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The Interpretation of Architecture as a Methodological Problem

Interpretácie architektúry ako metodologický problém

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Štúdia sa zaoberá štyrmi metodologickými problémami interpretácie architektonického diela. Prvý a základný problémový okruh interpretácie možno popísať ako hľadanie vzťahov medzi funkciami a významami a ako utváranie zmyslu architektonického diela. Druhým problémovým okruhom, ktorý nadväzuje čiastočne na ten prvý, je premyslenie vzťahu interpretácie a nadinterpretácie. Tento vzťah na jednej strane súvisí s prvým okruhom a z druhej strany je súčasťou oveľa komplexnejšej otázky pozície interpretačného výkonu, ktorá ho zakladá. Možno ho vyjadriť disjunkciou: buď je interpretácia oživovaním diela a následným procesom výkladu diela na základe hľadania jeho vnútorných súvislostí, alebo je súčasťou či pokračovaním, prípadne dokonca zavŕšením tvorivého procesu. Tretí problémový okruh takisto čiastočne nadväzuje na prvý a dotýka sa diferenciácie významov architektonického diela. Niektoré z významov prichádzajú do architektonického diela z vonkajších kontextov a zvyčajne sa označujú ako heterogénne: napríklad ikonografické programy neutvorené architektkami či architektmi. Iné vznikajú v procese tvorby diela ako objavy architektiek a architektov, prípadne vo vnútri inter-architektonických nadväzností a pomenúvame ich ako autonómne. A napokon štvrtým problémovým okruhom je povaha či charakter interpretačného výkonu. Interpretácia môže byť neopakovateľnou a jedinečnou udalosťou alebo, naopak, môže smerovať k opakovateľnosti, overiteľnosti a autokritickosti, teda k niečomu, čo zvyčajne nazývame metódou. Spomínané štyri okruhy tvoria štruktúru, štúdie a rámce diskusie s etablovanými semiotickými, umelecko-historickými, filozofickými a architektonicko-teoretickými koncepciami a súčasne sa stávajú východiskom k sformulovaniu vlastnej metodologickej pozície ako jednej z možných odpovedí na otázky v nich sformulované.

V prvom problémovom okruhu diskutujeme Ecovu semiotickú pozíciu, ktorá sa pokúsila preklenúť priepasť medzi funkciami a významami architektonického diela tvrdením, že architektúra je súčasť kultúry a všetko, čo sa stane jej súčasťou, sa premieňa na znaky: stolička, múr, dom nie sú len nástroje, ale ich formy a tvary sú znaky, ktoré denotujú ich funkcie a naznačujú nám, ako sa používajú alebo môžu používať. Architektonické znaky sú však komplexnejšie a neoznačujú len funkcie architektonického diela, ale súčasne konotujú im vlastné sekundárne významy: stolička je nielen na sedenie, ale môže sa stať kráľovským kreslom (trónom), prípadne elektrickým kreslom. Takisto katedrála nie je len zhromaždisko veriacich, ale aj mestom v meste či nebeským Jeruzalemom. Konotácie architektonických foriem teda poukazujú na to, ako dokáže daná kultúra stoličku a katedrálu uplatňovať pri vyjadrení svojich predstáv o svete a hodnôt. Architektonické dielo netvorí jeden znak, ale celé sústavy znakov, ktoré podľa ustálených pravidiel denotujú a konotujú funkcie a významy a generujú zmysel architektonických diel. Ustálené pravidlá nazýva Eco kódmi a rozlišuje syntaktické a sémantické kódy. Architektky a architekti podľa Eca majú k dispozícii takéto ustálené znakové sústavy a kódy a tie síce umožňujú variabilné kombinovanie znakov a kódov, ale súčasne nastoľujú závažný problém: kde a ako sa utvárajú nové kódy alebo ešte inak: je architektonická tvorba iba rétorikou dômyselne a ideologicky využívajúcou architektonické formy na posilnenie svojho pôsobenia, alebo je schopná utvárať aj nové formy a kódy? Ecov systém architektonickej semiotiky nastoľuje nielen túto dilemu, ale upozorňuje aj na ďalšie tri problémové okruhy: na vzťah heterogénnych a autonómnych významov a na súvislosti medzi pozíciou interpretácie a povahou či charakterom interpretačného výkonu. Predbežne sa diskutujú vymedzovaním pozícií Erwina Panofského a Hansa Sedlmayra, Christiana Norberga-Schulza, Petra Eisenmana a Nelsona Goodmana. V rámci tejto diskusie sa pokúšame prepojiť ich riešenia vzťahov medzi konvenčnými a dejúcimi sa významami zavedením tretej funkcie architektonického diela, ktorá popri denotáciách a konotáciách sprostredkúva tvorivé riešenia tzv. otvorených či uspokojivo nevyriešených architektonických problémov a úloh v tvorivom dialógu architektky alebo architekta s predchádzajúcimi generáciami tvorkýň a tvorcov architektúry. V tomto sprostredkovaní a dialógu nikto nemôže využívať len hotové významy a ustálené kódy, ale práve v ňom sa rodia dejúce sa významy reprezentované na jednej strane vnútro-architektonickými kódmi, ktoré majú spochybňujúcu a kritickú povahu, a na strane druhej reprezentované novovznikajúcimi formami anticipujúcimi nové riešenia, ktoré si spätne vyžadujú overenia a akceptácie. Túto tretiu funkciu nazývame autopoietickou funkciou, ktorá osciluje na pomedzí ostenzie, reprezentácie a nereprezentácie.

V druhom problémovom okruhu preberáme dve metodologické stanoviská, ktoré sa vyhranili v debate o pozícii interpretačného výkonu. Prvou je rekonštruujúce stanovisko, ktoré vychádza z predpokladu, že architektonické dielo v jeho ukončenej a vecnej podobe je potrebné rekonštruujúco zvýznamniť, ale proces rekonštrukcie je vedený v súlade s povahou diela, ktoré môže mať podobu uzavretého či otvoreného diela alebo textu, prípadne inter-architektonických sietí. Druhou je konštruujúce stanovisko, ktoré predpokladá, že každé dielo je v princípe neukončené a je len kandidátom na to, aby sa v danej

kultúre etablovalo ako architektonické dielo. Túto premenu z pozície kandidáta na pozíciu etablovaného diela mu umožňuje práve interpretácia, ktorá v tomto smere završuje proces tvorby architektonického diela. Obe stanoviská v sebe obsahujú možné odpovede na otázky kritérií pravdivosti alebo správnosti interpretačného výkonu. Z pozície nami navrhovanej tretej funkcie architektonického diela a autopoietického kódu sú architektky a architekti nielen prvými interpretmi vlastných návrhov a riešení, ale súčasne – v dialogických diskusiách diel s dielami, riešení s riešeniami – aj rozhodujúcou silou etablovania architektonického diela. Napokon, sú aj zásadnou silou diferenciácií medzi primárnymi, sekundárnymi a autopoietickými významovými vrstvami diela.

V treťom problémovom okruhu si zasa všímame dve extréme pozície. Prvou je pozícia metodologizmu alebo metodologického anarchizmu. Metodologizmus je takou petrifikovanou podobou metódy, ktorá v sebe neobsahuje autokritické korekčné mechanizmy. Metodologický anarchizmus je zasa stanovisko, ktoré neuznáva metodický apriorizmus metódy, ale vychádza z presvedčenia, že každý architektonický problém je natoľko špecifický, že si vyžaduje vždy nové a neopakovateľné metódy. Metodologizmus prehliada jedinečnosť diela, kým metodologický anarchizmus ju zasa absolutizuje. Z pozície tretej funkcie a autopoietických kódov architektonické dielo chápeme ako jedinečné riešenie otvorených všeobecných architektonických problémov, ktoré v sebe obsahuje sformulované i realizované rozhodnutia vo vnútro-architektonickom dialógu. Takéto chápanie diela si vyžaduje komunikatívnu metódu zohľadňujúcu všetky tri funkcie a kodifikované významy, ako aj dejúce sa významy vrátane neustálených vznikajúcich kódov.

V štvrtom problémovom okruhu sa na príklade interpretácie jedného z architektonických diel Vladimíra Dedečka usilujeme preukázať, že komunikatívna metóda interpretácie funguje ako hypotetická rekonštrukcia rozmanitých rozhodovaní – v tomto prípade architekta –, ktoré vznikali v dialógu architektonických riešení a až architektonický objav usporiadania architektonických kódov, ako aj konvenčných a dejúcich sa významov umožňuje pochopiť singularitu diela v jeho možných opakovaniach a súčasne prepojiť pozície heteronómneho kultúrneho kontextualizmu a vnútro-architektonického imanentizmu tak, že ukazujeme, ako môžu autonómne architektonické riešenia určitej podoby klastrového usporiadania do seba prijímať aj možné heteronómne, no autorsky zvnútornené zmýšľanie architekta ako človeka.

Introduction[1]

In this essay, we hope to address a few methodological issues in interpreting works of architecture that have gradually shown themselves to be problematic yet at the same time productive. If we accept interpretation as one possible approach to an architectural work, then the fundamental issue of interpretation becomes the question of the sense of the work in relation to, and in distinction from, preestablished and relatively stable meanings. An equally important range of issues, related to the first and fundamental one, has to do with rethinking not just the relationship between interpretation and overinterpretation, but also positioning the interpretative act: i.e., asking whether interpretation takes the work of architecture as its primary point of departure and defers to its composition and nature (its "workliness"), or whether interpretation is considered the fulfilment of the process of creating the work of architecture. Beyond these ranges of problems, there arise two subsidiary ranges characterizing the nature of interpretation. The first concerns an architectural work's autonomous and heteronomous semantic layers, and the second relates to the association between the "repeatability" of a method of interpretation and the uniqueness of a work of architecture. We endeavor here to remark on each of these ranges of problems while also striving to propose a possible answer to the questions raised within them. In this process, we draw upon established conceptions of art history, semiotics, and architecture.

Meaning or Function: Semantic Layers in an Architectural Work

The crucial questions for a theory of the interpretation of a work of architecture are, on the one hand, whether it in any way carries meanings, and what is thus embodied and communicated; and on the other, how and by what means it communicates. Is it necessarily a verbalizable message, and in this case does it entail a specific language or code?

At present we find but few advocates for the modernist position – which modernists themselves disturbed and transgressed – namely, that architecture is a machine, i.e., that it simply functions, and does not indicate or represent anything. Umberto Eco, with a nod to Roland Barthes, demonstrated this with the aid of the thought experiment of the cave, in which everything that is within the sphere of culture becomes a sign, and even machines and instruments signify their own functions.[2] In his analysis of architecture, Eco elucidated that an architectural work denotes so-called *primary functions*, understandable as generalized acts or actions connected to objects, whether they be any instruments or works of art. In addition to denotation, architecture, like the vast majority of other objects and instruments, also connotes and refers, for example, to manifestations

of a primary function within a given culture and period, or within its components, these ranging from fashion to politics and ideology. Thus, a staircase primarily denotes the stepped surmounting of differences in height, and a cathedral a space for believers to gather during liturgy and remind themselves of basic events and articles of faith. But a staircase in a certain period might be part of a monumental entry to a palazzo's *piano nobile*, or a separate part of a house with the transitional qualities of a hall with stairs, as in the *Treppenhaus*; or conversely it might be a typical American fire escape, or a staircase to nowhere. And a cathedral might connote the city of heaven within the worldly city, or it might, through its spatial order, manifest a form of thinking formulated in the Christian *summa theologiae*. A work of architecture denotes and connotes these functions and meanings in various combinations, duplications, and absences, by means of architectural and extra-architectural codes. Eco holds that architectural codes are both *syntactic* and *semantic*. Syntactic codes are subject only to structural and constructional logic (for instance, relations of clustered piers supporting a rib-vaulted ceiling, flying buttresses, column-lintel and wall-ceiling-floor relationships, and the like), and have no denotative or connotative function. On the other hand, semantic codes mediate references to primary and secondary functions, which are subdivided in turn into *elemental* and *type-related* codes. The first comprise basic building elements like walls, windows, roofs, and staircases, which are for the most part associated with primary functions. However, these elements, further elaborated, include other elements that embody secondary functions: for example, the metope, the column capital, the tympanum, or the contemporary digital facade. Eco also includes among these elements what he calls "spatial configurations", which denote programs and, as such, connote an "ideology" of inhabited space: dining room, bedroom, living room, but also choir, cathedral nave, matroneum, etc. As for typological codes, Eco divides these into two groups: the first are *functional-social types* like hospitals, schools, houses, railway stations, and so on; the second are *morphological-spatial types* like longitudinal and centralized buildings, *Raumplan* and free-plan interiors, etc.[3] This classification of architectural codes makes it clear that whether the codes and complexes at issue are syntactic or semantic, they are in any case sedimented and codified formations, and hence create a "lexis" (vocabulary) of architecture. This is what Peter Eisenman, for instance, means when he speaks of "anteriority", referring to the repertory of concepts and ideas that architects have available to them even before they begin to design or build. And for this same reason. Eco calls them "preconceived schemata"; they are generally unchanging relationships, and architecture utilizes them much as rhetoric utilizes preexisting rhetorical figures. It is on this basis that Eco can state that architecture is a form of rhetoric.[4] And this despite the fact that he understands – as confirmed by the entire conclusion of his essay "Function and Sign: The Semiotics of Architecture" – that architecture is a creative activity, and therefore it inescapably amends not just meanings, but above all codes and their lexes, and in doing so becomes (in contrast to rhetoric) a form of information. Eco hints that one way for architecture to update its meanings – in addition to the transformation of its own codes to the point of becoming an idiolect – lies in making reference to codes that are extra-architectural, which serve to link architecture to contemporary societal events, to inventions in science (materials and technologies), and to cultural contexts, i.e., to everything Eco calls "ideology", in his own definition of that term. Yet he simultaneously recognizes that not only does the dominance of exterior, so-called extra-architectural codes not of necessity initiate architecture's autopoietic forces, but it can indeed destroy or decompose them. Here it is not just the currency of a work or the innovativeness and updating of architecture that are in play, but understanding as well: in other words, a constant re-determination and transformation of relationships among rhetoric, ideology, and information. Thus, in his model of architecture he recommends that architects consider, as part of the design process, how to make sure primary functions are sufficiently *variable*, and secondary functions sufficiently *open*.[5]

We have chosen to elucidate Eco's theory extensively for several reasons. First: his system of architectural poses the question of relationships between functions and meanings. Second: this system can represent and summarize problems that arose previously in iconographic and iconological approaches to meaning in architecture. If we recall that Günter Bandmann (in connection with the cathedral) juxtaposed two layers of meanings in a single building – the sacred and the historical – and Hans Sedlmayr tried to bring in sensory experience in the form of "explicit or immediately ostensive character"[6] (*anschauliches Charakter*) with its spiritual meanings in essentially a four-layer medieval allegory, we will find that the problem does not in fact lie in the multilayered meanings of a work of architecture. Indeed, these can be identified in almost any architectural element, as well

as in the spatial whole.[7] Rather the problem lies in the way the work of architecture refers to meanings that have already been codified, in various senses, as if architecture were unable to generate its own meanings. In formulating his iconological method, Panofsky tried to resolve this problem by distinguishing between what he called *natural* and *conventional* meanings, on one hand, and the *inner meaning* and *content of a work*, on the other, where the former two collaborate in forming the latter two. In his interpretation of the Gothic cathedral as a Gothic summa – i.e., his reading of the cathedral's spatial division and segmentation on the basis of a homomorphy (structural similarity) with the *summa theologiae* – we are easily able to identify the iconographic sources. Yet if we desire to identify an *inner* iconological meaning, it would be better to ask whether and how the cathedral participates in the formulation of medieval scholastic thought, as opposed to merely clarifying and explicating this thought. Such a question also reverberates in regard to Sedlmayr's methods of interpretation: he too pointed to the sacral meanings codified in a particular period, specifically in relation to a major sacred building by Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach in Vienna, demonstrating the revised meanings that its ambivalent spatial arrangement revealed with respect to the actuality of Emperor Charles VI's power and politics. Here again the question remains whether and how Fischer von Erlach's configuration of forms and spaces carries those meanings that had recently emerged and in his architectural work. Third: Umberto Eco indicated that an architectural work intervenes directly in people's lives, initiating not just a change in their perception and understanding of the world, but also a change in dwelling, in both a narrow and a broader sense.[8] It is in the processes and situations of dwelling that comprehension and interpretation occur, and existential meanings arise that are not always, or not necessarily, codifiable in systems of signs and symbols. Meanwhile Christian Norberg-Schulz, who writes about existential meanings, not only connects them to life situations in specific places or in existential spaces – indicating the way they serve purposes of orientation and identification[9] – but also considers them concretizable in nondescriptive symbolic systems, among which he includes architecture. And within the latter, it is spatial formations and morphological types that are able to mediate existential meanings. In this aspect, he stands close to Eco and Sedlmayr, despite the inability of descriptive symbolic systems – including language, and above all scientific language – to convey existential meanings. At the same time, this view distinguishes Norberg-Schulz from Juhani Pallasmaa or Gilles Deleuze, who regard as problematic (though from different positions) symbolic mediation and representation in architecture. The former refers to experience, including aesthetic experience in the Deweyan sense, while the latter writes of how the architectural work mediates perceptions and affects. Fourth: in 1968, Umberto Eco would not have had the chance to reflect on the ideas put forward by Eisenman in the late 1960s, and after him Bernard Tschumi. Independently, though in some ways quite similarly, Eisenman and Tschumi pursued architectural strategies that could problematize codified meanings and functions in architecture. While they used syntactic strategies differently, they both endeavored to prove that syntactic strategies or syntactic codes can create meaning, an idea that Eco, in his typology of architectural codes, rejected.[10]

Thus, an insistent question arises in relation to the theory of interpreting a work of architecture: how can various forms of meanings and representations be connected? Nelson Goodman offers one possibility in expanding the terms representation and denotation to include expression, exemplification, and indirect or "mediate reference".[11] Another thus far untapped possibility might be to utilize Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of "dialogic meaning", i.e., meaning that is uncodified but constantly recurring. Were it possible to demonstrate how architects use not only codified meanings but also those that have not yet been firmly established, it would open up a new way of explicating inner meanings and also, for architects, of generating intrinsic architectural meanings. Ultimately, with respect to seeking a connection between architectural and extra-architectural codes, the mediating element of "architectonics" and "proto-architectonics" might be utilized as well, as described by the Czech philosophers Karel Kosík in the 1960s and Petr Rezek at present.[12]

In our book *Vladimír Dedeček / Interpretations of His Architecture*, we tested the working hypothesis of this "third function" and of the "intra-architectural code".[13] According to Eco's semiotic model, a work of architecture signifies that what it is intended for; it *denotes* its *first and predominant function*, namely the codified human activity that it embodies in forms and spaces (i.e., its "natural" or literal meanings); and it *connotes* its *second function* – i.e., the various historical connotations of the first function (allegorical, iconographic, and often also iconological meanings). What then is the *third function*? What meanings does it embody, and how does the work of architecture mediate them?

Furthermore, what might this function imply with respect to the problem of interpreting a work of architecture? Thus far, all the forms and methods we have examined in relation to the interpretation of an architectural work have been focused on the finished, completed work of architecture. The architect's interpretative and creative activities have been taken into consideration only in terms of the sedimented procedures of creation that users, critics, historians, and theoreticians have tried to understand. Yet the architect – beyond explicating and interpreting the place, the programs, and the personally developed solutions at various stages of creation, and organizing and rearranging various forms of interpretation, explanation, and pre-understanding as well as non-verbal understanding and elucidation – above all *addresses architecture and shares in its self-renewal*. Eco would probably classify these activities as part of architectural "ideology", and Panofsky would perhaps also classify them among iconological strategies, but their sense is different: clarifying one's own points of departure, building on one's own prior architectural solutions, and questioning and modifying them while entering into dialogue with previously existing answers to a given problem and task in the imaginary memory of architecture – again, this is what Eisenman calls architectural anteriority. And we must add, most importantly: it is the activity of entering into the present architectural debate on problems that have not been definitively resolved. Here, we must stress that what is at stake is the architectural invention of new possibilities of architecture. We can therefore confidently state that architecture is characterized, alongside its primary denotative and secondary connotative functions, also by a *tertiary autopoietic function*. If the primary functions denote the typification of forms of dwelling, and the secondary ones connote characteristic cultural means for their acceptance, modification, and transformation, how then is a tertiary autopoietic function mediated to us?

At first glance it might seem that this tertiary function is the form of representation that Goodman termed exemplification and mediate reference. But we prefer to call it a *hybrid representation*. The main problem in relation to it is that, while it is possible to imagine how new shapes denote new functions and meanings, it is also important to demonstrate how *occurrent meanings and inventions* are represented. While they might be embodied in successive iterations of drawings, designs, and models, or they might be the materialization of some specific stage of design, they are certainly not the objectification of brainstorming and decision-making processes. This is why it is so complicated to identify decision-making processes in designs, project drawings, and built realizations. All that is possible is their "hypothetical reconstruction" through *ex post facto* analysis and interpretation by interdisciplinary teams of contemporary architects, theoreticians, and other interpreters. Despite this, attempts have been made to denote the autopoietic function by identifying deep generative syntactic structures or indexical signs or *traces of difference and deferrals of meaning* (*différance*) as well as *palimpsestic procedures* and the like.[14] Yet the autopoietic function may be both connoted and exemplified: it may be partly connoted, for example, as the reconstruction of architectural ideologies competing within the work.[15] It may also be exemplified through form-giving configurations within architectural works. But most often the autopoetic function is a denotation explicated by connotation and exemplification – in other words, by the procedure that Goodman calls "mediate reference".[16] Yet there is no doubt that occurrent meanings and architectural inventions in a specific work are always a kind of new generation of architecture. Architecture in a state of generation exists at the border between references and representations, it is perpetually becoming an *other* architecture and an *other* architectural profession. In this sense, the autopoietic function is almost impossible to represent; yet it can be mediated, for example by means of what Deleuze describes as percepts and affects associated with the decay of memory over time, including of architectural memory, in the very process of becoming-other. Therefore, hybrid representation is permeated with, among other things, the forces of nonrepresentation.

Another complicated problem is the coding of the tertiary function. It seems that for purposes of this coding architects must rely to some extent on established architectural and extra-architectural codes. Architectural codes in Eco's conception are understood, not quite justifiably, as *codified* and *rhetorical*. Yet the codes of architecture's autopoietic function return to architecture; their signs are *self-reflexive*. They are therefore a part of architectural codes, but at the same time they constantly destroy and open the existing architectural codes in the direction of extra-architectural codes. We call them intra-architectural codes because their role is to initiate the signification of architecture's self-regeneration. How can the elements of these codes be imagined? If the elements of architectural codes are codified (for example, as windows, doors, ceilings, walls, piers, columns, stairs,

living rooms, bedrooms, classrooms, schools, banks, churches, etc.), and if they denote codified activities, then how can uncodified intra-architectural communications and architectural autopoiesis be codified? One possible answer is through the multiplying and doubling of codes.[17] Another is through polyvalent spaces.[18] Yet another is through architectural programs generating transformable forms and spaces that oscillate around traditional prototypes,[19] or even hybrid elements, buildings, and spaces.[20] Were it possible incrementally to elaborate and substantiate the concept of *three basic functions* and *three basic codes*, to do so would also bear upon the stages of interpretative procedures as well as the methods of interpretation.

Interpretation as a Process of Reconstructing/Enlivening a Work, or Interpretation as the Construction of a Work

So far, in contemplating the interpretative possibilities in general and complex interpretations of architecture, two methodological positions have been put forward. The first allows for all forms of explanation of the architectural work, both during and after the work comes into being. However, what is crucial is that the point of departure for this position is always either the architectural task, or the concept, design, or project – i.e., the results of different stages of design – and ultimately also the complete work of architecture, all of which provide frameworks for developing interpretative procedures. Within this position, which is the most widespread one in current architectural thought, several opinions may be distinguished. The first group of opinions takes the nature of the work as a starting point, whether in its various stages of development, or as a complete work, or only as the work itself without any context. For Sedlmayr, on the other hand, the basic point of departure for interpretation is the "written text". The act of interpretation begins with the effort to bring the text to life, proceeding from the text to a reconstruction of the totality of the work (first layer: ostensive [*anschaulich*], second layer: formal-objectual, third layer: noetic), corresponding to the three-layered formation of man (endogenous, emotionally-imaginative and intellectually-willful). Sedlmayr criticizes such an understanding of the task of interpretation that reduces the work of architecture to a thing and its meanings, and concentrates instead on experiencing the ordering force of what he calls the "center" of the work, i.e., its most explicit or striking character.[21] Peter Eisenman is of the opinion that the point of departure should be the work itself as a "text", which in his conception (already differing from that of Sedlmayr in the use of this term) means the work together with its intertextual relationships – but only those that are architectural.[22] For Norberg-Schulz, on the other hand, a work is interlinked with a place and all of its natural, social, and cultural contexts.[23] The second group of opinions in the first-mentioned methodological position is distinguished by its concern with criteria of correctness of interpretation as well as whether to admit only a single interpretation as correct or an infinite number. This question has been debated in relation to both interpretation generally and architectural interpretation specifically.[24] In this context, Sedlmayr and Panofsky not only consider the criteria of correctness but also the corrective mechanisms in interpretative procedures. Sedlmayr regards as one such mechanism the aforementioned ostensive character, which not only assures the work's rebirth, but draws attention (in the individual phases of interpretation based on primary experience) to the fact that an interpretation may be insufficient or of limited complexity. Among interpretations, Sedlmayr selects as correct the one that ascribes the greatest degree of complexity to the work. Panofsky, on the contrary, brings in as corrective mechanisms the history of styles, types, and cultural symbols at each level of his method of interpretation. Most interpreters of architectural works, however, do not take seriously the artist's intention as a criterion for an interpretation's correctness. Goodman attempts to explain this by arguing that a work of architecture, in contrast to other works of art, is not usually absorbed all at once but rather has to be experienced and encountered at different levels, which suggests that interpretation also depends on how we walk or move through a work.[25]
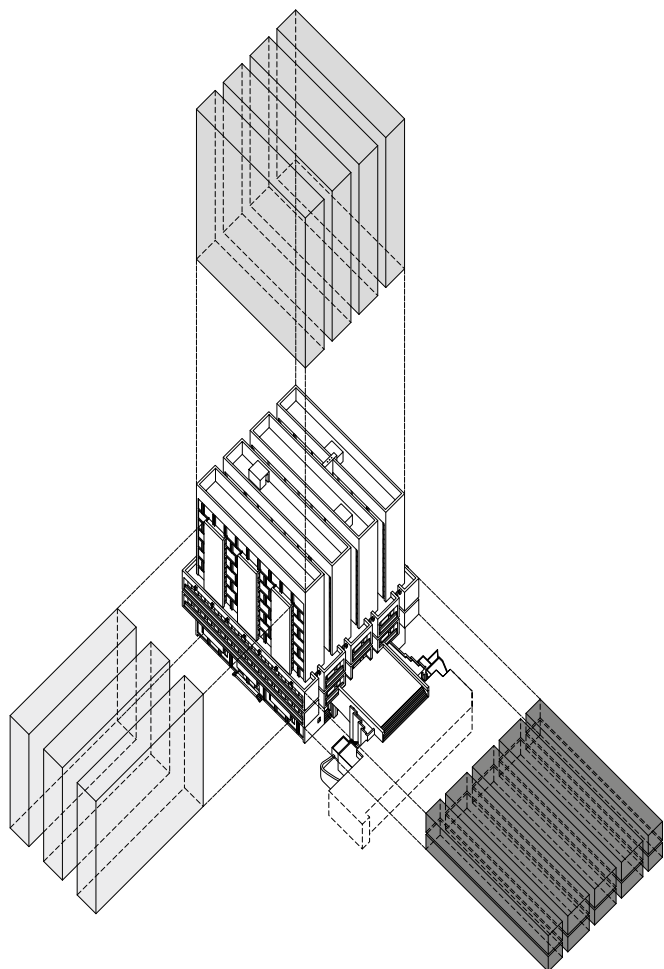
The second methodological position is one that is more rarely applied in architecture, and contradicts Goodman's opinion as just described. It seems to develop Sedlmayr's perspective to an extreme: the work of architecture must not merely be *brought to life*, but must always be *newly created* in situations of dwelling and use, in critical assessments and interpretational discussions. This position too has its different variants. According to the first variant, the mode of the architectural work's existence is considered; but its spatial, formal, and semantic qualities guarantee only that a given community in a given period will regard it as a work of architecture. According to the second variant, even this presupposition is uncertain; in keeping with the logic of the ready-made, it is

not a work's qualities that decide whether it is architectural, but only – to paraphrase the rhetoric of institutional theory – the world of architecture: critics, competition juries, curators of galleries exhibiting architecture, interpreters, users, institutions bestowing architectural prizes, and the like.

Yet because works of architecture directly intervene in the external world and in our environment, delimiting our movements and changing our behavior, living, and thinking by how they are arranged – and therefore imply a relationship between reality and illusion that is different from that of two-dimensional images, films, or sculptures – this last possibility remains rather problematic, as it would be difficult to imagine a situation in which users would maintain that the question of whether their building or house is a work of architecture depends only on them, with no regard for how the rooms are arranged or for how materials are used and functions and meanings embodied. It is our opinion that the first variant of this second methodological position is more plausible in the case of architecture, though we are not arguing that users and interpreters have nothing to do with whether a work becomes a work of architecture. An architectural work becomes architecture when it originates and develops the ambition to be architecture in the stages of its formation in relation to two basic parameters: how creatively it is able to use the sedimented potential of architecture to solve an actual task; and how and with what creative inventions it enriches architecture. These parameters arise from architecture's autopoietic function, which in our view is the decisive criterion of "architecturality". Architecturality is not, however, self-evident or self-reflexive, but rather carries societal, political, and cultural "binary oppositions" in its code and in this code's inscription. Architects as well as interpreters decide whether a work is architecture or not, but the former do so mainly by admitting the possibility of creative innovation in their work, and by this accepting the work, while the latter do so by understanding the aforementioned parameters (even when architects themselves have not yet accepted them) and thus understanding the work's architectural potential. A work of architecture's primary and secondary functions are organized by the autopoietic function, but this – as we have already indicated – is not closed in on itself; rather it works to regenerate architecture through the work itself, and in this state of generation, no codified rules apply for a time. Always and anew, the architect probes, explicates, and interprets the codified rules, desirous of expressing social and cultural contradictions, not as something heteronomous but rather as something autopoietic. This is confirmed by the discord between the ideas of architects about their own work and the initial opinions of the public, critics, and interpreters. It implies that it is principally the work's architects who decide whether the building or design can become a work of architecture, in how they decide to reorder and rearrange through their own procedures, the primary, secondary, and tertiary functions. And this is true even though the resulting work of architecture is almost always the outcome of collaboration with others, including many other professions, and ultimately of those who commission and use it. However, a thorough investigation of how these parameters influence each other can demonstrate what the architects had in mind, and how their intentions specified and manifested themselves in their early phases of design, subsequently in their design development and documentation, and eventually in the realized work. During these stages of production, the architect, client, and ultimate user may interchange their positions of explainer or mediator or someone who is committed to understanding and not misusing the realized work, not to mention an enthusiastic interpreter of his or her own aims and goals.

For example, the fact that users may disagree with the architects' ordering and arrangement of functions and spaces, and to one degree or another choose to remodel the building; or that critics and historians may grasp the building's meaning and sense in different ways at different times, is a consequence of their becoming resigned to accept a complex interpretation of the work, or preferring different functional levels and semantic layers, or simply favoring their own taste and comfort. It is at this point that, in Eco's terminology, the semantic and critical interpretation of the architectural work, or the understanding of the work, transforms simply to its use, or misuse.

Thus, an architectural work becomes architectural primarily based on how it engages in architectural discourse, though it can only engage in this discourse actively if it does not repeat what has already been "said", but instead creatively understands how people behave in a given environment, elucidating this understanding by interpreting the ordering and arrangement of spaces, functions, and meanings as well as of architectural inventions. The meanings of a work and their codes originate in part through acceptance of existing or current codes, but in terms of the autopoietic function they originate primarily in architectural communication – and these, as we are trying to show, can for this reason be considered intra-architectural. A complex theory of interpretation, however, ought to make a careful exploration of all

possibilities – even the marginal ones – of representing primary, secondary, and tertiary functions and of the mutual influence of architectural, intra-architectural, and extra-architectural codes as well as the modes of their acceptance and understanding in a work or architecture.

The "Methodologism" or Method of Interpreting a Work of Architecture

In the history of thought on the methods of creating and interpreting a work of architecture, two parallel programs can be observed. The first ranges from random, ad hoc procedures and everyday interpretations of an architectural work to substantiated and critically corrected procedures of interpretation. Among those who follow this program is Heinrich Lützeler in his book *Kunsterfahrung und Kunstwissenschaft*.[26] Panofsky and Sedlmayr even offered didactic outlines of interpretation, and each of them, in each step of his procedure, used a variety of critical correctives.[27] In his book *Ten Canonical Buildings,* Eisenman, for his part, has endeavored to construct a model of architecturally informed *close reading*, treating the architectural work, as we have already said, as a text. Norberg-Schulz constructs his own interpretive method in his book *Meaning in Western Architecture*, applying it to selected buildings from the entirety of architectural history, and in *Genius Loci* to three cities (Rome, Prague, and Khartoum).[28] Kenneth Frampton proceeds just as methodically in his book *A Genealogy of Modern Architecture*.[29] Each of these approaches, based on a substantiated procedure and a critical reassessment of each step, may be called a method of interpretation. Such a method is not a prescription but rather a proposed way forward, a framework, a "spotlighting" of the work that illuminates for us, through its individual steps, possibilities of interpretation. Such methods of interpretation usually also have their own meta-interpretational explanations in the form of methodics, and their own "scientific" meta-interpretational legitimizations.

The primary criticism of these generalizing methods of interpreting artworks, including works of architecture, comes from those interpreters who absolutize the uniqueness of architectural works. As such, they are critical of the *absolutism of method*.[30] The assumption that a method can be generalized, that it can be applied indiscriminately to all works, means, in their opinion, that it cannot elucidate that which is specific to a particular work. Another version of this attitude, related more to methods applied at the various stages of creating a work of architecture, is the neopragmatic or projective approach to interpreting and explicating architectural works.[31] Its proponents are persuaded that methods – if indeed pragmatist and neopragmatists may be said to formulate any general interpretational methods – arise out of specific problem-situations, and therefore are nontransferable and non-repeatable.

These methods cannot be utilized to address a task or to explicate and interpret in varying situations because they are created ad hoc, depending on a problem's particular circumstances and character. From this, the pragmatists infer that methods constructed in advance, which serve as "instructions" or prescriptions, are not only manipulative but in fact deceptive, as they do not allow for the possibility of creatively transcending methodologically anchored interpretative frameworks, and therefore cannot reveal a work's uncodified meanings. Moreover, they assume that these instructions can always be verbalized and theoretically generalized. They transform the use of such generalizing and repeatable methods into a petrified methodologism. They are not *against interpretation*, but *against methods*.[32] Instead of *preestablished methods*, they put forth *ad hoc methods* that originate in the process of creation or interpretation of an architectural work in accordance with the nature of the problems inherent in the task involved or established by the completed work. Such methods are usually non-repeatable, for the very reason that by repeating them we prove their hidden aim of becoming a method. Possibly, this conflict between methodologism and

method could be resolved by a definition of method that understands it not as a beaten track or a reflection of explanatory and interpretational procedures and understanding, but conversely as a hypothesis with methodological points of reference. This is apparently how Panofsky understood his own iconological method; in applying his method to different Gothic cathedrals, he modified its individual steps.

Interpreting a Work of Architecture Between Autonomy and Heteronomy

A basic problem in the interpretation of works of art and architecture is to explain the relationship between the work and its contexts, or the form of the work and culture. Michael Hays, for example, has highlighted this polarity in the title of one of his essays.[33] However, all major aesthetic theories and theories of interpretation reflect this polarity, which tends to be framed in the following ways: formalistic *l'art-pour-l'art*-ism versus vulgar sociologism; internally immanent laws versus so-called external histories; formalism versus contentism; communicative or autonomous signs and the uniqueness of a work versus intertextuality, contextualism, and ad-hocism. This polarity affects models of both creating and interpreting architecture. Supporters of the heteronomous approaches explain a work based on assumptions about, and circumstances of, the stages of its creation and the various forms of interpretations and explanations represented within them. Autonomists concentrate on the finished work in its unrepeatability and inner arrangement, or on its connections to (or disconnections from) other works. However, a work of architecture is difficult to rip out of its context, which is related to nature, to society and social conditions, to culture and aesthetics, to science and technology, and to architecture itself. We might argue that architecture is no different is this regard from other works of art and other instruments and objects. However, a work of architecture is literally imbricated in its contexts, even if some of these are more stable and others change dynamically.

The extent of architecture's imbrication in its different contexts affects both its construction and its form, and these contexts intervene – sometimes even imperatively – directly in its creation. In both the making of architecture and its interpretations, there has long been discussion as to the extent that contexts determine not only the choice of materials but the means of construction and the shapes of individual elements; the problem of sustainability and the architectural work's impact on its environment; and the relationship between the architect or architect-client team and the building contractor; all of these factors can influence the work's final appearance and its meaning and sense. There is also discussion of the architect's responsibility and the ethical function of architecture.[34] In recent decades, questions have arisen coming from a host of new micro-social contexts, for example weak thought in philosophy, and gender and transgender issues in relation to feminist theory.[35] The influence of diverse contexts may vary in relation to different historical situations, but it is sometimes strong enough to lead to a stance advocating an architecture without architects. As such, architects tend to admit the relevance of various contexts selectively, although they also engage in polemics with them creatively. These polemics can have an enriching effect, serving to counter the dominant pragmatic orientation.

From the preceding discussion, it may be deduced that architecture can in fact never be detached from its contexts. But this is not the case for autonomists of the most extreme persuasion. While architecture by its nature always has to overcome one of the most important forces determining it, namely gravity – and this is so no matter whether the first dwellings were carved into the earth or built on top of it – extreme autonomists not only deny the relevance of context to varying degrees, but they even problematize the question of whether architecture needs to be functional, and whether it necessarily harbors societal and cultural meanings. Instead, they regard syntactic relationships as the means and measure of architecture's independence and creative freedom. They see in the acceptance of heteronomous contexts an affirmation of the status quo and of recognized codes. And in their own creative questioning of contexts, by contrast, they see a strengthening of the autopoietic force of architecture, which relies precisely on occurrent meanings and intra-architectural codes.

Despite these seemingly insurmountable differences between the autonomous and heteronomous positions, it is, in fact, the architectural context itself that reconciles this polarity. The question remains unanswered as to whether architecture can be regenerated in a purely autonomous way, or whether heteronomous impulses from multiple extra-architectural contexts are necessary. Even such an initially convinced autonomist as Eisenman has subsequently come to acknowledge

that architecture, for the sake of its own development, needs to interact with exterior heteronomous forces. These forces, however, have to become evident within the architectural inventions; only in this way can they become part of architecture's "anteriority", in his view, and thereby have an enriching effect.[36] In Eisenman's own work, such forces have mostly emerged from the sciences – mathematics and physics, catastrophe theory, genetics – and from philosophy and literary theory. But all of these externalities can only interact with architecture through their common denominator with the architectural context. The means to discovering this common denominator is often the *diagram*.[37] The same goes for narrative stories and places. Eisenman reinscribes the former into his spatial schemes, and admits the latter in the form of a layered urban cartographic notations. This process of reinscription enables him to initiate architectural inventions and represent the autopoietic function by means of intra-architectural codes. A paradox of Eisenman's position is his intentional refusal to take into consideration the possibility that his procedure could reinscribe societal and political issues; and just as deliberately he disregards architectural iconography in interpreting works already built. This is obvious in his book *Ten Canonical Buildings*,[38] in which he devotes his attention to formal and inter-architectonic interpretations. The opposite is true, however, in his dissertation and his later book on Giuseppe Terragni, in which he implicitly indicates the very possibility of questioning politically affirmative iconography.[39]

Panofsky and Sedlmayr, as we have said, took cultural and social contexts into account.[40] Yet if their interpretations appear at first glance to be working exclusively within codified meanings and architectural codes, and if they seemingly deny the possibility of architecture's autopoetic function, it is our view that they implicitly assume it. For our own part, we have presented a model of architectural interpretation in our book on Vladimír Dedeček, a Slovak architect who worked in the State Design Institute (*Štátny projektový ústav*) of the former Czechoslovakia from the 1950s to the 1990s, for the most part heading its studio for educational (and cultural) buildings. We endeavored in our book to bring together autonomist and heteronomist perspectives, based on inspiration from the different interpretative models discussed in this essay.[41] It was a great challenge to interpret Dedeček's oeuvre, as it was often viewed by critics and interpreters at the time, and still today, as no more than a symbol of the socialist regime, and conversely and paradoxically, as a decontextualized repetition

of exhausted forms. Such forms could be associated with a society that was at first totalitarian and later authoritarian, and that was seen as having lost the original meanings of words, things, and actions; or alternatively (as is often the case with standardized or serial procedures and buildings) they could be seen as an expression of autonomy, or even of questioning and criticality. The working term we used in the book to describe our method of interpretation was *communicative*. By this term we did not mean to refer to Vilém Flusser's *communicology* nor to Dalibor Veselý's *communicative spaces*.[42] Rather – since every interpretation obviously anticipates communication, and every communication assumes interpretation – we wanted by this pleonasm to draw attention to the fact that we were interested not so much in classic semiotic models of architectural interpretation – represented best in our view by that of Umberto Eco[43] – but rather in representing and demonstrating the *tertiary autopoietic function* and the *intra-architectural code*. This is because we believe that a work of architecture can communicate with all contexts only when it *simultaneously regenerates and newly grounds architecture* – understood as a communicativeness between contexts in which these contexts become autopoietic. We are convinced that architecture is not just a natural but also a social and cultural phenomenon; or more precisely, it becomes so only when it enriches society and culture with its architectural responses to the challenges that its various "outsides" pose to it. Yet equally, and more intensively, we wanted to study the problem of communicativeness within architecture. While at the first level of communicativeness, codified meanings and architectural codes play an important role, at the second level it is informational strategies, open occurrent meanings, and the intra-architectural code that dominate. It is from these assumptions that our own procedure, our step-by-step method, arises. In the first step, a reconstruction of the autopoietic function and the intra-architectural code is undertaken against the background of preexisting architectural codes and the challenges and tasks of culture and society. Our reconstruction is based on analysis of the architect's intentions and design procedures as embodied in both unbuilt and built works, and as revealed in archival documents like project drawings and photographs, historical interpretations and critiques, and also findings concerning design discrepancies and possibilities for decision-making. We call this step *keys to interpretation*. Yet the focus on the single architect and on the centrality of the architectural work ("work-centrism") is not sufficiently exhaustive for us, though both of these are important interpretative frameworks. The decisive second step is the *hypothetical reconstruction of architectural decisions*, which serves to link the architect's intentions with procedures in the work. While there are hints of these decisions in the work, they only become fully evident when we identify established architectural codes. What helps us discover them is the reconstruction and depiction of *hypothetical architectural drawings*, which explore alternative architectural decisions at various stages of the work. This is the step we call *architectural interpretation*, and it has the character of project drawings and diagrams. Here we show to what extent architect Dedeček decided to utilize denotation or connotation of functions, as well as architectural code, and to what extent he proved able to infuse these instrumentalities with intra-architectural code. We do this through comparison between the archival documents and the new, hypothetical ones, revealing "discrepancies" or possibilities within the workings of the autopoietic function. At the end, the third step, which cannot be precisely separated from the second, involves *reconstruction of architectural invention or of the architect's intra-architectural code*. It occurs in the mutual action of architectural and textual interpretation. The third step above all includes a testing of how the intra-architectural code proves able to interconnect diverse contexts, what answers it can provide in regard to their challenges, and to what extent it can link the architect's previous work with the present construction while simultaneously defining its unrepeatability and uniqueness. In this third step artistic interpretation comes into play, most often photographically. In the case of our book on Dedeček the photography of the Austrian photographer Hertha Hurnaus were crucial. While its function was documentary in the first step, in the third it served to transform the autopoietic function and intra-architectural code into an artistic image. If at first glance the method we have just outlined sounds like a classical form of architectural analysis and interpretation supplemented by drawn and photographic documentation, the very presence of hypothetical project drawings such as those illustrated here, which come from the book, should at least open questions of autopoietic function and intra-architectural codes, and make clear that our communicative interpretation has other aims.

To conclude with a concrete example, we present a brief description of how we interpreted one of Dedeček's major works, the Slovak National Archives in Bratislava, designed and built from 1971 to 1983. From our classificatory and comparative analyses of Dedeček's report on his design,

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his formulation of his task, and his search for a building site, as well as of writings by contemporary critics, our own interpretations of the different drawings and documents of the various stages of the project, and our comparative study of national archives built elsewhere in the world, it became clear that Dedeček posed for himself a series of binary choices in carrying out his design: 1) whether to build the archives, from the standpoint of keeping them secure, underground or above ground; 2) whether to build them in a communicative relation with their context or as strongly autonomous; 3) whether to create a single, monolithic block or a functionally differentiated pavilion complex; 4) whether to give priority to the building's administrative character or to its cultural character; and thus 5) whether to prioritize its abstract appearance or the representation of its denotative and connotative functions; and finally 6) whether to work with established architectural codes and meanings traditionally associated with national archives or to link a singular cultural building with autopoietic function and intra-architectural codes. On the one hand, the architect was confronted with the forces of an immediate sociocultural situation, related to the recent proclamation of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic as a federal republic (on January 1, 1969) and to the symbolic institutional project of creating a national archives in Slovakia; on the other hand, there was the necessity to come up with an architectural response to this situation. Our interpretation revealed that Dedeček did not decide on any one of the alternatives in an *either/ or* sense, but rather pursued new possibilities in a sense of non-exclusive disjunction (that remains true if either *or both* of its arguments are true). He thus placed the archives partly underground, but mostly above. He chose to situate the building on unurbanized land and at an elevated height, thereby reinforcing its autonomy and giving it a commanding presence in the landscape, but he simultaneously acknowledged some of the dominant features nearby and anticipated future urban development around it, including a new forest park. He opted for a monolithic block for the archive spaces, but placed the rest of the functions in an articulated avant-corps, creating the overall image of a quadruple or triple tower wrapped in a belt of cellular "pavilion" spaces housing services and offices. Yet even this binary relationship was transformed, on the top story, into an image of four relatively separate "tower-pavilions", and the same can also be found in the subterranean part of the building. He chose to represent the building's primary archive function – of a vault for conserving and studying documents – as a quadruple or triple tower, while figuring its connotative functions as an encircling belt, thus arriving at a metaphor for the solidarity of the new federation's national components (and also alluding to the Slovak legend of King Svätopluk, with his three twigs representing his three sons, breakable individually but not when united). At the same time, he juxtaposes the archive's two somewhat abstract, self-referential facades with, as in almost all his works, generalized references to ancient Greek and Roman forms (amphitheaters, atria) as well as forms from other historical periods (towered houses, castles, walkways, deeper and shallower avant-corps). It is this hybridizing of different possibilities that gives rise here to a classical compositional ordering and arrangement, on the one hand, and transformable polycentric, or asymmetrical, clusters, on the other, signaling the presence of intra-architectural codes and joining the international debates of the day with Brutalists and Structuralists. Dedeček's clusterings thus succeed not only in interrelating multiple semantic layers and autonomous and heteronomous meanings through the third, autopoietic function as well as the presence of intra-architectural codes, but they also make it possible, by means of a communicational method of interpretation, to comprehend the uniqueness of a specific work and its architectural integrity.

1. We already tackled the problematics of types, genres and levels of interpretation in ZERVAN Marian, MITÁŠOVÁ Monika (eds.), 2015. Interpretation and meta-interpretition of architecture, Editorial. *Architektúra & urbanizmus* **49** (1-2), p. 3-5. At the time we distinguished historiographic, theoretical, philosophical interpretations and finally meta-interpretation of architecture including some possibilities of their mutual diffusion and permeation. Such distinction was inspired by Heinrich Lützeler's book *Kunsterfahrung und Kunstwissen-*

schaft. 3 Bände published by Karl Alber Verlag, München/Freiburg in 1975. This follow-up paper of ours could be categorized as a meta-interpretational genre containing some examples of an artistic-historiographical, architectonical and semiotic interpretations as well as our proposal for the modification of one of these interpretations demonstrated on architectural work of Slovak architect Vladimír Dedeček (1929 – 2020).

2 Umberto Eco, in the chapter "Function and Sign" of his book *La struttura*

assente (Milan: Bompiani, 1968), defends the idea that architecture denotes a primary function and connotes a secondary function: a chair, for example, denotes a generalized image of sitting, and simultaneously, when it takes a certain shape such as a throne, may express regal majesty. See ECO, Umberto, 1980. Function and Sign: The Semiotics of Architecture. In: Broadbent, G., Bunt, R. and Jencks, CH. (eds.). *Signs, Symbols, and Architecture*. Chichester, NY: John Wiley & Sons, pp. 11 – 70.

3 Eco, U., 1980, p. 329.

4 Eco, U., 1980, p. 331.

5 Eco, U., 1980, p. 353.

6 The translation of one of the central terms in Sedlmayr's methodological apparatus has not yet been settled. Attempts to translate *anschauliches Charakter* as "illustrative character" or "graphic character" lack the necessary physiognomic immediacy. Similarly, translations like "visual understanding" are unsatisfactory as they lose

the connection with the term "character", a tradition going back to the Middle Ages. A recent attempt to find a reliable equivalent comes from Josef Vojvodík and the translator David Short in the study VOJVODÍK, Josef. 2013. The Concept of Structure and the Work of Art in the Structuralist Art History of Hans Sedlmayr in Comparison with the Structural Aesthetics of Jan Mukařovský. *Art in Translation.* **5**(3), p. 321 – 378; *anschauliches Charakter* is rendered as *ostensive character*. Yet this solution, which refers to the protosemiotic situation of *ostensis*, is not definitive in our opinion.

7 What Eco enumerated as "architectural elements" in his classification of codes are truly distinguished by having a literal meaning, which can be constructional, as in the case of the column, or spatial, as in the case of the church as gathering place for believers, the school as space where teachers and pupils meet. But they can also have allegorical, moral, or anagogic meanings: a column may signify the tree of knowledge in the Garden of Eden, as is the case in some double-nave churches in Slovakia's Spiš region, or it may embody moral virtues, as in the Pillars of Hercules, or it may refer to the Temple of Solomon (Sedlmayr called attention to these last two meanings in a study of the iconographic program of the Karlskirche in Vienna). One specific aspect of the architectural sign in this sense is that it seldom mediates meanings by referring to extra-architectural worlds based on similarity (column-tree; tree branches as origin of the gable roof, as in Vitruvius's archetypal house), but rather does so by referring to mediate similarities between itself and other architectural elements: a cathedral becomes the sacred city because its plan is that of a city and its entrances take the form of city gates, as in medieval times; or its interior spatial structuring makes reference to a victory arch, as occurs both in sacral art and in the entries of some works by Alberti.

8 Martin Heidegger drew attention to this distinction in his essay Bauen, Wohnen, Denken. To inhabit means in narrow and established usage to "live in" a building, *behausen*. But in Heidegger's broader and non-trivial sense, a building or house does not automatically guarantee the occurrence of dwelling, *wohnen*, which is the way a human being *is* on the earth, part of which includes building, *bauen*. See HEIDEGGER, Martin, 1971. Building, Dwelling, Thinking. In: *Poetry, Language, Thought.* New York: Harper Colophon, pp. 154 – 55.

9 See, for example, NORBERG-SCHULZ, Christian, 1975. *Meaning in Western Architecture.* New York: Praeger Publishers, pp. 221 – 227.

10 See Eco, U., 1980, p. 38. See also EISENMAN, Peter, 2004. Notes on Conceptual Architecture: Towards

a Definition. In: *Eisenman Inside Out. Selected Writings 1963 – 1988.* New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 11 – 27; this tendency in Eisenman's thinking, derived from the linguist Noam Chomsky, can be traced back to his Ph.D. dissertation of 1963. Bernard Tschumi writes on this theme in relation to his Parc de la Villette, Paris, in TSCHUMI, Bernard,1988. *Architectural Design 78* (March – April), pp. 33 – 39, special issue Deconstruction in Architecture. Tschumi's strategy for this park focused on problematizing the assumption of architecture's ability to act as a "symbolic" asylum of humanism. Like Eisenman, he utilizes procedures of superposition and superimposition to insert chance and non-sense into the processes of design, thereby deregulating meanings. Eisenman distinguishes between perceptual *surface semantics* in Le Corbusier's early architecture, which contributed to machinistic *patois* or jargon, and a *deep conceptual semantics* in Giuseppe Terragni's architecture, which deploys syntactic structures based on ambivalent formal arrangements (alongside references to Renaissance forms and functional typologies) that are resistant to associations with the politics of the day.

11 GOODMAN, Nelson and ELGIN, Catherine Z., 1988. *Reconceptions in Philosophy and Other Arts and Sciences.* Indianapolis: Hacking.

12 See REZEK, Peter, 2009. *Architektura a protoarchitektonika* [Architecture and Protoarchitectonics]. Praha: Ztichlá klika; and KOSÍK, Karel, 1997. *Město a architektonika světa anebo Vítězství metody nad architektonikou* [The City and the Architectonics of the World, or the Victory of Method over Architectonics]. In: *Předpotopní* úvahy. Praha: Torst, pp. 52 – 61. *Autori/editori*

13 MITÁŠOVÁ, Monika and ZERVAN, Marian et al. (eds.), 2018. *Vladimír Dedeček / Interpretations of His Architecture: The Work of a Post War Slovak Architect.* Basel: Birkhäuser.

14 When Peter Eisenman faced the classic task of extending a city block, as was the case in his apartment project built at Checkpoint Charlie in Berlin (1981 – 1985) as part of the IBA Berlin program, he could have proceeded as a modernist and invented a new form and shape, or as a postmodernist and put up a contextual building with facades that followed the facades of the immediate neighboring buildings. After much analysis of the site in urban plans extending through many historical periods, he decided to proceed by what he called a "palimpsest method", which is another metaphorical description for procedures of superposition and superimposition: the overlaying and overlapping of one plan on top of or adjacent to another on the given building site. Through the interpretation and modeling of these overlaps, and through their

subsequent reinterpretations, he succeeded in producing a building that is primarily perceived as a new form and shape, even though in reality it contains the record or traces of past and present constructions as well as of many unrealized projects designed for this place. While his building is untransformable and static, it has at the same time a temporal dimension, referring to past and possible future solutions, which makes it unstable and still occurring as well. For his own elaboration of these ideas, see his book EISENMAN, Peter, 1994. *Cities of Artificial Excavation: The Work of Peter Eisenman 1978 – 1988.* Montreal: Canadian Centre for Architecture, pp. 73 – 103.

15 After beginning to design in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Dedeček gradually worked his way to buildings that were hybrids of the *monolithic block* and the *pavilion*, wherein the monolithic block represented the "barracks architecture" of modernism and socialist realism for him, and the pavilion represented the architecture of democratizing tendencies ushered in by the brief Prague and Bratislava Spring (1968). His oeuvre became a continuous quest for connecting or disconnecting these forms, and his invention was their clustered repetitive configurations, which connote the period's sociopolitical and architectural debates, in which he was directly engaged.

16 See Goodman, N. and Elgin, C. Z., 1988, p. 67. Goodman uses the concept of indirect or mediate reference to describe homogeneous or heterogeneous sequences of elementary referential connections; for instance, when a church makes reference to a sailing vessel it exemplifies detachment from the earth, and detachment from the earth in turn exemplifies the spiritual.

17 This was, for example, how Eisenman coded his "nonhouses" or "cardboard architecture": in one house in his series of such houses, he utilized several different syntactic and semantic codes, multiplying redundancy at the expense of rhetoric and problematizing the denotational and connotational potentials of traditional architectural elements. In this way he attempted to demonstrate and call attention to the decisions, procedures, references, and allusions to occurrent meanings in the process of architectural communication that inform this series.

18 When Dedeček designed an above-ground pavilion as part of the completion, extension, and refurbishment of the Slovak National Gallery building complex in Bratislava as a so-called *premostenie* (overbridging) of wings of a historical building, he used this bridging construction in part so as not to have to enclose the pavilion's disconnected individual floor levels, rather choosing to connect and join

them, partly open, into one whole as a gallery building. Thus he split the bridge's total space – covered in a solar envelope shaped by light – into three open exhibition platforms and an undivided spatial continuum, which can be read in section as an amphitheater form. This solution came about as an evolution of his own ideas on the order and arrangement of spatial clusters, but also in dialogue with Herman Hertzberger's notion of "polyvalent space".

19 One example would be the Tea and Coffee Towers project sponsored by Alessi in 2003. See ROCKER, Ingeborg M., 2006. Calculus-Based Form: An Interview with Greg Lynn. *Architectural Design* 76. pp. 88 – 95.[online] [Accessed 4, July – August 2006]. Available at: https://glform.com/living/tea-coffee-towers-2003/

20 Of many examples, let us mention at least that of Eileen Gray and her summer villa, E.1027 (in collaboration with Jean Badovici). On the concept "inherent plasticity" in this house, see MITÁŠOVÁ, Monika, 2017. Eileen Gray alebo architektka: Tri hypotézy kritického písania o rode v avantgardnej architektúre vily E.1027 [Eileen Gray; or, Architect: Three Hypotheses concerning the Critical Writing on Gender in the Avant-Garde Architecture of the Villa E.1027]. *World Literature Studies.* **9**(4), pp. 3 – 21. Among newer realizations, we might mention the Möbius Hause by Ben van Berkel and Caroline Bos (UNStudio) at Het Gooi in the Netherlands (1993 – 1998); or the TS 11 loft and interior by the architect couple Roman Delugan and Elke Delugan-Meissl (DMAA) in Vienna (2010 – 2013), one of the realizations of their architectural approach of "liquid flowing spatial transitions or mutations", where the floor smoothly changes into a sofa and other furniture formations. Czech architect Jan Kaplický realized similar interior spaces.

21 See the chapter on problems of interpretation, Zwei Beispiele zur Interpretation. In: SEDLMAYR, Hans, 1978. *Kunst und Wahrheit.* Mittenwald: Mäander Kunstverlag, pp. 96 – 132. Sedlmayr uses the term "text" in an unusual way, to mean the material form of the work's inscription, which the interpreter must gradually bring back to life and regenerate.

22 See EISENMAN, Peter, 2008. *Ten Canonical Buildings 1950 – 2000.* New York: Rizzoli, pp. 15 – 24.

23 NORBERG-SCHULZ, Christian, 1974. *Existence, Space, Architecture.* New York: Praeger.

24 For a general discussion, see Umberto Eco. In: Collini, S. (ed.). 1992. *Interpretation and Overinterpretation.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. In relation to architecture, the problem of one or an infinite number

of interpretations is discussed by Goodman, N. and Elgin, C. Z., 1988.

25 Goodman, N. and Elgin, C. Z., 1988, pp. 69 – 70.

26 LÜTZELER, Heinrich, 1975. *Kunsterfahrung und Kunstwissenschaft*. Freiburg: Verlag Karl Alber. In this work Lützeler distinguishes between extrascientific, prescientific, and scientific autonomous and heteronomous forms of writing on art and architecture. He divided his study of visual art according to how it utilizes expertise (*kennen*), *commentary or explanation* (*erklären*) and understanding and interpretation (*verstehen*).

27 See Sedlmayr, H., 1978, pp. 96 – 132; and PANOFSKY, Erwin, 1955. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor Books, pp. 26 – 54.

28 See Eisenman, P., 2008, p. 16; Norberg-Schulz, Ch., 1975 and NORBERG-SCHULZ, Christian, 1980. *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture*. London: Academy Editions.

29 FRAMPTON, Kenneth, 2015. *A Genealogy of Modern Architecture: Comparative Critical Analysis of Built Form*. Zürich: Lars Müller Publishers.

30 See Goodman, N. and Elgin, C. Z., 1988, p. 69. For his part, Michael Hays points to, in connection with work-centric interpretations, the threat of interpretative scientism. See HAYS, K. Michael, 1984. Critical Architecture between Culture and Form. *Perspecta*. (21), pp. 15 – 29.

31 For more on this program, see the books edited and written by MITÁŠO-VÁ, Monika, 2011 and 2012. *Oxymorón a pleonasmus: Texty kritické a projektivní architektury* [Oxymoron and Pleonasm: Texts on Critical and Projective Architecture] and *Oxymorón a pleonasmus II: Rozhovory o kritické a projektivní teorii architektury*. Praha: Zlatý řez. In 2014 the second volume was published in English as *Oxymoron and Pleonasm: Conversations on American Critical and Projective Theory of Architecture*. Barcelona: Actar; Praha: Zlatý řez.

32 FEYRABEND, Paul K., 1975. *Against Method: Outline of an Anarchistic Theory of Knowledge*. London: New Left Books.

33 Hays, K. M., 1984. In this essay Hays characterizes two positions in architecture. In the first position, architecture is understood as an instrument of culture, which it provides with reasons for being, and the interpreter's task is to study buildings and environments as signs of codified cultural meanings and values. Given that a work of architecture is understood as being conclusively finished, it is the task of the critic, historian, or interpreter to reconstruct the work's original meanings. In the second position, architecture is understood as an autonomous discipline with its own immanent laws. The historical reconstruction of meanings is substituted by the study of form and cultural hermeneutics is replaced with "an interpretive scientism". Hays attempts to put forward an alternative position, using it to interpret the work of Mies van der Rohe.

34 This is a very old discussion, as indicated by the Vitruvian term *decor*, a translation of the Greek *prepon*, usually translated as *propriety* in relation to the natural and cultural environment.

35 See, among others, the anthologies by COLOMINA, Beatriz (ed.), 1992. *Sexuality and Space*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press; AGREST, Diana, CONWAY, Patricia and KANES WEISMAN, Leslie (eds.), 1996. *The Sex of Architecture*. New York: Harry N. Abrams; COLEMAN, Debra, DANZE, Elizabeth and HENDERSON, Carol (eds.), 1996. *Architecture and Feminism*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press and HUGHES, Francesca (ed.), 1996. *The Architect: Reconstructing Her Practice*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. See also the following monographic publications: ADAM, Peter, 1987. *Eileen Gray: Architect/Designer*. New York: Harry N. Abrams; MCQUAID, Matilda, 1996. *Lilly Reich: Designer and Architect*. New York: MoMA; and MCLEOD, Mary (ed.), 2003. *Charlotte Perriand: An Art of Living*. New York: Harry N. Abrams.

36 See, for example, Eisenman's model of architectural creation, consisting of three factors: *anteriority*, *exteriority* and *interiority*, as elaborated in EISENMAN, Peter, 2003. *Blurred Zones*. New York: Monacelli Press. He explains the historical development of this model in the introduction to the first volume of his selected writings *Eisenman Inside Out*, pp. vii-xv.

37 See EISENMAN, Peter, 1999. *Diagram Diaries*. London: Thames and Hudson.

38 Eisenman, P., 2008, pp. 15 – 24.

39 See his dissertation, defended in 1963 but published much later: EISENMAN, Peter, 2006. *The Formal Basis of Modern Architecture*. Zürich: Lars Müller Publishers, pp. 293 – 315; as well as EISENMAN, Peter, 2003. *Giuseppe Terragni: Transformations, Decompositions, Critiques*. New York: Monacelli Press, pp. 33 – 131. In his interpretation of Terragni's Casa del Fascio on Piazza Verdi in Como, near the Teatro Sociale with its portico entrance, Eisenman realized that its architect, a devout Catholic and a devotee of certain Italian Fascist ideas, may have subscribed to both the established Fascist typology of the urban house as a Renaissance palazzo and the modernist typology of the building with strip windows and walls bearing political messages, especially as these sociopolitical and architectural contexts would have been intense pressures at the time. But, he argues, Terragni chose to embody the references to the Renaissance palazzo not in the facade but rather in the arrangement of spaces, including the interior atrium; and he transported the urban context into the logic of a reversible figure of rectangular longitudinal spaces and square central spaces, and this strategy governed the arrangement of the entire building, inside and out. It was this architectural invention, of joining a Renaissance order with a transforming geometric pattern derived from Piazza Verdi's configuration, that enabled Terragni to fuse multiple extra-architectural and architectural contexts into an autonomous and autopoietic code. By this means, the building, set off from its surroundings by an accentuated base and an abstract-geometric appearance, proved able to engage critically with its social and cultural contexts. And it was at this autopoietic code that critics of the period aimed their attacks, as they understood that this was the only way to weaken its ability to function socially and culturally.

40 See PANOFSKY, Erwin, 1976. *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism*. New York: Meridian Books; and Sedlmayr, H., 1978, pp. 143 – 52. In his explication of Gothic architecture, Panofsky seems to prefer the extra-architectural contexts of scholastic philosophy; however his explanation reveals that he is attempting to demonstrate that all scholastic principles, realized in *summa theologiae* and managed by the guiding force of *manifestatio* (expanded into sufficient enumeration and wholeness, articulation, and finally coherence), cannot be applied homomorphically with the structure of the summa theologiae without a unifying vaulting system and constructional and spatial tectonics. The *manifestatio* principle, for instance, searched for a solution between the *pilier cantonné* and the *cluster pier*, and it became obvious that only the cluster pier suited the need to clarify the force lines of the groin vault's ribs. Here again is a confirmation that it is the architectural context that brings together architectural inventions and societal and cultural demands on extra-architectural contexts. This holds even in cases where architecture would seem to be subject to extra-architectural iconographic demands. Sedlmayr, in a didactic example of his own interpretative method, showed how complex the iconographic program of Vienna's parish Church of St. Charles Borromeo, better known as the Karlskirche, is. In it, the program's originator, Carl Gustav Heraeus, paid homage to two individuals named Charles: Borromeo and Emperor Charles VI, whom he hoped to present as a new Hercules and Solomon, and Vienna as a new Athens and Rome. At the same time, the program was a reaction to current political and social events: the conclusion of the Treaty of Rastatt and the end of a plague epidemic in 1713, which directly inspired the church's construction. This program was of necessity objectified in the codification of both its spatial and formal elements: a central circular structure crowned with a lantern dome, two tall tower columns with ornamental relief, also with lanterns, and a horizontal structure with portico towers on either side. These elements were configured with reference to historical buildings – the Hagia Sophia, the Templum Jovis et Pacis, and the Temple of Solomon – but the church would not have manifested such complex doubling (Borromeo/Charles VI, Hercules/Solomon, Athens/Rome, etc.) had Fischer von Erlach, the architect, not utilized the inventive principle of grouping the aforementioned elements into two combinations of three elements each, the first trio being the central round structure with its dome and two columns, the second trio being the horizontal structure with two towers at the sides with portico. In the second grouping, the first trio is the circular building with the two wings of the horizontal building with its towers, and the second trio the portico and two massive columns with lantern. Only the architectural use of this "Baroque counterpoint" made it possible to connect architectural contexts with the many extra-architectural contexts, signaling the presence of an autopoietic code.

41 Mitášová, M. and Zervan, M. et al. (eds.), 2018.

42 See FLUSSER, Vilém, 1996. *Kommunikologie*. Mannheim: Bollmann Verlag; and VESELÝ, Dalibor, 2004. *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation: The Question of Creativity in Shadow of Production*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

43 We addressed his model in the chapter of our book titled "Interpretation as a Process of Reconstructing/ Enlivening a Work or Interpretation Constructing a Work". We used this model as a point of departure and a basis for considering the interconnection of polarities.

Obsah Content