

at their capacity to immerse, to belong to a new reality that does not seem to allow them to look at what has already become in their lives the “other reality” (to avoid confusion I am referring now to the real, physical one). This zooming in and out between worlds, modelled or imagined as well as real, is absolutely fascinating, and brings us exactly to the point of making this series of architectural exercises: revealing that there’s no reality outside the one that every one of us composes for ourselves. In other words, a cylindrical plaster volume of 5cm in height is as much a tree as a the *quercus robur* that is losing its leaves at about this time in autumn in front of our window.

The first Codex, Measures, took us at length on this route, where the cognitive was paired with *poiesis* to create an inseparable whole. After that first chapter, we now jump into a new discussion of a yet another seemingly basic term: Element. One more word that we believe we can handle easily without having to pay too much attention to it. But the first Codex has now taught us to be vigilant when it comes to terms and concepts. Even more, that exploring the meaning of terms can actually help to develop concepts, opening paths of comprehension.

Elements is opening a new gate for investigation. The second edition of the Codex, it marches along to the rhythm of the first year cursus as it gains in intensity and immersion.

Let’s not forget that this is just one of the different phases of ALICE’s first year. It is important to emphasize this because ALICE believes in open interpretations and dialogical approaches. The complexity of education cannot be reduced to a few elements, and it would be completely misleading to cast these elements as the fundamentals of early architecture studies.

On the other hand, confronting the students with a few “obvious” artifacts without defining them (continues page 3)

## 2018/19 ELEMENTS

PHASE 2/6—As we walk further into the world of words (and the ideas and realities they relate to), we seem to be confronted with a paradoxical movement. On the one hand, as the speleologist, the deeper we go, the more our knowledge grows. And with the increase of knowledge goes the appetite for curiosity. The more we know the more we want to know. On the other hand, the deeper we dive into the cave the further the entrance appears from us. The inevitable feeling of losing one reality in exchange for an obsessive ‘other’ is so strong that most of us do not know to which reality to refer to anymore.

I guess this is part of the game, or of any game where learning intensively is at stake. That game is to exchange, at least temporarily, what one could call an exterior reality with the interior one. It’s a well-known phenomenon, particularly with regard to first year students who, while casting plaster to make architectural models, speak quite curiously about the physical reality from which the model originated. Any speleological immersion bears intrinsically this risk: the one of forgetting that once we have entered a cave, in the best case scenario we will exit it having acquired some experience of learning about mirages and the power of the imagination. And in the worst case, we’ll be forever trapped in illusionary truths.

The platonic image of the cave of realities might seem slightly superficial in an introductory text that will open up to philosophical issues. Yet still relevant, I believe. When discussing some projection issues with first year students of architecture with barely a few weeks of experience in the field, I am astonished

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