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THE BAQ 2020, TRANSFORMATION (S)

The current field of discussion on Architecture and the city is in need of new spaces to debate and reflect upon the possibilities that our discipline has, in order to generate critical thinking, and to recognize design processes that feedback architectural praxis as to effectively enhance its positive impact on people's lives.

Contemporary production of our built environment has been characterized by the lack of the sense of belonging to a place and its indifference towards memory. Nonetheless, there are valuable examples of practices that can lead to other paths in our work; buildings that acknowledge the previous imprints of space and location, and that are complex and efficient in weaving significant relationships with their environment. They raise questions on our disciplinary approach through their specific answers, and by doing that, reach greater influence on the processes that shape our present and future.

The aim is to reinforce the idea of *intervention* over the concept of "*new footprint architecture*", (*opera nuova*). To intervene means to act directly over an existing reality, complex and diverse, natural or artificial. Every built intervention brings a new outlook on the reality it acts upon, while at the same time works on this pre-existing reality, it recomposes it by means of a series of principles to build a different order, a better new place to support human activity.

This edition of the BAQ aims to discuss architecture based on the concept of transformation. The etymological origin of the term is considered here, as it refers to *changing forms (transformare)*. We are not interested in form as an exterior image; but rather on its abstract, conceptual and operational characteristics. That is, as a structural system of relationships between its constitutive elements; between idea and reality, able to bring about *transformative possibilities*.

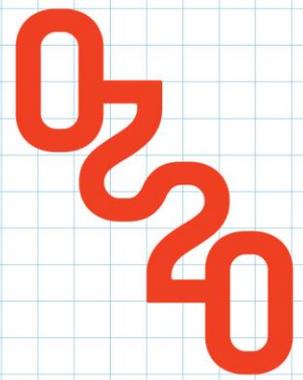


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In this sense, BAQ 2020 structures the debate around two intrinsic dimensions of the concept of transformation in architecture:

One, which is universal, and refers to its essential elements, to the relationships established between them and to the ordering principles that define it, allowing it to be 'transmissible' and 'replicable'.

The other, more specific and contingent, referred to the ability to affect its immediate context, or to potentiate it by allowing the dialogue with the 'here and now' and with memory, establishing new conditions henceforth.

Considering these two dimensions, we should reflect upon the following:

- How can architecture be universal and specific, at the same time?
- How can a critical approach to the architectural project further our discipline?
- How can architecture 'recompose' the system of relationships existing in the reality it is acting upon?
- How can architecture be 'transmitted' over time?

The BAQ invites both professional and the public to debate around these two dimensions, by means of the critical reading of architectural works and practices that "question the status quo through the project". The BAQ invites to look past the predominance of the image by focusing on thinking the architectural project from within the discipline, opening a space for speculation upon the production of the built environment, aiming to better the practice of our crafts as a profession.

From this moment on, the debate is open. Let us make this edition of the BAQ a place or space for the meeting and exchanging of diverse positions.

