

Alberti is anxious throughout the *Ten Books* to make a distinction between *lineamenta* and *materia*. Though they are clearly related, *lineamenta* has been variously translated as design, idea, form, measured outline but always in some way linked to drawings as an activity of the mind. Similarly he makes a distinction between *lineamenta* and *structura*, between design and construction, where *lineamenta* must precede *structura*. Our use of contemporary terms such as design for *lineamenta* may not literally correspond to the original Latin, as Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach and Robert Tavernor emphasise in their translation of *On the Art of Building in Ten Books* (Alberti, 1988). Nevertheless, the sense that there is a premeditating activity pursued by the architect is not in doubt. Alberti makes this clear in the First Book.

‘... let lineaments be the precise and correct outline, conceived in the mind, made up of lines and angles, and perfected in the learned intellect of imagination.’
(Alberti, 1988, p.7)

In architecture, design and drawing are inseparable. Whether the drawing is by hand or computer is, for the moment, irrelevant. What matters is the translation of a thought into some visually discernible artefact. By drawing I mean both making marks on a two-dimensional sheet or screen and making *exploratory* three-dimensional models. They are investigatory tools that are an essential element of the design process.

Drawings become a tool through communicating to the designer and the recipient of the design. Their ability to do so depends on certain conventions which need to be understood. In this sense architectural drawings – plans, sections, elevations – differ from other drawings, from drawings as works of art. We know at once the difference in character and intention between a drawing of a pavilion on a Japanese scroll and a plan and section of a similar building, to take an example where there is in fact a superficial resemblance between the two.

These conventions are largely necessary because the drawing is only an analogue of the building; it is always different from the building. However hard the drawing tries to be 'accurate' or 'atmospheric' it inevitably retains the qualities and appearance of a drawing. What is equally important is that

'... drawing in architecture is not done after nature, but prior to construction; it is not so much produced by reflection on the reality outside the drawing, as productive of a reality that will end up outside the drawing. The logic of classical realism is stood on its head, and it is through this inversion that architectural drawing has obtained an enormous and largely unacknowledged generative power: by stealth. For when I say unacknowledged, I mean unacknowledged in principles and theory. Drawing's hegemony over the architectural object has never really been challenged. All that has been understood is its distance from what it represents, hence its periodic renunciation ever since Philip Webb