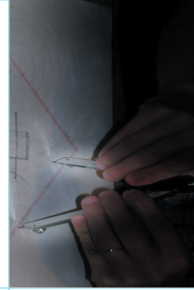


MATTER.....28



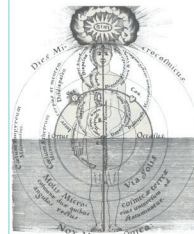
VIVACITY.....26



HEART + CITY.....24



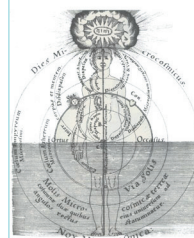
COSMOLOGY.....22





History is not defined by the actual reading of events, but rather by the interpretation of someone (a historian) in their own language. The artificial history is most likely the result of intentional re-construction of written signs and their interpretation.

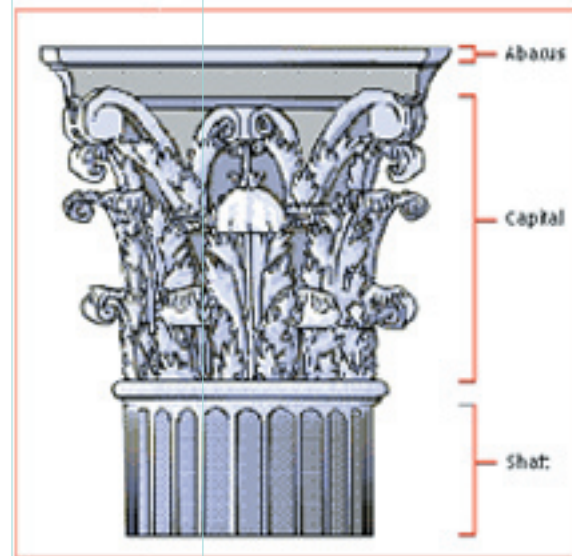
For centuries mankind has studied the cosmos, speculating about its origins and our place in it. By North American Indians, cosmos is conceived as a living unity that has its own cycle similar to the one of Man. It is viewed as an organism that is born, that develops, and that dies at the end of each year. Similarly, a human organism behaves the same way with its own cycle.¹²



MICROCOSMOS.

We often considered the human body as a smaller representation of the cosmos, or as a microcosm. The relationship between the human body, house, and the cosmos (man-architecture-universe) is fundamental in understanding of our personal cosmology.

Throughout time, the human body was used as a typological representation of the universe. During Ancient and Medieval times the human body was viewed as a perfection of order and proportion. The organization of different body parts were observed and treated as an exemplary harmony. The harmony that was found within the human body was then translated and transformed into the body of the building. It was believed that the beauty of everything in the world consists of proportion. With Christianity, Building proportions were derived from Adam's body, which had been made by God, and therefore had to be in perfect proportion. Later, the variety of orders appeared from the differences between the man's and woman's body, because of their different characteristics and individual proportions. As a result, different architectural orders emerged by translating body parts into the building parts. Parts of the building were named from forms of the human body. Names were given not just for aesthetic similarities, but more importantly, for their functional and intentional similarities.



As one example, we can look at the capital, the most elaborated part of the column. Its name in Latin refers to the "head" (caput-capitulum-capitellum). We can see that the name suggests not just the location of this element, but also the functional aspect that the element serves in relationship to the body of the building. The capital has three zones (abacus, echinus, and necking) same as the human head (forehead, face, and chin with neck). The analogy of the column as a body and the cornice as head was also frequently made. Francesco di Giorgio and later Jacques-Francois Blondel studied the relationships and proportions of the human face to the entablature of the building. They found that entablature had the same proportions as the head and compared it as follows: architrave for the shoulders, a frieze for the throat, an astragal for the chin, dentils for the teeth.¹³ Different facial characters prompted the basis for different architectural characters.

Many cities are organized by the specific political, philosophical, spiritual or industrial values associated by the origins of the specific site. Cities exist as a means of achieving a degree of association between people and their awareness of each other.



TEMPLUM.

Historic records indicate that the first cities existed some 8,000 years ago. Over time, cities and their cultures took leading roles in economic, industrial and political transformations of civilizations. During the thirteenth century, important European urban centers flourished by the rise of the mercantile societies. Later, during the Industrial Revolution in England and United States cities “experienced exponential population growth, enabling the concentration of great material wealth through economic growth cycles that led to new standards and forms of urban living.”¹⁴ The new city centers that were built between the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were result of industrial and technological innovations. This affected not only the way of living, but also the social division inside the cities. Because of the exponential population growth, in many cases, old neighborhoods started co-existing with the new industrial urban fabric, where old warehouses were juxtaposed with skyscrapers and new office buildings. This condition became the new urban heritage for the modern cities.

While planning new cities, we currently tend to forget about relationship between the city and the human heart. In historic cities there is always a center, which reflects our own center – the heart. Roman ancient city always began with the templum that was used to create the origins for the city. The templum was a cross within a circle, with first axis running east-west and the hinge running north-south. With this, Romans tried to establish the initial point of the city, which they called the “umbilicus” (belly button).

This center of the city corresponded to the navel of the body. From this, the planners later drew the spaces and streets of the city. The first streets were drawn directly from the initial center, where the street running east-west was called decumanus maximus and the one running north-south cardo maximus. This center was viewed as a point where the city was connected to the gods. All the streets, buildings, businesses, stores, and other separate parts of the city should be proportionate to the whole city, same as each member is to the body. All the parts of the city should be nourished and connected from the city center, same as human body gets nourished from its own center.

According to Semper, the first human gatherings started around the hearth – fire. The hearth was the element that held the fire as well as the small community together. The first huts were arranged, so this was the central element of its basic form. This was the place of communal gathering as well as the place of worship; this was their public realm. Semper identifies the heart as the first of four main elements of architecture. This is the moral element – the one that holds everything together. The other three elements are grouped around it. “The first sign of human settlement and rest after the hunt, the battle and wandering in the desert is today, as when the first men lost paradise, the setting up of the fireplace and the lighting of the reviving, warming, and food – preparing flame. Around the heart the first groups assembled; around it the first alliances formed; around it the first rude religious concepts were put into the customs of a cult. Throughout all phases of society the heart formed that sacred focus around which the whole took order and shape.”¹⁵



DRAWING. CONSTRUCTION.

“Something
Ought to be written about how this affects
You when you write poetry:
The extreme austerity of an almost empty mind
Colliding with the lush, Rousseau-like foliage of its desire to communicate
Something between breaths, if only for the sake
Of others and their desire to understand you and desert you
For others centers of communication, so that understanding
May begin, and in doing so be undone.”⁶

So, something has to be written about the constructing of drawings. While constructing a drawing we engage our imagination and try to give vivacity to an almost empty paper. We desire to communicate something more, between drawn lines, to those who try to read and understand this specific means of communication. Our goal is to engage people's imagination and have it result in a vivid perception of the space that we are trying to (re)present. Imagination is not only engaged while making a drawing, but also while trying to read it.

The act of drawing, and the act of reading the drawing, requires a translation of (actual) sensory experiences from the invisible world of our imagination to the vivacity of the visible world.

As architecture inhabits the world and participates in the tactile and visual nature of our senses, its drawings usually lack that direct relationship of sensuous content. In order to inhabit the drawing while reading it, our senses need to be engaged. This engagement happens through the tactile nature of paper, ink or graphite, light, etc., as well as through the act of mimesis. By leaving the traces that reveal our thinking process on the paper, we increase the level of communication that is possible between the drawn paper and the viewer. The drawing's role is to help us inhabit the imagined (invisible) space by giving us specific instructions, which we are able to follow through the act of mimesis. The drawing takes over the authorial role in the process of imagination and gives us the specific instructions that we need to follow.

The instructions must not be confusing (as in the case of measure in the Tower of Babel) or the whole drawing will collapse. Also, the instructions need to follow not just scientific, but also cultural reasoning (as in the case of Noah's Ark) in order to achieve the solidity of both the imagination and understanding. Understanding how something would be built comes through by investigating the drawing. The drawing takes over the role of guiding the builder's imagination by offering a variety of images that are open to interpretation. The interpretation could be understood as cutting through many layers in order to reveal the hidden knowledge that it carries. The drawings' sense of vitality of life depends upon how different parts are brought together. In this case "lines" describe not only the nature of material, but also the nature of the building. The drawing gives full sensibility of the structure through the act of synesthesia. The lines are not simply lines, but are made out of words. The drawing gives the story of the structure and describes the essence of its being. In order for the drawing (and the structure) not to collapse, the drawing needs to offer set of instructions that would be followed. This set should also have some room for imagination, so the instructions do not become prescriptions. The drawing takes place in non-actual, but by following the instructions and achieving vivacity in the imagination, the perception becomes actual.

The drawing, as a representation, allows us to see the potentiality of the object in the living realm. The good drawing, through its construction and later reading, has the ability to bring forth what is invisible into the vivid perception of the imagined space.

V i v a c i t y

FIRE. MATTER. INTIMACY.



Materiality and intimacy exist in a zone, not just a place; where, phenomenologically, certain aspects of life can be experienced. To further our understanding, the phenomenological “zone” can be defined:

- 1 - as an architectural space
- 2 - as a physical activity,
such as holding soap
- 3 - as a virtual activity,
such as de-distancing of ourselves

The 'New Webster's Dictionary' defines "materiality": 1. the quality or state of being material 2. consisting of matter;

And "intimacy": 1. the quality or state of being intimate 2. an intimate act 3. being on familiar, personal terms 4. very private and personal.

Considering this, we can say that "materiality and intimacy" is a zone where we can privately experience matter, in either an architectural setting or by our physical or virtual activity associated with the particular matter. Now, the question is, what types of activities and in what kind of domain do they happen? Analyzing a few different texts, such as: "Soap" by Francis Ponge; "Finding the Edge" by Ann Carson; and "Book Two. Materials" by Leon Battista Alberti; we can observe that these activities can happen in a wide range of settings, from holding the soap to building a house; in domains that go from very private, such as a bathroom, to a very public "open" spaces.

In "Soap" we are presented with the existential idea of holding soap and our relationship with this kind of matter that can disappear and in the same time be very intimately present during our use. Our intimate relationship with this kind of material, lasts for a very short period of time, but its very substance leaves a definite, permanent mark in our conscience. This mark becomes more alive in the moment when its power to serve us is gone. This little material bursts with power and gives us either everything or nothing. But, when it does give us its best, we are left with a great feeling of adventure, that "this brief encounter leaves you – this is what is sublime – with hands as clean as you've ever had."¹⁷

In contrast to this very physical experience, Ann Carson, in "Finding the Edge," shows us a different side of intimacy that can be experienced in a non-physical way. This comes into play when we notice the edge of things through sensing the nothingness that is present when we are missing something or someone. The "nostalgia for wholeness" and the desire to find a "personal identity" brings us closer to the person or thing that is missing. In the act of de-distancing (bringing something closer) we discover an intimate relationship between ourselves and the object or person (the matter).

And finally, intimate relationships with materials can be discovered through building construction. In Alberti's "Book Two. Materials" we understand how different materials have different impact on us; the way we use them in the building process and the way our relationship changes depending on its own consistency of particular matter. We can discover that different species of wood behave differently and have different matter qualities. "The bay oak displays entirely the opposite characteristics: it will never join with other timber, or even with its own kind, and it is hostile to all glues."¹⁸ By learning this and trying to employ our knowledge while designing and constructing our spaces, we change our personal relationship to particular spaces, as well as the materials that made those spaces.

Materiality and Intimacy exist together in different domains of public use and levels of engagement. The discovery of our intimate relationship with materials can be limited to a defined space (a building), or it can be open for a discovery, depending on the individual's use (a soap). In any case, the existence of materiality and intimacy is connected to the personal, phenomenological experience of the zone that is defined either by the architectural type, physical activity,

or virtual, non-physical context. e r