Sequences

by Bernard Tschumi

Any architectural sequence includes or implies at least three relations. First, an internal relation, which deals with the method of work; then two external relations, one dealing with the juxtaposition of actual spaces, the other with program (occurrences or events). The first relation, or *transformational* sequence, can also be described as a device, a procedure. The second, *spatial* sequence is constant throughout history; its typological precedents abound and its morphological variations are endless. Social and symbolic connotations characterize the third relation; we shall call it for now the *programmatic* sequence. All three relations are present in any architectural work, whether implicitly or explicitly.

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One customary mode of architectural drawing already implies a transformational sequence. Successive layers of transparent tracing paper are laid one upon the other, each with its respective variations, around a basic theme or *"parti"*. Each subsequent reworking leads to or refines the organizing principle. The process is generally based on intuition, precedents and habit.

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Guerrier   This sequence can also be based on a precise, rational set of transformational rules and discrete architectural elements. The sequential transformation then becomes its own theoretical object, insofar as the process becomes the result, while the sum of transformations is all that counts, rather than the outcome of the final transformation.

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Wilson   Sequences of space, *configurations-en-suite, enfilades,*
McNeur   spaces aligned along a common axis—all are specific architectural organizations, from Egyptian temples through the churches of the Quattrocento to the present. All have emphasized a planned path with fixed halting points, a family of spatial points linked by continuous movement.

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Sequences of transformation and sequences of spaces rarely intersect, as if architects carefully distinguished means of inception from end product, through a sort of discrete restraint that does not reveal the maker's artifices in the final result and favors the certainty of a well-defined axis over the passionate uncertainties of thought.

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