

Form and symmetry in farms and gardens

Excerpts adapted from Heavenly Gardens, by Enzo Nastati

If in the design of an agricultural organism it is important to consider what the place is calling for, to recognize the specific need of that place, the *genius loci*, then in garden design that consideration becomes fundamental. The *genius loci* is actually the spiritual entity that lives in that environment. The *genius loci* is all of the elemental beings and other entities that thrive in a given place. Previous human settlements and buildings often lead to environmental imbalance, a disequilibrium which has an impact on these beings causing disturbance and disharmony. The least we can do, when designing a farm or garden, is to try to mitigate such damage, restoring the lost harmony and creating the conditions for Nature's beings to stick around and work with life.

But, we must be careful not to be one-sided, because if we focus only on one purpose without introducing any new elements, any regenerative prospects, we end up by closing the door to the possibility of evolution.

Therefore, true artistry is needed to bring in the touches that guide the whole to evolve. For example, faced with a perfectly proportioned and symmetrical house, we can easily understand that the most suitable garden is one which is also symmetrical. However, a garden of perfect symmetry can become "stuck," unable to develop, to change and bring about further change. So, we need to study the laws related to zones, forms, colors, symmetries and asymmetries.

Symmetry acts to enhance the etheric plane, the plane of life, while asymmetry stimulates the soul plane, the astral world. It is particularly important to pay attention to the quality of the soul forces that are at work in a garden or farm.

The World of Form

In its essence, the world of form resonates with cosmic formative forces which mould and interpenetrate all that exists. A form can drive our deepest inner nature. Forms generate life, resonating with the world of life, the soul and with that of the spirit. There are three main forms to which we often return and from which all others can be derived.

Everything starts from a *point*, the dimensionless geometric entity, the infinitely small. Spiritually, it can mean the origin of all, the Father. When a "point" is created in a farm or garden, such as with a magnificent tree, everything else will flow and have its coordinates and bearings from that point.

There comes a point when the point stops being static, becomes active and follows a direction. This results in a *straight line*. Everything that was in the Father, as potential, starts to be expressed - and this represents the Son. This impulse then reaches its end and comes back to the starting point, describing a *circle* that represents completed creation, the Holy Spirit.

So, our three primary tools are the point, the line, and the curve. All two- and three-dimensional shapes are generated from these three, the origin of them all. This thought is fundamental to sacred geometry, the divine geometry notably used in the proportions of ancient religious buildings such as the Egyptian pyramids, the Temple of Solomon, Greek temples, Gothic cathedrals, and so forth.

To further deepen our understanding of the importance of form in any agricultural organism, garden, building, or structure of any kind, we need to look at the influences they bear on the etheric and astral planes of existence and the balance or imbalance created between the two.

The Etheric Plane and Greenery

On the etheric plane there is little overt stimulation, which fits more properly on the soul plane, so here the peace and calm of the greenery can reign without our eyes being stimulated by a thousand colors. The color green promotes concentration. Rhythm and movement also dominate this plane. Rhythm weaves space and time into repeating patterns. To work on the etheric plane the various forms must work with 'green' tones, using non-flowering plants such as hedges.

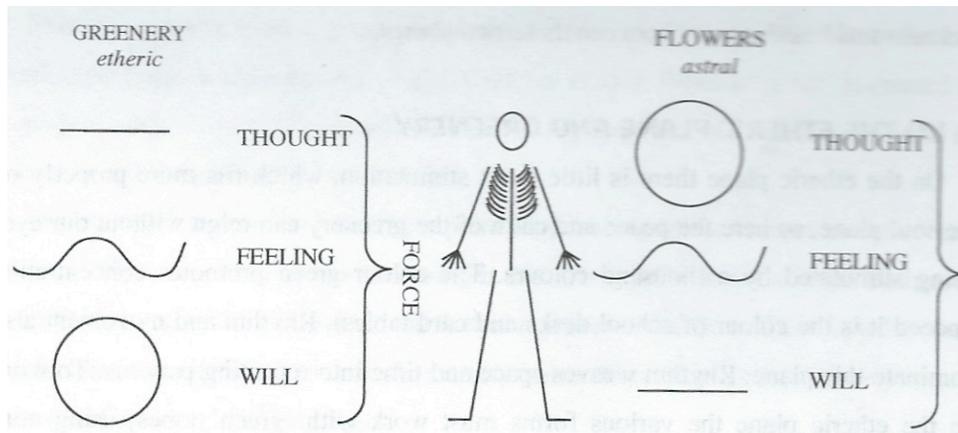
Straight lines encourage the power of thought which characteristically heads straight for a goal without allowing itself to be distracted. Because the power of thought is an etheric quality, if a straight line is curved with greenery it works on the etheric plane. Such a border of greenery influences the power of thought.

On the other hand, an undulating curved line made of greenery stimulates our feelings, whilst a circle of greenery influences the will: it represents the metabolism which feels fulfilled within itself, within its etheric processes. A predominantly free circular flowerbed influences the will but, because the will can't be left on its own without any control, an upright tree might be planted in the center of the bed, establishing thereby the element of Self.

The Astral Plane

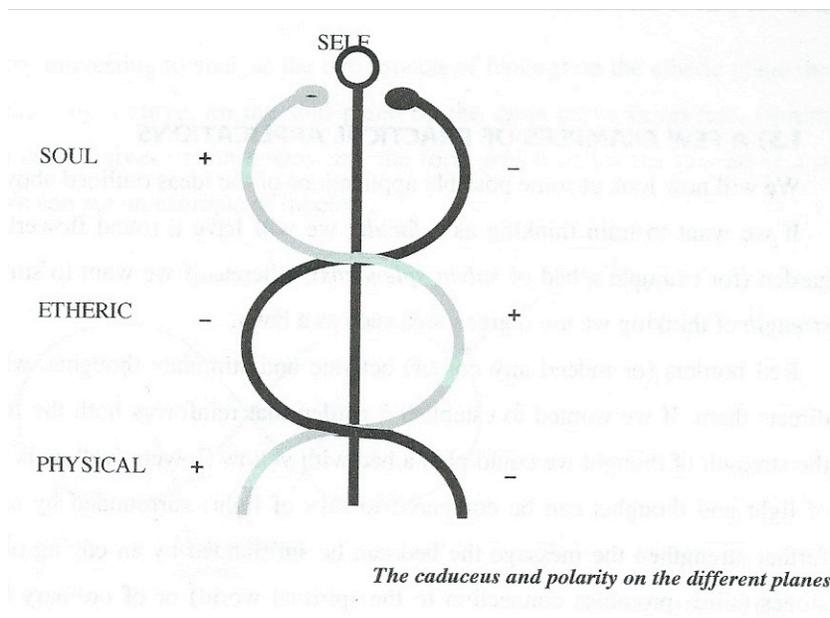
Whilst the etheric plane in the garden is evoked by the color green, the astral is activated by colorful flowers.

We can variously influence the three soul faculties: thinking, feeling and will. It should be said at the outset that by “thinking” we don’t mean the etheric power of thought, but the *soul faculty* that we can employ with greater or lesser etheric “force.” The faculty is the ability itself, the *force* is how we use that talent. In this context, thinking is connected to circles (the form of the head is circular, a sphere), whilst will is represented by a straight line (related to the outstretched limbs). The middle is the curved line, unchanging mercury: the heart is the center of both life and feelings.



The three fundamental forms in relation to the soul forces and facultie

It is notoriously difficult to keep a firm grasp on the differences between the etheric and astral planes. It helps to remember that astral laws work in opposition to those of the etheric plane, as the etheric also do in relation to the physical plane. The caduceus is a good representation of these polarities. In it we see physical forces, the forces of disintegration and death (represented by a polarity of “+” and “-“), which reverse when rising to the etheric plane, the plane of life. Similarly, the etheric forces have a reversed polarity when compared to the soul plane.



The caduceus and polarity on the different planes

Harmony between the physical, etheric, astral and spiritual forces translates into health, sociability, well being, and improved thought and concentration. This harmony supports the development of the Higher Self. Disharmony opposes it. When laying out a garden or farm, it is important to assess whether you want to stimulate and support the higher or lower part of the human.