

PARAMETRIC DESIGN AS A TECHNIQUE OF CONVERGENCE

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Abstract. Following the introduction of parametric design into the contemporary digital architectural scene, this paper exposes its principals as well as some of its major potentialities that emerge from its use in the discipline. It is argued that parametric design is a technique that embraces the concept of “convergence” in multiple dimensions. Through this explanation this paper intends also to highlight the relevance of the integration of this technique in architectural education. Student’s projects are described to illustrate some of the concepts.

1. Introduction

New digital technologies of design, engineering, manufacturing and communication are challenging architects in thinking about new ways of doing Architecture. Contemporary architectural practices have been fully embracing the digital, to create a variety of design techniques that promote the emergence of a landscape of research fields. Some of the most visible trends focus on extending the impact of the computer to digitally reconfigure the processes that drive towards the physically built object. Building concerns are joined together with conception and communication, revealing a deeper understanding of the specific potentialities of the digital for the “making” of architecture.

When Kolarevic (2001) observes that “*the Information Age, like the Industrial Age before it, is challenging not only how we design buildings, but also how we manufacture and construct them*” it’s possible to identify the actual relevance of those digital research fields dedicated to design-to-manufacturing methods. It is precisely in this scene that parametric