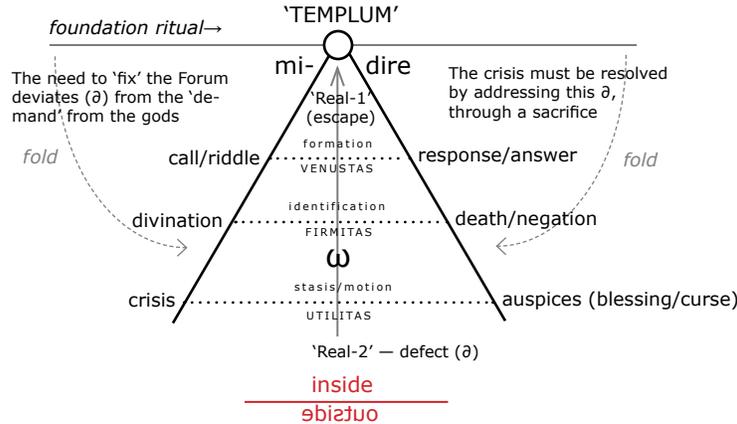


ENUNCIATING / ÉNONCÉ¹ : ARCHITECTURE

The three-tiered system of 'mathemes' that redeploy Lacan's discourses into the protocols of production are natural means of analysis for architecture, where the idea of the voice and text have long been employed to address architecture and landscape's apparent underlying intentionalities. *Architecture parlant* does not mean that architecture symbolizes what can be paraphrased in other symbolic systems but, rather, that architecture and place serve as 'partial objects' that deform the functional-instrumental spatial grid through a process similar to that encountered in the 'acousmatic' effect of the voice in cinema, where the dislocation of cause/source of voice re-aligns the meanings of the 'diagetic' action on screen. Distinguishing architecture and place from the quotidian environment does not intend to privilege a fine-arts definition of architecture but, rather, allow for the definition of a figure-ground relationship where systems of difference set in motion a protocol akin to the perception of any work of art.

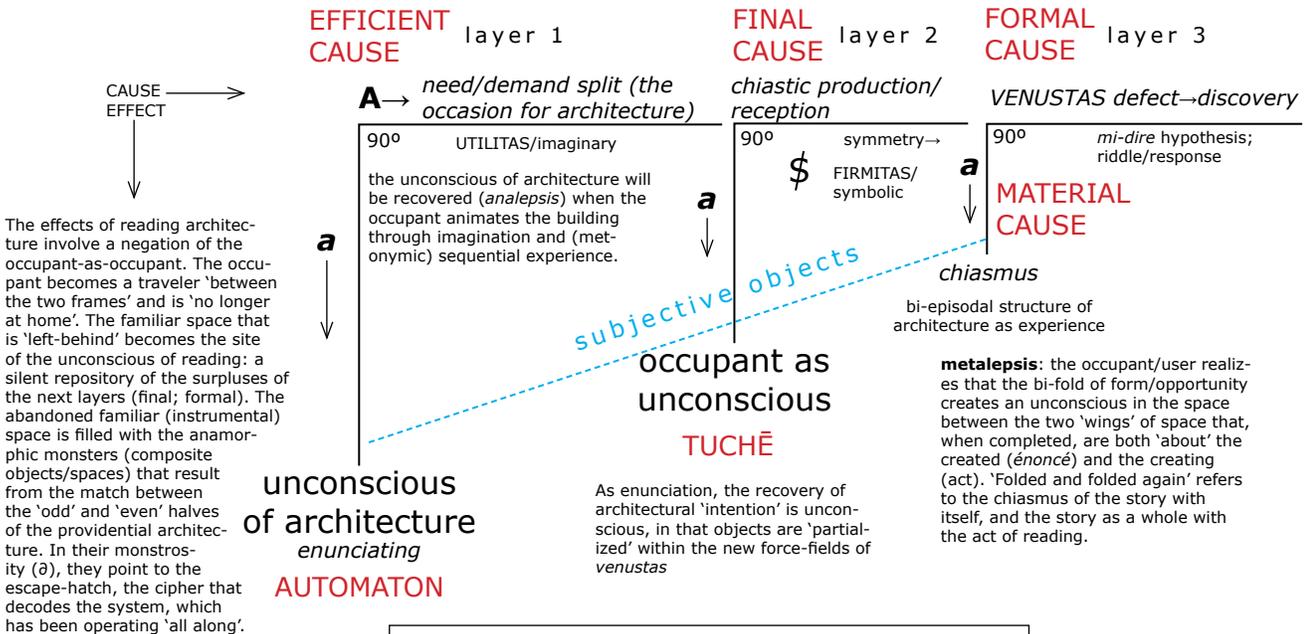
1 'Enunciating/énoncé' refers to Lacan's distinction between the speech act and the literal contents of words, meanings, and grammatical/syntactical relationships (*énoncé*). The extimate affects this distinction directly. Just as the shout Fire!, an effect or enunciating act, has direct effects without requiring a real fire to serve as the *énoncé*, effect become cause and is associated with the 'unconscious' of the partial objects that form the basis of Aristotle's two 'chance' causes, automaton and *tuchē*.



The lambda employed by E. A. Poe to 'butterfly' the narratives of his stories derives from architectural origins, where the foundation rituals for cities and buildings, as well as the customs for protecting tombs and agricultural fields, prescribed a complex symmetry of actions and enunciations. Like the palindrome, the aim of symmetry is to create an a-symbolic interior zone where 'anamorphs' (polysemic objects or expressions) create an order of 'escape' that effects the protection of the building or space. The magic procedure inadvertently reveals the topology of the 'partial object structure' by traversing the conditions of the Lacanian Mirror Stage.

The example of the self-sacrifice of Curtius follows the model of city foundation described by Fustel de Coulanges. After an earthquake, the Forum was imperiled by chasms and mud slides. Auspices were taken and the soothsayer presented his *mi-dire* conclusion, that Rome would have to sacrifice 'that which it held most dear'. Curtius understood this riddle to mean 'a citizen willing to die for his country' and thereupon mounted his horse and rode headlong into the chasms, which promptly closed up; the Forum was restored. The story substitutes natural narrative elements for the sequence of purification, sacrifice, and interpretation, just as the story of Romulus and Remus flesh out purely procedural components with the dynamic exchange between twin brothers leading to the murder of Remus. The relation of the three mathemes with the Vitruvian triad of values is speculative.

The three 'layers' of efficient, final, and formal/material cause correspond, in the dynamics of the Vitruvian 'virtues' — to *utilitas*, the imaginary, *firmitas*, symbolic (drawings and specifications), and *venustas*, the Real — as long as the customary interpretation of these is not limited to the usual 'usefulness', 'solidity', and 'beauty'. Because architects must make their intentions known through drawings, they are restricted by a built-in *mi-dire* operating at the level of the symbolic, the drawings and specifications. Their 'muteness', required by law, demonstrates that the drawing and not the justifications of the architect are operative. The imaginary is not the drawing as image but rather the imagined outcome of form; the motive concealed within is the efficient cause of architecture as a 'staged effect'.



Automaton as 'enunciating' operates entirely in the negated territory that is also materialized; the unconscious 'never sleeps' in the sense that it is an activity that, while eclipsed, continues necessarily throughout the act of reading, creating ciphers and structuring them in all component parts

ENUNCIATING ARCHITECTURE : NOTES

- §1 The extimacy of foundation rituals and, by extension, to architecture in general, is based on the idea of architecture as experience, a symmetrical counterpart to the 'anxiety' of design and construction. In this way architecture fits the model for fantasy: $\$ \diamond a$, with two 'wings', one based on anxiety, the other based on separation (the 'interpretive' experience of the occupant or visitor. Anamorphosis and ciphering are created between these two elements, as the poinçon, \diamond , suggests in its role as a mark of authentication and extimacy through scale inversion ($\langle \rangle$).
- §2 The acousmatic element of architecture is this insertion of fantasy's \diamond , the *templum*, at the center of the architectural experience. The voice is 'already there', as foundation ritual demonstrates, by structuring space and time through a fulcrum that divides enunciating acts and the *énoncé*, the utterance, into parts that correspond like a *tessera* (broken shards of pottery kept by parting friends, to be re-assembled at reunion). This 'voice' can be developed through visual-physical anamorphs that 'cipher'/bridge the gap between the two components of anxiety and separation.
- §3 The most neglected and potentially controversial component of the Aristotelian linked-matheme model is that of efficient cause. Like the case of the traveler, the most obvious fact is often forgotten: that the traveler has left home. The inhabitant or visitor to architecture 'leaves home' when the building or environment ceases to support an ideological-functional agenda. The purely negative case is that of the ruin, which has a 'pure' esthetic because of the subtraction of the original investments made by culture and economics. This subtraction amounts to a frame — the first frame (F1) to be crossed in the experience of architecture as such. This is the precondition for the role of the second frame (F2), which 'obverts' the spatial and temporal polarities that normally sustain ideological and functional 'entitlements'. In theology, the comparative motion/act is the reference to a world created through an act of speech (hence, the *énoncé*, or suspended/hidden component of this enunciating makes sense of the secret names and mystical Truths that are a part of every religion's traditions). Rituals begin with spoken charms and invocations that initiate a shift in the mode of signification. *Architecture parlant* is not a captionable architecture but, rather, architecture renewed through the status of being a 'mute speech', comparable to hieroglyphics and gesture. The speech is not 'normative' or denotative but, rather, 'puzzled' — a cipher comparable to the 'rebus' figures that translate images into names into sounds.
- §4 In the case of the initiation of a story, moving past the first frame corresponds to the customary 'willing suspension of disbelief'. The inside frame, the *templum*, is, as in all works of art, the inner defect that reverses the gaze by which the reader thought to employ as a surveillance of the work's particulars. The pivot or hinge of the *templum* creates a retroaction, a negation of the act of reading. Architecture frequently employs literal *templa*: not just identifiable centers and crossings but centers that are implicated negatively, through offsets, twists, and deviations that necessitate the addition of the preposition 'from'. A deviation (∂) implies a deviation from some unidentified or impossible-to-identify center. The center is something to be found rather than offered. Anamorphic composite forms, for example, imply a normative POV undermined by a displaced, concealed, secret 'vanishing point' that is the basis for programmatic unity connecting all 'displaced' anamorphs within the conventional forms. The *templum* of architecture is the proposition that displacements from normative uses and meaning is structured, whole, and (anagogically) informative.
- §5 The Vitruvian triad of *firmitas*, *utilitas*, and *venustas* is close to the Lacanian triad of symbolic, imaginary, and Real, respectively; but, it is not clear that Vitruvius did more than devise these to exhaust the range of empirical conceptions of architecture's value. Because of Vitruvius's philosophical sensitivity to Aristotle and Plato, among other philosophers, it's worth speculating that the same rhetorical demand to exhaust completely a subject into natural component parts affected both Vitruvius and Aristotle, in his assessment of the categories of cause. Just as Aristotle specified a supplement to the 'standard causes' (automaton, or natural chance; and *tuchē*, human opportunism), we might expect to find a Vitruvian 'supplement' based on the turn from conventional architectural functionality to 'occult' readings. Vitruvius's awareness of the relation of metaphor to architecture and place perception is evident in the case of the attribution of magic qualities to water drawn from a well because of the functionality of the pleasures of an oasis in the desert, a restoration of a metonymy (∂) through *tuchē* to automaton, the original 'a' suppressed in the original move past the frame that established the oasis.
- §6 Ruskin contrasted building and architecture in terms of function; this view combines building's functionality within an account that moves past conventional assignments. It places the role of the extimate at the center by holding to the consistent 'orthogonality' that holds apart metaphoric (superficial) drives from metonymic (chance, material) desires concealed within. Architecture is this extimity, put into action by the metalepsis of detail and the analepsis of a recovered/hidden *templum*, both a system of re-reading and a physical re-orientation of the materiality of the literal building.