

Figure 6.1 Centrifugal space: single column.

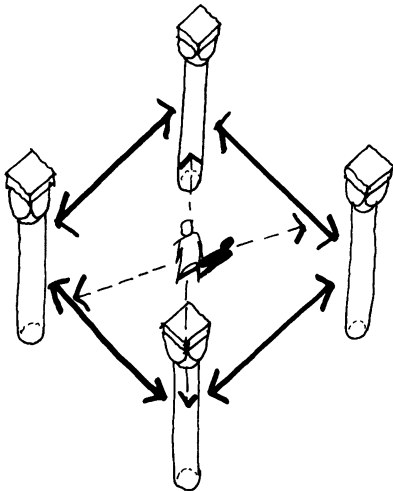


Figure 6.2 Centripetal space: four columns.

roof'. This is centripetal space. If four walls are used to define this centripetal space rather than four columns, then the sense of enclosure is enhanced (Figure 6.3), but the corners are less well defined and space tends to 'leak' from the voids thus created.

However if eight planes are used to enclose the same space by clearly defining the corners, then the perceived sense of enclosure is strengthened still further (Figure 6.4).

This phenomenon is best demonstrated when town 'squares' are established within the order of a town grid. If the square is formed merely by the removal of a block or blocks from the grid, then corner voids will result with a consequent loss of perceived space enclosure (Figure 6.5). But should the square be offset from the grid, then the corners remain intact

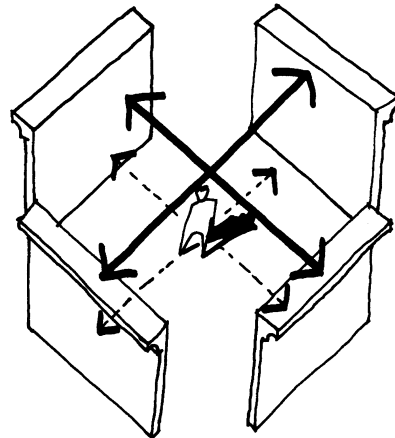


Figure 6.3 Centripetal space: four walls.

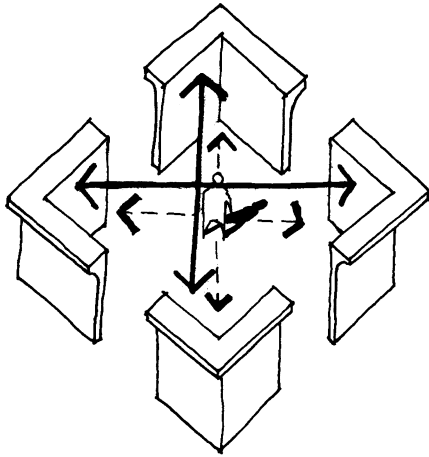


Figure 6.4 Centripetal space: four corners, eight planes.

thus heightening the sense of enclosure and giving views from the centre of the square along principal access routes (Figure 6.6).

As in building design, the study of precedent can provide a vital starting point for the design of spaces between buildings; whilst manifestly different in formal terms, Piazza San Marco, Venice, and Piazza del Campo, Siena have some important similarities which provide a set of clues or points of departure in the design of external centripetal spaces. First, both spaces are clearly defined as large-scale voids carved from the intense continuous grain of a city's fabric, so that they appear like public 'living rooms' without a roof, where a plethora of activities inducing social intercourse can take place.

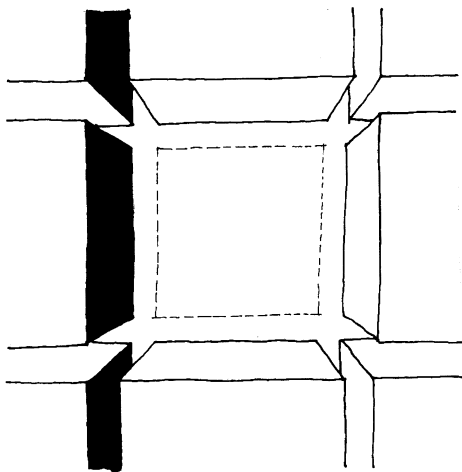


Figure 6.5 Town square 'on grid'.

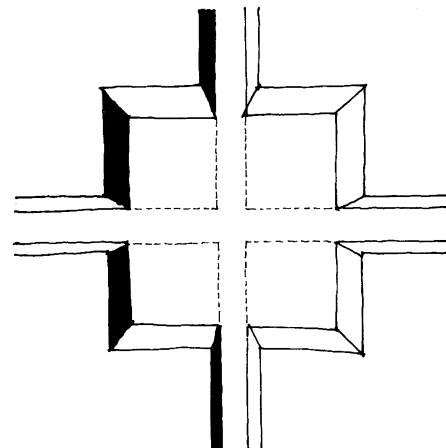


Figure 6.6 Town square 'off grid'.