

Brief description

Learning between concavities and convexities, Zaragoza School of Architecture

The site of the project is a vacant place waiting to be turned into public space. The place has an interesting topography, this topography changes from emerging areas to excavated areas, and this creates a convex topography. Its topography trough-shaped, bowl-shaped, is similar to the drawn by Ledoux in one of his drawings: "L'Abri du pauvre" (1804).

In the picture, Ledoux draws a representation of the original architecture, it can be seen how a man is under a tree, sitting on a cubic stone, but still without architecture; meanwhile, up in the clouds the world of allegories appears. Ledoux portrays in the clouds, in the sky, the world of architectural ideas, and that's the architecture that we should try to achieve today, because it is identified with our contemporary times. At the same time, by the light rays, the world above and below are connected. At the same time, the tree of the picture might remember what Kahn said about the first school: the first school probably began with a man under a tree, who did not know he was a teacher, sharing his realization with a few others who did not know they were students. In this way, they met under the tree to exchange ideas without an established hierarchy. This educational idea is highly contemporaneous, and it is how the university should be today: a place where everyone goes to learn in a free and multidirectional dialogue. The objective of the project is to realize this idea into space.

For this reason the project is constructed with U-shaped bowls that can be face up or face down, so, it may be "concave" or "convex". Therefore, the project consists of concave and convex bowls that look at each other and in their in-between space appears the space of the new School of Architecture, based on the coincidence or in-coincidence of the bowls. Kahn thought that the real essence of the university consists in discovering new things, and this requires being constantly moving between light and shadow, between the known and the unknown, between the established and the visionary, like happens in the project's School section. The materiality of the project would be on raw concrete in the lower area and white concrete in the upper area. With this materiality the project expresses the world of clouds (up) in opposition to the world of topography (down).

The program is organized around three main programmatic clusters: cafe, library and auditorium. In function of their position three large public spaces are located. The most important, the main access square, will be placed between the cafe and the auditorium. Then there is a sequence of workshops, connected through the circulation space, which also serves as workshop area due to its size and shape. In this way it is achieved a variety of delimited or diluted to the outside. An outside that goes from inside to outside and from outside to inside, introducing the external space through courtyards, terraces and spaces of transition.