Week #3: RENAISSANCE & GOTHIC IDEALS

Tu./Th. Sept. 13/15

REMINDER: Pre-20th-Century Paper Topic Forms Due Next Week, Sept. 11

Required Readings for all Students:
  
  Questions to think about: Read the excerpts of medieval theory quickly; the most important one is Abbot Suger (#8). How does medieval “theory” differ from Vitruvius & classical theory? Why? Then read the excerpts of Renaissance theory, focusing on Alberti, Serlio, & Palladio, etc.. How are they different? Who is the audience of each? How do they start to constitute a “language” of arch.?


Comparison of Table of Contents of Vitruvius, Alberti, Palladio (Website)
  Questions to think about: Compare the contents of Vitruvius, Alberti & Palladio: how are they different? What is the general structure of the book and argument? How are various themes dealt with differently in the three?

Assigned Readings:
* Alberti, L.B. Ten Books on Architecture = On the Art of Building = De Re aedificatoria (c.1450) Preface, Bk.I:Chs.1,2*,9.10; Bk.VI, Chs1,2,3; Bk.VII, ch.6*, Bk.IX: Chs.1-11, esp. 5,9. (** Please go to the library and check out the actual book; any version will do. If that is not possible, there are links to digital reprints through the course website)
  Questions to think about: Skim the entire treatise. How is Alberti’s treatise similar to, and different than Virtuvius? Read esp. carefully Bk.IX:5: what does the word Concinnitas (or Collocation) mean?

  Borsi, F. “The De Re Aedificatoria,” Ch.11 in Leon Battista Alberti: the Complete Works (1989), pp.221-243, for commentary

  * Palladio, The Four Books of Architecture = I Quattro Libri dell’Architettura (1570) Preface, Bk.I:Chs.1,12,15; Bk.II:1,2, skim 3-17; Bk.IV:pref. (** Please go to the library and check out the actual book; any version will do.... excerpts are avilable on website & Blackboard)
  Questions to think about: Skim the entire treatise. What differentiates Palladio’s treatise from Vitruvius? How is the text organized? Who was Palladio’s taret audience? What is innovative about Palladio’s illustrations?

  Tavenor, R. “Palladio’s ‘Corpus’: I Quattro Libri dell’Architetettura,” in Paper Palaces; p.233-246, for commentary.

Other Readings:


Questions to think about: How does “form” and “material” relate to “meaning” and “symbolism” in Gothic architecture? What things were symbolized by the church building?

Von Simson, O. “Gothic Form,” Gothic Cathedral: origins of Gothic Arch. & Medieval Concept of Order (1956) Pt.I:1=pp.3-20
Questions to think about: What are the main determinants of Gothic form according to Von Simson? What role did geometry play? How is this “theory”?

Panofsky, E. Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism (1951)
Questions to think about: What is “scholasticism”? How does Panofsky relate the design of Gothic cathedrals to “Scholasticism? Is this a “theory of architecture”?