



3 / EMERGENCE OF A “BEING” FROM THE FIELD OF CENTERS

What we see happening in the two-dimensional case of the carpet, is, I believe, happening all the time, throughout the three-dimensional world, whenever true unfolding happens. All kinds of structures — bricks, mortar, arches, roofs and streets — were all shaped, at certain times, by certain cultures in ways that had similar profound effect. Tough-minded creation of deep centers, worked together with other centers to create, sometimes, remarkable depth of structure all around us. And then we see living structure appearing, in a plethora of forms, all over our planet, in profusion.

In nature this seems to happen by itself, merely through unfolding. In things made by human beings, it happens when the maker concentrates deeply — intently — on the I itself, as far as it exists in him, in her, as far as he or she can perceive it, focus on it, draw on it, draw it out, and make a thing which comes from it, is of it, is of its form, is of its origin. This is not different from doing what has to be done to be practical. The farmer who mends his fence and makes it I-like is far more intently tuned to the

harmony of nature than he will let on to a city person who does not understand.

That original I-like matter has then been composed to embody unity, and shows us what we are ourselves. It is this focus on each living center as an I-like being, elaborated, intensified, which brings the emergence of life to a building. That is the main task: to connect to the I, the creation of a being.

I show, here, an extremely simple example of such a being arising in a building. The carpentry shop my apprentices and I built for the CES office in Martinez was a simple, ordinary structure, with massive wooden columns and beams. After we finished building it, I looked at it. It was straightforward, but somehow it lacked its life.

I spent several days trying to imagine what the building would it be like if it existed, more or less as it was, but was more filled with life? After a few days, I began to get a clear vision of the building with a large white star on the central bay. At first it was just a vision, caused by the fact that the three bays of the building formed an invisible center in the central bay, which needed to be completed. So in practice the star came from my ability to feel the field of centers in the building as a whole.⁶

I went to the office a few days later, and tried to explain this to one of my apprentices. It didn't make sense to him completely. At a certain point, I picked up an old piece of styrofoam and a penknife, and very quickly, without making any measurements, cut a big star from the styrofoam sheet. I hacked it out, as fast as I could. The star was crude and jagged. Not all the points were pointed. The arms had different lengths and different angles. I went outside, and put a single nail through it, to hang it up. The whole thing took literally no more than forty seconds. But it did bring the building to life.

Somehow, within the particular field of this



The giant star as cut by hand



The star in its position on the barn. How strong this irregular star, with its spontaneity, compared with the perfectly drawn star below.

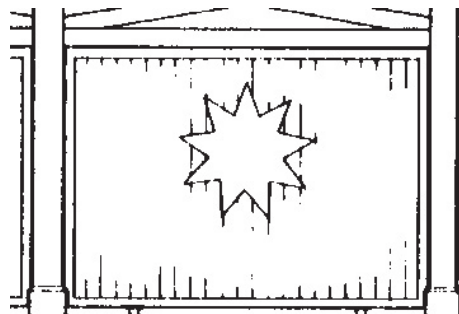
building, with its massive columns and calm, equal structural bays, this animated and irregular star created life and had being. If the same star had been in another context, it probably would not have made sense at all. But here, it had a being quality. Here, it connected to the I.

Now a surprising thing happened. I assumed that the crude star I had cut out was just a mock-up, and that we would use it to cut a “perfect” star. We began trying various exactly regular nine pointed stars in the same place. I got the average diameter of the star I had made. We tried to get the average distance of the inner points, and one of my apprentices then cut star after star, trying to find a regular and “properly made” star, which would catch the life in the same way, have the same feeling. He and I kept on trying for three months. None of the regular stars we made had the same life in them.

Finally, I gave up. I acknowledged that the irregular, jagged star had some kind of life in it which was perfectly in tune with the building, and that I was just lucky to have found it. It was

best to leave it alone. We cut a permanent star exactly on the template of the jagged styrofoam which I had originally made.

It is not the method which is hard to understand here; the *structure* is hard to understand. Even after looking at it, it is not easy to say analytically why the irregular star creates a more profound being than the regular star. But it does. Somehow, it brings the thing to life. This is the spirit. This is the contact with the I.⁷



A drawing from my office which shows the lack of living substance in the exactly drawn star