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9th International
Multidisciplinary
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Creation,
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05th - 07th
October 2023

SEVILLE
SPAIN

The Kitchen Revisited: meanings of functional and physical metamorphosis within the Western Urban Home

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Abstract

The concept, meaning, and embodiment of home are different from culture to culture. Cultural and social traits are, therefore, determinants in the definition of home topology and layout. The kitchen, a universal core space in domestic interiors, represents a room whose creation and definition are greatly influenced by social and cultural characteristics. Transformations of the latter result in transformations and metamorphosis of the kitchen space, either conceptually or morpho-topologically. The article aims at understanding the history of the Kitchen in urban Western civilization, focusing on the creation, transformation, and metamorphosis of this space, analyzing its functional and symbolic meanings in rapport with social norms and cultural traits. The article brings light to the possible understandings of the metamorphosis of the Kitchen per se or when the home is transformed into different uses and/or meanings. The study contributes to the field of housing architecture by demonstrating that social aspects and modes of living are pivotal in the definition of the home, intrinsically connected to the kitchen space, whose location in the topological system of the Western Home has changed over time as has its nature, purpose, and meanings.

Keywords: kitchen, home, housing, , house museum