-structures. The gather at the "urban tree" was not directed then to its leaves or branches, but at the stem, "conditioned by mobility". Its dimensions are given not in measures of length, but of speed... It can provide the link between these measures of speed as it can between the measures of validity (the 25- and 5-year cycles). The process of planning from stem to cluster will tend to re-establish the density and scale in habitat". These architects searched a urban restructuring as network (web) by jeans of matt-buildings, reference to anonymous architecture and to plateau constructions in Central American civilizations, which so would inspire Jörn Utzon, the allowed a segregation of pedestrian and car traffics, they could function in a local way, as well as being a concession to the rule of automobile.

However, an old typology was recovered for modern uses: "Matt-building can be said to epitomise the anonymous collective: where the functions come to enrich the fabric, and the individual gains new freedoms of action through a new and shuffled order, based on interconnection, close-knit patterns of association, and possibilities for growth, diminution, and change".

B- Notes on collective form. Three paradigms: composition, mega-form, group-form.

Fumihiko Maki³ started his argument from the point of view that urban society is "a dynamic field of interrelated forces" and proposed, not a "master plan", but a "master program", whose physical correlate had to be a series of "master forms", which differ from buildings in their response to the dictates of time. From a series of goals, the "master program" suggests several alternatives for its realization; its use depends on time and on its effects on the ordering idea. Actual cities (as F. Maki saw them, or more recently, as Rem Koolhaas sees them in "the generic city" lack "a visual and physical character consonant with the functions and technology which compose them. They also lack elasticity and flexibility".

We lack an adequate visual language to cope with the superhuman scale of modern highway systems and with views from airplanes... we have become accustomed to use visual and physical concepts which have to do with individual buildings and closed compositional means to organize them... A way to escape from these limitations is to observe critical-

ly the enormous architectural heritage produced since man became to operate in collectivity...

The term "collective form" so coined referred to "groups of buildings or quasi-buildings—the segments of our cities. It was not, however, "a building of unrelated, separate buildings, but of buildings that have reasons to be together".

Maki proceeded to analyze the structural principles implied in the production of collective form from three main approaches:

Compositional approach Compositional Form
 Structural approach Mega-structure/Mega-Form
 Sequential approach Group-Form
 The first one is historical and follows imposed conventions. The other two appear to be more relevant for the demands of growth and changes in contemporary contributions:

"Compositional Form: groups of buildings composed according to the traditional precepts of Modern movement Brasilia, for example).

Mega-Structure: a large frame which contains all the functions of a city, mostly housed in transitory containers in the short run.

Group Form: accumulation of identical spatial or structural elements within bigger complexes (Italian cities upon hills)".

It was Fumihiko Maki who suggested us in January 1995 a return to the "Six proposals for the new Millennium" by Italo Calvino, in order to recover for architecture qualities such as "lightness", "visibility" or "multiplicity". Not for literature, but for architecture. Nevertheless, his description of Musil is here quite relevant: "knowledge is conscience of the incompatibility of two opposed polarities: that which he (Musil) calls sometimes exactitude, others mathematics, others pure spirit, others directly military mentality, and another which he calls sometimes soul, other irrationality, other humanity, others chaos". Some buildings by F. di Giorgio seem to have two faces: the most private, solid and exact, covered with robust lightness; and the most public, humane, arranged in apparent chaos except for his ability to reach the impossible, when everything seems lost. And, in this unpredictable feature, a wit or a spark seems to appear, always from the power of articulations in his architecture.

C- Metabolism, capsules

Mega-structural euphoria had its peak in the final number of *Architectural Forum* (August/September, 1964) under responsibility of Peter Blau, where one could clearly see the contrast between the interests of the older generation, exemplified by the suggestion of Douglas Haskell to solve the problems of Manhattan, and the younger generation fascinated by "the modelling imagination and the liberating ideas" charged with utopia, which operated from Archigram Plug-in City to the capsules of Japanese metabolists.

13/ Smithson, Alison y Peter: "Territory", in Italian Thoughts, edited by Bengt Edgman, p. 32. See also P. Smithson: "Conversaciones con estudiantes". Ed. G. Gil, Barcelona, 2004.

14/ Smithson, Alison y Peter: "Conglomerate Ordering", and "Think it fit as a farm", in Italian Thoughts, op. cit., p. 60 and p. 86, respectively.

15/ "Think of it as a farm", "Italian thoughts", p. 80.

This would be an irrelevant subject today if these ideas had not been applied to recent interventions: the remembrance of mega-structures in the reconstruction of Berlin, including homage to Kisho Kurokawa last summer, 2005, or for the allusion to the city of Urbino, which here becomes inevitable.

Haskell connoted his reading of Manhattan: "New York forgot to carry further its sudden inventive concern of its regular urban movement of great density, and up to the present day it registers daily traffic jams, frustration, exacerbated agitation and violence, all on a basis that, at the pre-Columbus manner, is generally low rise and must be useful for buildings which might soon reach soon to 200 storeys". How different from the appreciation of Koolhaas delicious enthusiasm, where changing activities, and progress provided by new equipments, become synonymous of possibilities and invention.

Amongst critics such as Colin Rowe or Françoise Choay several types of "modern planning utopies" were distinguished: "The first of them is the metabolist distinction between permanent and transitory; the third is a technological vision of the city...; but the second is the concept of a "mobile population at leisure" as point of departure to model the future of urban planning". Thus, "leisure architecture" was first mentioned.

The reference to Urbino, with its sequence of dense buildings, amongst which unexpected open spaces, squares or cloisters appeared, was an aerial image which intended to illustrate a permanent urbanity, which opened, as well, the question about the operations of architects such as Francesco di Giorgio Martini at the duchy. They were medium size constructions, with a territorial sense of scale that had to be perceived, as buildings destined to mixed functions (vigilance, residence, but also control and military activities), in a wide territory. The notion which occupies us here emerged from the qualities of these buildings and its applicability to present reality.

Peter Smithson and Conglomerate Order

The notion of conglomerate order is not immediate and introduces changes in existing conventions: "Places move us by reasons which are beyond sensations derived from five senses (...) Some deeper recognition is implicit, felt through an inexhaustible animal sensitivity". Including its perception is dynamic: "We use the term 'conglomerate order' for the sensation we experience in front of a structure that is being ordering, when we cannot understand the place at a glimpse or we do not know the building" (Italian Thoughts)".

As a pragmatic resource to unveil something which can only be intuited, we must make clear its qualities, even to the point of surpassing our expectations, transcending what our senses perceive, because "when something is well achieved but lost its use, its quality brings other things for which it is adequate".

One can thus overcome formal obsessions which make redundant the configuring processes of architecture, and we can consider some transformations and changes of use.

And this quality is essential: "Everything is used for everything". In our time we thought this way of building had to be developed. It is not formal and does not use classic geometry. If you look from a window, you can see something which allows you to locate yourself, to look here and there".

Something has been lost, because "such scrutiny is no more than what was normal when making a farm, or a fortress, or a bridge, in the past; then, because of the effort, the hard work needed to make it, each part needed to perform and encompass, many tasks; there had to be an interlock of actions, including the process of erection, even subsequent alteration. But to think like this now demands a conscious set of mind, for it is no longer normal; to think thus can overturn our accepted notions of the arrangement of spaces and of the elements of support and servicing".

It is not a formal matter, but economy of effort, which we must bear in mind. We can ask ourselves in front of F. di Giorgio's architecture: ¿is it a fortress or a palace? ¿is it a territorial watch-point or a home? ¿Which is its scale, the urban, the regional, the territorial? Is it destructive or illuminating?

At ILAUD 1986 P. Smithson said: "For me the greatest wonder is the disposition of the Doric temple and the process of forming the stone blocks for this miraculously fit... using the customary horizontal, verticals, straight angle, plane... for my generation horizontal is datum, the vertical is plumb/ upright, and both are 'true'... a statement of ethical as well as geometric soundness".

The architects of the heroic period wanted straight façades, flat walls, level floors... because they suggested a revolution: such as the tallness of Gothic, the straightness best carried the revolutionary intent...

Something very different happened when one faced an imposing construction without apparent order: "...sitting in front of an evolved mediaeval building such as Santa Maria della Scala trying to imagine a few simple start lines to draw on paper to which one could then relate part with part, the mind collapses, lacking the usual supports of a horizontal floor; a level string course; a regularly spaced line of regular windows; level courses of brickwork. The mind collapses because it has been trained to survey and to draw so as to make things fit and the things that have to fit in our period are usually 'square' to each other".

The subtlety which differentiates the "conglomerate" is its elusive character: superimposed layers of meaning, known and ignored with the speed of new tools. When we limit ourselves to linear tracing or survey or the construction of a 3D model of these Works, and ignore the material and sensitive perception, which

is that of our own discipline, the subtleties to preserve in any careful rehabilitation disappear.

This was our task in 1986 and 1987 in front of SMS: to note in the place the moving qualities which overrated modern space fluidity. When we think about old conglomerate buildings (SMSScala, Cuna, Mondavio) with floors that slope, ceilings that tilt or drop, walls that set in and out, are battered or warped, we think of them with difficulty. However, some properties can be selected to structure and identify the phenomenon.

Spatial presence

A conglomerate building has "spatial presence—more awesome than object presence (think of the sensation one has when he is alone in the woods... think of the disruption of silence in San Bernardino during a summer sunset)—something not remotely reducible to a simple geometric schema or communicable through two dimensional images". And it is with capacity to absorb spontaneous additions, subtractions and technical modifications without disturbing its sense of order; different each day and always familiar and comfortable, because "one is never frightened" in a conglomerate building.

En Cuna o en Sassocorvaro "an interior ego tell us with certainty that we shall always be able to find our way to return to the central access ramps from which we entered, which no doubt they will allow me to descend and go out... and even if the great door is closed, the sky vault is open and I can, alter all, shout and talk to the birds which are flying in that sky rectangle, know what time it is, feel the rain on my face, see the shadows crossing the walls".

Henceforth, its natural appearance: "...we experience the feeling of a fabric being ordered even when we do not understand it or are 'lost'. We may not be able to see where we are, but can nevertheless navigate through our capacity to feel light and warmth and wind on our skins; sense the density of surrounding fabric; know that behind that wall are people; smell who has been here, or where someone has gone. Conglomerate order harnesses all the senses: it can accept a certain roughness, it can operate at night; it can offer, especially, pleasures beyond those of the eyes: they are perhaps the pleasures of territory that the other animals feel so strongly".

Multiplicity of uses

A further character lies discreetly without being mentioned, together with its capacity to absorb aggregations, its capacity to accept several uses without apparent conflict. It is not mentioned for the difficulty of concrete expression implicit in that the changes of a conglomerate building include a "convention of use". We refer to those things characteristic of the ethos of a hospital (SMSScala) or a granary (Cuna) or a con-

Federico in la mia exigue intelligentia forse più che quella non meritava, gli piacque più luoghi facease fare di fondo roccie in nel territorio di sua signoria...". one hundred and thirty six works (Sassoferrata, Costacciaro, Fossombrone, Mercatello, Sant'Agata Feltria, San Leo... and a long et cetera).

vent (Santa Chiara, Urbino). Of course, there are physical things which give the limits of that 'convention of use'; for example, if there is a 'way' that joins uses together (such as the interior street at SMScala) it has to be dimensioned to the order of all those uses... and the fabric, it would seem, has to have weight so as to be able to absorb the effects of the sometimes conflicting uses and the change of those uses.

Territory

"Conglomerate order" and "territory" are inseparable ideas which characterize the founding buildings of this architecture (SMScala, Cuna). Both require all the senses to have several experiences... of density, weight, mass and permanence, lightness and transitory nature, openings to the sky, closing elements, observation towards the outside and the inside... And we operate on these differences, enjoying the pleasures of territory.

When we are roaming about, walking, we perceive the difference between its components... the permanence of some, the transitory nature of others; we can calibrate the station by means of a temporal delay when smells spread after the rain... slowly on the old stone fruit or the earth in our hand, immediately on fresh fruit and dry cereals.

When we visit again our childhood territory we search the limits of our feeling of territory, the deepest sensations in our memory.

Perhaps few buildings describe the essence of Montefeltro territory better than the fortresses and works by Di Giorgio, as he expressed in the "Istretto". At the Duke's Palace in Urbino (Lauraana 1464 - F. di Giorgio 1477) walls establish a conscious presence towards the countryside and towards the city. But the courtyard, as it was rebuilt, seems of a different order. Why? F. di Giorgio has a peculiar ability to adjust with regular or almost regular forms the uneven contours which might generate a sensation of disorder, as it can be seen at the "lacciata dei torricini". The main courtyard is the counterpart of this ability, far too easy.

Mass

A conglomerate building has a thick built mass on both directions but it is not too tall and is penetrated from above by light and air. It could almost be a little village, but the parts open to the sky are smaller than one believes, even those as Mesta in Chios that have houses together to form a continuous matt building.

Sections unveil the mechanism of courtyards, which seem to go on opening towards the sky, wider on higher floors: a simple comparison of the rocca di Frontone and SMScala explains this singular feature.

The fort at Sassocorvaro (Francesco di Giorgio 1478-79) is upsetting: we expect the courtyard to articulate with empty volumes, and see that one of its sides, that

of the staircase which connects it to the upper level of the "purtone" is practically a mass. And, as soon has we have developed this perception, we gather the gallery, with porticos on both levels, light, in clear contrast with the robust base of the staircase. We feel secure, enjoying light, as well as feeling the need to be alert in order not to fall on false positions. And, if this happens in the interior, at the exterior, its strange mass is articulate with absolute naturalness with this feud which sees and can be seen clearly present in the valley of the Ubaldini.

Part and totality, elevations and plan

The roof of a conglomerate building is another face... all the faces have the same value, all equally considered, but none is an "elevation". Conglomerates are an inseparable part of a bigger fabric. We can distinguish parts in their tracing, even detect its age by contrasting the building history and that of the changing functions of its parts. A conglomerate has no front, no back, is equally implied with everything it faces.

Uses and adaptations

A change within its "convention of use" incentives its sense of order. Its fabric accepts interventions. In fact it is dominated by one material... the conglomerate matrix. A conglomerate building seems dropped from above to reach the ground, not the ground arranged to receive the building. Its bearing walls and columns diminish in thickness as its weight or the need of mass diminishes; the gap between columns and walls is irregular, owing to use and natural setting. It has a plan and a section of variable density. A conglomerate has protruding parts and is heavy, as can be seen in the rivellino at Costacciaro. The remains of the rocca at Fossombrone present at the outside a disordered aspect, to which the years have contributed, but the subjacent structure offers no doubts, is of a very modern rationality, especially the lower ground of the purtone: spaces rigorously divided, fused, hidden, from which one can gain access to a labyrinth of corridors.

Once these qualities are established and understood, we can illustrate the concept with two examples: Grancia di Cuna and the Complex of Santa Maria della Scala.

The origins: Ospedale de Santa Maria Della Scala and Grancia di Cuna in Siena.

The Ospedale de Santa Maria Della Scala (SMS) was founded by the canons at Siena Cathedral as shelter for the pilgrims on their way to Rome. It emerged in front of the Major Church of Holy Mary and, when the new Duomo was built, the still existing stairs at its main façade gave name to the complex, which went on growing upon the walls systematically enlarged, superimposed upon the outside ways, and forming this great insula, addition of existing structures without a

17 / Colin St. John Wilson: "The Other tradition of Modern Architecture. The Uncompleted Project", Academy Editions London, 1995. He says in p. 85, "The Other Order": "Nothing can be left out because it is too awkward to be accommodated; each component must have its place and its identity be given due presence in the whole. This is the vitality of life itself". And he includes an illustration (Fig. 4.20) which is the realized drawing here enclosed and redrawn.

global composition, an enormous mass adapted to the place, without pre-established dimension.

At the date of its first Statutes (1305-1318) the oblates of SMS ruled the Brotherhood without subordination to the canons, and under the authority of a Master charged with its administration. Some of these masters donated their goods to the institution, which came to have enormous disperse possessions. The need to administrate these goods was centred on better organized foundations, smaller in number, and such was the origin of Grancia di Cuna. We can see how territory, density and plurality of uses were the origin of this architecture, which gathers echoes from other foundations (Cister and templar). Our attention is called by its aspect of fortress, whilst, once inside, a great peace dominates around a nucleus (the ramp-courtyard) around which the successive levels go on changing, although the perceived space, differentiated, maintains a character akin to its levels.

The surprises at Cuna are increased in Santa Maria della Scala, for which a risky reading was advanced some years ago. This work and the debated survey carried out is here taken as point of departure". It is assumed that F. di Giorgio endowed the building with balance in expressing spatially with eurythmic relations the control of its global form besides that of its parts. It was a temptation to relate San Ansanus façade and that of Piazza dei Duomo in order to underline its differences, amongst which the fabric appeared as a set of interchangeable blocks akin to the complex nature of the conglomerate. Its great virtue, the high degree of flexibility: flexibility of organization (lodging several activities, which allows to re-interpret its forms), flexibility of combination (the blocks of existing structures which explained its variability), and flexibility of circulation (one could choose between uses, establishing the adequate to the nature of the spaces, thus transforming its character, especially that of the internal street, which crosses the complex).

Any proposal had to consider the alternative accesses to the building and the specific quality of the space at the complex different levels: The main entrance at Piazza dei Duomo was not a specific access to the building, rather, part of the chapel. The alternatives were to maintain it without changes or moving it to the next bay, facing the Pellegrinaio. It could be complemented with an entrance through the original Gothic house, giving independence for a specialized activity (first aid center or similar), next to the entrance to the internal street in the interstitial space between the chapel and the Pellegrinaio delle Donne, option which endowed with great possibilities for a direct entrance to a public space.

Both entrances could be linked by a courtyard and a ramp recognizable by its natural quality within the existing tissue. At the backside, the two entrances to the internal street were direct and had to be kept without changes.

The quality of space changed at the different levels of the building, as well:

At the lower ground, there was a coexistence of the ceremonial character (Pellegrina), sacred (Chapel) and institutional (memories of the Ospedale), a network of public and semi-public spaces.

At level -1 the hustle and bustle of activity within the internal street could be increased (in quantity and quality), and the strict organization of spaces with façade towards Foso di San Ansano offered great potential. But the difference of level allowed an access to level -2, double levels at San Ansano façade, with the consequent changes for those spaces closer to the ground, which allowed a transversal circulation, alternative to the existing one. And lastly, at level -3, the accesses to the internal street provided significant relations with neighbouring areas and accesses to public domain (exterior surrounding street) ... It became evident that relations with closer areas were inevitable to clarify any possible intervention in the future, and that was the theme of the following Laboratory (LAUD 17).

Its openings did not follow a regular order, either; they are a reflection of its uses, of settlement or adjoining existing allotments and activities which happened independently from its interior. The lack of regularity makes difficult its perception, unless we accept redundancy as the authentic criterion for its form: openings later filled, superimposed fabrics which provide thickness, an informal, brutalist material quality, which accepts changes easily.

Some challenges remained open: re-use of the interstitial space to provide life, and not as a left-over for services, linking the complex with the neighbourhoods, since the institutional role was abstract: the "contrades" differentiated the city through the historical grid of the contrades, which provided cohesion and association, as well, giving a basis for the identity of each sector, but the Ospedale de SMScala had become a neutral domain without hierarchies, whose presence was avoided and not shared.

All the deep and elusive complexity of the façades at Piazza del Duomo and San Ansano had to be tackled, preserving its nature and showing both sides of a single fact, with a value yet to discover. And, by the way, showing the potentialities of the area between Foso di San Ansano and the back façade, with a compromise with the way that façade reached the ground.

At least, this aspect had to be faced to understand this singular order: San Ansano façade seemed versatile from a distance, as other complexes by Di Giorgio (see S. Leo), and offered different positions for its interpretation: the nature of the accesses to the building on that side of the building, the meeting of building and ground, the variety of perceptions as we walk around de complex, but it was preferable to concentrate on the relation between interior and exterior spaces, in order to study that façade as an inter-

18/ Oleg Grabar: "The Mediation of Ornament", *The A.W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts*, Princeton University Press, 1982.

19/ O. Grabar, op. cit. p. 19: "A theory of intermediaries in Art".

20/ O. Grabar, op. cit. p. 179: "The intermediary of Architecture".

21/ Giancarlo De Carlo: "A Diary", *ILAUD 1986/87*. Sogep Edizioni and Spazio e Società. Set. 1986.: "The proposals for the façade towards S. Ansano (derived from the sharp 'reading' done by González, Milán and Perini), as well as the tentative projects for the re-composition of the façade towards piazza del Duomo, are in my opinion an important face where one could register the traces of changes in the organization through time. Then, the systematic re-use filled with noise any perception. The wide spectrum of redundancy, in its intermediary function as membrane which regulated interchanges, even as excretion of functions and services located in that skin, or as strange ornaments organically unintended, all produced a disquieting presence. From our discipline (surveying, composition, design) the interest lied in the continuous transformation, rather than in the image perceived. As Oleg Grabar did question", one could ask whether or not "the transformation of mimetic signs was the relevant subject, not signs themselves", argument which leads to the inseparability of design modes, the process to produce them and the final result; and this is one of the senses of abstraction (which only has intrinsic form, with little or no intent of pictorial representation or narrative content), and we could then consider "the apparent lack of purpose" as one of the ways to show architecture".

Consequently, the autonomy of forms towards their meanings allow a greater freedom than a situation where forms were linked to specific meanings, as it happens with figures, closely connected to a particular culture; thus, this façade acquired an unexpected modernity, owing to the tension between its qualities as plane and the virtual volume of the two walls which constitute the external façade, after several accretions, and the previous, internal one, tension caused by the lack of dominance of one upon the other, since the situation was of mere co-existence. These subtleties appear in a synoptical rhythm when one proceeds to a close reading of the façade, by means of a detailed survey, where the forming elements could be recognized and defined.

The reading and criteria for intervention in SMScala concentrated on three lines of action: the understanding of levels (2 to -3), searching if they were compatible with a new program for the complex, a survey of San Ansano façade visiting the different spaces related with it to experiment some paradigms of intervention, and lastly, a proposal for two areas around the complex of SMScala, which is not exposed here.

From a rather abstract idea of the existing and previous Laboratories proposals, we decide to go deeper into essential features: such as entrances, the nature of different levels and an operative approach to what the plan morphology suggested; in especial, the flexibility of blocks of spaces at each level.

The main entrance from Piazza del Duomo was paradoxical. An independent element in appearance, formed part of a larger space, the chapel; and besides it does not provide a direct access to the Pellegrina, even if it partakes the same axis; it happens to be an intermediate space which leads to another vestibule from which we gained access to three areas: a Second Pellegrina, the part of the Hospital placed perpendicu-

larly to it and the gothic house which densely fabric, and amongst which the traces of an old courtyard were still visible. The proposal was to recover it to preserve the memory of the place and locate a fast aid centre and a residence for the elderly. By means of a ramp, access to the inferior level was established, connecting with the internal street which would, thus, provide access to all the levels in this part of the building. A similar entrance was proposed in the interstitial space between the chapel and the Pellegrina della Donna, ending with a staircase parallel to the internal street. And, at the backside of the building existing entrances were kept, for its functionality and to preserve the character of the building.

Since level 0 is public, it was respected as part of the morphology, recovering the original structure... for public use.

The apparent disorder of level -1 was solved by means of a piazzetta already present in the medieval fabric, treated as a landmark. The spaces closest to San Ansano were distinguished from the interior ones emptying the passages located over the internal street, to increase light and lighten the place better.

At levels -2 y -3 the structural traces were searched; making transversal traffics possible, maintaining the longitudinal one in the internal street and clarifying domains. As in the internal street light-wells were also water wells, the relation between the underground and aerial worlds became evident if vertical connections were introduced to facilitate accesses for all the building.

And lastly, superimpositions could be perceived at San Ansano façade. In the survey carried out one could see, on a basis built at Middle Ages, later aggregations without reaching a unitary composition, where the redundancy of elements created tension. The result was an abstract, informal skin, where tic matter provided depth. Cleaning it, clearing off patinas meant destroying its essence. Rather, it was treated as a thick skin, with materials inscribed by the centuries on it.

The work carried out had to pass several Jury Sessions (Piano, Adenti, Pietilli, Smithson, De Carlo, etc.) and a final judgement".

The praise was appreciated, now it seems more important to underline that a reading, survey or measured drawing is not, or should not be a dry and mechanical operation, however precise it might be or might be intended. Rather, it should be tainted by a project action, in accordance with its nature and its cultural derivations up to the time in which it is carried out, looking at its past, present and future.

The mentioned reading and proposal show the character of open work of the façade plan and urban fabric, linked to the events of their evolution, to the relations between filled areas and voids. In fact, the character mentioned was so open, that it still remains indelible in our memory.