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STRATIFICATION

The interpretation of architectural challenges as extensions

DLA dissertation

Motto:

“...even if it is concealed, since we had forgotten it, we are being part of a Whole that can not be put into words ”

(Péter Balassa)

My DLA dissertation is deliberately subjective: I try to organize my thoughts and knowledge that lead to the Theses with the help of three experiences I have had (an exhibition, a book and a journey). The Theses reveal one possible approach to architectural challenges by also offering points of reference and solutions to lean on.

The subtitle of my dissertation: *The interpretation of architectural challenges as extensions* implies the recognition of continuity, because the apparently existing spiritual and physical environment, as an existing stratum or layer, is always present in every architectural challenge. In developing my dissertation I investigate different ways of connection to the existing and of functional, formal and spiritual integration:

- In terms of the relation of *permanence and scale*, I wish to illustrate through my plans scaled as *an object, a building and a fabric* that the components of an architectural space interchange at a frequency subject to their scales, i.e. the scale in this sense forecasts the permanence or validity of any architectural composition (as a layer of the built environment). (*Thesis No. 1*)
- I analyze the relation of *old and new* with the help of the categories – *extension, derivation, transformation* – created by *Paul Spencer Byard* in *The Architecture of Additions* (*W.W.Norton, New York, London, 1998*) and introduce a new category I call *conformation*. I elucidate *Thesis No. 2* based upon three contemporary Hungarian works and one of my own competition works: *It is not easy to categorize the mostly complex spatial and spiritual relations of architectural works, as they tend to escape the pattern of scientific organization. It is possible, however, to grasp accents, moreover, it is necessary for the sake of intentional integration of the new layer we planned.*
- I try to explore the relation of the *Part* and the *Whole* with the help of the writings, confessions and works of *J. Pawson, J.A. Coderch, S. Fehn* and *W. Pichler*. Instead of only being related to the individual parts as layers, an architectural work as part of the Whole is also linked to the Whole as the sum (or communion) of the parts. *Such link is accomplished at both spiritual, emotional and moral levels* (*Thesis No. 3*)

In my interpretation, the masterpiece analyzed in my dissertation has a strategic role – just like a girder – with regard to the life (work) it forms the foundation of. I articulate *Thesis No. 4* with regard to the building presented as the masterpiece (*Family House at 14 Rákóczi street in Biatorbágy, Hungary*): *Instead of being science or art, architecture is a part or extension of life.*

The ending of the dissertation may seem to loosely relate to the rest of the study. The description of the self-made wicker fence is indeed a kind of summation. The summation of my knowledge of architecture:

In early Spring each year as my aunt and my parents prune the fruit trees and the grape vines, respectively, new layers of wicker are added to this fence. It maintains its height though, because I first compact the existing layers, the upper layers will slide in place of the lower, rotten ones, and I weave the fresh, bendy twigs (plum, apple, pear, peach, sometimes grape vine) onto the top of the fence.

It is important for the twigs to be fresh and flexible, Therefore, fence weaving is obviously a job to do only at the time of pruning. This time pressure is a guarantee for success.

The color of wicker varies by the tree type with plum being burgundy, pear being yellowish green, apple being sage green, and peach being pink. It is expedient to work with one type at a time by opening bunches one by one. You may want to make color experiments in the pattern of weaving. Weaving may be further varied by alternating individual twigs and bunches of two or three twigs. What's nice about it is the different appearance of the same fence each year.

And by the time the garden turns green, the scent of jostaberry flowers and the sweet flavor of raspberry on the other side outweigh the subject of my pride from early Spring: the wicker fence.