

Practice Assignment 1: Architecture Described as Emotional Experience

Schedule

Wednesday, **September 14**: Assignment out, Demo

Wednesday, **September 21**: Due (Short presentation and discussion)

Overview

Emotions of places are one of the most fundamental dataset that inform spatial designs, just as form, material, ethnography and other social/physical/historical context are. However, discussions and publication in architectural discipline rarely include emotions, and architects seldom use them as part of design rationale in pedagogical and professional dialogs. (This contrasts how emotions in space are described and consumed in real estate ads and tourist guides.)

In this exercise, you will first identify a literature example in which its author describes emotional reactions of visiting a particular place/building (existing or imaginary) and examines the language of description and its relations to the physical context. Then you will select your own location and describe your emotion through the text.

Your task

1. Make a team of two students.
2. Find a short text (less than a few paragraphs) written by an architect, critic, historians or professional writer/poet, which describes the emotions during a visit to a place.
 - You may use a book, professional publications, or some historic document of your choice to identify and extract the text. Or you may use one of the references below and look for the text.
 - The place may be a building, urban space, landscape design, and it can be unbuilt space. The text needs to include descriptions of the emotions that transition over time during the author's visit.
3. Examine the text
 - What expressions (lexicons) are used to describe the emotions? Note that emotions may or may not be depicted with explicit adjectives. Then how did the author, through text, convey the sense of his/her states of the mind during the visit?
 - When the author traverses the space (for instance from the exterior approach to the major interior space, or moves to different corners or a large room), how are the transition of emotions described, if any?
 - If available, accompany illustration (photo/plan) to visually map each emotional response described to the point on the site.
4. Find your own location and describe your emotions through the text
 - Each member of the team will visit the site separately and make his/her description.
 - Compare the descriptions made by you and your partner.
 - Accompany illustration (photo/plan) to visually map the emotions to points on site.
5. In the next class, make a presentation (10 min per team).
 - Summarize your exercise (Step 2-4 above)
 - Include your findings.

Submission



Please submit your presentation files before the class. Dropbox location will be announced.

Reference

Frank Lloyd Wright, An Autobiography (1932)

<https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.61386/page/n161/mode/2up>

Giorgio Vasari, The Lives of the Artists (1894)

https://www.google.com/books/edition/Lives_of_the_Most_Eminent_Painters_Sculp/RHpKAAAAYAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0

* For example, look for the text discussing Brunelleschi vs Donatello (p137)

Ralph Adams Cram, Impressions of Japanese architecture and the allied arts (1905)

<https://archive.org/details/impressionsofjap00cram/page/134/mode/2up>

* For example, look for the text describing domestic architecture in Japan.



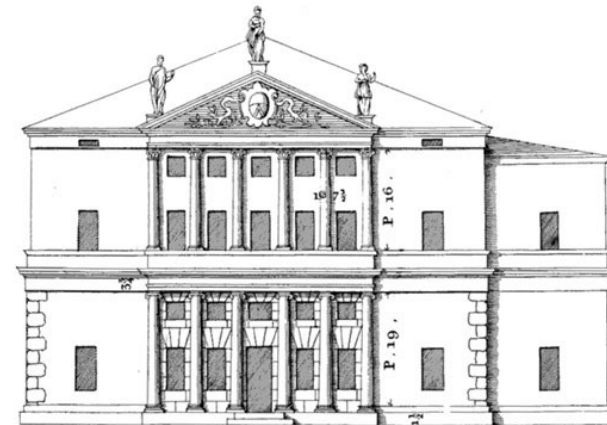
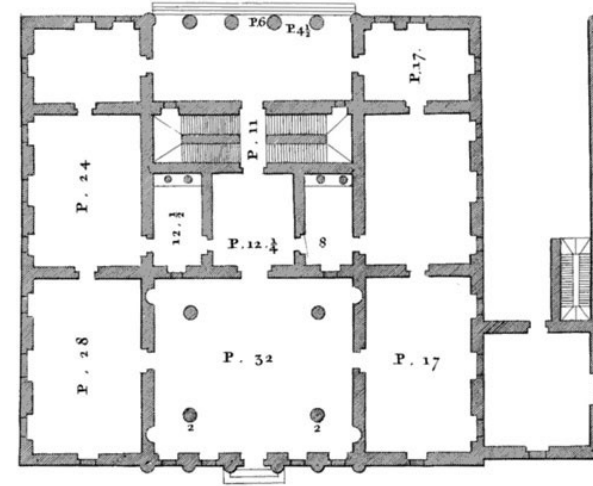
First Book, Chap. XXI

Of the loggia's, entries, halls, rooms, and of their form.

The loggia's, for the most part, are made in the fore and back front of the house, and are placed in the middle, when only one is made, and on each side when there are two....

The rooms ought to be distributed on each side of the entry and hall; and it is to be observed, that those on right correspond with those on the left, ...

Four Books of Architecture
Andrea Palladio, 1570



Frank Lloyd Wright on Taliesin West
An Autobiography, 1932

*No house should ever be on a hill or on anything. It should be of the hill. Belonging to it. Hill and house should live together each the **happier** for the other.*



Eiji Usami (Japanese Poet, 1918-2022) “The Inner Labyrinth”, cited by Fumihiko Maki in “The City that Appears and Disappears”. Translation from “Fumihiko Maki: An Aesthetic of Fragmentation”, Fizzoli, 1988.

What is the cause of that feeling of weariness and isolation – that exaggerated impression of being far from home – which overtakes us when we arrive at an inn, and a maid takes us to our room?

Is it perhaps the animal instinct – the total submission to the natural continuity of time, that we feel rising within us as we pass down the long corridor, trying to memorize every bend and intersection ...?

Eiji Usami (Japanese Poet, 1918-2022) “The Inner Labyrinth”, cited by Fumihiko Maki in “The City that Appears and Disappears”. Translation from “Fumihiko Maki: An Aesthetic of Fragmentation”, Fizzoli, 1988.

*Or do the changes that appear as we round each corner, and the slight rhythmic irregularities of our footfall as we go up and down flights of stairs, carry our **sprits away from reality and towards a world of illusion?***

