

4.607

**Thinking About Architecture: In History and at Present**

Instructor: Prof. Mark Jarzombek

TA: Ana María León

M: 9.30-12:30

LECTURE NOTES: OCTOBER 19

Defining the architect: Two examples of ontological arguments, Vitruvius and Gropius

Vitruvius (ca. 70 BC - c. 15 BC) Vitruvius served the Roman army under Julius Caesar with the otherwise unknown Marcus Aurelius, Publius Minidius, and Gnaeus Cornelius. Vitruvius is the author of *De architectura*, known today as *The Ten Books on Architecture*, a treatise written of Latin and Greek on architecture, dedicated to the emperor Augustus.

Augustus (63 BC - AD 14), the first emperor of Roman Empire  
Vitruvius, rebuilt Roman infrastructure and added many temples. Vitruvius, who did not have any major commissions, wanted architectural production to be more systemitized.

Preface of *De architectura* outlines a theo-ontological argument: Augustus unifies in his being that which was dispersed in society; he unifies, in particular, the difference between "mind" and "hand."

Myth of Prometheus and the relationship between the divine and the human

The Architect having to work to unify the disciplines whereas the divine Augustus does not.

The architect as a human reflection of divine and thus as a special case intermediary between the realms, similar to an augur.

Temple discussion:

Augur [priest]

Conspicio (with sight) [viewing natural signs sent by the divine]

Contemplatio (with template) [contemplation]

Templum [the building but also a diagram]

Inauguratio [the official opening of a building as transmitter of the divine]

General Theme: Vitruvius

**DIVINE REALM**

Ontology  
Augustus = God

MIND	POWER
(mens)	(numen)
triumph (larger mental problem)	victory (battlefield)
obeyed	courage
guidance	free from fear
public dignity	common greatness

**HUMAN REALM**

The architect

(theoretical)		(practical)
technology	[temple]	craftsmanship
method	struggle disciplines	hands/ manual
learn		natural

**Walter Gropius** (1883 -1969) was a German architect and founder of the Bauhaus School who, along with Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Le Corbusier, is widely regarded as one of the pioneering masters of modern architecture.

*Scope of Total Architecture* (1955) outlines the 12 points of architectural education. It is not a question of academic disciplines, but of the new Self in relationship to the World - a Self that accommodates the post-industrial age and the need to mobilize large realities.

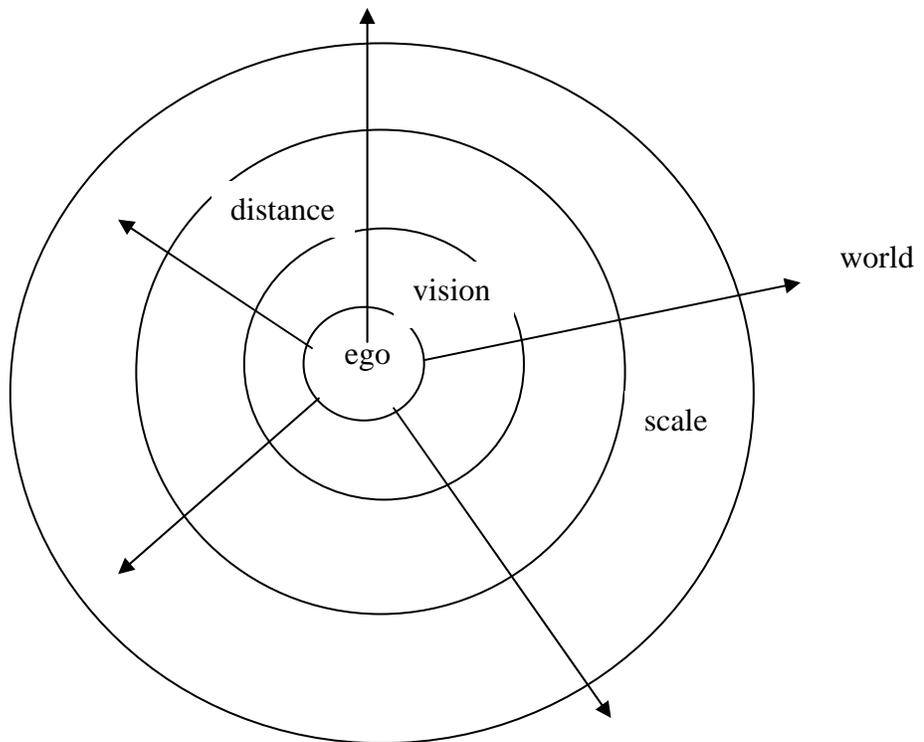
### Gropius

vision + competency



industrial revolution

education order	vision	understand distance	scale
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