

dual-ectics

The binary structure of the dual seems to have lost its status. Too simple to hold the complexity of our current world, too attached to the dichotomist schematism that splits positions into for and against. However, the implicit symmetry of the dual should not make us overlook the advantages of taking things in pairs.

Comparison is at the base of any intellectual activity committed to the production of knowledge, because meaning mostly stems from the observation of difference. As a primary scientific device, it generally addresses the task of confirming or refuting a certain hypothesis or theory. By pointing out the coincidence or divergence between the two terms of the comparison, it tends to rely on a logic of causality in order to proceed towards a generalization. Yet, in its barest form, comparison can also pursue a purely interpretive goal. Such is the case of analogy, based on the premise that the two terms paralleled are not at all equal, except from a specific point of view. Analogic reasoning proceeds from the particular towards the particular. From a formal logic stance, it lacks any demonstrative capacity because it relies, not on the probable, but on the plausible. The establishment of a causal relationship, a *de facto* link between the couple considered, is not as relevant as the things that can be learned when looking at each one in the light of the other.

The pairing of images has a long tradition in the history of art. Pendant paintings consist of two pictures that are compositionally and iconographically related as a pair but are not attached to each other the way hinged diptychs are. They hang or stand side by side but separately and autonomously. The term derives from the French phrase *faire pendant*, adopted to express the idea of one hanging or depending from the other, and evolved into 'pandam' to designate the dual nature of any disposition consisting of two fundamentally similar art pieces but different

in detail, which both rely on each other to make full meaning of one another.

Meaningful arguments dealing with a dual structure of the subject matter need to address resemblance and coincidence as well as dissimilitude and divergence. Correlation is always a question of proportion: How much of 'this' is present in 'that'?

The confrontation of two objects, concepts, authors or works does not necessarily imply an oppositional choice. When put into practice by exemplifying exclusionary terms, comparison might only lead to the confirmation of previous convictions and the enunciation of value judgements. Instead, we suggest that placing two things face to face can be both systematic and remain open to unexpected results. A procedure clearly related to the practice of dialogue.

Any dialogue implies two *logoi* or reasons that agree at least to discuss a disagreement. Plato took this technique to its highest level as a means to push any argumentation forward. Such a dialectical mode of thinking always implies a sense of transformation. Therefore, dialectics raises as a self-conscious process which, by confronting the consequences of the simultaneous affirmation and negation of a proposition, achieves a certain explanation for this contradiction through a synthesis. Today, even if this 'resolutive' approach might be questioned, we must still acknowledge one real effect of dialectics: it forces us to remain critical towards reality.

We propose to carry out a critique based on a duality that avoids the oscillatory pendulum of alternative sides as much as it avoids the need to supersede this opposition with a third term. An exercise in sheer comparison, in the midst of today's growing complexities and multiplicities, that might lead to a deeper understanding of our discipline.

The 4th edition of the Critic|all Conference welcomes contributions that critically address coupled case studies in a way that brings about a new meaning for any of the two terms compared. We expect interpretive work that draws new relations between things.

The most basic structure should present the cases, explain the reasons that justify the comparison, support them with arguments in the main body and bring the paper to a conclusion.

Papers must be limited to 5000 words, written in English and preceded by a 300-word abstract. Peer reviewing will be carried out in two phases.

Abstract deadline: 10 March 2020

Full-paper deadline: 10 June 2020

Critic|all is an initiative lead by the Architectural Design Department of Madrid ETSAM—UPM. The current edition of this two-day conference is organized in collaboration with FAU—USP and will be held in São Paulo on the 24–25 September 2020. This research event aims to bring together both young and established scholars from every discipline dealing with architectural thought, including approaches from history, historiography, theory or design.

All accepted contributions will be included in the digital proceedings of the conference, a publication with ISBN that will be given to the registered participants and also be available online. Depending on the amount of works submitted, the Scientific Committee will carry out a selection of papers for presentation during the conference.

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