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공학석사학위논문

# **Conflict and Compromise of Architectural Fragments**

**- A Taxonomy of Representational Strategies in Korean  
Urban Architecture between 1960s and 2000s -**

**건축적 파편들의 갈등과 타협**

**－ 1960 년대와 2000 년대 사이 한국 도시건축의  
표상 전략에 관한 분류체계 －**

2023 년 8 월

서울대학교 대학원

건축학과

서 은 섭

# Conflict and Compromise of Architectural Fragments

- A Taxonomy of Representational Strategies in Korean  
Urban Architecture between 1960s and 2000s -

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이 논문을 공학석사 학위논문으로 제출함

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# Abstract

This paper proposes an approach to comprehend contemporary Korean architecture through a singular perspective of "part and whole." The objectives are twofold. Firstly, it aims to develop a taxonomy that classifies the exterior appearance of Korean architecture based on the relational aspects of parts and wholes. Instead of considering the representation of a building as an abstract concept, it views it from the perspective of a physical image of the object. The parts and their organization into a whole within an architectural object serve as the means through which the image is conveyed. Consequently, the second objective is to comprehend what Korean architects had been representing and how they convey it through the appearance of their buildings using this classification approach.

Since modernization in South Korea, architecture has been an important medium of communication in the social realm: a representation of the Korean identity, an expression of singularity, authority, a self-establishment of learned modernism, or a proposal for high-density urban condition. Although there have been diversified architectural expressions in modern and contemporary practice in Korea, and despite the emphasis put on the outward expressions, domestic architectural discourses have, since around a certain time, prioritized conceptual themes over their tangible manifestations into an architectural object. Research on architectural expression has predominantly focused on specific architects

or labeled architectural styles, with a scarce investigation employing a methodology rooted in the Korean architectural practice. With a focus on the communicative role of architecture, this paper attempts to delve into the atlas of architectural languages in the exterior of Korean contemporary architecture.

Underlying in this thesis a premise and hypothesis that "externally fragmented architectures provide a deeper understanding of the context of Korean architecture." The fragmentation is caused by multifaceted concepts and necessities, including critical challenges within Korean architecture such as regionality, spatial experience, pragmatic concerns and intricate urban environments. The taxonomy is to classify the manipulation of generated architectural fragments in the process of incorporating them into each whole, which pertains to the representational strategy. It is a formation of architectural imagery on the exterior through the syntax of diverse fragments. The strategy not only encompasses an artistry of an individual architect, but also emerge as an utterance of the architectural object.

Each period is thematized, identifying the crucial themes relevant to the fragmentation of Korean architecture. Then, the syntax between fragments is scrutinized and developed into the taxonomy. Significantly, the primary objective of this research is to investigate the convergence between fragments and representation within the distinctive historical context which manifests into indigenous imageries in the Korean architectural milieu.

The research is twofold: First, it develops a basic taxonomy of architectural part-whole, based on the relevant theories on mereology. It further specifies the physical, perceptible languages that contribute to the diversification of each basic type by analyzing significant projects by Korean architects. Second, as a primary objective, it investigate the specific diversification of representational strategies throughout the 1960s and 2000s. Through a iterative process of categorization and analysis, this study aims to identify the architectural fragments that are at hands of Korean architects, and the concurrent evolution of fragmented architecture into a diversified taxonomy.

The methodology suggested for understanding the fragmented architecture would be applicable to analyzing architecture more inclusively across the borders of heterogeneous "-isms" and styles. Further investigations regarding mutual influence and comparison with a broader international architectural practice could provide a comprehensive understanding of the introspection of Korean architecture.

**Keywords:** Architectural fragments, Urban architecture, Mereology, Representation, Taxonomy, Korean contemporary architecture

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# Chapter 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Background and purpose

Stepping out from doctrinaire design approaches and incorporating evolving technological preconditions, contemporary architectural expressions has been broadening its spectrum of diversity and individuality. One can either look at the diversity in a given context, or focus on a specific theme in order to search for how it is implemented in different circumstances. However, domestic architectural discourses have, since the collective criticisms on exterior expressions until the 1990s, prioritized conceptual themes over their tangible manifestations and its outward communicative roles. Park Gil-Ryong has mentioned that “While Gilles Deleuze and Jean Baudrillard are often invoked, a mention of Gestalt theory would leave the audience cold.<sup>1</sup>” There had been formed a prevailing tendency to understand architectural design from the perspective of internalizing external conditions, rather than viewing it as the subjective acts of individuals<sup>2</sup>. Consequently, the outward expression including the exterior of architecture has been limited to individual dimensions and has been rarely become a subject of common discourse. Moreover, researches on architectural expression of Korean architects

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1 Park Gil-Ryong, 한국 현대건축 평전, p.329.

2 Pai Hyung-Min, 파편과 체험의 언어, 건축 도시 조경의 지식 지형, p. 73.

have predominantly focused on specific architects or labeled architectural styles, with a scarce investigations employing a methodology rooted in the Korean architectural practice.

Generally speaking, reading buildings within the context of specific isms or theories does not always explain all aspects of individual buildings. This is particularly true for Korean architecture, which has played a subjective role in the formation and evolution of certain theories and has not purely followed established models throughout history. Instead of seeking traces of established themes applied to a single building, this thesis assumes that discovering "connective tissues" among various samples is a valid perspective for understanding contemporary Korean architecture, independent of the production site of isms. Therefore, this paper aims to propose an alternative taxonomy, rooted in the basic theme of "architecture as parts and wholes," which goes beyond the conventional formal classifications based on external characteristics.

The relationship between the parts and the whole revealed within a building can be understood as expressing a certain "attitude" that goes beyond design techniques. Therefore, various specific modes of expression embodied in a single building can be classified under a common "attitude." Isms or theories in architecture always entail a certain attitude towards the relationship between parts and the whole. Fumihiko Maki's concept of "Group Form" and Robert Venturi's concept of "Complex Whole" both share the same attitude of pursuing architecture that does not strongly manipulate the geometric form of the whole, while

allowing the overall form to be revealed or concealed<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, just as Robert Venturi developed his theory by analyzing architecture of previous eras, buildings of different styles that have a significant time gap between them can also be linked through a similar logic of parts and wholes. Just as his theory was prominently manifested in the appearance of architecture, the mechanism of parts and wholes is an attitude that clearly manifests itself not only in spatial organization but also in the organization of the external form. A taxonomy based on part-whole mechanism can be a valid system which can provide a common set of terms for reviewing the exterior expressions of contemporary Korean architecture.

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<sup>3</sup> Kim Kwang-Hyun. 부분과 전체. 안그라픽스. 2018. p. 184.

As highlighted by Pai Hyung Min, the concept of 'Fragment' plays a crucial role in comprehending Korean architecture from the starting point of modern architecture until the present day. The term itself may simply refer to the elements of architecture, but the notion of fragment in this context extends beyond to encompass spatial experience, principles, theories, images, context, culture, as well as pragmatic and realistic considerations.

Since the early stages of Korean contemporary architecture, discernible characteristics unfold following the absence of firmly established architectural languages and the absence of comprehensive discourses and trials around conventions and evolutionary processes. Consequently, architectural systems such as modernism are perceived merely as borrowed fragments of languages that contribute to the constitution of each architectural whole. Moreover, the multifaceted challenges of complex social and urban realities amplify the emergence of fragments. In a conceptual dimension, it is a notion that enables an allegorical reading of Korean architecture that does not necessarily derive from a given language of authority<sup>4</sup>.

The highlighted aspect in this paper is the transition of such fragments from conceptual dimensions to physical dimensions, leaving traces on the external appearance of architecture. For instance, when major Korean architects initially adopted Miesian methodologies, evidence of

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4 Pai Hyung Min. "Positive Fragments: The Allegorical Language of Contemporary Korean Architecture." *Convergent Flux*. Eds. Jinhee Park, John Hong. Basel, Cambridge: Birkhäuser, Harvard Graduate School of Design, 2012. pp.90 - 96

architectural fragmentation became apparent in the resultant wholes. In Sam-II Building(1968) by Kim Joong-Up, it is notable that the method of construction for the lower floors is different from the upper floors while the Seagram Building(1958) by Mies van der Rohe is built in an singular manner<sup>5</sup>. The Sam-II Building is situated on a platform, whereas the Seagram Building stands independently as a pure structure. In the case of the Sam-II Building, a massive functional core is attached as a distinct mass constructed and clad with a different system, whereas in the Seagram Building, the core is concealed from the exterior, and the protruding mass at the rear is clad in a uniform skin structure. In the Hyoseong Building(1977) by Kim Jong Seong, the syntax of the front and the side is distinguished. Kim incorporates Ludwig Hilberseimer's idea of taking the orientation of a building into account, while the front of the building itself is a modification of the Miesian method that assigns equal hierarchy to all four sides <sup>6</sup>. Furthermore, attempts to find tradition in Korean contemporary architecture, which continued until the 1980s, mainly manifested as a tendency to integrate the old traditions and various fragmented foreign elements through the expression of the appearance, using architectural elements, namely physical fragments, as intermediaries. This aspect of fragments, which will be further discussed in Chapter 2, takes on different backgrounds and connections depending on the era, transforming into different forms of physical fragments. These fragments,

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5 Park Gil-Ryong, 한국 현대건축 평전, 공간서가, 2015.

originating from diverse sources in their nature sometimes defy notions of homogeneity, order, and wholeness. The challenge lies in assembling and managing these fragments to form a unified, singular built form.

In contemporary architecture, representation extends beyond the reproduction of existing objects or concepts and encompasses the construction and production of images. Korean architecture, too, has been an important medium of communication in the social realm: a representation of the Korean identity, an expression of singularity, authority, a self-establishment of learned modernism, or a proposal for high-density urban condition.

Within the dominant appearance of fragments in Korean architecture, the question of "what will be communicated through the exterior of architecture?" becomes the *conflict between fragments and representation*. The interplay and relationships among fragments in their external manifestation yield varied representational effects, and it is at the architects' disposal on how to construct the desired image. The manipulation of fragments through their shape, materials, integration, separation, concealing and revealing, and the creation of order on the architectural exterior constitutes a series of expressive choices, defining how fragments are *compromised into a cohesive whole* to construct a specific image

Instead of generalizing that "Korean architecture is conceptually and visually fragmented," this thesis begins with the premise and hypothesis



that "externally fragmented architectures provide a deeper understanding of the context of Korean architecture." The aim is to categorize and analyze the fragmented architecture as indigenous imageries where shared problematics and subjects of a specific time are firmly embodied.

The taxonomy of fragmented architecture developed throughout this thesis pertains to the representational strategy of each whole. It is a formation of architectural imagery on the exterior, through the syntax of diverse fragments. These strategies not only encompass an artistry of an individual architect, but also emerge as a statement on the exterior of architecture. It embraces multifaceted concepts and necessities, including challenges within Korean architecture such as regionality, monumentality, commerciality, spatial experience, pragmatic concerns and intricate urban environments.

## 1.2. Data and methods

The underlying question throughout the whole thesis is "Which fragment had emerged? And how is it assembled into a whole?." Each period is thematized, identifying the fragments relevant to the context of each timeline. Then, the syntax between the fragments, the "particular solutions" of each case, will be scrutinized and developed into the taxonomy. In the process of these inquiries, differences and diversification within both the fragments and the taxonomy that follow will be examined.

Fragment and syntax both refer to perceptible elements on the exterior of a building. Here, the term 'exterior' is closely related to the word 'surface' of a building, but sometimes, even within a single building, disjointed architectural elements such as fragmented masses, projections, pilasters, or walls can all become subjects of analysis. Therefore, in a broader sense, I will refer to them as 'appearance'.

The taxonomy targets individual 'units' rather than building 'clusters' when it comes to a single architecture. It encompasses buildings of various functions such as commercial buildings, offices, and religious facilities, excluding typologies such as private residences or landscape architecture. It focuses on a wide range of scales, from small-scale commercial buildings to medium-sized buildings, all of which are situated within an urban context.

The research primarily focuses on urban architecture for three reasons. First, it aims to examine a singular unit of building in order to apply a

unified criterion when scrutinizing their parts and wholes. Second, in the realm of urban architecture, various external conditions operate in conjunction with the architectural process, necessitating manipulation of the building's parts and wholes that extend beyond the architect's exclusive artistry. Situations may arise demanding fragmentation or, conversely, a emphatic symbolism. Lastly, the relative independence from symbolic obligations or national identity associated with architecture before 1980s, when the significant works of Korean architecture were predominantly shaped by the constructions of national significance.

The approach to developing the taxonomy is as follows. Firstly, four basic types of part-whole relationships – *Collection*, *Integral Object*, *Mass*, *Thing* - are established as the main categories based on relevant theories. These categories are derived from classifications proposed in the fields of cognitive science and linguistics, considering how the exterior of a building is ‘perceived.’ The terminology and criteria for taxonomy are adjusted to reflect the specific conditions of architecture.

The crucial aspect of this paper is to discover how these main categories are further refined and developed through specific modes of expression, both within different time periods and among individual architects. While the main categories are derived through an inductive approach, the analysis of individual buildings will investigate differentiations within the works of individual architects or within works from the same era, completing a refined taxonomy through a deductive approach.

## **Chapter 2. Theoretical Background**

### **2.1. Theories on part-whole relations in architecture**

#### **(1) Perception and communication of architectural form**

This paper shares the idea of how people perceive architecture, as suggested by Charles Jencks, that “people invariably see one building in terms of another, or in terms of a similar object; in short as a metaphor<sup>7</sup>.” In this idea of architecture as ‘the mode of communication’ we can further understand the representational strategies of architecture and how they transmit the desired images. He also holds the same point of view to the analogical understanding that architecture communicates through ‘Words,’ ‘Phrases,’ ‘Syntax,’ and ‘Semantics<sup>8</sup>.’ ‘Words’ in architecture refer to separate elements that comprise a building, such as columns and a roof, being basic units of meaning - in this paper, they will be regarded as ‘Fragments.’ They can be both literal and phenomenal (perceptual); they can be surface, plane, volume, a void, or even a hole on a surface. ‘Phrases’ are a particular combination of elements, and ‘Syntax’ is a set of rules governing the arrangements of words and phrases.

In the historical context of Post Modernism, Jencks himself had considered the syntax as being more “mundane than metaphors and words,” since the syntax of architecture has been existed in the modern movement

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<sup>7</sup> Charles Jencks, *The Language of Post Modern Architecture*(1977), p.40.

<sup>8</sup> Charles Jencks, *op.cit.*, p.40.

“to the point of obsession.” Instead, he values the instances where the preoccupied syntax rules are constantly broken<sup>9</sup>. However, as a ‘cohesive language of fragments,’ syntax is the basic logic in which representational strategies out of fragments are conducted. Since the focus is not on the ‘sign’ itself but how it is set ready to be perceived by people, syntax is still an important aspect in the context of this thesis. Most importantly, within the context that Korean architecture had to ‘borrowing and starting from scratch’ as described earlier, the formal principles explored in the modern movement and the syntactical strategies pursued in terms of the principles of facade were also important languages in contemporary architectural expression for a long time. Therefore, the pure architectural elements and formal languages of modernism—such as planes, volumes, contrasts, repetition, order, segmentation, and others—are considered as the ‘materials and methods’ of expression that need to be identified in the buildings studied in this paper.

## **(2) Mereology in Architecture**

The relationship between the parts and the whole revealed within a building can be understood as expressing a certain "attitude" that goes beyond design techniques. Therefore, various specific modes of expression embodied in a single building can be classified under a common "attitude." Isms or theories in architecture always entail a certain

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<sup>9</sup> Charles Jencks, *op.cit.*, p.72.

attitude towards the relationship between parts and the whole. Fumihiko Maki's concept of "Group Form" and Robert Venturi's concept of "Complex Whole" both share the same attitude of pursuing architecture that does not strongly manipulate the geometric form of the whole, while allowing the overall form to be revealed or concealed<sup>10</sup>. Furthermore, just as Robert Venturi developed his theory by analyzing architecture of previous eras, buildings of different styles that have a significant time gap between them can also be linked through a similar logic of parts and wholes. Just as his theory was prominently manifested in the appearance of architecture, the mechanism of parts and wholes is an attitude that clearly manifests itself not only in spatial organization but also in the organization of the external form. A taxonomy based on part-whole mechanism can be a valid system which can provide a common set of terms for reviewing the exterior expressions of contemporary Korean architecture.

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<sup>10</sup> Kim Kwang-Hyun. 부분과 전체. 안그래픽스. 2018. p. 184.

## **2.2. Major discourses on Korean architectural history**

### **(1) 'Diagrams' of Korean architecture**

In the realm of architecture, the role of a 'diagram' is defined as the intermediary between architects and the actual construction process, enabling the realization of architectural structures in accordance with diverse external conditions. It functions akin to an abstract mechanism, guiding the transformation of situational aspects into architectural manifestations and concretizing the process of architecture.<sup>11</sup> Chung In-Ha has captured inherent 'generative diagrams' shared amongst architects in the history of 20th-century Korean modern architecture through this conceptual lens. Among these, 'Architectural form and visual perception,' 'A search for new spatial concept,' 'Semantics of Technology,' and 'Discovery of Reality' represent commonalities that have influenced architecture between the 1960s and the 2000s, which form the scope of this study. Preceding the 1980s was a period characterized by the prominence of a select group of architects, each reflecting significant deviations within the realm of the same generative diagram. Meanwhile, the notion of the 'Discovery of Reality' pertains to the process of transforming realistic conditions that extensively influenced Korean architectural practice post-1980s, potentially serving as a temporal framework.

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<sup>11</sup> SPACE 200602

The chronological differentiation of eras related to the subject matter of this paper and the segmentation of individual sections are based on diagrams that impact the representational strategies of buildings. These are defined as intersections where the specific conditions of urban architecture, as elucidated by Chung In-Ha, come into play.

## **(2) The logic of 'fragments' in Korean architecture**

Pai Hyung Min has presented fragments as a crucial concept and motif in understanding Korean architecture and the works of architects. According to him, "fragments are the most fundamental condition and mode of understanding in Korean contemporary architecture <sup>12</sup> ." Furthermore, he states that "fragments are distinguishable elements within a whole, but they do not form a systematic knowledge. Due to their nature, fragments reveal the incompleteness and contradictions of the entirety they constitute<sup>13</sup>." He examines the "logic of fragments" or "a fragment of architecture" in the context of specific periods in Korean architecture or the works of particular architects. Based on his various descriptions, these fragmentary logic and subjects converge around several common themes in different periods. Furthermore, this concept exhibits a transitive nature between the conceptual dimension and the physical dimension. When

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12 Pai Hyung-Min, 파편과 체험의 언어, 건축 도시 조경의 지식 지형 p.75.

13 Pai Hyung-Min, et.al. 1990 년대 이후 건축역사와 건축설계교육의 관계에 대한 연구, p.53.



organizing these fragmentary concepts according to each period, the following can be summarized.

In Korean architecture rooted in modern architecture, modernity was not a continuous tradition from our country's perspective. The fragments of Korean contemporary architecture emerge in the process of creating architecture anew by utilizing vague old traditions and scattered foreign fragments<sup>14</sup>.” As he pointed out, for a long time, the most typical way for architects to talk about architecture was to correspond linguistic conventions to a specific part - a fragment - of the building. Among them, the issue of traditionality manifested as a "highly specific form" and was a fragment of Architecture and a building<sup>15</sup>.” When confronted with the issue of traditionality, architects have approached the symbolic planning of architecture through specific fragments of tradition. This approach even extended to the conceptualization of Kim Ki-woong's "Independence Memorial Hall" design in the 1980s. He combined and arranged traditional architectural elements such as roofs, stairs, fortifications, and walls to satisfy the demand for traditionality surrounding the building. He then explained his architecture through individual elements within it.

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14 Pai Hyung-Min, op.cit., p. 45.

15 Pai Hyung-Min, 파편과 체험의 언어, 건축 도시 조경의 지식 지형, pp. 49-50.

From the late 1980s onwards, Korean architects became more actively exposed to Western architecture and theories. In addition to the direct fragments of tradition, a different logic of fragments operated within Korean architecture. There were vigorous efforts to communicate architecture through language and to embrace new architectural languages. However, a significant problem was the lack of a well-established system of principles and knowledge, as well as a sufficient practical foundation, which had been developed over a long period of time in Korean architecture. As a result, architectural discourse and practice at the time were characterized by a fragmented and disjointed nature, relying on individual experiences and fragmented pieces provided by scattered readings<sup>16</sup>.

Firstly, their works and various references - applied principles, images, collected discussions, and topics - were structured with a fragmented logic. They operated not always in direct correspondence to physical fragments like the issue of traditionality, but rather as a source of inspiration or a “creative origin<sup>17</sup>.” Then it primarily emerged through the individual's ‘artistic intention,’ intertwining with the process of architectural creation<sup>18</sup>. These conditions comprised the fragmented nature of the architectural discourse prevalent at that time.

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16 Pai Hyung-Min, op.cit., pp. 44-47.

17 Pai Hyung-Min, *파편과 체험의 언어, 건축 도시 조경의 지식 지형*, p.57.

18 Pai Hyung-Min, op.cit, p.69.

The concept of "fragmented experience" does not necessarily involve a direct one-to-one correspondence with visually fragmented architectural elements, as discussed in relation to the notion of tradition in the past. However, in terms of 'allegorically configuring fragmented spatial experiences,' it can be inferred that there had been made a transition into the physical fragments, as a form of 'physical conditions fragmented for multifaceted spatial experiences.' This can be seen as an extension of architectural themes that frequently emerged in the 1990s, such as "채나눔" and "미움." As expressed by Park Gil-Ryong, the "walls as morphemes" becoming one of the common architectural languages holds significant importance. In this context, Lim Seok-jae has presented the theme of "the Korean abstract" as one of the main currents in Korean architecture during the 1990s<sup>19</sup>.

Their discourse remained in a conceptual dimension that was detached from the actual production of architecture, which was a concern raised at that time.<sup>20</sup> However, this paper maintains that these "fragmented logics" not only in terms of the architecturalization of individual thematic fragments but also as existing beyond the conceptual dimension. They manifest as inconsistencies within architectural forms, the hybridization of formal expressions, the coexistence of multiple images within a single building, and the physical fragmentation related to partial experiences of

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19 Park Gil-Ryong, op.cit., p.

20 Pai Hyung-Min, 파편, 체험, 개념 - 4.3 그룹의 담론 구도에 관하여, 전환기의 한국 건축과 4.3 그룹, p. 88.

space. On the other hand, the influence of contemporary ‘culture of fragmented architecture’ such as postmodernism and deconstructivism, which had permeated Korean architecture since the 1980s, accelerated the emergence of fragmented architecture. This becomes even more evident when looking beyond the architects of the 4.3 Group that Pai Hyung-Min primarily dealt with.

Pai Hyung-min's concept of fragments focuses on the works of the architects known as the "4th Generation Architects" who emerged in the mid-1990s. They had been educated with architectural grammar, principles, and systems that had not been properly established in Korean architecture. Moreover, they practiced ways to architecturalize the externalities of the built environment, that is, to incorporate the systems of the external world into architecture. The architects who began their prominent activities during that time were able to access the systematic education of architecture from western countries, which considered working with "fragments and fragmented systems" that emerged after the collapse of the continuity of tradition as a demand of the era <sup>21</sup>. However, in the context of Korean architecture where established systems or traditions were not in place, "fragments and systems" were not autonomous traditions of architecture but rather external conditions internalized within specific projects, such as urban conditions, programs,

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21 Pai Hyung-Min, 1990년대 이후 건축역사와 건축설계교육의 관계에 대한 연구, pp. 54-55.

budgets, and other external factors<sup>22</sup>. In the absence of established criteria such as the principles of facade or the formal principles of modernism that were not ingrained in Korean architects, their common struggle lay in how to create a coherent façade system for buildings and what approach to take when constructing new buildings in the context of surrounding buildings that lacked systematic or proper architectural qualities to reference. They had to grapple with these challenges and find innovative solutions.

On the other hand, Chung In-Ha defines Korean architecture from the late 1980s as ‘architecture of reality.’ He noticed that, what dominated Korean architecture since the late 1980s was no longer a preconceived concept but a methodology based on realistic conditions<sup>23</sup>. It includes an attitude of embracing the given reality positively and solving practical problems, which became the driving force behind architectural works, and through that exploring various methodologies.<sup>24</sup> The spectrum of the architecture of reality, as he describes it, encompasses external factors such as functionality and commercial viability, sense of place and urban context, program and typology. These refer to the elements that were encompassed within the logic of fragments in Korean architecture at that time, analyzed by Pai Hyung-Min.

So, what were the external conditions or contexts given to them like? Due to “various systems operating within complex architectural, urban,

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22 Pai Hyung-Min, 1990 년대 이후 건축역사와 건축설계교육의 관계에 대한 연구, p. 54.

23 Jeong In-Ha, 현실의 발견, 건축의 지식 지형, 나무도시, 2011, pp.16-19.

24 Jeong In-Ha, op.cit., p. 22.

and social backgrounds<sup>25</sup>,” and the logic of fragmentation that had been inherited from previous generations—the logic which presumably was not limited to a few conscious architects alone—shaped the city, and the complex overlapped with realistic conditions became their architecture's external context. These external conditions not only served as motivations for shaping the spatial form of the buildings but also led to the creation of complex and fragmented architectural structures with a methodologies for the exterior such as to reflect the heterogeneity of the surrounds or to fragment for the sake of connections with the outside.

Now, the proposition mentioned earlier, "externally fragmented architectures provide a deeper understanding of the context of Korean architecture," has become more agreeable. Among various examples, Pai mentioned that there is also a logic of fragmentation present in Yoo Kerl's Seo Seok Residence. In the Seo Seok Residence, the existing traditional hanok building and the new building are juxtaposed in completely different styles. Here, since tradition and modernity cannot be harmonized as one, there is an understanding that they must be approached as separate fragments.<sup>26</sup> If Kim Ki-Woong had undertaken the same project, what would the appearance of the newly constructed building have been like? If it had to be an expansion as an individual unit, what would the combined form of the two volumes have looked like?

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25 Pai Hyung-Min, *op.cit.*, p.50.

26 Pai Hyung-Min, *파편과 체험의 언어, 건축 도시 조경의 지식 지형*, p.59-60.

In this paper, the taxonomy focuses on individual buildings rather than building clusters. However, it is important to remind ourselves that the taxonomy in this paper deals with the manipulation of these embodied fragments within the realm of representation in architecture. The detailed analysis of specific buildings in Chapter 4 begins by thematizing the identity of the fragments that constitute the building's exterior. Each taxonomy can be understood as a "palette of fragments" that comprises the image of the exterior.

### **2.3. A basic taxonomy of representational strategies**

Charles Jencks' perspective is based on the cognitive aspect of architecture. The perspective of this paper focuses on 'how fragments and their syntax have been manipulated to perceived as a desired image. In linguistics, meronymy deals with the semantic relationship between parts and wholes. Researches in linguistics and cognitive science has suggested a taxonomy of *part-whole* meronymic relations. Based on the semantic relation in the ordinary English-speaker's use of the term "part of" meronymic relations can be categorized into six types<sup>27</sup>.

1. Component – Integral object (pedal – bike)
2. Member – Collection (ship – fleet)
3. Portion – Mass (slice – pie)

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27 Morton E. Winston, Roger Chaffin, Douglas Herrmann, A Taxonomy of Part-Whole Relations, Cognitive Science, 11. 1987, pp.417-444.

4. Stuff – Object (steel – car)
5. Feature – Activity (paying – shopping)
6. Place – Area (Everglades – Florida)

The aforementioned study considers this classification valid within relationships where a physical connection exists between the entities referred to by the parts and the whole. Distinctions are made between semantic relations with differing attributes, such as topological inclusion, class inclusion, and attribution.<sup>28</sup> From an architectural standpoint, particularly within the context of this present paper, this taxonomy is deemed applicable to classifications ranging from 1 to 4. Moreover, with regard to classifying based on the architectural visual whole, a reconfiguration of nomenclature has been carried out, resulting in the derivation of four fundamental types of architectural wholes: Integral Object, Collection, Mass, and Thing.

### **1. Collection**

- a collection of individual and distinctive fragments  
(member)

### **2. Integral Object**

- a uniformly configured or ostensibly integrated whole with individual fragments (compenent). Includes metaphorical integration into a specific configuration.

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28 Morton E. Winston, Roger Chaffin, Douglas Herrmann, *op.cit.*, pp.427-429.



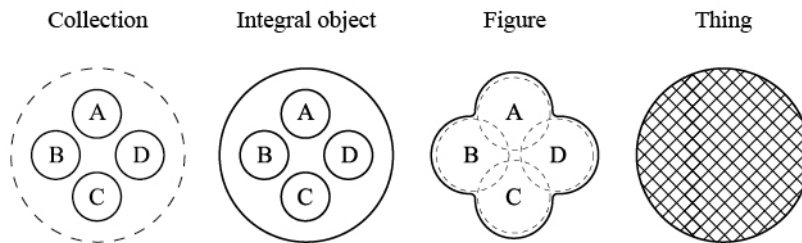
### 3. Figure (mass)

– a monolithic whole with discernable parts (fragments, in this context.)

Includes protuberances and other deformations within homogenous volume.

### 4. Thing

- a pure monolithic whole with uniform surface.



**Figure 1. Four fundamental types of architectural representational strategies**

The original taxonomy had been developed around three decisive criteria. Termed as “relation elements,” types of meronymic relations can be distinguished by combinations of three main aspects<sup>29</sup>:

A: Are the relation of part to whole is *functional*?

B: Are the parts *homeomeric*?

C: Are the part and whole *separable*?

- For ‘Member - Collection,’ only C is positive
- For ‘Component – Integral object,’ A and C is positive
- For ‘Portion – Mass,’ B and C is positive

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<sup>29</sup> Morton E. Winston, Roger Chaffin, Douglas Herrmann, op.cit., pp.421.

- For 'Stuff – Object,' non is positive.

Within the architectural realm, these can be translated into following:

A: Functional

→ Is it physically interactive in terms of visual dynamics<sup>30</sup>? Or, is it functional in the formation of the metaphorical whole? Or, without this, does the identity of the whole changes?

B: Homeomorous

→ Is it visually synecdochical to the whole? Or, do they share certain visual or phenomenal attributes?

C: Separable

→ Is it complete/determinate? Or, is its identity discernable from the whole? Or, is the identity of the whole maintained without this?

The analytical approach employed in the subsequent chapter unfolds as follows: The relations within the dominant overall entity, that is, the image of the entire entity that is either visibly manifest or intuitively perceived as a whole, are initially categorized based on an extrinsic order. This can be referred to as an intrinsic order, and the finer classifications will be discerned based on implicit order(s).

The intrinsic order is, in other words, a *part to part* relations. In the identification of the intrinsic order, attributes such as 'Functional,' 'Homeomorous,' and 'Separable' will be reconsidered within each *'partial*

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30 The concept of 'visual dynamics' is researched by Rudolf Arnheim, in <The Dynamics of Architectural Form, 1977> and <Art and Visual Perception, 1954>. It embraces the basic order of architecture and ostensible dynamics of architectural forms.

*order'* or '*part to part relations.*' While progressing with the analysis of each building, explicit syntax and implicit syntax will be identified to further refine the four major classifications into more specific sub-classifications. In the process of organizing parts in architecture, integration and differentiation processes can occur within the part-whole structure. This is commonly referred to as 'integration and deintegration' or 'differentiation and dedifferentiation.'<sup>31</sup> Through these processes, the intrinsic syntax structure is concretized. The relationships from part to part, facilitated by these processes, are categorized into *componenthood* and *membership*. By elucidating the relationships between part to whole structure and part to part structure within the analyzed buildings, the specified taxonomy will be finalized.

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31 Lee Seung-Yong, *The Concept of Part and Whole in the Architectural Field and the Possibility of the Application to Understanding Architecture*, p. 28.

## **Chapter 3. 1960s-1980s : Early Representational Strategies**

### **3.1. Fragments of heterogenous identities**

#### **(1) Background**

The language Korean architecture in the 1950s and 1960s was based on the international style and modernism given as a pre-established model to follow. In the process of assimilating Western modern architecture, Korean architecture made various attempts to integrate the identity of traditional architecture. This was primarily achieved through direct adoption of traditional architectural elements and the transformation of formal systems.<sup>32</sup> However, these attempts were primarily undertaken in buildings that demanded a certain function of commemoration or in independent structures that maintained a certain distance from the urban context. In the realm of urban architecture, the focus shifted towards a faithful assimilation of modern architecture. Nevertheless, due to technological constraints, the progress of Western architecture was arduously pursued, and architectural technological achievements took precedence over spatial accomplishments.

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32 Chung In-Ha, SPACE 200608, pp.158-159

## **Assemblage of different cladding systems**

According to Park Gil-Ryong, some of the limits of Korean modernity can be seen as following: 1) The International style and Modernism was not comprehended nor practiced as a cultural movement incorporating the aesthetics and spatiality but as a style of ‘newness’ 2) With the necessity for post-war redevelopment, quantitative values were prioritized over spatial qualities. Park puts this as ‘surface culture 표질 문화.<sup>33</sup>’ There were limitations in comprehending or implementing the overarching principles of constructing architecture as seen in cases like Miss Van der Rohe or Louis Kahn, as systems of modern production. Furthermore, there were no systems of facade or traditional orders that individual urban architecture could refer to. In this period of incomplete assimilation of the language of modern architecture, what manifested in the appearance of Korean architecture was not a system of cladding, but rather diverse compositional methods of pre-existing languages.

Representational strategies were the matter of different composition and proportionalities of existing architectural languages. Within the limits of material and construction techniques, one of the most common Korean architectural languages since the 1950s was the ‘grid.’ The overlapping vertical or horizontal, concrete or brick components on the façade and their repetitions could easily achieve the cost-efficient, low-tech but modern

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33 “건축의 표현에서 자의식은 훨씬 강하여지나 그것이 근원적인 질의를 거쳐 나온 것이 아니기에 주로 표질 문화에 그친다”, Park, op.cit.

image from their clear geometry.<sup>34</sup> In <Statistics Office Building (1962)> by Lee Hee-Tae, the outer layer of horizontal concrete grid overlaps with the vertical, same concrete columns. Then the inset is filled with vertical brick and glass components. For <Metro Hotel (1960)>, Lee organizes the similar geometric grid but the infill was made of tile, and the horizontal slabs were accentuated to emphasize the image of their vertical stacks. They were different variations of grid structure of the vertical-horizontal elements, with the infills of brick, tile, or the curtain walls.

One of the common aspects of urban architecture that were often pointed out was the differentiation of surface qualities within a single building. <St. Mary's Hospital (1963)>'s curtain wall was only installed on the front and the back, while the sides were covered with bricks. During that time, curtain walls were mostly applied partially on the façades due to technological limitations. On <UNESCO Hall (1966)> by Pai Ki-Hyung, where he could wrap the front and the corner of the building in a rounded shape with curtain wall, the other sides are covered with concrete elevations. Chung In-Ha highlights that curtain walls, due to their technological limitations, were only partially applied to the exterior walls rather than being installed throughout, thereby failing to faithfully manifest the inherent essence of curtain walls.<sup>35</sup> It functioned as an element that contributed to the compositional aesthetic in conjunction with other facade elements, similar to the grid-infill relationship in grid

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34 Park, op. cit., pp.20-21

35 Chung In-Ha, SPACE 200610, p.173

formation, rather than constituting a singular system enveloping the exterior of modern architecture. The attempt to implement curtain walls using domestic technology and encircle them around the entirety of a building, as seen in the case of the <Chohung Bank Headquarters (1966)>, forms a contrasting relationship with the foundational composition. This is juxtaposed with the fact that the base of the building, which emulates the curtain wall of the tower, is a variation from the Lever House (1951) it is imitating. Distinguishing facades based on direction and volume was not exclusive to curtain wall structures. It signifies the convergence of technological constraints and rational considerations, leading to a compositional amalgamation of distinct materials and structural methodologies, thus evolving into a shared representational strategy in urban architecture until the 1960s. This is particularly evident through the UNESCO Hall, where the front facade is completed by a compositional element defining the left and upper portions around the curtain wall, rendering this even more evident.

### **Assigning identities to fragments**

The international aspiration to transcend the anonymity of the International Style and seek regional characteristics in architecture began to gradually manifest in Korea as well, starting from the late 1950s.<sup>36</sup> Chung In-Kook, a professor and architect, attempted a stylistic shift in his

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<sup>36</sup> Park, Op.cit., pp.44-45.

architectural approach by harmonizing with the cyclical nature of architectural evolution proposed by Viollet-le-Duc. While aligning with the rational tendencies inherent in his architecture, he sought to integrate a romantic inclination – one that pursues "regional attributes and the sensibilities unique to each architectural purpose." This endeavor aimed to bring about a transformation in style.<sup>37</sup>

On the other hand, Kim Joong-Up, a disciple of Le Corbusier, drew significant inspiration from his architecture and sought to apply it to the context of Korea. Particularly notable was his distinctive approach of juxtaposing various architectural elements, a logic of form. This logical approach was most pronounced and became a profound influence on East Asian architecture as it served as a means to amalgamate modern architecture and regional traditions through a variety of forms that reflected local specificity.<sup>3839</sup> While the architectures of Chung In-Kook and Kim Joong-Up can be interpreted through different labels such as romanticism and formalism, both of them progressed their architectural styles from the point of assigning a distinct identity to the elements of architecture.

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37 한국의 건축가-정인국, pp.40-41.

38 Chung In-Ha, SPACE 200606, p.144.

39 PA-001-김중업, p.37.



## **(2) Integral object**

It was the general theme for the architects of the 1960s to adapt the modernism in a negotiative way, stepping out from the International style.<sup>40</sup> The steps forward was about the variation of fragments themselves within the limited means of rational-formalistic structural syntax. Chung In-Kook, once the leading practitioners of the International style, had consciously revised his architectural languages through the decades with an attitude of romanticism.<sup>41</sup>

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40 Park, op.cit., p.52

41 Park, 한국의 건축가 – 정인국(3), 건축사 9603

- *Korea Electronic Power Corporation Annex building (1964)*



**Figure 2. Korea Electronic Power Corporation Annex building (1964)**

### **Integral Object (Part-Whole) – Membership (Part-Part)**

As an annex to the main office building built in 1928, <한국전력  
별관(1964)> - KECA – follows the generic format of tri-partite, which  
comprises a dominant order which constitutes the *component-integral  
object* relation. However, the fragments it employs are from multiple  
sources. To conform to the context of the extension, it attributes the formal  
properties of the original buildings in a distinctive way. The thickened  
outline of KECA's grid echoes the materiality and symmetrical

protuberances of the shaft and the capital. But it also had its thin concrete grid with the glass blocks and windows infilled, as another variation of the rational and compositional strategy prevalent in the era, such as the assemblage with curtain wall or the variation within the grid language. The tile clad outline defines the set of grid which is then supported by the thin base slab – differentiated with vertical tiling - to complete the rectangular volume. The grid is not a uniform plane by itself but rather the infill or the smaller layer of the bigger framing that makes up a syntax of integration.

It is noteworthy that the two set of figures on the base and top are assembled while keeping its identities separate and distinct. The pilotis are figured as a table-like expression on the bottom of the mass being the base platform. For the upper portion it is noteworthy that the defining role of cornice is doubled in KECA. Although the geometric totality could have been complete solely with the ‘defining’ quality of the framing, the contradictory arc figures define the composition again as the cornice or a roof does.

Moreover, these figures are partially contradictory with other elements not only with its geometry but also with its overall treatments. On the south side, the figure is placed at the center but with the surface behind it shows a contradictory quality with the main volume. Their shapes are irregular on the east side, and on the north side they are left asymmetric and detached from the ceiling. This way the volume sitting on top attached with arc figures can be read as an autonomous entity on one hand, but becomes another way of defining the roof on the other hand, akin to how

a capital completes the tri-partite form. Even if these asynchrony might have been due to practical reasons, it was tolerable probably since the initially conceived figure had already been given its autonomous quality. We can also assume that it was allowed since the emphatic monumentality was not so necessary for the site, considering its location and scale.

Between the heterogeneity and formality, there exists a certain amount of incompleteness where fragments are loosely organized – whether it was desired or unintended. As Park Gil-Ryong refers to it, KECA embraces the formality of the main building while mixing it with his own languages<sup>42</sup> - the surface from the old building frames the curtain wall inside the grid, supported by vault figures, and topped with different volume which is decorated with arches reminiscent of classical architecture.

The dominant tripartite division designates each fragments as components, and each parts are clearly defined. Thus its basic taxonomy is *an integral object*. However, abovementioned desynchronizations, ‘double defining’ and other explicit distinctions within each units of fragments, partially set each other to be independent at the same time which intensifies the separable relation between each part and the perceptive whole. The crucial aspect of KECA is that each of the distinct parts holds a distinct identity of the self, both because it is semantically a fragment of gothic architecture and because of its autonomous formative

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42 한국의 건축가 정인국 3 – 건축사 9603

aspect. Thus, the part-to-part relations in KECA can be stated as membership.

- *Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education Building (1968)*



**Figure 3. Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education Building (1968)**

### **Integral Object – Membership**

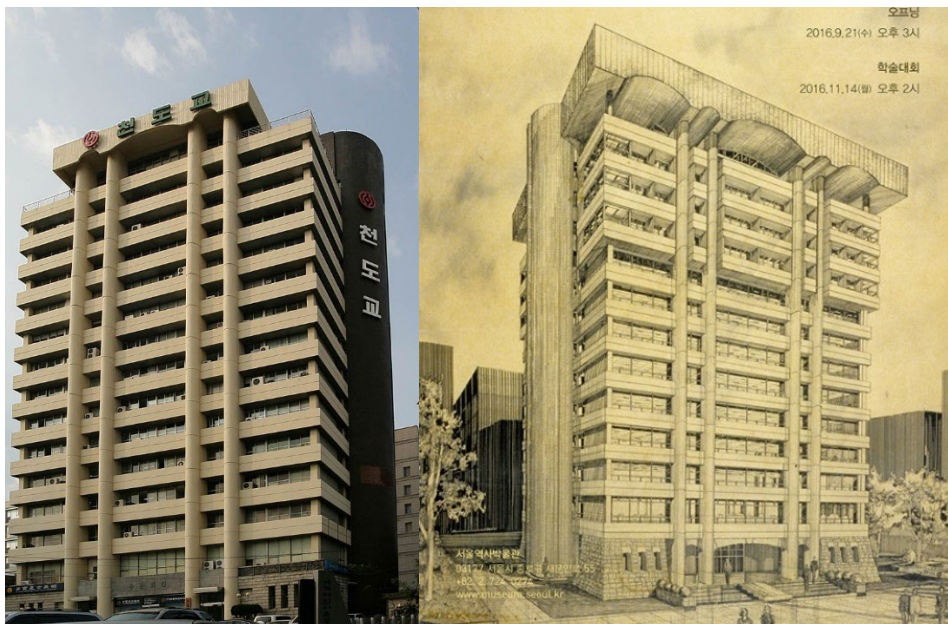
<서울시교육위원회(1968)> - SME – shows a next step of Chung's representational strategy with distinct figures. SME required a bigger scale of formality as a council building standing on a boulevard. While it is an *integral object* as well, the part-to-part relation is embodied in a different manner.

Although not in a distinct proportion, SME also stands with a tripartite composition. Colonnade on the first floor clad with granite differentiates itself with its thick proportion and the shape reminiscent of a traditional column. Flattened arches with marginal extrusion from the upper body coheres with columns to make a unified set. The double defining – or the additional figure - of the capital portion is evident in SME as well. Uppermost portion of the body shows a variation from the repetitive floor slabs into a lace-like surface to highlight and define the overall form. On top of the body sits another figure with arches but is detached from the body – inset in this case, comparable to the arches of KECA.

The vertical volumes standing in symmetry ‘defines’ the overall composition. It was one of the common languages of urban buildings in the era, as a method to complete its overall composition. On plans we can see how the staircases and the storage is volumetrically separated on purpose to utilize them as formal entities. This marks an offset from the surface languages such as the grid. The contradiction between the sharp geometry of the body and the curved volume is evident. However, what is notable here is how these distinct fragments try to contradict but assimilate as well to create a sense of wholeness. The figure on the roof echoes the shape of the last module of the body and the symmetrical definers have white horizontal moldings as if it extends from the body. This assimilation is similar to the concept of *inflection*, which Robert Venturi had been explored through his theories and works.

The tri-partite compositioning and the cores on both sides dominantly define the composition of SME, which constitute into an *integral object*. Fragments reference the traditional forms and materials, thus maintain their autonomous semantic and perceivable identities when individually appreciated. Thus, their part-to-part relations are membership.

- ***Cheondoism Soowoon Hall (1970)***



**Figure 4. Cheondoism Soowoon Hall (1970)**

### **Integral Object - Componenthood**

As another *integral object*, <천도교 수운 회관(1970)> - CSH – is composed of fragments which are assembled into a more expressive and organic syntax. In other words, the overall format is still strictly formalistic – the tripartite division, giant cores in symmetry and the roof as both

‘definers’ – but within the structure the fragments cohere in a more formally organic manner in both the form of each fragment and their layers of syntax. Although the figuration and distinction of fragments recalls those of Chung’s previous works, CSH attributes its fragments to the historical Cheondoism Church sitting on the same site built in 1921. The final version now standing had been apparently compromised from the original plans where we can find more abundant and firmly unified fragments.

In this case, the base calls for a more distinct association to the traditional architecture with its granite rustication and the profile that spreads towards the ground. This figuration of the base could be an expression of the *visual dynamics* of basic physical existence - the impact of gravitational force and the action-reaction, just as any base of a column need to get thicker.<sup>43</sup> This expressive assemblage states more of an intuitive organic integrity, perceivable wholeness rather than the neutral totality of a mere structure. However, since it takes reference from the traditional motif, what it clings to is more of a direct representation of a traditional structure, than the imagery of the CSH itself.

The exaggerated columns that subdivide the façade overlaps from the base to the top and support the roof and tries to dilute the rigid symmetry. Along the way it ‘interlocks’ with the upper main body, which is formed by terraces of the hotel floors. It was clearly stated by the inset and distance between the columns and the volume, and the extrusions in-between each

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43 Rudolf Arnheim. Visual Dynamics.



set of two columns. This subtle push and pull of objects is also another example of visual dynamics that is distinct from a mere aggregation.

A comparison to Paul Rudolph's <Boston Government Service Center (1962)> where the emphasized upper volumes and cores on each corners define the overall composition of minor formal entities, reveals the difference in the CSH's syntax. While both buildings put an emphasis on the upper body – obviously following the programmatic structure – and it is stated clearly by the columns that support them, CSH's double columns soar up until they reach the roof figure while the volume makes way, as if the roof should be always there as an absolute definer, just as in the KECA building. This, again, together with the expression of the patio, shows the obligation to the direct representation of the imagery of a traditional structure.

These hints of organic structural syntax in CSH comprises into a strict formality and scale of exaggerated cylinders and roof, and the weight put on the capital portion. In comparison to the vertical projects of Paul Rudolph where the vertical juxtaposition or the modular layout of fragments are noticeable, Chung's series of work is consistent in its generic formality. In the built version of CSH, it is more evident that the complexity of required programs – offices, hotel, religious hall, conference hall – are fit into a rigid totality.

The potential to manifest its imagery of whole indigenous to the CSH itself, was reduced to the literality of the fragments and the rigidity of the structure. The fragments exist, literally following how the fragment should

exist according to their reference – the patio should be like this, the roof should look like this, supported like that, and so forth. These attributes reinforce the *functional* aspect of each fragments, perceptively. The fragments became so functional here that it represents an actual integral object, a traditional structure, as if a house. The perceptive neutrality and functionality of fragments, in a reductionist manner, reference their identity through their relation within the whole. Therefore, the part-to-part relations of fragments in CSH is componenthood.

### (3) Collection

- *Suh's Maternity Hospital (1966)*



Figure 5. Suh's Maternity Hospital (1966)

#### Collection – Componenthood

<서산부인과의원(1966)> - SMH - is a *collection* of autonomous entities. The juxtaposition of independent entities was a crucial language in Kim Joong-Up's architecture. This aspect of his works surpassed the notion of "independent objects," a methodology established by Le Corbusier which involves juxtaposition of figurative fragments, by pertaining corporeality to each.<sup>44</sup> One of such significance of the SMH lies in the expression of fenestrations. Kim Joong-Up's sketches of SMH

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44 Jeong In-Ha, 시적 울림의 세계.

depict a series of cut-out windows as if they were inscribed on the figure, described as "punched holes" instead of windows. It was similarly expressed through the 'beton brut', as cut-outs on the concrete cylinders. The bathroom on the second floor partially unwraps the skin, giving the impression of deformation an object, which is different from Corbusier's geometric approach of static objects.

It is crucial to understand that juxtaposition, as a common representational strategy in Kim Joong-Up's works, was also a generative methodology. This can be observed in the design development of his Bangbae-dong House(1979) scheme, where juxtaposed figures with distinct identities underwent individual and independent developments.<sup>45</sup> The deformation of the cylinder in the first and second plan of the SMH also illustrates the mediation between its corporeality and the generative process. In this process of architectural generation, the fragments evolve **"from below,"**<sup>46</sup> which in turn constitutes the architectural imagery from below as well.

The two volumes and two sets of terraces stands alternately juxtaposed, presenting an image of a sequential layout of a *collection*. However, their sequential layout, altogether with the soaring tower, revealed another aspect of their syntax, overcoming the predominantly planar nature of Kim Joong-Up's spaces. In projects such as Jeju University Building(1964), where different entities from various sources

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45 Jeong In-Ha, Kim Swoo-Geun and Kim Joong Up's archetypes, 1996, p.37

46 R.Arnhem. op. cit.

coexist, or in the SMH, where each entity possesses its own narrative as a corporeal object, the identity of the whole primarily stems from the individual fragments. As if emerged from each different realm and integrated within the architecture, they assume a renewed existence as a cohesive entity.

Particularly in the SMH, the expression of the subtle push and pull among the entities transcends mere spatial configuration, extending into an interaction between two autonomous objects. It is another method of integration that differentiates from a mere juxtaposition of objects that defies the presence of each other. It creates a partial assemblages. In terms of Christopher Alexander's notion of wholeness, every in-between interactions of form in SMH creates "centers." Chung In-Ha refers to the qualities of in-between-fragments in Kim Joong-Up's architecture as "the poetic resonance." In this particular case of SMH where the different objects as fragments constitute a single building instead of a cluster, the resonance becomes the actual assemblage, each manifesting as sub-wholes. SMH is still a *collection*, since the form, location and identities of each fragment is not dominated by a singular order, nor does it constitute a particular structure. It is rather representing a hardened state of interaction between fluid objects. Although the fragments possess autonomous identities, in-between the partial assemblages they are assigned renewed relations, functioning in constituting each sub-whole. Therefore, the part to part relation in SMH is componenthood.

## 3.2. Fragmentation as a consciousness to the surroundings

### (1) Background

It is evident that in the 1970s, there was a clear expansion in scope of Korean architecture from form to space, and from individual objects to the city.<sup>47</sup> The investigation of spatial qualities emerged as a natural progression in the pursuit of regional characteristics, accompanied by a parallel exploration of modern architecture.

As a natural progression within the realm of architectural language, there emerged a tendency to employ volumes as formal languages.<sup>48</sup> This was notably evident in the language developed by Kim Swoo-Geun in the 1970s and onwards. Concrete structural fragments, as exemplified in projects like the <Freedom Center (1964)>, were replaced by brick masses as expressive elements in the <University Road Art Museum, 1979>. This approach served as a means to convey regional characteristics while employing volumetric architectural languages. Similarly, within traditional architecture, the focus shifted from direct imitation of elements or the formalistic traditionalism to the exploration of spatial qualities inherent in traditional architectural expressions.<sup>49</sup>

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47 Park Gil-Ryong, 한국 현대건축 평전, p.221.

48 Kim Jong-Gi, Hong Dae-Hyung, A Study on the Theory of Expression in Transitional Period of Korean Contemporary Architecture, 1992

49 Park Gil-Ryong, op.cit..

## **(2) Collection**

Among various explorations in volumetric compositions of the era, the ‘imagery of aggregation’ is noticeable as a distinct theme. This was most evident in Kim Swoo-Geun’s architecture at the middle of his career.<sup>50</sup> It was seen as a regional imagery, one of a more specified notion of which historicist Kim Bong Ryeol pointed out as the ‘Collectivism.’<sup>51</sup> It is different from how the previous approaches to the tradition had been inclined to a solid and specific image of a traditional structure.

While a series of churches including Kim Swoo-Geun’s works situated in urban settings share the same taxonomical theme, a tendency of major differences can be discussed.

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50 Jeong In-Ha, ‘Mental image’ and ‘Schema’ of Kim Swoo-Geun, 1994.12.

51 Park Gil-Ryong, op.cit..

- *Yangduk Catholic Church (1977)*



**Figure 6. Yangduk Catholic Church (1977)**

YCC is composed of the platform and the upper structure, which is an aggregation of several units of volumetric fragments which are articulated again into body and roof. The asymmetric eastern side becomes the main elevation that faces the road.

While spatial organization is symmetrical to the axis of the main space, surrounding volumes are all varied in size and proportion. Although the heights gradually increase toward the north, the shape of each volume diffuses its directionality.

The platform is clad with rusticated bricks, taking a form of draped walls. Slits are made in-between the volumes to clarify each entities, however, the roof and each of the vertical walls are dis-joint, revealing the assemblage of surfaces rather than being a monolithic volume.



Decorative components share a same logic but were put asymmetrically in random order on each surfaces, except for the one facing the main entry of the hall. Platform-body-roof articulation shows a structural manner of assemblage, then each volume becomes a distinct unit which shares its genetic traits and aggregates informally.

However, the asymmetric layout of decorations and dis-joint walls diffuses the regularity of each volumes even further. It is evident in the initial sketch of YCC by Kim Swoo-Geun. Seen from the south-east, it can even be perceived as collective planes rather than volumes. Although it shows a strong imagery of clustered aggregation, these properties abstract the overall configuration at the same time before it is perceived in singularity. Each unitary fragment comprises a member of *collection*. Within the independency there exists a *homeomorous* aspect shared by them, manifesting as a *collection – member* type.



Figure 7. Sketches for Yangduk Catholic Church

- *Seomun Church (Junglim Architects, 1979)*



**Figure 8. Seomun Church (Junglim Architects, 1979)**

Seomun Church (1979) by Kim Jung Sik and Lee Sung Kwan of Junglim Architects was intended to form an image of a church with no frontality. To assimilate to Jeonju's streetscape of small aggregations, to be un-ostentatious, and to form a place with a sense of community.<sup>52</sup>

In the design of the SC, the arrangement of fenestration played a crucial role in distinguishing each volume as distinct entities. The different shapes and proportions of the volumes were complemented by the strategic placement of windows. Approaching and entering the building, one could perceive the geometry of the windows and the gestalt units they formed. There was a window dedicated to the tower, a row of windows with syncopation for the middle volume, and a pair of narrow windows for the

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<sup>52</sup> Lee Sung-Kwan, Retrospective of Jeonju Seomun Church, Junglim People&Works, <https://junglim.info/archives/3473>

right volume. This careful arrangement ensured that each volume maintained its individuality within the overall composition. They are expressed on the volumes as cut-outs or carve-outs, reinforcing the volumetric nature of the architecture.

Upon closer inspection, the tectonic quality of the brickwork became evident. The original intention was to emphasize the junctions between volumes and walls by exposing the joints, stating the connection between different elements.<sup>53</sup> However, this aspect of the design was not realized during the construction phase.

The overall configuration of the church revealed a collection of smaller volumes aggregated onto a main structure. Each fragment, from the fenestration to each volumes maintained its distinct geometry, contributing to the composition of a geometric collage. However, the profile of each of the volumes was intentionally subdued, creating a sense of geometric neutrality, except for the tower which maintains its bodily figure.

A significant distinction between the YCC and the SC lies in their respective approaches to architectural syntax. The SC is rooted in the principle of pure architectural geometry, employing the fragmented entities as their primary units. On the other hand, the YCC is based on a "clustered imagery" approach, which endows a synecdochical relationship between the whole and the fragments. This fundamental difference in

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<sup>53</sup> Lee Sung-Kwan, Retrospective of Jeonju Seomun Church, Junglim People&Works, <https://junglim.info/archives/3473>

methodology highlights the contrasting approaches based on the same attention to the concept of clustered fragments.

### **(3) Integral Object**

- *Kyungdong Church (1980),  
Bulgwang-Dong Catholic Church (1981)*



**Figure 9. Kyungdong Church (1980) : Integral object - Membership**

Entities comprising the whole in KDC is more distinctive figures. Irregularity of walls(planes) and decorations in YCC changed in KDC to that of volumes and orientations. YCC's figures are tectonically articulated on its surface, while KDC's figures are monolithic, clad with rusticated bricks. YCC's volumes are structured from platform, body, and roof, while KDC's are figured – the top of each is not a roof but a folded body.

As Seung Hyo Sang recalls, KDC had a different goal. Firstly, “To compensate from the YCC’s form for being too ‘bold’, we decided to divide up the masses. Kim Swoo-Geun referred to this as an expression from ‘individuality to totality’. <sup>54</sup>”

Subtle interruptions such as twists, syncopations were made within figures with similar morphology. At the bottom of each figure has door, window, or niche. These are again unified within the overall profile as an abstract figure. It was an intent to make a clearer imagery of the whole. Volumes were smaller than YCC, with no slits, in coherent profile, and they even look as if a flattening skin of a gigantic body. Kim had also reminded, according to Seung, that “architecture with multiple metaphors that allows the people to appreciate with their own ways of seeing.”<sup>55</sup> This coincides with the notion of abstraction and multivalence which Charles Jencks also had argued.

Tectonic expressions were existing in YCC while KDC was pursuing corporeality. In YCC, Kim was expressing ‘richness’ through masonry itself.<sup>56</sup> However, it is notable that the changes from YCC to KDC show this ‘richness’ sought by Kim had moved from explaining the masonry itself to corporeality, although the decoration on the surface still remained.

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54 Seung Hyo-Sang, Retrospective of Kyungdong Church, 지혜의 건축.

55 Seung Hyo-Sang, op.cit., p.

56 Park Gil-Ryong, op. cit., p.117



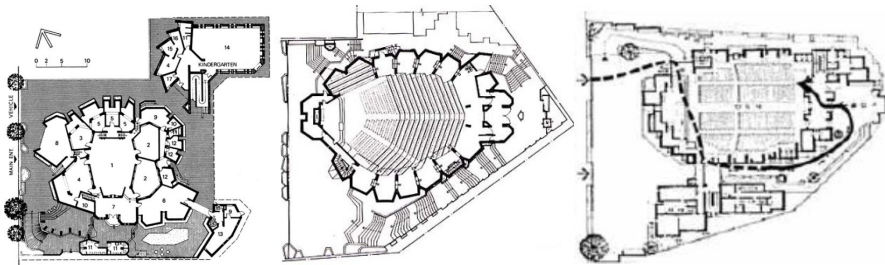
**Figure 10. Bulgwang-Dong Catholic Church (1981) : Integral object**

Similar to the KDC, each fragment of the BDC forms a distinct entity. However, the entities are more in definite geometric shapes rather than a figure, standing upright – the repetitive volumes are forming a regiment, which in some perspectives can also be read as a structural disposition. The carved-out edges in the middle of the front units even defies the tectonic expression of masonry. Decorative bricks are only put at the top of each unit.

Instead of variations in unity manifested in YCC or KDC, the BDC can rather be read as unity over variations. Although the front is asymmetric, overall profile points toward an edge, and is implying more specifically of a figure of the ‘praying hand.’ On the either side of the

main axis where the main approach from outside happens, the volumes are aligned to stand in orders.

One of the most important languages of BDC is the horizontal patterns of rusticated bricks alternating with normal bricks. Although it is an irregular pattern rather than an ordered modenature, they coincide in keeping the homogeneity of the surface even though the cutting and the openings are made. The notion of brick cladding as ‘skin,’ the term which Kim Swoo-Geun had been referring to, was vitalized and more literally expressed in BDC. It is spatially working as a skin as well. In terms of the spatial hierarchy, the surrounding volumes changing from YCC, KDC to BDC can be read as shelters, a second layer, and the surrounding membrane.<sup>57</sup> From this it can be inferred that both spatially and expressively, BDC was meant to be a monolithic whole, rather than a clustered aggregation of genetified entities.



**Figure 11. Plan drawings for Bulgwang-Dong Catholic Church**

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<sup>57</sup> Han Ji-Ae, *A Study on the Church Series of Kim-Su-Geun*, 2014.

### 3.3. Fragments as street-ward cues

#### (1) Background

Since the early 1980s, private market dynamics, urban development, and a surge in commercialism, small-scale architecture firms embarked on autonomous design practices. These firms were influenced to varying degrees by Post-Modernism and Deconstructivism, often resulting in what can be termed as 'fragmented architecture.' This approach engendered a tension between the fragments representing urban conditions, the imagery of the city, and other concurrent realities, leading to the emergence of a heterogeneous urban landscape. The thematic exploration of "다의적 표현의사" (polysemous intent) and "혼성성" (hybridity) was also evident in parallel research endeavors. Notably, urban architecture assumed a pivotal role as the primary arena for architectural expression. Until the late 1980s, these architectural fragments were primarily employed as tangible elements rather than conceptual ones. Their significance lay in their dual function: serving as both fragments of representation and fragments derived from reality. As noticed by Jeong In-Ha, what dominated Korean architecture since the late 1980s was no longer a preconceived concept but a methodology based on realistic conditions<sup>58</sup>. It is notable that in some works from the previous chapter, reality began to intervene in the buildings as tangible fragments. In Kim Ki-Seok's Woorimadang, fragments

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58 Jeong In-Ha, 현실의 발견, 건축의 지식 지형, pp.16-17.



generated from realistic conditions were incorporated, and several linguistic unit elements that worked as theoretical basis of his architecture were added. Instead of putting them in conflict, the basis of the work was to appropriately "organize and harmonize" them. Additionally, in Byuksan Building by Kim Swoo-Geun, a number of realistic conditions, such as conflicting programmatic requirements, the surrounding nature, the shape of the site, and the necessity for multifaceted frontality, were problematized and solved into a monolithic whole with the language of enform. From the late 1980s onwards, the problems of reality began to actively intervene.

## **(2) Integral object**

In this context of urban architecture, the comprehension and assimilation of postmodernism have been a subject of study. Providing a concise introduction to Kim Ki-woong's postmodernist approach, it is evident that instead of striving to consolidate heterogeneous architectural fragments into a singular system or attempting to overhaul existing structures, a predominant number of architects have chosen to embrace these fragments. They skillfully engage in a process of collaging through methods like juxtaposition and contradiction, expertly weaving them into the fabric of their architectural compositions. This particular approach has garnered recognition from architectural scholars such as Jeong In-ha, who observed its implementation in the works of architects like Kim Joong-up and Kim Suk-cheol. Similarly, Professor Im Seok-jae acknowledged its application in the design of the Gyeonggi Provincial Museum (1995), highlighting its potential to catalyze fresh discourse on the concept of Korean identity. Notably, these fragments serve more as figures than mere components, maintaining their autonomy amidst the architectural composition. While components can be connected through structural syntax, figures retain their distinct independence, collectively contributing to a dynamic architectural language.

- *Turebak (1987)*



**Figure 12. Turebak (1987)**

In the midst of the diverse architectural tapestry of the era, characterized by the juxtaposition of heterogeneous styles often assembled unconsciously—fragments arising from commercialism and pragmatic considerations—Kim Ki-Seok's architectural expressions stood out as inherently indigenous. His approach involved the integration of figurative fragments, amalgamating disparate identities within a predominantly symmetrical structural framework crowned with roofs—a hallmark of his architectural style akin to Aldo Rossi's. These figures held distinct meanings, at times drawing from regional sources or metaphorical contexts. It is remarkable that his consistent utilization of fragmented architectural languages aimed at evoking a palpable sense of urban context. Kim Ki-Seok's fragments encompassed a spectrum of influences:

childhood reminiscences, visual imprints from magazines and journeys, and motifs inspired by Eastern sequences—exemplified by elements such as 'cheongsachorong', octagonal windows, and intricately engraved columns.

Kim's fragments, unlike Aldo Rossi's, are collages of individual component-fragments. There are a few reasons for this distinction. First, Kim's fragments are easily disfigured and are derived from individual practices. On the other hand, Aldo Rossi's fragments are derived from established systems, order, and rhythm, which are then reassembled into something new. Rossi's fragments refer to primitive elements of collective memories.

Kim's fragments, in contrast, are composed of individual elements and personal memories. As a result, the resulting whole often exhibits hybrid overtones. For example, there may be conflicts between the roof and arches or between traditional Korean elements like "청사초롱" or "누하진입" and arches. Kim's buildings, taken as a whole, resemble graphic collages with non-referential imagery.

In comparison, Aldo Rossi's compositions are not limited to singular geometric elements. His approach involves the concept of a clear fragment and syntactic references, rather than independent fragments like in Kim's. Additionally, Rossi's work is rooted in Western architectural tectonics and cultural systems, which give structure and familiarity to the whole.

### (3) Collection

- *Sun House (1982)*



**Figure 13. Sun House (1982)**

At a smaller scale, the Sun House bring about *collections* of heterogeneous fragments, including geometric openings and figurative structures composed of different materials. These figurative fragments undulate around the surface, contributing to the syntax of a sequential manner.

What is notable in the Sun House was that we can assume that Kim Joong-Up was acknowledging the urban condition, and the interaction between the streetscape and the perceivers. The intent was rather to make a sequential syntax than a mere heterogenous collage, which awaits for a sequential perception of incidental fragments, as a statement to the streetscape. As Kim Joong-Up explains, the Sun House is meant to be “a

place making passers-by stop and look back, a place which people are urged to go into casually and wander about.<sup>59</sup>”

### 3.4. Incorporating fragmented volumes

#### (1) Collection

- *Woori-Madang Series (1977-1982)*



Figure 14. Woori-Madang Series (1977-1982)

Woori-Madang Series as a whole, referred by the architect to as ‘모듬집(collective house)’, has a *collection-member* relations. The first building started as a renovation of an old house into a mixed use building,

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59 Kim Joong-Up, Sun’s House, PA001, p.192.

and the second and third building was built with the methodology driven from the first one.

It is significant that montage-like strategy for Woori-Madang also worked as a generative and non-hierarchical addition of fragments. To meet functions and other requirements based on the conditions of renovation, fragments, including additive volumes and stairs, programmatic separation were initially generated. Additional fragments for spatial sequences and the elements which the architect theoretically refers to as “cues” for the people’s perception from the streetscape and approach to the inside - flying buttresses, arch shape openings, windows in traditional shapes.<sup>60</sup> It is the process of imagery generated “from below”, which is to be perceived “from below” as well.

While these fragments are defined through formal additions at a lower scale, they are formally "organized," as the architect refers to it, in other words, elevated to a clustered imagery through manipulating the fragments to share the formal language of the '45 degrees.' Derived from the initial expansion of the existing structure, the 45 degrees angle was a formative device to give an impression of a traditional imagery, and also originated from the reality that it conforms to the code restriction of diagonal angle<sup>61</sup>.

In summary, the imagery of Woorimadang is formed through a series of generative process; first conforming to the realistic conditions, then adding formal characteristics on the outside to give genetic properties – as

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60 Kim Ki-Seok. Seung Hyo-Sang, Interview with Kim Ki-Seok, 건축문화 1988.

61 Kim Ki-Seok, 길은 집을 만들고, 살림.

if an improvisation - which became its own languages to unify the sequential constructions. Architect Kim had been stating his work, especially for this one, as being a process of “generation and organizing.”<sup>62</sup>

The generation of fragments was in accordance with the given conditions, not the intentional fragmentation of a given volume. And adding of several components of fragments as architectural devices followed, all of which constituting the syntax “from below,” which ultimately meets with the approach “from above” by satisfying a certain geometric balance with a signification of a traditional morphology.

## **(2) Figure**

This syntactic strategy can be regarded as an approach that emerged parallel to the advancement of metal cladding construction. It involves the integration of multiple fragments into a cohesive, monolithic entity, resulting in a homogeneous whole. This strategic utilization of metal cladding constructions enables the creation of seamless architectural compositions that exhibit both unity and multivalency. This represents a departure from traditional syntactic methods.

- ***Gallery Bing (1986)***

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62 Kim Ki-Seok. Seung Hyo-Sang, Interview with Kim Ki-Seok, 건축문화 1988.





**Figure 15. Gallery Bing (1986)**

Several critics has referred to this building as a preconceived image - of jewelry or a diamond - imposed upon spatial qualities. However, this point of view should be reconsidered. In fact, Kim Won had been designing his projects out of clear logics of geometry. Upon analyzing Gallery Bing's spatial structure based on plans and sections and considering practical conditions, we can infer a clear generative logic, that can be called a 'spiral system', one of the types which Peter Eisenman has theoreticized – which is a “from below” approach.

However, the distinction that Gallery Bing makes from his other works is in the additional, post processed, “geometric manipulation<sup>63</sup>” – a “from above” approach.

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63 Lim Seok-Jae, 한국적 추상 논의 1 .

Based on the geometric complexity generated by its spatial disposition and geometric fragments all incorporated into an initial state, by first wrapping with the uniform cladding system, and then throughout a list of geometric manipulation, its complexity is enformed into a unified whole. Throughout these manipulations an abstracted imagery of a monolithic figure emerged. Lim Seok Jae notices the multivalency within uniformity manifested in Gallery Bing, as if a chimera.<sup>64</sup>

Through standardization and modular repetition, the notion of totality was manifested in simple cuboid forms, supporting a value system rooted in functionalism. However, Gallery Bing transcends the uniformity and totality derived from such approaches. It embodies a composite impression of a collection, composed of geometric scales, geometric elements, and reflective glass windows that are attached like patterns (or as integral parts of its distinctive surface properties). Lim Seokjae interprets this as a "realistic-oriented attitude" that playfully mimics the fragmented context of the surroundings. Furthermore, the reflective properties of the glass, such as reflection, mirroring, and the dispersion of light, are seen as characteristics of a surface (or form) that pursues the value of uniqueness, contrasting with the surface of uniformity found in the adjacent Hyatt Hotel<sup>65</sup>. The imagery of Gallery Bing is formed in the middle of the generative syntax "from below" and "from above"

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<sup>64</sup> Lim Seok-Jae, *op. cit.*

<sup>65</sup> Lim Seok-Jae, *op.cit.*

- ***Byuksan Building (1985 - 1991)***



**Figure 16. Byuksan Building (1985 - 1991)**

Along with the metal cladding in Gallery Bing, the Slick-Tech expression was prevalent since the “Late-Modern” architectures of the 1970s, which relates to the enform methodology. As an era in which the urban landscape takes shape<sup>66</sup>, it reflects the obligation to be part of the urban landscape of the massive constructions.

Still a series of works including the Byuksan Building, Renaissance Hotels (1985), explored the possibilities of the metal cladding as well as more definite sense of imagery for the cityscape of the then newly developed areas.

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<sup>66</sup> Park Gil-Ryong, op.cit., p.194

However, what differentiates the Byuksan Building from the Gallery is a stronger totality over multivalency, as similar to the later works of Kim Swoo-Geun. The patternized windows, devised as a language of “richness”, it first establishes a syntax of a structure

Looking at the Byuksan Building alone, it can be defined as a directly representational form, a Korean curve, or an organic composition. However, when considered in connection with Gallery Bing or Renaissance Hotel, it becomes important as one method of countering fragmentation or resolving it through internal principles different from a specific modern normative formal language. In doing so, it attempts to accommodate or neutralize fragmentation as a “both-and” approach, contrasting with a special modern normative formal language. It can be seen as an attempt to reconcile fragmentation by incorporating it with other elements. Additionally, it involves the abstraction of a monolithic form through the use of skin, generating a monolith either from a preconceived monolithic form, dogmatic modernist geometry, or arbitrary figural elements. It represents an inexact geometry. Furthermore, it demonstrates the potential for slightly deviating from imposed imagery, as if planting a single gene of its own. It reveals the possibility of self-representation. However, on the other hand, as a methodology for generating creation, it remains simplistic. It can also be reduced to the limitations of mannerism and the imposition of imagery.

### 3.5. Summary

- *Ambivalence of fragments*

Within Chung In-Kook's architecture, he introduced fragments that possess a decorative and independent character, reflecting his inclination to break themselves out within the obligations of modernistic image which prevailed the era. To connect with the classic architecture, or even the locality.<sup>67</sup>

These initial figures, with their independent nature, could be seen as formal entities that have achieved autonomy within the framework of their structural syntax. However, while his expressive impulse endowed these structural fragments with an independent character, their overall composition still adheres to a rational framework, maintaining a coherent but rigid structural syntax.

Although in CSH remains abundant formal expressions, with “the stinginess of public space and rigidity of the planimetric form,<sup>68</sup>” the attempts shown in CSH were insufficient to resolve the internal complexity into the external morphology. Moreover, the distinct fragments of Chung's works had each of its innate formality as an imposed logic to follow – to be the base, or to be the definers standing on the side or top as a roof. The independent nature of the fragments was inherently

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<sup>67</sup> In terms of shape and materiality

<sup>68</sup> Park Gil-Ryong, op.cit.

collagist, yet their actual connection relied on the structural syntax of formalism, serving as a direct representation of a specific imagery.

The issue of collagist contrast lies not in the contrast for the sake of manifesting a new form or imagery, but rather in the unification of fragments that possess essential attributes, thereby emerging as an obligation to converge them into a unified whole. Thereby within the conflict between his fragments and formality, the initial *membership* of his architecture had been ultimately compromised into a structure of totality, leaving the once autonomous fragments of his architecture into a *componenthood*, reducing the representation back to the literal, ‘traditional architecture,’ as seen in CSH.

- ***Integration-oriented***

Mainly led by Kim Swoo-Geun, the imagery of cluster was an indigenous imagery architects of the era had sought for, and also a type of spatial organization that they derived from a regionalist point of view.

As Seun Hyo-Sang recalls, “giving wholeness to the individual was one of the important methodology of Kim’s.”<sup>69</sup> It had the potentials to differentiate itself from a matter of style. The Yangduk Church operated on the principle of logic rather than imagery. It existed conceptually as an embodiment of the idea of a community, establishing and connecting the actual building elements through the concept of "an imagery and

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69 Seung Hyo Sang, op.cit..

concept of community." This principle served as a mechanism for generating and linking the tangible fragments of the building.

About fragmentation and aggregation Kim Swoo-Geun puts, “avoided scale that emphasize authority, searched instead for a good relationship with the surroundings. A church might function better in a slum, commercial district or even a crowded housing area. ...” About the irregularities between the collective fragments ranging from lower to bigger scale, “it was to host various activities and to express a sense of community, I made irregular patterns for walls and slits.<sup>70</sup>”

Between the ‘individuality and totality,’ as Kim had put, was an important syntactic mechanism for Kim’s architectural forms and imagery, however, what was in the middle – the associations between the individualities, the *membership* – had become faint as time. It was analyzed in a number of researches on Kim Swoo-Geun’s later works, that he had been pursuing stronger ‘geometric completeness’, project by project, among which stated it as “a tendency for formalization.” Jeong In-Ha analysis that, from the late 70s, his ‘aggregation’ as an archetype, went into giving a stronger sense of image and symbolism through architectural forms.<sup>71</sup>

From Yangduk Church to Kumi Cultural Center **was from ‘principle of aggregation’ to ‘image of aggregation.’** Inclination towards a more clear and emphatic architectural form had led those to become **imposed**

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70 Kim Swoo-Geun, Masan Yangduk Church, SPACE 1980.01., p.25

71 Jeong In-Ha, Architect Kim Swoo-Geun 3, 건축문화 9603, p.77

“**from above,**” ultimately to fall into a mannerism of which the image of the whole came to be reduced into a regiment of generic figures – into the *Integral object*.

- ***From Above vs. From Below***

In the 1970s and 1980s, fragments primarily took the form of generic elements at the scale of entities, and architects sought to develop the language of syntax while adhering to intuitive formal principles. Through the projects highlighted in this paper, we can observe the potential for autonomy and creativity in discovering indigenous imagery of wholes and the syntax systems that implement them. Kim Swoo-Geun captured the natural syntax of "clustering" as a regional imagery and developed it as a indigenous syntax of his architecture. This type, as seen in the case of Seomun Church by Junglim Architects, can be regarded as a syntactic approach that is not limited to the architect's individual style. It had the potential to evolve into an autonomous system, but it was accepted more as an image of a fixed archetype rather than a logical one, and in subsequent works, this syntax is reduced to a structural imagery representing totality as represented in Kim Swoo-Geun's works. Consequently, the autonomy of fragments observed in Kim Swoo-Geun's Yangduk Church or Kyoungdong Church is compromised in later projects again as a structural fragment, unable to resolve the conflict between formal complexity and completeness.



In the 1980s, the aspects of fragments and syntax discovered can be summarized as follows. Firstly, it was demonstrated that the syntax from fragment to imagery can be formed through the approach of "from below," which responds to incidental conditions, going beyond the imposed imagery of "from above." Additionally, as evidenced by the emergence of enform types, the palette of expressive languages in Korean contemporary architecture has become closer to the state of "all things at hand." Therefore, it is noteworthy that in Korean architecture after this period, fragments were able to form a powerful imagery of the whole without the dominance of imposed imagery which necessitates clear points of reference.

# Chapter 4. 1980s-2000s : Architecture in Urban Reality

## 4.1. Background

Since the 1980s, small and medium-scale urban architecture has gradually shifted to the forefront of architectural production, supplanting monumental construction. Until the early 1980s, Korean architecture sought to utilize a system of generic methodologies of modern architecture reconstructed with fragments of locality and to find indigenous imageries, as represented by Kim Swoo-Geun's architecture. The ultimate goal in their individual architectures was not to directly demonstrate a relationship with reality. However, as noticed by Chung In-Ha, what dominated Korean architecture since the late 1980s was no longer a preconceived concept but a methodology based on realistic conditions.<sup>72</sup> It is notable that in some works from the previous chapter, reality began to intervene in the buildings as tangible fragments. In Kim Ki-Seok's Woorimadang, fragments generated from realistic conditions were incorporated, and several linguistic unit elements that worked as theoretical basis of his architecture were added. Instead of putting them in conflict, the basis of the work was to appropriately "organize and harmonize" them. Additionally, in Byuksan Building by Kim Swoo-Geun, a number of

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72 정인하, 현실의 발견, 건축 도시 조경의 지식 지형, p.26.

realistic conditions, such as conflicting programmatic requirements, the surrounding nature, the shape of the site, and the necessity for multifaceted frontality, were problematized and solved into a monolithic whole with the language of enform. From the late 1980s onwards, the problems of reality began to actively intervene.

Architectural structures conceived on the basis of reality cannot be uniformly categorized under a single trend. Chung In-Ha mentioned that regionality (urban context), program (or typology), technology, and traditional patterns or forms can be regarded as key attributes of pragmatic architecture.<sup>73</sup> In particular, within this paper, the manner in which reality relates to the creation of architecture in the context of urban conditions is primarily characterized by urban context and program. These external forces have deeply influenced the formation of urban architecture in South Korea since the 1980s, marking the emergence of new types of representational strategies. This chapter divides buildings that incorporate the realistic conditions of urban architecture into three distinct patterns of transformation, spanning from the 1980s to the 2000s.

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73 정인하, op.cit., p.26.

## 4.2. Echoing reality

In the first phase named here as ‘echoing reality,’ the conditions of reality had been evolved into representational strategies in more or less straightforward manners. Mostly between the late 1980s and 1990s, urban architecture was concerned with the physical conditions of the surrounding context. Representational strategies primarily manifested through the deliberate creation of heterogeneous fragments to resonate with the complexity of the surrounding context or assimilate with existing visual properties and sought for their aesthetic possibilities. Whereas they were independent components in Kim Ki-Seok’s architecture, fragments from then on primarily appear as units rather than individual components. This phenomenon, in part, can be seen as an implicit resonance with the preference for fragmented architecture characteristic of deconstructivism or postmodernism, as well as a tendency towards a neo-modern hybrid approach that amalgamates various construction methods in contemporary architecture. However, primarily, it stood as a distinct utterance, accommodating realistic conditions, and conscientiously considering the relationship with the urban context.

### (1) Collection of Integral objects - 1

- *S-Mode Building (1988), Baroque Building (1989)*



**Figure 17. S-Mode Building (1988) : Integral Object of Integral objects**



**Figure 18. Baroque Building (1989) : Collection of Integral objects**

When explaining his works, Kang Suk-Won had often employed a similar narrative. On S-Mode building, he mentioned that “the floor plan was finalized by considering architectural requirements, regulations, and the site's characteristics, while ensuring the maximum floor area ratio requested by the client.” ... “and pursued ‘geometric clarity’.” The S-Mode had been fragmented into the body and the core for pragmatic

concerns. What he did afterwards was keeping the geometry and symmetry clear for each volumes, and covering both with a uniform cladding with a bright colored decorative molding. The taxonomy of S-Mode is an *integral object*, of which the part is another *integral object* of elements. Part to part relation is *membership*, since the sub-wholes were independent.

Decorative images were criticized for imposing over other values. But in fact, bottom-up process of practicality had left no rooms for expressive aspects in urban architecture. With limited chances of delving into spatial qualities, plenty of buildings settled for surface expressions, justified or perhaps fueled by ‘-isms’ of the era. Now their language tends to be characterized by "geometry." They cannot resist the reality, so they perceive geometry as a language. In other words, as Kang mentioned, after considering functional and practical aspects within the interior space, the exterior is enriched with a sense of stability, volume, and geometry.

However, the <Baroque Building (1989)> by Cho Sung-Ryong takes a different approach of its representation. Numerous studies on the elevations of the Baroque Building were made in the process, all of which were experiments of how to integrate the fragmented planimetric elements (or organization) into a unified whole with the use of enveloping plane. However, the final outcome of the design studies took a different turn, juxtaposing the different identities of the body and the core.

The “core” was a fragment of reality that had to be initially hidden from the façade through a planimetric layout, or a formal entity that self-

conscious architects managed to diffuse its presence into a harmonious composition. For example, in the earlier works of Kim Ki-Seok, or Cho Seong Ryul's buildings with minimal brick volumes, or Kim In-Chul's Yangchun Psychiatric hospital (1994).

Cho Sung-Ryong attempted to create *integral objects* by borrowing fragments from various buildings around its own site, similar to Mario Botta's Fribourg Bank (1979-1982). He reflected the intention of creating a new sense of whole, along with a series of commercial buildings through "making of an urban scenery." This also demonstrated a willingness to embrace the context of Gangnam as a hybrid urban environment, an urban reality.

The problematic of core and the body intentionally revealed in the Baroque Building can be comprehended in two perspectives. On one side it is comprehensible to the manner of reflecting the "genius loci" as a theme that a building could embody, as once thematized by O.M. Ungers.<sup>74</sup> However, the evident juxtaposition of the heterogeny instead of integrating them into a singular body could be seen as manifesting "도시적 사실", or "as-it-is", as a statement.

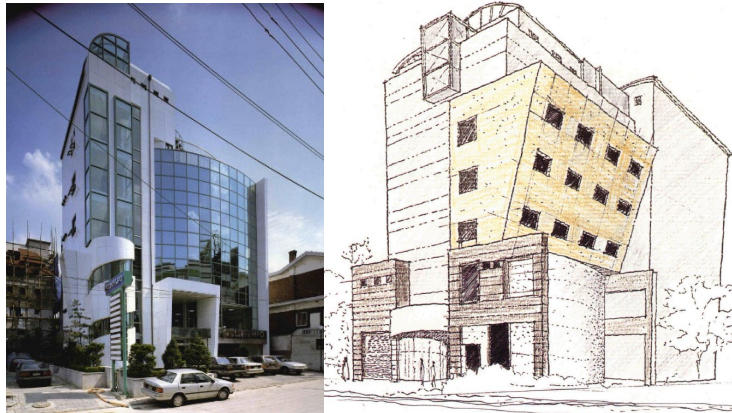
This recollection of heterogenous fragments and the conscious juxtaposition of the core and the body in Baroque Building had emerged as evidence to one of the commonalities of the era, that urban architecture started to discover and reflect their reality. In Baroque Building, it has been

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<sup>74</sup> O.M. Ungers, *Architecture as Theme*.

manifested as a *collection*, of *integral objects*, of which are in membership state of part-to-part relations.

- ***Kim Byung-Yoon, Cho Kun-Young, Son Hak-Sik, Lee Il-Hoon***



**Figure 19. Contempo Building (1989), JS Building (1990)**

Abovementioned approaches of “reflecting reality” was one common approach to the urban conditions for the architects of the era. It was to resonate with the urban complexity, they had been tried to consciously generate, or embrace the “genius loci” by collecting the architectural fragments in their works.

Kim Byung-Yoon had argued that his architecture is aimed to find the legitimacy of his architecture through the “reflection and transformation of reality.” He sought to derive the formal basis from the surrounding context and then reconfigure it, which led to the fragmentation of architectural body. It was also a conformity to realistic



necessities including practical and commercial issues. However, most of those approaches ended up in a collage of fragments instead of creating an integral order or sub-wholes, since their assemblage is only perceivable as a mere aggregation or a topologically defined composition. This was evident in a drawing for his unbuilt Sinsa-dong building project.



**Figure 20. Duson Plaza (1992), Gagabul-E (1997)**

Buildings such as Duson Plaza (1992) by Son Hak-Sik, or Gagabul-e (1997) recalls the approach of collaging fragments borrowed from the surrounding urban context, similarly to the Baroque Building. In case of JS Building (1990) by Cho Kun-Young, it was intended as a “vibrant building that suits the youthful atmosphere.” His fragmentation was pertaining to the “chaotic beauty and progressive anarchy” as termed by Kazuo Shinohara.

The fragments they embody are separable and independent, yet they do not function in constituting the identity of the whole. Thus existing in *membership* relations. Those are trying to be semantically and visually

linked to the urban context, diverging into various ties with them and to harmonize. However, they are as they are, attached on the body of the building and neutral when individually appreciated, while not constituting a discrete architectural body. As an independent object, it is not constituting a whole as itself but only identifies itself as a state of heterogeneity.

- ***Dong Jeong-Geun***



**Figure 21. U-One Design Office (1992) : Integral Object**

Dong Jeong-Geun's architecture sought the initial motif of deconstruction from the realistic conditions, such as the conventional configuration of the stairs – the core – and the body, the shape of the site, and the legal restrictions which affects the morphology of the building. He advocated for concepts such as "structural form" and intended for it to function as a 'sign.' His U-One design office is one case of his deconstruction. Whereas the early deconstructivism of western

architecture in terms of architectural form pertains to the breaking out from the pure forms, this building tries to deconstruct the generic configuration of urban building in Korean context.<sup>75</sup>

The tilted core and the triangular volume on the other side takes its configuration as if it wants to break out from the body. However, those deconstructed fragments are oriented toward the same direction, or as if is ascending to the peak of the body. The visual dynamics in between fragments integrate the overall configuration into a uniform direction or a uniform state of tension, thus incorporating into the representation of an *integral object*. The fragments of this building cannot exist in its own nature, and the surface and geometry of each identifies as semantically generic architectural entities. Therefore the parts in this building are in a componenthood.

## **(2) Collection of Integral objects - 2**

- *Barunson Center (1995)*

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<sup>75</sup> Deconstructivism, MOMA



**Figure 22. Barunson Center (1995) : Collection of Integral objects  
- Componenthood**

Barunson Center demonstrates the potential for an alternative version of representation as a *collection*, through the partial interlocks and assemblages of heterogenous fragments - planes clad with metallic panels, exposed steel structures, and exposed concrete volumes. As the initial fragmentation, the core is separated from the main body, making a movement system between the back and the front on the ground level. Together with the parking tower, the planar division separates the building into 3 volumes of separate entities, resulting in four different sides. The motive for different stages of fragmentation is mainly relevant to the conformity to the urban context. What began as planimetric fragmentation of volumes to generate a movement system of the ground has been taken further into overall fragmentation in the entity scale to coexist with the differing scales of urban fabric from front to back and top to bottom. In

fact, they do not have ‘elevations’ since the morphology of a tower is completely dismantled so that the orientation is diffused. Song Joong-Yeol describes this building as “montage of the city,” where those fragments of the urban fabric is metaphorically aggregated, and those as architectural parts possess autonomous identity within the internal context.<sup>76</sup>

The fragments are not directly borrowed from the context of reality but are generated through the “decontextualization of the fragments of the context.”<sup>77</sup> Initiating from this heterogenous condition, a combination is achieved through the process of “interweaving” to form a unified “body,” resulting in a imagery of sporadic interlocks and assemblages.<sup>78</sup> However, Barunson Center is not dominated by a schema that determines the identities, place and function of every individual fragments. The partial assemblages and interlocks represent a mimesis of an ‘interlocked state’ rather than a machinery configuration. This is where Barunson Center makes a significant difference with Dong Jeong-Geun’s U-One Design Office, where partial interactions in-between fragments do not generate any assemblages. It is also noteworthy that in these interlocks, their individual morphology is not compromised nor ignorant in reference to the other fragments. They rather ‘collide’ while maintaining their clear definitions of their morphology as in Peter Eisenman’s architectural fragments in collision, thereby each of them is exist as autonomous entities.

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76 송중열, City Montage

77 Ibid.

78 우의정, City Montage

Thus, the part to whole relation is a *collection* of distinct fragments partly including the representation of *integral objects*, whereby the part-to-part relation is componenthood, where they occasionally or sequentially assemble to create various state of sub-wholes – centers, in Christopher Alexander’s terms.

### 4.3. Reconstructing & utilizing reality

#### (1) Collection of Collections

- *Cho Sung Ryong and Seung Hyo Sang*



Figure 23. Yangjae 287-3 (1995)



Figure 24. Dongseung-dong Cultural Space (1998)

Passing through the Barunson Center and the activities of the 4.3 Group in the 1990s, the tendency to reconstruct reality became even bolder. If the previous process could be described as being "dominated" by reality,

the subsequent period can be summarized as “re-creating and reconstructing” reality. In this process, fragments return to the most basic morphemes, distinct from the previous complex unit formats, and the syntax takes shape based on the reconstructed structure of reality. The beginning of the re-creation of reality can be observed in the architectural experiences of Jo Sung-Ryong and Seung Hyo-Sang, where the theme of architectural experience is transformed into a process of materialization. In particular, the core, as one architectural fact, is presented as a new form of fragment called the "backbone space," defining the relationship between the building's body and the core through various expressions such as "body and skeleton," "body and enveloping wall," or "staircase within the open body."



## (2) Integral object of Figures

- *Welcomm City (2000)*



**Figure 25. Welcomm City (2000) – Integral object of figures**

The fragments in the Barunson Center and the exposed concrete buildings by Cho Sung-Ryong and Seung Hyo-Sang did not deviate significantly from the neutrality and plasticity of the language of modernism, specifically "Architecture with capital A." In a way, they were the language itself. These exposed concrete buildings can also be seen as expressing themselves in a manner similar to the syntax of modernism's elementarism.

These results were overcome by the subsequent works that emerged in the 2000s. In the 2000s, fragments emerged with new identities and differentiated themselves from previous versions by adopting a more autonomous syntax. The transformation of fragments observed in Seung Hyo Sang's Welcomm City presented them as figures of corporeality, departing from the geometric figures prevalent in his previous works

characterized by simplicity and neutrality. The figures were treated as a singular and objective entity enveloped by the properties of Corten steel. These figures aimed to serve as distinct elements standing against the urban backdrop while also defining the voids within the architectural structure. The podium of exposed concrete is meant to be an elevated ground. Their syntax demonstrated the possibility of being defined as an alternative structure, consisting of corporeal boxes as ‘figures standing on a podium,’ instead of a presence of the roof which a formalistic composition would call for. It was the representation of the spatial structure, the reconstructed structure of reality.

### **(3) Integral object of Collections**

- *Kim Seung Hoy*



**Figure 26. Health Care Center Munkyoung (2000),  
Health Care Center Pohang (2001)**

In Kim Seung-Hoy's Health Center series, seemingly scattered fragments formed cohesive assemblages within distinct multiplicitous systems. These fragments, both extracted from the conditions of the urban context or generated autonomously as tectonic elements, creates order from lowest to the uppermost scales while generating partial wholes. In Munkyoung, the floating box defines overall order of the vertical layout of space which embodies heterogenous fragments and their sub systems. In Pohang, the horizontal ordering of the body and the vertical layout are superimposed, while the other fragments are deployed as if they are unraveled on a field condition.

On the surface of his architecture, two significant aspects emerge. Firstly, there exists a clear overall order while individual fragments possess distinct and autonomous identities. Secondly, when these elements interact with existing orders or with other fragments, they do so not by compromising each other's form or position or identity, but by clearly being interlocked. As evident in his expressions such as "pose," "elevated box," "hanging room," these methods underscore his approach to endowing fragments with relational dynamics and identity. They establish a lucid articulation and engage in constructive relationships, ultimately achieving a "delicate interlocks."

The comparison with the Basrunson Center further elucidates the significance inherent in his healthcare center architecture: The Basrunson Center dismantles its building into fragments to resemble the external urban fabric, subsequently reorganizing them through partial compositions.

In contrast, Kim's buildings combine their inherent order with external orders and fragments, demonstrating a distinct approach. In the Kim Seung Hoy's buildings part to part relations can be termed as componenthood.

#### **(4) Integral object**

- *Boutique Monaco (2008)*



**Figure 27. Boutique Monaco (2008)**

In Cho Min-seok's Boutique Monaco, reality becomes a freely applicable subject. Fragments in Boutique Monaco are the results of materialization through devious application of the conditions of reality. Like the buildings showcasing core problematics in the early 90s, these

fragments are still generated from the commercial and regulatory conditions in Boutique Monaco. However, the manifestation of these fragments is neither explicit nor reference-oriented to the surrounding urban context. Instead, the fragments take autonomous forms. They are expressed as units of various systems at multiple levels of scale, and their syntax operates in complex and diverse ways. The arrangement of units and windows, as well as the expressive structural elements in the lower levels, form syntaxes of different "skins." Additionally, the columns on the ground level, the skin system in the lower part, and the skin system in the upper part form a clearly vertical, layered structure syntax despite being fragments of different natures. Voids, defined as cut-out parts or flesh of the body formed by the skin, partially combine to create a syntax of sub-wholes. Finally, the lower and upper systems, through v-shaped voids where they intersect, form a cohesive assemblage, completing the system of an integral object. The diverse layers of reality freely transformed into fragments in Boutique Monaco, forming a powerful expressive whole.

## 4.4. Summary

In the first phase interaction between architecture and the reality, the focus remains on the heterogeneous creation of fragments themselves, yet their syntax remains confined within the boundary of a simple collection - juxtaposition or elementary collage of various shapes. This syntax fails to transcend its previous form and lacks transformative potential. Nonetheless, the Barunson Center offers an alternative part to part relations, componenthood within its member-collection relation, showcasing the potential for reality's reconstruction. Unlike directly borrowing from reality, Barunson Center's fragments are generated through interpreting reality's conditions. Their interweaving forms a cohesive "body," resulting in a montage-style imagery.

Progressing through the Barunson Center and the activities of the 4.3 Group in the 1990s, the inclination towards reconstructing reality becomes more pronounced. While the previous phase could be seen as being "influenced" by reality, the following period can be described as "recreating and reconstructing" reality. Fragments return to basic morphemes, distinct from complex unit formats, with syntax taking shape based on the reconstructed structure of reality.

In the 2000s, fragments assume new identities and differentiate themselves from previous versions by adopting more autonomous syntax. Seung Hyo Sang's Welcomm City presents fragments as corporeal figures enveloped in Corten steel, defining voids within the architectural structure.

Kim Seung-hoy's Health Center series exhibits cohesive units within multiplicitous systems, delicately interlocking. Cho Min-Seok's Boutique Monaco embodies an even more liberated interpretation of reality, where fragments freely transform into diverse layers, resulting in an emphatic and expressive whole while its fragments forming numerous sub-wholes.

## Chapter 5. Discussion

### Conflict and Compromise of Fragments

#### 5.1. 1960s ~ 1980s : Self-contained Urban architecture

The manifestation of fragments in the 1960s emerged initially as a conflict in the process of combining the given modern architectural system with elements of romanticism or locality. This is most dramatically evident in a series of buildings by Jeong In-kook, where it starts with a *collection* of different forms of fragments and gradually evolves into *integral object* that compromises into a formative completeness.

##### (1) Fragments in formalism

In Jeong In-kook's works, the modification of imported anthropomorphic, tri-partite structural syntax through the *collection* of structural components as fragments is evident. At the scale of components, fragments manifest from heterogeneous points of reference, forming a hybrid collection of classic architecture, local forms and materials, and sometimes curtain wall construction. However, the intention was clear to achieve a syntax of a unified structure rather than intentional non-conformity such as collisions or juxtapositions, resulting in the fragments being reduced to structural components dependent to the composition. The imagery of the whole is discernible as a direct representation of a roofed structure, and the subtle harmony between the fragments in terms of form



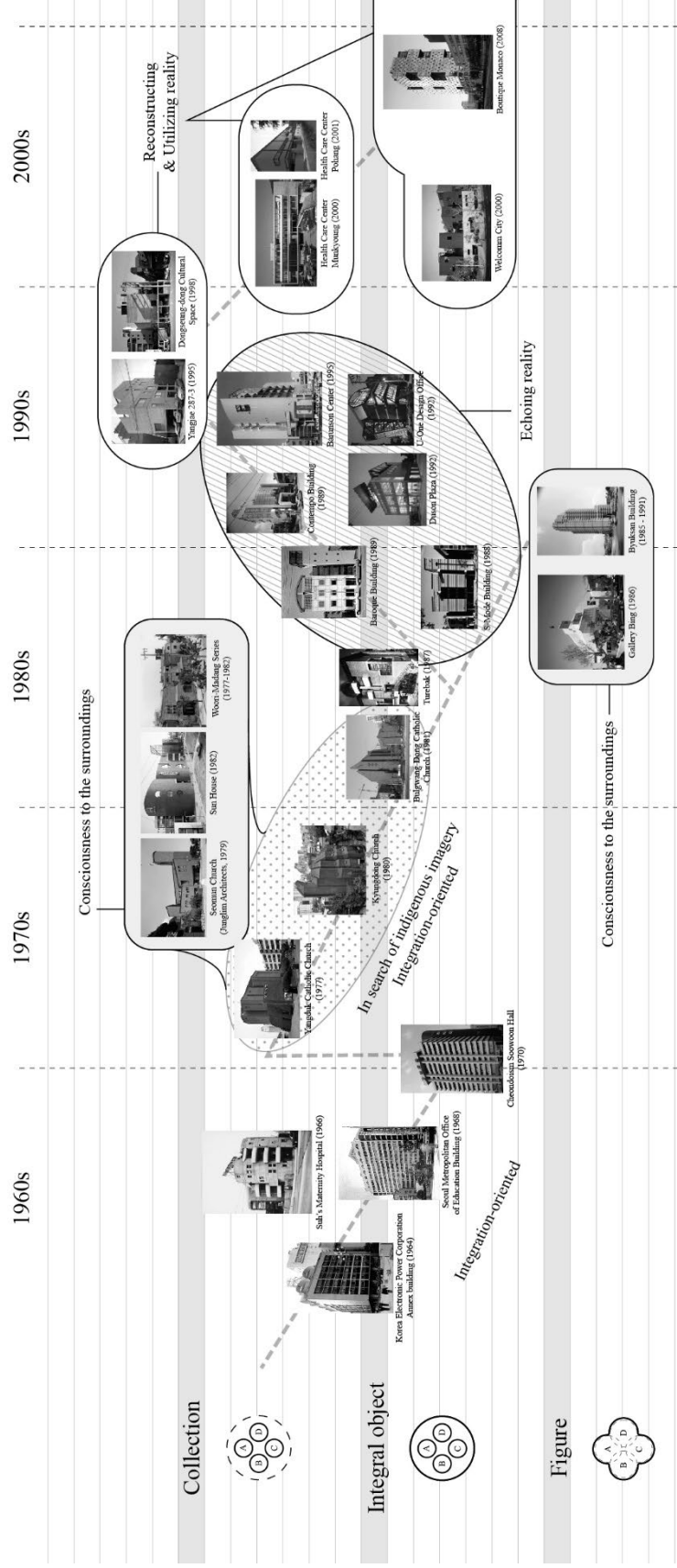


Figure 28. Conflict and Compromise of Architectural fragments

or material was intentionally made. Such attempts are most evident in the Soowoon Hall, where the emphasis on a roof as a direct form and the repetitive layers of structural syntax between fragments with different attributes result in a strengthened monumental representation. In his works, multifaceted conflicts of fragments form a collection but are again compromised through the structural syntax of formalism. The fragments he created endow the elements within the structural framework with independent characteristics, yet they are assimilated on the surface within the overall framework, reduced to neutral structural fragments.

## **(2) In search of indigenous imageries**

In the 1970s and 1980s, fragments primarily took the form of generic elements at the scale of entities, and architects sought to develop the language of syntax while adhering to intuitive formal principles. Through the projects highlighted in this paper, we can observe the potential for autonomy and creativity in discovering indigenous imagery of wholes and the syntax systems that implement them. Kim Swoo-Geun captured the natural syntax of "clustering" as a regional imagery and developed it as a *collection*. This type, as seen in the case of Seomun Church by Junglim Architects, can be regarded as a syntactic approach that is not limited to the architect's individual style. It had the potential to evolve into an autonomous system, but it was accepted more as an image of a fixed archetype rather than a logical one, and in subsequent works, this syntax is reduced to a structural imagery representing totality as represented in

Kim Swoo-Geun's works. Consequently, the autonomy of fragments observed in Kim Swoo-Geun's Yangduk Church or Kyoungdong Church is compromised in later projects again as a structural component, unable to resolve the conflict between formal complexity and completeness.

On the one hand, as another notable imagery, Kim Joong-Up's architecture evolved as a *collection* of distinct fragments by implanting a system established by Le Corbusier which involves juxtaposition of figurative elements. In his architecture, Kim explored the potential for new formation of fragments by filling the materials of juxtaposition with autonomous and figurative fragments extracted from personal references. As seen in Suh's Maternity Hospital, corporeal fragments with independent identities were incorporated into a *collection* of componenthood.

### **(3) Syntax 'from above' and 'from below'**

One important difference between Kim Swoo-Geun and Kim Joong-Up's architecture lies in the generative methodology of each imagery. In Kim Swoo-Geun's architecture, the syntax of repetition had its origin in a fixed imagery of "cluster of fragments," rather than an established logic such as Maki Fumihiko's "collective form." The subsequent distortion into a structural syntax implies that it was imposed as a fixated imagery, indicating that the generative process of such architectural imagery occurred "from above." On the other hand, as noted by Jeong In-Ha, in

Kim Joong-Up's architecture, his fragments were generated as independent figures and spatial elements, undergoing individual and autonomous transformations. This means that the generative process of the imagery took place "from below." This generative process also operates in the perception of the imagery, with both "from above" and "from below" approaches, leading to different approaches to the significations of the fragments that constitute the syntax. The significant aspect of the syntax from below is that it allows multifaceted fragments to flexibly intervene in the formation process of the imagery and enables each fragment to accommodate various incidental inflections.

In Kim Ki-Seok's Woorimadang, the condition of the renovation project generates different fragments, and fragments are added as spatial or perceptual devices. While these fragments are gathered as a *collection* at a lower scale, they are formally "organized," in other words, elevated to an imagery through the "from above" approach of the architect's expression. Furthermore, in Kim Won's Gallery Bing, it is possible to infer a logical and geometric process of spatial generation within the internal space. The form of space generates fragments in a direct and explicit manner towards the outside, following the "from below" approach. At a partial scale, geometric fragments form a collage, but utilizing the distinct building skin construction, they constitute a new type of syntax which enforms a *figure*. Ultimately through formal manipulation, they conclude as an ambiguous and multivalent figure, namely, through the "from above" approach. The

construction of imagery in these two architectures is a syntax created through the mediation of "from below" and "from above" approaches.

In summary, the aspects of fragments and syntax discovered in the 1980s can be summarized as follows. Firstly, it was demonstrated that the syntax from fragment to imagery can be formed through the approach of "from below," which responds to incidental conditions, going beyond the imposed imagery of "from above." Additionally, as evidenced by the emergence of *figures*, the palette of expressive languages in Korean contemporary architecture has become closer to the state of "all things at hand." Therefore, it is noteworthy that in Korean architecture after this period, fragments were able to form a powerful imagery of the whole without the dominance of imposed imagery which necessitates clear points of reference.

## **5.2. 1980s ~ 2000s : Reconstructed Externalities**

### **(1) Discovering Reality**

Until the early 1980s, Korean architecture sought to utilize a system of generic methodologies of modern architecture reconstructed with fragments of locality and to find indigenous imageries, as represented by Kim Swoo-Geun's architecture. The ultimate goal in their individual architectures was not to directly demonstrate a relationship with reality. However, as noticed by Jeong In-Ha, what dominated Korean architecture since the late 1980s was no longer a preconceived concept, but a

methodology based on realistic conditions. It is notable that in some works from the previous chapter, reality began to intervene in the buildings as tangible fragments. In Kim Ki-Seok's Woorimadang, fragments generated from realistic conditions were incorporated, and several linguistic unit elements that worked as theoretical basis of his architecture were added. Instead of putting them in conflict, the basis of the work was to appropriately "organize and harmonize" them. Additionally, in Byuksan Building by Kim Swoo-Geun, a number of realistic conditions, such as conflicting programmatic requirements, the surrounding nature, the shape of the site, and the necessity for multifaceted frontality, were problematized and solved into a monolithic whole into a *figure* with its uniform cladding. From the late 1980s onwards, the problems of reality began to actively intervene.

During the stages of discovery and reflection, the emphasis is placed on the heterogeneous creation of fragments themselves, and their syntax still fails to transcend the boundary of simple juxtaposition or elementary collage of various shapes, and to seek for transformative potentials from previous syntax structures. In the midst of this, the Barunson Center demonstrates the potential for another *collection* of componenthood, the possibility of reconstructing reality. Barunson Center's fragments are not directly borrowed from the context of reality but are generated through the process of reading the conditions of reality. However, their combination is achieved through the process of "interweaving" to form a unified "body," still without being dominated by a structural order.

## **(2) Reconstructing reality**

If the previous process could be described as being "dominated" by reality, the subsequent period can be summarized as "re-creating and reconstructing" reality. In this process, fragments return to the most basic morphemes, distinct from the previous complex unit formats, and the syntax takes shape based on the reconstructed structure of reality. The beginning of the re-creation of reality can be observed in the architectural experiences of Cho Sung-Ryong and Seung Hyo-Sang, where the theme of architectural experience is transformed into a process of materialization. In particular, the core, as one architectural fact, is presented as a new form of fragment called the "backbone space," defining the relationship between the building's body and the core through various expressions such as "body and skeleton," "body and enveloping wall," or "staircase within the open body."

However, the fragments in the Barunson Center and the exposed concrete buildings by Cho Sung-Ryong and Seung Hyo-Sang did not deviate significantly from the neutrality and plasticity of the language of modernism, specifically "Architecture with capital A." In a way, they were the language itself. These exposed concrete buildings can also be seen as expressing themselves in a manner similar to the syntax of modernism's elementarism.

These results were overcome by the subsequent works that emerged in the 2000s. In the 2000s, fragments emerged with new identities and differentiated themselves from previous versions by adopting a more

autonomous syntax. The transformation of fragments observed in Seung Hyo Sang's Welcomm City presented them as *integral object of figures*, departing from the collection of geometries prevalent in his previous works characterized by simplicity and neutrality. The *figures* were treated as a singular and objective entity enveloped by the properties of Corten steel. These *figures* aimed to serve as distinct elements standing against the urban backdrop while also defining the voids within the architectural structure. The podium of exposed concrete is meant to be an elevated ground. Their syntax demonstrated the possibility of being defined as an alternative structure, consisting of corporeal boxes as 'figures standing on a podium,' instead of a presence of the roof which a formalistic composition would call for. It was the representation of the spatial structure, the reconstructed structure of reality.

### **(3) Positive conflicts between fragments of reality**

In Kim Seung-Hoy's Health Center series, seemingly scattered fragments formed cohesive units within distinct multiplicitous systems. These units could be extracted from the conditions of the context or generated autonomously. Notably, the syntax of these heterogeneous fragment units is "delicately interlocked," contrasting with the syntax of the floating *collection* of unitary fragments by other architects of the 90s, and it is expressively clear in its construction.

Lastly, in Cho Min-seok's Boutique Monaco, reality becomes a freely applicable subject. Fragments in Boutique Monaco are the results of



materialization through devious application of the conditions of reality. Like the buildings showcasing core problematics in the early 90s, these fragments are still generated from the commercial and regulatory conditions in Boutique Monaco. However, the manifestation of these fragments is neither explicit nor reference-oriented to the surrounding urban context. Instead, the fragments take autonomous forms. They are expressed as units of various systems at multiple levels of scale, and their syntax operates in complex and diverse ways. The arrangement of units and windows, as well as the expressive structural elements in the lower levels, form syntaxes of different "skins." Additionally, the columns on the ground level, the skin system in the lower part, and the skin system in the upper part form a clearly vertical, layered structure syntax despite being fragments of different natures. Voids, defined as cut-out parts or flesh of the body formed by the skin, partially combine to create a syntax of sub-wholes. Finally, the lower and upper systems, through v-shaped voids where they intersect, form a cohesive assemblage, completing the system of an *integral object*. The diverse layers of reality freely transformed into fragments in Boutique Monaco, forming a powerful expressive whole.

## Chapter 6. Conclusion

### **From ‘fragments-in-itself’ to ‘fragments-for-itself’**

From the 1960s to the 1980s, and then from the 1980s to the 2000s, urban architecture was divided into two themes: 'emergence of diverse morphology' and 'interaction with urban reality'. In the 1960s, the works of Chung In-Kook and Kim Joong-Up were analyzed for their integration of diverse identities into singular architectural compositions. While Chung In-Kook's fragments were shaped by external references to form their appearance, Kim Joong-Up's works began organizing spaces from independent fragments. Both emphasized partial identities in planning architectural representations, but in Chung In-Kook's buildings, these parts were reduced to neutral elements. In contrast, Kim Joong-Up's fragments evolved into wholeness while maintaining distinctness through morphological expressions.

Moving into the 1970s, the design of church architecture within urban contexts revealed schemas of collections formed by fragmented entities. This attempt, seen in Kim Swoo-Geun's work, sought to find indigenous imagery within Korean architecture while conscious of the surroundings. However, the symbolic nature of church architecture and the pursuit of formal integrity caused the role of fragments to converge back into an integral whole. In both Chung In-Kook's and Kim Swoo-Geun's

architecture, fragments played prominent roles initially, but their architecture progressed toward integration-oriented directions. Notably, Kim Joong-Up's architecture employed unique fragment representations, yet it achieved loose cohesion among parts within an overall order, forming a significant componenthood relationship. It established a reciprocal connection between *collection* (part to whole) and *componenthood* (part to part).

During the late 1980s, positions in urban architecture began to shift slightly in response to the context and functional realities of the surroundings. Notably, there was a tendency to inscribe the complexities of the surroundings directly onto the architectural body (*collection of integral objects*). In the late 1980s and into the 1990s, attempts were made to incorporate the context while resisting direct representation, resulting in a *collection of collections*, where geometrical layers were superimposed onto neutral fragmentary elements. Meanwhile, the Barunson Center demonstrated a method of reassembling the fragmentary context within its own territory, not dominated by a comprehensive order but forming partial interlocks and assemblages while maintaining fragment identities. This self-representation resonates with external conditions, rather than merely reflecting them. Within the coexisting environment demanding engagement with external conditions, urban architectural fragments shifted from 'fragment-in-itself' to 'fragment-for-itself,' transforming their relationships within the whole.

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## Abstract in Korean

이 논문은 부분과 전체라는 통일된 관점으로 한국의 현대건축을 이해하는 방식을 제안한다. 첫 번째 목표는 부분과 전체의 관계성을 바탕으로 한국건축의 외형을 분류하는 체계를 만드는 것이다. 건물의 표상은 어떤 관념을 내포하는 것이 아니라 객체의 물리적 이미지라는 관점에서, 건물의 부분과 전체는 그 표상의 내용들이고, 그것들이 조직되는 방식은 이미지가 전달되는 방식이다. 따라서 이 분류방식을 통해 한국의 건축가들이 외형으로 어떤 것을 표상하고 어떻게 전달하였는지를 이해하는 것이 두 번째 목표이다.

근대화 이래로 한국에서 건축은 한국적 정체성의 표현, 권위의 표현, 모더니즘의 자족적 실천, 또는 복잡한 도시 조건에 대한 발언과 같은 다양한 의사소통의 매체였다. 비록 한국의 근현대 건축에서 건축의 다양한 외적 표현이 있었고 그 중요성은 더욱 강조되고 있음에도 불구하고, 국내의 건축 담론들은 특정 시기 이후부터 건축의 실물적 표현보다 그 이면의 개념적 주제들을 우선시해왔다. 한국 건축가들의 표현에 대한 연구는 주로 한정된 수의 건축가나 건축 양식에 집중되었으며, 한국 건축의 특수한 조건들과 건축 표현을 연결 지은 분석들은 드물었다. 본 논문은 건축의 소통적 기능에 초점을 두고 한국 현대 건축가들의 건축언어를 들여다보고자 한다.

이 논문의 기저에는 "과편화된 외형의 건축물들은 한국 건축의 맥락에 대한 더 깊은 이해를 제공한다"는 전제와 가설이 깔려 있다. 지역성, 공간적 경험, 실용성이나 합리성의 문제, 복잡한 도시 환경 등과 같이 한국 건축 내부에서 중요한 과제들이 되었던 다면적인 개념과 조건들은 건축의 과편화를 야기해 왔다. 본 논문에서 제시하는 분류방식은 생성된 건축 과편들이 각각의 전체를 만들어 가는 조작 방식을 분류하는 것이며, 그로 인해 만들어진 전체는 그 건축의 표상이 된다. 다양한 과편들의 조합을 통해 외관에 어떤 건축적 이미지를 형성하는 것이다. 이러한 전략은 개별 건축가의 작가정신의 발현으로만 존재하는 것이 아니라 건축 객체의 발화로서 남게 된다.

연구는 두 가지 과정으로 진행된다: 첫째, 부분전체론을 바탕으로 건축적 부분-전체의 기본 분류 체계를 설정한다. 이를 기반으로 한국 건축가들의 주요 프로젝트를 분석하고 그 과정에서 세부 분류의 기준이 되는 물리적이고 인지 가능한 언어를 식별해 낸다. 둘째, 1960 년대와 2000 년대 사이의 건축에서 등장하는 다양한 표상적 전략들과 변화 과정을 추적한다. 각 시기는 한국 건축의 파편화와 관계되는 주제들을 기준으로 구분하였다. 분류체계의 구체화를 통해 다양한 표상 전략들 사이에서 드러나는 공통된 태도나 차이들을 포착하는 것을 목표로 하였다.



# Appendix

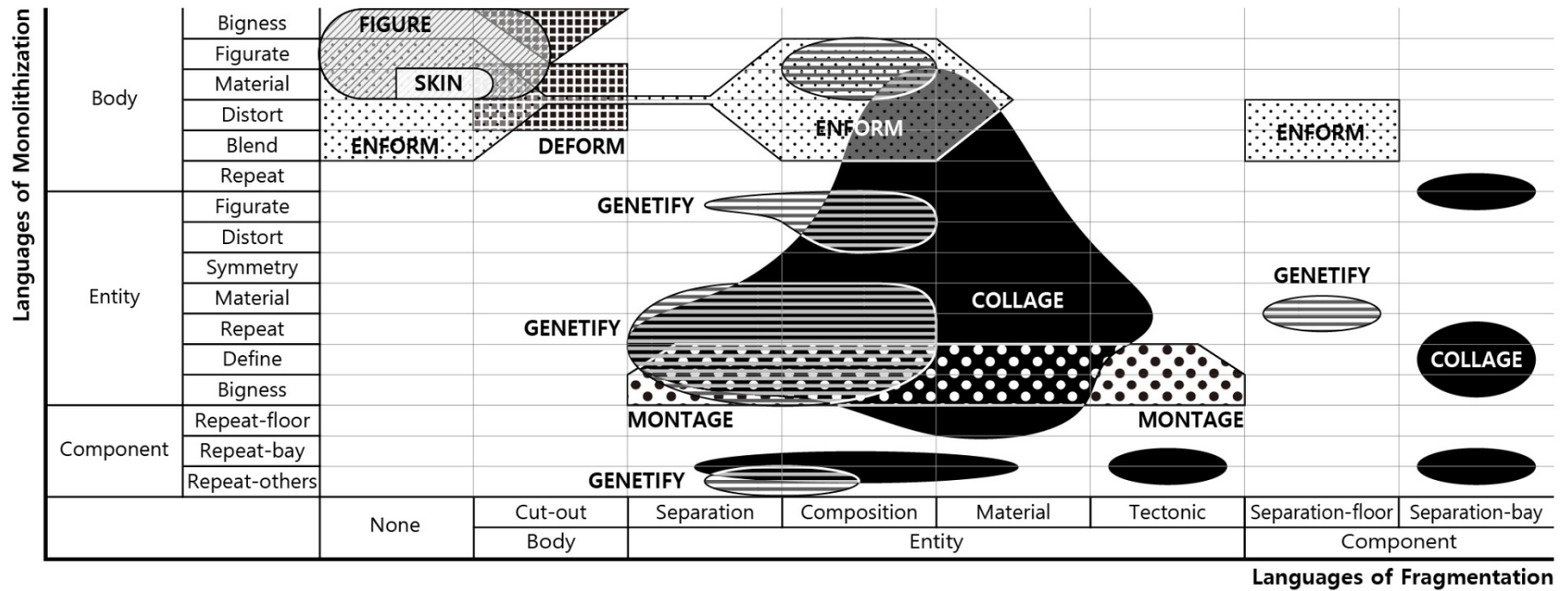
<Table 1> Languages of Fragmentation and Monolithization

Level			Actions of Fragmentation					Actions of Monolithization							
			Cut-out	Separation	Composition	Material	Tectonic	Figurate	Distort	Material	Blend	Repeat	Symmetry	Define	Bigness
Body	1	Mass	●	●				●	●	●	●	●			●
Entity	2	Sub-Mass		●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●	●
Component	3	Floor		●								●			
	4	Bay		●								●			
	5	Others										●			







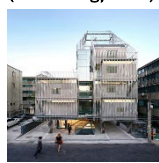


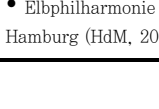
<Table 2> Project analysis on the languages of Fragmentation and Monolithization

No	Project	Year	Type	Actions of Representation								Actions of Monolithization														
				1-Cutout	1-Separate	2-Separate	2-Composition	2-Material	2-Matrix	3-Separate	4-Separate	1-Figurate	1-Distort	1-Material	1-Blend	1-Repeat	1-Excess	2-Figurate	2-Distort	2-Material	2-Repeat	2-Symmetry	2-Define	2-Excess	3-Repeat	4-Repeat
1	비룡승정각 (이종호)	1994	MONTAGE																							
2	영천신림교회 (김영철)	1994	MONTAGE																							
3	Hotel Chonnam Inn	1995	MONTAGE																							
4	시도(해지)공방교량 (정수권)	1996	COLLAGE																							
5	봉명사정각 (정수권)	1996	COLLAGE																							
6	법문교정각 (정수권)	1999	COLLAGE																							
7	세종문화회관 (정수권)	1996	COLLAGE																							
8	종교문화 (정수권)	1995	COLLAGE																							
9	영천신림 (정수권)	2020	COLLAGE																							
10	Hotel Capsule Tower (Woo Seokho)	1992	COLLAGE																							
11	Chonnam Culture House (Jeong Seungwon)	2012	GINETIPY																							
12	정수권교정 (정수권)	1991	GINETIPY																							
13	영천신림 (정수권)	2016	GINETIPY																							
14	Chonnam Culture House (Jeong Seungwon)	1997	GINETIPY																							
15	Hotel 8 Palaces (Woo Seokho)	2017	GINETIPY																							
16	영천신림 (정수권)	2015	GINETIPY																							
17	61 Cooper Square (Mingchun)	2019	GINETIPY																							
18	The World Gallery (2015)	2019	GINETIPY																							
19	영천신림 (정수권)	1999	GINETIPY																							
20	영천신림 (정수권)	1991	GINETIPY																							
21	영천신림 (정수권)	2014	GINETIPY																							
22	영천신림 (정수권)	2012	GINETIPY																							
23	영천신림 (정수권)	2012	GINETIPY																							
24	영천신림 (정수권)	2003-16	GINETIPY																							
25	영천신림 (정수권)	2017	GINETIPY																							
26	영천신림 (정수권)	1992	GINETIPY																							
27	영천신림 (정수권)	2004-12	GINETIPY																							
28	영천신림 (정수권)	2021	GINETIPY																							
29	영천신림 (정수권)	2016	GINETIPY																							

<Figure 1> Seven types of representational strategies between Monolith and Fragments



<Table 3> Languages and Projects of fragmentation and monolithization by types

Type	MONTAGE	COLLAGE	GENETIFY	DEFORM	ENFORM	FIGURE	SKIN
Diagram							
Languages of Fragmentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separation of entities</li> <li>• Composition</li> <li>• Material differentiation</li> <li>• Tectonic differentiation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Composition</li> <li>• Material differentiation</li> <li>• Separation of entities</li> <li>• Tectonic differentiation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Composition</li> <li>• Separation of entities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cut-out</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implication of composition</li> <li>• Cut-out</li> <li>• Separation of entities or components</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cut-out</li> </ul>	
Languages of Monolithization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bigness of an entity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeat of entities or components</li> <li>• Presence of defining entities</li> <li>• Bigness of an entity</li> <li>• Figuration of an entity</li> <li>• Symmetry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unified material of entities</li> <li>• Repeat of entities or components</li> <li>• Figuration of entities</li> <li>• Distortion</li> <li>• Bigness of entities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distortion</li> <li>• Distinct body material</li> <li>• Bigness of body</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blend of entities</li> <li>• Figuration of body</li> <li>• Distortion</li> <li>• Distinct body material</li> <li>• Unified material of entities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Figuration of body</li> <li>• Distinct body material</li> <li>• Bigness of body</li> <li>• Symmetry</li> <li>• Repeat of entities or components</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distinct body material</li> </ul>
Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 바른손센터 (이종호, 1994)</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 양천신경외과 (김인철, 1994)</li> <li>• Spiral (Fumihiko Maki, 1985)</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 사회복지공동모금회 (김수근, 1978)</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 세종문화회관 (임덕문 · 이희태, 1978)</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 웰컴시티 (송효상, 2000)</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 광명시청사 (김수근, 1984)</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 경동교회 (김수근, 1981)</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 예화랑 (장윤규, 2006)</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guggenheim Bilbao (Frank Gehry, 1997)</li> <li>• Asakusa Tourist Center (Kuma Kengo, 2012)</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 열린책들사옥 (서혜림, 2005)</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 41 Cooper Square (Morphosis, 2009)</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Twist Gallery (BIG, 2019)</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 갤러리빙 (김원, 1989)</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 벽산빌딩 (김수근, 1991)</li> <li>• 송파마이크로하우징 (John Hong, 2014)</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 국제갤러리 (SO-IL, 2012)</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 질모서리 (김인철, 2012)</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 플레이스제이 (김승희, 2017)</li> <li>• 송은 (HdM, 2021)</li> <li>• Baron Vert (Philippe Starck, 1992)</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elbphilharmonie Hamburg (HdM, 2016)</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 플랫폼엘 (이정훈, 2016)</li> </ul> 