

Edge of Diversity

The realization of one's self is the origin of architecture. Through theory, humanity has tried to understand its surroundings, and through them come to know "the self". Humans come to know themselves through their understanding of the rest of the world. Theory has been a part of human societies ever since the first attempt to explain and understand; but it is only until the Modern Era where it became not only a manner of argumentation, but also one of the basic principles of conception of architecture.

When humans began to understand themselves as separate entities from other humans they started to understand limits, and within those limits, edges. The end of me is not a continuation of you; but rather it's that space which marks the difference. This idea is what gives us humanities first diagram. A center that represents the ego, with an enclosing that describes both limit and space - the self-; this marks interior and exterior.

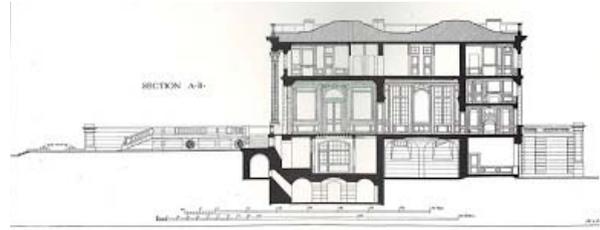
An edge is fundamentally a double entendre; it is commonly understood as a division but has the underlying message of space. It references a void that through being cut becomes material. Through this architecture became a simile, a simulacra of the human body and its way of reasoning; the diagram of human consciousness within the human body

in relationship to architectures interior and its surroundings.

Settlements began to systemize space into particular areas with defined objectives. One whole communal land is no longer traversed; instead, space becomes inhabited and so, divided. This division is not intended in its negative connotations; it does not mean to alienate, but to emphasize diversity. The edge here becomes crucial to architecture. Space is born when a split occurs; this marks the embodiment of architecture. It defines it through perception rather than creativity. If architecture is created through the relationship between the self, versus the other (interior versus exterior), then the aesthetic argument becomes crucial. It enables an appreciation of architectures values through its pursuits rather than its formal or monetary properties. The argument instead falls into hierarchies of political and cultural potential value. It creates a proximity with morality and justice that allow society to relate to architecture in reference to themselves; fairness becomes “a symmetry of everyone’s relations to each other” and to their surroundings. The homonym of fair brought up by Elaine Scarry deepens the relationship between beauty (the aesthetic) and justice (the moral, or the self). It reinforces the argument that aesthetic theory is not a superficial pursuit. In fact, it deals with the artistic categories of beauty, but also reacts to the form and physicality of architecture as they together influence the individual and the whole.

During the classical periods, beauty was seen in architecture as one the crucial orders. It was a method of associating art and culture with society and everyday life. The Petite Trianon demonstrates the marriage between formal applications and aesthetic theory. A reading of the plan and section could demonstrate the careful proportional design, but its special organization and annotations attend to social and qualities. It is adorned with cultural references and gives as much importance to the structure and the mathematical resolutions as it does to the habitable and beautiful systems. The house is aware of the inhabitants as it maneuvers around courtly life. It has vast entertaining spaces as a parallel of royalty; yet the architecture also addresses the idea of privacy and allows for secret passageways

that lead to personal areas only dedicated to Marie Antoinette. The house reflect the personalities of both court, society, culture and self, creating an allegory between architecture and humanity.



“Petite Trianon” Palace of Versailles

“An Analogy is inert and at rest only if both terms are present in the world; when one term is absent, the other becomes and active conspirator for the exile’s return” . Today’s society has regimentalized beauty; it is now a concept only valid when in resonance to quantifiable data, but the need for fairness is still present in all people. When did pleasure become uneducated? If the final goal is to be carried to the subject of aliveness; we must allow and educate our perceiving, rather than our creating.

Architecture today has attempted to rebirth the importance of audience which is evident in buildings such as the Burder Klaus Field Chapel. Peter Zumthor embraces the sensuous affects into architecture and allows them to seep into not only the design, but the processes and even the construction. The design of the chapel intended to have an intimate interior that was masked by a rough and massive exterior to create the analogy of the diagram of the ego and the self. The architect allows his design to return to the basic conceptions of a person, and then exploits it to intensify the sensation of space.

The methods of construction provide a close relationship to culture and to the systems traditional to the farming community of its location in Germany; it uses native trees as structure and then applies compacted earth on the exterior; but the crucial moment comes when the structure is lit and allowed to burn off leaving only the echo of the tree trunks in its rugged surfaces and burnt smells. Here architecture has both social and cultural significance, but retains a relationship to landscape and to the exterior.



"Burder Klaus Field Chapel" Peter Zumthor

The building becomes the division between interior and exterior but it is also deeply embedded into its surroundings. This generates a diffused barrier in which the edge becomes "an interposed veil". A clear example of the diffused transparency is the Ghost House by Philip Johnson indicating a diaphanous landscape and relationship between background and object.



"Ghost House" Philip Johnson

The chain linked walls that join to create the shape of a traditional pitched roof house gives the sensation of either existing or not; the choice of which is up to the viewer and perception. The edge is very clearly defined but it allows for a relationship of differences rather than complete detachment iv.

The analogy of real space and the self, propose a change from the prevalent attitudes towards formalism and technical definitions into one that can allow for sensibility and beauty, and may even provide the conditions for new orders or social attitudes and hierarchies. Human societies keep evolving and affecting the world around them; but these changes in turn reverberate into the personal conception of self and perception of the world. Pleasure and fairness evoke a new manner of design which is always in constant evolution and morphing in relationship to both limit and space. This type of architecture will provide a new kind of edge and diagram, one that will emphasize diversity.

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