

# A Taxonomy for Apithology: Navigating an architecture of words

Will Varey <sup>1</sup>

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**ABSTRACT** – The discipline of apithology involves new ideas that at a first glance, due to their unfamiliarity, may appear complex and abstract. The field will often use familiar terms in an unfamiliar way, leaving us to grapple with their meaning. Because apithology seeks to examine the qualities of consciousness, rather than the structures of consciousness, an inquiry into the aesthetics of consciousness is required. This is an aesthetic of something that cannot be seen. The languages and descriptors used in the fields of psychology, neurobiology, phenomenology, systems theory and sociology are contributive, yet insufficient for this task. This article seeks to provide guidance on the essential descriptive terminology used in apithology. An illustrative architectural metaphor is used to make these abstract concepts more tangible for the practitioner. This article therefore provides a way to explore the dynamic architecture of human conceptions by introducing an appreciation of the aesthetic qualities of thought itself as seen within the processes of generative emergence.

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## INTRODUCTION

The field of apithology studies the dynamics of different qualities of consciousness. Because ‘meaning’ and how it is made plays such a central role in revealing the dynamics operating in human systems, words and what they signify hold a unique significance in the methodology of apithology. Words signify and provide the reference points in an architecture of thought that holds and contains many dynamic flows

within the thought spaces consciousness enacts. In the discipline of apithology the practitioner will often be working with the post-construct aware stages of human development, where meaning is both subjective and objective at the same time (Cook-Greuter, 2002). Language in the post-construct aware stage can also hold complex resolved forms of paradox unique in meaning to the mind of the inquirer (Wade 1999). Because apithology represents a different form of philosophical inquiry it therefore requires its own taxonomy. In forming this taxonomy the discipline of apithology explicitly recognizes the potency and limitation of its own language forms. Learning the language of apithology is designed to assist in generating the minds necessary in an apithological inquiry. The intention of this article is to review the main concepts used in an apithological inquiry and provide guidance to the meanings already established for the word signifiers used. The intention is to provide a reference point for those seeking to engage in the next level of discourse within this field, alleviating the need to create one’s own meaning, and adding a coherence of practice to enable the potential for a diverse body of practitioner based work to emerge.

## ATTRACTION OF APITHOLOGY

The practice of apithology potentially appeals only to certain practitioners holding a particular orientation in their desire for human health and wellbeing. It may not appear a natural form of inquiry for all persons. While the idea of apithology as being synonymous with being healthy will be enticing to some, for those who find an

apithological orientation is not part of their own system of meaning making system, the actual inquiry practices within the discipline will hold great challenge with no apparent rewards. It is not difficult to see why this would occur. The following three forms of attraction to apithology may suggest reasons why an apithological motivation might result for some and not for others.

Firstly, apithology as a research field concerns life (or Life) and the dynamics of generativity in living forms as systems of potential. It is an inquiry primarily into the nurturance of living systems. For the research fields that are primarily orientated towards an interest in static forms, systems without living responses, non-sentient modes of technology or which have as their goal to imitate, replicate or replace the processes of life, rather than work with living processes, apithological concerns represent an entirely different inquiry. While these disciplines will have great creativity and ingenuity, they generally will have no real need for, or interest in, the topics of focus that are fundamental to apithology. This is because the object of inquiry in apithology is the emergence of life itself.

Secondly, apithology as a discipline of engagement has initially been grounded in examining the potential of *human* systems. While its theories could potentially be applicable to other living systems, apithology primarily applies within a limited scope of focus. It concerns itself only with phenomenon that is viewed with a human consciousness, involves human actors or is subject to the impacts of human intentions. Other research disciplines with a focus on non-human systems may find interest, but not utility, in the methodologies of apithology. Apithological principles will not naturally extend into fields not having human concerns as their focus and can be successfully ignored. However, any field that uses human perceptions or conceptions in their research approach will eventually require apithology, even if only to fully understand their own research efficacy. This is because the inter-subjective inquiry in apithology is our own place and role within humanity.

Thirdly, apithology as a process of inquiry acknowledges that in working with conscious human agents in living systems the actions in those systems by those agents will primarily be determined by what is 'meaningful'. When looking at the health and generativity of human systems a common, and commonly overlooked, feature is the crucial role of

human conceptions in creating meaning and perception. Apithology is a study of the meaning in human systems, rather than only the processes of meaning within an abstract systems theory. It examines the qualities of the structures of meaning operating as a system of potentials. It does so by understanding them, recognizing explicitly the challenges in that statement of aim. The formation of meaning, its coherence and the dependence on this for human generativity is a primary focus in apithology. The search for a general systems theory to explain human emergence without reference to human meaning making will struggle to find value in apithological theory and practice. This is because the subjective experience of apithology is one of a personal engagement with meaningfulness.

In summary, apithology is a field of practice that concerns those interested in the potential for a meaningful human life. It might hold no great interest or attractiveness to those interested in forms of problem solving that do not inquire into these dimensions. Life in its mystery and complexity is most easily dealt with in the physical sciences by its removal from the scope of inquiry. Fields of application that see the human experience as largely not relevant will predictably find nothing of resonance, use or value in the practice of apithology. Researchers in these fields might use, reinterpret and reframe the concepts, frameworks or practices of apithology, possibly only for the purposes of self-definition in opposition. However, without the practices that inform the processes of apithology, these adoptions will be at best benign and, with the absence of intention, can be potentially deleterious to the integrity of those practices and the practitioners themselves. This is why ethically, apithology as a philosophy, is generally not offered, unless first asked for. A practitioner of apithology is therefore most easily identified by their motivating intention within these three attractions, rather than by the skilled or unskilled use of the field's terms or its forms

#### ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATION

The attractions of apithology described above provide a clear and explicit statement of the focus of this inquiry practice as guidance for the potential practitioner. Inquiry into these is a highly useful way of determining the appropriate level of engagement, self-selection and the personal identification. In doing this we discover that, in apithology, the objective focus is the flourishing

of life, the inter-subjective experience gained is an expression of humanitarian compassion and the subjective intention held is for meaningfulness. These three elements, if at all present to any degree, provide the coherence of conception necessary for a practitioner of apithology. However, when examined as a meta-discipline there is perhaps also a fourth qualifying attraction in apithology that may or may not be present for those who are potentially engaged by its ideas.

Apithology holds as its field of inquiry humanity as a whole. Its position of inquiry is one that potentially takes in the entirety of humanity and all human meaning made. This is the meaning that enables all life and forms of living in human systems. While its principles can (and must) be applied in practice at the individual level the context of inquiry is always at the humanity level. Apithology involves in its essence a caring for humanity. This is why it is not sensible in apithology to promote human flourishing for an individual in direct conflict with the wellbeing of humanity and the collective in its entirety. The ultimate divergence of these seemingly similar goals is one of irreconcilable conflict. In this premise lies a profound truth.

Given the choice to protect one's own form of meaning making or to engage in the practice of engaging in the discovery of the meaning made by others, the non-apithological practitioner as a healthy expression of choice will resist and reject all that is offered by apithology. This question of intention in the field's attraction is one that is best answered prior to one's engagement with the conflict inherent in the content of its practice. In summary, apithology is not a process for finding meaning for the self. It is primarily a practice for finding the nature of meaning itself.<sup>1</sup> With intention clear, the language of apithology is found to be a taxonomy of both clarity and simplicity. The difficulty is only then in its apparent intangibility.

## ARCHITECTURE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

A way of illustrating the principles of an apithological inquiry with clarity is to find parallels in another discipline which we might already have some familiarity. The metaphorical parallels between the disciplines of apithology and architecture provide such an opportunity by their similarity. Both involve abstract concepts within the constraints of the physical world. Both are systems disciplines that benefit from multi-

dimensional viewpoints and multi-disciplinary practices. Both ask much of their practitioners in the scope of their processes and frequently are rewarded disproportionately to their benefits delivered. Fundamentally, both seek to create enduring value while enabling the creation of the greatest testaments to the expressions of human beauty and ingenuity. The deeper reality is that these disciplines both examine the spaces within which we live. Just as architecture examines the dynamics of the structural spaces of human habitation, apithology examines the dynamics of the structural spaces of human conceptions. While we have an established discipline and philosophy of practice for the aesthetics of the physical spaces which we occupy, we have previously lacked an established discipline and philosophy of practice for the aesthetics of the conceptual spaces we inhabit. Apithology, in proposing an aesthetics of the architecture of consciousness, seeks to build a doorway into the place in which new forms of conscious practice for the building of a humane and healthy society may emerge.

The challenge this presents also has its architectural equivalent. As part of a lifelong inquiry into the philosophy and practice of designing 'life' into the built form, architect, designer and educator Christopher Alexander compiled thirteen volumes on the discovery of patterns, structures and processes of wholeness in architecture. Much of this work is in sympathy with the more recent aims of apithology. For this reason Alexander's work forms the basis of an illustrative analogy in this article. For example, he writes (Alexander, 1966) when describing how 'fit' is an aesthetic quality that represents more than merely the absence of obvious compromises or 'misfits', that:

*"It will be objected that to call good fit the absence of certain negative qualities is not more illuminating than to say that it is the presence of certain positive qualities. However, though the two are equivalent from a logical point of view, from a phenomenological and practical point of view they are very different. In practice it will never be as natural to speak of a good fit as the simultaneous nonoccurrence of the same number of corresponding misfits." (p. 24).*

While reminiscent of the foundational premise of apithology, being that health is more than the absence of dis-ease, it is the qualities of the 'living structures' described by Alexander, being structures that we not only want to live in but which also encourage the

flourishing of *life*, where the apithological parallel finds most merit. As in apithology, living-systems architecture initially suffered from an absence of a taxonomy to describe ‘degrees of wholeness’, the ‘degree of coherence’ and for buildings ‘their degree of *life*’ (Alexander, 2001) limiting what could be discussed, and therefore what was effectively available to be seen.

Not surprisingly then, with similar aims and paths, apithology uses many architecture-like terms. Rather than being a description of classical structures, forms and features of physical spaces, apithology concerns itself mostly with the dynamics of space and flow in a contemporary architecture of thought within consciousness spaces. The leading thinking in contemporary architectural theory, and particularly that related to ‘living-structures’, being structures that create life, can therefore assist greatly in our understanding and interpretation of apithology.

Alexander (2001b.) invites architectural practitioners into a process of inquiry to create living-structures and, in the same way, apithology invites of its practitioners the same inquiry into the structure preserving processes of meaning making in humanity. In Alexander’s words:

*“Let us come, now, to what is perhaps the very core of the structure-preserving process for buildings and land. I have said a number of times that the essence of a living process lies in the way that each step repairs and extends and completes the whole. ... I want to ask you to think about a process which sets position, height, volume, and space of new buildings as they are created, so as to heal the land, and builds from them the larger geometric texture which can form a living whole in a city and community.”* (p.154)

Apithology is also a discipline that has as its purpose to combine aesthetics and functionality, where each step repairs, extends and completes the whole, using defined dimensions to look at human perceptions and the practicality of achieving meaningfulness in its infinite expressions, through a stepwise process of practitioner based self-inquiry. Using the words of Jean Gebser (1986) when examining aperspectival architecture: *“In the realm of the rational everything is orientated towards a center. The individual grasps this center only partially, sectorially and perspectivaly. The focal point once sought externally is found by the “new man” within himself. This is the integration and supersession*

*of rational fragmentation.”* (p. 468). The whole that is within is found by finding the meaning that is outside oneself. The practitioner’s question then is how to approach this task?

## CONFUSION OF CONCEPTIONS

Recognising that it is impossible to even begin to have the presumption to create generative forms with a confused and incoherent conception we are thrust into an inquiry with humility about the capacities of our own perception. Alexander (2001) describes the same phenomenon in the practice of architecture:

*“And if we do ever carefully examine our own picture of the world, we shall find, no doubt, a rather complicated mixture of things; vague conceptions of atoms, galaxies, and stars; organic life as it appears on earth from, we are told, some primordial soup of amino acids. Mixed with this, there is no doubt some form of concern for our fellow human beings, some kind of piety, some awareness that certain things are more beautiful and others less. How can all this muddled mess of a conception of the world be responsible for anything? How could it possibly be that this conception might interfere so deeply with our efforts as builders, that it makes it all but impossible to make a building well.”* (p. 7)

To provide some reference points in an inquiry into the role of conceptions in the practice of building human structures of thought that are ‘well’ or ‘well-made’, the following sections explain by illustrative summary five of the fundamental concepts involved in an apithological inquiry. These five dimensions are signified by the terms *delineation, orientation, location, configuration* and *contribution*. The architectural equivalent concepts are translated in this article as the qualities of *elevation, position, scale, tension* and *sympathy*. A simplified explanation of each of these crucial dimensions in apithology is provided using these five architectural metaphors.<sup>2</sup>

## DELINEATION OF HORIZON

The first component in the five dimensions of an apithological inquiry is that of *delineation*. This concept of ‘delineating the horizon of perception’ describes how with the “two definitional polarities separated by a perceptual barrier we can use the lineal fiction of a continuum of development to conjoin and

contrast two frames as counterpart perspectives” (*Aspects of Apithology*, Vol. 1 No. 1). On one side of this horizon is a tendency towards an absence of life on a passage towards eventual death and lifelessness. On the other horizon is the propensity for the presence of life and generation towards perpetual thriving and meaningfulness. The two sides of the notional central point of such a continuum are easily discernable by the propensity of the dominant tendency operating. From the perspective of each horizon the boundary point of commencement of the other is extremely hard to discern. Delineation of the horizon is a skill to acquire.

In architectural terms the equivalent concept would be *elevation*, being the definition of the ground level for the potential structure that will exist. In this concept of elevation is the identification of a line of reference unique to that landscape potentially describing where the foundations will be and the natural equilibrium points are to be found. While it may appear fundamental and inconceivable that this would not be inquired into before attempting construction, many a house has fallen by not having sound foundations or has flooded after the builder failed to correctly assess the high water mark levels of natural (although infrequent) floodplain flows. An inquiry into elevation is not a trite selection involving an arbitrary description. It is governed initially by the natural landscape and ultimately by the conditions the structure must endure and the functions which it must perform.

In apithology, the practitioner’s initial inquiry is to ascertain this horizon of perception. In an architectural survey what appears to be stable, solid, level, sound and structural might not hold any of these qualities or potentials. This is also the case for structures of consciousness. The natural level of the foundations for thought is where we come back to for stability and security when environmental conditions become adverse and we require a solid grounding. Before ascertaining the ability for further extension one must make an adequate survey of the foundations. The horizon of elevation once defined then informs the choice of the structure’s aspect and the view that is ultimately obtained and obtainable from this baseline of elevation.

#### ASPECTS OF PERCEPTION

The second component in the five dimensions of an apithological inquiry is that of *orientation*. This

concept of the ‘aspect of a perception’ describes how “clear contrasts can be seen between the four aspects in their different levels of proactive response and in their effects in creating different degrees of assumed levels of health.” (*Aspects of Apithology*, Vol. 1 No. 2). The four aspects are signified as *pathology* (p.), *anti-pathology* (p+), *apathology* (a\_) and *apithology* (a^), providing an additional level of definition to the primary horizons and their orientations towards health.

In architectural terms the equivalent concept would be *position*, being the orientation of the structure with reference to the north, south, east and west of the location. While these demarcations are arbitrary, their effect on the resulting form is significant. Whether the structure’s position is configured to capture or avoid light, heat, airflow, viewscape, points of access, ambient noise, or any one or more a combination of significant considerations, the effect of the ultimate potential for livability of the structure is dependent on this initial assessment.

In apithology, the practitioner’s necessary obligation is to ascertain the aspect of orientation of each conception. In architecture, what appears to be a conducive orientation on an initial inspection may be found to be only a temporary and seasonal aberration. Different conditions provide benefits and threats that need to be either openly encouraged by open portals or actively prevented by concrete barriers. This is also the case for structures of consciousness. The aspect of orientation provides for livability in circumstances of survivability. A structure’s optimal positioning then informs its location and the possible choices for its dimensions.

#### DIMENSIONS WITHIN LOCATION

The third component in the five dimensions of an apithological inquiry is that of *dimension*. This concept of a ‘dimension within location’ describes “the spans of different systems of perception of infinite variability within an infinite open-ended frame” bounded by the “conception of health” and the “perception of causation” operating (*Aspects of Apithology*, Vol. 1 No. 3). This dual concept of location and dimensionality defines the nominal center of perception and the span of conception, using ‘health’ and ‘causation’ as the key concepts of delineation. The limits of our conception of health (and unhealth) and what in remoteness is cause (or effect) suggest the boundaries for our meaningful

perception and the dimensions of consciousness in the wider landscape of all meaning.

In architectural terms the equivalent concept would be a structure's *scale*, being the total floor-space, the construction area and the volume of the individual room sizes that the potential structure contains. In the concept of 'dimensions within the location' is a recognition that the combination of sizes and shapes used within a defined location hold the potential for a variety of eventual forms. An inquiry into volume and scale within the landscape (once elevation and position are determined) is a complicated process of optimization.

In apithology, the practitioner's widest investigation is to consider the boundaries of perception within the available landscape of location. In architecture, how much area a structure covers and the spaciousness of its confines has physical restrictions. This is also the case for structures of consciousness. The expansiveness of conceptual meaning carries with it psychological restrictions, of both what can be envisaged as possible and what can be conceptualized as occurring. The dimensionality can only be seen after appropriate inquiry. The size and scale of the consciousness space prescribed by its dimensions itself creates the need for resolution in the inherent resulting structural tensions.

#### CONFIGURATIONS OF TENSIONS

The fourth component in the five dimensions of an apithological inquiry is that of *tension*. This concept of 'tensions in configurations' describes how in "the manifestations of the combination of the four tensions in resultant sets, each can be given a characterization by the presence or absence of their opposite forms." (*Aspects of Apithology*, Vol. 1 No. 4). The four combinations described represent a balance of grace and form (*eros* and *agape*) in space and structure. The degree, as well as the character, of this balance is what determines the *quality* of a conception. The question this description poses is not one of virtue. It is one of balance. Spaciousness can be obtained at the expense of structural integrity. Narrow and confined structures with structural integrity may have limited and restricted utility. The architect's roles, like that of all consciousness, is to hold paradox in balance, not compromise.

In architectural terms the equivalent concept would be *configuration*, the way form comes together to define and create a novel arrangement of space. In this concept of configuration is the architectural skill of the resolution of tensions in a way that does not create apprehension. The appreciation of the tensegrity of a structure (i.e. its tensions providing structural integrity) recognizes that the quality of stability arises from a configuration that is dynamic, even if apparently static. Even within the most immovable of concrete blocks considerable forces are operating. The perception of the integrity of the operating tensions in the configuration of form to construct unique space is a complicated inquiry. There are, however, some basic governing rules and limitations in the opportunity for creativity.

In apithology, the practitioner's empathetic task is to ascertain the appropriate tensions of configuration. In architecture, the engineering questions raised are not ever only structural, as there is also an inquiry into what is potentially possible. This is also the case for structures of consciousness. The 'space' created for perception may be rigid and constricted or open and transitory, concrete and closed or flimsy and insubstantial. The ascertainment of the balance required for the present conditions of existence is the essential inquiry to be made. The configuration that provides a unique balance creates a stable and functional form that may also be beautiful. The test of aesthetic beauty is ultimately qualified by the changing environment of utility. Tensions resolve differently with different configurations and are always subject to environmental integration.

#### CONTRIBUTION OF COACTIONS

The final component in the five dimensions of an apithological inquiry is that of *contribution*. This concept of the 'contribution of coactions' describes "the qualities of a conception by examining its distinct contributions in its relationships with its habitats of existence." (*Aspects of Apithology*, Vol. 1 No. 5). The nine potential forms of relationship an entity can have with its environments are described, only one of which can be considered to be mutually generative and therefore contributive to self and the whole.

In architectural terms the equivalent concept would be *sympathy*, being an assessment of how the built form performs in its relationship to its environment. Within this concept of sympathetic design is the understanding

of the reality of the conditions in which the form exists, be they climatically harsh, seasonally cyclonic or having density intensity. No structure operates without context, whether this is an open pristine ecological landscape or the cultural and structural milieu of millennia of closely surrounding urban development. Many structures are built from a design devoid of location with the assumption that after some preliminary site works there will be a blank slate for the planned development. An inquiry into the aesthetics and energetics of environmental coaction is not as simplistic as a brief site inspection. It is governed by the resulting forms of coaction that only occur once the structure and its character are fully manifest and existent in the changing landscape itself.

In apithology, the practitioner's additional requirement is to ascertain the contributions of these potential coactions. In architecture, each built form contributes something, be it positively or negatively attributed, to each other construction and the environment containing its formation, both intimately and directly. This is also the case for structures of consciousness. Each person's individual conception is actively and continually shaped by the quality of the consciousness of each other conception they are in dynamic relationship with in each moment of time. In the moment of understanding of this concept and the extent of its reach is the point at which a humanitarian evolutionary ethic becomes, for each apithology practitioner, profoundly acute. Before one can determine the validity or virtue of the unique structure of any conception, one must consider and inquire into its contributions to all other forms in each of its coactions. From this we see that the stability and beauty of the whole is often dependent on the integrity and grace of each of its parts, with function being dependent on the efficacy and elegance of the overall combinations of all.

#### ETHIC OF AESTHETICS

In placing together in one place the five core concepts of an apithological inquiry, the question may arise defensively as to why such a process of inquiry is even necessary? Surely, each person can make their own way in the struggle of life and death equally? The infinite plan of life itself involves a process of death and with every growth there must surely be decay? Even architecturally, form can be created and then destroyed with impunity as to the duration of its utility. With all construction there is destruction and the

paradox of eventual demise must surely be ever present, even prior to the architect's first sketch. Buildings, like lives, come and they go, serving those who occupy them adequately for the period of their occupation. Their beauty or austerity is of no concern in an evaluation of their utility. Why then should there even need to be a theory for the quality of spaces that are, by definition, temporary?

This raises a central question of the ethical orientation of apithological practice. In apithology the focus is on humanity as a collective and also on the humanity *in* the collective. In creating the conditions for the fulfillment of the potential for life, life flourishes within that potential. We might argue that it is not necessary to formulate conditions of generativity any more than it is desirable to have access to places of great beauty. Yet, apithology, like architecture "... *may well possess moral messages: it simply has no power to enforce them. It offers suggestions instead of making laws. It invites, rather than orders, us to emulate its spirit and cannot prevent its own abuse.*" (de Botton, 2007. p.20). The ethic that presents itself is one of inviting the potentiality existent in the opportunity that allows for conditions of humanity.

Alexander (2001a.) describes this ethic, of creating for humanity environments *of* humanity, describing a generative system, being one that continuously enables the creation of life in a human world of wholeness for each and for all:

*"The humanity of the environment comes about only when the processes are morphogenetic, are whole-seeking, are placed in a context that gradually allows people to work towards a living whole in which each person plays a part. ... I believe we may take on this task, collectively, and can gain effective, instrumental knowledge of our generative system, and thus some measure of awareness and control over the system of processes that generates the world. I choose to define a society as that system which creates the human world, and say that its primary ongoing function, and the criterion we should use to judge it by, is its capacity to create and re-create a living world for us."* (p. 509).

The vision presented resulting from this process of consciously creating living-structures in architecture is one of a society filled with humanity that creates a human world that has the capacity to re-create itself in cycles of living, generatively. The vision presented

resulting from a process of consciously creating generative structures in apithology is of a humanity filled with life giving societies where the self-worlds of the human mind let in beauty, light and grace where we re-create ourselves in enduring cycles of generative space. These two aesthetics each offer to us a clear and guiding personal and collective ethic.

#### NOURISHING SELF

The surprise insight in engaging with the ethic of a practice of apithological aesthetics is that in nourishing the world there is also a profound nourishing of the self. The most compelling parallel to be found between apithology and living-structures architecture comes in the personal reasons found for their practice. The benefit of creating living structures is experienced by the architectural practitioner as life-giving. The benefit of creating generative conceptions is experienced by the apithological practitioner as life-affirming. In finding living-centers the practitioner is also likely to find their own. Once again, it is Alexander (2001c.) who describes how the work of nourishing the world nourishes those who undertake it:

*“There is a simple and vital fact to contemplate. When I make something which has wholeness or life, I became more alive in the act of making it. When I make something which is dead, or contribute to the making of something which is dead, I become less alive. ... But when the thing which is made has life, when the process of making the thing come to life plays an important role, all this changes. The rewarding and life-enhancing nature of work comes into focus at the moment because the work does actually nourish the world. As it nourishes the world by building centers which have life, the people who are making these living centers themselves then begin to change dramatically.”* (p. 263)

For the apithological practitioner the questions of attraction and motivation seem to vanish over time. There comes for each person in the practice of a different way of seeing the world a desire to contribute to the life of the system, by expressing the life found in the system. To nourish self so as to nourish the world provides one with the courage of renunciation. Why contribute to the making of something that is dead once given the processes to enable something that enables life? For each practitioner who comes to apithology

there is a question of choice, and at the same time, no real question at all.

#### CONCLUSION

In summary, for the five dimensions of an apithology inquiry we can find parallels in architectural philosophy. There is in this no great mystery as the consideration and conflicts of form and space are all pervasive, whether they be the boundaries we form against the physical environment or the windows we create and allow into our conceptual spaces. We are the architects of our own dwellings of perception and this informs the quality of all our conceptions. As Christopher Alexander proposes, how can we with a confused mind create great architecture? The question posed by apithology is how can we hold great mindfulness within a confused architecture of consciousness? Our dwelling creates us while we create the place in which we dwell. The practitioner’s question is therefore how to release or enable the tensions in this paradox by developing new forms of unique practice.

The answer to the question of ‘how’ lies in the fact that the architecture of our mind is something no harder to see than the dynamic flows of an unbuilt architectural form in the mind of its designer. The philosophy and practice of architectural inquiry proves this to be difficult and possible. Christopher Alexander (2001a.) describes a profound fact by analogy that each person inquiring into the practice of apithology in designing conducive conditions for generativity eventually meets with the humility of their own personal discovery:

*“The crux of every design process lies in finding the generative sequence for that design, and making sure that sequence is the right one for the job. Because such a generative sequence is hard to find, people do not readily grasp the fact that such sequences exist, and therefore find design much more difficult than it needs to be.”* (p. 317)

It is that difficulty, and the process of finding its simplicity with integrity, that calls for an apithological process of inquiry. In conclusion (and in affirmation), philosopher Alain de Botton in discussing *The Architecture of Happiness* recalls the immense scope an inquiry into human expression contains and the validity in the desire for greater definition a taxonomy

of *qualities* provides within that aim. He could as easily be speaking about apithology as he is of architecture:

*“We might learn to put names to the virtues of buildings as these philosophers have done to those of people, carefully pinning down the architectural equivalents of generosity or modesty, honesty or gentleness. Analogising architecture with ethics helps us to discern that there is unlikely to ever be a single source of beauty in a building, just as no one quality can ever underpin excellence in a person. Traits need to arise at congruous moments, and in particular combinations, to be effective. A building of the right proportions which is assembled out of inappropriate materials will be no less compromised than a courageous man lacking patience or insight. Armed with a comprehensive list of aesthetic virtues, architects and their clients would be freed from over reliance on Romantic myths concerning the chance or divine origins of beauty. With virtues better defined and more readily integrated into architectural discussions, we would stand a fairer chance of systematically understanding and re-creating the environments we intuitively love.”* (p. 174)

This paper merely suggests that as practitioners we now begin to learn to walk the landscape of thought, sketch what appears and begin the process and practice of enacting living-designs by our desire for living. If we do this, who knows what gracefulness we might build for humanity and the grace of humanity we might build into the life in all of our lives.

Will Varey<sup>1</sup> - 15 September 2009

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<sup>1</sup> William Varey (B.Juris., LLB. (Hons.), MLM, Integral Theory (Grad. Cert.)) is a biosychosocial systems psychologist. He is a presently undertaking doctoral research into the dynamics of emergence in conceptions of health in social systems. He lives and works in Fremantle, Western Australia.

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<sup>1</sup> Apithology involves a practice of inquiry into the meaning that is being made, not the projection of meaning held. It honors meaning by holding meaning without constructing or controlling meaning. Apithology, as a practice, will then probably hold no attraction for the practitioner who does not feel the need to inquire into the system of meaning operating, because they hold their own meaning as being primary. It is not simply that their inquiry will not be done adequately because the intention to discover is only vaguely disguised under the intention to impose. The difficulty lies in the reality that the necessary inquiry will not be undertaken at all. An apithological practice holds no real virtue for those with a primary attachment to the mind of meaning they hold, making a desire for projection primary to any other motivation. This simple fact explains almost the entirety of the content of apithological form and practice. If one does not hold initially an open question, there can be no desire to listen for the offered explanation. The first question for the potential practitioner seeking an easy understanding of the application of apithology is to examine their own deepest motivation with reference to all of humanity. The depth of their intention will govern their capacity for revelation.

<sup>2</sup> These concepts are described in detail in the series of articles published as Aspects of Apithology: *'Introduction to Apithology: An Emergent Continuum'* (Volume No.1. No. 1), *'Orientations in the Four Dimensions of Health'* (Volume No.1. No. 2), *'Dimensions of Health: Locating Conceptions of Health and Causation'* (Volume No.1. No. 3), *'Balancing Dynamic Tensions: Pathology in Apithological Systems'* (Volume No.1. No. 4), *'Generativity and Coaction: Relations in Contribution Analysis'* (Volume No.1. No. 5). They are available at [www.aspects.apithology.org](http://www.aspects.apithology.org). This paper assumes their content as prior reading.

<sup>3</sup> This paper is published as a membership-based knowledge resource. This article is available free of charge. Subsequent articles in this series are provided by donation. Full access is provided to subscribers. To share this knowledge with confidence, please refer all interested readers directly to the library of online versions at [www.aspects.apithology.org](http://www.aspects.apithology.org) where current copies of the entire series of articles are maintained. If you have found this work of interest, please consider contributing your skills by joining our community of practice at [www.apithology.org](http://www.apithology.org).

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