

Process of Natural Growth of Architecture

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Abstract

For the living environment to be alive, supportive and sustainable, the quality of the process of its creation is crucial. The formal result is just the consequence of the process.

Process of natural growth of architecture is the methodology, way of working on designing and building that encourage changes in quality of life through conscious relationship with environment. The basic idea is to open up the design process so that everyone involved can connect and feed the project on many levels: mental, emotional, spiritual... Through the synergy, working beyond conscious level, the process gets infused with life, allowing the architecture to emerge naturally. Such a way of working feels right, grounded in laws of natural balance. In this way, sustainability is embedded in the process itself without being imposed as a set of outside rules and demands.

Process of natural growth of architecture is configured as to follow the way architecture manifests itself in the outer space. Although the process is fed by the participants, it is driven by the force of life coming from the seed which has the power to break through into the manifestation provided it is healthy and vital. An architect has the role of the leader of the process and the mediator of a group process having the ability to recognize the forms when they are ready to show up.

7 steps of the process of natural growth of architecture:

I step = COEXISTENCE = The reality of current life condition coming from the relationship with present environment shows what is the starting point

II step= SEED = Recognizing true potentials and authenticity of the people, gaining freedom for new choices, defining the qualities we wish to be included in life with the future environment- condensing the seed

III step= PLACE = Listening to what place needs and offers by looking beyond perceivable

IV step= CREATION= Merging of people and place - new life, new form arises in virtual space

V step= BUILDING= If the process has enough force, the form will break through into physical realm

VI step = FIRST BREATH = new life of a building starts- moving in

VII step = COEXISTENCE = Establishing new relationship with the environment, one cycle ends, another one begins

Keywords: The methodology, Architectural design, Sustainable architecture, Truthfulness, Manifestation, Life, Supportive environment

Article history: Received: 6 July 2014
Revised:
Accepted: 6 October 2014

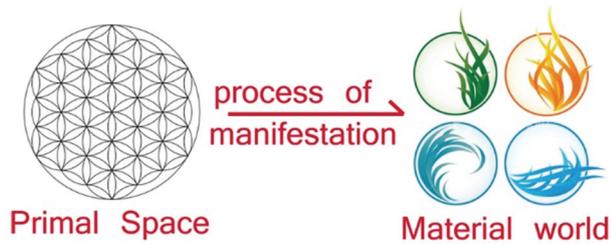
1. Introduction

Process of natural growth of architecture is the methodology of creating architecture that allows the architectural forms to come to life naturally and in an easy way from the idea to the built form. The process changes the usual architect-clients relationship. The architect is more a mediator of the group work which feeds the life force that enables the form to come into manifestation. As a consequence of the Process, infused with life, the living environment that comes out of it, is supportive, alive and sustainable.

2. Theory of Space and Form

According to Vastu, the ancient science of form and matter from vedic texts, there is the Primal energy called Moolam= Space, out which all the forms emerge through the process of transformation. The Primal space has inner consciousness. Everything we perceive as forms, aural and visual, are transformed Primal space. Manifestation is described as the Space which pulsates or vibrates and then becomes self-consciousness and creates Kalam=Time, out of which units of Seelam=Order is created and then turns into Kolam=Form.

Human beings have the ability to influence the Primal Space through their consciousness. The process of manifestation starts with the intention which causes the first pulse. Young people use public spaces in a different way from most other users. More self-determined and sometimes aggressive, they are no longer "sweet" to attract enough affectionate tolerance. A small group of young people is already felt to be disturbing or threatening and nobody knows what to do with their demands and desires. That may be the reason that research and open space planning are putting far less attention on their spatial demands than on those of the sweet children [2].



SPACE IS ALIVE AND ALL THE FORMS,
NATURAL & BUILT ONES, ARE UNDER
THE SAME LAWS OF THE UNIVERSE

Figure 1. Illustration of the process of manifestation

3. The space is alive

As the Primal energy field is alive by its very definition, all the matter, be it natural forms or built forms, are alive as well and under the same laws of creation as everything else in the universe. Respecting the laws, makes the spaces vibrant and supportive for life.

The spaces we inhabit can feed and support us or they can deplete our energies.

Creating spaces with consciousness of the laws that govern all the forms and with heart connection, ensures that these future spaces will be healthy and nourishing. *teens_open_space* is co-funded by the European Union and takes place in cities in Austria and Slovakia and can take place everywhere. The examples and experiences put together in this paper represent a synopsis of six years of the project.

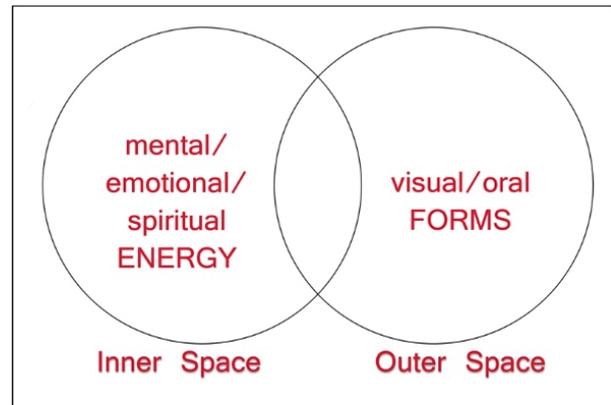
4. Inner and outer space

According to Vastu Science, all our outer circumstances are mirror pictures of our inner space. As a human being we all know the difference between our inner world and outer world. Our inner world with its emotional, mental & spiritual levels crates our inner space. And that space is place where we create our lives. What we perceive as real world is just a mirror image.

Changes we try to make in physical reality are easy if we have made the inner shift which allows the new circumstances to emerge naturally.

According to this, the building of architecture makes the current state of our inner space present and visible in the material world.

The Process of natural growth of architecture enables the building process to be a tool for the inner change, for a real improvement of the quality of life. It moves the building process from the position of a demonstration



OUTER SPACE IS A MIRROR
IMAGE OF THE INNER SPACE
INTERPRETED WITH THE LANGUAGE
OF THE MATERIAL WORLD

Figure 2. Explanation of inner and outer space

tool to a tool for the inner work and shifts, which then simply manifest in the outer world.

5. Energy moves in cycles

We can learn a lot from nature by exploring its shapes and forms and understanding the patterns and cyclic nature of life. Organic growth is not linear, but cyclic depending on the rhythms of the dance of the planets. Earth is a part of the larger system which is a part of the larger system which is.....

As architecture is part of the same system, it needs to accept the same rules. The Process of natural growth of architecture nurtures the organic approach to the development of design. It encourages flow and gives space for energy to move through a cycle understanding that one cycle follows another in an endless flow of life.

6. The difference between usual design process and process of natural growth of architecture

The intention is always the step which precedes the actual design process. What happens in a classical design scenario is that clients after having the intention to build something, communicate to architects their wishes and then the architects transform them according to their abilities into design which is then built by constructors.

In the process of natural growth of architecture the main focus is that the activities during the process feed the initial force coming from the intention, so that it becomes strong enough to burst into life form.

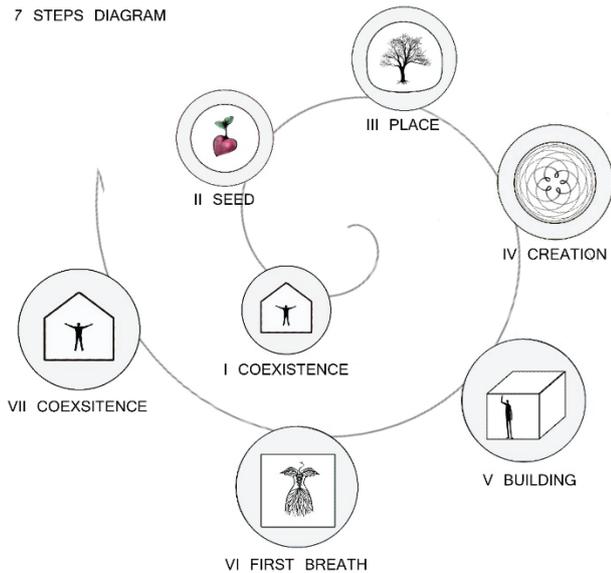


Figure 3. Diagram showing 7 steps of the process of natural growth of architecture

I step = COEXISTENCE

For every change we wish to make in our environment, it is important to become aware of the starting point or the reality of the current condition concerning the topic. This is very important as we can only move anywhere if we start from where we are.

For example if the design process seeks to create a new family house, the current living conditions are analysed, as they actually give the best information on the inner space of the family. The analysis is done through group work exploring all the levels of the existence of the space, from physical, over temporal, emotional to the spiritual level. Such approach provides very clear insight into the current condition. The outcome of this step is the "Manifest" of what the current place says and how the family relates with that.

II step= SEED

This step creates the shift toward the new condition. It allows people's true potential and authenticity to come to surface.

It works on gaining freedom for new choices. This is the freedom we often forget we have.

Its goal is to define the qualities we wish to be included in life and with the future environment.

What is of crucial importance for the SEED step is that it needs to create a consistent emotional model of the future building. The manifestation depends on how strong and consistent the emotional model is. Ideally, we need to lose fears and burdens and create the model out of love and good feelings knowing that the

future building is actually already very alive and present in the inner space.

In this step we may sit around the fire, draw posters, work with clay, make space cosmos, dance....depending on the project. In the case of corporate clients we introduce group work without a hierarchical structure in the group so that everyone can feel free to express themselves.

The outcome is again "Manifest" saying what the future place will say.

III step= PLACE

The energy of the actual place where the architecture is about to happen has a strong influence on the project. The place is already alive and has its own life. It needs to be listened to and respected. The Process of natural growth of architecture uses the method of place analysis developed for a consensus design which allows the group to read the message of the place by going from the physical level of perception, through time and emotional levels, toward the spiritual level.

This method allows the voice of the place to be heard without doubt as it is read by the group sharing consensus at every step.

IV step= CREATION

Till this phase, Process has gained very strong inputs and the condensation of forms happens in an easy way. They emerge as a 3D model in virtual space. In this way everyone involved can connect to the project. The virtual model gives clear information on the forms created. Clients can feed their emotional model through exploring the virtual model.

This step can once again be done through group work by making models and working on the plot if the project scale allows it. The design is later transferred into 3D model and drawings.

In any case it is important to keep in constant relation to the seed and the spirit of the place during the creation phase and to remain open to the possible influences on the design. The form needs to find its own expression. The space already knows what it wants to be. Architects need to give encouragement for the inner force to come to recognition.

V step= BUILDING

All the energies that are involved in the building process determine the quality of the future space. Constructors should be chosen not only on the basis of the technical quality of their work and the price they offer, but choosing a company that has high moral values and respect for their workers. Depending on the scale of the project, the participation of the clients in the building process is necessary for the future healthy relationship between them and the space.

Choosing natural materials, that haven't gone through heavy industrial processing helps the future space to be vibrant and life supportive.

Acquiring building permits and the building itself should flow easily if the first 4 steps of the process were well done.

VI step = FIRST BREATH

Moving in is the moment when the life of a building starts. This initiation needs to have a conscious moment dedicated to it. It can be a simple ceremony coming from the heart.

VII step = COEXISTENCE

With the establishing of a new relationship with the environment, one cycle ends, another one begins. Immediately we start to gain new experiences what naturally leads to a new cycle.

Supportive spaces give us freedom to be ourselves. This experience happens not only on a physical but also on emotional and spiritual levels. The feeling is as if we have sunk deeper in our own peace.

7. Conclusion

Everything we own is the expression of what we are. Process of natural growth of architecture is a tool to help us to become better, to enjoy life and to follow our inner needs instead of fighting our shadows.

The intention behind Process of natural growth of architecture is big. It wants to make life better, people more free, happy and closer to themselves. Our experience is that it works. Making the shift is crucial. No matter how big. Just to make one step toward ourselves is what helps us to go on.

The relationship we have with our living environment is so constant, so present and forceful that it is a great opportunity to use it as a tool for an improvement in the real quality of life.

The current condition of architecture shows the broken relationship between us and the natural forces. Mostly buildings tend to separate life from nature, to create artificial, zones, based on the physical commodity.

The Earth suffers. It is used and ignored as the mother and source of life.

Sustainability cannot be gained by imposing a set of rules on architecture. Sustainability can only come from inside, from the consciousness of every individual as the need that cannot be ignored.

When our being is out of balance we tend to make substitutions by increasing quantities in our physical environment. We build too big houses, we have too

many things. By being closer to our true desires, we need less and what we need comes with ease.

Process of natural growth of architecture puts focus on the quality of process. It changes usual object and goal oriented working. The architects need to feel fulfilled by working. Clients and other participants need to feel connected and seen.

Sometimes a Process brings out something completely different from what the initial intention pictured. Onetime clients came with an idea for a big house with 3 flats. Then after following the Process we ended up with a simple house with which they felt much more at ease.

One Process for a big Retail industry on the interior for their shops, showed that the strategy they had followed over the last few years went in the wrong direction,

emphasising the points which didn't show their real strengths. On individual levels they felt it, but on a corporate level, there was not enough strength to change it.

The Process brings up all sorts of ambiguities and forced presumptions that can be surprising. It can be applied without actual plot or money. Applying it helps to move from the current life position to whatever changes might be.

It is applicable to small projects like family houses or bigger scale projects where more people are involved. The methods of work depending on the case. Usual office work is expanded into group activities that sometimes might seem like they have nothing to do with the design process. The point is to loosen learned positions and to allow free expression.

We believe in the wisdom of life. At our best we let it through us. Each of us, is a completely unique prism, making the rays of life disperse into the biggest possible varieties of life form. By life form we mean all aspects of our physical presence on Earth, our bodies as well as all our formal expressions.

Bringing this consciousness into the process of creation and coexistence with our living environment is what we feel is the highest priority. For our own sake, as well as for the sake of everyone with whom we come into co-creation.

References

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- [2] V. Ganapati Sthapati, *Building Architecture of Sthapatya Veda*, Dakshinna Pub. House, 2nd Edition, 2004.