

Q U A D E R N S



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QUADERNS

Publicación del Colegio
Oficial de Arquitectos de Cataluña

Abril, Mayo, Junio
1984

Del realismo antiguo y moderno

PAGINA 3

Para G.

Hay un aspecto de la poesía de Homero que me parece que no se enfatiza lo suficiente a menudo ni en los términos que debería serlo, aunque resulta fundamental para comprender algunos pasajes clave del viejo poeta. Me refiero al hecho de que, a pesar de parecer tan fascinado por la superficie externa de las cosas, por la apariencia fulgurante del mundo, es capaz de no ceñirse, de no limitarse a la pura descripción, sino que emplea la imagen exterior para vehicular, para revelar el ser más profundo de las cosas. Sin embargo, los estudiosos del género oral formular, de la poesía oral de carácter formular, tan meritorios y que han agitado de manera tan radical las aguas un poco estancadas de la crítica homérica, han descuidado este aspecto de un modo singular. Está claro que a estos estudiosos les interesa sobre todo enfatizar que en Homero hay prácticamente una única manera de describir cada cosa: frases canónicas, establecidas todas ellas con un propósito especial y económico. Los aedos no tienen ningún interés en alterarlas; porque lo que ellos se esfuerzan por reflejar son las cualidades constantes y regulares de cada ser y de cada objeto. El carácter formular de este lenguaje implicaría que en su seno todo es normativo; todos los hombres dicen lo mismo a propósito de los mismos temas: la fórmula comporta una gran unidad de experiencia. Desde el momento que, gracias a la economía de este estilo, la palabra coincide con unos moldes asumidos por todos como verídicos, no es necesario que se establezca la distinción fundamental entre palabra y realidad; al contrario, respecto a la realidad, la fórmula es sentida como su representación adecuada: en perfecto acuerdo con ella. El lenguaje homérico es inmune a la sombra de distanciamiento que para nosotros comporta la conciencia de que, más allá de las palabras, hay algo virgen e inalcanzable. En efecto, no parece que los griegos de la época homérica pudieran disponer de una noción del lenguaje como interposición entre la realidad y el que habla. Porque de hecho, ¿qué es esta noción de realidad, capital para nosotros aunque se resista enconadamente a dejarse definir, y para la cual los griegos arcaicos se habrían manifestado tan daltónicos, sino la tierra incognita que está más allá de las palabras? Sabemos que éstas son significativas: enfáticamente nos dirigen hacia un significado, la existencia del cual es postulable precisamente a partir de estos elementos que lo significan: sólo a través de ellos somos capaces de percibirlo. En cambio, en el mundo de la oralidad sin obstáculos de la *Ilíada*, cosas y palabras se identifican. Para reflejar esta situación quizá no es del todo inoperante la metáfora de un tejido: las palabras constriñen las cosas, las estrechan, su textura se confunde con la textura misma de la realidad.

Para ilustrar estas especulaciones tomaré como ejemplo los versos finales de la *Dios apate*. La unión sexual de Zeus y de Hera *no habría de poder ser* objeto de una descripción propiamente dicha: porque ¿qué palabras harían justicia de manera adecuada a una hierogamia, a la unión sacra de las dos divinidades principales del panteón homérico? Sin embargo, los versos que cierran el pasaje constituyen uno de los momentos más fulgurantes de toda la *Ilíada* (XIV, 346-350):

Dijo así y en sus brazos tomó el hijo de Cronos a su esposa y la tierra divina por debajo tierna hierba brotóles: el loto del rocío humedecido y azafrán y jacinto, espeso y blando, que elevados por encima del suelo los tenían. Allí sobre las flores se acostaron, y bella nube de oro se vistieron, de que caen, como perlas, las gotas de rocío.¹

Sin duda, se me puede reprochar el haber apelado a un pasaje reconocido notoriamente como atípico. Pero en el aspecto que nos interesa no es nada atípico; al contrario, ilustra con claridad un rasgo fundamental del hechizo homérico. Como antes señalábamos, los estudiosos de la oralidad subrayan que en Homero cualquier cosa tiene cabida, pero homogeneizada, transformada por la fuerza del estilo formular. El proceso de cristalización de las fórmulas sirve para reducir drásticamente el porcentaje de arbitrariedad del lenguaje: por eso hemos podido describirlo más como un conjuro que como una etiqueta connotada por el sentimiento agudo de su convencionalidad. Un lenguaje, pues, que se encuentra muy cerca del ensalmo. Homero no acostumbra a forzar nunca la expresión, no introduce elementos atípicos, ajenos a su tesoro de frases cristalizadas, elementos sensoriales o teñidos de excepcionalidad. Esta constatación ha llevado a algunos críticos a afirmar que el estilo homérico se caracteriza por una especie de tono monocrorde, incapaz de alcanzar una variación de registros y de niveles, de hacer sonar una nota que no sea de una dignidad sin altibajos: una sublimidad imperturbable, olímpica, pero también un poco monótona. Por eso hay que insistir que la fuerza homogeneizadora de la dicción formular no es de una naturaleza distinta que su capacidad de transfiguración; pero ésta se apoya en un arte sutil para combinar elementos que, tomados por ellos mismos, son regulares y constantes, aunque grávidos de una carga de revelación impresionante.

El viejo poeta sabe quebrantar las fronteras de la apariencia y llegar a las fuentes más hondas de la realidad sin recurrir, para ello, a expresiones atípicas, insólitas, ajenas a su propia tradición. Las sumarias pinceladas de la *Dios apate* que antes citábamos, cósmicamente impersonales (la referencia a la fecundidad de la tierra verdeante, el rápido brotar de una vegetación milagrosa, el envolverse de nubes, la

crecida de un rocío de secretas, misteriosas aguas), expresan metafóricamente la realización del acto amoroso, en uno de los ejemplos de elipsis más portentosos de cualquier poesía arcaica. En mayor grado que cualquier forma poética que haya llegado a nuestro conocimiento, los poemas homéricos ilustran el postulado básico que cada elemento lingüístico resulta inteligible sólo si se le refiere a la totalidad del sistema en el cual se integra. Una palabra, una frase no quieren decir literalmente nada, si no tenemos siempre en cuenta, ya sea como memoria tácita o bien como distanciamiento significativo, el inmenso transfondo del poema.

Estas observaciones se pueden vincular con el tema, tan complejo, de los estudios sobre el realismo (el más ambiguo, el más comprometido de todos los términos habituales de la crítica literaria) en la tradición occidental. Se trata de un argumento que ha acumulado una bibliografía de un grueso y una entidad impresionantes, sobre todo gracias a la energía y la calidad insólita de la obra que lo planteó por primera vez, la ilustre *Mimesis* de Erich Auerbach (significativamente titulada *Dargestellte Wirklichkeit in der abenländischen Literatur*). Tradicionalmente, los filósofos clásicos se han lamentado por el hecho que los autores grecolatinos —y muy en concreto Homero— no hacen demasiado buen papel en las páginas de Auerbach. En la polémica subsiguiente (que a menudo versó sobre cuestiones secundarias)², la palabra justa que quizá fue dicha por el mismo Auerbach, al reivindicar para la crítica literaria el derecho y el riesgo de emplear términos del habla común —como ahora éste de realismo— a pesar del hecho de que en el transcurso de las diversas épocas y períodos no hayan tenido un significado en absoluto homogéneo.³

El tipo de realidad que interesaba a los primeros poetas griegos es irreductible a aquel con el cual nosotros estamos familiarizados: ellos persiguen la realidad paradigmática del mito. No se trata sólo del hecho de que determinadas narraciones míticas sean más verídicas que los triviales episodios de la existencia cotidiana, tan insignificantes; es que, además, esta misma existencia cotidiana sólo adquiere sentido en la medida que imita determinados paradigmas: como si se tratara de la repetición de las figuras de un único minuetto a cargo de intérpretes que incesantemente se renuevan.

El mito no describe la realidad, no remite a ella: la fundamenta. La imitación artística de la realidad por medio de las palabras implica, en las lenguas modernas, postular la existencia de una copia y de un original. En cambio, en la ejecución poética, tal como era practicada en la Grecia oral, este original hipotético (la realidad más allá de las palabras) no es sentido como el objeto de la mimesis: lo que cuenta es la identificación del poeta y del auditorio con un mito⁴. Gracias al sistema de la oralidad, la poesía griega se ha constituido en este dominio de la palabra eficaz: cuando palabras y mitos nos remiten a otra cosa y no a ellos mismos, lo hacen a un ritual que se vuelve a celebrar periódicamente. Al afirmar que la poesía griega era simultáneamente mítica y realista, no le atribuimos dos características alternativas, contrapuestas: era una cosa en la medida que era la otra, naturalmente.

Cuando el mito se agotó, cuando perdió extensión y sentido, sus *patterns* sobrevivieron como segmentos narrativos, aptos para organizar un relato (cosa que anteriormente había sido equivalente, pero ya no lo era, a estructurar la realidad): recetas culinarias que podían servir para construir obras de consumo, como la comedia o bien la novela de amor y aventuras, con su *status* artístico devaluado.

El divorcio entre palabras y cosas se operó por medio de la escritura. A través de ésta, las palabras se convirtieron en objetos: ya no existen sólo en el espacio aural, en el espacio que se abre entre la boca de quien habla y el oído de quien las recoge, sino que se han convertido en un objeto visible. Remitiéndonos, intercaladas, a otra cosa, crean, por extrapolación, la realidad: aquello que no agarramos, que se nos escapa, que no logramos alcanzar. En la medida que el concepto de la realidad es histórico, existe sólo cuando existe la escritura: es aquel más allá que las palabras escritas intentan cazar sin acabar de conseguirlo nunca por definición, porque se sitúa en una alteridad que no puede ser conseguida. Los griegos hicieron el descubrimiento del lenguaje como pantalla de la realidad precisamente cuando el sistema oral hizo crisis, cuando las palabras dejaron de ser las cosas y comenzaron a remitir *hacia* las cosas, situadas en otro plano, en la profundidad de una dimensión nueva. Por tanto, en el caso de la Grecia arcaica —y de la clásica también, en gran medida— términos como ahora *realidad* y *realismo* resultan temporáneos, porque son inadecuados para dar razón de los mecanismos de una literatura de base oral.

Cuando el alfabeto se difunde en una sociedad tradicional, se abre por primera vez un abismo entre las palabras y las cosas. En las sociedades orales, en cambio, había un inmediatez referencial, denotativa: el entramado de las palabras envolvía estrechamente los objetos, no consentía la distanciamiento. Aunque parezca una paradoja, la realidad (entendida como algo que se sitúa con sus leyes, su dura coherencia específica, frente a quien la viste de palabras) es producto de un distanciamiento sin remedio, de una alienación; es hija de la época (que en Grecia se produce a finales de siglo V; Tucídides es su primer exponente calificado) en que el autor pone plenamente a contribución las posibilidades de la escritura, entendida en contraste con la composición oral, y las explota de manera sistemática (lo cual no quiere decir que en una época anterior no se hubieran servido esporádicamente de la escritura, en una medida variable, muy difícil de determinar); y al mismo tiempo se dirige ya a un público potencial de lectores o como mínimo, a un auditorio que escucha a alguien que lee en voz alta.⁷

De modo que, al menos en lo que se refiere a la percepción de la realidad y a los medios de reflejarla, la poesía griega arcaica siguió unos caminos muy distintos de los transitados por la tradición literaria posterior; pero, al contrario de lo que Auerbach daba a entender, esta observación es válida sobre todo para el período anterior a la constitución del sistema de la retórica clásica, sistema al cual el gran romanista atribuía, con toda la razón del mundo, una importancia capital.

Parece que a cada generación le es dado sentir nostalgia por un aspecto distinto de lo griego: los clásicos se reinventan con el paso del tiempo. En lo que atañe a nuestra generación, nos resultan particularmente entrañables especulaciones como las del *Cratilo* platónico sobre una palabra que no sea signo convencional, ni instrumento, sino que de alguna manera contenga la cosa que denota. Sentimos una tenaz añoranza por la imposible desconvencionalización del signo lingüístico, por la reconquista de la palabra como ensalmo o hechizo, por la persecución a tientas —dejada atrás la conciencia que el signo no es otra cosa que signo— de una perspectiva mítica. Y valoramos especialmente un cierto tipo de pasajes —la *Dios apate* constituye un ejemplo ilustre de ellos— de la poesía anterior al triunfo definitivo de la escritura, pasajes en los cuales la misma realidad parece que no sea objeto de mediación por parte de las palabras, sino que se inflame a través de ellas, que se convierta en transparencia incandescente: pasajes en los cuales palabra y realidad inimaginablemente se identifican. En una época posterior estas mismas palabras, emancipadas de la cadena de oro de lo oral, serán ágiles pinceladas, calculadas hábilmente por parte del poeta a fin de producir un efecto, con astucia y deliberación, y con competencia profesional: entonces, no nos queda más que añorar el hechizo roto.

Puede ser que resulte instructivo, ahora, poner frente a frente, de manera brusca, dos términos extremos de este larguísimo proceso (Homero por un lado y, por otro, algún representante ilustre de la novela contemporánea), con el fin de enfatizar hasta qué punto divergen los caminos del esfuerzo de la palabra para aproximarse a lo que no es ella misma: para poseer la virgen, inalcanzable realidad. Querría sobre todo llamar la atención sobre el hecho de que la sutileza cada vez mayor de los medios técnicos de observación y de reproducción de lo real progresa de manera paralela al sentimiento, también cada vez más intenso, de que el abismo no es franqueable. Así, se diría que gran parte de la eficacia del pasaje homérico que hemos citado depende del admirable final del último verso: *stilpnai d'apeipton eersai* (caen, como perlas, las gotas de rocío). Uno casi se sentiría tentado a dar crédito a las teorías sobre la simbología universal de los arquetipos inconscientes: el viejo poeta, por cierto, no tuvo que esperar las especulaciones de ningún psicoanalista de observancia jungiana para recurrir de manera intuitiva a una imaginería de vivas, frescas aguas, a la hora de aludir a las fuerzas primordiales de la vida y de la sexualidad.

Y la otra cara de la moneda: la literatura, en el extremo opuesto de su evolución, se lanza a una carrera extraordinaria, cada vez más enconada, más espléndidamente desesperada, para atrapar la irreductible singularidad de los objetos (que cada vez son más objetos, porque cada vez es más remoto el sueño de una fusión con la palabra mágica), en su materialidad, en su carnalidad más tangible —también en su insoslayable dimensión temporal—. De este modo se llega a un punto de inflexión en el cual los términos se invierten: la precisión a toda ultranza, casi microscópica, llega a parecerse a la máxima abstracción, casi a confundirse con ella.

No quiero dejar de evocar aquí, recurriendo a un ejemplo famoso de la *Recherche* proustiana, la descripción de la textura del cuerpo de Albertina, el granulado de la superficie de su piel, vista tan de cerca por el narrador que adquiere una consistencia lejana, pétrea, un tornasolado casi geológico. Y, sin embargo, este realismo microscópico (o quizá haríamos mejor llamándole clínico)⁸; tampoco ha renunciado a la dimensión ancestral que, por falta de una palabra más apta, podríamos calificar de *sacramental*. En efecto, cuando la barrera de la superficie corporal es rebasada, en el esfuerzo enloquecido por quebrantar la alteridad, por buscar el reverso de los cuerpos, el narrador califica la lengua de Albertina con una serie de adjetivos (*nourricière* es el término clave) y una imaginería que la tradición literaria de Occidente ha reservado habitualmente, sin vacilaciones, a la *hostia*. Así pues, los extremos (puntillismo impresionista y mitificación casi religiosa que, involuntariamente o de forma consciente, olvidan sus orígenes) acaban, de una manera u otra, por reencontrarse.

JAUME PÓRTULAS

1. HOMERO: *La Ilíada*, estudio preliminar y versión rítmica por D. Ruiz Bueno, Madrid, Biblioteca Clásica Hernando, 1956.

2. Los hitos fundamentales de la polémica son, en el terreno de los estudios clásicos, Otto Regenbogen, *Mimesis: Eine Rezension* (reeditado en los *Keine Schriften*); Ludwig Edelstein, «Modern Language Notes» (junio 1950), págs. 426-431. Auerbach respondió con unos *Epilógos a Mimesis*, que fueron traducidos como apéndice a la versión italiana del libro, publicada por Einaudi y posteriormente reeditados en el volumen *Da Montaigne a Proust. Ricerche sulla storia della cultura francese*, Bari, 1970, que es donde yo los he consultado.

3. Por cierto, debían ser tiempos de encantadora modestia, cuando la crítica no tenía todavía pretensiones de un argot científico especial.

4. Cfr. Laurence Kahn, *Hermès passe ou les ambiguïtés de la communication*, París, Maspero, 1978, pág. 167: «moment intense de la communication, à l'endroit où ne se creuse pas

l'écart entre le discours et son objet, ni entre le locuteur, le destinataire et le message. En cela on ne fera que conclure à l'efficacité de cette parole, efficacité qui se mesure au *kraimein* des mots, efficacité qui est celle-là même du chant lyrique exprimant la genèse et l'ordonnement du monde: elle suffit, le verbe peut».

5. El reaprovechamiento de *patterns* narrativos, después que su inicial dimensión mítica se ha perdido, es uno de los terrenos donde observaciones similares a las de Auerbach podrían aplicarse de una manera particularmente fructuosa; pero es una tarea que, al menos en buena parte, queda todavía por hacer.

6. Cfr. J. Goody and I. Watt, *The Consequences of Literacy*, en J. Goody (ed.), *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, Cambridge, The University Press, págs. 27-68.

7. Carles Miralles dedicó una conferencia, todavía inédita, a esta problemática, esforzándose por hacer progresar las intuiciones básicas de E.H. Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, Harvard, The University Press, 1963, y otros críticos.

8. No utilizó el término al azar. George Painter, subrayando que Marcel Proust era hijo y hermano de cirujanos y que el hermano Robert llegó a escribir un libro de texto sobre la cirugía de los órganos genitales femeninos, constata: «tema que no parece absolutamente ajeno a la mentalidad de Marcel cuando describe a Albertine desnuda, dormida». (cfr. G. Painter, *Marcel Proust. A Biography*. Vol. I, pág. 28 de la trad. española, Madrid, 1972.)

Sobre la «comestibilidad» del arte

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Me viene a la memoria aquellos años (1966-71) durante los cuales fui profesor de la cátedra del Sr. Lozoya en la Escuela de Arquitectura. Años aquellos de gran efervescencia política, en los que se luchaba con la esperanza de obtener grandes cambios sociales. Los estudiantes fueron protagonistas de la lucha frente al inmovilismo reaccionario de ciertos cuadros docentes, y así comenzaron las grandes y largas huelgas. Recuerdo que por aquella época, eran tales las ansias de cambio, que todo se contestaba, llegándose, entre otras cosas, a cuestionarse la importancia del dibujo en o para la arquitectura. Se creó tal confusión que finalmente esta asignatura cayó en el más absoluto desprestigio. Digo asignatura, porque el dibujo en sí, tanto como medio de conocimiento, como de expresión, es incuestionable, siéndolo sin embargo el método.

Han pasado los años y con los cambios ha vuelto la calma, y parece ser que existe un esfuerzo conjunto por recuperar y devolver al dibujo la dignidad que siempre le correspondió en la escuela. Recuerdo una exposición que organizó el Colegio de Arquitectos de Catalunya con dibujos y pinturas de arquitectos, en su mayoría profesores, donde quedó clara esta intención. Siendo notable, en algunos casos, el amor con que habían sido hechos. Es por ello que cuando Lluís Clotet me invitó para enseñarme sus acuarelas, además de brindarme la posibilidad de poder conocer las pinturas de alguien a quién yo admiro como arquitecto hace tiempo, ya tenía conocimiento de la gran estima e interés con que él practica la acuarela.

Mantuvimos una larga conversación sobre pintura, sobre la función del arte a través de la historia y sobre los conceptos nuevo o actual en el arte.

Clotet sostiene una teoría muy singular, incluso me atrevería a llamarla doméstica, sobre la función del artista y del científico. Me habló de algo que él llama la «comestibilidad».

Dijo que al principio, como ahora, el hombre estaba hambriento y rodeado de una naturaleza hostil en algunos casos y pasiva en la mayoría.

Cazar, pintar un bisonte, asociar un sonido a un objeto o a un sentimiento, controlar el fuego... son gestos creativos que apuntan en la misma dirección. La de intentar que el hombre pueda sobrevivir, conocer, disfrutar, «comer» cuantas más cosas mejor.

Y que los artistas y los científicos son como los cocineros, los cuales, a partir de la tradición y de su transgresión, proponen sabores desconocidos hasta entonces.

Dijo que nunca había saboreado algo que no se lo hubieran servido descrito, pintado, esculpido, formulado...

Y hablaba de Hopper, de Huston, de los hiperrealistas... ¿Es que alguien cuando va a EE.UU., ve alguna cosa por su cuenta? Si la ve y la muestra a los demás pasará con todo merecimiento a la historia de la «gran cocina», al coro de sus santos.

Sobre esta opinión tan particular yo diría que el artista o su función es como la del espejo en el que al mirarnos nos reconocemos. Así que cuando visitamos los EE.UU. y decimos, esto parece un Hopper, no hacemos otra cosa que reconocer imágenes que él tomó de la realidad y que a través de su sensibilidad nos las devuelve con toda la carga emocional que le afectaron. De modo que, los símbolos o cosas dispuestas en el cuadro de una manera intencionada provocan un reconocimiento del yo en el objeto. Es pues a partir de esta idea que entiendo la obra pictórica de Clotet; cuando representa e intenciona estos lugares insólitos que suelen darse en la conjunción de paisaje y arquitectura y que provocan en él la necesidad de plasmarlos.

En cuanto a los conceptos «nuevo» o «actual», debo decir que siempre me han producido cierto desasosiego, quizá porque llevan implícita la caducidad, ya que una vez pronunciados son viejos. Por el contrario prefiero utilizar la palabra arte, que la siento asociada a algo perenne, algo así como un manantial de vida ina-

gotable en el tiempo. Es por ello que no veo, que lo representado en un cuadro sea lo que lo hace aparecer como algo nuevo. Me vienen a la memoria los bodegones de Morandi, que con objetos viejos e inútiles, pero que ya pertenecen al tiempo, consiguió transmitirnos un nuevo aspecto de la verdad. Quiero decir con ello, que cuando se pinta algo que siempre estuvo allí, hace falta alguien capaz de develar el misterio y crear así la verdadera realidad.

Y en este empeño estamos metidos todos.

XAVIER SERRA DE RIVERA

Banco de España en Girona

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El solar donde se va a construir la nueva sede del Banco de España en Girona está ubicado en una zona representativa del ensanche de la ciudad. Forma parte de una manzana que está ordenada según una ocupación tradicional, pero con unas alturas de edificación muy variables.

En (1) se observa que dicho solar, por uno de sus lados menores y por el chaflán, se apoya en la Gran Vía de Jaime I. Pero lo hace precisamente en un cambio de dirección y provoca que el nuevo edificio se convierta inevitablemente en remate de una larga perspectiva de varios centenares de metros. En (2) se puede ver el aspecto que toma esta visual en la actualidad.

Al otro lado de la calle y frente al Banco, se abrirá un importante parque. Este vacío urbano pide que el nuevo edificio colabore en su definición volumétrica, de la misma manera que lo puede hacer la iglesia colocada en su otro extremo.

Las otras dos calles que definen el solar (20 de junio y Bonastruc de Porta) son de menor importancia y no presentan conflictos especiales.

En la foto (3) vemos el cuarto lado, el colindante con los solares vecinos. Aquí nos encontramos con una alta medianera de siete plantas, el patio de manzana y una construcción en planta baja con fachada a la Gran Vía. Por encima de este pequeño edificio aparece la fachada lateral de una casa modernista. Estas dos construcciones, separadas por un pasaje ajardinado, están protegidas por el catálogo de monumentos de la ciudad.

En este solar, situado en una zona urbana muy consolidada y relevante de la ciudad, y con unos problemas de entorno muy específicos, se levantará el nuevo edificio con un programa totalmente distinto al de las edificaciones vecinas.

El Banco se compone fundamentalmente de una serie de garajes, una caja fuerte y unas oficinas mínimas que generarán poca actividad peatonal. Pero además, el nuevo edificio debe ser aislado por cuestiones de seguridad y pequeño como consecuencia de su programa.

La impresión que produce la complejidad del entorno no es muy sugerente y tampoco mejora con un edificio aislado, bajo y discreto. La voluntad de que la nueva construcción ponga el máximo orden en este paisaje, implica que el edificio ha de ser capaz de resolver tanto sus solicitudes internas como las del lugar donde se ubica. Pero en este caso, al ser tan contradictorias unas con otras, no era nada evidente el cómo hacerlo.

Sin embargo la preocupación por esta tensión, el convencimiento de que todo edificio debe además resolver su urbanidad, se convirtió en el motor principal del proyecto.

En el dibujo (4) se apuntan algunos de estos temas casi en caricatura. La constatación de que el problema de la medianera no es tanto de calidad superficial como de directriz en planta; el aspecto que toma el edificio pequeño y aislado... pero aparece ya el cuerpo cilíndrico colocado sobre la prolongación del eje de la Gran Vía, como respuesta geométrica al tema de su giro. Por otra parte esta independencia con las alineaciones del solar hace que el nuevo volumen no impida la contemplación de la fachada lateral del edificio modernista vecino.

En (5) un muro alto completa visualmente el volumen inacabado de la manzana y contiene en su interior al nuevo edificio. A la idea del cilindro se le ha añadido este muro que simula una construcción mayor que la que contiene y aparecen estas ventanas que no dan a ningún espacio interior.

En (6) la construcción se hace más autónoma. El edificio es un cilindro alto y aislado que resuelve la medianera simplemente por el hecho de que la oculta visualmente. La imprescindible valla, que aquí no está dibujada, ya se imaginaba tratada con los mismos elementos que el edificio. La intención era que formara con él una sola unidad y que enmascarara en lo posible la imagen de un edificio aislado dentro de un solar vallado.

La conveniencia que el edificio tuviera el máximo volumen se confiaba al vacío del patio de operaciones. Tal como se ve en (7), este espacio era de planta circular, estaba colocado en el centro del cilindro y ocupaba toda su altura. Las dependencias auxiliares se situaban a distintos niveles dentro de la corona circular que lo envolvía. Pero resultaba antipático dentro de esta geometría, resolver en planta las pequeñas dependencias.

Por este motivo el interior fue definiéndose, tal como se ve en (8) y (9), como un cuerpo prismático de varias plantas, yuxtapuesto a un espacio semicilíndrico vacío. Sólo el último nivel del prisma tiene aún directrices curvas. Pero el programa permite colocar aquí una gran sala de descanso, que no ofrece grandes dificultades para ser resuelta con este perímetro.

Y así, tal como se explica en el dibujo (10), empezó a tomar cuerpo esta contradicción entre exterior e interior. Porque desde la calle se entiende el edificio como un cilindro completo al que se le mezcla un cuerpo más bajo de directrices prismáticas, y evidentemente esta imagen no se corresponde con la organización interior.

La idea constructiva del edificio era, en esta fase, muy rudimentaria. En la planta (8) se pueden distinguir una serie de muros más o menos calados, paralelos a la fachada a Bonastruc de Porta, y que van adentrándose hacia el interior del edificio. El último de ellos, el que coincide con el diámetro del cilindro y que en esta planta está muy poco enfatizado, se convierte por su posición en una importante fachada interior. Con su estudio empezó a concretarse la manera como el edificio sería construido.

Los dibujos (11), (12), (13) y (14) explican la intención de que se comprenda, desde el patio, la sucesiva superposición de láminas paralelas y caladas, y en el (15) el convencimiento de que si los dinteles fuesen arcos, la riqueza visual de un espectador en movimiento sería mayor.

En (16) y (17) vemos los primeros tanteos y en (18) aparecen los apeos que dan más transparencia en planta baja. Inicialmente se trabajaba con vigas de hormigón de perfil inferior arqueado (19), pero finalmente se optó por construir todo el edificio con muros y arcos de ladrillo.

Esta decisión condujo a que la planta fuera evolucionando en el sentido de abandonar los muros paralelos para definirse como cajas rectangulares contiguas.

La geometría que exige esta opción constructiva se hace aparente en todo el interior del espacio y se constituye en uno de sus exponentes expresivos más importantes. Las fachadas, como puede comprobarse en las plantas definitivas, cortan con gran libertad el estricto orden interior.

Al estudiar en ladrillo el gran muro curvo del patio de operaciones se le añadieron una serie de contrafuertes para evitar su pandeo (20). Estos elementos se han aprovechado, como se ve en (21), para sostener una celosía cerámica colgada. Su objetivo es el de tamizar la luz natural e iluminar tenuemente y por reflexión los fondos de los nichos entre contrafuertes. Así se evita el contraluz de las grandes ventanas sobre el muro cilíndrico y una luz más sutil bañará todo el espacio.

La cubierta del edificio pasó también por varias soluciones. En (22) y (23) se explica un techo con cerchas metálicas vistas. Pero era difícil encontrar una geometría que pasara con habilidad de lo ortogonal a lo circular, y tampoco ofrecía las garantías de monolitismo que el edificio exigía.

Al final se extrapoló, a otra escala, la solución adoptada en los forjados nervados de las otras plantas. El techo del edificio ha quedado finalmente formado por una retícula de jácenas que se apoya en los muros inferiores y se prolonga sobre el vacío del semicilindro hasta encontrarse con el muro curvo de la fachada. En la cubierta y para evitar peso, los grandes casetones que se forman y que no son imprescindibles por accesibilidad o maquinaria, han sido substituidos por una cubierta metálica a cuatro aguas y de suave pendiente.

Esta nueva estructura no queda explicada desde el interior. En (24) se ve la nueva imagen del cieloraso prácticamente horizontal y la recuperación definitiva del plano del semicilindro por su parte superior. Un óculo circular queda partido en dos por su diámetro y junto con una gran lámpara colgada relaciona el interior con el eje del cilindro exterior.

La escalera de uso público que comunica la planta baja con la de dirección debe estar controlada por una esclusa de seguridad. Era difícil relacionar una escalera expresiva con una zona de control en su arranque. En (25) vemos uno de los primeros dibujos. Se han tratado como dos objetos preciosos e independientes, bastante abstractos. La escalera va aplacada con finas láminas de granito rosado y la esclusa aparece como un pequeño palio dorado. Deberán ser los protagonistas en un interior pintado de blanco a la manera de las iglesias barrocas alemanas. Su posición en planta es voluntariamente casual, y quiere ser un guiño que recuerde la temporalidad de los usos.

En (26), (27), (28) y (29) se ven distintos tanteos del remate del cilindro y de la valla, que no acababan de gustar por razones constructivas. Se ensayaron soluciones adinteladas, como la (30), pero el ladrillo, como se dibuja en (31), (32) y (33) acabó invadiéndolo todo y llegando hasta lo más alto.

LLUÍS CLOTET

Ese edificio singular, esa macia un poco monumetal de un cilindro hueco y un cubo compartimentado que describe Luis Clotet en el artículo anterior, está imaginado con una textura de ladrillo visto al exterior y pintado en su interior. Pero, ¿hasta que punto podía pensarse que ese material asumió el papel portante? Recordemos que el cuerpo cilíndrico tiene una altura libre interior de 18 m. o que en el cuerpo cúbico hay luces de 9 m. con sobrecargas en el archivo de 1000 Kg/m². ¿Qué tipo estructural podía adaptarse? ¿Qué imagen arquitectónica era la más coherente?

Una primera opción debía tomarse sobre el papel portante de la fábrica de ladrillo.

En principio era deseable que ese material, aparentemente portante, formase realmente la estructura del edificio. A pesar de los problemas que planteaba esta solución estaba más acorde con una postura «ética» de valorar, expresivamente, los sistemas estructurales.

Voces «sensatas» sugerían que el programa, la volumetría y las cargas del edificio hacían inadecuada una estructura de muros de fábrica y exigían la adopción de una estructura interna de hormigón que podría reforzar la capacidad portante del imaginado ladrillo. En apoyo de esta postura se citaban incluso precedentes romanos. A pesar de la aparente mayor seguridad, es evidente que la concepción es incorrecta y el precedente mal citado. En el muro romano, el núcleo de cemento, principal elemento portante, implica al ladrillo en el descenso de cargas. Las hojas de cerámica, formadas por piezas triangulares, se hincan en la masa de hormigón garantizando la adherencia. Las amplias juntas entre ladrillos permiten que las caras acompañen al núcleo en su retracción. La homogeneidad del asiento entre caras y núcleo será favorecido por el lento y horizontal proceso de obra.

Hoy un muro de hormigón vertido entre dos láminas de ladrillo con sus caras interiores planas no tiene esas garantías de adherencia. Probablemente la retracción del hormigón produzca de inmediato la desolidarización de las tres hojas, pero en cualquier caso, jamás podría conocerse con precisión el reparto de cargas porque el sistema de apoyo dependerá de las retracciones y asientos relativos.

La opción de utilizar exclusivamente el ladrillo como elemento portante no se fundamenta sólo en una cierta ética sino también en las estrictas leyes de la reología.

MUROS PLEGADOS O MUROS GRUESOS

Decidido ya que los muros eran de albañilería portante había escoger entre dos opciones: La de muros huecos formados por hojas delgadas plegadas con formas de mucha inercia o la de muros gruesos. La primera estaría muy cerca de la albañilería mudéjar. Las torres mudéjares no tienen, como las románicas, la limitación de espesores de puesta en obra de la mampostería. La albañilería permite optimizar espesores y las torres pueden elevarse con dobles muros de esbelta fábrica sin tener que envidiar nada en rigidez e inercia de la planta y siendo más ligeras y económicas en el uso de los materiales. Un exponente paradigmático de esta opción es el Restaurante del Parque de Domenech i Muntaner con su gruesa fachada de 1,5 m. formada por dos hojas de 0,15 m.

A pesar de lo atractivo de esta propuesta no nos atrevimos a plantearla como solución para el muro portante de fachada. El muro de dos hojas, el muro capuchino, es hoy una solución delicada cuando, buscando mayor confort térmico y ahorro energético, se introduce en su cámara un eficaz aislante térmico. Las brutales diferencias térmicas que, pueden darse entre ambas hojas, someten a las uniones a tensiones excesivas y hacen imposible la hipótesis de un comportamiento estructural solidario.

Por todo ello se adoptó la solución de muros macizos, de construcción homogénea. Es decir, la construcción basada en un solo material capaz de asumir las funciones más importantes de la edificación gracias a su espesor. La cerámica es uno de esos materiales tradicionales «de amplio espectro» que con espesor suficiente puede dar capacidad portante, protección estanca y aislamiento térmico.

El espacio, dentro de la construcción homogénea clásica, aparece como vaciado en una masa continua, es lo que Giedeon llama la segunda concepción del espacio y ejemplifica con el Panteón.

En nuestro caso, como en muchas construcciones homogéneas tradicionales, el papel de ese material multifuncional se limita a unos muros gruesos que basan en ese grosor su eficacia estructural, térmica y estanca. Los elementos horizontales, forjados y cubiertas, se resuelven lógicamente, con materiales especiales en la flexión y en la impermeabilización.

Esta construcción ofrece las ventajas de una inmejorable durabilidad. La homogeneidad del material favorece la homogeneidad de los movimientos, una de las agresiones fundamentales a la durabilidad del edificio. El grosor garantiza que las áreas exteriores más expuestas estén sujetas, zunchadas, por la masa interior. El muro grueso ofrece las garantías de su espesor más eficaz que las delgadas y ligeras soluciones actuales en las que un rasgado de una tela, un defecto del sellado, una mínima perforación de la envolvente, anula toda la eficacia del conjunto. El muro grue-

so es un abrigo que, a veces, se empapa pero una vez seco puede volver a usarse. El delgado es un impermeable que sólo satisface un objetivo y si se rasga hay que tirarlo.

Conseguir la impermeabilidad suficiente en el muro de albañilería exige hoy ciertas precauciones en la absorción del ladrillo y la calidad del mortero. Tenemos el hábito de usar morteros de cemento portland con altas dosificaciones que consiguen resistencias muchas veces inútiles y algunas peligrosas. La puesta en obra exige aditivos, las retracciones aumentan y la impermeabilidad se resiente.

Si las tensiones no se previeran tan elevadas podría haberse utilizado un mortero bastardo con alta composición de cal, pero era necesario llegar a una resistencia de cálculo de 36 kg/cm^2 , lo que obligó a utilizar un mortero sin retracciones y un ladrillo perforado de 280 kg/cm^2 de resistencia característica.

El aparejo escogido fue el belga, con una hilada de tizones y otra de sogas y tizones. Es el que mejor admite los pequeños asentos diferenciales sin minimizar la traba ya que tiene muchas piezas a tizón.

La junta se rebajó a 7 mm. de espesor medio para aumentar la resistencia de la fábrica y disminuir su deformabilidad; disminución muy favorable a efectos teóricos de cálculo de pandeo.

PROYECTO Y NORMA

La norma española del ladrillo, ofrece un complejo sistema de cálculo que parte de soluciones constructivas discutibles inscritas en tipos edificatorios convencionales.

La respuesta solidaria del edificio ante las acciones horizontales exige monolitismo según la norma. Pero, ¿debe ser el muro o el forjado lo monolítico? En la solución clásica homogénea no hay duda: el muro grueso y la trabada planta garantizan el monolitismo del edificio. El forjado es un simple diafragma que se apoya en el muro a través de la carrera perimetral y de unos canecillos de piedra que minimizan el momento flector en el muro y no lo perforan como las cabezas de las viguetas porque son del mismo material y fueron construidos con él.

La norma prevé que el forjado se introduzca en el muro transmitiéndole momentos y provocando excentricidades. A partir de aquí todo el complejo cálculo del flexopandeo es un obligado castigo para proyectistas.

En este proyecto hemos querido centrar en lo posible las cargas y evitar que el forjado transmita momentos al muro, para poder reducir los espesores de la fábrica en bien de la economía de la obra. Para ello los muros centrales reciben la carga del forjado a través de una estrecha y centrada tira de mortero alta resistencia.

Además los apoyos se reducen a las áreas donde encima hay huecos, de manera que los macizos soportes de los arcos se apoyan sobre la planta inferior sin ser atravesados por los forjados.

El muro de fachada por su parte tiene una sección escarpada para que el forjado se vaya apoyando en cada zarpa.

Además de ello, para que el forjado pueda tomar las acciones horizontales de la fachada, se formarán unos tetones de hormigón que entrarán en la albañilería sin degollarla totalmente ni transmitir flexiones.

Estas acciones se transmiten a los muros perpendiculares y a dos pantallas verticales de hormigón convenientemente situadas entre el gran semicilindro de la sala de contratación y el prisma de las oficinas.

CONSECUENCIAS TIPOLOGICAS

Adoptado ese sistema estructural, la estabilidad de los muros de albañilería plantea unas exigencias específicas en cada uno de los dos cuerpos del edificio. Como señalábamos anteriormente el edificio está (conceptualmente) compuesto por la macia de dos volúmenes, uno cúbico y otro cilíndrico, que albergan funciones diferentes. El cúbico recoge todos los locales de administración, reunión, almacenamiento etc., y está por lo tanto subdividido por numerosos cerramientos y forjados. El cilíndrico sólo contiene la gran sala, enorme volumen unitario.

En el primero, la estabilidad se resuelve dentro de las normas tradicionales de la albañilería formando en planta cajas cerradas de la menor dimensión posible, y, huyendo de los esquemas de muros paralelos.

La planta debía trabarse con muros perpendiculares de arriostramiento ofreciendo nuevas exigencias y sugerencias al proyecto. Todo el difícil y atractivo juego que supone el proyecto con muros, con su fuerza ordenadora y su exigencia de orden dió algunos de los aspectos más interesantes del trabajo.

Los muros se perforan con numerosos arcos, sobre todo en las plantas más bajas, sin perder por ello su estabilidad horizontal aunque llegando al límite de su capacidad portante que establecimos en 36 kg . Por ello los elementos macizos entre arcos se han tenido que apilastrar con pequeños contrafuertes hasta formar una planta de cruz latina.

Mucho más delicado es el problema en el muro semicilíndrico que encierra la gran sala.

La gran altura sin forjados intermedios (17 m.), la distancia entre los extremos unidos a la parte cúbica y estable del edificio (30 m.), y, la baja curvatura configuran al muro como una lámina de difícil estabilidad. La primera operación fue

dotarlo de contrafuertes interiores para aumentar su espesor de cálculo. Los contrafuertes evolucionaron a lo largo del proyecto perdiendo parte de su protagonismo inicial al formarse la envolvente interior de celosía cerámica difusora de la luz. El conjunto muro exterior-celosía unido por los contrafuertes y por la pasarela de acceso a las ventanas con el gran zócalo de los dos primeros metros forma ya un elaborado y grueso muro que da al interior de la fachada profundidad y matices de luz.

La norma no permite, a pesar de todo, el cálculo de este tipo de muro porque exige unas fijaciones finales, unos límites a la longitud del muro en planta. La forma semicircular de éste dejaba dos opciones: tomar como extremos los de semicírculo, despreciando las evidentes ventajas de la curvatura, o inscribir un trapecio en el semicírculo y tomar cada lado del trapecio como un muro. Adoptamos la primera para permanecer siempre al lado de la seguridad, pero una vez más se evidencia la falta de flexibilidad de la norma.

Se planteó lógicamente la posibilidad de colocar algún zunco de hormigón horizontal que colaborara en la rigidización del conjunto pero, aparte de la debilidad que implica su longitud, no parecía posible situar una franja de hormigón en la sección del muro. Si este material cortaba toda la sección del muro llegando a fachada se planteaban problemas de imagen y de condensación. Si sólo ocupaba parte de la sección el problema era de transmisión de cargas puesto que es difícil garantizar la colaboración de hormigón y ladrillo por su diferente comportamiento elástico y reológico.

El aspecto más problemático, aquel en el que la solución adoptada no es quizá absolutamente satisfactoria, es el de la unión entre esos dos volúmenes tan dispares constructivamente.

En efecto, el uso del mismo material y la voluntad de una composición sencilla de ambos volúmenes llevaban a la continuidad en la solución entre ellos. Sin embargo el comportamiento de ambos puede ser diferente. De una parte por la diferencia de cargas verticales; una zona sólo soporta las propias del muro, la otra recibe las de los forjados y sus sobrecargas. De otra por la concentración de esfuerzos horizontales que de todo el cilindro se llevarán hasta el anclaje en el prisma. Quizá incluso el diferente comportamiento térmico entre elementos rígidos y otros más libres. Todo ello configura una línea de intersección relativamente débil entre ambos volúmenes que el pesado zuncho de la cubierta y las rígidas columnas de hormigón del interior minimizarán, pero que quizá hubiese sido más claramente solucionada, planteando otro tipo de intersección entre ambos volúmenes, matizando la continuidad total de material y textura entre ellos.

El edificio hubiese podido ser analizado desde otros puntos de vista, pero este pequeño discurso sobre su tipología estructural parecía más ilustrativo de las estrechas relaciones composición-construcción, que en él se plantean y más universal porque se contempla el esfuerzo por la reconsideración de las estructuras de muros, y, en particular de la fábrica, como un objetivo de nuestro momento arquitectónico que enlaza con la tradición por encima de la hoy convencional separación entre estructura porticada y cerramientos, paradigmática desde el Movimiento Moderno, pero de consecuencias más que discutibles.

IGNACIO PARICIO

Orígenes del moderno eclecticismo: Las teorías de la arquitectura en Francia a comienzos del siglo XIX.

PAGINA 66

1. Las interpretaciones habituales de la significación de la obra de J.N.L. Durand en la historia de la arquitectura tienden a atribuirle el papel de un inicial teórico racionalista frente a la avalancha de arquitectura ecléctica que desde finales del siglo XVIII se está gestando en Europa (1). El método de proyectar que Durand enseñará en la *École Polytechnique* a los ingenieros franceses se contrapondría precisamente a la enseñanza de la *École des Beaux Arts* quedando, grosso modo, distribuidas en estas dos instituciones los orígenes de las actitudes llamadas racionalistas y eclécticas en Francia y luego, como consecuencia de la influencia pedagógica de la arquitectura francesa a lo largo del siglo XIX, en toda Europa (2).

Henry Rusell Hightcock ya vio hasta qué punto este tipo de simplificación era no sólo maniquea sino engañosa, cuando puso de manifiesto la influencia que las obras de Durand tuvieron en toda la arquitectura europea y, por supuesto, también en la llamada arquitectura ecléctica (3). Con ello sugería que la dicotomía entre racionalistas y eclécticos no sólo era a menudo difícil de verificar en la práctica sino que había, en realidad, una profunda interpenetración de uno y otro concepto y que por lo tanto, al intentar explicar los orígenes de la arquitectura en las sociedades industriales, era totalmente ineficaz la dicotomía planteada y lógicamente era tendencioso el querer destacar una tradición racionalista que desde Durand, o desde Laugier, llevaría hasta los arquitectos del Movimiento Moderno, frente a otra tradición cuya propia lógica debería en todo caso llevar por los desarrollos del *Beaux Arts* decimonónico hasta el reciente resurgimiento de la llamada arquitectura post-moderna (4).

Por el contrario el análisis que aquí se propone parte de una hipótesis distinta. De la convicción de que eclecticismo y racionalismo no son cosas opuestas, históricamente, sino que son dos aspectos de un mismo proceso histórico que se da, teórica y prácticamente, en la arquitectura europea de comienzos del XIX y cuyas formulaciones más claras intentaremos analizar en el área de la cultura francesa durante el período de tránsito del siglo XVIII al XIX. Sólo desde el grado de abstracción alcanzado por la cultura artística de nuestro siglo es posible una simplificación como la que aquí se denuncia puesto que si se leen atentamente los textos y las propuestas teóricas de hace casi doscientos años en Francia, se puede advertir que el proceso de abstracción del método de proyectar es sólo un componente de todo un cambio epistemológico más global que implica la conciencia misma que la arquitectura tiene de su propia historia y la relación entre la noción clásica del arte como *mimesis*, como copia de una realidad natural o convencional, y la moderna noción —romántica en sus inicios— del arte como proceso de creación, de invención radical de nuevas formas y de nuevos contenidos (5).

Efectivamente el desarrollo de los viajes, de la cultura de los anticuarios y de la arqueología ofrecía a lo largo del siglo XVIII un nuevo material ante los ojos de los conocedores de la arquitectura del pasado que provoca la crisis del modelo único de referencia que la arquitectura del renacimiento había intentado como hipótesis histórica. El conocimiento histórico introduce el pluralismo y junto a un conocimiento empírico de la tradición greco-romana que pone en crisis la unidad de la cultura antigua se produce, al mismo tiempo, el conocimiento de otras culturas: la egipcia, la china, la india, la medieval, la árabe, las culturas precolombinas, etc. Todas ellas presentan un conjunto de obras de arquitectura importantes, colosales a veces, capaces de nuevas experiencias estéticas de las que el hombre occidental de la naciente sociedad industrial no quiere privarse y a las que, en todo caso, no renuncia a comprender y a explicar mediante una cierta lógica. La experiencia del pluralismo arquitectónico, como corolario del pluralismo cultural, es de alguna manera el origen de la reflexión histórica y del nacimiento de la teoría del arte como disciplina histórica.

La arquitectura toma conciencia de su propio devenir como hecho histórico, ligado al pluralismo de las culturas y relacionado con la noción de cambio. El conocimiento científico-positivo, inicialmente taxonómico, tiende a transformarse en conciencia histórica del proceso de la arquitectura.

Por otra parte esta experiencia del pluralismo lleva consigo la crisis del concepto de *mimesis*, de imitación, como concepto central de la estética clasicista para abrirse a nociones más dinámicas que incorporan la temporalidad y el cambio como conceptos centrales en su concepción de la realidad de la arquitectura.

No es el eclecticismo la primera arquitectura que tiene que ver con las arquitecturas del pasado sino tal vez la última. Como Tafuri ha señalado, desde Brunelleschi se inaugura una concepción de la forma arquitectónica que debe producirse por referencia a códigos establecidos y conocidos como fueron los de la arquitectura de la antigüedad (6). Pero la razón por la cual no podemos llamar ni historicistas, ni eclécticos a los arquitectos del renacimiento es porque ellos nunca tuvieron otra noción más que la de imitar un único modelo ideal, colocado hipotéticamente en la antigüedad grecorromana o en Vitrubio y esta referencia permanente a unos modelos cuya imitación constituía el fundamento de la estética clásica se viene abajo sólo a partir del momento en que es posible entender que hubo otros ciclos históricos y otras áreas de experiencia arquitectónica y que ya no existe autoridad ninguna, ni moral ni estética, para establecer la primacía o la superioridad de unos sobre otros (7). A partir de este momento son posibles dos cosas: por una parte la instauración, coyuntural, del pluralismo y la aceptación de la validez de cualquier referencia, de cualquier imitación, pero por otra parte también la necesidad de fundamentar más genéricamente, no sólo mediante un código establecido que defina el orden y la seguridad de las referencias, sino mediante una concepción dinámica y cambiante de la realidad que justifique, no ya por la imitación del pasado sino por la adecuación al presente de las nuevas formas que la arquitectura pueda tomar. Racionalismo y eclecticismo son en este momento dos aspectos de un único proceso. El proceso de la conciencia moderna, racional e histórica, que necesita fundamentar la comunicación estética no ya sobre la base de una teoría formal del orden del hombre y del cosmos sino sobre una teoría psicológica del sujeto y una teoría racional de la producción de los objetos.

2. En 1785 Quatremère de Quincy expone en la Academia una «*Disertation sur l'architecture égyptienne considérée dans son origine et par rapport à l'architecture grecque*» que se publicará en forma de libro sólo años más tarde, en 1803 (8). El texto es enormemente significativo puesto que se trata no de una obra de erudito o de arqueólogo sino de una obra de teoría de la arquitectura. Puede decirse que en ella Quatremère trata de explicar, desde una teoría general, el significado de un nuevo cuerpo, un cuerpo de algún modo extraño a la cultura clásica pero de enorme actualidad en aquellos años gracias a los avances de la arqueología en el conocimiento de la arquitectura egipcia, de un revival egipcio que desde mediados del siglo XVIII, y en buena parte gracias a los grabados de Piranesi, se había difundido en toda Europa.

La disertación es bien sintomática en su planteamiento teórico pues se trata tanto de fundamentar estéticamente los principios que rigieron la tradición de la arquitectura egipcia como de su comparación con el modelo ideal por antonomasia

sia, la arquitectura griega, que sigue teniendo todavía el carácter de referencia primera e indiscutible.

Las conclusiones de la *Disertation* son significativas. Por una parte la valoración de Quatremère es muy negativa en comparación con las cualidades de la arquitectura griega. No se cumple más que muy pobremente el principio aristotélico de la *mimesis* puesto que la arquitectura egipcia imita sólo de una forma muy tosca no a la cabaña primitiva sino a la cueva primitiva. No hay un sistema establecido de proporciones. No se produce un juego claro entre variedad y unidad sino que las obras egipcias caen en la monotonía. No es explícita una idea de orden, etc. La única idea que se manifiesta insistentemente en la arquitectura egipcia y que constituye su carácter peculiar es la de la solidez, la pesadez, la masividad de la edificación. Apparently el texto de Quatremère tiene una intención clara: frente a la moda de lo egipcio y a su difusión en el gusto de la época su *Disertation* parece una ortodoxa defensa de la primacía y la perfección de la arquitectura griega. Efectivamente, esta intención puede ser cierta y tal vez ésta es la imagen que ha prevalecido de la figura de Quatremère como un defensor incansable del clasicismo frente a la dispersión del gusto en el momento en que el clasicismo entra en crisis. Pero existe la posibilidad de entender, en este texto y en el que Quatremère empezará a publicar poco después, a partir de 1788, como parte de la *Encyclopédie Méthodique*, que los problemas con los que se enfrenta han entrado en una vía sin retorno y que, por lo tanto, el reaccionarismo de Quatremère es secundario frente a su real contribución a los cambios conceptuales que en este momento se están produciendo (9).

Efectivamente en la voz *Architecture* de la *Encyclopédie Méthodique* son significativas la aparición de una teoría plural de la arquitectura y de un esbozo de teoría histórica de la misma. Por una parte Quatremère plantea la idea de que el origen ideal de la arquitectura no debe colocarse sólo en la cabaña primitiva, tal como había hecho hasta entonces la tratadística, sino que deben reconocerse tres distintos orígenes, la cueva, la cabaña y la tienda, correspondientes a tres estados naturales del hombre primitivo que son el de cazador, el de agricultor y el de pastor. Admitir esta pluralidad significa romper con la teoría del modelo único y por lo tanto aceptar la posibilidad de desarrollar procesos paralelos o independientes de arquitecturas que nacerían respectivamente de estos tres refugios originales que en sí ya no son reducibles a un único origen sino que significan la diversidad nacida de diferencias en la cultura material de los distintos pueblos.

En sus textos posteriores este planteamiento tendrá su desarrollo en las distintas interpretaciones que las diferentes arquitecturas se planteen. Así la arquitectura egipcia será una arquitectura nacida de la cueva primitiva, como la etrusca y, en cambio, la arquitectura china o india nacerán de la tienda nómada, mientras que, sólo la arquitectura griega tendrá su origen en la cabaña del agricultor originario. De nada serviría que Quatremère pretenda señalar que a pesar de esta diversidad de orígenes exista «une espèce de predilection de la nature» por el modelo de la cabaña.

Aunque este tipo de afirmaciones en favor de la primacía del modelo griego continúen en la teoría de Quatremère, sin embargo, las semillas de un radical cambio conceptual han sido echadas. Es el pluralismo de los orígenes el que pone en marcha una concepción de la historia de la arquitectura según ciclos autónomos, cerrados cada uno sobre su propio modelo originario y desarrollándose como compartimentos estancos con su propia lógica interna. La elaboración de una historia plural —y en cierto sentido global no sólo clásica como en Winkelmann— se pone en marcha en Quatremère admitiéndose desde este momento que la arquitectura se ha desarrollado en las distintas culturas según modos distintos, aunque todos ellos intenten unificarse bajo unos únicos conceptos estéticos, no históricos sino abstractos.

Efectivamente la noción de *mimesis*, central en la teoría de Quatremère, es ahora reformulada en términos significativamente nuevos. En la cultura clásica la noción de imitación se propugnaba de forma literal. Era a los modelos ideales de la antigüedad como segunda naturaleza a los que había que referirse, como norma de la buena producción artística. Sin embargo en su *Encyclopédie*, en la voz *Imitation* y en otros textos posteriores la noción de *mimesis* propuesta será objeto de cambios sustanciales (10).

En primer lugar la noción de imitación para Quatremère no hay que tomarla en un sentido literal sino sólo en un sentido metafórico. No sólo se descarta la idea de que la *mimesis* sea una copia sino que no es más que una imitación en un cierto sentido. En la arquitectura se da una analogía entre el modelo originario al cual ella se refiere y la obra concreta que el arquitecto produce. A diferencia de los artistas de las artes del diseño, como la pintura o la escultura, que tienen modelos naturales perfectamente definidos a los que referirse, sean éstos la naturaleza empírica o la naturaleza ideal que se deduce como canon de la naturaleza empírica, en cambio en el caso de la arquitectura la noción de imitación sólo puede tomarse en un sentido más laxo, metafórico, lo que el arquitecto imita es el carácter del modelo ideal.

La importancia que el término *carácter* obtiene en la teoría de la arquitectura a partir de este momento no puede dejar de señalarse (11). Aunque los tratadistas del XVIII ya utilizan este término, es importante señalar que sólo ahora la noción de carácter, la pluralidad y la diversidad de los caracteres, será lo que justifique la interpretación de la diversidad de las arquitecturas.

Refiriendo la noción de *mimesis* a la imitación de los caracteres, Quatremère abre una nueva vía al pluralismo y produce además un definitivo desplazamiento

desde los modelos formales a los que referir el contenido de la imitación arquitectónica hacia contenidos psicológicos subjetivos ligados no ya a los modelos de referencia en el proceso de producción de la arquitectura sino a los contenidos que en la percepción del sujeto consumidor se producen en su experiencia de la arquitectura. Gracia, armonía, pesadez, lujo, orgullo, solidez, gravedad, austeridad, nobleza, elegancia, etc., etc. son los términos de los distintos caracteres hacia los cuales fatalmente la teoría de la mimesis se ha deslizado. La introducción de las teorías fisiognómicas es, en realidad, la culminación de este planteamiento. Efectivamente carácter para Quatremère, en la voz que desarrolla este concepto en su primer volumen de la *Encyclopédie Méthodique*, está relacionado directamente con la vieja noción clásica de fisionomía (12). Es evidente que a lo largo de la teoría clásica de los órdenes arquitectónicos, la fisionomía tuvo un papel destacado en la explicación de los distintos significados o caracteres de los órdenes y que antropomórficamente el carácter de los órdenes se explicó en términos fisiognómicos. Lo que en Quatremère se produce, sin embargo, es que su teoría general de la *mimesis* lleva a una concepción abierta de las metáforas que esta mimesis comporta y por lo tanto a referir estas posibles metáforas a las nociones psicológicas del carácter entendidas como fisionomías. Ya veremos, más adelante, hasta qué punto este desplazamiento subjetivo y psicológico es decisivo en la moderna concepción de la significación y por lo tanto en la teoría decimonónica del significado de los estilos tal como también Quatremère lo teoriza en su *Encyclopedie*, precisamente refiriéndolo a la noción de fisionomía como básica no ya en una teoría de la imitación sino también en la teoría de los estilos (13).

Finalmente es importante destacar un tercer cuerpo de conceptos aparentemente clasicistas e inmovilizados en el pensamiento de Quatremère pero que, paradójicamente, en la medida en que este pensador no es ajeno a los cambios culturales de su tiempo, están ya poniendo de manifiesto los desplazamientos teóricos que desde comienzos del siglo XIX van a producirse.

Si examinamos el término *invention* y junto a éste los de *uniformité, diversité, unité, variété*, aparece claramente que en Quatremère hay una actitud reluctante al cambio. La *invention* es la combinación nueva de elementos preexistentes (14). La definición es claramente restrictiva y pone el acento en una permanencia semántica de los contenidos o elementos y en una libertad de invención sintáctica a partir de reglas que ordenan un determinado sistema de arquitectura. «*Loin que les règles nuisent l'invention, l'invention n'existe point hors des règles*».

La misma desconfianza ante la novedad se presenta en el uso frecuente del término *bizarro* para calificar a la invención incontrolada, sin reglas y sin lógica propia.

Pero de nuevo aquí hay que advertir que tras el aparente conservadurismo de Quatremère la noción de la invención como combinación, como libertad para el ejercicio de nuevas posibilidades en función de unas reglas sintácticas y de unos elementos dados, está prefigurando una noción típica de la cultura decimonónica y en concreto de la estética del eclecticismo. El juego combinatorio es aceptado y sólo será necesario definir en cada sistema estilístico cuáles son estas reglas, cuáles son las leyes internas de cada una de estas unidades históricas que la experiencia del pasado nos muestra. De este modo la historia plural que Quatremère teoriza y el concepto de mimesis como carácter fisiognómico adquieren una disponibilidad y una apertura a un uso nuevo que la invención desencadena como nunca se hubiese formulado en el pasado. En definitiva es al conocimiento positivo de la historia de la arquitectura y a la nueva teorización sin exclusiones a la que, a pesar de sus referencias y de sus personales compromisos con las instituciones más conservadoras de la cultura francesa, Quatremère contribuye de una manera no sólo eficaz sino incuestionable (15). Parece como si en la obra de este autor más allá de su papel de celoso guardián de la ortodoxia clasicista de la *Académie*, se formularan, en embrión, conceptos básicos que sus inmediatos contemporáneos no tendrán más que tomar y poner en funcionamiento una vez que se hubiesen despreocupado de los argumentos de autoridad en favor de la arquitectura griega. La arquitectura griega y sus reglas quedarán o como una alternativa más en el concierto de estilos que la cultura histórica pueda necesitar o en todo caso segregarán conceptos más genéricos y abstractos —como orden, simetría o carácter— que ya no estarán comprometidos con una opción figurativa concreta sino que se habrán transformado en instrumentos estéticos generales del pluralismo instaurado por la conceptualización del conocimiento histórico de los diversos arquitectos.

3. De Quatremère de Quincy a Jean Nepomucène Louis Durand se consume el proceso de construcción de un modelo abierto para la producción de la arquitectura, ya no es un artefacto que se produce copiando modelos del pasado sino que, fundamentalmente, es un producto que nace del análisis lógico de las posibilidades técnicas de la construcción y de las necesidades de un programa que el edificio tiene que albergar. Un tono general de adecuación directa y mecánica entre necesidades técnicas y funcionales y organización formal parecen ser la bandera de choque con la cual Durand programa polémicamente su método con el que aborda cualquier clase de edificios. Pero veremos con qué instrumentos plantea su nuevo método pedagógico. En primer lugar, su primer libro «*Recueil et Parallèle*» se propone como un resumen de la información histórica deseable para cualquier persona que debe proyectar en términos de ofrecer en un solo libro el material que de otro modo debería buscarse mediante varios cientos de obras eruditas (16).

Pero el *Recueil* es una obra sin prejuicios respecto a los materiales que enseña. No sólo en su primera lámina muestra una orla con edificio de todas las épocas y de todos los estilos sino que la clasificación temática de las obras a lo largo del *Recueil* permite mezclar edificios de procedencias diversas sin ninguna clase de dificultad conceptual. Las preferencias, fundadas vagamente en la naturaleza, que Quatremère encontraba para declarar a la arquitectura griega superior a cualquier otra, han quedado definitivamente arrinconadas.

Durand parte de una total y absoluta indiferencia frente a la historia del pasado y justifica la elección de los edificios por el criterio de su importancia y magnificencia con independencia del estilo o período histórico al que pertenezcan. El procedimiento de redibujar todos los edificios a una misma escala y con un mismo tipo de delineación todavía refuerza la aparente indiferencia histórica con la que el autor se enfrenta a las colecciones de ejemplos del pasado, disponiendo de ellos a su antojo y conveniencia en función de programas y temas de arquitectura propias de la ciudad contemporánea.

Por otra parte en la obra teórica inmediata, el *Precis des Leçons*, Durand expone claramente su falta de convicción frente a las teorías de la imitación y frente a la primacía de la arquitectura clásica ante las demás. Por el contrario, tomando como base los datos positivos que la arqueología le ofrece, arremeterá violentamente contra lo que todavía pudiese quedar del principio de autoridad y planteará que los órdenes clásicos jamás se ajustaron a cánones, como lo demuestra la diversidad de medidas que los edificios reales tienen, ni tampoco se ajustaron a formas o tipos bien definidos lo prueba también la diversidad de obras que la arqueología puede documentar. Ninguna teoría general que permita hacer modelos ni mucho menos que permita, como todavía sucedía en Quatremère, mantener un sistema intrínseco a los sistemas arquitectónicos (17).

Por el contrario el sistema debe ser propuesto por el arquitecto en el proceso de diseño del edificio y por lo tanto el proceso de producción es, de alguna manera, un proceso abierto y creativo. Su método, un método general, válido para cualquier caso que pueda plantearse (18) y su capacidad de adaptación sólo está limitada por las condiciones técnicas establecidas como puntos de partida y por las condiciones llamadas de economía que son en realidad principios abstractos de la forma. Si en Durand los dos grandes principios de diseño son *Convenance* y *Economie*, debe explicarse que tras el primer concepto lo que el autor entiende es en realidad la lógica de la construcción y del programa, mientras que en *Economie* lo que para Durand significa es la adaptación en términos operativos de los conceptos de simetría, regularidad y simplicidad, como herencia de la tradición de diseño clásica reinterpretada no como platónica exigencia de orden entre el microcosmos del edificio y el macrocosmos sino como leyes de eficacia y operatividad.

¿Qué tiene entonces que ver este sistema durandiano con las opciones del eclecticismo? A nuestro juicio la relación del operativismo durandiano con la disponibilidad del eclecticismo es totalmente directa e inmediata. De algún modo el *Recueil et Parallèle* es una obra significativamente ecléctica. Se trata de tomar, según las conveniencias, cualquier material histórico y entender que esta posibilidad no sólo no atenta contra ningún principio estético sino que constituye una buena ayuda a este nuevo proyecto histórico que es la construcción de una arquitectura para la ciudad de la burguesía industrial.

Efectivamente la descontextualización de material historiográfico y su uso uniforme y sin valores preestablecidos en un manual que reúne, indiferenciadamente, los productos de épocas y culturas distintas supone una disponibilidad de la historia que sólo tras la crisis del orden clásico, y, con el establecimiento del positivismo histórico, es posible. De hecho el *Recueil et Parallèle* como catálogo de arquitectura histórica y el *Precis des Leçons* como obra metodológica, como tratado de composición, se presentan como obras complementarias y no existe en absoluto la noción de que una anteceda a la otra o viceversa (19). El orden lógico del tratado y la clarificación tipológica del *Recueil* son la muestra de que la historia ha sido asumida en su totalidad no sólo como un repertorio de soluciones reutilizables sino como un caudal de informaciones que pueden ser leídas simultáneamente desde principios únicos de forma y significación.

Efectivamente éste es el reverso del aparente racionalismo abstracto de Durand: la posibilidad de una nueva forma de historia de la arquitectura, sin necesidad de remitirla a modelos originarios ni a otras explicaciones que no sean su propio orden formal y su contenido significativo, su carácter.

A este respecto es extraño que hasta hoy la historiografía que se ha ocupado de Durand no haya llamado la atención sobre una obra que se produce de forma totalmente implicada en ella. Se trata de la obra historiográfica de la arquitectura de Jacques Guillaume Legrand. Su *Essai sur l'histoire générale de l'architecture* fue publicado por el autor como un avance de una monumental historia de la arquitectura que desde hacía años tenía en preparación y había anunciado (20). El *Essai* de Legrand no es una obra independiente. Por el contrario es una obra que se propone como historia de la arquitectura pero que va a apoyarse en el *Recueil* de Durand como ilustración gráfica. Se trata de un caso de curiosa simbiosis en la que las grandes láminas y el gran esfuerzo de recopilación hecho por Durand va a servir al mismo tiempo como ilustración complementaria de las lecciones de composición editadas como *Precis*, y, como un resumen de historia de la arquitectura como el que Legrand escribe como avance de una gran historia que nunca llegará a publicar (21).

Pero la actitud de Legrand respecto a la historia es clara. Se trata de conocer el pasado para disponer de él en el presente. De una forma tal vez más concluyente que el propio Durand, Legrand habla en primer lugar de la arquitectura como fenómeno de creación: «*L'architecture est un art createur*» (22) lo cual no le impide que, a renglón seguido, explique que sólo conociendo las obras del pasado y usando de ellas según la conveniencia de las necesidades presentes se producirá una buena arquitectura contemporánea. La formulación de Legrand es la formulación del más estricto eclecticismo y lo es desde la historia de la arquitectura. La historia no es sólo un ejercicio cultural. Es un instrumento de diseño a disposición del arquitecto que debe afrontar los nuevos programas de necesidades. La información que el historiador suministra supone que ésta tiene en ella misma una disponibilidad para ser incorporada a los problemas del proyecto sin mayores dificultades. Incluso la noción de mezcla, de combinación de materiales diversos aparece también en Legrand como una posibilidad aceptable, como aparecía en Durand, no oculta que ha tomado materiales de diversa procedencia —egipcios, griegos, romanos, piranesianos o modernos— a fin de surtirlos de repertorios diversos desde los que montar sus edificios combinatorios.

La obra de Legrand como historiador no nos ofrecería otra cosa que la confirmación del eclecticismo implícito en Durand si no añadiese interesantes esclarecimientos en un punto de la mayor importancia (23). Puesto que la historia no es sólo una historia de las formas sino también una historia de los significados, los repertorios que el historiador puede mostrarnos no son sólo combinaciones formales sino también posibilidades fisionómicas distintas. De nuevo el concepto de fisionomía hace su aparición en el cuerpo teórico de la arquitectura del eclecticismo francés como corolario del carácter que las arquitecturas históricas tienen. Efectivamente, Legrand toma la concepción del carácter fisionómico tal como está formulado en Quatremère de Quincy y se aplica a explicar el repertorio de las arquitecturas históricas como un repertorio de fisionomías. El proyectista tiene ante sí no sólo sistemas formales distintos, unos más adecuados que otros según las necesidades, tal como analiza Durand al comentar el programa y la resolución de distintas tipologías, sino que tiene también repertorios de estilos o, para usar su propia terminología, los distintos estilos históricos comportan fisionomías diversas que significan caracteres distintos a disposición del proyectista.

La cultura histórica no sólo muestra repertorios formales y por supuesto, como va a producirse poco tiempo después, repertorios técnico-constructivos, sino que sobre todo dispone de una amplia muestra de distintos caracteres ejemplificados por las arquitecturas históricas en relación a la diversidad fisionómica que estas arquitecturas presentan.

El problema de proyectar es un problema que remite a la historia, pero no a una historia como pura autoconciencia, sino a una historia como suministradora de materiales consumibles en el gran mercado de la nueva producción de edificios. La racionalización no es ajena a este uso de la historia ni el aparente «funcionalismo» de los planteamientos es indiferente al problema de la significación que las formas arquitectónicas pueden tener más allá de su pura capacidad de respuesta a las exigencias de *convenance* y de *economie*.

Durand expone claramente que el carácter del edificio no es un problema de decoración, es decir, de uso epidérmico de unas ciertas formas en el acabado del edificio. Por el contrario, el carácter del edificio está ligado a su *disposition*, es decir, a aquella condición significativa de la estructura formal cuyo contenido obedece a los resultados alcanzados por el cumplimiento de las necesidades funcionales, pero que comporta los valores estéticos que la arquitectura trata de alcanzar.

Con la crítica a la decoración, es decir, al costoso e innecesario revestimiento del edificio de un cierto ropaje tomado de las arquitecturas del pasado, Durand hace una crítica demoledora al historicismo superficial o en cierto sentido epidérmico de las arquitecturas revivalistas del siglo XVIII, pero sigue aceptando que de la organización formal de los cuerpos y muros que forman el edificio surge un determinado carácter que constituye el contenido de belleza y de gratificación estética propio de la arquitectura (24).

Lo que interesa de este modo subrayar es la concepción abstracta de la noción de carácter o significación estética, sólo mediatamente relacionada con las arquitecturas del pasado. Un historiador y crítico, como Legrand, al analizar las arquitecturas del pasado, descubriría en ellas caracteres y fisionomías diversas ligadas a su construcción y a su forma. Lo que Durand reclamará en cambio será la posibilidad de un uso de estos lenguajes significativos, no por la vía de una mimesis, de una imitación superficial o literal de las formas decorativas de las arquitecturas del pasado, sino considerándolas como estructuras formales básicas que, estando insertas en aquellas arquitecturas históricas, comportan contenidos significativos permanentes e inalterables con independencia del contenido anecdótico que las referencias a las arquitecturas del pasado pueden tener.

4. El significado de la obra de David Gottin Humbert de Superville incidirá, a comienzos del siglo XIX, definitivamente en la formulación de una teoría general de las formas artísticas reasumiendo bajo una única formalización abstracta la diversidad de las formas históricas.

La obra de Humbert de Superville madura entre Roma y París en los años del cambio de siglo y participa de la problemática general del momento en la búsqueda de explicaciones plausibles ante el hecho evidente de la pluralidad de los esti-

los artísticos (25). La teoría de Superville, publicada sólo más tarde, durante su época de residencia en Holanda, pero directamente conectada con el resto de la cultura Europea, significa un peldaño más en la elaboración de conceptos capaces de resumir la multiplicidad de las formas artísticas imposibles de explicar desde la pura teoría de la imitación del cuerpo humano o de la cabaña primitiva para la arquitectura e, insuficientemente explicadas, desde el árido funcionalismo de Durand o desde la teoría del carácter desarrollada por historiógrafos como Legrand (26).

La teoría fisionómica clásica está en el origen de este planteamiento. Sin duda la hipótesis de correspondencia entre el hombre y el universo está en la base de las teorías fisionómicas de Della Porta o de Le Brun ya en pleno cartesianismo (27). Superville, partiendo de esta tradición, plantea en realidad una gramática de las formas significativas tomadas abstractamente. Lo que en la fisionomía clásica era, en realidad, el paralelismo entre las formas del rostro humano y de los animales como fuente de homología entre las cualidades espirituales y las físicas de unos y otros se convertirá en Humbert de Superville, en una gramática básica del significado psicológico de las formas geométricas elementales.

Convergen en este punto la tradición fisionómica con el arcaísmo que la cultura neoclásica había desarrollado en todos los campos de la cultura formal. El gusto por las estructuras elementales, por la geometría básica en la pintura, en la escultura o en la arquitectura, se convierte en Superville en un ejercicio por descubrir la arquitectura básica que subyace a las obras de los pintores y escultores del período prerafaelita. Sus cuadernos de dibujos de la época romana son todos ellos un ejercicio reduccionístico de explicación de las obras de arte del pasado en términos de su geometría básica (28). Un cierto arcaísmo domina sus propias obras como pintor y dibujante, al tiempo, que éstas manifiestan también muy claramente el gusto y el interés por la geometría fundamental de las formas visuales.

Pero de este gusto por una cierta forma de esencialización, Humbert de Superville pasa a una teoría general de la expresión de carácter gramatical. Se trata de la construcción de un sistema de signos y de unas reglas sintácticas capaces de expresar de un modo permanente la relación del sujeto con la percepción de los contenidos.

Obviamente tras el problema propuesto por Humbert de Superville está el problema kantiano de la relación del sujeto con el mundo exterior a él, con toda la realidad y el modo cómo esta realidad se hace comprensible a este sujeto. Frente a una teoría mimética que anticipa la existencia de la realidad a la del sujeto, el romanticismo implícito en el pensamiento de Kant supone la idea opuesta, la de una realidad que se construye sólo desde las condiciones *a priori* del sujeto y desde las posibilidades de significación que estas categorías *a priori* puedan conceder o entregar al objeto construido desde la sensibilidad.

Es aquí donde la teoría fisionómica, no desde su vertiente cósmico-objetiva de la tradición neoplatónica, sino desde la moderna investigación positivo-fisiológica del Lavatier y de Gall, adquiere una nueva función (29). Poder predicar que en el sujeto humano, como consecuencia de su estructura fisiológica y de sus condiciones como ser viviente en un mundo físico, se dan unas determinadas categorías significativas de las formas y de los colores, supone la posibilidad de disponer de los términos básicos de la gramática formal buscada por Humbert de Superville. Su obra, publicada tardía y caóticamente con el título *«Essai sur les signes inconditionnels de l'art»*, se plantea como una teoría general del significado de las formas a partir de su relación con la estructura fisis-psicológica del sujeto. Obsérvese que se trata de signos, es decir, de la reducción abstracta de la significación a unas estructuras portantes que actúan infaliblemente en el campo de la producción de objetos artísticos. Y obsérvese también que se trata de signos incondicionales, es decir, de aquellos caracteres permanentes que pueden predicarse de la percepción humana como fenómenos inmutables puesto que nacen no de las condiciones históricas, sino de las potenciales posibilidades que la propia estructura del cuerpo y del espíritu humano permiten deducir como algo permanente.

El trabajo de Superville se desarrolla analizando en líneas y colores fundamentales el significado que estas realidades abstractas comportan de un modo absoluto, con total independencia de tiempo y lugar. Establecidas estas formas elementales el *Essai* de Superville pasa a analizar los problemas de explicación del funcionamiento de estos signos elementales en la arquitectura, la pintura y la escultura y, finalmente, en las formas geológicas de la naturaleza.

Para el caso de la arquitectura, el alcance del texto de Superville significa la consumación de lo que en Durand y en Legrand aparecía como necesario desplazamiento en el centro de sus construcciones teóricas. Las formas históricas de la arquitectura en sus más diversas realizaciones pueden ser objeto de una lectura que las refiere a todas ellas a un cuerpo teórico común. El problema del carácter y de su significación fisionómica no es algo que no pueda ser comprendido desde un cuerpo de doctrina unitario, sino que, por el contrario, los signos incondicionales del arte permiten referir todos los distintos estilos históricos o las distintas combinaciones que el artista puede realizar a un sistema que los explica, desde las categorías abstractas del simbolismo fisionómico de los signos incondicionales del arte. Así el carácter de las arquitecturas China o India, Griega o Medieval, Árabe o Persa pueden asociarse como categorías psicológicas a una determinada estructura formal dominante. Horizontalidad, verticalidad, inclinación, blanco, negro, rojo, azul o amarillo no aparecen casualmente en la historia de la arquitectura. La teoría del signifi-

cado de las líneas y de los colores es el resumen del significado de los distintos materiales que la historia pone ante los ojos del proyectista. Una gramática general de las formas y de los colores explica el significado de los caracteres históricos y explica también las correspondencias y simultaneidades que entre las distintas artes se dan en cada período. La teoría de los estilos como carácter y como unidad psicológica se pueden formular simultáneamente.

5. El método propuesto por Durand como proceso de composición partía de una selección abierta de cualquier arquitectura en su *Recueil* para formularse después como máquina generativa ilimitada de artefactos arquitectónicos. La selección indiscriminada de materiales históricos era como un primer peldaño para la formulación de un método general basado ya no en la imitación sino en la invención productiva.

Quedaba sin embargo irresuelto el problema del significado. Para Durand el significado era o una pura convención, fruto de la costumbre, o era el resultado automático de la adecuación entre los requerimientos del proyecto y la respuesta arquitectónica a la misma. La conveniencia era la causa del carácter como una relación necesaria de causa efecto. Y sin embargo quedaba irresuelto el problema de la diversidad de los caracteres, de la diversidad de significados que la arquitectura podía enseñar a lo largo de la historia.

Los historiadores generales de la arquitectura, como Jacques Guillaume Legrand, descubrían caracteres distintos en la diversidad de las culturas arquitectónicas conocidas a lo largo del espacio y del tiempo. Pero el origen de estos caracteres no era atribuible mecánicamente a las características de la conveniencia sin una mediación formal. El problema entre arquitecturas «funcionalistas» y arquitecturas «significativas» o parlantes estriba siempre en este punto: en la mediación entre las condiciones que definen la obra y el lenguaje que la expresa. Había que pasar de la gramática generativa durandiana a la lingüística general de Humbert de Superville. La fisonómica debía transformarse en el sistema de los símbolos incondicionales del arte. Los símbolos incondicionales de arte introducían de este modo la posibilidad de una lectura transhistórica de los materiales de la historia de la arquitectura. Paradójicamente la arquitectura ecléctica, profundizando en sí misma, buscando sus propias leyes generales, abandonaba su historicidad para buscar una formulación abstracta y general.

¿Es necesario decir que estos problema llegan hasta los orígenes mismos de la arquitectura del movimiento moderno? La influencia de Superville en teorías estéticas tan dispares como las que puedan ser en teoría de la *Einfühlung*, de la *gestalt-psicologie* o de la teoría abstracta del *Beaux Arts* puede recorrerse sin demasiada dificultad. La teoría del arte moderno no es ajena a esta reducción abstracta del significado a un sistema de signos esquematizados en la línea y el color. De alguna manera en el proceso de la Ilustración al Romanticismo se están decidiendo algunas de las opciones estéticas básicas en la modernidad. El eclecticismo es, en este proceso, un paso necesario.

IGNASI DE SOLÀ-MORALES

1. La más característica interpretación de J.N.C. Durand como racionalista aparece en Louis Hautecoeur, «*Histoire de l'Architecture en France*» Tomo V: «*Revolution et Empire. 1792-1815*» París, 1953. También términos similares pueden encontrarse en la obra de Leonardo Benevolo «*Storia dell'architettura moderna*» Bari, 1960, vol. I y en el artículo de A. Hernández «*J.N.L. Durand's architecture Theory. A study in the History of Rational Building Design*» en *Perspecta*, nº 12. 1969.

2. Sólo en publicaciones recientes este esquematismo entre ingenieros y arquitectos, entre racionalistas y eclécticos, tiende a superarse en favor de una visión más sintética. De entre las últimas contribuciones destacaríamos el catálogo de la exposición celebrada en el M.O.M.A. de New York «*The architecture of the Ecole des Beaux Arts*» Cambridge, Mass 1977; el nº 8 de la revista *Oppositions* dedicado al mismo tema y la obra de Donald Drew Egbert «*The Beaux Arts traditions in French Architecture*» Princeton, 1980.

3. Véase en Herry-Russell Hitchcock «*Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*» Harmondsworth, 1958, el capítulo 5: «*The Doctrine of J.N.L. Durand and its Application in Northern Europe*».

4. Aunque no exista una historia de la arquitectura moderna desde la óptica y los tópicos del llamado *post-modernismo* valgan como ejemplo la voluntad de conectar a Louis Kahn con el *Beaux-Arts* en V. Scully —en su «*Louis Kahn*» New York 1960— o la reciente reivindicación del *revival Beaux Arts* en Ch. Jencks «*Post-modern classicism*» Londres, 1981.

5. Para la contraposición entre clasicismo y romanticismo como paso de una teoría de la mimesis a una teoría de la creación véase Philippe Junod «*Transparence et Opacité. Essai sur les fondements théoriques de l'art moderne*» Lausanne, 1976.

6. Véase M. Tafuri «*Teorie e storia dell'architettura*» Bari, 1968.

7. Para una discusión sobre los orígenes del término eclecticismo y su significación en la crisis del modelo clásico de cultura véase Rudolf Wittkower «*Imitation, Eclecticism and Genius*» en «*Aspects of the Eighteenth Century*» Oxford, 1965, y también en Denis Mahon «*The construction of a legend: The origins of the classic and eclectic misinterpretation of the Carracci*» en «*Studies in seicento art and theory*», The Warburg Institute. Londres, 1947.

8. J.C. Quatremère de Quincy: «*De l'architecture égyptienne considérée dans son origine et rapport à l'architecture grecque*» París, 1803.

9. J.C. Quatremère de Quincy «*Encyclopédie Méthodique. Architecture*» 3 vols. París, 1788-1825.

10. J.C. Quatremère de Quincy. «*Encyclopédie Méthodique*» op. cit.

11. Vid. Colin Rowe: «*Carácter y composición, o algunas visicitudes del vocabulario arquitectónico del siglo XIX*» publicado en *Oppositions* nº 2, 1974 y posteriormente en «*The mathematics of the ideal Villa and other Essays*» Cambridge, Mass 1976.

12. Para un análisis histórico de las teorías fisionómicas vid. Jurgen Baltrusaitis: «*Abe-*

rrations: quatre essais sur la légende des formes» Paris, 1957. También en E.H. Gombrich en el texto «On physiognomic perception» publicado en «Mediations on a hobby horse» Londres, 1963.

13. ...«Style, par conséquent, à l'égard des arts du dessin, de leurs ouvrages, des facultés diverses et diversement modifiées de chaque artiste, exprime de même une manière d'être caractéristique, qui les fait reconnaître et distinguer avec plus ou moins d'évidence, et de la façon dont la nature imprime à chaque nation, à chaque individu, une physionomie particulière». J.C. Quatremère de Quincy *Encyclopédie Méthodique* vol. III-voz Style. pp. 44.

14. ...«Invention est encore le synonyme de création dans la langue des arts, et les deux mots se rapprochent aussi nécessairement par une notion commune qui est à les définir. Aussi l'on est convaincu que le mot «création» n'est qu'une methaphore, que l'homme ne crée rien dans le sens absolu de le terme et qu'il n'est autre chose que trouver de combinaisons nouvelles d'éléments préexistants. Or, trouver ces combinaisons, c'est inventer». *Encyclopédie Méthodique*, cit. voz: Invention vol II pp. 569.

15. Para un estudio del papel de Quatremère en el conjunto de las instituciones francesas de su época vid. Rene Scheider «Quatremère de Quincy et son intervention dans les arts» Paris, 1910.

16. «Une chose qui importe extrêmement aux architectes et aux ingénieurs civils, c'est d'étudier et de connaître tout ce qu'on a fait de plus intéressant en architecture, dans tous les pays et dans tous les siècles» Del texto de J.N.L. Durand explicando el contenido de su «Recueil et paralele» incluido como publicidad en el *Precis des Leçons d'architecture données à l'Ecole Polytechnique* Paris, 1809. pp. 30.

17. Vid. J.N.L. Durand *Precis des leçons d'architecture données à l'Ecole Polytechnique* par... Paris. 1809 especialmente el vol. I.

18. «L'architecture n'est pas l'art de faire un certain nombre de proje c'est l'art de faire tous les projets d'edifices possibles, soit publics soit particuliers et encore de les faire dans toutes les circonstances que les peuvent modifier». J.N.L. Durand «Partie graphique de cours d'architecture faits à l'Ecole Royale Polytechnique Paris, 1821 pp. 24.

19. En las páginas del *Precis des leçons* y en las posteriores de la *Partie graphique*, op. cit., se hace no sólo referencia constante a las imágenes del *Recueil et Paralele* sino que, incluso, se incluye un folleto de publicidad del mismo con indicación de su contenido y resumen de su introducción.

20. J.G. Legrand. «Essai sur l'histoire générale de l'architecture po servir de texte explicatif au Recueil at Paralele de edifices de tout genre, anciens et modernes remarquables pour leur beauté, le grandeur et leur singularité et designées à la même echelle par J.N.L. Durand» Paris, 1809. Legrand ya había publicado anteriormente un «Paralele de l'architecture ancienne et moderne» Paris, 1806 y una interesantísima obra titulada «Collection des Chefs d'oeuvre de l'architecture des differents peuples exécutés en modes et analysés par J.G. Legrand». Paris, 1806, que se propone también como un resumen de historia general de la arquitectura.

21. En la edición del *Essai* de 1806, se publican la carta de Legrand a Durand proponiéndole la colaboración mediante este libro y la carta de aceptación de Durand a la idea de esta obra, en cierto sentido conjunta.

Posteriormente en Italia, en 1833, se publica una edición bilingüe, ampliada, del *Recueil* bajo el título «Recolta e paralelo delle fabbriche classiche di tutti i tempi, d'ogni popolo e di ciascun stile di J.N.L. Durand con l'aggiunta di altri 300 piu fabbriche e dell'architettura di J.G. Legrand» Venezia, 1833, que incluye tanto las láminas de Durand, como una versión bilingüe del texto de Legrand y como una ampliación «a cura di protenoi della I.R. Accademia» que añadía materiales italianos y de culturas exóticas claramente en el sentido propuesto por el texto de Legrand.

22. Vid. J.G. Legrand. *Essai*. op. cit. pp. 7.

23. Sobre Jacques Guillaume Legrand Vid. la carta biográfica publicada al comienzo de la obra. También en Elie Brandt *Les architectes par leurs oeuvres* Paris 3 vols. 1893 vol. II pp. 184-85.

24. «La disposition est la seule chose à la quelle doit s'attacher l'architecte quand même il n'aurait d'autre but que celui de oiaire vu que le caractère, la variété, en un mot, toutes les beautés que l'on remarque ou que l'on cherche à introduire dans la decoration architectonique resultent naturellement d'une disposition qui embrasse le convenance et l'economie» J.N.L. Durand «*Precis*» op. cit. pp. 23.

25. Para un estudio de la obra teórica de D.G. Humbert de Superville vid. Barbara Maria Stafford «Symbol and Myth. Humbert de Superville's Essay on absolute sings of Art» Cranbury, N.J. 1979.

26. La obra teórica fundamental de D.G. Humbert de Superville es el *Essai sur les signes inconditionnels dans l'art* publicada en Leyden entre 1827-1839, aunque con numerosas modificaciones por estar editada por fascículos sucesivos. El establecimiento de una edición crítica de este complejo texto es algo de lo que todavía hoy no se dispone.

27. Vid. Giovanni Battista della Porta: «De humana physiognomia», Vico Equinese, 1586 y Charles le Brun «Méthode pour apprendre à dessiner les passions» Paris, 1698.

28. Para la época romana de D.G. Humbert de Superville véase la introducción al *Catálogo degli Uffizi*, Florencia, 1964, a cargo de Giovanni Previtali.

29. Vid. P. Camper «Disertation sur les varietes naturelles qui caracterissent la physiognomie des hommes et des divers climats» 1791-92. Oeuvres de P. Camper, Paris, 1803. Johann Caspar Lavatier «*Physiognomische Fragmente in ihrem verhältnis zur bildenden Kunst*», Berlin 1915.

Una casa en el Maresme

PAGINA 80

Este proyecto de casa señorial responde a un encargo insólito para un arquitecto de mi generación e, incluso, de las más recientes.

Insólito el terreno, magníficamente situado en el Maresme de Dalt, de grandes dimensiones, compartido por los miembros de una familia para construir varias casas sin vallas ni división física alguna entre sus jardines.

Insólito el programa; muy completo, con muchas dependencias de tamaño razonable cada una, que responde mucho más a una vida de todo el año que a una casa de vacaciones.

Insólitos, por último, los clientes que se tomaron con tanto «seny» la elección del proyectista y que promovieron un concurso de anteproyectos, por invitación, entre dos arquitectos; mi buen amigo Pepe Pratsmarsó y yo. Para este anteproyecto se nos entregaron unas bases en qué además de un programa detalladísimo y superficiado se concentraba una clara imagen de la casa deseada: Cubierta inclinada de tejas, aberturas no muy grandes y protegidas con postigos, materiales experimentados, duraderos y de poco mantenimiento etc. En fin una imagen mucho más cercana a una mansión tradicional del Maresme que a una casa «*machine a vivre*» de estilo moderno. Parece evidente a la vista del proyecto, que el arquitecto ha hecho lo posible por respetar este deseo que debo reconocer me resultaba particularmente simpático, en este momento de mi carrera. (Quizá la casa está quedando algo más clásica, menos *payesa* de lo que imaginaban en un principio.)

Desde el inicio del anteproyecto hasta el final del proyecto ejecutivo, el plazo de un año, el seguimiento de los clientes ha sido constante; solicitando multitud de modificaciones que si bien nos han exigido una intensa dedicación han dado como resultado una casa más rica, menos esquemática y abstracta.

Por ejemplo, el empeño de los propietarios, en disponer de una terraza en la planta ático nos ha obligado a una solución promiscua de cubierta plana y en pendiente, imprevista y con muchas posibilidades de evolución.

En los primeros croquis aparece un cuerpo cuadrado central de dos plantas, rodeado por un anillo de una planta que se interrumpe abriendo la entrada.

Más adelante la casa pierde su rígida simetría radial, se adapta mejor al terreno, al soleamiento las vistas y los deseos del programa; pasa de un esquema Palladiano a uno más cercano a las villas de Lutyens, cuya articulación de geometrías parciales me ha resultado liberadora y llena de sugerencias.

PLANTA NOBLE

- (1) - Porche de entrada: El rellano frente a la puerta pavimentada de vidrio ilumina el sótano durante el día y el porche por la noche. En el techo se abrirá una cúpula semiesférica de escayola donde pretendo pintar un cielo nublado.
- (2) - Hall de entrada: La posición no simétrica de las puertas al office y a los dormitorios se resuelve con paneles de espejo en ángulo con las mismas.
- (3) - Antesala: Como otras piezas alejadas de la fachada (5, 7, 12, 14 y 16) recibe iluminación y ventilación cenital por una abertura en el forjado que crea un espacio de doble altura con ventanas a nivel del ático. El pavimento de esta antesala está algo elevado respecto al de la sala; el desnivel se subraya con una barandilla que se interrumpe por dos escaleras de 3 peldaños.
- (4) - Sala: Al descender el nivel del suelo se consigue una altura interior superior al resto de la casa. Durante el día se ilumina por dos balconeras en la esquina, dos ventanas que dan a los porches y la luz cenital de la antesala. Todas las ventanas y balconeras de fachada se cierran con correderas de aluminio lacado, de una sola hoja que se desliza por encima del plano de fachada. Los postigos se deslizarán de la misma manera por encima del vidrio.
- (5) - Comedor: En su parte más alejada de la fachada recibe luz cenital.
- (6) - Porche a mediodía: Espacio de estar y comer al aire libre frente a la parte despejada y plana del jardín.
- (7) - Office: Se ventila e ilumina cenitalmente por ventanas del ático.
- (8) - Cocina: Puerta al porche y ventanas frente al fregadero y los fuegos.
- (9) - Lavado de ropa
- (10) - Dormitorio
- (11) - Aseo utilizable para el dormitorio o por los visitantes desde el hall de entrada.
- (12) - Hall dormitorios: Se ilumina y ventila cenitalmente por ventanas del ático.
- (13) - Antecámara.
- (14) - Closed-vestidor. Se ilumina cenitalmente.
- (15) - Baño principal.
- (16) - Dormitorio principal: En la parte más alejada de fachada se ilumina cenitalmente.
- (17) - Porche a levante: En su interior un quiosco de vidrio a modo de costurero-invernadero. Dos claraboyas en el suelo iluminan el porche inferior. La mejor vista sobre el mar coincide con esta orientación.
- (18) - Distribuidor dormitorios: Recibe luz cenital a través de una franja de tejas de vidrio que también ilumina las piezas 19, 21 y 22.
- (19) - Baño: Luz cenital sobre los lavabos.
- (20) - Dormitorio.
- (21) y (22) - Dormitorios con balconera a levante y luz cenital sobre la mesa.

PLANTA ATICO

- (23) - Distribuidor ático: Un balcón enrejado ilumina la pieza a la vez que domina visualmente la entrada. Frente a este balcón una vidriera comunica con la biblioteca.
- (24) - Estudio biblioteca: Utilizable también como habitación de huéspedes de compromiso. Recibe luz natural por las balconeras de la terraza, las 2 ventanas sobre la cubierta de tejas, la puerta de entrada vidriada y las estanterías de vidrio que atravesarán los tabiques extremos comunicando con los espacios iluminados (27).
- (25) - Aseo huéspedes: Una masa de vidrio traslúcido ilumina la ducha del aseo inferior.

(26) - Pozos que permiten la doble iluminación y ventilación cruzada a las habitaciones de la planta noble.

(27) - Pozos de iluminación y ventilación de habitaciones inferiores de la planta noble, iluminan también el canto de las estanterías de vidrio de la biblioteca.

PLANTA SEMI-SOTANO

(28) - Hall de distribución: Se cubre con bóveda tabicada esférica.

(29) - Pozo de iluminación: Su techo es el rellano de cristal de la entrada. De día se ilumina por el porche de entrada, de noche se ilumina artificialmente. Pretendemos colocar una escultura en su centro.

(30) - Almacén.

(31) - Despensa.

(32) - Alcoba invitados.

(33) - Cámara invitados.

(34) - Aseo invitados y vestuario piscina.

(35) - Taller, bricolage.

(36) - Garaje cubierto con tres bóvedas tabicadas.

(37) - Aparatos gimnasia.

(38) - Instalaciones.

(39) - Cocina piscina.

(40) - Porche inferior. Se cierra con un arco y se cubre con una bóveda muy rebajada. En esta bóveda se abren dos tragaluces en las esquinas que resultarían más oscuras. Puntos de luz en estos pozos iluminarán tanto el porche inferior como el superior a través de las claraboyas.

OSCAR TUSQUETS

De lo viejo y lo nuevo

PAGINA 86

El proyecto se inició con cierta voluntad de villa decimonónica, de gran casa burguesa del Maresme, sobre todo por lo que respecta a su implantación y a sus grandes elementos arquitectónicos. A lo largo del año y medio de proyecto, de aquella voluntad han quedado trazas en la imagen general, hoy mucho más neoclásica, y en algunos elementos arquitectónicos concretos. Sobre éstos, las exigencias contemporáneas del confort han obligado a introducir innovaciones en las que se ha recurrido a la más moderna tecnología. Así hemos intentado utilizar lo mejor de lo viejo y de lo nuevo, buscando en cada pieza la imagen más adecuada a esta síntesis.

LOS MUROS

Los muros exteriores del sótano, por ejemplo, que se unen con los de contención, se imaginaron de mampostería para facilitar su continuidad con los pequeños elementos que ordenarán la jardinería. Aquí era indispensable que la mampostería fuese el único elemento portante. Las grandes alturas de estos muros exigirían unos grosores absolutamente antieconómicos. Pensamos, pues, complementar la mampostería con unos contrafuertes de hormigón armado, de manera que el muro trabajase a flexión vertical entre ellos. Para complementar esa capacidad de flexión proyectábamos unos zunchos horizontales que interrumpieran la mampostería y se manifestaran exteriormente con unas verdugadas de ladrillo. Esta solución fue valorada por las posibles constructoras y sus ofertas fueron elevadísimas. Los constructores presionaban para que optáramos por el muro de sección continua de hormigón careado con las habituales piedras planas. Su oferta por esta solución era de poco más del 50 % respecto al proyectado. Como siempre la oferta del constructor prima lo conocido y penaliza lo que no conoce, ya sea por su novedad o por pertenecer a una tradición olvidada.

Al final la solución pactada fue un muro mixto en el que el hormigón del trasdós se hace ciclópeo en el extradós pero en el que todo es portante y se ejecuta con la misma técnica: colocación de materiales dentro de un encofrado aunque unos se apilen (las piedras), otros se monten (las armaduras de acero) y otros se viertan (el hormigón).

Su coste se aproxima al de la solución más barata. El tamaño de la piedra, su color, la cremosidad del mortero de cal sin cemento, lo granado y cálido del árido, etc., han reproducido lo más fielmente posible los viejos muros de la zona.

LA FACHADA

El cerramiento exterior plantea una exigencia de confort térmico que la construcción contemporánea está resolviendo con muros de fachada de dos hojas radicalmente separadas por el obligado aislamiento térmico. Esta solución ya habitual en muchos países, y que empezamos a estudiar en conjunto en el proyecto para el

museo de Frankfurt, plantea la incógnita de su imagen. ¿Cómo debe comportarse una fachada de dos láminas absolutamente independientes, de las que la exterior sólo es un forro, aunque pesado, del aislamiento? La composición tradicional de huecos y macizos se basa en una fachada portante y en las leyes tectónicas del descenso de cargas.

A esta pregunta los nuevos proyectos responden ensayando una piel con imagen más ligera en la que se ha suprimido casi totalmente la expresión del descenso de cargas. En este sentido pueden citarse como ejemplo los bloques cerámicos de gran altura con rayados verticales que utiliza Sert en las viviendas de Roosevelt Island.

Pero quizá la línea más interesante es la de evidenciar la estructura de esa doble fachada reduciendo el espesor y cambiando el carácter de la hoja exterior, enriqueciendo así la composición.

En nuestro caso existen esas grandes correderas de doble hoja, una de vidrio y otra de reja, que ocupan el espesor de la hoja exterior de albañilería. El aislamiento térmico se cubre en esos planos, ya protegidos por la albañilería, con unos estucados al fuego. Para la composición de la fachada se dispone pues de tres elementos: los macizos de albañilería estucados en frío, los grandes huecos de vidrio de hasta casi dos por dos metros, y, junto a éstos, las zonas donde se alojan las correderas en las que el aislamiento se reviste con un tenso y brillante estuco en caliente.

Los detalles adjuntos muestran un intento anterior de resolver esos planos rehundidos de protección del aislamiento con una hoja de aluminio moldeado y enmarcado en una gran carpintería del mismo material.

En cualquiera de los dos casos la aparición de ese tercer plano ligero, brillante, fue haciendo evolucionar el proyecto, sobre todo en las dos fachadas con componente sur. En efecto, los pocos macizos estucados en frío que quedaban entre los dobles huecos (vidrio + protección ligera) fueron desapareciendo. Su misión de soporte de la cornisa fue sustituida por unos pilares pequeños que ordenaban de nuevo la composición. Al final el estuco en frío se reservó para las dos fachadas con componente norte y en las otras dos sólo aparece en las esquinas como cantonera que enmarca los elementos ligeros.

Este análisis de las consecuencias en la composición de la doble fachada será más complejo en otros edificios como las viviendas económicas en Reus, que estamos estudiando con Oscar y Carlos Díaz, en las que la altura obligará a buscar elementos de soporte de la hoja exterior que no sean demasiado ajenos a la tecnología española contemporánea.

LA CORNISA

Sobre este muro de fachada vuela una amplia cornisa que soporta las últimas tejas de cubierta. La cornisa siempre ha sido un elemento estáticamente comprometido. Para impedir su vuelco cuando era difícil con forjados de madera soportar velos de piedra, la historia de la construcción inventó las soluciones más ingeniosas.

En este proyecto el planteamiento coherente de la continuidad del aislamiento térmico nos retrotrae a esos viejos problemas de estabilidad.

La sustitución de la hoja exterior en casi toda la fachada agrava el problema pues descalza la cornisa, aunque el apoyo se reconstruye con unos finísimos pilares que soportan el zuncho revestido de la cornisa, y, reordenan la composición de la fachada.

El vuelco de ese zuncho apenas apoyado es pues un problema aún más grave que el de los casos tradicionales.

La solución evidente, volar el forjado, supone un grave puente térmico y las consecuentes e inadmisibles condensaciones. Caben todavía tres soluciones:

- 1º Sustituir la cornisa pesada por otra ligera. Solución que en el XIX era habitual recurriendo a piezas de terracota. Su versión contemporánea se ha intentado con aluminio fundido, material de efectos insospechados y textura pétrea. El coste fue excesivo por el espesor de la capa mínima para el moldeo y por el gran desarrollo de la moldura. La solución se retiene para los pilares pequeños verticales.
- 2º Estabilizar la cornisa con piezas de acero inoxidable ancladas en la hoja interior. Solución habitual en la «high tech» internacional pero quizá inadecuada para el pequeño constructor del Maresme catalán.
- 3º Cambiar la solución de cubierta para poder «colgar» de ella la cornisa aprovechando la ductibilidad resistente del hormigón armado.

Estos ejemplos que hemos expuesto muestran algunos esfuerzos por conseguir esa difícil síntesis entre construcción y composición, tradición e innovación, siempre nueva y siempre difícil, que aquí, puntual y, limitadamente, hemos intentado.

IGNACIO PARICIO

Cuando Oscar Tusquets mira...

PAGINA 90

Soumise à cet impératif du temps, l'avant-garde n'est que la caricature du moderne.
«*Considérations sur l'état des Beaux-Arts*» JEAN CLAIR

Cuando Oscar Tusquets mira, sabe captar esta realidad fugitiva de todo lo que le rodea. El pintor es un vidente que restituye sobre la tela la luz mudable que envuelve las cosas, las perfila o las atenúa. ¿Cómo plasmar la emoción que le motiva a realizar su obra creadora, si el ojo no se conmueve?

Habiendo acordado dar a la composición un lugar preeminente, la utilización del espacio será tan importante en el decurso de su trabajo como el lento ceremonial del oficio. Hombre fogoso y temperamental sabe canalizar todas las sorpresas del gesto con una voluntad perfeccionista y al mismo tiempo relajada. Sus obras, sensualmente acariciadas se vuelven nítidas y misteriosamente turbadoras.

¡Qué difícil y arriesgado es el oficio del pintor! Rilke escribe: «Las obras de arte nacen siempre del que se ha enfrentado al peligro».

Contemplando los dibujos, las acuarelas y los óleos de Oscar Tusquets, admirando el rigor y la audacia de sus temas, uno se da cuenta de este valeroso enfrentamiento.

En todo pintor, en todo poeta, hay una fuerza que le lleva a un constante «inaugurar». Ante la blancura de la tela y del papel, Oscar Tusquets sabe que todo comienzo va vinculado a un recuerdo de los que le han precedido en esta apasionante y siempre renovada historia de las Bellas Artes.

XAVIER VALLS,

París, 1 de junio de 1983

XAVIER VALLS

before at some moment during this exciting and always renewed history of Fine Arts. need to «inaugurate». Facing the whiteness of the canvas or the paper, Oscar Tusquets In every painter, there is an inner urge that leads to a constant confrontation.

ing the severity and daring of his topics, one becomes aware of this courageous Contemplating Oscar Tusquets drawings, water and oil-paintings, and admiring always born to those who have faced danger.

How risky and difficult a painter's job is! Rilke wrote, «Works of art are become sharp and mysteriously disturbing. gestures through a perfectionist, yet ample, intent. Sensuously caressed, his works will be as important to him throughout his work as is the slow ceremony of his trade. Having agreed on an outstanding site for the composition, the usage of space out his creative work if the eye is not shaken?

them fade away. How can one translate the emotion that motivates him to carry on canvas the changeable light that, by enclosing things, outlines them or makes reality present in everything that surrounds him. A painter is a seer who puts down When Oscar Tusquets looks at things, he knows how to capture that aloof

«*Considérations sur l'état des Beaux-Arts*» JEAN CLAIR

Soumise à cet impératif du temps, l'avant-garde n'est que la caricature du moderne.

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When Oscar Tusquets looks

IGNACIO PARRICIO

scale, we have attempted here. innovation—always new and always difficult—which, specifically and on a minor The examples we have discussed reveal some of the efforts made to achieve ing advantage of the high-resistance ductibility of reinforced concrete.

3. Changing the roofing in order to be able to hang the cornice from it, taking inadequate for a small constructor in the Catalan Maresme.

struction firms and their bids were very high. They insisted on a concrete cross-section wall sheathed with the customary flat stone. Their bidding was slightly over 50 % higher than the budget. As usual their main concern is preserving what is familiar to them and downplaying what is not, whether it is new or an age-old tradition. (Fig. 1-2).

In the end, an intermediate agreement was reached. The concrete on the outer surface becomes massive inside. Everything is load-bearing and done the same way: molding; even if there are several kinds of elements, some piled-up (the stones), others framed (the steel framework) and others poured (the concrete). (Fig. 3).

The costs are as close to the cheapest as possible. The size of the stone pieces, their color, the creaminess of a cementless mortar, etc., have contributed to reproduce as faithfully as possible the typical old walls of the area.

THE FAÇADE

The thermal comfort requirements on the outer surfacing as are currently being solved by construction standards imply the use of two-course walls, radically separated by the mandatory type of insulation. This solution is customary in many countries. We started studying the subject while working on the Frankfurt Museum project. This solution poses the question of appearance. What behaviour is to be expected from a two-course façade where one of the two totally independent sheets is only a covering —however heavy— for insulation? Traditional composition of hollows and solids is based on the principle of the load-bearing façade and on the tectonic laws of downward thrusts.

Now techniques provide an answer by trying a new lighter sheet with no load-bearing capacity. An example could be the high reaching streaked ceramic blocks used by Sert in his Roosevelt Island development. (Fig. 4-5).

But perhaps the most interesting feature lies in evidencing the double façade by reducing its thickness and changing the nature of the outer layer, thereby achieving a richer composition.

In our case, there are some two-layer sliding elements (one glass; the other, ironwork) taking the place of the outer course of the brickwork. The surfacing on these areas (already protected by the masonry) is by means of fire stuccowork. Three elements are, thus, used in the composition of the façade: the solid low-temperature stuccoed brickwork; the great glass openings (up to 2 x 2 m); and next to these, the areas where the sliding elements go where the insulation is surfaced by a tense and bright fire-stuccowork.

The enclosed details show an attempt at finding an answer for these insulation-protecting underlays by means of an aluminum sheet and aluminum frames. (Fig. 7-8).

In either case, this third, light, shiny plane gradually influenced the design of the project, especially on the south façades. In fact, the few remaining solid stuccoed-surfaced stretches between the hollows (glass and light-weight protection) gradually disappeared. Their load-bearing role of the cornice was substituted by some small pillars that gave the composition order. In the end the cold stucco was reserved for the two north façades. Stucco appears on the other two façades only at the corners as framing for the light-weight elements. (Fig. 8-9).

This analysis of the consequences on composition of a double façade will take an even more complex turn in the low-budget development project we are studying with Oscar and Carlos Diaz in Reus, where the height will force us to find load-bearing elements for the outer sheet that are not too alien to contemporary Spanish architecture.

CORNICE

From this façade wall an ample cornice supporting the last shingles of the roof juts out. Cornices have always posed an aesthetic problem. The history of architecture has devised the most ingenious solutions to sidestep cornices at a time when it was difficult for wood to bear protruding stone elements. (Fig. 10).

In our project, the question of a coherent continuity of the insulation takes us back to the old problem of stability.

Substituting the outer sheet nearly all over the façade makes matters worse as it leaves the cornice naked even if support has been supported by means of very fine pillars bearing the covered sheathed cornice banding. The pillars also rearrange the composition of the façade.

The projection of this band, just barely supported, is thus an ever more serious problem than in the more traditional cases.

The obvious solution —projecting the ironwork— implies a serious thermal gap and the related inadmissible condensations. Three solutions are still possible:

1. Substituting the cornice by a lighter one. This was customarily done in the 19th century by using terra-cotta pieces. The modern day version of this has been attempted by using molten aluminum, which is a material that has unthought-of effects and a stoney texture. The cost was too high due to the required minimum thickness for molding and for the great size it would have to have. But the solution is kept for the vertical columnettes.

2. Stabilizing the cornice by means of stainless steel pieces anchored in the inner layer. This is customary in international high-tech construction but perhaps

11. Bathroom: Servicing the bedroom of the guests coming from the entrance hall.
12. Bedroom hall: Overhead lighting from attic windows.
13. Antechamber.
14. Closet-dresser: Overhead Lighting.
15. Main Bathroom.
16. Main Bedroom: Overhead lighting for the area farthest from the façade.
17. East Porch: Inside a glasshouse to be used as a sewing room/greenhouse. Two skylights on the floor light up the lower porch. The best view of the sea is found here.
18. Bedroom corridor: Overhead lighting through a strip of glass tiles which also illuminates rooms 19, 21 & 22.
19. Bathroom: Overhead lighting on basins.
20. Bedroom.
- 21 & 22. Bedrooms with balcony facing east and overhead lighting on the table.
23. Attic corridor: An ironwork balcony lights up the room and is the main visual element one sees upon entering. Opposite it a glass door leads to the library.
24. Library-Study Room: Can also be used as an emergency guest room. Sunshine through the two terrace balconies, the two windows on the tile roofing, the glass door and the glass cases which will break through the walls thus letting the light of other rooms in²⁷.
25. Guest Bathroom: A volume of translucent glass illuminates the shower in the lower bathroom.
26. Shafts allowing double lighting and ventilation for rooms on the ground floor.
27. Lighting and ventilation shafts for the lower ground floor rooms; also lighting the glass bookcases in the study room.

SEMIBASEMENT

28. Distribution Hall: Covered by a spherical partitioned vault
29. Light Shaft: The ceiling is the glass floor at the entrance. Lighting through this porch floor. A sculpture is intended to be placed in its center.
30. Storage.
31. Pantry.
32. Guest Room.
33. Guest Chamber.
34. Guest Bathroom and Pool Changing Rooms.
35. Workshop. Woodshop.
36. Garage: covered by three partitioned vaults.
37. Gym.
38. Facilities.
39. Pool Kitchen.
40. Lower Porch: Closed by an arch and covered by a very reduced vault. Two skylights are opened on the corners that were to turn out darker. These shafts will illuminate the lower porch as well as the upper one through skylights.

OSCAR TUSQUETS

On the new and the old

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The project was initially conceived as an attempt at a 19th Century villa or great bourgeois Maresme house, especially as regards its implementation and its larger architectural elements. Throughout the year and a half it took, only a few traces of the original idea remain on the general appearance—it is currently much more Neo-Classical—and some specific architectural elements shaped by the requirements of modern-day comfortability. These innovations have used the most advanced technology. We have made use of the best of the Old and the New along the way, trying all the time to find for each part the expression that best suits this synthesis.

THE WALLS

For instance the outer basement walls—linking up with the containing walls—were decided to be masonry to give continuity to the smaller elements that are to put order into the garden. This made it imperative for the masonry to be the only load-bearing element. The great height of the walls requires an entirely uneconomical thickness. We then decided to complement the masonry with reinforced concrete so that the walls' vertical elasticity would rest on it. Also, some horizontal bands were placed, interrupting the brickwork and showing on the outside some brick fillets. There were budgets for this solution from several possible con-

J. N. L. Durand con l'assistenza di altri 300 più fabbriche e dell'architettura di J. G. Legrand, Venezia, 1833, which includes both Durand's illustration plates and a bilingual version of Legrand's text as an extension «a cura di protenoi della I. R. academie» which added Italian material and from exotic cultures, clearly in the spirit proposed by Legrand's text.

22. See J. G. Legrand, *Essai...*, op. cit., p. 7.

23. On Jacques Guillaume Legrand see the letter included at the beginning of the work. Also in Elie Brandt, *Les architectes par leurs oeuvres*, Paris, 3 vols., vol. II, ps. 184-85.

24. «La disposition est la seule chose à laquelle doit s'attacher l'architecte quand même il n'aurait d'autre but que celui de plaire ou que le caractère, l'effet, la variété, en un mot, toutes les beautés que l'on remarque ou que l'on cherche à introduire dans la décoration architectonique résultent naturellement d'une disposition qui embrasse la convenance et l'économie», J. N. L. Durand, *Precis...*, op. cit., p. 23.

A house in the Maresme

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Designing this aristocratic house obeys a commission which is unusual for an architect of my generation-or for that matter one of the more recent ones.

An unusual site beautifully located in Maresme de Dalt, very large and shared by the members of the same family to build several houses with no fences or separations whatsoever in the surrounding gardens.

An unusual scheme; pretty complete with many facilities of a reasonable size each, in accordance more with year-round living than just holiday quarters.

Finally, unusual clients whose choice of designer was intended to be so sensible that they promoted an open competition between two architects: my good friend Pepe Pratsmarsó and myself. For this bidding project we were given a series of guidelines which contained not only a highly detailed end scheme but also quite a clear idea of what they had in mind: a sloping tile roof; not very large openings protected by shutters; tested, durable, low-maintenance materials, etc. In short, an image closer to a traditional Maresme mansion than to a modern-style *machine-a-vivre* house. With this project in mind, it seems evident that the architect has done everything possible to respect this desire, which I must say I found particularly charming at this point and time of my career. (Perhaps the house is turning out somewhat more classical, less rustic than they thought it would at first.

From the start of the bidding project to the end of the executive project (a year) the clients have followed every turn, suggesting a vast array of changes which, though having required from us an intense devotion, have resulted in a richer, rather less sketchy and abstract house.

For example, the proprietors' determination of having a terrace at the same level as the attic has made us come up with a mixed solution of designing a flat-yet-sloping roof, unexpected and with many developing possibilities.

The first outlines show a square central two-storey body surrounded by a one-storey high ring broken at the entrance.

Later on the house loses this radial symmetry. It adapts better to the site, to the sun's impact on views and designing intentions. It goes from a Palladian scheme on to one closer to Luytens' villas in which the articulation of partial geometric shapes has been a liberating and highly suggestive condition to me.

GROUND FLOOR

1. Entrance Porch: the landing in front of the door is tiled in glass to illuminate the basement during the day and the porch at night. The roof opens onto a plaster half-sphere where I intend to paint a clouded sky.

2. Entrance Hall: The non-symmetric position of the doors to the office and bedrooms is worked out by means of mirror panels forming an angle with them.

3. Antechamber: As the other areas away from the façade (5, 7, 12, 14 & 16) overhead sunshine and ventilation are provided through an opening on the framework which creates a double-height void with windows at the level of the attic. The floor is a bit higher than the living room's and this difference is emphasized by means of a handrail broken into two 3-step stairs.

4. Living Room: As the floor level is lowered the walls are higher than in the remainder of the house. During the day sunlight comes in through two corner balconies, two windows overlooking the porches, and the central antechamber overhead light. All these windows and balconies are provided with shutters made of lacqued aluminium. These shutters are made of one sheet sliding over the façade plane. The blinds close over the crystals the same way.

5. Dining Room: On the side most distant from the façade it gets overhead lighting.

6. South Porch: An outdoor lounging and eating area facing the cleared flat area of the garden.

7. Office: Overhead ventilation and lighting through the attic windows.

8. Kitchen: Door to the porch and windows over the sink and burners.

9. Laundry area.

10. Bedroom.

and while searching for its own general laws— was abandoning its stance of history to go on to an abstract and general formulation.

Is it necessary to say that these problems go as far as the origin itself of the architecture of the Modern Movement? Superville's influence on aesthetic theories as diverse as may be the *Einfühlung*, the *Gestaltpsychologie* or the abstract theory of the Beaux-Arts can be seen without much difficulty. The theory of Modern art is not that different from this abstract process of reducing meaning to a systematic scheme of lines and color. Somehow during the transition from the Enlightenment to Romanticism some of the basic alternatives of Modernity were decided. Eclecticism was a necessary stage in this process.

IGNASI DE SOLA-MORALES

1. The most typical interpretation of J. N. C. Durand as a rationalist appears in Louis Hautecœur's *Historie de l'Architecture en France*, Volume V: *Revolution et Empire, 1792-1815*, Paris 1953. Very similar terms can be found in the work of Leonardo Benevolo, *Storia dell'architettura moderna*, Bari, 1960, volume I and in the essay by A. Hernández J. L. N. Durand's *Architecture Theory. A Study in the History of Rational Building Design*, in *Perspecta*, No. 12, 1969.

2. This schematic approach to «engineers versus architects» or rationalists versus eclectics tends to be surmounted only in the most recent literature on the subject in favor of a rather more synthetic view of the matter. Among the latest contributions we would like to point out the catalogue of an exhibition at the M.O.M.A. of New York: *The Architecture of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts*, Cambridge Mass, 1977; Issue No. 8 of *Oppositions* on the same subject; and Donald Drew Egbert's *The Beaux-Arts Tradition in French Architecture*, Princeton, 1980.

3. See *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Henry Russell-Hitchcock, Harmondsworth, 1958, Chapter 5, The Doctrine of J. L. N. Durand and its Application in Northern Europe.

4. Although there is no work on the history of modern architecture from the point of view and the platitudes of the so-called *Post-Modernism*, a good example of the will to link Louis Kahn with Beaux-Arts is manifest in V. Scully's *Louis Kahn*, New York, 1960 or in C. Jencks' recent defense and revival of Beaux-Arts entitled *Post-Modern Classicism*, London, 1981.

5. On the opposition between Classicism and Romanticism in terms of a shift from an imitational theory into one of creation, see Philippe Junod's *Transparence et opacité. Essai sur les fondements théoriques de l'art moderne*, Lausanne, 1976.

6. See *Teoria e storia dell'architettura*, M. Tafuri, Bari, 1968.

7. For further discussion on the origins of the term eclecticism as well as its role in the crisis of the Classical model of culture, see Rudolf Wittkower, *Imitation, Eclecticism and Genius*, in *Aspects of the Eighteenth Century*, Oxford, 1965; and also in Denis Mahon's *The construction of a legend: The origins of the classic and eclectic misinterpretation of the Carracci in Studies in Seicento art and theory*, The Warburg Institute, London, 1947.

8. J. C. Quatremère de Quincy, *De l'architecture égyptienne considérée dans son origine et rapport à l'architecture grecque*, Paris, 1803.

9. J. C. Quatremère de Quincy, *Encyclopédie Méthodique. Architecture*, 3 volumes, Paris, 1788-1825.

10. J. C. Quatremère de Quincy, *Encyclopédie Méthodique*, op. cit.

11. See Colin Rowe, *Character and Composition or Some Viscidities of the Architectural Vocabulary of the Nineteenth Century*, in *Oppositions*, No. 2, 1974 and later in *The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa and Other Essays*, Cambridge, Mass., 1976.

12. For an historical analysis of the physiognomic theories see Jurgen Baltrusaitis, *Aberations: quatre essais sur la légende des formes*, Paris, 1957. Also, in E. H. Gimbrich in the text, *On Physiognomic Perception*, in *Meditations on a Hobby horse*, London, 196.

13. «... Style, par conséquent, à l'égard des arts du dessin, de leurs ouvrages, des facultés diverses et diversement modifiées de chaque artiste, exprime de même une manière d'être caractéristique, qui les fait reconnaître et distinguer avec plus ou moins d'évidence, et de la façon dont la nature imprime à chaque nation, à chaque individu, une physionomie particulière.» J. C. Quatremère de Quincy, *Encyclopédie méthodique*, op. cit., under *Style*, volume III, p. 44.

14. «... Invention est encore le synonyme de création dans la langue des arts, et les deux mots se rapprochent aussi nécessairement par une notion commune qui est à les définir. Aussi l'on est convaincu que le mot «création» n'est qu'une métaphore, que l'homme ne crée rien dans le sens absolu du terme et qu'il n'est autre chose que trouver de combinaisons nouvelles d'éléments préexistants. Or, trouver ces combinaisons, c'est inventer.» *Encyclopédie Méthodique*, op. cit., under *Invention*, volume II, p. 569.

15. For a study on the role Quatremère played in the whole of the French institutions of his time, see Rene Scheider, *Quatremère de Quincy et son intervention dans les arts*, Paris 1910.

16. «Une chose qui importe extrêmement aux architectes et aux ingénieurs civils, c'est d'étudier et de connaître tout ce qu'on a fait de plus intéressant en architecture, dans tous les pays et dans tous les siècles.» From J. N. L. Durand's text on the contents of his *Recueil et Parallèle*, included as publicity in *Précis des leçons d'architecture données à l'Ecole Polytechnique*, Paris, 1809, p. 30.

17. See J. N. L. Durand, *Précis...*, especially volume I.

18. «L'architecture n'est pas l'art de faire un certain nombre de projets; c'est l'art de faire tous les projets d'édifices possibles, soit publics soit particuliers et encore de les faire dans toutes les circonstances qui peuvent les modifier.» J. N. L. Durand, *Partie graphique de cours d'architecture faits à l'Ecole Royale Polytechnique*, Paris, 1821, p. 24.

19. In *Précis des leçons* and later in *Partie graphique*, op. cit., there is not only constant reference to the images of *Recueil et parallèle* but there is even a publicity booklet included which indicates its contents and a summary of its introduction.

20. J. G. Legrand, *Essai sur l'histoire générale de l'architecture pour servir de texte explicatif au Recueil et Parallèle d'édifices de tout genre, anciens et modernes remarquables pour leur beauté, leur grandeur et leur singularité et dessinées à la même échelle par J. N. L. Durand*, Paris, 1809. Legrand had already published a *Parallèle de l'architecture ancienne et moderne*, Paris, 1806, and a very interesting work called *Collection des chefs-d'œuvre de l'architecture des différents peuples en modèles et analysés par J. G. Legrand*, Paris, 1806, which is proposed also as a summary of the general history of architecture.

21. Legrand's letter to Durand suggesting that they cooperate on this and Durand's letter of acceptance appear published in the 1806 edition of *Essai*.

Later, in 1833, they publish a bilingual extended version of *Recueil* under the name of *Racolta e parallelo delle fabbriche classiche di tutti i tempi, d'ogni popolo e di ciascun stile di*

quality. He makes a system of signs and syntactical rules capable of expressing, once and for all, the relationship between the individual and his perception of contents.

Naturally, after Superville's discourse comes Kant's question of the relationship between the subject and the outer world, including the whole of reality and the way this reality becomes comprehensible for the subject. To the imitational theory which regards reality as pre-existing the individual himself, Kant's implicitly Romantic thinking opposes it by stating that there is a reality that can only be based on conditions prior to the existence of the individual; and on the meaningful possibilities which those *a priori* categories may furnish a finished product built through sensibility.

It is here where the physiognomic theory takes on its new role — though not from the point of view of a «Neoplatonic» cosmic and objectival tradition, but through the Modern positive and physiological research work of Lavatier and Gall.²⁹ Being able to state that the human being displays a certain set of significant categories of forms and color as a consequence of its physiological structure and of its conditions as a living being in a physical world implies the availability of the basic elements in Humbert de Superville's formal grammar. Published belatedly and in a disorderly manner under the title of *Essai sur les signes inconditionnels de l'art*, his work is laid out as a general theory of the meaning of forms from the point of view of the relationship with the individual's physiological and psychological structure. It must be noted that *Essai* deals with signs, i. e., with an abstract process that reduces meaning to a set of conveying structures which relentlessly operate in the field of artistic production. It must also be noted that *Essai* deals with unconditioned signs, i. e., with those permanent traits that can be used to describe human perception as unchangeable phenomena since they derive not from historical conditions but from the potential possibilities which the very structure of the human body and soul enable us to deduce as permanent.

Superville develops his work through analyzing in terms of the fundamental lines and colours the absolute meaning these abstract facts have, regardless of considerations of time and place.

As regards architecture, the scope of Superville's text entirely achieves what in Durand's and Legerand's works appeared to be a necessary displacement of the core of their theoretic discourse. The most diverse architectural forms and constructs throughout history can be read as belonging to a common theoretical frame. The question of a work's particular character and physiognomic meaning is not something that can be understood in the light of only one doctrinarian corpus. On the contrary, the unconditioned signs in art allow room for referring to all the diversity of historical style and of combinations an artist may create to one explanatory system by using the abstract categories provided by the physiognomic symbolism of art's unconditioned signs. Thus, the peculiar quality of the architecture developed in China, India, Greece, the Middle Ages, the Arab world, and Persia may all be related together as psychological categories of only one dominant formal structure. Ideas such as horizontality, verticality, inclination, whiteness, blackness, redness, blueness or yellowness do not haphazardly emerge throughout the history of architecture. The theory of the meaning of lines and colors is the summary of the meaning of the several different materials with which history has furnished the designer. A general grammar of forms and colors explains the meaning of the diversity of qualities throughout history and also explains the relationships and simultaneities present among the various arts in each period. One can simultaneously develop a theory of styles — understood in the light of both the individual distinctive quality and the psychological unity.

5. The method proposed by Durand in *Recueil* for the process of composition started out by choosing openly any one architecture to then become a machine that generates unlimited architectural devices. The indiscriminate selection of historical material was the first step towards establishing an overall method based no longer on imitation but on productive inventiveness.

However, the question of meaning was yet to be solved. Durand thought meaning was either mere convention deriving from custom, or the automatic results of solving the struggle between a project's requirements and the architectural answer that it provided. In a cause-effect relationship convenience was the cause of a work's character. And yet this left out the answer to the question of the diversity of character, of the diverse meanings which architecture could point at throughout its history.

General historians of Architecture, such as Jacques Guillaume Legerand, discovered a separate character for each of the many sorts of architecture found throughout time and throughout the world. But the origin of these several characters could not be mechanically found in the dynamics of convenience without formal mediating elements. The problem between «functionalist» and «significant» or «talking» architecture always lies at the same place i. e., in the mediating elements between the conditions that shape the work and the language that expresses it. There had to come a leap forward from Durand's generative grammar to Humbert de Superville's general linguistics. Physiognomy had to be conformed into the system of the unconditioned art symbols. These symbols, thus, introduced the possibility of an historical reading of the material provided by the history of architecture.

30 Paradoxically, in doing this, Eclectic architecture —while going deeper into itself

idea of physiognomic character just as it is stated by Quatremère de Quincy and devotes his efforts to present the vast array of historical architectures as a repertory of physiognomies. As Durand himself says while discussing planning and the way to solve the problem of the many typological possibilities, the designer may not only choose from the several different formal systems according to which is most suitable to his needs, but also from a repertory of styles to which he may apply his own vocabulary. These historical styles imply a different sort of characterization the designer may use.

An historical culture not only reveals formal repertories and, of course, as the case may be, building technique repertories, but, above all, a vast range of elements exemplified by the corresponding architectural period.

The problem of design leads to history, but not understood as mere self-consciousness but, rather, as a source of materials to be used by the great market of the new generation of buildings. Rationalization is not incompatible with this use of history, nor is the apparent «functionalism» of the planning process unrelated to the problem of the meaning which the architectural forms may have beyond their mere ability to solve the requirements of *convenance* and *economie*.

Durand clearly states that the character of a building is not a question of decoration, i. e., of superficially using certain particular forms on the façade. On the contrary, the character of a building is closely linked to its *disposition*, i. e., to that meaningful condition of the formal structure whose contents comply with the functional requirements but which conveys the aesthetic values that architecture tries to achieve.

Through this critique on decoration —i. e., the criticism on the costly and unnecessary veneering of a building using a particular series of elements taken from past architectures—, Durand is shattering that superficial sort of historicism so much in vogue in the 18th-Century revivalist architecture, but he is still accepting the fact that the source of the particular quality which gives architecture its peculiar aesthetic and pleasure-giving content derives from the formal organization of the volumes and walls that make up the building.²⁴

Therefore, what should be pointed out is the abstract conception of the idea of quality or aesthetic meaning — which is only remotely related to the forms of architecture of the past. When an historian and critic, such as Legrand, devoted himself to analyzing the architecture of the past, he discovered a diversity of qualities and physiognomies in them linked to their particular construction and shape. Instead, what Durand made claims to was the possibility of using these diverse languages meaningfully, not through a superficial or literal imitation of the ornamental forms developed by those architectures of the past, but through considering them as basic formal structures which —belonging to those past architectures as they did— conveyed permanently and unchangeably meaningful contents not restricted by anecdotal connotations implied in making any reference to past architectures.

4. The significance of the work of David Gottin Humbert de Superville was to be decisive in the early 19th century for the development of a general theory of artistic form, as this work summarizes in one abstract formalization the whole of the many historical forms.

Humbert de Superville's work was to mature in Rome and Paris at the turn of the 18th century. It shared the general concern of this age of looking for plausible explanations to respond to the evident fact of a plurality of artistic styles.²⁵ Published only later when he had moved to the Netherlands, but nevertheless related to the remainder of European culture, Superville's theory represents a step further in the direction of managing to produce ideas capable of coping with the multiplicity of artistic forms which until then could not be explained in the light of a mere theory of imitation of the human body or of the architecture of the primeval hut and were insufficiently explained by Durand's arid functionalism or by the theory of character developed by historiographers such as Legrand.²⁶

The classical physiognomic theory lies at the root of this discussion. Undoubtedly, the hypothesis of the relationship between man and the universe is based on physiognomic theories like Della Porta's or —already on the Cartesian level— Lebrun's.²⁷ Carrying on from this tradition and considering them in their abstract value, Superville actually develops a grammar of significant forms: What to Classical physiognomy was actually a parallel between the human face and that of animals —taken as an analogy between the spiritual and physical quality of both— in Humbert de Superville became a basic grammar of the psychological meaning of elementary geometric forms.

At this point, physiognomic tradition converges with the archaic-loving tradition which the Neo-Classical culture had developed for all fields of formal culture. In Superville the taste for elementary structures, for a basic sort of geometry in painting, sculpture and architecture becomes a quest for the basic architecture underlying the work of Pre-Raphaelite painters and sculptors. His drawings of the Roman period are all an attempt to reduce the works of art to their basic geometric patterns.²⁸ A certain archaic quality pervades his own pictorial work and draughtsmanship. His works in these two arts at the same time clearly reveal his liking for and interest in the fundamental geometric patterns of visual forms.

But from this liking of a certain kind of search for the essential, Humbert de Superville goes on to develop a general theory of expression of grammatical

to well-defined types or forms— as proved by diversity of works documented by archaeology. There is no general theory that permits the making of models, let alone supports a system as intrinsic to the several architectural systems, as was still the case with Quatremère's.¹⁷

On the contrary, the system must be proposed by the architect somewhere along the process of designing the building. Therefore, the production process is —somehow— an open and creative process. The architect's method is general and valid for any case that may arise,¹⁸ and his ability to adapt will be limited only by the technical conditions established at the start, as well as by the so-called economic conditions which are actually the abstract principles of form. For Durand the two great principles of design are *convenance* and *economie*. In this respect, it must be said that this author really understands the former as the logic of the construction and the planning, and that the latter means for Durand the operational accommodation of symmetry, regularity, and simplicity. He takes these three concepts from the Classical tradition of design and reinterprets them not as a Platonic requirement for orderliness between the microcosmos of the building and the macrocosmos, but as laws of efficiency and functionality.

What, then, does Durand's system have to do with the alternative of eclecticism? To our understanding, the relationship between Durand's operationism and the availability of eclecticism is entirely direct and immediate. Somehow *Recueil et Parallèle* is a significantly eclectic work. Here it is a matter of taking —as convenient— any historical material and understanding that this possibility not only does not go against any aesthetic principle, but, rather, is of great help to this new historical project implied in the construction of an architecture fit for the Industrial Bourgeoisie's idea of a city.

Indeed, decontextualizing historiographic material and using it uniformly and unbiasedly in a manual which blends together indistinctly the products of several different periods and cultures implies the availability of history that is possible only after questioning the Classical order and establishing a historical positivism. In fact, *Recueil et Parallèle*, as a catalog of historical architecture, and *Précis des Leçons*, as a methodological work and treatise on composition, are presented as complementary works: there are no implications whatsoever as to whether the former precedes the latter or vice versa.¹⁹ The logical order in the treatise and the typological clarification in *Recueil* are evidence of the fact that history has been entirely accepted, not only as a repertory of reusable solutions, but also as a stream of information that can be simultaneously the unified principles of form and of meaning.

This is indeed the other side of Durand's apparently abstract rationalism. He poses the possibility of a new approach to the history of architecture without having to refer to any particular primeval model or any particular sort of explanations other than architecture's own formal order and significant contents, i.e., architecture's own character.

In this respect, it is rather unusual that so far the historiography on Durand has made no mention of a work that was written in a way totally implied in it. We are talking about Jacques Guilleme Legrand's *Essai sur l'histoire générale de l'architecture*, a historiographic study of architecture published by Legrand as a preview to his monumental history of architecture, which he had been working on for so long.²⁰ *Essai* is not an independent work. On the contrary, he poses it as a history of architecture to be used for illustration along with Durand's *Recueil*. This is a peculiar case of symbiosis in which Durand's great illustrations and compilation was to be used at the same time as further illustration of the lessons on composition contained in *Précis* and as a summary of the history of architecture which Legrand was writing and never published.²¹

But Legrand's stance regarding history is clear. To him it is a matter of being familiar with the past in order to be able to make use of it in the present. Perhaps in a more conclusive way than Durand himself, Legrand first speaks of architecture as a phenomenon of creation: «l'architecture est un art createur».²² However, this statement does not keep him from immediately going on to explain that good contemporary architecture can be achieved only through a thorough knowledge of the works of the past and a good adaptation of them to present needs. The nature of Legrand's stance is of the purest eclecticism and his eclecticism is based on the history of architecture. History is not merely a cultural exercise. It is a tool available to the architect who must confront new planning requirements. The information provided by historians is telling the architect that it is available to him to be used and included in his projects without major difficulty. Even the idea of combining different sorts of materials is also shown as an acceptable possibility for Legrand, as it was for Durand, who did not conceal the fact that he had taken elements of diverse origin —Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Piranesian or Modern— in order to furnish himself with a large repertory to use for his combining buildings.

Legrand's work as an historian would not be offering us anything different from a confirmation of Durand's implicit eclecticism if it did not provide important clarification on a matter of utmost importance.²³

Since history is not only history of forms but also of meanings, any repertory an historian may show us is not only a series of formal combinations but also one of different physiognomical possibilities. Once again, the concept of physiognomy appears in the architectural theoretical discourse of the French eclecticians as a corollary to the character of historical architectures. In fact, Legrand takes the

open understanding of the metaphors implied by imitation and, therefore, to referring these possible metaphors to the psychological notions of characters understood as physiognomies. We will later see how decisive this shift to the psychological and subjective is for the modern understanding of meaning and, therefore, for the 19th Century understanding of the meaning of styles as Quatremère himself states in his *Encyclopédie*, referring it precisely to the notion of physiognomy as the basis no longer of a theory of imitation but of a theory of styles.¹³

Finally, it is important to note a third order of ideas apparently Classicist and stationary in Quatremère's thinking but which, paradoxically, (since this thinker is not remote from the cultural changes of his time) already reveal the theoretical shifts that were to take place from the early 19th Century on.

If we examine the word *invention*, together with *uniformité*, *diversité*, *unité*, *variété*, it becomes clear that Quatremère's attitude is reluctant to change. *Invention* is a new combination of pre-existing elements.¹⁴ This definition is clearly restrictive and stresses the semantic immutability of contents or elements. It also emphasizes a certain syntactic freedom to create on the basis of the rules that put order into any architectural system. «*Loin que les règles nuisent l'invention, l'invention n'existe point hors des règles.*» The same distrust of novelty is evidenced by his frequent use of the word *bizarre* to describe an uncontrolled sort of inventing under no rules and lacking its own logic.

But here, once again, behind Quatremère's apparent conservatism, the idea of invention as combination, as liberty to exercise new arrangements in accordance with a set of syntactic rules and given elements, is announcing a notion later to be prevalent in the 19th Century, and specifically typical of eclecticism. The game of combinations is fully accepted and it will only be necessary to establish for each style a set of rules i.e., the set of internal rules proper to each of the historical units that past experience reveals to us. This way, the plural history Quatremère writes and the concept of imitation as physiognomic character become available and open up to a new use as it had never before been thought possible.

In short, it is to the actual knowledge of the history of architecture and the new non-excluding theoretization (despite his references and personal commitments to the more conservative of the French institutions) that Quatremère's effective and unquestionable theory contributes.¹⁵ Beyond his role of a zealous custodian of the Classicist orthodoxy of the *Académie*, it seems that his *oeuvre* contained the embryo of the basic concepts which his contemporaries would have but to take and activate once they shedded their concern over authoritative argumentation in favor of Greek architecture. Greek architecture and its rules was to remain either as one other alternative of style that historical culture may need or, in any case, produce more generic and abstract concepts—such as order, symmetry or character—was no longer to be committed to one particular figurative choice but was to be transformed into the general aesthetic tools of the pluralism brought about by the conceptualization of the historical understanding of the many architects.

3. During the period that goes from Quatremère de Quincy to Jean Nepomucène Louis Durand the process of building an open model for architectural production is accomplished. Producing architecture is no longer a question of just copying from the models of the past, but, fundamentally, one of producing from a logical analysis of the technical possibilities of construction and of a scheme which the architect's building is to house. A general mood of direct and mechanical adjustment between the technical and functional needs and formal organization seems to be the banner under which Durand polemically sets forth his method for dealing with any sort of building. But we will see which elements he will include in his new pedagogic method. First, *Recueil et Parallèle*, his first book, is proposed for anyone with a design project in view as a résumé of the desirable historical information for the designer who, otherwise, would have to look for this material in hundreds of scholarly books.¹⁶

But *Recueil* is an unprejudiced work with respect to the material it includes not only because on the edge of its first illustration plate there are buildings from all eras and typical of all styles, but also because the classification of the works by topics found throughout *Recueil* allows room for intermingling buildings of different sources with no sort of conceptual difficulty. Quatremère's preferences—vaguely fundamented on nature—regarding Greek architecture as superior to any other sort have been entirely laid aside.

Durand's reasoning starts off from a total and absolute indifference to past history and justifies choosing buildings on the basis of the criteria of importance and magnificence, disregarding the style or period they belong to. He draws over again all the buildings in the same scale and with the same technique, a fact which further supports the hypothesis of the apparent indifference to history that the author displays while studying the works of the past. This indifference is revealed by the fact that he makes use of them in terms of the architectural schemes and themes characteristic of the contemporary city.

On the other hand, in *Précis des Leçons*, his next theoretical book, Durand clearly showed his lack of conviction in the theories of imitation and the supremacy of Classical Architecture over all others. On the contrary, on the basis of the factual data provided by archaeology, he violently attacked any remaining authority principle and argued that the Classical orders never did adjust to canon—as shown by the diversity of size the actual buildings have—nor did they adjust

cept of order is not explicit. And so forth. The only idea which is persistently found in Egyptian architecture, and which gives it its peculiar character, is solidity, heaviness, the massiveness of its buildings. Seemingly, Quatremère's *Dissertation* has a clear intent: it seems to be an orthodox defense of the supremacy and perfection of Greek architecture over Egyptian architecture, for which his age had a clear liking. Indeed, this may be so and perhaps this is the idea that has prevailed regarding Quatremère as an untiring upholder of Classicism at a time when there was a vast array of tastes stemming off from the crisis which Classicism was then undergoing. This text (as well as Quatremère's next, which he began publishing soon after 1788 as part of the *Encyclopédie Méthodique*) provides an opportunity to understand that these problems had reached a point of no return and that, therefore, Quatremère's reaction is secondary to his actual contribution to the ideological changes taking place at the time.⁹

In fact, under the heading *Architecture* in the *Encyclopédie Méthodique* the inclusion of a many-fold theory of architecture and an outline of an historical theory of architecture is significant. For one, Quatremère poses the theory that the ideal origin of architecture should not be set only in the primeval hut (as until then had been the case with the literature on the subject) but suggests three different origins: the cave, the hut and the tent, each corresponding to one of the three natural states of primitive man, the hunter, the agriculturalist and the herdsman. Admitting this diversity implies breaking away from the theory of one sole model and therefore accepting the possibility of developing parallel and independent architectural processes, each of which would be originated in one of the three initial shelters which, in themselves, can no longer be combined into one but imply a diversity deriving from the different material means of the peoples of the world.

In his later texts, this argumentation was developed through the several different interpretations for each of the several diverse architectures. Thus, Egyptian architecture was thought of as stemming from the primitive cave, as is the Etruscan. Chinese or Indian architecture instead originated in the nomad tent, whereas only the Greek derived from the original agriculturalist's hut. It was to be of no use for Quatremère to point out that despite this diversity of origins there is, «une espèce de prédilection de la nature» for the hut.

Regardless of the fact that these theories in favor of the prevalence of the Greek model continue in Quatremère's work, the seed of an ideological change has been sown. The diversity of origins is the factor that will inchoate a theory of the history of architecture according to independent cycles, each deriving exclusively from its original mode and developing as closed units and displaying their own inner dynamics. Quatremère undertakes the task of writing a «plural» history—global in a sense, not just Classical, like Winkelman's. From the start, he admits that architecture has developed differently in each culture, even if he tends to include all these developments under the same aesthetic—not historical, but abstract—concept.

Indeed, *mimesis* (central to Quatremère's theory) is cast in significantly new terms. Imitation was interpreted literally in Classical culture. The standards of good art ruled that one had to have as one's point of reference the «second nature» of the ideal models of Antiquity. However, in his *Encyclopédie* under *Imitation* (and in later texts) the proposed notion of *mimesis* underwent substantial changes.¹⁰

In the first place, Quatremère's notion of imitation has to be understood in a metaphorical—not literal—sense. Not only must we discard the idea that *mimesis* is a copy, but also that it is merely an imitation in a certain sense. In architecture there is an analogy between the original model (to which architecture refers) and the specific work the architect produces. Whereas painters and artists have natural models to refer to (whether they abate of the empirical nature or ideal nature deduced from the former as a canon), in the case of architecture, instead, imitation can only be understood in an ampler, more metaphorical sense: what the architect imitates is the *character* of the ideal model.

The importance that the term *character* gains in architectural theory as of this moment cannot be overlooked.¹¹ Though 18th Century essayists have already used the word, it is noteworthy that only now the notions of character and the plurality and diversity of characters justify the interpretation of the diversity of architectures.

By relating *mimesis* to the imitation of characters, Quatremère opens a new path to pluralism and generates a no-return shift from formal models (to which architectural imitation must refer) towards psychological subjective contents linked no longer to the reference models found in producing architecture, but to the contents perceived by the spectator while experiencing architecture. Grace, harmony, heaviness, luxury, pride, solidity, seriousness, austerity, nobility, elegance, etc., are the names for the different terms towards which the theory of *mimesis* has fatally veered. The rise of physiognomic theories is, in fact, the point where this argumentation peaks. Indeed, in the development of this idea as found in the first volume of his *Encyclopédie Méthodique*, for Quatremère character is directly related to the old Classical idea of physiognomy.¹² Evidently, throughout the whole Classical theory of the architectural order, physiognomy played a leading role in explaining the several meanings or characters of each order. Clearly, their character was anthropomorphically explained in physiognomical terms. What takes place in Quatremère, however, is that his general theory of *mimesis* leads to an

ed by the artistic culture of our century is it feasible to get to the core of things as this discussion hopes to do. This can be seen when one reads the texts and theoretical approaches current in France almost two hundred years ago. One notices in them that the process of abstraction of the method of work is only one of the parts of an entire overall epistemologic change. This change implies the degree of architecture's awareness of its own history. It also covers, on the one hand, the relationship between the Classical notion of art as *mimesis*, or imitation, as a copy of natural and conventional reality, and, on the other, the Modern notion (Romantic at first) of art as a process of creation, of radical invention of new forms and new contents.⁵

Indeed, the development of travel, the culture of antiquarians and archaeologists offered throughout the 18th century new material for the onlooker knowledgeable of past architecture, which brought about a crisis to the one-model scheme that Renaissance architects had posed as a historical hypothesis. A knowledge of history brings pluralism into the scene which together with a factual knowledge of the Greco-Roman tradition that questions the unity of this Ancient culture at the same time, brings about a familiarity with other cultures: Egyptian, Chinese, Indian, Medieval, Arabic, Pre-Columbian, etc. They each provide an array of colossal architectural works which are sometimes capable of introducing new aesthetic experiences which early Industrial-Age Western man does not wish to do without and which, in any case, he does not accept, not being able to understand and explain them through a certain logic. Experiencing architectural pluralism—an offshoot of cultural pluralism—is somehow the origin of historical reflection and of the theory of art as a historical discipline.

Architecture becomes aware of its own evolution as a historical fact linked to the plurality of cultures and to the idea of change. An initial taxonomic sort of positive knowledge now tends to become a historic awareness of the development of architecture.

On the other hand, experiencing pluralism brings along a crisis to the idea of *mimesis*, or imitation, as the central concept of Classical aesthetics, to open up to rather more dynamic notions which take on temporality and change as the cornerstones of their conception of architectural reality.

Eclecticism is not the first form of architecture to deal with the architectures of the past, but—perhaps—the last. As noted by Tafuri, Brunelleschi signals the beginning of a new era conceiving architectural forms which must refer to established and well-known codes such as those of Ancient architecture.⁶ But the reason that we cannot call Renaissance architects either historicist or eclectic is that they never had more than one sole ideal to imitate, viz., Ancient Greece and Rome, or Vitruvius. This permanent reference to models that were the core of the Classical aesthetic collapses only after it is possible to understand that there were other areas of architectural experience; and, also, to understand that there is no longer an authority—moral or aesthetic—by which a hierarchy of models can be established.⁷

From here on two things are now possible: on the one hand, a timely establishment of pluralism and the acceptance of the validity of any frame of reference, of any imitation; but on the other, the need for a rather more general foundation based not only on using an established code to provide order and certainty to the references, but also on a more dynamic and changing conception of reality to justify the forms architecture may take, no longer through imitating the past but through adapting things to the present. Rationalism and Eclecticism are now two aspects of the same process of Modern consciousness—rational and historical—which must base aesthetic communication not on a formal theory of man and the cosmos, but on a psychological theory of the individual and a rational theory of the production of objects.

2. In 1785 Quatremère de Quincy discussed before the Academy his *Dissertation sur l'architecture égyptienne considérée dans son origine et par rapport à l'architecture grecque*, which was not to be published as a book until many years later in 1803⁸. The text is enormously significant as it is not a scholar's or an archaeologist's work but one on the theory of architecture. It can be said that in this work Quatremère attempts to explain—by laying down a general theory—the meaning of a new reality which was to a certain extent foreign to Classical culture but, nevertheless, enormously relevant at the time and which was made possible through the achievements archaeology had been making in the study of Egyptian architecture, i.e., through the revival of Egyptian architecture that—to a large extent thanks to Piranesi's etchings—had been spreading all over Europe since the middle of the 18th Century.

The theoretical argument of *Dissertation* is symptomatic inasmuch as it attempts to fundament both the aesthetic principles that ruled over Egyptian architecture and the comparison with the ideal model of Greek architecture which continues to be the first and indisputed point of reference.

The conclusions in *Dissertation* are significant. For one, Quatremère's evaluation is very negative in comparison with the qualities of Greek architecture. The Aristotelian principle of *mimesis* is fulfilled rather poorly since Egyptian architecture renders only a coarse imitation not of the primeval hut but of the primitive cave. There is no established system of proportions. There is no clear interplay between variety and unity in Egyptian works; they are monotonous. The con-

and gradually shed their initial importance as the light-giving ceramic lattice-window was shaped. The outer wall/lattice unit tied by buttresses and through the passageway to the windows with the great 2 m socle, already formed a thick and elaborate wall which provides perspective and hues of light to the façade.

In spite of everything, the standards do not allow calculating this type of wall because they require some final fixations, some limits in the length of the wall. Its semicircular shape permitted two options: either taking the two ends of this half-circle (slighting the obvious advantages of the curve) or inscribing a trapezium into the half-circle and taking each side of the trapezium as a wall. We chose the first one to be on the safe side, but once again the lack of flexibility is evidenced.

We logically raised the possibility of placing a horizontal concrete claw to help harden the unit but, apart from the weakness derived from its length, it did not seem possible to place a concrete strip on the section of the wall. If this material cuts the whole section of the wall reaching the façade, a series of image and condensation problems will be encountered. If it only took up part of the section, the problem was now one of transmitting loads, since the several different plastic and rheological features of concrete and brick make it difficult for both to combine.

The biggest problem (where the solution encountered is perhaps not entirely satisfactory) is connecting these two so different volumes.

Indeed, using the same material and desiring a simple composition for both volumes led to the need for a sense of continuity from one to the other. One reason is that the vertical loads were different; one area alone bears almost all of the wall's, the other the framework's and the overloads. Another reason lies in the concentration of horizontal strains which will be transmitted from all over the cylinder to the anchoring in the prism. Perhaps even the difference of thermal behaviour between the rigid elements and the more flexible ones. All of this suggests a rather feeble intersection between both volumes which are minimized by the heavy roof claw and the rigid inner concrete columns, but which could have been more clearly worked out by posing a different type of intersection, perhaps through toning down their continuity of material and textures.

The building could have been analyzed from other points of view but this little discussion on its structural type seemed to illustrate well the intimate relationships between composition and construction found in the building. This discussion is also more universal as it includes the efforts made to reconsider the wall structures and especially the brickwork as an aim of the current moment of our architecture, which links up with tradition and obviates the now conventional separation between porticoed structures and closings, a must from the Modern Movement on but whose consequences are more than arguable.

IGNACIO PARICIO

The origins of modern eclecticism: The theories of architecture in early 19th Century France

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1. The customary interpretation of the meaning of J.N.L. Durand's work in the history of architecture tends to attribute to him the role of an early rationalist theoretician confronting the avalanche of eclectic architecture under way in Europe since the late 18th century.¹ The method of design that Durand was to teach at the *Ecole Polytechnique* to French engineers would be precisely the opposite to the teachings of the *Ecole des Beaux-Arts*. In general, the origins of the so-called rationalist and eclectic attitudes are to be found in France in these two institutions. Later, as a consequence of the influence on teaching of French architecture during the 19th century, they spread all over Europe.²

Henry Russell Hitchcock has already noted how this sort of oversimplification was not only Manichaean but deceitful when he disclosed the influence that Durand's work had on all European architecture and, naturally, on the so-called Eclectic variety as well.³ By this he meant to suggest that the dichotomy between Rationalists and Eclectics was often not only difficult to verify in actual practice, but also that there really was a deep interrelationship between both ideas. Consequently, this dichotomy was totally ineffective to explain the origins of architecture in industrial societies. Logically, it was biased to try to emphasize the Rationalist tradition (which from Durand, or Laugier, would lead to the architects of the Modern Movement) while minimizing the other (the logic of which would, in any case, go from the 19th-century *Beaux-Arts* developments to the recent revivals of the so-called Post-Modern architecture).⁴

On the contrary, the analysis this paper attempts starts off from a different hypothesis, viz., the certainty that Eclecticism and Rationalism are not two historically opposed schools but the two aspects of one same historical process that takes place, both theoretically and in actual practice, in early 19th century European architecture. We will attempt to analyze their clearest statements in the light of French culture at the turn of the 18th century. Only with the degree of abstraction achiev-

quires a series of precautions regarding the absorbing capacity of the brick and the quality of the mortar. We are in the habit of using portland cement with light concentrations which achieve a level of resistance often useless and sometimes dangerous. Using it requires adding components and implies more contraction and damage to moisture resistance.

If the stresses were not expected to be so high, a different sort of mortar could have been used with a higher percentage of lime. But 36 kg/cm^2 was required, making it necessary to use mortar with low contraction and a porous brick of 280 kg/cm^2 resistance.

The Belgian bonding pattern was chosen. Here there is a layer of headers and another of stretchers and headers. This is the pattern that best adapts to the differential gaps with no impairment to the pattern itself as there are enough headers.

Joints were reduced to an average width of 7 mm to increase resistance and reduce deformation. This reduction was very favorable to the theoretical calculation of the plastic flow.

PROJECT AND STANDARDS

Spanish brick standards include a complex system of calculation which starts from some arguable options pertaining to conventional building types.

The building's answer to the horizontal stresses requires its being monolithical, in accordance with the standards. But: which must be monolithical, the wall or the framework? As for the classical homogeneous choice there can be no doubt: the thick wall and the interlocked layout ensure the stability of the building. The framework is simply a diaphragm bearing on the wall throughout the whole perimeter and some stone corbels which minimize the bending momentum on the wall and do not pierce it like beam corbels do because they were made of the same substance and were built together.

Standards require the framework to penetrate the wall thus transmitting momentum to it and giving rise to eccentricities. As of here the complex calculations of the flexible bearing are a mandatory ordeal for the designers.

It has been desired to concentrate the loads as much as possible and to avoid the framework's transmitting any momentum to the wall in order to reduce the thickness of the brickwork, a strategy which results in a better economy. For this purpose the central walls bear the load of the framework by means of a narrow and correctly centered high-resistant mortar layer. Furthermore, the supports are restricted to those areas where there are holes so that the solid supports of the arches bear on the floor underneath without being pierced by the framework.

On the other hand, the façade wall has a sloping section for the framework to be secured on each claw.

Apart from this, in order for the framework to take the horizontal forces on the façade, some concrete bubbles would be shaped to fit into the masonry without piercing it entirely or transmitting bending stresses.

These forces are transmitted to the perpendicular walls and two vertical concrete shields conveniently placed between the great half-cylinder of the business hall and the office prism.

TYPOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

Once this structural system was decided, the stability of the masonry walls posed some specific requirements for each of the two volumes of the building. As it was pointed out before, the building (conceptually) consists of a juxtaposition of two volumes, a cube and a cylinder, that are to house two different functions. The cube contains all the management, meeting, storage, etc. facilities and is suitably divided by many sorts of closings and framework. The cylinder only contains the great hall, an enormous one-piece volume.

In the cube stability is obtained within the traditional masonry standards, forming in the layout closed cubicles of the smallest possible size and sidestepping the scheme of parallel walls.

The layout should be patterned with perpendicular walls, thus creating new requirements and suggestions for the project. The entire attractive game posed by the walls with their order-giving power and the need for order, provided some of the most interesting aspects of the building.

The walls are pierced with many arches, especially in the lower floors. And yet the horizontal stability is not lost though the limit of the load-bearing capability (established at 36 kg) was used up. This is why the solid elements between the arches have had to be buttressed by small reinforcements, thus forming a Latin Cross layout.

The problem of the half-cylinder wall enclosing the great hall is far more delicate.

The great height (17 m) of the wall, its lack of any crossing framework, the distance between the ends united to the cubic and stable part of the building (30 m) and the low curving mean very little stability for the wall sheet. The first thing was to furnish it with inner buttresses to increase the thickness in the calculations. The role of these buttresses was in constant change throughout the whole project

Bank of Spain building in Gerona

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This unique building, this somewhat monumental juxtaposition of a hollow cylinder and a cubicled cube described by Lluís Clotet in the preceding article was conceived to display a bare brick façade and to be painted inside. But how much of the load could this material bear? Let us recall that the cylindrical volume is 18 m high and that for the cube there are 9-meter high light shafts with 1000 kg/m² overloads on the area to be occupied by the filing section. What sort of structural scheme was to be used? Which architectural image was the most coherent?

The first choice to be made had to do with the load-bearing role of the brickwork.

At first it was desirable for this apparently load-bearing material to play the supporting role of the building. Whatever the problems posed by this choice, it was more in agreement with that «ethical» position of evaluating the expressiveness of the various structural systems.

«Sensible» opinions suggested that the program, the volumetrics and the loads of the building made a brickwork wall structure inadequate and demanded including an inner concrete structure to reinforce the load-bearing capacity of the desired brick scheme. To support this view even some Roman precedents were quoted. Nevertheless, despite the seemingly better firmness, it evidently was a misconception and a misquotation. In the Roman world the mortar (the main load-bearing element) requires brick for the downward forces. Ceramic sheets of triangular pieces sink into the concrete. The ample joints between the bricks allow the sides to retract along with the matrix. The uniformity of the settling of sides and nucleus will be favored by the slow and horizontal work procedure.

Today a concrete wall cast between two flat-surfaced brick sheets does not warrant this adherence. Probably the contraction of the concrete will immediately generate a loosening of the three sheets but, in any case, the load distribution could never be known precisely since the support system will depend on the contractions and relative settlements.

The choice of using only brick to bear the loads is not just a matter of a certain type of ethics but also one of strictly observing the laws of rheology.

«HOLLOW» WALLS OR THICK WALLS

Having decided that the walls were to be load-bearing brick ones, the next choice was whether they would be made of folded thin sheets to provide a better inertia or thick walls. The former would be closely related to Mudejar architecture. Mudejar towers are not limited (like the Romanesque ones) by the thickness of the rubblework. Masonry allows taking the maximum advantage of thickness so that towers can be built up on double slender brickwork without lacking the firmness and stability found at the ground floor and being lighter and more economical in their use of materials. A paradigmatic example of this approach is the restaurant built at Domènech i Muntaner Park where there is a thick 1.5 m façade formed by two 0,15 sheets.

However attractive, we did not dare propose it as a solution to the façade's load-bearing wall. The cavity (or Capuchin) wall is currently a delicate choice when, looking for better thermal resistance and energy saving, an effective thermal insulator is placed in the cavity. The tremendous temperature differences found between the two courses exert too much stress on the joints and make the hypothesis of a sturdy structural performance impossible.

This was the reason that solid homogeneously built walls were preferred— that is, built of one sole material capable of taking on the most important construction roles thanks to its thickness. Ceramics is one of those «wide-range» materials that when thick enough may perform as good load-bearers, protectors and thermal insulators.

The space inside the classical homogenous construction seems as if poured into continuant matter, very similar to what Gideon termed the second conception of space and illustrated by recalling the Pantheon.

In our case (as well as other traditional homogenous constructions) the role of this multipurpose material is reduced to the making of thick walls. Here their structural, thermal and seaking effectiveness is based precisely on this thickness. Horizontal elements, framework and roofings are logically figured out using special materials for elasticity and moisture resistance.

This type of construction also has unsurmountable durability. The homogeneity of this material favors the uniformity of motion, one of the fundamental aggressions to the durability of any building. The thickness ensures that the outer surface shall be fastened and secured by the inner matter. A thick wall is more effective than the thin light options currently in use where the tearing of a cloth, a faulty seal or a small hole in the draping may spoil the effectiveness of the whole. A thick wall is like a coat which may certainly get soaked but when dried out may be worn again. A thin one is like a raincoat for one sole purpose but which must be thrown away if torn.

Achieving sufficient moisture resistance for a masonry wall currently re-

The convenience of the building's having the largest volume possible relied on the main activity hall. As shown by fig. 7 this area had a circular section, was set in the center of the cylinder and occupied its whole height. The auxiliary rooms were located at different levels within the circular crown enveloping it. But it seemed unpleasant in this geometric context to figure out the layout of all these small rooms.

This is how the layout gradually shapes into a prismatic body of several storeys (fig. 8 & 9) and juxtaposes with an empty semicircular space. Only the top-most level of the prism keeps any curves. But the plan allows room to place a great lounge here, and it is not very difficult to figure it out within this perimeter.

And this was how (fig. 10) the contradiction between the interior and exterior was started. That is because from outside the building is seen as a complete cylinder to which a lower prismatic body is attached whereas this does not correspond to the internal layout.

The constructional idea of the building was very rudimentary at this point. The layout (8) shows a series of walls more or less pierced, running parallel to the façade over Bonastruc de Porta and leading inside. The last one of them (coinciding with the diameter of the cylinder little emphasized on this floor) becomes an important indoor façade on account of its position. Studying it helped shape the way the building was to be constructed.

Figs. 11, 12, 13, & 14 show the intention to understand, from the patio, a series of superimposed parallel pierced panels. Fig. 15 reveals the conviction that if the lintels were arches the visual richness for a spectator in motion would be greater.

Figs. 16 & 17 show the first reckonings and fig. 18 shows the surveys that would bring a better transparency to the ground floor. At first C-shaped concrete beams were used (fig. 19) but in the end it was decided to use only brick walls and arches.

This decision led to seeing the layout evolve into abandoning the parallel walls and taking the shape of adjoining rectangular boxes.

The geometry required by this choice pervades the entire indoor space and certainly is one of its most important expressive features. As can be seen in the final drawings, the façades freely interrupt the stern inner order.

After studying the brick to be used for the great curved wall in the man activity hall a series of buttresses were added to curb plastic flow (fig. 20). As seen in fig. 21, these elements have been used to support a hanging ceramic lattice window. The purpose here is to sift sunlight and to light up mildly and through reflection the bottom of the buttresses' niches. This way the reflection of the light of the great windows on the cylindric wall and a rather more subtle light will flood the space.

The roofing also went through several different solutions. Figs. 22 & 23 explain the roof with visible metal tiework. But it was difficult to find the right geometric expression that would go from the perpendicular to the circular. Also, there were no guarantees for the requirement of having a one-piece building.

In the end and at a different scale, the choice made was extrapolated from the framework of the other floors. The roofing has been formed in the end by a network of girders bearing on the walls. It reaches out of the void of the half-cylinder to the curved façade wall. To have less weight on the roofing, the great molding units formed (not indispensable for access or machinery) have been replaced by a metal, gently-sloping, 4-face roof.

This new structure finds no explanation as seen from inside. Fig. 24 shows the new image of the virtually horizontal ceiling and the definite recovery of the upper part of the plane of the semicylinder. A circular lighthole is split in two along its diameter and together with a great hanging lamp they both establish a relationship with the outer axis of the cylinder.

The public staircase between the ground floor and the Administration must be controlled by a security gate. It was difficult to relate an expressive staircase to the control area at its base. Fig. 25 shows the first drawings. They have been treated like two precious and independent objects which are quite abstract. There is pink granite veneer on the stairs and the gate appears as a golden canopy. These elements will play the leading role in an indoor environment painted white, very much like Baroque German churches. As seen in the elevation, their location is purposefully casual and intends to be a reminder of the temporariness of custom.

Figs. 26, 27, 28 & 29 show different reckonings of the way the cylinder has been finished and of the barrier, which are not totally convincing in constructional terms. A few solutions using lintels were attempted (fig. 30) but brick (figs. 31, 32 & 33) ended up invading it all and getting to the very top.

LLUÍS CLOTET

The symbols or intentional elements in a picture arouse the recognition of the self in the object. Thus, it is this idea where my understanding of Clotet's pictorial work begins: when he is purposefully representing these unwonted places that usually make landscape and architecture coexist and that stir in him the need to represent them.

As regards the concept of the «New» or the «Up-To-Date», I must say I've always felt uneasy around them, perhaps because they imply «out-of-dateness» since once they are uttered, they become obsolete by dint of the act itself. On the contrary, I prefer to use the word art, which I associate with something everlasting, something like an unexpirable source of life throughout the ages. This is the reason that I don't see what is pictured in a painting as the means of making the work appear as new. I recall Morandi's several still life paintings where, by including old and useless objects that, nevertheless, are already part of time, he managed to convey a new aspect of truth. What I mean by this is that when you paint something that has always been there, there is always a need for someone capable of unveiling the mystery and creating reality.

And this is the task we are all committed to.

XAVIER SERRA DE RIVERA

Bank of Spain building in Gerona

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The site to be built upon is located in the middle of the urban enlargement of the city. The block it is part of shows standard orderliness but the buildings reach several different heights.

Fig. 1 shows this site. Gran Vía de Jaime I runs along one of its lesser sides, though it starts in the opposite direction precisely here, thus inevitably turning this building into the focus of a long perspective that is several hundred metres long. Figure 2 is a current view of this.

Across the street, just opposite the Bank, an important park will be opened. This urban isle calls for the building's contributing to help define its volumetrics, very much the same as the church located on its other side already does.

The other two streets that touch the site (20 de Junio and Bonastruc de Porta) are of lesser importance and do not pose any particular problems.

Fig. 3 shows the fourth side which borders on the neighboring lots. Here we find a high partition wall (7 storeys), the inner courtyard and a one-storey high volume facing Gran Vía Street. Overlooking this is the side façade of a Modernist house. Separated by a garden walkway, these two buildings are protected under the city monument Act.

Located in a consolidated and highly representative section of the city with its particular environmental problems, this site will see the erection of this building which runs on a plan that is entirely different from those of its neighbors.

The building is fundamentally composed of a series of carparks, a security vault and a minimal office area which will allow for very little pedestrian activity. But it must be isolated for security reasons as well as be small to follow the plan.

The impression generated by the complexity of the surroundings is not very suggestive and it would not improve either with an isolated, low and discreet building. Intending to make this building introduce a great deal of order into this environment implies two limitations: it must be capable of figuring out its own inner requirements as well as those pertaining to the site. But being as contradictory as these two sets of considerations are, the answer was by no means clear.

Nevertheless the awareness of this contradiction, the belief in the fact that every building must also figure out its urban requirements, became the major motivation of the project.

Fig. 4 includes some of these topics, almost to the point of caricature. For instance, verifying that the problem posed by the partition wall was not merely one of surface quality but rather one of layout guidelines; the way an isolated and small building will look; etc. But already present is the cylindrical body placed on the extension of the Gran Vía axis as the geometrical answer to the problem of turning. Also, this independence from the lines of the site will keep the new volume from blocking the façade view of the neighbouring modernist building.

Fig. 5 shows how a high wall visually completes the unfinished volume of the urban isle and includes the new building. This wall has been added to the concept of the cylinder to simulate a larger construction than it actually is. These blind windows appear.

In fig. 6 the building becomes more independent. The building is a tall and isolated cylinder which solves the problem of the partition wall by hiding it visually. The indispensable fence (not pictured) was already intended to be treated with the same elements as the building's. The purpose was for it to form one only unit with the building and, also, to disguise as far as possible the image of a building lying isolated in a fenced-in lot.

monument and has the shape of a trapezium with its base facing the slope. The remainder of the garden is closed off and is separated by means of trimmed hedges. One of the hedges (2 m. high) lies in the background of the figure and the other (1 m. high) runs parallel to the street.

The gardens and monument to Isidor Macabich in Ibiza complement each other in the desire to give this figure a familiar appearance on the site.

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The girl who symbolizes the Constitution was born on the same day the Charter was issued.

The design of this square centers on a bronze figure of a girl sitting on a Travertine staircase that branches out into two volumes and marks off an irregular area paved with bricks having an *opus espicatum* pattern along Jaime I Street.

Both the square and garden boundaries have been treated differently on all four sides in order to enhance the role of the central area of the square. The girl symbolizing the Constitution will be surrounded by a rosebush, a rabbit, a turtle, a lizard, a snail and a doll, also in bronze, thus achieving a larger size for the whole monument.

It is intended for the monument to be increased as time goes by. Every fifth or tenth anniversary of the Constitution of 1978 another figure will be added on to the girl by Francisco López.

The large area to be occupied by the Square-Gardens of The Constitution in Gerona finds its principle of order and organization in the minute figure of a girl who represents the Constitution.

On the «edibility of art»

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Those years (1966-71) when I was an associate professor to Mr. Lozoya at the School of Architecture come back to my mind: (they were) years of political unrest and people were struggling in the hope of tailoring a great political change. Students played the main role in the battle against the reactionary motionlessness posed by certain faculty members, giving rise to great long strikes. I recall that, at the time, people were so eager for change that everything was questioned, including—among other affairs—the importance of drafting in or for architecture. There came such a degree of confusion that this subject lost all of its prestige. And I say subject because drafting itself, as a means of both knowledge and expression, is unquestionable. But not so the method.

The years have gone by, some changes have cooled things down and it seems that there is a common effort to give back to drafting the dignity it had always enjoyed in school. The Association of Architects of Catalonia organized an exhibition of drawings and paintings by architects, most of whom were professors, thereby making clear their intent. In some cases they were prepared with exceptional care. This is why when Lluís Clotet invited me to see his water-colours (thereby giving me the chance of getting to know the pictorial work of a person who, as an architect, I already admired) I was already aware of the interest and care he puts into them.

We had a long chat on painting, on the role of art throughout history and of the concept of the New or the Up-To-Date in art.

Clotet supports a very unique theory, I would even dare call it «domestic», on the role of the artist and the scientist. He has spoken to me about something he terms «edibility».

He said that at first as well as now man was surrounded by an environment that was hostile in some cases and passive in most.

Hunting, painting a bison, associating a sound to an object or a feeling, controlling fire, care all creative instances that aim at the same point, viz., trying to make it possible for man to survive, understand, enjoy things, «eat», the more, the better.

Also that artists and scientists are like cooks who, on the basis of tradition and the transgression of tradition, offer flavors unknown till then.

He said he had never tasted anything that had not been served, described, painted, sculpted, formulated...

He spoke of Hopper, of Huston, of the Hyperrealists... Does anyone touring through the United States see anything for himself? If he does, and if he shows it to other people he will rightfully go down in the history of *Grande Cuisine* together with his own kind.

On this unique opinion I would say that the artist's role is similar to the role of a mirror in which, while looking at our image, we recognize ourselves. When we visit the United States and say, «This looks like a Hopper», we are doing nothing but recognizing images he took from reality and then, through his sensitivity, gave back to us complete with the emotional load he experienced himself.

The monument to the Constitution in Gerona consists of a sculpture I added to a development project. The idea of having a girl sitting on a staircase came from Elías. I think this monument follows the same lines as the one in Ibiza; it is meant to be attainable, within your hand's reach. Our idea is for the sculpture of the monument to become as popular as, for instance, the Siren in Copenhagen, which is a very small sculpture of a siren sitting on a stone by the ocean and is renowned world-wide. We intend to achieve something similar, though it's difficult to attain. It all depends on the general public's accepting it, on their becoming fond of it. And you never know what such an acceptance depends upon. Anyway, I don't believe popularity depends on whether things are well made or not. We believe making a «touchable» figure, so to speak, would perhaps be the way to make it popular. The process is unknown but some pieces become that popular, even if they are not so great. Having chosen a girl who was born the same day the Constitution was issued as the model is a highly symbolic fact. It's not even an ostentatious symbol. Many people don't even realize it's there.

Aren't you afraid it may seem merely anecdotal, making it look trivial?

There is that risk, yes. But I don't think the popularity of a work depends on its size. I think it depends on other factors and if we find out which ones they are, we will have achieved our purpose.

«Popular» in the sense of being well-known?

Yes, of being well-known, of people being fond of it and familiar with it. That may not be the result in the end; people may ignore it altogether. But it's worth a try.

The first time Elías and I worked together was on the monument to Isidoro Macabich. We met then and he came to see me to discuss the project. He wanted to make a monument to this Ibizan monk, historian and poet. We started discussing the concept of the project the way we were going to do it, etc.

He had already been working on the design of the area surrounding the monument, hadn't he?

Yes, he even did the garden of the square which was abandoned. This is a small square called La Carroza. It's very close to the house Isidoro Macabich lived in. There are some eucalyptus trees to the sides and some very worn-out benches. We put in some other benches that were very much like the original ones, and a life-size statue sitting on one of them with a book at its side. This was the project.

Tell us about the way you two cooperated. Did you discuss things over or did Elías already have a very clear idea of what had to be done?

Elías had thought about making a very «reachable» statue which wouldn't be obtrusive but intimate, an everyday thing. We discussed all of this and we gradually pinned down the final form in unison.

Since you were dealing with a monument to a person who was dead, you had to work without a model...

Right. Elías and I travelled to Ibiza to compose a portrait of Isidoro Macabich. We searched for a photograph of our character through a series of parishes on the island. Luckily we gathered a lot of them. With a soutanne someone lent us, a pair of glasses and all necessary accessories, I made a model. First I modelled a small-size statue and then I took up doing the life-size one.

I had to take a look at the clothes he had worn in his life. His clothes would give me an idea of his size and proportions. I set up a model with his same measurements, but I had to do his portrait through the pictures I had. Elías, who had met Macabich, would come by and say, «I think his nose was rather more like this or like that.» And we got by like this. The truth is that I had never done a bust or a statue based on photographs. This implies a series of difficulties and I think you never do go deep enough. You might perhaps in a drawing or a relief, but a statue of a body is something much more complex.

Sometimes I felt I wouldn't be able to go all the way. To put it more humbly, it just didn't come out. And this was due to the difficulty of doing the work from a series of photographs. I ran across serious problems.

How was the posture decided?

I made the decision and this brought along another problem. Perhaps it wasn't a typical posture of his. I never met him. I made it up: the man is sitting on a bench with a book by his side and his hands on his knees. He's there as if waiting for something, looking at the landscape, that's all.

I made a wooden model of the same size of the bench the statue was to go on. This is how it should always be done so that when you do set the figure on

the bench you won't find that the feet don't reach the ground or that the height is wrong. The next thing I did was have a model from the school pose for me in order to get a general idea of the shape of the body. I got the head from the body. Then I had the model wear the clothes they had lent me and did the finishing touches to the outfit.

Did you give any thought to the implications of the fact that the statue was going to be placed in a public space and be there for everybody to see and for everybody to sit around? The feeling you must have had was probably different from the one you get when you do something that is to be exhibited at an art gallery.

I felt somewhat uneasy when it was inaugurated. After the ceremony, I felt restless about leaving it there in the middle of the street. I was afraid someone would take it away or break its head off or that something would happen. I thought it was so fragile there within everybody's reach. That worried me a lot. Time has gone by and there it is and nothing has happened to it. In spite of this fear, I thought it was nice for people to be able to touch it to sit around it, to be near it, to keep it company. I thought it wouldn't just be a distant statue at the top of a pedestal. But it's true I was concerned about its safety once it was set in place in the middle of the street. Until this time, I had always seen my work exhibited in galleries, in protected places. I thought they were safe so to speak. This is the reason that leaving the statue of Isidoro Macabich there in the middle of the street, not knowing what could happen to it, disturbed me very much. I remember two or three days after the inauguration I went by the square to see if it was still there.

The figure of Quinta Amelia is a sculpture I did in Rome in 1964. Elías saw it and came up with the idea of placing it in this park and redesigned his project accordingly.

Did you have an influence on the way it was placed?

No, it was all Elías' doing. The project was his. He has a better idea than I do as to how and where to put it. He asks me but I don't want to interfere.

What do you think of the results?

I'm very pleased. I was in Barcelona recently and I thought the design of the park was very good. The wall, everything was very nice. The figure is just a small item in it.

PEDRO AZARA
PEPITA TEIXIDOR

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Design for the extension of the Villa Cecilia Gardens—now known as Casal de Sarrià—by including the area that was formerly taken up by the house and part of the gardens belonging to Quinta Amelia, most of which were transformed into the current Santa Amelia Park after the street that runs by it was opened.

The gardens were extended onto the new site by means of planting new trees of the same species as those already in place (pine, plantain, cypress, palm and lime trees). In order to ensure continuity for both the new and the old areas a series of different species of hedge plants were included. These hedges run interruptedly towards the new area and separate the playground and the walking areas and, also, along the slopes that connect the several different levels.

Oneness and coherence are provided by means of a wall that runs along Santa Amelia Street. In the middle of this wall there is a gate that opens the way to an area from which the bystander can see the little channel that enhances the figure of Ophelia.

The figure of Ophelia in the Villa Cecilia Gardens of Barcelona has been furnished with a romantic scenery adequate to the lying female figure. Here the boundary along the street plays a leading role.

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The Canon Archivist of the Cathedral and a writer, Isidor Macabich was the author of *History of Ibiza*, a must for anyone interested in acquiring a reasonable knowledge of these islands, and an important figure in Ibiza until his death in 1973.

The old garden of Sa Carrosa neighboring Macabich's house was the place chosen to erect this monument. His closeness in time to us and his familiarity with the site made the decision of a monument, a figure sitting on a bench by an eucalyptus tree to which the passers-by can come close. From the old garden six eucalyptus trees remain on a spindle-shaped, 5 % sloping site. The garden that was designed (and which Macabich is still awaiting) is composed of two horizontal dirt areas. One is circular and has a fountain and the other is independent, faces the

his heads. This technique gives marble the look of being gradually shaded from light areas to dark ones, which provides a very impressive effect. As for Phidias, however, everything is rather more spectacular, the volumes are larger.

I like that. I like the material to have a finish that is exquisitely fine.

In your drawings and reliefs there is no precision of lines on things, that is, things look gradually toned down, whereas in sculpture, since you can look at it from all sides, there is more precision.

Reliefs are a world that is fascinating to me. It's like a spell where what you try to do is give the feeling of reality. The material is uniform. There is no color to convey the idea of a landscape. You have to execute a figure so that it looks as if it had a body, and it doesn't. It isn't a drawing either. It's something somewhere between drawing, painting and sculpture. It is there, wandering about in very attractive and mysterious fields. I'm very interested in the treatment of surfaces, and I certainly do fade lines away. I don't make them precise because what's so beautiful about reliefs is for the light inciding on them to slide along, the light being exactly what creates the ambiance. Now, if you cut down on the contour, this light we're talking about not only does not enrich them, but could also spoil them. Reliefs call for a very special sort of light.

A sculpture of the body is there as if real, whether at night or day-time, sunny or cloudy, but a relief is a more subtle thing. It responds to the interplay between what you make of it and the light it gets. I feel linked to the light inciding on the relief and I model my work accordingly.

You always work with clay and wood. Have you ever used stone?

No, I don't work with stone. I don't have the skill or the experience required to carve it. I would like to, though. In fact, what I could do would be to give the material to someone to do the sharpening of the tools and then to do all the block-out work according to a model. Then I would complete it. But the truth is that I haven't done anything of the sort. I work with terra-cotta, wood and bronze. It's easy for me to work on wood because I have a good knowledge of the required skills.

You make a volume of jointed pieces of wood. You can't use just one large piece. That's very dangerous; it can split open. You join the pieces into a prism resembling the general size of the work. If there's any need for some more wood in a certain place, for instance at the knee, you keep adding on and if there's more than necessary, you remove it. It's not convenient to work with one piece of wood because there is more tensile strength when there are several, in which case the thrust of one grain is balanced or compensated by another.

Is light essential?

Yes. As regards drawings and reliefs, more than about the details, I'm concerned about the problem of light. Interpreting the light for a particular work at a particular time of the day requires certain skills. When you're a beginner, you're more interested in shape not worrying about the fact that things are what they are only by dint of the light they get. This problem was incorporated into painting—rather belatedly—as of the Impressionists.

When you were young and still in school, didn't you ever consider doing abstract work?

Yes, I did. Mainly because it assured you great success and my work was so scorned that I used to think, «Am I not going the wrong way? Here I am playing the fool and going down a road that doesn't lead anywhere?» But I realized I was doing what I had to, otherwise I would have got bored. I have fun doing this girl in Gerona; I know her. That way I come closer to life through my art.

Haven't you ever had to distort or deform a body?

Not really. It hasn't crossed my mind. I try to make my works look as close to the real thing as possible. I've noticed that it's not only the literal translation of reality that matters—you may find a lot of support in it, certainly—but there's always an ideal that is what really makes art become Art, not merely an imitation of reality.

Does it worry you to see your work become decorative or anonymous?

No, it doesn't bother me to remain anonymous, it doesn't really. I'd almost prefer that. I feel more comfortable and work more at ease that way. I don't want to be famous. I wouldn't like to starve either... but I run away from fame, I'm not attracted to it. When your work means a lot of effort even if only a physical one, you need time to do things and public life takes it away from you. I don't envy Dalí or Picasso, or any of those people at all.

Once the subject is chosen, what do you do next? Do you start off doing sketches, or rather, directly get into the model posing for you in your studio?

Very often I do without sketches, directly, *au-naturel*. But this is, actually, a mistake. I've come to realize this gives me a lot of problems with the framework. Some figures must be done using an iron skeletal structure to provide support for the clay; otherwise it would fall apart. If you don't design it with utmost precision, you may find that parts of it will start sticking out through a leg, the head or a shoulder; a real setback for the whole work. Before I used to do them straight on, real size, but I've been making them smaller lately (more or less in scale), without finishing all the molding. Next, I do all the structure based on that figure.

Are all your figures always as frontal, showing such calmness?

They usually are, yes. But I don't think it's a matter of giving the figures frontality, but rather, that they are frontal because their expression is very restful, very motionless. When I do sculpture, I think of portraits... how could I say it..., something like what Velázquez did—keeping the proper distances. He did the same with his paintings. His figures always have this calm, serene look, to the point of repetition: they are leaning against a chair or another piece of furniture.

Is this due to the model's having to remain in the same posture?

Exactly so. And in Velázquez this is provocative. Sculpture as a portrait is very different from sculpture as a representation of other concepts. In the latter case, there certainly does appear motion pertaining to such an idea. I sometimes think that such motionless statues imply a limitation. I often do, really, and I think I might be able to get rid of it soon.

However, reliefs allow me to choose rather less impassive expressions or attitudes, but as regards statues, I lack the faith necessary to face them the same way. I think of sculpture as a portrait.

Are the clothes covering the body of a statue an important element?

Why, yes, of course. Everything is important: the trousers, the shoes... When Francisco came over to pose for me, I always made him wear the same clothes. In this case I was interested in the whole body, not only the head and his expression which, however restful, had to authentically convey his inner self.

While you were working on the reliefs at Bankinter, did you think of the importance of the quality of the treatment given to the surfaces, even though you knew they were meant to be looked at from a distance?

To tell you the truth I didn't. I worked throughout the whole project as if it were my own affair, regardless of the fact that the friezes were to be contemplated from a distance. When you do a monument-size work, you have to study, for instance, the problem posed by the head. You have to make it larger if the figure is to be on its feet because when you look up a real-size head would look too small. But this is not my case. I have not done any work this size so as to have to worry about this problem. If I ever did, I would figure it out like any other sculptor would, running the risk of an awkward-looking final product. If you look at Phidias' work on the Parthenon—unfortunately, so deteriorated—you realize they did not give any thought to these problems. The figures are very well-proportioned and real size and they're set up in the pediments. Nevertheless, the architect did seem to think about the problem, if you consider the curving of the floor.

Michelangelo's David stands five meters high and is extremely well-proportioned. The proof is that the pictures we're all familiar with show him as if nearly real life-size, whereas it is actually a statue of colossal proportions.

In your studio you have a lot of replicas of Greek and Roman sculptures that should have influenced you very much. Do you follow them as models?

I believe I do, yes. I have them around because I like to look at them. You can learn a lot from Greek art especially, and my work is just that: constant learning.

What do you get from Greek sculpture? The expression? The proportions?

I think it's something rather less concrete: the way to shape the material, to work out the size. That's something really difficult to pinpoint.

When you're working and, for example, a crease doesn't come out, do you go and see how a Greek sculptor solved that problem?

No, not that way. This is not possible. I consider the general way he solved the problem, the figure and, above all, the way he's worked out the surface, the finished appearance of the head, etc.

For instance, Praxiteles did something that is called *sfumato Praxiteliano* on 1!

That always happens. But in any case what we all want —the figurative artists and the abstract ones— is to be able to represent something from the outer world, from the world we live in. It makes no difference if it's Miró, Tapies or Francisco López.

I think I am from the 20th century; I live in the Twentieth Century, suffer in the 20th century and enjoy myself in the 20th century. The 20th century has to be reflected in my work. Through this deduction is how I stop worrying, but when the time comes for my own definitions, I notice my sympathies are with an older world and an older language, I don't know if I'm entitled to...

I'm very concerned about this. Sometimes it almost even keeps me from being able to work because I can't change the other part either. I wonder if it's not just some neurotic trait in me or if there's something right about it. I notice we don't express that 20th century frenzy of ours, especially the 20th century we confront and live in the cities. Our things are silent. They have a tone which doesn't belong in the world around us and I wonder if that's right or wrong. We are encircling something and in so doing —on the rebound— we unintentionally reflect it. I certainly would like for all of that to show. I would like to shed the honesty of the climates, not to be such a good guy, so quiet, not be the way I am and be more like the people of today and be able to show a character more in pace with the times.

Looking at your work, you get the feeling that time has stopped, as if your universe, the universe of your images and compositions, your themes and even the way you express them belonged to a world that stood still at a certain moment. They seem to be out of date.

Well, that's exactly what I don't like.

PEDRO AZARA

PEPITA TEIXIDOR

Interview with Paco López

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I was born in Madrid in 1932. I owe my love of art to my father, a medallist, an engraver, and a professor at the School of Fine Arts. I grew up in such an environment and that is why my brother and I—who are nearly the same age—decided to quit high school and devote ourselves entirely to art.

We started at the School of Arts and Crafts of Madrid taking modelling and History of Art classes while, at the same time, attending the lectures at the Casón (Museum of Reproductions) where there are some plastic reproductions of the Victory of Samothrace, of the sculptural work of Praxiteles and Polykleitos, of all sorts of Greek and Roman sculpture, of Michelangelo's most important works, of Donatello's Portico of Glory, etc. It was a wonderful museum.

My brother later entered the School of Fine Arts. I myself was not able to as I had to help my father with his work. This was how we started taking our first steps.

In 1960 I won an award for an opening in sculpture at the Academy of Rome. I moved to the Italian capital city and I lived there for four years. In Rome I met Rafael Moneo, who was also an awardee but in architecture.

Once back in Spain, I kept on doing sculpture and medals in my workshop. I like medals. They are an area of sculpture which I find very attractive. Even now I still make some, but only those I want to.

I am also a professor at the School of Fine Arts. On my return, my father had retired and I was offered his position.

Together with Elías Torres and Rafael Moneo, who have shown great interest in the subject, I have been working on «public works» for some years. I had never done this before, but I like it. I find working with them very positive.

I think that in an artist's career—whether he be a painter or sculptor—each work prepares him for the next. It is like studying all the time. I believe it to be of use to any subsequent work to correct the mistakes, if there be any, on a given figure—whether it pleases me or not—. On reliefs it works the same way. Years ago my works had a lot of volume; I did not see them as I do today when I have reduced the contrast.

QUADERNS: When you're working on something you've been asked to do, something that is not pre-established or pre-ordained, when it's something that you want to do, such as the sculpture of Francisco, how do you choose your subject?

PACO LOPEZ: Francisco is my son. I see him everyday at home, in my studio. He goes there a lot. Looking at him, I would think, «What a beautiful little thing!» and I would envisage a finished product. I was attracted by his gesticulations, his boyish manners, his age. You look at him, you see him and you realize the time will come when you inescapably will have to do a sculpture of him.

from the beginning; it was entirely subject to plastic laws. But you usually ask yourself, «Well, what is it that I am painting?».

I could paint a woman's figure, and I actually did start painting a woman's figure. What posture was I to put her in? Well, I decided to make her sit and face this way. And the background. What background could I use. Perhaps some from Tomelloso. I later saw clearly that this was not the right one and changed it for a room. That is, the whole thing was moving in a purely plastic domain, or a purely—it's hard to explain—dream-like one. But it was also pressed or set in motion by influences from Italian Art; or I don't know what kind of art. When your starting point is something real that impresses you, all the symbology is there underneath. But you can't search for it. Perhaps it's in the way you represent the street. I think it has to be there because whatever this symbology has of the authentic is something which belongs to the individual and won't disappear but which is not there at first glance. It will be in the way we draw things, in the way to represent things, to compose them and in the order you put them in. I don't know what it is actually about, but it must be present, otherwise it would be a whim, a purely aesthetic game promoted by a series of influences.

In my first paintings, the picture itself was the leading element. It had its own clear cut-needs.

In Klee's or Tapes' works, where do you find the end of one of Tapes' paintings? Well, when the painting is not available anymore. I don't know, but when it intends to be a mirror, then there is a disproportionate impressive struggle deriving from something as prodigious and unattainable as reality.

You're quite right and I agree. I like Gran Vía and all that area in Madrid very much because I've lived there for so long. A lot of times you work on subjects you wouldn't undertake at present but which you've already started. So you must finish them. I like the world of Modern architecture very much. If I didn't have all of the work I'm doing now for the exhibition—much of which I started years go—I would devote myself to working on this. I want to recover it.

It's not that I think I have to do it; it's that I want to. For instance, being in the area of La Castellana—of the whole area of Azca—and being interested in a Modern building and not a skyscraper, however less spectacular less New York-like the former may be. I like it much more than a building from the 1910's or the 1920's. In the views of Madrid, all this other architecture is present. What happens is that it is blended into all the other architectural styles, creating a city that is not independent and that is not meant to look like a modern place, but a city that is intended to look like what it is, like Madrid. And Madrid isn't Modern; it does not belong to the present. It is an old city, centuries old. But yes, I do want to recover this more current aspect.

Tell us about that atemporality that characterizes your statues of men and women, especially the male ones, because perhaps as they lack any clothes or hair, they are not restricted to a particular period. But there is also a soberness in these works that is very assertive. Could it be that, from your point of view, man is a non-man?

Atemporality... Yes, it's true, it's authentic, it's wonderfully miraculous. Something by Vermeer is atemporal. Very good things are always atemporal. There is no formula for atemporality. If there were one, we would all be doing atemporal work. This might be a delusion. Fifty years from now I may be saying that what I found so atemporal before was so only on account of the spur of the moment. This always happens. Those discussions proper of certain cultures of the twenties, for example, looked at men and women in a terrible way. And they didn't amount to much in the end. I think that atemporality is the prodigious spark that sometimes grows out of doing the temporary marvellously. Take Vermeer or Velázquez for instance.

You perhaps get that feeling. But having a greater ability than you to spot the mistakes than the things that come out right—which is something that takes away a lot of my steam—I see too much of the temporary, too much of the anecdotal. And this comes from an impure aesthetic element which is playing its tricks, which is betraying you...

Do the effects of a lack of depth present in your early work continue to interest you?

I wish it were the other way round. The thing is that these portraits were taken from photographs. They are my grandparents. Copying from a plane and not from a figure is like copying from something that lacks volume despite its light and dark contrasts. I've always been concerned about volume in painting. When I was painting these things, what I thought about most was shape, more than about color and paints. «This mouth has to be shaped. This neck has to be set on the shoulders, and that shoulder has to go back.» I was modelling all the time—using chiaroscuro, but modelling. As I have gradually been undertaking working more directly with reality, all this desire for volume becomes aerial space and no longer a particular volume.

That reality you're talking about and fear not representing adequately, is it very much your own, and as such, not very real either?

Regarding those canvasses you put off working on for a while to dedicate your time to other work, may taking them up again imply changes in their structure simply because it's been a while, because you now see things differently, or because what you've been doing in the meantime has suggested something new?

No, not in general. What happens is that it takes me so long to begin working on things from the time I get all excited about them, that I have enough time to get to feel quite sure that I do want to do that. What indeed can happen is that while working on a particular subject for days, you may suddenly find that you like the work after having been painting it for four hours. You always prefer all the other lights over the particular one you're working on. Sometimes you even start another picture on the same subject or place with another sort of light. But, well, it's just a suggestion. The light you have to paint is the one you were first impressed by. You sometimes wear out from working on the same thing over a long period of time and you're attracted to a change in the light only because it's new.

When do you enjoy yourself most: when you start the work; while you're doing it; or, when you manage to finish it?

Finishing it is the worst part for me because that's when you see that you've failed and when you experience the powerlessness of not having been able to make your dreams come true.

Do you think you don't achieve your goals?

No, no, I don't, of course. But maybe this is just a feeling that fades away with time. While working on your painting, while copying your subject, you say to yourself, «This is not well done.» And you make corrections one after another, go on working and, finally, deliver it more or less finished. Then you say to yourself, «It didn't come out. I was not able to do what I wanted to», because you're judging it from the point of view of reality, like a copy of reality. But after a few years you find there is something in it beyond your intent, something that is no longer part of reality, that is only your own feeling translated onto the canvas, and you may end up liking it. Once you've forgotten that your light did not get to be as radiant as it was in reality, that the results are clumsy; when you can no longer tell whether your work is just a poor-quality mirror, an amateurish reflection of life or reality; then you don't have to wonder if it's a good or bad reflection of reality and simply see it as a painting that may have something exciting about it, and you judge it as independent from reality, as it should be. But while working on it you can't look at it like that. I certainly can't. I lack the ability to do it.

Do you ever choose a problem or a theme on purpose? For instance, studying the structure of a particular object.

No, never. I always paint something because I suddenly see something in it that I think is wonderful. The structure comes in during the making of the picture. For instance, if you start working on this basin, you know you have to draw it well, and you do your best. You have to make the reality that has excited you yours. You think that the closer you get to it, with all its perfection, all its plenitude, the more likely it is that you'll get that feeling that has convinced you to work on that subject. But as for engaging yourself in a painting with the sole intent of working on the form, that's something I have never done, never. Well, perhaps in school, but those were just exercises that you had to do and figure out. The defense for all of us lies precisely in being enamoured with the subject. Otherwise, you wouldn't have the energy to work and struggle.

When you choose your colors, do you take them from reality or do you adapt them?

No, no, this is something you have to respect absolutely and completely. What happens is that it's the same for light as for sizes. For instance, what's the size of things in *Gran Vía*? Do you paint more of *Gran Vía* making it smaller? Or, do you bring things close together? Or, do you make the painting larger or smaller? This is a terrifying maze and I never know what to do. I don't abide by any particular rule. And for light, the same thing applies. You can make your painting very bright or less so. You can put shadows in it. The real thing is very much what you want it to be, what you feel it is. In my uncle's work, there's light in everything. Other painters work more with shades than with luminous surfaces. That depends on each one's own sensitivity.

In your first paintings there was more symbolism, the characters were more allegorical. Have you gradually been leaving this sort of painting behind?

Perhaps, I don't know.

For example, that scene in Madrid with two people making love in the foreground.

found in showing certain things. I don't think that's right. What's at play is a variety of aesthetic alternatives, regardless of whether you think this situation is wrong or right, of whether you assume it or not. Well, you do have to assume it! There's no other choice. There it is behind your back and there's nothing you can do about it. I see this difference operating in me because there are times when, while reflecting on these same subjects, there is none of that tendentiousness. And I prefer it that way.

These are things I've thought about many times. Because I'm in possession of my pictures only very sporadically. Sometimes they are at home for a few days and then I deliver them. Then after a while, of not having them around, all of a sudden, they surprise me, I regard them as being very remote and I then say, «Well, there is a certain amount of exaggeration in this.» But not an exaggeration that benefits the expression or that is licit or necessary, but one that is tendentious and not necessarily for critical purposes. It's as if I were saying to myself, «Look how interesting this poor little thing is.» And I always think this is wrong.

You seem to be insisting on painting somewhat decrepit environments all the time. Is that what you see, what surrounds you?

That's maybe because of all the things that surround me, that's what I'm drawn to. I don't know because there are other things too. It's not something I intentionally look for either. This bothers me very much now. This world of the decrepit and the outdated coincides with this feeling of not working with the elements that really make up our times. And then again, I now find that yes, there certainly are a lot of run-down things and a lot of the old in my subject matters.

Also, some of that sort of sadness and melancholy opposing that type of joy so much in tune with the spirit of our times and which is half true and half fake, but which presents itself like a beam of sunshine. The times we are living in are very dynamic, with lots of rushing around and very wild. This is an essential point.

This need for the Classics or the Moderns in your education, do you still feel it's there, or have you broken away from it?

No, I haven't. I feel very uncomfortable because I've been working for many years with the feeling that I'm in a place where I cannot express what the up-to-date is. All during the 60's we worked in an environment of very strong criticism. «What are you doing? You won't get anywhere that way!» they would say to us. I'm still afraid of working in a manner that does not express the current world, the contemporary world.

The composition of a painting being very important, can you imagine what the finished product will look like before you start working on it?

I make a lot of mistakes in that area. Every painter has his own size. There are people who make things larger than they should. And others who work with very small frames. For instance, Mari. She puts many elements in a picture. They're so small at times that she barely has to do any work, having time to work on large things. But when my uncle does a landscape of La Mancha, he almost always works from a distance, making things substantially bigger. The size you choose to represent things is essential. Many times, when the canvas is well under-way you realize there is too much space on the left or that you're lacking some at the bottom. I spend my life adding on pieces or making my canvasses larger at the top because I need some more sky. At the start, I think I know what the composition of a picture will be like, but later I make many corrections.

Are you concerned about the relationship between objects, about the distance between them?

Of course I am. You have a liking for certain objects, as usual. Where you don't normally have the chance to make a choice is out in the street. You walk around Madrid keeping to your own affairs and, all of a sudden, there is a fragment of the city where you see a particular light that impresses you and you say, «I'm going to come back here and paint this.» And then, even if there is a sign you don't like or a façade so painted or faced that you like it even less, you still, in spite of everything, take things as they come and respect the integrity of the place, including the drawbacks.

Do you always respect it? Don't you make any changes?

No, no. In Gran Vía they put some horrible flower-pots. Well, they had to be painted. It's just an obligation that you have. You can't do it any differently. An ordinary still-life is not like that, though.

Essentially, an interior is like a street. Sometimes it happens that suddenly there is a chair you didn't put there. Every movable element, i. e., everything that is not a wall, that is not still, is gradually left out or included in the painting according to certain variables.

psychological mechanism: a fading-away of the links that memory and habit establish for situations that seem as coexisting within a familiar context; and both acknowledge it as a typically modern phenomenon, as a consequence of the downgrading of that order for which Culture—Classical Culture—established that the world was man's home or house; *Heimat* is the word used by Freud.»

11. Antonio López García, *The Most Expensive Painter*, Interview by Sol Alameda, in *El País Semanal*, Sunday, January 7, 1979, Issue No. 91, Fourth Year, Second Era, page 10.

Interview with Antonio López

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QUADERNS: After starting to work with your uncle in La Mancha you came to Madrid in 1949 to go to the School of Fine Arts. Once you finished your studies, you went back to Tomelloso...

ANTONIO LOPEZ: I went back to Tomelloso because my parents' house was there. I used to go back for the summer and Easter holidays. Tomelloso was my home but I was aware at once that I had to live in Madrid. Though I like it there very much. For a long time that world was stimulating to me. However, I felt I had to be in Madrid. The things I cared most about, the people I was most interested in and could get along better with, were all in Madrid. My uncle and I (as well as the rest of the family) didn't understand each other, even if you loved them and they loved you.

Were paintings and museums necessary for you?

Oh, yes, yes. At that time, very much, of course. I used to go to El Prado almost every day. That seems exaggerated but that's the way it was. We would go to see Velázquez, Goya, El Greco. Classical painting is very strange because you like to look at it very much; you always go there hoping you're going to learn a lot, or hoping you're going to figure out the answers to your deepest questions, only to find out that not so many things are resolved. And when you do understand Velázquez' or Goya's art is when it is the least useful to you because you're already committed to your own life so that this keeps you from using any of the elements of their languages. We were both influenced by the Spanish painting in El Prado and the Greek and Italian art. The key to introducing ourselves a bit into reality was Modern Italian sculpture (Martini and Marini), all the Quattrocento Greek sculpture, etc. We didn't even discuss Spanish painting. I remember Paco and me commenting *Las Hilanderas*, which was a painting I liked very much. He said that the crosswise light coming from the back was anecdotal, and too bright and spectacular. It took us many years to understand Velázquez and when we finally did we couldn't use what we had learned.

From Renaissance Art, what were you interested in? What did you take?

At that time, in youth, you always take the form; the substance is impossible to take. Take that hieratic purity of Piero della Francesca or Mantegna, which we loved. I was very impressed by their paintings but I was familiar with them only through photographs. Roman painting, for instance the School of Pompeii, seemed wonderful to me. I was greatly influenced by them and also by Klee and Picasso. It was all a terrible mess.

This aestheticism of poverty—so very suggestive and present in themes such as the open refrigerator—did you represent it because that object impressed you? Or is there something else that makes this sort of subject appealing to you?

There's always something else. Things are there and you see them. But when your eyes stop and stay fixed on something it's because there's something else there. The diversity of elements to work on is so great that it is precisely that «something else» that makes you gradually put limits on your choice.

That refrigerator was the one my in-laws had in Palos de Moguer. But there were other objects that had nothing to do with all of this and I didn't choose them. There was perhaps a very deep, a very real sympathy, but there was also a certain aesthetic poverty that pervaded all art at the time. I see it in Tapies, too.

What was personally experienced—the truly human—had so much prestige that it could play dirty tricks on you. You can choose the smallest of worlds, say the world of misery, for instance, and make it your own, and yet not be lacking in this respect. Wanting to do work on slums, on the men and women that lead

10 hard lives, has nothing to do with the fact that there is any of that certain pleasure

it can be said that only when the characters «are scared» do they look at the spectator. We had sensed this also in *Outskirts of Madrid*.

In his 1967 drawing, *Interior*, there appears an element that is to become, as windows have, relevant in his overall work: doors. Doors and windows themselves unite exteriority and interiority, they represent the boundary between both worlds, a barrier that, nevertheless can be overcome: concealed worlds can be opened, interrelate and define each other.

The Back Garden takes us to the garden, already present in the latter two works. Gardens are normally understood as pleasant places, outdoors and full of plants and flowers. But López García chooses the best time of the year: winter.

In *Window in the Afternoon*, the artist looks at the landscape through the window. He places himself on this —our— side of the window in the dark. The painter/onlooker looks at things from the distance; he is not leisurely leaning against the window, gazing at the scenery, as it is not pleasure-giving. The artist/onlooker, however, chooses to stop and look.

In the great landscapes of Madrid, the feeling is the same: an almost disquieting tranquility; desolation, emptiness. In the 1970 oil *Madrid* we notice how the square façade on the first plane is reproduced endlessly on the other houses. Houses do not look as such but as black holes, giving the feeling of having been abandoned, or that, in *Madrid* (1965-70), the woman has forgotten to take down the clothes from the line. And on this same canvas, we can see how the emptiness of the site coexists with the variegation of houses. The dead space is next to the built-up area, also empty. «Anyway, life in the city is sad, isn't it? Trying to push sincerity, I would say that my paintings are sad, not only as regards me myself but also other artists and Art itself. It is a form of aesthetics to cultivate a certain sort of sadness, of dramaticity. My pictures may contain some personal pessimism, but I also think there is an element of dramatic narcissism».¹¹

ELBIA ALVAREZ LOPEZ

1. *On Poetics*, Aristotle, Trilingual Edition by Valentin García Yebra. Ed. Gredós, Madrid, 1974, page 223, 1460a:

«A likely impossibility is always preferable to an unconvincing possibility.»

2. *Idem*, page 223, 1461b:

«Speaking generally, one has to justify the Impossible by reference to the requirements of poetry, or to the better, or to opinion. For the purposes of poetry, a convincing possibility is preferable to an unconvincing possibility...»

3. *Idem*, page 127, 1447a:

«Epic poetry and Tragedy, as also Dithyrambic Poetry, and most flute-playing and lyre-playing, are all, viewed as a whole, modes of imitation.»

4. *Art and Illusion*, E.H. Gombrich, Ed. Gustavo Gili, Art, page 133: «...Till doing was replaced by becoming equal to reality, thanks to the new technique of *mimesis*. We are deluding ourselves on the character of this technique if we speak of an imitation of Nature. Nature cannot be imitated or «transcribed» without first tearing it apart and (then) reconstructing it.»

On Poetics, *idem*, page 158, 1951b:

«Hence poetry is something more philosophic and of graver import than history, since, its statements are of the nature rather of the universals, whereas those of history are singulars. By a universal statement I mean ones as to what such or such a kind of man will probably or necessarily say or do —which is the aim of poetry, though it affixes proper names to the characters.»

6. *Mimesis: This is That*, Valeriano Bozal, Unpublished essay, pages 10-11:

We can assess: words make sense because things have their own essence. But this process may be inerted and the reasoning to what is actually stated: not the existence of essences but their necessity in order for words to have meaning —and make sense— and for language to be possible. Therefore, (it is) not a property of the Real —to which poet and painter would look at— but a transcendental predicate which is posed (we pose, the poet creates) as a precondition to language and sense. This enables us to take *mimesis* from the framework of representing the Extant —whether universal or particular— to the real of the prediction of meaning, a production which always implies the sought-for universality, inasmuch as this universality is the very aim of my search. This transposition imposes some limits we cannot escape from: the poet and painter create their world through their means and procedures; they do not reproduce it.»

7. *The Lucid Camera*, Roland Barthes, Ed. Gustavo Gili, Barcelona, 1982, page 161:

«The photo-portrait is palisade of forces. Four imaginary ones intersect, confront each other and are deformed. In the presence of the target I am at the same time the one I believe I am; the one I would like people to believe I am; the one the photographer believes I am; and, the one he uses to exhibit his art.»

8. *Aesthetics and the History of the Visual Arts*, Bernard Berenson, Fondo de Cultura Económica, México, 1956, page 63:

«Tactile values appear in the representations of those solid objects that are not mere reproductions but representations that stimulate the imagination into feeling their volume, their weight, their potential resistance, into measuring how far away they are from us and into pressing us —again in our imagination— to enter into close contact with them, to grab or embrace or walk around them.»

9. *Classicism and the Plastic Arts in Italy between the Two Wars*, Pia Varelli, in *Les Réalismes*, 1919-1939, at the Georges Pompidou Center Catalogue, Paris, 1980, page 66.

10. *De Chirico and the Limits of Modernity*, Tomás Llorens, unpublished essay, pages 4-5:

Clair remarked (*Metaphysics and Unheimlichkeit*, in *Les Réalismes* (1919-39) on a series of parallels between the text by De Chirico (*Sull'Arte Metafisica*) and another by Freud (*Das Unheimliche*), both published in 1919. Both authors describe, in very similar terms, the same kind of psychological experience: the feeling given by a situation, apparently familiar and soothing —Freud speaks of a walk under the sun at noon through the quiet streets of a small Italian town (and the coincidence is all the more meaningful as Freud very likely had never heard of De Chirico by then) when suddenly it shows itself as menacingly enigmatic and alienating. Both De Chirico, in his text, and Freud assign the origin of this feeling to the same

As for most of the subjects López García deals with—family portraits (including women and childhood), Tomelloso, etc.—those of his paintings that refer to the city—whether directly, indirectly or through interiors—are part of the different «styles» or the different types of Realism he has developed. One same subject can reveal his pictorial and sculptural evolution.

In this case the subject is always Madrid—with the sole exception of the canvas entitled *New York*, inspired by a photograph—the city the artist lives in. It is also an everyday subject.

The fundamental differences between his Surrealist works and his rather more Realist ones are on the formal level, as the urban environment will always be plotted to look deserted. The city stands out as a solid, endless object formed by a variegation of houses, of hives. The city is beyond the neglect it may have been subject to. It is a virtually indestructible conglomerate. It is mere construction, not shelter or lodging.

As seen in his other subjects, López García takes on tradition and at the same time transforms it. In Masaccio and Piero della Francesca architectural backgrounds already appear empty, but this is further evidenced by the between-wars Italian painters, where the city is not thought of exclusively as background but as a representative object in itself. Meaningful examples are *Autumn Meditation* (1912) and *Mystery and Melancholy of a Street* by Giorgio de Chirico, as well as Mario Sironi's 1920-22 urban landscapes.

The mystery and melancholy connotations which typify the work of the Italians do not disappear from López García's landscapes. Conceiving the urban environment as deserted is, in itself, poetic. In this Spanish painter's work one can find a difference between his rural landscapes—*The Painter's Street* (oil, 1959); *Still Life near Town* (oil, 1959)—where the peace and quiet of nature mean nostalgia, and his urban ones, where quietness means mystery. Where any reference to mystery or melancholy does disappear is from those of his images referring to the outskirts of the city.

His Surrealist paintings are *Outskirts of Madrid* (il, 1960-61); *Mari at Embajadores* (oil, 1962); *Homage to Marilyn Monroe* (oil, 1963); and *Atocha* (oil, 1964).

In the first, a woman's bust is overlaid—virtually cut—on the landscape. Here there is none of the melancholy found in the other canvases he was working on at the time *Campo del Moro* (1960); *Painting in the Country* (1961). The artist is beginning to slip into reality (understood, in principle, in an empirical sense). One can no longer speak of the country but of the scenery created by the city in its outskirts, but if there is melancholy reflected on her face, it is almost fear. This is one of the few images where the figure looks at the spectator, as if it did not wish to form part of the landscape it is in. On the contrary, the animal on the left is perfectly adapted to this environment, posing a paradox as it is grazing on a field where there is nothing to graze on. Here survival is impossible.

In the other three, a figure is introduced in an environment it does not belong to, whether by isolation (*Atocha*), by superimposition (*Homage to Marilyn*), or by juxtaposition (*Mari at Embajadores*). In all three cases it is difficult to understand the scene empirically. *Mari* seems to be coming out through a door suspended in the air. *Mari*—María Moreno, López García's wife—comes out from the dark smiling, in contrast with the squalor of the street. A plant and a lighted candle are falling and the candle does not go out. In *Homage to Marilyn Monroe*, there is a close-up of the actress cut out on the background, Paseo de las Delicias in Madrid. There is a formal relationship between figure and landscape. They are irreconcilable or can only be reconciled in dreams or nightmares. The posture she is in—somewhat tilted—leads one to think she may be falling. In any case, Marilyn does not always look as she usually does, i. e., a cheerful and sensuous woman: a storm. In *Atocha*, the first thing one sees is a couple making love on the asphalt and a deserted city in the background. The composition is very theatrical. The plot—this intercourse is dramatic—takes place on a stage. The city has become a private place for intimate situations.¹⁰

Finally, we have to discuss, among this Surrealist series, *Madrid* (oil, 1961-62) which signals the shift to the great urban landscape of Madrid. In it there is the façade of the Archaeological Museum and part of Villanueva Street. To the left, there is a couple sitting on chairs up in the air and leisurely talking.

The more Realist works referring to the city, and within the city, to exteriors and interiors, are: *Wicked* (oil, 1962); *Dog Killed by a Train on the Outskirts of Madrid* (oil, 1962); *Madrid* (1960) painted from María Molin Skyscraper; *New York* (oil, 1962); *Madrid* (1965-70) showing the area of Atocha: to the left the roofing of the train station and to the right the Observatory; *Window* (oil, 1966); *Interior* (drawing, 1977); *The Back Garden* (oil, 1968-69); *Window in the Afternoon* (oil, 1973-82); and, lastly, *Madrid* (oil, 1976-82) painted from The Torres Blancas Building, showing the road to the airport and the corner of Cartagena Street.

Interiors also look deserted. In *Window*, there is still a girl, Carmencita, the painter's daughter. The picture is divided into two parts. The lower half shows the girl, tiny amid the emptiness that surrounds her. The upper (more than half the surface) shows a window through which one sees a garden in winter. The girl cannot reach the window and remains in the dark, somewhat scared. In general,

Reconstructing the Classical world is a two-fold task: on the one hand, as was mentioned before, representing and idealized and abstract world. The images referring to it (*Four Women*, drawing, 1955; *The Mother*, drawing, 1956; *Girl in the Country*, drawing, 1957; *Woman on the Beach*, drawing, 1959) portray women like the Classical Roman matron. Their look may remind us of Masaccio's feminine characters in particular the woman holding a child in the fresco *St. Peter and St. Paul Giving Alms at Carmen Church*, or Piero della Francesca's *Fragment from the Legend of the Cross: The Queen of Sheba Worshipping A Piece of the Cross*. All these figures are shaped using cubic geometric volumes, perfectly oval faces, the cylinders of the necks wide and strong, rounded and thick arms. They are figures that display what Bertrand Berenson has termed «touch values».⁸

These formal features are further emphasized by the New Classicism of the Italian painters between the wars, as seen, for instance, in *Lot's Daughters* (1929) by Carlo Carra and *The Family* (1930) by Mario Sironi, where human figures are inserted into a balanced and idyllic nature. These influences or formal similarities found in López García culminate in Giorgio de Chirico and are introduced in Spain by Carlos Pascual de Lara.

All of López García's work we have quoted here are drawings and this is by no means a coincidence; not only because «Classicism (...) is typified by the demon of lines, i. e., that firmness and purity found in lineal feeling»⁹ —both of which are not present in nature, as it has no straight lines or contour— but also because reality is not black and white.

The other line of the task of reconstruction is exemplified by two 1958 paintings, *The Early Riser* and *The Bride*. Especially so in the latter, where the girl is wearing a garland of flowers in her hair and a wizened-crease tunic that hides the anatomy of her body, Classical feminine figures are set amid alien environments, such as the outskirts of the city in *The Early Riser* or of Tomelloso in *The Bride*.

THE PRESENCE OF THINGS

A shift in the artist's work can be more clearly sensed c. 1960-61. Surrealism is gradually left behind to go on to a sort of Realism lacking any poetic or mysterious connotations or rhetorical allusions and shedding every element of ornamentation or any other which disturbs the very presence of things.

This Realism takes place round the observer as it will now be he who constructs the image to the point that it will be different in each case as he shifts from one viewpoint to another. This can be clearly seen in two images where there are women in a bathtub (the first a 1968 oil-painting; the second a 1971 drawing). In the former, water has the effect of making the body look rachitic: the breasts are volumeless, the trunk is shortened, and from it very long arms and legs stem off. It is almost a corpse. In the latter, the body is cut through the head and feet and the erotic elements gain importance, providing a greater feeling of sensuality. The two images display the same woman in the same posture, but the onlooker has moved, his viewpoints are different and the results are two entirely diverse images.

The onlooker —both the artist and the spectator— looks at things but does not commit himself to them; he will touch or use them, and always place himself at a distance. A fundamental element to achieve this distancing is the movie camera: the composition of the image radically changes in relation to his Classicist or Surrealist work. Traditional perspective elements such as vanishing points, overlapping of planes, frontality and balanced composition are replaced by motion-picture-camera-like frames: from the top; from the bottom, violent foreshortening, slanted frames, even manual travelling is implicit.

The spectator's look chooses, focuses on, decontextualizes. These procedures enable him to set himself at a distance and give him such a «vulgar» and everyday view of things —a bathroom, left-overs, scars— that, when the painter stops to tell us about objects we see everyday as if new to us or as if we were not aware of their existence, his narration becomes one which transcends mere anecdote.

Another fundamental and motion-giving element in the artist's new Realism is sequencing. Through a series of images the painter shows us the same object from different points of view: by approachment, by inversion or by moving sideways. A clear example is provided by the woman-in-the-bathtub series. Another is the series of oils and drawings dedicated to his bathroom and studio.

All his work during the last twenty years has to do with five topics; women; the artist's bathroom and studio (which can be grouped together as they belong to the same series); left-overs; scars; and the urban landscape.

Through the above-mentioned resources, objectness is stressed further, turning live things into dead things: the feminine body is lacking any sort of sensuality, eroticism or feeling of pleasure. Food is repugnant, inedible. The bathroom is filthy and loathsome. What is emphasized about a sick man are his scars on the tubing that keeps him alive. It is no coincidence that these objects are there to be looked at. The artist is modifying or inverting society's evaluation of certain things: feminine nudity is shown in opposition to its traditional meaning of pleasure and sensuality. Food —a matter of survival and, moreover, an excuse for social get-togethers and meetings— likewise looks loathsome. The artist's bathroom and studio are filthy and abandoned. The least important aspect of the sick man is his pain.

events in a person's life which take place in his house, family and private life, then «everydayness» is present in all of Antonio López García's works, from the very first to the more recent ones. It is during these years when López García exhibits a series of portraits of members of his family and of characters from Tomelloso, his hometown: *Josefina*, his sister (drawing, 1950); *Wedding*, his maternal grandparents (oil, 1955); *My Parents* (oil, 1956); *Wedding*, his paternal grandparents (oil, 1956); *Carmen*, his sister (oil, 1960); *Luisa Perales* (oil, 1960), *Maria Juliana Olmedo* (oil, 1960); *Francisco Carretero*, his friend and fellow painter from Tomelloso (oil, 1961); *Carmen Torres*, his grandmother (oil, 1961); *Mari*, his wife (oil, 1961).

His portraits of his grandparents or of turn-of-the-century women such as Maria Juliana Olmedo and Luisa Perales, are done from photographs. Roland Barthes has mentioned the photographed person's tragedy: they do not feel either subject or object, or rather, that instant when «the subject feels he is becoming an object».⁷

The distance developed by the camera, the «objectness» of the people in a photograph and the formal reference implied by a frontal take of the subjects on a neuter background are the elements that manage to transcend the particular, the mere folk chronicle of characters, and to achieve transcendental, universal objects.

In general, Iconographic Surrealism implies the disappearance of Classicist premises. We are facing a world of things which cannot be seen but have to be sensed; a world composed of poetic and oeniric elements where apparitions take place and where there are alterations of time and place. A world built on memories, dreams and manifestations. The visual, empirical reality where his relatives and friends belong is no longer the sole element at play. It is no longer a matter of what is seen, but of how it is regarded and, above all, of how people live in that everyday reality which is posed not only in terms of an outer conception of things but also in terms of man's own inner experience. It is in the encounter of subject and object, their dialectic relationship, the opposition of concepts and worlds where lies the factor which generates conflict and restlessness.

Between 1957 and 1964 he produced «*Dead Girl*» (oil, 1957); *Playing around the Clock* (oil, 1958); *The Early Riser* (oil, 1958); *The Bride* (oil, 1959); *The Lamp* (oil, 1959); *The Street* (oil, 1959); *Apparition of Little Brother* (relief in bronze, 1959); *Carmencita at Play* (oil, 1960); *Girls Asleep* (oil, 1960); *Campo del Moro* (oil, 1960); *Outskirts of Madrid* (oil, 1960-61); *Painting in the Country* (oil, 1961); *Remembering Pepito* (oil, 1962); *The Cupboard* (oil, 1961-62); *Mari at Embajadores* (oil, 1962); *Homage to Marilyn Monroe* (oil, 1963); *Apparition* (relief, on polychrome wood, 1963); *Atocha* (oil, 1964); *The Newly-Weds* (relief on wood and polychrome polyesters, 1964).

The problem of coherence discussed by Aristotle is encountered in these works. The formal coherence is provided by the coherence of the subjects. Just as we dream and remember things in a disorderly, «incoherent» fashion—in the sense contrary to the common understanding of the word coherence, as having a beginning and an end—dreams and memories do not abide by these rules, thereby generating a different reality which makes sense and is coherent only within the framework in which it was developed. For instance, in *Dead Girl* we find a coffin in the middle of a street in Madrid, a fact which, in principle, is not very usual. Neither is it usual to find the streets of Madrid deserted. But when one element combines with the other, the image gains coherence.

Women are central to López García's work. They play the main role in most of the paintings quoted above. They appear now as independent, lonely, and having a world of their own built by themselves to cope with a society that has been hostile for too long. But confronted with these concrete circumstances, women possess a virtually supernatural power belonging to a dark and mysterious world which enables them to transcend and escape from the existing one. Only women can play with time, only they undergo manifestations.

THE BELOVED AND THE MISSING

In each of the two paintings on manifestations the subject is a child. Children perhaps represent a primitive world, but also one which is purer and more innocent, a happy world which has been lost as have been the Classical and the rural. López García undertakes the reconstruction of those realities, though perhaps understanding from the start that this is an impossible task: children do not live «happily» except when they sleep—dream?—(*Maria Asleep*, the painter's daughter, sculpture in polychromed wood, 1964; *Girl Asleep*, oil 1960) or when they play (*Carmencita at Play*, oil, 1959-60). In the other cases (*Carmen*, oil, 1960; *Maria*, the painter's daughter, sculpture in stained wood; two 1966 oils on *Carmencita*, his younger daughter; *Carmencita's Head*, bronze, 1971) childhood is not portrayed as a paradise but rather with perplexity and fear, and always melancholy.

There is no reconstruction of the rural world. The painter exhibits a series of drawings, already regarded as Realist (*Room in Tomelloso*, *Farmyard in Tomelloso* and *Santa María Street*, all from 1972; and *Kitchen in Tomelloso* 1975-80) where his hometown appears deserted, the rooms empty and household items covered with sheets. His hometown—which in his early work could be taken as meaning life, mankind, and which the artist dealt with from the point of view of the contradiction between a beloved, yet, missing world—is now deserted, abandoned.

Antonio López García, the deserted urban environment

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In art, and fundamentally in painting, the 60's are typified by an extraordinary variety of trends and styles: Informalism, Conceptual Art, Minimal Art, Pop, Arte Povera, Op Art, etc. In this context, it is remarkable how well Realism—never totally abandoned—has fared. But one cannot speak of Realism proper as what has characterized it in our century is its diversity of forms, well represented in Spain: photographic realism (Claudio Bravo), critical realism (Eduardo Arroyo, Equipo Crónica), social realism (Amalia Avia, Juan Genovés), intimist realism (Carmen Laffon) and what some have termed magic realism (Antonio López García).

This diversity of realism reveals the difficulty of its own essence: *mimesis*, or imitation. How can the Aristotelian premise of this-being-that be translated into an image of art? Is it possible to reproduce the surrounding reality?

This problem can be sensed especially in the iconography of urban landscape, which started to gain relevance in the 20's. The problem is based on three great movements: German Realists, Surrealists and American Hyperrealists.

The images of the first group—*Synagogue* (1919) by Max Beckman, *Studio on a Roof* (1920) by Schlicter, *Republican Automata* (1920) by George Grosz, *The Speculator* (1920-21) by Davringhausen, *La Grève* (1931) by Franz Radziwill—the individual takes part in the empirical reality by adding to it some elements it does not possess itself.

Among the Surrealists, special mention should be made of Dorotea Tanning and her interiors (both interiors and exteriors make up the urban landscape) in which she introduces fantastic figures—*Birthday* (1942), *Little Night Music* (1946)—and the everyday poetic images of Balthus *The Street* (1933).

Is the Aristotelian premise fulfilled here?

In the works of the American Hyperrealists—Este's *Nighthawks* (1967), Bechtle's *Palm Trees* (1971), Salt's *Bruised Boneville* (1971-72)—the city is represented merely on a physical level, becoming a meaningless object.

What sense can a meaningless reality make? Is there such a thing as a «meaningless reality»?

Antonio López García's landscapes ambiguously—everything is ambiguous about his work—belong somewhere among Surrealism, Realism and Hyperrealism. He takes on tradition (the influence would have to be traced as far back as Italian Renaissance) and transforms it, producing a unique pictography with its own reality.

«The impossible but credible is preferable to the possible but incredible», writes Aristotle in his *On Poetics*,¹ giving evidence to one of the central problems of *mimesis*, i. e., coherence (which he later returns to).² The problem of *mimesis* or imitation, has for long been posed in the Western World as one of the most polemic and basic (particularly so by Realists) throughout the history of the theory of Art. For Aristotle, *mimesis* means representing activities, in particular those present in nature, as is his initial assessment in *On Poetics*.³

Imitating does not mean copying or simply imitating the physical nature of things, as is the case with the Americans, but rather reconstructing reality⁴. If *mimesis* is not merely copying individual entities, then what is it? Here, it is necessary to discuss two categories as important to Aristotle as they are to López García: the Particular and the Universal. Aristotle clearly differentiates between poetry and history and tells us about some «types of men» to whom he later gives a name⁵. The General or Universal, a characteristic of the «type», is peculiar to poetry and art. The individual is a feature which, according to the Greek philosopher, defines history. But the credibility of poetry and art requires a concretion of that Universality. Aristotle implies both categories: the General («type of men») and the Particular («the name» which is given them). This is the peculiar feature of their individuality whose kinds must all be men and concrete, unique characters. Imitation implies creating a world, not merely reproducing it.⁶

Antonio López García's Realism must be interpreted within this context. One cannot speak of Hyperrealism proper, at least in the sense developed by American Realists. Often achieving such a level of technical perfection and imitative exactness that we may be tricked into believing that his images are merely a reproduction of reality, López García's Realism, on the contrary, displays throughout its several stages a series of plastic and conceptual elements that break away from reality and generate another which only belongs to the image itself and cannot be found in the outer world. These elements characterize the painter's several different stages. Here, we cannot speak of stages in the common sense of the work as one does not start where the other ends, but rather, they overlap. For instance, his Surrealist works come before his rather more Realist ones, but between 1961 and 1965 both «styles» coexist.

Reminiscent of Italian Renaissance, his first stage (1950-59) is characterized by a two-fold Classicism. On the one hand, there is a representation of an absolutely abstract and idealized world in which the Classical figure is «idyllically» related to the landscape. This will be discussed later as it poses the problem of reconstructing a lost world which has its own separate place. On the other, there is a reference to everyday life. Moreover if everyday affairs are defined as daily

which reality itself does not seem to be mediated by words but which, rather, becomes incandescent, hoisted up, and transparent *through* words; in short, passages in which words and reality are inconceivably identified. Freed from the gold chain of oralism, these same words will become in a later age agile brush strokes which the poet skilfully, cunningly, and deliberately makes use of, to create a certain effect; we thus have no choice but to long for the broken spell.

It might be instructive now to proceed with two extreme terms of this very long process —on the one hand, Homer, and, on the other, some outstanding representative of the contemporary novel— in order to emphasize the extent and the diversity of ways which words have of exerting themselves to reach what they themselves are not, to grasp the virgin and unattainable reality. Above all, I would like to note the fact that the ever more considerable subtlety of the technical means of observation and reproduction of reality moves along with the feeling —ever more intense itself— that the gap is insurmountable. So, I would say that to a large extent the effectiveness of the Homeric passage we have quoted derives from the admirable finale of the last verse: *stilpnai d'apeipton eersai* (from which fell glistening dew). One is almost tempted to attest the theories on the universal symbology of the unconscious archetypes: the old poet naturally did not have to rely on the speculations of any Jungian psychoanalyst to produce by intuition an imagery of fresh lively water courses to allude to the fundamental forces of life and sexuality.

The other side of the coin is the fact that literature —at the opposite end of its development— sets out to the extraordinary, and evermore ardent and splendidly desperate quest for grasping the irreducible singularity of objects (which become evermore objectival, as the dream of fusing with the magical word is evermore beyond reach) in their materialness, in their most tangible entity and, also, in their unattainable time dimension. Thus a turning point is reached where the terms are inverted: an out-and-out, nearly microscopic precision tends to be assimilated with the maximum abstraction, even to melt with it.

I would not like to finish without recalling a famous example from Proust's *Recherche*, viz., the description of the texture of Albertine's body, of the granularity of the surface of her skin, which the narrator is so close to that it takes on a distant, stoney complexion, an almost geological iridescent quality. However, this microscopic (or perhaps we should call it clinical) realism has not forsaken its ancestral dimension either, a dimension which, lacking a better word, we could call *sacramental*. Indeed, when the barrier of the surface of the bodies is transgressed, in a mad effort to break through to otherness, to seek for the other side of the body, the narrator chooses a series of adjectives to describe Albertine's tongue (*nourricière* is the key word), as well as a certain imagery that the literary tradition of the Western world has saved away, without hesitating, for the consecrated bread. Therefore, these opposed extremes (a puntillist impressionism and an almost religious mythification, which forget about their origins, involuntarily or not) wind up meeting one way or another.

JAUME PÓRTULAS

1. Translation by J. Griffin, *Homer on Life and Death*, Oxford, Clarendon. Press, 1980.

2. The fundamental landmarks of this polemic for Classical studies are Otto Regenbogen, *Mimesis: Eine Rezension* (reprinted in the *Keine Schriften*); Ludwig Edelstein, «Modern Language Notes», June 1950, pages 426-431. Auerbach replied in his *Epilogema a Mimesis*. Added to the Italian translation of his book published by Einaudi and later reprinted in the volume *Da Montaigne a Proust. Ricerche sulla storia della cultura francese*, Bari, 1970, which is where I have taken them from.

3. By the way, these must have been charmingly modest times as criticism did not yet have any pretensions over a scientific jargon of its own.

4. Cfr. Laurence Kahn, *Hermès passe ou les amiguities de la communication*, Paris. Maspero, 1978, page 167, «moment intense de la communication à l'endroit où ne se creuse pas l'écart entre le discours et son objet, ni entre le locuteur, le destinataire, et le message. En cela on ne fera que conclure à la efficacité de cette parole, efficacité qui est celle-là même du chant lyrique exprimant la genèse et l'ordonnement du monde: il suffit, le verbe peut.»

5. Reutilizing narrative patterns —once their initial mythical dimension has been superseded— is one domain where observations similar to Auerbach's could be applied in a particularly useful way. But this is a task which, to a large extent at least, must yet be undertaken.

6. Cfr. J. Goody and I. Watt, *The Consequences of Literacy* in J. Goody (ed.), *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, Cambridge, The University Press, pages 27-68.

7. Carles Miralles gave a lecture (not yet published) on this problem making an effort to further the basic intuitions of E.H. Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, Harvard, The University Press, 1963, and other critics.

8. I am not using the word haphazardly. Emphasizing the fact that Marcel Proust was the child and the brother of surgeons and that his brother Robert wrote a textbook on the surgery of the female genital organs, George Painter says, «... a subject that is not at all removed from Marcel's mind while describing a naked Albertine while asleep.» Cfr. G. Painter, *Marcel Proust. A Biography*, Volume I, London, 1960.

These remarks can be related to the extremely complex studies on Realism in the Occidental tradition (realism being the most ambiguous and the most committed of all the terms used by literary criticism). This subject has promoted a huge amount of bibliography, from the pioneering, and nowadays standard-reference book by Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis* (significantly subtitled *Dargestellte Wirklichkeit in der abendländischen Literatur*). Traditionally, the Classical philologists have complained that the Greek and Latin authors —and Homer in particular— are not very well treated in the pages of Auerbach's book. In the subsequent controversy (often engaged in secondary questions),² it was perhaps Auerbach himself who phrased things best when he claimed for literary criticism the right —and the risk— of using commonly used words (such as the term «realism») in spite of the fact that they have not have had the same meaning throughout history.³

The type of reality the first Greek poets were interested in is entirely different from the one we are accustomed to, as they seek the paradigmatic reality of myths. It is not only that certain narrations are truer than the trivia of everyday life that is so insignificant; it is also that these everyday affairs only make full sense when they imitate certain mythical models, as if it were a question of repeating endlessly the same minuet and replacing the performers once and again.

The myth does not describe or represent reality: it is the foundation of reality. The artistic imitation of reality through words implies, in modern languages, postulating the existence of a copy and an original. On the other hand, in poetics as practiced by the Greek oral tradition, this hypothetical original (the reality beyond words) is not felt as the object of imitation; what matters is the identification of the poet and the audience with the myth.⁴ Thanks to the procedure of oralism, Greek poetry has build up a domain of efficacious words. Otherwise, when words and myths refer to something else and not back to themselves, they do so by periodically taking up some ritual. If we say that Greek poetry was at the same time mythical and realistic, we are not talking about two alternative and opposing qualities: the one depended on the other and justifiedly so.

When the boundaries of myth were marked, when it lost some of its extent and meaning, its patterns survived as narrative segments capable of organizing a narration (which at first had been equivalent —but no longer so— to structuring reality): they became recipes that could be used to make consumer works such as comedies, or romantical novels, but their artistic status had been devaluated.⁵

The great break between words and things was carried out by writing. Through writing, words became objects. They no longer exist only in the aural space, in the space lying between the mouth of the speaker and the ear of the listener. They have become visible. By taking us elsewhere they create reality through extrapolation: that reality which we cannot grasp, which escapes us, which is beyond our reach. Since the concept of reality is historical, it exists only when writing exists: it is that place beyond words which written words try to capture and never quite manage to because it is of a nature that cannot be reached. The Greeks made the discovery of language as the mirror of reality precisely when the oral system underwent a crisis, when words stopped being the things they represented and started referring to things that were on a different plane, that were in the profundity of a new dimension. Therefore, in the case of Archaic Greece —and to great extent of Classical Greece as well— terms such as *reality* and *realism* are out of place and time because they are inadequate to describe the ways of a literature based on oralism.

When the alphabet spreads in a traditional society, there arises for the first time an abyss between words and things. In oral societies there was a denotative referential immediacy instead: the web of words tightly embraced the objects and allowed no room for any distancing. Even if it seems to be a paradox, reality (understood as an entity that is placed, with its laws and its particularly difficult coherence, in front of the person who dresses it with words) is the product of an irremediable gap, of an alienation; it is a product of its age in Greece (*circa* the end of the 5th Century B.C. Thucydides being the most clear example) when for the first time the author fully uses the writing for his needs (as opposed to the needs of oralism) and exploits it systematically (a fact which does not mean that the writing had not been used before sporadically, to an extent that is variable and difficult to estimate); and when at the same time the literary work is meant for an audience of readers or, at least, for an audience of people listening to someone reading aloud.⁷

It follows that for all that makes reference to the perception of reality and to the means used to express this perception, Archaic Greek poetry followed very different paths from the ones taken by later literary tradition. Contrary to what Auerbach suggested, this statement makes sense especially for the period that came *before* the constitution of the system of Classical rhetoric to which this great Romanist quite rightly ascribes great importance.

It seems that every generation is meant to long for a different aspect of Hellenism. The Classics are reinvented once and again throughout time. As regards our generation, we find particularly interesting and pleasurable speculations such as the ones contained in Plato's *Cratylus* about words as non-conventional signs nor labels, but as something that somehow contains the thing referred to. We feel an obstinate longing for an impossible unconventionalization of the linguistic sign, for recovering the bewitching nature of words, for groping about — once left aside the awareness that the sigh is nothing but a representation of a mythical perspective. We especially appreciate a certain type of passage (the *Dios apaté*, is an outstanding example) of the poetry prior to the final victory of writing, passages in

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There is an aspect of Homer's poetry which I believe is not emphasized often enough in the terms it should be, even though it is fundamental for to understanding of certain aspects of the old poet. I am speaking of the fact that, despite appearing to be fascinated by the outer surface of things, he is capable of not restricting himself, of not limiting himself to mere description, but rather of using the outer image to convey, to reveal the deepest quality of things. Nevertheless, the scholars of formulaic oralism —however praiseworthy and however much they may have transcended the stagnant waters of Homeric criticism— have singularly overlooked this aspect. It is clear that these scholars are particularly interested in emphasizing the fact that in Homer there is only one way to describe things, viz., canonic phrases, all of which are present for a special purpose of economy. The bards have no interest in altering them, as what they strive for is to reflect the permanent and regular qualities of each being and each object. The formulaic qualities of this language would imply that everything be standard; all men say the same things about the same themes: the formula involves a great unity of experience. From the moment when —thanks to the economy of this style— words coincide with some models regarded by all as true, it is no longer necessary to distinguish between words and reality. On the contrary, the formula is regarded as an adequate representation of reality, in perfect accord with it. The Homeric language is untouched by the distancing that for us would be implied by the awareness of the fact that there is something virgin and ungraspable beyond words. Indeed, it does not seem that there was a notion of language as a mediating element between reality and the speaker available to the Greeks of Homeric times. In fact, what is this notion of reality which is so vital to us even though it is so difficult to grasp, and with regard to which the Ancient Greeks showed themselves so blind, if it were not the unknown domain beyond words? We know these are significant as only through them do we perceive things. On the other hand, in the unhindered oral world of the *Iliad* there is an identity between things and words. To illustrate this, perhaps the metaphor of a web would not be too far fetched: words restrict things; they bind them; their texture gets confused with the texture of reality itself.

To illustrate these speculations I will use the final verses of the *Dios apaté*. It should not be possible to give a proper description of the sexual union of Zeus and Hera, for which would be the appropriate words to describe hierogamy, to describe the sacred union of the two main divinities of the Homeric Pantheon? However, the closing strophe of this passage is one of the most brilliant in the whole of the *Iliad* (XIV, 346-350):

Therewith the son of Cronos clasped his wife in his arms and beneath them the divine earth sent up new growing grass, dewy lotus, crocus and hyacinth, thick and soft, which raised them high from the earth. Thereon they lay, and had above to cover them a fair golden cloud, from which fell glistening dew.¹

Undoubtedly, I could be reproached for having quoted a passage that is notably renowned as atypical of the *Iliad*. But the aspect we are interested in is not at all atypical. On the contrary, it clearly illustrates one fundamental characteristic of the Homeric spell. The oralist scholars —as was noted before— underline the fact that in Homer anything can be expressed, though blended in and transformed by force of the formulaic language. The process of crystallization of formulas is useful to drastically reduce the percentage of arbitrariness in language. This is the reason that we have been able to describe it more as a web than a label characterized by a marked feeling of conventionality. Thus, it is a language that is closer to a charm. The facts are that Homer does not usually force his expression, he does not introduce atypical elements that are foreign to his treasure of crystallized phrases, or elements that are sensationalist or meant to be exceptional. This verification has led some critics to say the Homeric style is monotonous and incapable of achieving a variety of tones and levels, of striking notes other than those of relentless dignity: an undisturbable, Olympic, but also monotonous sublimeness. This is why there is a need to insist on the fact that the homogenizing strength of the formular diction is not at odds with its transforming capability, the latter of which relies on a subtle skill to combine elements which are in themselves regular and constant, though charged with a remarkable potential for revelation.

The old poet knows how to go beyond appearances and reaches the deepest sources of reality without having to make use of atypical unheard-of expressions that do not belong to his own tradition. The cosmically impersonal, brief, strokes of the *Dios apaté* which we have quoted (the mention of a field that is turning green, the miraculous budding of vegetation, the clouds above, the mysterious glistening dew) are, as a metaphor of sexual intercourse, one of the most marvellous examples of ellipsis in Archaic poetry. More so than any other poetical form that has come down to us, the Homeric poems are a clear example of the basic postulate which states that each linguistic element is comprehensible only in reference to the whole of the system it belongs to. A word or a sentence do not mean anything literally if we do not bear in mind, whether as a tacit memory or as significant remoteness, the immense background of the poem.

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Publication of the Official
Association of Architects of Catalonia

April, May, June

Q U A D E R N S

