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# Perceptual landscapes from the perspective of cultures and genres

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## Abstract

In this chapter, we investigate and compare the perceptual landscapes of two multisensorial practices, namely architectural design and wine tasting, and show how these experiences are communicated in discourse through an exploration of reviews of buildings and wines. The point of departure is the actual physical experiences of the two perceptual landscapes, which form the necessary requirements for the descriptions of buildings and wines in the reviews. We show that although the journeys through those landscapes follow different routes, the reviews in both cultures are very similar. They both start with a report on visual properties, i.e., what the buildings look like and the color of the wines. After that, the wine reviews describe the smell, taste and touch, mostly in that order. In the architectural texts, the order is not as clearly marked as in the wine texts, but both touch and to some extent smell play important roles. Critical reviewing practices play important epistemic and acculturation roles in both these communities and contrary to what we expected at the outset, the reviews proved to share many traits.

## 1. Introduction

This chapter takes us on a tour through the perceptual landscapes of architecture and wine. Through the lens of wine and architectural reviews, it addresses the question of how sensory experiences are conveyed to readers in these genres across two cultures. We are concerned with how authors transfer their perception of these two landscapes as knowledge, and how they use language to evoke the visual, olfactory, gustatory and tactile experiences that they themselves experience. More precisely, we walk the readers through the landscape of what is described, which in our case is buildings and wines and then we investigate how those experiences are communicated through the discursive structure of the texts as well as what lexical-grammatical resources are used in descriptions and evaluations of the sensory perceptions. We highlight both similarities and differences across the cultures and genres.

One of the foundational assumptions of Cognitive Linguistics is the physical grounding of human cognition or *embodiment*, whereby the way we think is heavily determined by our physical constitution and experiences in the world through our senses. In spite of the fundamental status of embodiment, much less research has been devoted to aspects of the relation between olfactory, gustatory and tactile experiences and language than to aspects of cognition and visual experiences. However, the bodily grounding of our consciousness is neither original nor exclusive to Cognitive Linguistics—or to linguistics, for that matter. This was already discussed by anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski in his much quoted book *Coral Gardens and their Magic* (1935), philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty in *Phénoménologie de la Perception* (1945/1962), or psychologist Alexander Luria in *Cognitive Development: Its Social and Cultural Foundations* (1976) within the Western tradition. Characteristic of the

experientialist line of thought is the intimate relationship between the mind and the body or knowledge and praxis. This view also forms the underpinnings of related epistemological approaches to human behavior and, therefore, to language, as in different approaches to Embodied Cognition (Lave 1988; Kirshner and Whitson 1997; Barsalou 1999, 2010; Tomasello 1999, 2003; Gee 2010; *inter alia*) and Enactivism (Varela, Thompson, and Rosch 1991; Ellis and Newton 2005; Thompson 2007). McGann and Torrance (2005: 184) summarize the main ideas of the latter as follows:

The structures of the world allow the structures of the observer to exist, while the structures of the observer allow the structures of the world to be conceived and perceived. It is this complex interplay between the world and the subject which gives rise to meaning, the understanding of the world [...] The enactive mind is not a passive recipient of information from the world, but actively engages with its environment [...] Cognition is not tied into the workings of an ‘inner mind’, some cognitive core, but occurs in directed interaction between the body and the world it inhabits.

In this chapter, we discuss the way in which architects and wine critics perceive, construe and convey their worlds through language as suggested by their discourse interaction with their readers. Our choice of these two cultures is guided by the idea of embodied cognition and their view of the world as intrinsically multi- and cross-sensorial. In both cultures, the conveyance of sensing is made possible through knowing. In so far as it is possible to tease apart the sensations, wine reviews are concerned with all the above senses with a focus on olfactory and gustatory experiences, and contrary to folk views of experiencing and assessing architectural space as mainly visual affairs, contemporary architects maintain that their work is much more multimodal, and that vision actually engages the other senses as well (Bloomer and Moore 1977; Pallasmaa 2005; Seamon 2007). The task of reviewers in both cultures is to translate their experiences through the medium of written language in a form that the readers can understand and, in the best of worlds, also relate to through their senses. This is an extremely complex and sophisticated task and it suffices to take a cursory look at descriptions of buildings and wine to see that, in order to overcome the limitations of human language, wine critics and architects frequently rely upon imagery of diverse sorts. For instance, both buildings and wines are described as having a *backbone* or assessed as *tightly-* or *finely knit*, *sexy*, or *sculpted*. Given the sensual bias and the supersensual goals of both cultures, finding synesthetic instantiations such as “the Sonoran desert around Tucson is *visually fragile*—easily thrown into imbalance by a *jarring building*” or “a little *raucous* now, [this wine] should *soften* with cellaring” is far from surprising. In this regard, the ultimate aim of this paper is to explore the ways in which the sensorium and imagery inform and contribute to the shaping of perceptual landscapes of the two discourse communities.

## 2. Perceptual landscapes in architectural reviews

The prominence of sight in architectural thinking has led to the characterization of architects as having a *thinking eye*, a cognitive style that involves “exploit[ing] the perceptual

event in order to initiate reasoning with the perceived stimuli of visual objects” (Oxman 2002: 147). Taken at face value, this explanation illustrates an extreme ocular-centric view of architecture. However, although vision plays a catalyst role in architectural design, it is not the only sense or modality involved in the “perceptual event” exploited in architectural design. For instance, in his book *Thinking Architecture* Peter Zumthor (1999: 21–25) describes the way he starts thinking a building as follows:

I try to *visualize* [spatial diagrams and volumes] as precise bodies in space [...] When I work on a design I allow myself to be *guided by images and moods that I remember* [...] When I am designing I try to find out *what these images mean* so that I can learn how to create a *wealth of visual forms and atmospheres*. After a certain time, the object I am designing takes on some of the qualities of the images I use as models. If I can find a meaningful way of interlocking and superimposing these qualities, the object will assume a *depth and richness*. [...] *Form and construction, appearance and function are no longer separate. They belong together and form a whole.* [Authors’ italics]

Together with acknowledging the analogical, associative quality of architectural thinking, Zumthor also says that sight is but one aspect of the multi-sensory quality of design, further described as “associative, wild, free, ordered and systematic thinking in images, in architectural, spatial, colorful and sensuous pictures—this is my favorite definition of design” (Zumthor 1999: 59). By claiming the engagement of all senses in the design of buildings, these are implicitly presented as *perceptual landscapes*, i.e., as aesthetic spaces where bodily interaction leads to their understanding rather than the other way round. Moreover, by reverting to the original Greek sense of ‘aesthetics’ as sensory perception *and* understanding (cognition), contemporary architects emphasize the importance of the haptic system in our experience of three-dimensional space—an embodied approach that brings us back to the Aristotelian notion of *sentience* or *common sense* discussed throughout this book.

In this section, we look into how architects’ perceptual landscapes are assessed in a genre specifically devoted to this purpose, i.e., the architectural review. More precisely, we are concerned with exploring (a) what sensory experiences afforded by buildings are described, (b) what linguistic resources are involved in this endeavor, and (c) how the architectural reviews are textually staged.

### 2.1. Experiencing and re-experiencing buildings

Buildings may be experienced in many ways, among which two stand out. On the one hand, we can approach, look at and contemplate buildings as objects, and we can appreciate the way they integrate with their surroundings. However, on the other hand, we mostly experience buildings by actually moving along, through, up, and down the spaces inside them. While the first experience may be qualified as somewhat ‘tourist-like’, the second is the real *raison d’être* of most private and public buildings. This is nicely put by Bloomer and Moore (1977: 86–88), who describe the temple complex at Monte Alban in Mexico as follows:

The temple complex [...] seems to have been built around the act of climbing. There, thousands of feet above the valley floor, a flat plaza was made from which each temple was entered, up a flight of steps, then down, then up again higher to the special place. To arrive at the largest temple, one went up, then down, then up, then down, then farther up again. [...] getting there is *all* the fun. [Italics in the original]

The visual *and* kinetic properties of buildings are, nevertheless, equally important in architectural appreciation—after all, architecture is a mixture of art and craft. Therefore, both are taken into account when assessing buildings in the genres involved in architectural criticism. One such genre is the architectural review, a textual practice that has largely contributed to shaping the rationale of architecture and to fostering particular architectural trends and aesthetics during different periods. Architectural reviews have also played an unmistakable pedagogical role in the discipline. For instance, the editor of the first issue of *Architectural Record* in 1891 claimed that their goal was to educate readers given their ignorance “of even the A, B, C of Architecture” (*AR*, July-September 1891). Likewise, reviews are nowadays seen as “central and invaluable tool[s] in architectural education—in the basic teaching of design, as well as in the production of reflexive, informed, and discerning professional graduates” (Stead 2003). This is mostly due to the comprehensive nature of the topics covered in the genre: although reviews are mainly devoted to describing and evaluating buildings which are regarded as noteworthy, this often involves discussing the issues addressed by those buildings, for instance, how they solve a particular construction problem, represent a design typology or trend, etc.

The textual organization of the genre responds to these descriptive and evaluative goals, and relies upon three distinct parts: the Introduction, Description, and Closing Evaluation. These are further organized in various textual sequences in agreement with the way reviewers choose to accomplish those goals (Caballero 2006). The prototypical structure of the genre is summarized in Table 1 and illustrated in example (2).

Table 1. *Rhetorical structure of the architectural review*

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TITLE + LEAD
INTRODUCTION
Creating context
Introducing the building
First evaluation of the building
DESCRIPTION
Providing technical/budget/construction details of the building
Outlining building’s general organization and/or appearance (overall plan)
Describing the parts/components of the building
Highlighting parts of the building
CLOSING EVALUATION
TECHNICAL CARD
VISUAL DATA + CAPTIONS

---

As shown in Table 1, buildings are first introduced and evaluated in TITLE + LEAD (if there is a LEAD). The function of this initial part of reviews functions as a frame for the commentary in the INTRODUCTION. In “Creating context”, reviewers establish the criteria of their assessment and, when pertinent, the issues, problems or constraints of the building reviewed. Through this contextualization of the building, reviewers set the scene for their explanations of what makes

the building worth evaluating and provide an outline of the points further developed in the ensuing preparatory parts: “Introducing the building” and “First evaluation of the building”. In DESCRIPTION, which is the most technical part, reviewers explain the building’s general organization or plan and provide a detailed account of their structural components. However, when the building under review exhibits a particularly noteworthy feature, for instance, a façade, DESCRIPTION may focus on this trait alone at the expense of any other characteristic. The third broad section in architectural reviews is the CLOSING EVALUATION, which is mainly concerned with providing a final assessment of buildings, often echoing the initial assessment in TITLE + LEAD and/or INTRODUCTION. Two final components of the genre are the VISUAL DATA (sketches, photographs, plans, etc.) that accompany the verbal commentary and TECHNICAL CARD with information about the building’s budget and the professionals involved in its construction.

Like other types of review, architectural reviews are ultimately geared towards evaluation. However, given the professional status of both reviewers and their readers, who are usually architects, critical assessment must be substantiated by technical and constructive information if reviewers are to be taken seriously. This means that appraisal must cover the buildings’ tectonic, functional and aesthetic aspects, which can be accessed through the graphic components of the genre, in which case visual sensations may be said to ‘cue’ other sensory traits of buildings, such as texture. In this regard, many reviewers follow the strategy of borrowing the architects’ own views of their projects in order to elaborate these in their commentary. For instance, in 1987 architect Zvi Hecker wrote the following:<sup>1</sup>

- (1) A drawing of *the geometry of a sunflower* was given to me by Ann Tyng in 1970. It demonstrated how the spirals determine the growth of the sunflower seeds, and that the spiral proceeds in the golden progression. [...] Finally, *the Jewish School in Berlin provided me with the opportunity to pursue my fascination with the phenomenon of the sunflower’s phenomena* a little bit further [Authors’ emphasis]

The building was completed in September 1995, and one year later it was assessed in the following review. The different sections have been labeled to highlight the review’s structure.

- (2) Scholastic Sunflower  
[LEAD]

In the first Jewish school built in Berlin since the Nazi times, Zvi Hecker has used his obsession with geometry to generate a network of memorable particular places to act as a humane backdrop to education.

[INTRODUCTION]

The borders of Wilmersdorf and Grunewald offer that calm, leafy background of loose-fit into which [buildings] can be dropped without disturbance [...] The site of Hecker’s last major building, the Spiral in Ramat Gan, on the edge of Tel Aviv might be similarly described as an absorptive condition [...] Both the earlier building and the school have a gyratory system as an a priori. The Israeli building is jagged, wild [...] The German building rests the gyrations on the ground and articulates the flanks with a controlled system: all straight walls are white, all curved walls are grey, all ‘snakes’ are metal, all evacuated spaces can be walked on or planted in.<sup>2</sup> Yet the new building is in every way the more extraordinary of the two [...] The “Sunflower” which is the generating idea is always traceable but not overbearing.<sup>3</sup> The clue lies in Hecker’s process of working.<sup>4</sup> [...]

[DESCRIPTION]

A conscious evaluation of light and the role of the window emerges [...] Of the balcony as exotic and precious transition [...] Of shelter as necessity rather than form. Essentially Northern issues. [...] Yet in the process of walking around the building, the Mediterranean experience is remembered. The left-hand side (seen from the street) is a knife cut through the sunflower system. Exposing a series of re-entrants and crevices, pieces jutting viciously and delving insidiously. [...] Turning round into the rear playground the sheer range of the parts and the ‘knitted’ quality of the whole add to this. Of course, it is a town. What else could it be? And the total system reinforces the analogy. The radiating sweeps define ‘quartiers’ and their streets, the ‘snakes’, are a counter-movement, somewhat like a stream, the edges of the town have different physiognomies dependent upon circumstance [...] The quality of external space is of a series of localities. Hecker has exploited this internally [...] In his own words, Hecker wants the school to be a “big family house” rather than an institution. [...] He enjoys the fact that only the inmates really know all the routes through the building. Town rather than house. [...] The Mediterranean characteristic pervades in the question of surface and incision. In only one part of the building does he offer a ‘standard’ two-storey run of repeated rooms and window-and-spandrel architecture. Nearby, though, is one of his naughtiest moments when a pathway disappears into the ground to crawl under a low-lying ‘snake’ bridge [...]

[CLOSING EVALUATION]

In many ways, this architecture defies categorisation. [...] It is clearly Modernist [...] yet its spatial instincts are 2000 years old. It is European [...] yet it is outgoing and still waiting for the hot sun and the need to crouch in the shade when you stand outside. It is aware of symbolism and the need to react to a bourgeois world [...] So Hecker stands at a watershed. [...] The generation of one building out of another. [...] Surely an architect’s interpretation of ‘Beth-Sepher’ – the house of the book – which is its basic form, by the way.

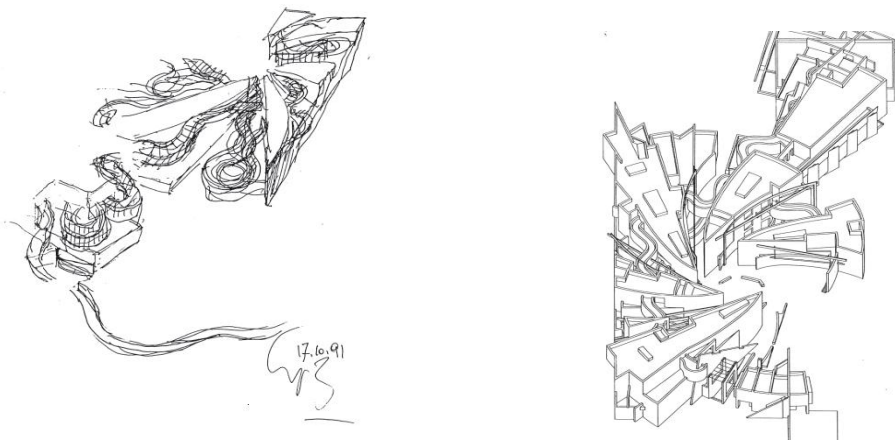


Image 1. Sketch and axionometry of The Sunflower

The building described here is first introduced and evaluated in the TITLE, which explicitly refers to the architect’s sunflower design idea. In the INTRODUCTION, the reviewer sets the school against Hecker’s previous—and similarly informed—work in Germany and Jerusalem, respectively. However, this building goes a step beyond his previous ones, and this is what

makes it noteworthy. In the DESCRIPTION, the reviewer gives a detailed account of the building's organization and its different components. The school is described as following a mixture of Northern and Mediterranean constructive guidelines, a combination drawing upon Hecker's own explanation of how the initial *sunflower* gave way to a *town* and, finally, to a *book*. The building is finally evaluated by pointing to the various trends it encapsulates, which result in the *town-book* 'blend' ultimately informing it.

Together with showing how an initial image develops into something more complex, example (2) illustrates both how the perceptual landscapes of a building are textually staged as and what linguistic resources are used in the review, and how an initial image develops into something more complex. Regarding the former aspect, the reviewer takes readers on a virtual tour inside the building using descriptors such as *stand*, *walk* or *turn around*. Readers are guided outside and inside the school's *localities* and *routes*, and this helps them imagine what experiencing those spaces actually may feel like. Also, figurative language helps articulate the abstract and visual properties of the building's landscape, focusing on the whole (a *sunflower*, a *book* and a *knitted* artifact) or on its constitutive parts (streets referred to as *snakes*, *knives* or *streets*). The role of figurative language in verbalizing the sensory experiences afforded by buildings is the topic of the next section.

## 2.2. The sensory perceptions and their descriptions

While the engagement of all our senses when experiencing buildings may, in principle, be unproblematic since we can recall what a given place smelled, sounded or felt like, describing that experience is not always easy and often involves stretching the lexical resources of the language. Thus, in order to avoid the one-dimensional rendering provided by adjectives like 'big', 'high', 'spacious' or more non-specific and at the same time more complex adjectival meanings such as 'cozy', 'homely' or 'nice', we often use words frequently used in other domains of experience. This is shown in example (3) from an official travel guide, (4) from a travel blog, and (5) from a DIY (Do It Yourself) online magazine:

- (3) When entering the Cathedral you can smell the minerals and the darkness takes hold of everything.
- (4) The staircases at either end of the building are dark and clammy with stone-cold steps and iron railings.
- (5) A damp moldy, musty smell [in the house] gradually got worse over a period of about a year.

When describing places, we usually draw upon various sensory experiences, one at a time or cross-perceptually, e.g., the tactile 'clammy' in (4). We also often use metonymical techniques, e.g., 'smell the minerals'. The use of figurative language is particularly conspicuous in architecture. For instance, metaphor informs jargon terms such *skin*, *rib*, *cladding*, *fan vault*, *blister*, *fatigue*, all of which refer to elements, typologies of those elements or building's pathologies. Metaphor is also a critical component in post-construction texts such as architectural reviews. The reviewer's choice of metaphor in these texts depends on whether the focus is placed on the architect's intervention (the design or construction processes), the external appearance of buildings, or their functional properties. For instance, in order to comment upon the combinatory



procedures involved in a building, reviewers often draw upon seemingly related practices like, for instance, cloth-making (6), experimenting (7), or language (8):

- (6) The delicacy with which [the architect] *has stitched the new to the old* recalls Foster’s work at the Royal Academy.
- (7) Eric Owen Moss, *the architectural alchemist* who turns base buildings into sites of revelation, *has conducted another brilliant experiment* in Culver City, California.
- (8) Holl studies *architecture’s rhetoric*; he uses typological conventions and elements to create new meanings. In the Cranbrook science center, Holl begins with *the basic vocabulary of foursquare enclosures* infiltrated by oblique angles at facade openings.

Other metaphors focus exclusively on buildings’ properties. This is the case in the portrayal of the building in (2) as a *sunflower*, an image that foregrounds the geometrical, visual properties of the building’s plan. Further reference to the building as a *town* and *book* and to its parts as *quartiers and their streets* departs from that ‘simpler’, more visual image to invoke the interactive quality of the building’s internal spaces. Concepts and images, nevertheless, mix in the text and, thus, the urban views of the town-school appear hand in hand with more *ad hoc*, mostly visually concerned expressions. This is the case of reference to one side of the building as “a *knife* cut through the *sunflower* system”, or the qualification of the building’s internal *streets* as *snakes*. Finally, the example illustrates a conspicuous trait of architectural discourse: the dynamic rendering of spatial artifacts, as in “pieces *jutting* and *delving*”, *radiating sweeps* described as being “a counter-movement, somewhat *like a stream*” or “a pathway disappears into the ground to *crawl* under a low-lying ‘snake’ bridge”.

However, in architectural descriptions things are rarely simple. This is particularly noticeable when we attempt to determine the type of knowledge involved in architectural metaphors—as done in cognitive metaphor research after the typologies of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Lakoff and Turner (1989). An important distinction in this regard involves concept-onto-concept mappings (ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE IS LANGUAGE or CLOTH-MAKING) and image-onto-image mappings, as in “the building is a *jagged fan of five overscaled concrete fins webbed together*”, giving rise to *conceptual metaphor* and *image metaphor* respectively. Of course, in architectural texts it is possible to find clear cases of both types, as happens with the textile and experiment metaphors in examples (6) and (7) above, both of which focus on design procedures and hence, carry abstract knowledge. With reference to the building assessed in (2), elements as *knives* or *snakes* simply draw upon the visual properties of such entities. Yet, clear-cut examples like these are not only exceptional, but seem to restrict the type of knowledge involved in ‘conventional’ metaphor to concepts and visual images—an opposition both unfortunate and unrealistic (see also Deignan 2007). Before taking this point further, consider example (9):

- (9) The three volumes are enveloped by an undulating *skin of sheet aluminum cladding* that *drapes languidly* over the building *like a candy-striped blanket*.

This description concerns a research institute in Berlin, and incorporates the biologically motivated term *skin* and textile expressions. *Skin* refers to both the internal and external protective layers of buildings, a functional ‘resemblance’ that leaves other traits of this organ out, e.g., ‘flexibility’. Skins are often further covered by *cladding* of diverse sorts, i.e., layers added for insulation or aesthetic purposes. In the building above, this cladding comes as a single piece,

In *Sensuous Cognition – Explorations into the Human Sentience – Imagination, Emotion and perception*. Berlin: de Gruyter Mouton

hence the use of the visually informed term *sheet*. Interestingly, by qualifying those layers as *draping languidly like a candy-striped blanket*, the reviewer adds a textural component to the functional and visual information is encoded in the other terms.

Indeed, the texture of buildings is as important as any other sensory trait, yet in architecture this is felt both through the eyes and the whole body. Architects try to convey this holistic experience through language that may be deceptive as to the metaphor informing it. Take, for instance, the description of the Cité de L'Océan et du Surf in Biarritz in example (10) below. Here the reviewer combines visual information, the building as a *concrete wave*, with information less 'precise' yet alluding directly to the sensual experience provided by this building, as explicitly pointed out by qualifying the ensemble as "sensuous architecture". For instance, *muscular* conveys both visual and haptic information, while the verbs *cups and cradles* and the nouns *compression* and *release* attempt to capture how people 'feel' the building as a whole. The ensuing explanation by Holl, the architect himself, reinforces these ideas:

- (10) Holl understands the visceral thrill of communing with the ocean's rollicking power. Such experiences feed through into the *muscular yet sensuous* architecture, which *cups and cradles* visitors within *the concrete wave*. The curved platform also acts as *a belvedere rising up to address the site* and frame views to the distant western horizon where sea meets sky. This sense of *compression and release* is intended to *suggest the experience of surfing*. 'It's *analogous to being on a rolling sea*', says Holl, 'when you dip down in a valley of water and are spatially enclosed [...] then the sea lifts you up and you can see in every direction'.

Texture is also the main focus in example (11), as explicitly acknowledged in the text. However, although the whole passage carries a figurative flavor in the broadest sense of the term, the expressions used by this reviewer are not felt to be metaphorical when considered in isolation:

- (11) Other resonances of an industrial past are present in the architects' treatment of surfaces, creating texture and grain through the abstract patterns of windows, projecting balconies, bristling metalwork and other protuberances reminiscent of dockside landscapes.

In the light of such examples, one way to approach the metaphors found in architectural reviews may be to pay attention to both the domains informing them as well as the sensory information suggested by their different instantiations, even if their full potential is best discerned when seen in their context of occurrence. Table 2 provides a summary of the terms found in a corpus of 132 reviews:<sup>5</sup>

*In Sensuous Cognition – Explorations into the Human Sentience – Imagination, Emotion and perception.* Berlin: de Gruyter Mouton

Table 2. *Metaphor and the senses*

<i>Domains</i>	<i>Metaphors and instantiations</i>	<i>Senses involved</i>
MOTION	BUILDINGS ARE DYNAMIC/KINETIC ENTITIES arch, break through, cascade, clamber, climb, cross, dip, double, emerge, expand, fall, fly, float, flow, flutter, heave, hover, meander, move, revolve, run, scurry, slide, slip, snake, soar, spin, step, straddle, surge, sweep, swing, thread, thrust, topple, travel, tumble, unfold, weave [buildings/building elements are] cascading, compressed, dynamic, expanding, erratic, falling, floating, flowing, fluid, gymnastic, processional, sweeping, swooping	SIGHT
	BUILDINGS AS LANDSCAPES/MOTION EXPERIENCES circuit, circulation, course, crossroad, direction, flow, fluidity, journey, motion, movement, pace, passage, path, procession, progress, progression, promenade, route, sequence of spaces, speed, slowness, static, street, struggle through space, way	MULTISENSORY
TEXTILES	ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE IS CLOTHMAKING darn, drape, dress, knit, sew, stitch, thread, warp, weave BUILDINGS/CITIES ARE CLOTH cloth, fabric, grain, knit, moiré, silky, warp, weft BUILDING ELEMENTS ARE PIECES OF CLOTH/CLOTHING apron, blanket, cap, cladding, coating, curtain wall(ing), finely-tailored garment, jacket, mantle, sheet, skirt, sleeve, suit, tapestry, veil	SIGHT TOUCH (TEXTURE)
LANGUAGE	ARCHITECTURE IS LANGUAGE articulate(d), idiom, imagery, edit, episode, expressive, idiom, language, lexicon, punctuate, translate, vocabulary BUILDINGS ARE TEXTS accent, comprehensible, grandiloquent, hushed, legible, lyrical, muted, quiet, read(ing), rhetorical, vernacular	SIGHT TOUCH KINESTHESIA (HOLISTIC)
ORGANIC	BUILDINGS/BUILDING PARTS ARE ORGANIC ENTITIES (PLANTS, ANIMALS, OR PARTS OF THEM) almond, amoeba, arm, beak, behemoth, blind, bone, butterfly, carapace, cell, chunky, crouching creature, embryo, feminine, fin, flower, masculine, membrane, muscular, mushroom, onion, orb, palm, pod, rib, robust, shell, sinewy, skeleton, slender, snail, spine, tadpole, trunk, vine	SIGHT TOUCH (TEXTURE)
INORGANIC	BUILDINGS/BUILDING PARTS ARE 3-D EVERYDAY ENTITIES ark, aviary, barrel, beacon, boat, book, boomerang, bowl, box, cake, cauldron, canyon, cigar, Concorde, fan, fish tank, hairpin, honeycomb, horseshoe, igloo, lozenge, page, pinwheel, ribbon, sandwich, sawtooth, ship, surfboard, umbrella, wedge, zeppelin BUILDINGS/BUILDING PARTS ARE GEOMETRIC ENTITIES/FIGURES circle, cone, cube, parallelepiped, prism, rectangle, ring, slab, slit, sliver, slot, sphere, spiral, strip BUILDINGS/BUILDING PARTS ARE ALPHABET LETTERS H, L, I, U, T, V, Z	SIGHT TOUCH (TEXTURE)
MALLEABILITY	BUILDINGS ARE PLASTIC, MALLEABLE ENTITIES bisect, break, carve, chamfer, chop, cleft, crumple, cut, dissect, erode, extrude, flexibility, flexible, fold, fracture, fragment, gouge, hew, hollow, incise, laminate, peel, pierce, plastic, plug, punch, scratch, sculptural, skew, slash, slice	SIGHT TOUCH (TEXTURE)
<i>Cross-sensory mappings</i>		
SOUND	BUILDINGS ARE SONORAN EXPERIENCES echo, jarring, resonance, resonate, toned down	SIGHT TOUCH (TEXTURE)
	BUILDINGS ARE MUSICAL PIECES (staccato, rhythmic) beat, choreographed, choreography, lyrical, melodies, music, strike a note, rhythm	
TOUCH	cold, compact, crisp, fragile/fragility, hairy, hard, heavy, light/lightness, palpable, rugged, soft, solid, tactile, tangible, texture, warm/warmth	TOUCH (HOLISTIC)
SIGHT	(acoustically) transparent	SOUND

Table 2 provides interesting information about the figurative language used by architects in spatial assessment. In the first place, and irrespective of the source domains informing them, most of the metaphors appear to be concerned with the sensory properties of buildings. Among these, sight and touch seem to matter the most in architectural appreciation, to the extent that both are also the targets in (purely) synesthetic metaphors. For instance, the expressions *jarring building* or *discordant spaces* incorporate adjectives concerned with aural experience in order to assess the visual impact of buildings upon the observer or its surroundings. More interesting is the combination of distal (sight) and proximal (touch) perceptual experiences in the same figurative expression, as happens when buildings are described as *crisp* or *rugged*—two adjectives blending touch and look. Architecture’s ultimate concern with ‘feeling’ (accessed by yet going beyond ‘looking’) is elaborated by Bloomer and Moore (1977) and, above all, by Pallasmaa (2005). Drawing upon Gibson’s (1966) views of senses as *systems* rather than merely physiological receptors, these architects foreground the role of the haptic system in experiencing three-dimensionality, i.e., the *sine qua non* of architecture. Haptic experience simultaneously combines feeling and doing since it encompasses, directly or indirectly, most other senses and, particularly, motion. This truly enactive (embodied) and, hence, multimodal approach to architectural experience is also discernible in the language used to describe it, particularly motion expressions. Example (12) is evidence of this point:

- (12) Based on an angular version of a Möbius strip, its parti *drives* the conventionally two-dimensional floor plate into the third and fourth dimensions: *Looped circulation* that is always *rising* or *falling* erases the distinction between floors, turning them, literally, into a *rotating, revolving continuum of linked space, form, and time*. The *Möbius strip* implies a *continuously evolving surface*, and by subsuming all the rooms in the *circulation ribbon*, the architect creates a relational environment of forms and spaces juxtaposed in evolving relationships. [...] The *Möbius circulation* starts at the top of the entrance stair, one flight up from the lowest level, where the main bedroom and one of the studies are located. *The path splits* at this landing *with a corridor that passes* an informal kitchen and a large dining area that doubles as a conference room for at-home meetings. *The path continues* to a tall living room of variable height; the ceiling and floor *shift* at the center, *splitting* the room into low and high ground. *The path doubles back on itself and climbs* a half level to a corridor that serves the second home office, two bedrooms, and a bathroom. This corridor *continues* to a stair that *descends* to the second-floor entrance hall to complete *the circuit*. All the rooms comprise a *loop*, “a 24-hour cycle of sleeping, working, and living,” to use Van Berkel’s phrase. [...] The *flow* of space is simultaneously *centripetal* and *centrifugal*. A fascinating, counterintuitive diagram characterized by form and circulation reversals, the Möbius strip, as applied to the house, makes *the sequence of spaces* intriguing – impossible to predict and difficult to grasp. Eluding easy understanding, Van Berkel and Bos’s design works as a *piece of environmental braille*, with light, textures, and *shifting* planes that cue changing interpretations of its form. *The house engages the senses* by inviting *promenades that set the parts into kaleidoscopic rotation*. Spaces that are alternately intimate and grand, *warm* and *cold*, abstract and *tactile*, closed and open, *succeed each other* in this time-based concept of a house understood through experience.

This complex example illustrates how imagery of various sorts combines to verbally recreate a building's sensual landscape. The Möbius configuration, which is a two-dimensional surface of a single boundary component, is both the image and concept informing the design of the house assessed in (12). It is used to refer to a building explicitly designed upon this well-known topology, giving rise to the whole as a *ribbon* or *loop*. Although a Möbius strip is an essentially geometric construct, its physical continuity may be used as a topology to represent the time-space continuum, as explicitly stated in the text. This temporality is applicable to notions of architecture as facilitating experiential spaces. Accordingly, the reviewer's commentary recreates the circulation routes in the building, making extensive use of nouns (*path, circuit, promenade*) and verbs (*rise, fall, pass, continue, shift, double, descend, succeed*), which evoke the idea of an idiosyncratic JOURNEY metaphor. The adjectives used (*rotating, revolving, evolving, warm, cold* or *tactile*) point to both the kinetic and tactile, i.e., haptic, experiences afforded by the building. This is reinforced by qualification of the ensemble as *a piece of environmental braille*, an expression that points to the abstract and sensory complex structures informing the design of the building, where the combination of sight and touch in writing-system Braille is an effective descriptor.

### **3. Perceptual landscapes in wine reviews**

While viticultural knowledge and its sensual pleasures go back thousands of years, the high status of wine as a prestige comestible and an index of social status is a relatively recent phenomenon (Hommerberg 2011). This may be seen as a result of social and discourse practices associated with “you are what you say about what you eat” (Silverstein 2003: 227) or, in the context of wine, ‘you are what you say about what you drink’. However, regardless of the social impact of discourse practices associated with wine, a significant number of texts and discourses on the topic of wine have a more technical side to them too, such as texts written by enologists and chemists. Our main purpose in this section is to describe how the perceptual landscape of wine tasting is discursively staged in wine magazines and books that have emerged on the market over the past thirty years. We do this by investigating the texts produced to describe wines and the language resources used to verbalize the sensory perceptions afforded by this beverage. Our focus of attention is on wine reviews, which is one of the genres together with general reportages, editorials and advertisements in wine magazines. Wine reviews are particularly important since they in fact are the main *raison d'être* of wine magazines, irrespective of whether they are online or paper magazines. We explore the linguistic means involved in such descriptions as well as the discursive arrangement vis-à-vis the tasting procedure as such.

Wine is a complex domain of aesthetic knowledge and tasting practice is complex in that it involves the whole range of sensory perceptions, ranging over VISION, SMELL, TOUCH, TASTE, giving rise to certain aesthetic responses and emotional reactions. In spite of the fact that the act of tasting activates those four different sensory perceptions, it is the unity of sensuous pleasure (or displeasure), meaningful interpretation and emotional involvement that the taster experiences in the end. It is the totality that constitutes *an experience* (Hekkert 2006: 159–160). It is the task of the wine critic to communicate his or her experiences in a way so that these can be understood by readers. This means that sensory perceptions have to be transformed into expressions that will have to go through the readers' cognitive system in order to be interpreted and, if possible, also

to give rise to some kind of idea of the various sensory experiences evoked by the wine. One way of facilitating the task of the readers is to describe the different sensory perceptions as if they were separate stages. This means that it is only for reasons of analytical clarity that we need to divide the process into sensory sub-processes. These component parts are described by Gluck (2003: 109) as follows:

You pour out the wine. You regard its color. You sniff around it. You agitate the glass to release the esters of the perfume and so better to appreciate the aromas, the nuances of the bouquet. You inhale those odoriferous pleasantries, or unpleasantries, through the chimney of the taste, the nostrils (the only access to the brain open to the air) and then you taste. You swill the liquid around the mouth and breathe in air so that this liquid is aerated and experienced by up to ten thousand taste buds. The taste buds are arranged in sectors of differently oriented cohesion: one designed to recognize salinity, another alkalinity, another sweetness and so on. They connect with the brain which in turn provides the sensory data, memory based, to form the critic's view of what s/he is drinking. Some of the wine is permitted to contact the back of the throat, but only a small amount is permitted to proceed down the gullet, so that the finish of the wine can be studied. Then the wine is ejected and several seconds are left to elapse whilst all these sensations are studied and written up as the impression the wine has left is mulled over.

First of all, the taster inspects the color of the wine and then, second, the smell or the nose of the wine, followed by, third, its taste and texture (touch or mouthfeel). Stage four involves an evaluation of the wine's aftertaste and the fifth stage concerns how the wine vaporizes, i.e., its finish. As pointed out by several researchers in the field (e.g., Silverstein 2003; Caballero 2007; Paradis 2010; Hommerberg 2011), the ability to verbalize and describe the perceptual landscape of the experience of the tasting of wine is crucial for professional wine reviewers. This ability is the trademark of professional wine reviewers and connoisseurs, which sets them apart from wine lovers more generally. The transformation of the sensory perceptions at the tasting event into a textual description of them is what the next section is about.

### 3.1. Experiencing and re-experiencing wines

Wine reviews are short texts written by specialized journalists, wine-lovers or people who are interested in winemaking. Wine reviews are typically written according to a strict pattern following the tasting procedure described in the previous section, as in (13) and (14):

- (13) This unfiltered blend of 65% Tempranillo, 30% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 5% Merlot saw malolactic in barrel, and aging in French as well as American oak for 16 months. Bordeaux-like, it exhibits a dense ruby/purple color in addition to a bouquet of sweet tobacco, black currants, and leathery aromas, medium to full body, terrific purity, an enduring texture, and a long finish revealing moderate but ripe tannin. This beauty should drink well for 10-12 years.

- (14) There is something about these kitchen sink red blends that just gets me excited. This offering from Ben Marco is terrific. It is opaque and pitch black colored. It opens with a fragrant black raspberry and black licorice bouquet. On the palate, this wine is full bodied, balanced, rich, and very fruit forward. The flavor profile is a delicious boysenberry and vanilla oak blend with notes of blackberry with a hint of blueberry. The finish is dry and its moderate dusty tannins are nicely prolonged. This tasty fruit bomb is a wonderful wine. Grill up a big stack of messy ribs and enjoy it with this gem. Enjoy – Ken

Example (13) is a review of a wine from Robert Parker's *Wine Advocate* (Paradis 2010: 57),<sup>6</sup> and (14) is a review from *KensWineGuide*. Robert Parker, formerly an American lawyer from Maryland, is one of the most famous and maybe also the most influential wine writer in the world. He has no formal training in wine tasting, but started to take an interest in wine during a wine tasting on a trip to Europe in the 60s. This was also when he discovered that he could use his exceptional olfactory and gustatory abilities to assess and describe wines (Langewiesche 2000). Short after that, in 1978, the first issue of Robert Parker's magazine *The Wine Advocate. The independent consumer's guide to fine wine* came out.<sup>7</sup> In contrast to *Wine Advocate*, which for the majority of the reviews requires customer subscriptions, *KensWineGuide* is a freely available buying guide on Internet. Irrespective of the commercial difference, both reviews are similar in terms of their textual and discursive structure.

The texts consist of three parts starting with production facts and ending with some kind of general assessment and recommendation of prime drinking time. The middle of the text, which is also its main body, is devoted to an iconic description of the wine tasting procedure from the taster's inspection of the wine's visual appearance through smelling, tasting and feeling its texture, i.e., from VISION through SMELL, TASTE and TOUCH (mouthfeel). Both reviews also make remarks on the aftertaste and the finish, and conclude with a recommendation. In (13), the recommendation makes predictions about the durability of the wine and a recommendation of the prime drinking time, while (14) also gives food serving recommendations. A general characteristic of tasting notes is that they are at the same time both descriptive and evaluative all through. On the basis of a corpus of 6,000 wine reviews from *Wine Enthusiast*, *Wine Spectator* and *Wine Advocate*, Caballero (2007: 2099) sets up a rhetorical schema of wine reviews. The schema is shown in Table 3:

Table 3. The discursive schema of tasting notes (Caballero 2007)

Technical Card (optional)	
Introduction of the wine	
Name and year	and/or
Winery	and/or
Price	and/or
Score	and/or
Cases/bottles made	and/or
Grape composition	
First evaluation of wine	
Assessment of the wine's color	
Assessment of the wine's nose (aroma and bouquet)	
Assessment of the wine's palate (flavors and texture or mouthfeel)	
Attack	and/or
Mid-palate	and/or
Aftertaste or finish	
Closing evaluation of the wine	
Potential consumers	and/or
Consumption span	and/or
Recommended food	and/or
Final evaluation	

It is clear from Table 3 that wine reviews may contain more information than just the descriptions and the evaluations of the wines. For instance, information relating to the production of the wine, which is normally given before the review proper, constitutes the first part of the review or appears as kind of technical card preceding the review. The production part contains information about the location of the winery, the oenologists, the grapes, the vintage and things like that, as shown under 'Introduction of wine'. In our examples (13) and (14), the former has more information about concrete production facts. Thus, in (13) it says that the wine is *unfiltered blend of 65% Tempranillo, 30% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 5% Merlot saw malolactic in barrel, and aging in French as well as American oak for 16 months*, while in (14) there is only a mention of the winery: *This offering from BenMarco is terrific*. Next is the assessment of the color, smell, taste, mouthfeel and finish. This is the part that is our focus of interest, because it describes the perceptual landscape of wine tasting. We return to this landscape in the next section. For now, it suffices to say that the various descriptors used are not restricted to wine descriptions and not even restricted to the various sensory domains described. Many of them are words for things in the world, such as *tobacco, black currants, and leathery aromas* from (13) and *boysenberry, vanilla oak, blackberry and blueberry* from (14). Finally, in line with the



rhetorical schema both our examples sign off with a recommendation as mentioned before about prime drinking time (13) and a food serving tip (14). Apart from the fact that our main interest in this chapter is on the perceptual landscape it is important to note that all discursive parts are there to provide direct or indirect evidence of the credibility of the reviewer and hence important for their success and the impact of the texts in terms of their persuasiveness. This may be achieved through a range of different means, including facts, trustworthy and transparent terminology, temporal and aspectual representation, as well as elements of appraisal and certainty (Caballero 2007, 2009; Caballero and Suárez Toste 2010; Hommerberg 2011; Herdenstam 2004; Lehrer 2009; Paradis 2009, 2010; Paradis and Hommerberg 2010; Suárez Toste 2007). The next section zooms in on the actual descriptions of wines.

### 3.2. The sensory perceptions and their descriptions

As already pointed out, wine reviewers' descriptions of the tasting event follow the journey of the wine from the glass through the nose and the mouth and finally into the spittoon. When reviewers interact with the wine, they always receive information through all senses more or less at the same time, not one at a time, with the possible exception of the visual inspection. This information, then, is processed in the brain and contributes to the experience that is to be described through language. An important aspect of the taster/reviewers professional task is to be able to convey the representation of the perceptual landscape in a way that is understandable for the reader at the same time as it should preferably also arouse the reader's sensorium.

The main body of the wine reviews we have investigated are what Herdenstam (2004: 65–80) refers to as analytical descriptions of the perceptual landscape. Such descriptions involve a decompositional approach to the wine tasting experience, where the sensory perceptions are described separately from one another by means of terminologies that are designed to facilitate description and interpretation of communication about the perceptive experience. Yet, also, interspersed in most of wine reviews are more holistic or synthetic comments. This section starts with a description of the use of structured terminologies and ends with some examples of holistic comments about the wine. A famous terminological attempt at a consistent and clear descriptor system in the wine world is the Aroma Wheel (Noble et al. 1984), which was developed by oenologists at the University of California at Davis for descriptions of smell. The Aroma Wheel has been further developed for both whites and reds by the German Wine Institute ([www.deutscheweine.com](http://www.deutscheweine.com)). Figure 1 shows the German Aroma Wheel for red wines. In spite of the fact that it is still called the Aroma Wheel, it also includes aspects of taste and mouthfeel:



prominently when it comes to reviewing and the sensory importance of appreciation of the wine drinking event as such. Normally there are only very short statements about the color, such as in (13), *a dense ruby/purple color*, and (14), *opaque and pitch black colored*. Yet, this is an observation that is not entirely true because of the cross-modal character of descriptions of wine.

After having swiveled the glass and inspected the color, the taster/reviewer proceeds to agitate the glass in order to assess the smell of the wine, the taste, the texture and the aftertaste or the vaporization. The relevant passages of examples (13) and (14) are repeated in (15) and (16) respectively:

- (15) to a bouquet of sweet tobacco, black currants, and leathery aromas, medium to full body, terrific purity, an enduring texture, and a long finish revealing moderate but ripe tannin.
- (16) It opens with a fragrant black raspberry and black licorice bouquet. On the palate, this wine is full bodied, balanced, rich, and very fruit forward. The flavor profile is a delicious boysenberry and vanilla oak blend with notes of blackberry with a hint of blueberry. The finish is dry and its moderate dusty tannins are nicely prolonged.

In (15) the smell (bouquet) of the wine is described in terms of *tobacco, black currants, and leathery aromas* and in (16) in terms of *fragrant black raspberries and black licorice bouquet*. Both these wines are red wines and the choice of dark-colored descriptors is not a coincidence, but a system consciously used by wine reviewers. Descriptions of the aftertaste of the wines are provided for (15) *a long finish revealing moderate but ripe tannin*, and (16) *the finish is dry and its moderate dusty tannins are nicely prolonged*.

If we instead turn to the descriptors of white wines, the objects used to describe the wines are mainly light-colored object as in (17) and (18):

- (17) Its delightful aromatics reveal honeyed spices, pears, and white pepper. On the palate, this bright, focused wine is satin-textured, medium-bodied, and complex. Its concentrated, almost sappy personality offers flavors reminiscent of ripe apples and pears that are intermingled with white pepper, orange blossoms, and anise.
- (18) Bright, lifted nose that could very easily be mistaken kiwi, gooseberry, grapefruit zest, “mineral”. But this is riper, deeper. Ditto in the mouth. Great depth of fruit and opposing mineral cut. Another wine with a sugar/acid cage match.

Example (17) describes a bottle of a 2004 Chardonnay and (18) a 2009 Verdejo using descriptors such as *honeyed spices, pears, and white pepper*, and *kiwi, gooseberry, grapefruit zest, “mineral”*, respectively. As all four examples (15)–(18) show, the descriptions of the wines’ nose are followed by a description of the wines’ palate, i.e., taste and touch in terms of body, balance, depth and again fruit and spice descriptors, and again those descriptors are dark-colored in the case of the red wines and light-colored in the case of the white wines. While the descriptors of the red wine, say in (16), are *boysenberry and vanilla oak blend with notes of blackberry with a hint of blueberry*, the descriptors for the whites are expressed as flavors reminiscent of *ripe apples and pears that are intermingled with white pepper, orange blossoms, and anise*. The use of descriptors for smells and tastes as fruit, minerals and spices is not wine lingo but a necessity because of the relative lack of specific every-day vocabularies in sensory domains in English as in most other languages of the world (Rouby et al. 2002; Paradis 2009; Paradis and Eeg Olofsson in preparation). In his book, *Remarks on Color* Wittgenstein (1977:

102) writes: “When we’re asked What do ‘red’, ‘blue’, ‘black’, ‘white’, mean? we can, of course, immediately point to things which have these colors—but that’s all we can do: our ability to explain their meaning goes no further”.

The descriptors used in Aroma Wheels are primarily limited to objects. For this reason it deserves to be pointed out that there are also other terminologies such as the Wine and Spirit Education Trust that proposes a schema of descriptors across Appearance, Nose and Palate, which are organized along scales, as in Table 4:

Table 3. A systematic approach to wine tasting according to the WSET, adapted from Herdenstam (2004: 131).

<b>Wine and Spirit Education Trust (WSET)</b>	
<b>APPEARANCE</b>	
<b>clarity</b>	bright – clear – dull – hazy – cloudy
<b>intensity</b>	
white	water-white – pale – medium – deep
rosé	pale – medium – deep
red	pale – medium – deep – opaque
<b>color</b>	
white	green – lemon – straw – gold – amber – brown
rosé	pink – salmon – orange – onion skin
red	purple – ruby – garnet – mahogany – tawny
<b>other observations</b>	Legs, bubbles, rim, color vs. core, deposits, etc.
<b>NOSE</b>	
<b>condition</b>	clean – unclean
<b>intensity</b>	weak – medium – pronounced
<b>development</b>	youthful – grape aromas – aged bouquet ( <i>tired – oxidised</i> )
<b>fruit character</b>	fruity, floral, vegetal, spicy, woods, smoky, animal fermentation, aromas, ripeness, faults
<b>PALATE</b>	
<b>sweetness</b>	dry – off-dry – medium dry – medium sweet – sweet – luscious
<b>acidity</b>	flabby – low – balanced – sharp
<b>tannin</b>	astringent – hard – balanced – soft
<b>body</b>	thin – light – medium – full – heavy
<b>fruit intensity</b>	weak – medium – pronounced
<b>alcohol</b>	light – medium – high
<b>length</b>	short – medium – long

The schema in Table 3 does not make Aroma Wheels redundant. On the contrary, they can be seen as complementary methodologies and analytical systems that can be used as guiding tools. The WSET covers dimensions of attributes associated with the object descriptors of the Aroma Wheel across its nose (smell) and palate (taste and mouthfeel) dimensions. The point of all analytical systems is to be used as methods that make the identification of different smells and tastes possible and that provide independent sensory perceptive descriptions of the landscape.

As briefly mentioned in passing at the beginning of the section, there are two types of descriptions, analytic and synthetic descriptions (Herdenstam 2004). Up to now, we have been concerned with analytic descriptors. In contrast to analytic descriptions, synthetic descriptions aim at providing holistic impressions of the sensory perceptions and they often rely on comparisons of different kind, which is much more difficult and, also, harder to grasp. The

difference between analytic and synthetic descriptions is that, while the point of departure of analytic descriptions is the parts, the departure for synthetic descriptions is the whole or as Herdenstam (2004: 80) puts it: “[t]he analytical approach attempts to account for the sensory experience of wine, while the synthetic approach attempts to describe the total complexity of the whole”. In order to do that the reviewer has to make use of more general descriptors and figuration that is capable of bringing together a number of sensory perceptions into more complex conceptions through analogies and imagery. The latter descriptions are often less specific and non-terminological descriptors or comparisons, such as in (19)–(25):

- (19) Tasty, dry, and hedonistic, it is a delicious, pure, inexpensive sparkler to enjoy over the next year.
- (20) This is a sexy, lush, gorgeously made wine.
- (21) This wine [...] yearns to taste like a good Bordeaux.
- (22) If tasting the [...] was like swallowing an electric eel, this is like getting hooked up to a generator.
- (23) So smooth, so easy, yet so complex, this wine is like Ray Charles at his smokiest.
- (24) This beauty should drink well for 10-12 years. (from (13))
- (25) This tasty fruit bomb is a wonderful wine. Grill up a big stack of messy ribs and enjoy it with this gem. (from (14))

The descriptions in (19) and (20) are non-specific and non-terminological and attempt to obtain a grasp of the general experience of those wines. In (21) the total experience of the wine is like *a good Bordeaux*. The taste of the wine in (22) and (23) is likened to the feeling of *getting hooked up to a generator* and *like Ray Charles at his smokiest*. In (24), the wine is personified and referred to as a *beauty*, and in the final example (25) the wine is a *fruit bomb*. These more holistic and general remarks typically occur at the beginning of the review, when the wine is introduced or at the end when the reviewer rounds off or as in the recommendation part. Finally, some reviews make more extensive use of such holistic, non-terminological descriptions:

- (26) This is becoming one of Helmut’s most important wines; a highly refined bouquet of cox-orange and *boucherie* does not even remotely prepare you for the gleaming fruitsalt interplay on the palate; the wine is elegantly *manic*; the flavors – all 100 of them – are so glowy and serene but they blast around the palate like popcorn in a hot skillet. Yet the whole thing is somehow mysterious and irreducible, like an old sofa that’s absorbed all the ethereal fragrances of the many generations who lay there reading, sat knitting, made love while the giggling servants peeked from around the corner.

The review in (26) begins with a more moderate and composed description but ends with a forceful and wild description of the feelings that this wine evokes.

#### **4. The perceptual landscapes of architecture and wine in summary**

In a study of descriptions of product experience in different languages, Fenko et al. (2010) say that the general and popular belief seems to be that vision has the dominant role in everyday

experience, which is evident from the saying “we eat with our eyes first”. Referring to Stadtlander and Murdoch (2000), they also say that when people are asked to describe objects, they primarily use words that refer to vision or touch and conclude that the roles of the modalities depend on whether a certain type of information is present, how it is processed, and how people react emotionally to it. Needless to say, culture is bound to play an important role in determining the relative importance of the sensory modalities. Being one of the core factors of any culture, the sensorium is encapsulated in how we think about the worlds around us and how the information about the world is packaged and distributed in the languages of the world and to what extent the way we package this information influences our cognitive processing of sensory information (Burenhult and Majid 2011).

In this chapter, we set out to investigate how sensory experiences in the realms of architecture and wine are communicated in the review genre. We have described how architects and wine experts sense and think of their respective worlds and cultures. In spite of the fact that many people conceive of these two cultures as worlds apart, our study rather point towards the fact that reviewing buildings and reviewing wines have many things in common. The previous sections on each of the two cultures are parallel in so far as the topics of the sections are the same, and they are presented in the same order. In this section, we summarize and compare the two types of review, starting with an account of the objects under investigation and the practices related to them, i.e., the experiences of the architect and of the wine critic. The experiences are then compared to how the practices are described in the reviews across the two cultures and finally we compare the language used to communicate the experiences in the reviews in terms of similarities and differences.

Even though the journey through the perceptual landscapes follows different paths, reviewing in both cultures starts with the perceptual experiences afforded by buildings and wines. In both cases, the point of departure is vision. For wine experts visual inspection is the starting-point of the ritualized route with stages signposted by what is perceived through the nose and the mouth – smell, taste and touch are all present in wine appreciation. In turn, and contrary to popular beliefs, touch plays a crucial role in architectural experience, and, in fact, to some extent also smell. However, the tactile experiences of buildings appear to be less salient than the textile experiences of wine. A reason for that may be that they depend more on expert knowledge and training in the area. While architects see texture as a distinct property of buildings, yet intrinsically related to their visual and kinetic properties, non-architects may be said to perceive texture when they are interacting outside or inside the buildings without consciously thinking about it. Texture is perceived through the whole body in motion.

Next, we addressed the question of how the sensory experiences of the two objects of study are communicated to the members of the communities. Our initial assumption was that particular communities and cultures are built around highly conventionalized, or ‘genred’, interaction (Fairclough 1992; Freedman and Medway 1994; Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995; Bronckart 1996; Silverstein 2004). Also in this respect, architects and wine experts have more things in common than we expected. For one thing, the critical reviewing practices enacted in the two genres play an important epistemic and acculturation role in both communities. Indeed, in both architecture and wine, praxis and discourse are two sides of the same coin. Not only does the criticism in the two cultures bond the members together, but they also grant access to the communities. In other words, given the multiple literacies at play in the cultures built around architectural space and wine, the mastering of the domain knowledge necessarily entails the mastering of the language as well. The pure existence of publications that basically consist of the

genres of building reviews and tasting notes (*The Wine Advocate* or *The Architectural Review*) testifies to their importance in their communities and cultures. In other words, at the heart of the importance of genre is the fact that reviews are read by both the expert members of the architecture and wine communities in order for them to keep up with the latest events in the field, and the newcomers as part of their acculturation process.

As a final remark, we want to highlight the iconic patterning of the descriptions of buildings and wines and the experiences assessed through language. This is particularly noticeable in the wine reviews, which, as discussed earlier, mirror the key stages in the highly ritualized event of wine tasting, from the moment it is poured into the glass and displays its color and glycerin content—the wine’s *legs* or tears—to the experience of its finishing vaporization inside the taster’s mouth, as shown in (14) above. In like manner, a well-crafted building review, as the one in (12), attempts to translate into words a holistic experience of a building, which starts from an assessment of its visual properties to gradually guide the readers through its inner routes. In this regard, we might contend that the true potential of both genres as cultural artifacts rests upon the descriptions of the virtual tours ‘inside’ wines and buildings provided through them as a means to better understand the aesthetic and highly sensual landscapes of wines and buildings.

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## **Notes**

1. Permission to reproduce Zvi Hecker’s texts and drawings has been kindly granted by the architect. The texts can be found at <http://www.zvihecker.com>
2. Positioning the building in context/architect’s work.
3. First evaluation of building
4. Review of architect’s career and building agenda
5. The texts in the corpus were retrieved from *Architectural Record*, *Architectural Review*, *Architectural Design*, *Architecture*, *Architecture Australia*, and *Architecture SOUTH*.
6. <http://www.erobertparker.com/entrance.aspx>.
7. <http://www.kenswineguide.com/>
8. We are grateful to the German Wine Institute ([www.deutschshesweine.com](http://www.deutschshesweine.com)) for letting us use their picture.

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