

SUB UMBRA ALARUM TUARUM

Prologue. La sombra, forma del espacio arquitectónico. Rafael Casado Martínez

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That an architect who has always defended light as the richest material with which we architects work should preface a text on shadow as a form of architectural space might surprise some. But the fact is that light, the center of architecture, is inextricably linked to shadow. And just as music is air and music without air would not be possible, so architecture, which is light, would not be possible without shadow. And although the principle well says: "Architettura sine luce, nulla architettura est", neither light without shadow would be nothing. Both, light and shadow, well measured, well tempered, well proportioned.

The fact that an architect who has always defended the Orteguian principle that "clarity is the courtesy of the philosopher" prefaces a complex text such as the one we are dealing with, is a good occasion to invoke this principle once again, on the understanding that the purpose of any writing is to bring to light, to communicate well, what it is intended to say. And so, when sometimes the message is conveyed through words that are certainly complex, getting to the essence of what is being proposed may require a greater effort.

I know, those of us who work with light know, how difficult it is to establish the precise amounts of light and shadow to make our architecture touch the hearts of men. This is what the Pantheon of Rome, which is in itself the best eulogy of shadow and light, does so clearly.

I know, those of us who write know very well, that it is not easy to choose the right words and arrange them in such a way that the content of our writings reaches our readers. That is what poets know how to do so well with their poems, when they reach not only our head but also our heart. When they manage to suspend time.

There is a beautiful engraving by Goya, entitled *El sueño de la razón produce monstruos* (The dream of reason produces monsters), which is in the Prado Museum, and which corresponds to a manuscript preserved in the National Library, where it is said that "the fantasy abandoned by reason produces impossible monsters, but united with it is the mother of the arts and the origin of marvels". I would like that, in the same way that light and shadow are united, in these writings fantasy and reason are united to produce these marvels.

I would ask readers to be patient when reading this text, which comes from a very interesting doctoral thesis, and to be able to discern the light from the shadows. And doing a truly architectural exercise, get to the heart of the issues proposed here. And trusting the author's intelligence, and that of the reader, to get to the core of the issues proposed. And find the light among the shadows. It will have been worth it.

The swords of the Templars were engraved with a phrase from Psalms 16:7 that read: "sub umbra alarum tuarum protégeme" [under the shadow of your wings protect me].

How well these words fit here! The shadow, form of architectural space. The shadow to conquer the light, or rather, to let oneself be conquered by the light.

John Cage said in *Silence*: "What we hear is fundamentally noise. When we ignore it, it disturbs us. But when we listen to it attentively, we find it fascinating". Listen very carefully to Rafael Casado's words in his praise of shadow and light in this book. You will be fascinated.