



Fundamental domain Architecture
Specialty domain Architecture

Habilitation Thesis Summary

Theory and Practice. Architectural intersections.

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Theory and practice. Architectural intersections

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MULȚUMIRI

Aș dori să mulțumesc doamnei profesor Dana Vais care de-a lungul întregii mele formări ca arhitect a fost un reper de etică și substanță profesională și care m-a încurajat în tot ce am întreprins. Îi sunt recunoscătoare domnului profesor Jacques Boulet pentru că m-a învățat să gândesc arhitectura într-o perioadă în care eram grăbită mai curând să fac arhitectură.

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The habilitation thesis is written from a two-fold perspective. The immediate perspective refers to the possibility it opens, that of monitoring doctoral studies. From a more personal point of view, it represents a moment of reflection at a stage in the professional life that is in evolution, but needs and can benefit from self and external evaluation. The role of the text is therefore to better assess personal interests, to organize them, prioritize them, assign them different significance and finally, find ways of further evolution.

From the beginning, the text tries to establish the main motivations behind this professional development. Motivation is understood as a way of setting the context of the thesis, and although it does not refer to personal work it defines it by associating it to contemporary lines of thought. Therefore, the first chapter is dedicated to explaining how certain themes have become long-term preoccupations, how they shifted, appeared or disappeared in the last ten years since the doctoral research. The chapter constitutes a plea for theory, for the urgency of debating themes further discussed in the paper. Theory is seen through the eyes of contemporary architects not only as a place of debate but also as an essential condition for practice. This position is the core of the thesis, the point from which the paper unfolds. The following chapters treat aspects of the professional development separately, but at the end, these aspects meet again, showing possible intersections between practice and theory.

The paper is structured in two parts that are asymmetrical from the quantitative point of view. The first one describes the professional evolution over a time span of the last ten years, while the second tries to determine future objectives.

The first part is constituted of three chapters which describe the academic, design and research activities. The academic activities reflect theoretical interests when teaching master level architectural theory courses, but also design. These activities are subscribed to the general interest in the theory of architecture postulated at the beginning of the paper, but also express the desire to create the appropriate context for making theory relevant for practice through the eyes of students. This

becomes visible through different prolongations of teaching activities, themselves at the thin border between academia, practice and research. The second chapter describes the design activity of the last decade, selecting projects that have been an opportunity for extending theoretical reflections. These activities show how sometimes small projects – houses – can be an opportunity of self-reflection, while larger-scale urban projects or interventions on historical buildings, may in fact constitute an opportunity for collective reflection. Design is seen as an active search for experimenting, for translating theoretical themes into practice, for finding partners in debate and reflection. The third chapter of the paper's first part presents the research activity, mainly by describing articles, books or conference participations. Unlike the preceding two chapters, the one dedicated to the research activity is presented chronologically. This option is meant to reflect how certain interests have shifted and evolved, many times one from the other. The interplay between the three areas of activity described in the first part of the paper is not evident at all times, but there are certain superpositions between activities.

The second part of the paper has a predictive character. It tries to present projects that are already begun, projects to be developed in the near future, or partial continuations of finished projects. Long term projects are instead meant to attain objectives that are still in the process of being defined. However, the ambition of the long-term projects is to fulfil the need for a more integrated relation between academia, research and design when intersecting theory and practice. From this perspective, monitoring doctoral studies is an interesting opportunity. At the end of the paper, exercising architecture from this privileged position – at the crossroads of academia, design and research – is seen as the premises for further developments and evolutions. It is a position suited for action and reflection, for touching the problematics of real architecture, architecture that matters.

