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How Vitruvius builds the home: the rhetoric of architecture, and the architecture of rhetoric.

Vitruvius is mostly conceived as the author of the long and detailed treatise: *de architectura*. In this work, Vitruvius prescribes and describes the construction process—from choosing the right site, to laying proper foundations, to using appropriate materials. This is all very technical. Accordingly, Vitruvius's work has been scoured by scholars and architects alike for its historical and structural content.

Recently, though, Classicists have begun to view Vitruvius through other lenses. Callebaut observes a rhetorical Vitruvius. Weeks calls for a literary and political reevaluation of Vitruvius's agenda. Such novel perspectives are necessary. To think of Vitruvius as merely an architect is to do him an injustice, for he reflects at length on social structures (e.g. class), on biological structures (e.g. body), on cosmological structures, and more. In so doing, he draws the discipline of architecture out of its narrow confines, and yokes his project to a variety of other discourses.

My project is to discuss the translation between these various registers via the medium of Vitruvius's *domus*. I agree that Vitruvius is an architect. In fact, I will argue that he does architectural—literary architecture—even as he writes on it. I also agree that there is more to Vitruvius than straight architecture. Vitruvius uses the structures of language and of the *domus* in order to construct a "home" that is, in the final say, a complex complex, one that closely resembles—even as it houses—humans.

First, I flesh out some textual examples to show that Vitruvius inscribes a social structure into the house both literally and figuratively. From the *rustici* to the *nobiles*, in 6.5.2 Vitruvius describes the appropriate homes for all. Here, we find that form mirrors content, and that Vitruvius's text builds up to the built-up buildings of the *nobiles*. At the center of things, Vitruvius includes the *diserti*—the very class to which he belongs. That is, he inserts himself in the middle space, even as he mediates between space and society, form and content, idea and text.

Second, I extend Vitruvius's presentation of domestic space from a syntactical, rhetorical analysis to a more holistic vision of the Vitruvian home. From its birth in Book 2 to the physical and social development of the *domus* through Book 6, Vitruvius builds up a complex home even as he writes its "biography". In this way, text mirrors life.

Thus, from the foundational level (of grammar and syntax) to the constructed and final product (text in toto), Vitruvius uses language both to mobilize, and mediate between, different domestic structures (social and concrete), and to build up a text and a texted *domus* that closely resemble the real home. Thus, Vitruvius is an architect; but he is also doing architecture as he writes.