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01

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESEARCH AND DESIGN

They are undoubtedly intertwined, forming an inseparable relationship. They constitute a dual spiral, mutually supporting and promoting each other.

On an operational level, Complex Projects Graduation Studio divides research and design into two stages. From my personal understanding, the studio ultimately focuses on design outcomes. Due to the structured course framework set by mentors, each node in this process becomes relatively clear and easy to control. Throughout the entire MSc3 period, research is the primary mode of operation. The research process generally undergoes two major phases: first, determining the theme to be designed or researched; second, delving into specific problems or design objectives. Although the boundaries between these two stages are not entirely clear.

For me, the initial stage involved a period of confusion. This uncertainty arises from our awareness that this will be an outcome-oriented process, where the result is crucial. When we are not yet certain about the building we will ultimately design, the choice of a research theme becomes hesitant. All of these considerations are based on longstanding design habits. Once the research theme is established, to some extent, it implies that we have a final design goal. Although we are aware that obtaining a negative result after weeks of research is theoretically meaningful, I believe no one wishes for that to happen.

In this context, research transforms into a unidirectional process of seeking favorable answers or optimal solutions. Therefore, research will inevitably and increasingly need to become smoother until the commencement of the design phase. Although this process is unfamiliar to me, it does provide me with new perspectives for consideration.

Firstly, during the research process, I frequently have to suppress the impulse to engage in design, providing me with an opportunity to slow down and contemplate issues that are often overlooked in the early stages of design. Secondly, some research elements that were previously scattered and integrated into the design process are now organized and emphasized. This not only contributes to gaining confidence during the design process but also facilitates presenting the outcomes to other groups. This aspect is particularly important for me, as past experiences have shown that presenting design outcomes tends to lag behind, resulting in a chaotic and hurried display without a comprehensive reorganization process. However, due to the existence of the research process, all design actions are well-connected into a cohesive whole, collectively serving the set objectives.

Nevertheless, the relationship between them is neither singular nor fixed. The experience in this graduation studio has allowed me to make a successful attempt and will contribute to forming a suitable logic for research and design in my future practice.

02

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GRADUATION TOPIC AND STUDIO TOPIC

Complex Project Graduation Studio, is distinctive. The Bodies & Building Berlin project aims to explore what value architecture, as an entity, can create within the context of a complex urban issue. The studio provides a well-crafted narrative that allows us participants to conduct their experiments and explorations within a relatively unified context, thereby stimulating a diversity of outcomes. Each project within this studio possesses rich evaluation dimensions, ranging from individual buildings to building types, spatial features, and

group themes, directly reflecting the essence of the studio's name, "complex projects." I believe the awareness of analyzing design issues from multiple dimensions is undoubtedly based on continuous long-term practice, and this is what I have learned from this graduation studio.

As for my graduation topic, it involves a discussion of museum architecture in a broad sense. I specifically explore the characteristics of museum and cemetery building types and their potential correlations. Starting with the notion of publicness, I attempt to empower cemeteries by using museums as a means of characterizing public buildings or urban public spaces. I investigate the possibilities of a new cemetery building type in Berlin, based on the museum as a prototype.

I am pleased that my project differs from previous museum projects. In my understanding, this differentiation, resulting from careful research and thoughtful design, is precisely what the Complex Projects Graduation Studio aims to achieve in the Bodies & Building Berlin experiment. I believe that, whether for the studio as a whole or for individual participants, architecture as an entity is paramount. However, this does not mean we should limit our perspectives. Thinking and researching across scales have played a crucial role throughout the entire research and design process. It is more about the breadth of thinking and vision, and that is what I have come to realize from this experience.

03

RESEARCH METHOD AND APPROACH IN RELATION TO THE GRADUATION STUDIO

The relationship is clear and straightforward for me. For the graduation studio as a whole, its aim is to create a specific yet diverse and comparably valuable framework for each participant. Therefore, some universally applicable methods are necessary, such as case analysis, model analysis, and different seminar groups. Constructing a contextually unified matrix is the foundation for further development, enabling meaningful experimental results by controlling variables.

As participants, for each individual, due to differences in project themes, building types, personal preferences, etc., we undoubtedly need to find the most suitable research methods for ourselves. For example, in my case, focusing on museum-type architecture involves many experiments with lighting methods and effects due to its emphasis on specific spatial considerations. These personalized research methods, in conjunction with universal approaches, ultimately contribute to the creation of well-organized and unique outcomes.

In summary, the studio provides us with a rational framework within which we can explore the boundaries of our individual research, complementing both personalized and universal research methods.

04

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GRADUATION PROJECT AND THE WIDER SOCIAL, PROFESSIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

This is a multifaceted topic, and I have two perspectives on this matter.

Firstly, on the project level, it addresses issues related to societal sustainability. The project highlights the real problem arising from the imbalance between urban space and human behavior. As the per capita burial area continues to decrease, there will be a need for transformation in the form of cemeteries in the visible future. This issue is not only closely related to each individual but is also a larger-scale concern about urban public spaces. Rather than finding a definitive answer, the practical significance of this project lies in raising awareness and sparking discussions about the issue. I believe that not only my project but the entire Complex Projects Graduation Studio is not solely driven by the desire to implement projects on the ground but rather to initiate more targeted and valuable discussions.

Secondly, in terms of design thinking, the experience in the graduation studio has reinforced my belief that the core value of architecture lies in the value of space, and everything else should selflessly serve the space. The imagination and design of space are among the architect's most critical decisions. Space is the most straightforward and honest presentation of design and ideas. Regardless of what we want to achieve, we have to create something tangible. Architectural themes may vary: self, community, city, environment, etc., but all of these are ultimately materialized in the form of spaces and places. When we first enter a space, the most direct experience is not about grand narratives, complex issues, or conceptual ideas, but about the essence of the things themselves. Therefore, choosing an appropriate architectural language and authentically and accurately presenting space are crucial for a practicing architect.

05

ETHICAL ISSUES AND DILEMMAS THAT ENCOUNTERED DURING GRADUATION

I acknowledge that architecture fundamentally serves a purpose. I maintain a skeptical stance towards the idea that architecture can solve every complex and intricate societal issue. In reality, transformative changes in these societal problems are rarely led by architecture but rather by economics and science. For instance, while sustainable, environmentally-friendly design is undoubtedly one of the mainstream architectural evaluation criteria today, envision a scenario where energy issues are resolved through technological means, and abundant clean energy becomes readily available. Would the sustainability discourse still evoke such widespread discussion? What then becomes the core value of architecture? Certainly, these issues are an essential dimension of contemporary architectural reflection.

As an architect, it is easy to fall into a false sense of self-satisfaction, envisioning a brighter future while fervently seeking every available argument. Balancing these considerations is a dilemma that, unfortunately, I currently cannot provide a definitive answer to.