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ATLAS EIGHT

Humans are distinguished from the remaining primates in that they are the only ones to be entirely bipedal. From the moment they began to walk upright, the manner in which they experience space has been determined by their vertical condition, which coincides with the force that imposes a certain order on the world. By aligning themselves with the force of gravity, they found a tentative rootedness of sorts, a bond with the earth which both anchored them and allowed them to retain their inherent mobility. From an early stage, this upright posture enabled a more complete experience of vertical space. They soon realised that exploring the world from a vertical perspective, seeking to master height, would increase their sovereignty on earth and bring them closer to the celestial transcendence which they believed to be supreme, positioning themselves between those they wished to dominate and the unknown which dominated them.

This vertical posture expanded their relationship with the world at large, inviting them to overcome the limitations of matter in search of answers to the many unknowns offered up by the world. However, it also brought with it a state of permanent tension. Walking upright on just two feet, humans experience a constant need for something to hold on to. Upright, humans raise their head, perceiving three levels: the ground on which their feet rest, their field of vision, which ranges far and near at a speed unmatched by their feet, and finally the vertical void hanging over their heads. As a result, humans walk in tension, resting on the

Height

compact, obscure soil while feeling the volatility and unpredictability of space above them. Whereas on one hand this inescapable tension holds us to the ground, on the other it reminds us of a weakness which must be overcome: the price we pay for the ability to walk upright is the constant risk of falling.

Whereas, on a global scale, mankind has sought protection, advancement and dominion by exploring height, on the scale of the spaces we have built for ourselves we have sought to underscore the presence of the verticality we have striven to maintain. Indoors, the vertical dimension demands a volume of space which exceeds our material needs, reflecting our desire to reinforce our hard-won verticality through our conception of space.

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