



PRACTICAL POETICS

RHYTHMIC SPATIALITY AND THE
COMMUNICATIVE MOVEMENT BETWEEN
SITE, ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURE

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ABSTRACT

My thesis is that urbanity is a function of the communicative movement between the natural and social conditions of a site, as revealed in architecture and sculpture, and most clearly in their continuity. In order to deal with the effects upon modern design and architectural thinking of dead metaphors like 'technology', 'form' and 'space', I critique and reject their use in architectural discourse, by returning to the philosophical tradition of 20th century phenomenology – Husserl and Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, et al - in order try to reveal the power of spatiality in 20th century thought, and its central importance to modern art and architecture. This led to new ways of making site-specific, topographic and spatial sculptures, and in some cases led to brilliant and urbane syntheses of architecture with sculpture – revealing the potential communicative depth of spatiality. Central to characterizing this communicative depth was recovering the cultural - rather than formal or picturesque - continuity of Renaissance and Classical poetics. Whilst the iconographic, social and political aspects of this continuity are standard features of interpretation, far less noticed is the tradition of *Eurhythmia*. Rhythm was traditionally seen as an aspect of measure – therefore invoking justice (cf. Plato's Divided Line in the *Republic*) and mediation; and these animate a rich geometric poetics that is more profound than the usual understanding. A vital aspect of the character of urban spaces – arguably the most communicative of architectural settings – is the rhythmic characteristics of situations and the natural world that are revealed in urban topography and architectural physiognomy, and often articulated most emphatically in sculptures. Crucially, the revelation of the structure of relationships between site, place, social life, the natural world, etc., which make up the architectural conditions for civic praxis, is the basis also of ornament and decorum in the arts generally. However, when architects confuse their work with sculpture - misunderstood as 'form' rather than rhythmic spatiality – the philosophical and communicative potential of architecture is diminished. My thesis concerns the conditions of the possible recovery of this potential in urban terms.

My argument is not only abstract but also dialogically engaged with other critical architects working at an urban scale today e.g. Peter Eisenman (and also engaged explicitly with his own dissertation, as I believe that there is an inherent, if not entirely causal, relation between words and images, theory and design). I feel that whilst one could produce a more elegant text by removing some parts of my dissertation, doing so would remove not only aspects of my argument, but also aspects of architectural culture that belong essentially together, and which become impoverished when cut away from each other. My work is seeking to counter this impoverishment - which is ultimately a condition of urbanity. The written work needs to be this extensive, in order to enable the design work to be sufficiently intense enough to deal with the problem of the built context of the modern city.

Victoria Street can be said to have always been conceived of as a sort of High Street, but despite the presence of some major representational buildings, the hinterland remained until recently disconnected from it. Arguably, a typical High Street is successful because it mediates the differences between the background metabolism of a city quarter and the decorum of the civic institutions that are the face of this deep urban structure. My work seeks to amplify and to reveal both aspects of this part of Westminster: firstly, as a series of urban rooms for the typical situations associated with a city quarter; secondly, in the rhythmic armatures of buildings that respond to the basic conditions of civic decorum, orientation and public life; and thirdly, in the creation of architectural settings for public sculptures.

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INTRODUCTION

THE PROBLEM OF RHYTHMIC AND COMMUNICATIVE SPATIALITY TODAY

i *The Problem of 'Method': Poetics, Practical Reason & Praxis*

'The young poet and musical child prodigy can attain a perfection without much training and experience – a phenomenon hardly matched in painting, sculpture or architecture. Poetry, whose material is language, is perhaps the most human and the least worldly of the arts, the one in which the end product remains closest to the thought that inspired it. The durability of a poem is produced through condensation, so that it is though language spoken in utmost density and concentration were poetic in itself. Here, remembrance, Mnémōsyné, the mother of the muses, is directly transformed into memory, and the poet's means to achieve the transformation is rhythm, through which the poem becomes fixed in the recollection almost by itself. It is this closeness to living recollection that enables the poem to remain, to retain its durability, outside the printed or the written page, and though the "quality" of a poem may be subject to a variety of standards its "memorability" will inevitably determine its durability, that is, its chance to be permanently fixed in the recollection of humanity. Of all things of thought, poetry is closest to thought, and a poem, no matter how long it existed as a living spoken word in the recollection of the bard and those who listened to him, will eventually be "made", that is, written down and transformed into a tangible thing among things, because remembrance and the gift of recollection, from which all desire for imperishability springs, need tangible things to remind them, lest they perish themselves.'

Hannah Arendt

The aim of this dissertation is to offer examples of the specific encounter with reality that architecture affords, in order to orient the rhythm that unites specific cultural situations within the ethical structure that reveals itself as urbanity. I have called the communicative movement that arises between site, architecture and sculpture *Practical Poetics*. I wrote this dissertation between 2010 and 2014, whilst I was simultaneously working on the design of a number of projects on Victoria Street. Imaginative architectural design – the fact that it is an art - is not simply the result of theorem applied to practise, and the philosophical ideas that I have explored in this dissertation suggest that 'concepts' are best investigated and develop most vividly '*in the*

*midst of things*¹, in the social conditions of everyday life. Thus the conventional notion of academic method – as either a literature survey, or the experimental method of testing a hypothesis under laboratory conditions – is challenged by the conditions of praxis. As this is a PhD *by praxis*, I refer to my own design work and do so in drawings made specifically as research. I have also used drawings to analyse and to describe St Peter's Klippan and the town of San Sebastian, as in both instances the relationships between architecture, sculpture and site are spatial as much as analogical.

The specific Platonic and Aristotelian traditions of philosophical enquiry that I investigate confidently situated geometry alongside logic, poetics alongside rhetoric, and natural science alongside making in general (*poesis*). This tradition survived until quite recently even in the 'natural sciences', and architecture is traditionally a discipline that attempts to embody the visible aspect of reality, and to represent its invisible aspects. Crucially, embodiment is experiential. In an early draft of his book, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation: The Question of Creativity in the Shadow of Production*², Dalibor Vesely suggested that:

In my approach, there is a point, where the interpretation (hermeneutics) and the way of making (poetics) come so close to each other, that they constitute a full reciprocity, in which what we know, contributes to what we make, what is already made, contributes substantially to what is possible to know... The distance separating the instrumental and the communicative understanding of architecture represents a wide gap in our contemporary culture. Any serious attempt to bridge this gap requires a new kind of knowledge, which can indicate, how genuine creativity and creative spontaneity may be reconciled with the productive power of contemporary science (technology)... The framework in which the communicative role of architecture can be restored must allow, apart from any other role, the reconciliation of the abstract language of conceptual constructions with the metaphorical language of the visible world. This was a typical task of poetics, replaced in modern times by the science of poetics, known better as aesthetics, which left the creative principles of making unaddressed... I have argued why it is important to return to poetics and why it can be, as a new poetics of architecture, together with

1 *Art and Space*, Martin Heidegger translated by Charles H. Seibert (*Die Kunst und der Raum*, SG Erker Verlag, St Gallen, 1969).

2 *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation: The Question of Creativity in the Shadow of Production*, MIT, Dalibor Vesely, 2004. The passage cited is from an unpublished manuscript made available to me by the author via José de Paiva.

contemporary hermeneutics, the most appropriate framework for the restoration of the humanistic nature of architecture. It is to this goal, that the main part of this book is devoted, with the full awareness, that the text, as it stands, is only a foundation and framework for such a goal.

This study is an attempt to build on Vesely's foundation and framework, and it has its origin in two other dissertations, and in my attempts as a writer and as a designer to unite the practical and the poetic aspects of architecture. My dissertation at Liverpool University for the *Bachelor of Architecture* degree (1993) was written as a response to a question posed in a lecture by Carlo Scarpa - 'Can Architecture be Poetry?' I was lucky to be taught by Karl Simms in the English department and by Raymond Quek in the architecture school. Scarpa's answer to his rhetorical question was a qualified yes, with the warning that 'You musn't say: "I'm going to produce a poetic piece of architecture", poetry grows out of the thing itself.'³ After working in practice in Germany for two years, I returned to England and took a *Master of Philosophy* degree in *The History and Philosophy of Architecture* at Cambridge University (1996). My dissertation, 'The Theatricality of the Baroque City: M-D Pöppelmann's Zwinger at Dresden for August the Strong of Saxony', was supervised by Dalibor Vesely. Orienting both dissertations was Aristotle's notion of *mimesis* set out in his *poetics*. Also key was the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer, for whom all of our experiences of art are fundamentally festive. The orienting power of festive time⁴ (or 'time out of time'), suggested to me that Baroque cities, with their emphasis upon festivals and spaces for them, were essentially theatrical in both character and conception. Theatricality is thus a quality of spatiality and a form of temporal rhythm, and we sense in Baroque spaces the potential for transformation. This potential informs and inspires the profiles and armature of Baroque buildings, giving them an air of expectancy and imminence - a powerful sense of latent energy.

³ 'Can Architecture be Poetry?', Carlo Scarpa, in *Carlo Scarpa: The Complete Works*, ed. Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol, Electa/The Architectural Press, London, 1986, p.283.

⁴ *The Relevance of the Beautiful: Art as Play, Symbol, and Festival and other essays*, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Cambridge University Press, 1986: 'There is in addition, however, a totally different experience of time which I think is profoundly related to the kind of time characteristic of both festival and the work of art. In contrast with the empty time that needs to be filled, I propose to call this "fulfilled" or "autonomous" time.', p. 42.

I decided five years ago that in order to orient myself better as an architect involved in making cities, that I needed to try to understand how architecture might be considered an art and what it has in common with, and how it differs from the other arts.⁵ My supervisors for this Ph.D. dissertation were Peter Carl, Helen Mallinson and Joseph Rykwert. I have been inspired by the emphasis that they place upon *praxis* and the role of nature in architecture. I felt compelled to investigate the current tendency of architects to discuss their work in terms of 'sculptural form' as I believe that this is a symptom of a general misunderstanding and misconception at the heart of modern architecture. This misunderstanding of the relationship between architecture and the other arts has many consequences I suggest: what is at stake, the continuity of communicative spatiality and urban praxis, is the topic of this dissertation. The possible recovery of this continuity is its aim. In order to calibrate this aim, I will describe the problems that we encounter as architects working in cities that seemingly lack any communicative space between 'tradition' and 'modernity'.

Arguably, architects have, over the recent decades, become obsessed with 'form' and in imitating sculptors⁶, and yet this tendency coincided, somewhat ironically, with sculptors' increasing fascination with spatial experience and tectonics. Whilst the intrinsic link between commission, ornament and decorum that shaped traditional cities has largely been lost

⁵ Cf. *On Painting*, Alberti (1435), Penguin Classics, 1972. For a discussion of the enduring power of the concept of *mimesis* in modern poetry and of the compelling attraction between poet and painter see also 'Beyond the Rhetorician's Touch: Stevens's painterly abstractions', Alan Filreis, *American Literary History*, Spring 1992, pp. 230-63, which extrapolates on Wallace Stevens's 1951 MOMA lecture 'The Relations between Poetry and Painting' and the poet's art collection, his poems about paintings, etc.

⁶ Cf. *The Art-Architecture Complex*, Hal Foster, Verso, 2011. Whilst 'it's always good to hear an establishment figure having a go at these powerful, universally celebrated architects', Kieran Long suggests, he articulates the essential weaknesses in Foster's approach: 'The problem with the book is not so much that we've heard these things before... The problem is that in bringing a linear, author-focused attitude to architecture, his critique is stranded in abstract, art history. I didn't find a single mention of the city, of public life, of the street or of any of the things that surround the buildings he looks at', Review, *Icon*, 28/02/12:

<http://www.iconeye.com/opinion/review/item/9654-the-art-architecture-complex>.

I also find *Art and Architecture: a Place Between*, Jane Rendell, Tauris, 2006, frustrating: not only because she indulges the pretensions of a certain generation of architects to behave like fine artists e.g. Tschumi, Libeskind, Alsop, et al; but because - in common with many of her colleagues at UCL - she refuses to discuss what the art of architecture is, and how it differs from fine art. The result of this too easy elision of 'art' with 'architecture' is that avant-garde architects continue to usurp the role of artists and to neglect the central tasks of their own praxis - leaving the task of making cities to others, with dire consequences for the quality of both the art and the architecture that is created in this civic betrayal.

today, I would like to suggest that Site Specific Art and Land Art renew the mediated relationships between the natural world, temporal phenomena and human artefacts that typify traditional art experience. The outward forms of modern sculpture might be radically different to traditional art works, but they remain fundamentally experiential, and, I suggest, ornamental in character.

The majority of contemporary architectural discourse concerns formal categories (semiotics, type, etc.) and/or new or emerging technologies; and much current architectural theory mirrors the social sciences attempts to establish 'scientific' methods of research, largely based upon statistical methods of collecting and collating data. In contrast, Site Specific art works are essentially spatial experiences that enliven, intensify and articulate one's perception of temporality, geometry and cosmology⁷; and so might be described, essentially, as poetic.

Aristotle's *poetics* concerns the art of drama specifically, and in particular, the importance of mediation in theatrical presentation. Aristotle suggested that poetry and painting, as arts of imitation, should use the same principal element of composition (structure), namely, plot in tragedy and design (outline) in painting⁸. This suggests to me that there is an irrevocable link between use and appearance in architecture.

7 James Turrell's *Roden Crater* is a monumental earthwork and natural observatory recalling the Renaissance ambition to build wells deep enough to view the stars from during the day. Walter de la Maria's *Lightning Field* reveals the invisible aspects of nature in a similar way that the spectrum of natural light appears in the commingling of sunlight and water in the rainbows that hover over Baroque fountains. Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* emphasizes the reciprocity of geometry with the appearance and disappearance of natural phenomena, and his *Non-Site* sculptures recall the role of Curiosity Cabinets in reconciling taxonomy with wonder. Dan Graham's investigations with reflections in curved glass operate in a rich seam of 'being and seeming to be' that typified practical experiments in perspective in Baroque architecture and art regarding 'deformation' and 'reformation'. This list is not complete, and unfortunately in this dissertation I only have space to look in more detail at some *Site Specific* artworks by Richard Serra and Eduardo Chillida. However, their work might be seen to echo the traditional aim and role of architecture – to situate us in relation to the natural world, other people, ethical and political values, and the processes of social life and the material culture.

8 *Poetics*, Aristotle, 6.19–21. Cf. *Ut Pictura Poesis*, Horace, which is based upon a notion of *mimesis* as decorum in both painting and poetry:

*'If a painter had chosen to set a human head
On a horse's neck, covered a melding of limbs,
Everywhere, with multi-coloured plumage, so
That what was a lovely woman, at the top,
Ended repulsively in the tail of a black fish:
Asked to a viewing, could you stifle laughter, my friends?
Believe me, a book would be like such a picture,
Dear Pisos, if it's idle fancies were so conceived
That neither its head nor foot could be related
To a unified form. 'But painters and poets*

Gadamer's begins his argument in 'On the Contribution of Poetry to the Search for Truth' asserting that 'it seems incontrovertible to me that poetic language enjoys a particular and unique relationship to truth'.⁹ He declares that this is despite 'the old Platonic and naive objection to the trustworthiness of poetry and poets – "poets often lie"... for the liar wants to be believed'. His faith in the performative nature of truth - as an aspect of dialogue and of participation with reality - is at the heart of his objection to claims for scientific method as the only mode of articulation of truth. Gadamer insists upon the role of 'Language as Horizon' in *Truth and Method*, and of 'language games'¹⁰ as an essential aspect of the relationship between Being and world. In his essay on poetry and truth he contends that 'language always furnishes the fundamental articulations that guide our understanding of the world. It belongs to the nature of familiarity with the world that whenever we exchange words with one another, we share the world.' Poetry's role in "making ourselves at home" in the world suggest a profound similarity with architecture of course. This similarity is suggested by Gadamer's insistence in the conclusion of *Truth and Method* upon the ludic character of discourse and of creativity and dwelling in general. He emphasises the fundamental orienting role that play has in culture generally:

What we mean by truth here can best be defined again in terms of our concept of *play*. The weight of the things we encounter in understanding plays itself out in a linguistic event, a play of words playing around and about what is learnt. *Language games* exist where we as learners – and when do we cease to be that – rise to the understanding of the world. Here it is worth recalling what we said about the nature of play, namely that the player's actions should not be considered subjective actions, since it is, rather, the game itself

*Have always shared the right to dare anything,
I know it: I claim that licence, and grant it in turn:
But not so the wild and tame should ever mate,
Or snakes couple with birds, or lambs with tigers.'*

The idea that poetry and painting are similar was not Horace's discovery of course, and he probably knew of a more explicit earlier statement of Simonides of Keos (first recorded by Plutarch, *De gloria Atheniensium*, 3.347a, more than a century after Horace's *Ars Poetica*): "*Poema pictura loquens, pictura poema silens*" (poetry is a speaking picture, painting a silent, mute, poetry).

⁹ 'On the Contribution of Poetry to the Search for Truth', in *The Relevance of the Beautiful*, Op. Cit., p.105.

¹⁰ *Truth and Method*, H-G Gadamer, Op. Cit., p.490.

that plays, for it draws the players into itself and thus becomes the actual subjectum of the playing.... When we understand a text, what is meaningful in it captivates us just as the beautiful captivates us... what we encounter in the experience of the beautiful and in understanding the meaning of tradition really has something of the truth of play about it.¹¹

Gadamer's thesis is that in comparing *Truth and Method* dialectically, scientific method is revealed to operate within the horizon of language. It is thus shown to be another aspect of play, and that in fact theory, as *theoria*, is ultimately a mode of playing with the possibilities latent within the order of the cosmos. This *play involvement* is not subjective he contends, just as 'the ability to act theoretically is defined by the fact that in attending to something one is able to forget one's own purposes'. Gadamer continues to emphasise the theatrical and performative character of theoretical participation, and to defend the role of contemplation as a characteristic of this, declaring that '*Theoria* is a true participation, not something active but something passive (*pathos*), namely being totally involved in and being carried away by what one sees.'¹²

Gadamer's critique of scientific method and emphasis upon human experience and participation informs my approach towards the contribution *praxis* makes to the sum of human knowledge. He asserts as the conclusion of *Truth and Method* that:

There is undoubtedly no understanding that is free of all prejudices, however much the will of our knowledge must be directed towards escaping its thrall. The certainty achieved by using scientific methods does not suffice to guarantee truth. This especially applies to the human sciences, but it does not mean that they are less scientific; on the contrary it justifies the claim to special humane significance that they have always made. The fact that in such knowledge the knower's own being comes into play certainly shows the limits of method, but not of science. Rather, what the tool of method does not achieve must – and really can – be achieved by a discipline of questioning and enquiring, a discipline that guarantees truth.¹³

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid., pp.124-5: 'Here we can recall the concept of sacral communion that lies behind the original Greek concept of *theoria*. *Theoros* means someone who takes part in a delegation to a festival. Such a person has no other distinction or function than to be there... Greek metaphysics still conceives the essence of *theoria* and of *nous* as being present to what is truly real, and for us the ability to act theoretically is defined by the fact that in attending to something one is able to forget one's own purposes.'

13 *Truth and Method*, pp.490-91.

Since architecture is not a science, my approach in this dissertation is not a 'method' as such, but rather a process that engages imagination with reason to disclose the dialectics of situations. It will necessarily be a mixed methodology, ultimately oriented to Gadamer's concept of practice. It will involve a dialogue between concrete judgements arising from design/making (and the conversations with the several constituents - and their institutional backgrounds - ranging from clients to contractors to artist collaborators); and reflection arising from the philosophical concerns for an ethically/culturally coherent approach to urban transformation. The modernist procedure of raising the richness of civic life to instrumental generalities - 'space', 'form', 'circulation', 'public', etc. - has made planning efficient, but at the expense of the city. Accordingly, it has become necessary to recover or reconstruct what is at issue in re-making a city. Hence this document is wide-ranging: an attempt to summarise the issue according to present understanding. The particular focus of the argument arises from my practise's Victoria Street commission, and is concerned to understand the nature of communication of meaning in the movement from urban topography, to architecture to sculpture. Rather than present a stand-alone literature review, this understanding appears as the argument progresses. Gadamer persuasively suggests that philosophical research is itself situated in praxis. This 'method' is not simply what Manfredo Tafuri calls "operative criticism", i.e. an architect's naive interpretation of another's motives bereft of any theoretical structure¹⁴; nor is it an attempt to deploy theoretical concepts to 'explain' how to ensure successful outcomes¹⁵ - to what is inevitably an imaginative activity both for designers and critics.

Gadamer claims that 'naive Platonism' often obscures the reciprocity of action and contemplation today, and he distinguishes 'practical philosophy' from modern "theory" in the essays collected in *Reason in the Age of Science*. Gadamer suggests that "Today practice tends to be defined by a kind of

14 Cf. *The Sphere and the Labyrinth: Avant-gardes and Architecture from Piranesi to the 1970's*, Manfredo Tafuri, MIT, 1990.

15 *The Formal Basis of Modern Architecture: Dissertation 1963*, Peter Eisenman, Lars Muller, 2006.

opposition to theory”¹⁶, and that in ‘technocratic societies’ theory dominates praxis. In ‘What is Practice? The Conditions of Social Reason’, Gadamer compares the role of craftsmen in traditional societies to the dominant role of experts in ‘technological civilizations’. Expertise now dominates all aspects of common practical life, he claims. This is troubling, he suggests, because it affects political life; when we cease to have practical knowledge we are not capable of participating fully in society. Praxis is a fundamental aspect of being human Gadamer suggests, since Being is typified as *involved in the horizons of reality*.¹⁷ Praxis is an exemplary mode of Being he explains, because it:

involves consciously intended purposiveness, in terms of which one understands oneself as humanly reasonable, because one has an insight into the suitability of any means of commonly willed ends, the realm of all that transcends utility, usefulness, purposiveness takes on a unique distinction. We call anything of this sort beautiful in the same sense in which the Greeks used the word *kalon*. This referred not just to the creations of art or ritual, which are beyond the realm of necessities, but encompasses everything with respect to which one understands without any question that because it is choiceworthy, it is neither capable nor in need of a justification of its desirability from the standpoint of its purposiveness. This is what the Greeks called *theoria*: to have been given away to something that in virtue of its overwhelming presence is accessible to all in common and that is distinguished in such a way that in contrast to all other goods it is not diminished by being shared and so is not an object of dispute like all other goods but actually gains through participation. In the end, this is the birth of the concept of reason: the more what is desirable is displayed for all in a way that is convincing to all, the more those involved discover themselves in this common reality: to that extent human beings possess freedom in the positive sense, they have their true identity in that common reality.¹⁸

16 ‘What is Practice? The Conditions of Social Reason’, in *Reason in the Age of Science*, H-G Gadamer, MIT, 2001, p.69.

17 Ibid., p76. Peter Carl notes that *Praxis* is characterised by ‘Horizons of Involvement’, and I will discuss the layered and stratified character of these in some detail below.

18 Ibid., p77. The ontological meaning of beauty in Greek culture is clear in the meaning of *kalon* as beauty, and moral beauty, or goodness. This duality is one reason for the importance of Hellenic culture to Romanticism, evidenced most explicitly in John Keat’s poem *Ode on a Grecian Urn* (1820), which concludes:

*When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."*

One reason for this interest in the integrity of artifacts, I suggest, is that industrial production and the changes this entailed in the relationships between cities and natural world - and

Gadamer makes a case for “Practical Philosophy” as *Hermeneutics* noting that whilst modern ‘hermeneutics is understood (as) the theory or art of explication, of interpretation’, it is in fact ‘old.’¹⁹ In 18th century German the ‘expression for this *Kunstlehre* (a teaching about a technical skill or know-how), is actually a translation of the Greek *techne*’, Gadamer tells us, noting that this points to the origins of Humanism in Aristotelean philosophy:

It links hermeneutics with such *artes* as grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic. But the expression *Kunstlehre* points to a cultural and educational tradition other than that of late antiquity: the remote and no longer vital tradition of Aristotelian philosophy. Within it there was a so-called *philosophia practica* (*sive politica*), which lived on right up to the eighteenth century. It formed the systematic framework for all the “arts”, inasmuch as they all stand at the service of the “*polis*.”²⁰

Hermeneutics is a mode of what Gadamer describes as *theoria*, and in fact he extrapolates - from Aristotle’s ‘splendid statement’, in his *Politics*, that ‘we name active in the supreme measure those who are determined by their performance in the realm of thought alone’²¹ - the shocking statement (to us moderns) that ‘Theoria itself is a practice.’²² This statement makes sense in the context of the ancient world but seems odd to us today when we are used to thinking of theory in terms of science; and of poetry as something that is impractical, and in fact of practice, in contrast to ‘theory and science’ in terms of ‘impurity, haphazardness, accommodation or compromise.’²³ It makes sense if we think of it in terms of politics Gadamer suggests, and in particular in

between mankind and nature generally - disrupted what was traditionally mediated by craft (poetics). I will investigate attempts to reunite the various arts with craft within the context of industrial production below. Romanticism was in many ways a form of retreat from civic culture in favour of an individual relationship with ‘truth’ and with self, although the tension between withdrawal and engagement with modern life and with ‘nature’, led to a strong ambiguity in the poetry of Hölderlin and Rilke, which Heidegger describes in terms of fragment. Dalibor Vesely sees in ‘The Ambiguity of the Fragment’ both the possibility for further disorientation and recovery of the whole- the fragment points both ways he claims. Arguably, the context of much of our work as architects today is in the 19th century cities that we have inherited from our great-grandparents, and their concerns with ruination and with the representation of nature within civic culture remain potent. These somewhat unresolved aspects of modernity are something which architecture cannot help encountering today I suggest.

19 ‘Hermeneutics as Pratical Philosophy’, in *Reason in the Age of Science*, Op. Cit., p.88.

20 Ibid.

21 *Politics*, Aristotle, 1325b 21ff.

22 *Reason in the Age of Science*, Op. Cit., p.90.

23 Ibid.

Plato's writing on the state that distinguish between 'purely ideal order' and the 'soiled and mixed up world of the senses'; the tension between these typify the character of the *polis* as site of *agon*, conflict and participation, and, Gadamer claims, 'the relationship between theory and practice in the Greek sense.'²⁴

Practice is thus an attribute of social reason, just as theory is a matter of participation in what is acknowledged as common. Participation is the basis of political life, and the nature of city life is that it is there that we agree and acknowledge what it is that we disagree about.

Poetics is in fact much closer to praxis than we are led to believe today.

Peter Carl claims that in fact poetics is the imitation of praxis:

Aristotle separates mimetic discourse from the work of politics and logic, in his *Poetics*. At the same time, he makes the central thesis of his treatment (of, mostly, tragic drama) the proposition that poetics is a mimesis of *praxis*; and the basis of this mimesis is what he terms *mythos* (usually translated as 'plot'). Accordingly, one can see that Plato and Aristotle are responding to the life in logos in different ways, but that the life in logos itself harbours a commonality that claims all speakers. One always finds oneself in an agonistic movement between particular and universal, between concrete many and symbolic one, between dialogue and dialectic. As the very nature of 'finding oneself', being, there-being, this *agon* would be reframed by Heidegger as one between earth (conditions) and world (possibilities), which points to the universal nature of 'situation (all situations involve interpretation).'²⁵

I suggest that Carl's emphasis upon interpretation suggests its central role in poetics. *Poetics as imitation of praxis* suggests that it is in fact a mode of decorum – and that interpretation concerns what is or is not appropriate in a situation. In terms of architecture I would suggest that this is not a matter of either the introverted nature of functionalism on the one hand, nor the extroverted character of formalism on the other. Rather, decorum is the communication between both the interior and exterior of buildings, people, and the world. We see this most clearly illustrated in the role that facades play as spatial thresholds between interior and exterior rooms – indeed, the façade

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ 'Geometry and Discourse', Peter Carl, unpublished essay, 2010.

was itself understood as a type of space in Baroque architecture. This notion still has currency in modern architecture, I believe.²⁶

In urban settings the role of the façade is key to establishing urbanity itself. This is because there is a certain degree of typicality both to spatial situations, (or 'programs'), and to urban contexts, which the façade of a building negotiates. This is the most obviously 'ornamental' aspect of architecture. The central role that ornament and facades play in mediating between building and city, and its contribution to decorum generally, is something that the antinomies of 'function' and 'form' cannot articulate. Yet the façade – and the vexed role of ornamental sculptures within it – perhaps unsurprisingly, reveal, I suggest, the tension between the art and praxis of modern architecture.

26 Cf. The facade is the meeting between outside and inside - Fasaden ar motet mellan ute och inne, Peter Celsing, Museum of Finnish Architecture (1992).

ii *The Problem of Civic Decorum & The Disunity of the Arts in Victorian London*

In his report to the Office of Works in 1905 Aston Webb proposed a series of decorative stone figures arranged on the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, so that:

The Painters would occupy the central curtains of the Cromwell Road front, while the Sculptors would have the West and the Architects the East curtains of this front, the Craftsmen occupying the whole of the Exhibition Road front.

In effect, the attempt to unify the arts and to house their fruits together at the V&A was arguably undone at the moment in which their accommodation was conceived – the architect placing his work amongst the ‘other’ artists and separating these from craftsmen²⁷. The placement of statues depicting ‘Knowledge’ and ‘Inspiration’ on either side of the main entrance typified the curious situation that Aston Webb was trying to work in at the beginning of the twentieth century – one which Peter Eisenman’s recent advocacy of ‘the new subjectivity’ seems unconsciously to reflect²⁸.

²⁷ In conversation with Melissa Hamnett, director of sculpture at the Victoria and Albert Museum and Kieran Long, director of architecture and the digital art, in July 2013, I suggested that instead of a new sculptural program for the new courtyard, an annual symposium might be a better way to connect the building to the city. The first of these will be in Spring 2014 celebrating the life and work of Joseph Rykwert. An annual festival each summer will help to animate the new courtyard. The architect of the V&A’s refurbishment, Amanda Levete, seems to be strangely resistant to the project’s use as a sculpture court.

²⁸ Cf. Interview with Peter Eisenman by Iman Ansar, *Architecture Daily*, 13th September 2013, ‘Eisenman’s Evolution: Architecture, Syntax, and New Subjectivity’. Whilst the late 19th century city is often typified by the alienated figure of the flaneur, the other figure that haunts it is the craftsman. A fundamental tension existed in the 19th century between the ideal of an artist as free - if poor and often mad - genius, and the counter reaction to this, which took the form of attempts to revive the Guild tradition e.g. The Art Workers’ Guild was founded in 1884. What was at stake in these diverse images of the artists was the quality not only of art, but I suggest, the public value of this art. For the flaneur, the city is a finished artefact that has no need of any creative contribution (the flaneurs view is essentially Hegelian, accepting his argument for the death of art). Creativity for the flaneur is instead a form of criticism, a pessimistic commentary upon a state of abandonment – what Baudelaire called a struggle between ‘spleen’ and ‘ideal in *Les Fleurs du Mal* (1857). In contrast, the Victorian neo-Guildsmen were embedded in culture, responsive to economic and civic needs, socially active and devoted to improving the worst aspects of industrialism. It is not an exaggeration to describe William Morris’s Christian Socialism as the counterpoint to 20th century Situationism – whilst both share a profound antipathy towards capitalist industrialisation and the spectacle of the modern city, Morris’s position was both active and contemplative - a proto-modern embodiment of Alberti’s pragmatic and socially active civic humanism. In contrast, Eisenman’s position can be said to be always to try to de-situate Alberti and Palladio from the conditions that their imagination encountered,

Figure 2 Figure of Architecture by students of the Royal College of Art under the supervision of Professor Lanteri

and similarly to attempt to escape from architecture and *praxis* generally, into literary theory or art practise. Contra this, Leatherbarrow's description of the loggia of Palladio's *Pallazo Chiericatti* (Op. Cit., 'Sacrificial Space', in *Common Ground*) situates it exactly in the civic topography of 16th century Vicenza as well as its current status as both grand entrance and public short cut. Increasingly, it is not the areas of interest to which Eisenman directs us to that are uninteresting or irrelevant, but rather that his attempts to claim autonomy for these architects and artists and critics that is misleading. It is a symptom, I suggest, of the various dualisms between practical knowledge and theory that typified 19th century culture. Eisenman sees that something is at stake, but cannot identify what this *topos* is, and so everything is reduced to a fight between a neo-liberal notion of the individual genius versus the everyday world, and their hunt for autonomous rules and orders. The irony of this paradox should be amusing, but is somehow not.

What was at stake I would suggest, in Victorian Londoner's attempts to house the arts and sciences together at Albertopolis – and in Webb's efforts to represent the unity of progress and tradition in sculptures set into facades – was not simply the neuroses of architects, nor the credibility of architecture as an intellectual discipline, but its contribution to the public good: which means its role in a modern city. Architecture is obviously a discipline with a history, but it is dependent²⁹ and contingent rather than autonomous in character, and the architectural imagination, I suggest – if one can use such a loose term – flourishes in confrontation with the negotiations that typify urbanity. The role of the architect is at stake in this confrontation – are we “free” like modern artists, or bound not only by the character of specific commissions, but by the broader ethical ambit of civic architecture?

Despite the art historians' attempts to reduce 19th century *civic architecture* to a question of styles, this civic topography is largely what we inherit in European and American cities. Victorian civic architecture in Britain was largely the result of the Municipal Reform Act – or Municipal Corporations Act – of 1835, after which properly elected and accountable municipal governments were formed in Manchester, Birmingham, Bradford and Leeds. From these grew the drive to make these productive landscapes into proper cities. There were roughly four stages in the development of Civic Pride in Victorian England.

The Industrial Revolution created profits but also misery – the moral crisis signalled by Engels in his study of working conditions in Manchester in the 1830s³⁰. Previously provincial centres of production – factory-towns – sought to transform themselves into “proper” cities after 1835. For this to work, an appeal to high culture was required³¹ – which of course industry was not. Asa Briggs documents the growth of the so-called “civic gospel” of Birmingham, in his book *Victorian Cities*³². In terms of buildings, this took the form of institutional monuments, from town halls to educational bodies to charitable organisations, along with the urban planning necessary to make

29 Cf. *Architecture Depends*, Jeremy Till, MIT, 2009.

30 Cf. *The Conditions of the Working Class in England*, Friedrich Engels, 1845.

31 Cf. *Culture and Anarchy*, Mathew Arnold, 1867-8.

32 *Victorian Cities*, Asa Briggs, Pelican, 1963, p. 184.

visible their proper functioning, which one might call, after Briggs, the topography and architecture of "civic pride". In this context "art" was the mark of a cultured society, and the municipal art schools were among the institutions by which cultured civic pride could be communicated to the unlettered masses, in effect creating a properly "cultured" constituency via civic art and ornament, and of course a new mode of *decorum*.

These newly civic cities (Liverpool was a village at the beginning of the 19th century) enacted the representational tropes of earlier forms of corporate power. These were 'inscribed in the public rites and in the published funeral addresses, which sought to recreate a life devoted to beneficent exercise of power and to place the individual into a long line of patrimonial duty'³³. In a recent study of *The Public Culture of the Victorian middle class*, Simon Gunn notes how the 'shared modes of ritual expression' in Victorian 'processional culture... offered rich resources for the display of civic pride and community, and of authority, social order and identity.'³⁴ Local worthies – as they became known – aspired to patriarchal values ('he lived and died like a patriarch' was a common claim) and 'municipal leaders' saw in the public spectacle of funerals ways to sanctify their newly found 'civic virtues'. Architecture was not only key in the creation of buildings to house civic virtue, but was also seen as an essential part of the foundation of new universities. The Roscoe Professorship at Liverpool University was the first chair in architecture at a British University, and is still funded by the Leverhulme Trust (who of course also owned Port Sunlight and made soap). The elision of great wealth with civic virtue is most evident in the cities created in North America in the 19th century of course (Pittsburgh's Carnegie Mellon University, etc., etc.). Munificent cultural patronage also created new forms of social life and the establishment of municipal public art Galleries (The Walker, The Tate, etc.) by industrialists, who 'had the capacity to transform evanescent authority into something resembling the permanence of power', Gunn believes.

³³ *The Public Culture of the Victorian middle class: Ritual and authority in the English industrial city 1840-1914*, Simon Gunn, Manchester University Press, 2007, p. 178.

³⁴ *Ibid.* See also *Victorian and Edwardian Town Halls*, Colin Cunningham, Routledge Kegan and Paul, 1981. Victorian history painters, such as Lord Leighton, were particularly interested in processions e.g. *Cimabue's Celebrated Madonna is carried in Procession through the Streets of Florence, 1853-1855*.

However, 'the illusion of power embodied by mid-Victorian civic ritual' was 'transitory', he concludes, and 'the sheer number and scale of public spectacles in the second half of the nineteenth century gradually satiated the appetite of observers for such events.'³⁵ Enthusiasm for representational structures and rituals went somewhat against the august puritanism of the northern merchant class, who were almost entirely Methodists and Quakers, and the 'evangelical' wing of The Church of England struggled to represent and to accommodate these tensions within the establishment³⁶. *The Battle of the Styles* was not simply a matter of taste of course, but of denominational definitions, and these were closely related to perceived political status and the closeness or not of provincial cities to a national or international sense of modernity. Arguably, the port cities of Liverpool and Glasgow saw themselves as part of the wider Atlantic context that included North America. The Enlightenment, and Whig politicians favoured Greek architecture to the Ultramontane position of The Oxford Movement³⁷. The sudden appearance of Anglo-Catholic rituals alongside the rebirth of pseudo-medieval traditions (the grand funeral parade, etc.) and neo-Gothic architecture was an attempt to save England from the dangers of rapid industrialisation. The immense wealth necessary to imitate medieval culture meant that neo-Gothic architecture is at once strangely anachronistic and innovative. This contradiction is clear in the ways in which architects sought to reconcile technological innovations with the bizarrely arcane notions of late medieval train stations. Stations tended to be either triumphal arches (Euston, Kings Cross, *Gare de l'Est*) or hotels (Victoria, Liverpool Street). The spires and loggias of St Pancras Station and Hotel by Gilbert Scott embody both types.

London was somewhat different to the northern British cities, of course, and its aspiration to be the centre of the British Empire meant that it did not have to borrow "culture" in the way in which provincial cities imitated ancient Greece or Rome. However, *Albertopolis* was, in effect, an attempt to transpose a Victorian version of ancient Alexandria to London, with the Victoria and Albert Museum the site where two conceptions – of craft and industry - met. Another way of understanding this is as a matter of making

³⁵ Ibid., p. 179.

³⁶ Ibid., p.178.

³⁷ Cf. Rykwert, *The Judicious Eye*, Op. Cit.

culture through making artefacts of a certain quality (for which the organisation by period and locale as the 'styles' - was crucial). Industrial production had supposedly triumphed at the Grand Exhibition of 1850. A counter reaction was made in attempts to claim for 'Culture' a greater degree of authenticity. Everybody involved in commenting upon 'culture', from John Ruskin to Mathew Arnold, saw craftsmanship embodying not only artistic values, but also greater moral worth than mass labour. For Marx, the Division of Labour resulted in inequality; for Morris this was a form of spiritual and material deprivation also⁹⁸.

Whilst it is tempting to focus our attention solely upon grand civic buildings as representations of this or that style or as the manifestation of genius, what must be acknowledged is that architecture arises out of the dynamic forces that shape a city. Victorian cities often have some beautiful buildings, but the major achievement was the creation of safe, sanitary and recognisably urbane habitats. Victorian civic culture's greatest contribution and innovation is The High Street, transforming the villages of Georgian London into a series of town centres within a metropolitan whole. This enabled the creation also of distinct districts represented by football teams, as well as the possibility of civic representation at local political level. One legacy of this diversity is the influence that Borough Councils have upon development and which local planning policy has upon architectural culture.

A High Street brings together all of the representational buildings that we now recognise as the *topos* of the modern city: accommodating libraries, town halls, churches, banks, pubs, etc. in a recognisable and *coherent* image of a city, but at a *coherent* and local scale. Its distinct character can still be sensed in Rathmines in Dublin, at Deptford High Street or on Upper Street in Islington, and at a larger scale the city centres of the great English northern towns are marked by the integration of cultural buildings and commerce. What makes these places valuable, in almost every sense, is the connection that the largely anonymous background of housing has with the high street. For example, it is very hard to argue that the destruction of the 19th century streetscape and its replacement with road engineering has not damaged both

⁹⁸ Cf. *News from Nowhere and other writings*, William Morris, Penguin, 1994.

Liverpool city centre and Robert Cockerell's magnificent St George's Hall. The grand civic buildings of 19th century cities seem to emerge from "background" topography, and this territory is the clue to understanding what the architectural task is at Victoria Street in Westminster – the site of the 'practical' part of this doctoral submission.

The original foundation of Victoria Street as a *Street*, can still be sensed, even if its formation was initially also technological. Victoria Street is constructed on marshland that was drained as part of the creation of the Victoria Embankment, built ostensibly to commemorate the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1860. At the same time, The Victoria Embankment was designed by Joseph Bazalgette to distribute effluent away from the Thames, which by 1858 had become a fetid mass. 'The Great Stink' was powerfully obvious to politicians in Barry and Pugin's new Houses of Parliament, and led MPs to debate the problem of the Thames. Sir Edwin Chadwick was able to create the Metropolitan Commission of Sewers and then the Metropolitan Board of Works in 1855, which led to Bazalgette's almost invisible but profound contribution to London – the creation of a centralized drainage system for human waste³⁹.

Chadwick was a Utilitarian, and under his guidance the ancient image of the city as a Body (with the king at its head) was transformed so that 'the metropolis had transformed into a machine'. Utilitarianism defined virtue as 'the most good for the most people'. The metropolitan sewerage system was suddenly of crucial importance for all, and not only to solve the problem of the unpleasantness of human waste. It was necessary because John Snow had shown in 'On the Mode of Communication of Cholera' (1854) that infected potable water supplies killed people. Snow proved that an infected parish-pump on Berwick Street in Soho was the cause of the spread of Cholera there. From this discovery sprang the urgent need to create a 'metropolitan' system of fresh water and drains and sewers.

³⁹ *The Stones of London: A History in Twelve Buildings*, Leo Hollis, London, 2011, pp.264-297. See also *Building Jerusalem: The Rise and Fall of the Victorian City*, Tristram Hunt, London, 2005; and *Victorian Babylon: People, Streets and Images in Nineteenth-Century London*, Lynda Nead, London, 2011.

Figure 3 The construction of the Victoria Embankment and section through this

Bazalgette's network of invisible pipes led him eventually to his proposals for a new embankment, cutting Somerset House off from The Thames and unifying modern infrastructure into one landscape. The Victoria Embankment houses sewers and what was originally called the Metropolitan District Line, as well as forming a road viaduct enabling vehicles to by-pass central London. Leo Hollis is clear that this development meant that 'London was now the city of engineers'.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 269.

Figure 4 York House Watergate today and depicted in *York Water Gate and the Adelphi from the River*, John O'Connor, 1872

Bazelgette's plans included also a proposal to create a series of terraced garden plots connecting The Strand to The Thames, but this failed to convince a number of private landowners so was never instigated.⁴¹ Instead, The Middle Temple and Somerset House have had their river frontage's cauterized, and the subsequent pattern of development saw a line of semi-classical Portland stone office blocks sat somewhat awkwardly on the new ground.

Figure 5 The rear facades of Edwardian government offices seen from The Embankment with views through to Whitehall

At what was the confluence of the River Fleet and The Thames, on the corner of Farringdon Road and The Victoria Embankment, raised up 9m from the water levels at low tide, Unilever Houses (Sir John Burnet and Partners, 1920 – Burnet's practise went on to become Burnet Tait & Partners, the architects of the original Kingsgate House & Westminster City Hall) illustrates the difficulty of any authentic response to the new relationship between architecture and nature. The battered base is an awkward attempt to allude to

41 Ibid. Sadly there seem to be no images of these proposals.

the nautical origin of the site, but stuck 3 storeys above the river; the building seems to lack any connection with the ground. It appears overly defensive and yet marooned amongst roads and tunnels that undermine the credibility of architecture there. The heavily rusticated ground floor is windowless, apparently to reduce traffic noise inside the building⁴². Sculptures are used to try to communicate some relationship between architecture and site, and the corners are marked by entrances surrounded by large plinths on which are placed sculptures of human figures restraining horses called *Controlled Energy* by Sir William Reid Dick. In addition, there are also Merman and Mermaid figures are by Gilbert Ledward.

Figure 6 View of Unilever House at the corner of Farringdon Street and The Embankment with detail of sculpture *Controlled Energy* by Sir William Reid Dick

This new, engineered ground is riddled with holes. The river is damned at this point, accessible only intermittently, and seems to pass by like a panorama or a film. Cars surge by, on two-minute sequences of red and green traffic lights. Sometimes between the rhythm of din and emptiness you can hear the river lapping the wall and smell its presence.

⁴² *Public Sculpture of the City of London*, Philip Ward-Jackson, Liverpool University Press, 2003, pp.227-82.

Figure 7 The George V Archway designed by Joseph Bazalgette on The Embankment

Bazalgette was a brilliant engineer, and he also seemed to have understood the architectural consequences of his work. This is limited to the George V Archway on the Embankment, which borrows from the iconography of Somerset House – and its now occluded river gate – in depicting Father Thames, although the river now obscured from view by a small plinth.

Figure 8 Somerset House and Waterloo Bridge on The Embankment and depicted in Somerset House from the River Thames, Willaim Daniel, 1805

The creation of The Embankment led, arguably, to the destruction of a visible link between the tides of the Thames and London, and this has led to the loss also of the vital role that ornament played in its architecture, as representations of nature, which traditionally formed the mediating border between river and city. Sculptural settings attempt to mediate between nature and city, and nature remains present analogically in sculptural settings, albeit transformed into ‘geography’, or ‘archaeology’, ‘myth’ or ‘agriculture’.

Figure 9 View of Sphinx *and* view upriver towards Westminster from Cleopatra's Needle (1878)

Figure 10 Holborn Viaduct with the 4 statues representing Agriculture, Commerce, Science and Fine Art

At the point that one crosses the buried River Fleet on the Holborn Viaduct, four sculptures remind you forcibly of the Victorian sense of decorum; Commerce, Agriculture, Science and Fine Art are depicted in 4 statues that define Victorian civic virtues, and which confirm the bridge as a new mode of

an ancient type – a version of a grand civic portal. Pseudo-classical gatehouses sit in two corners of the viaduct, and connect the upper and lower levels of the Victorian City. Its riverine origins are both buried and revealed at this point. The river is alluded to if not made visible in actual or metaphoric terms in both the iconographic content of the figures, and in the extreme topographical junction made by the viaduct. This is a mode of modern decorum, one in which man celebrated his victory over the natural world, which is represented now in its 'produce' and in the industrial character of modern modes of production. It is a form of 'third nature', divorced from the primary field of representational reference. The long tradition of civic bridges is evoked.

Figure 11 View of Big Ben from The Embankment

Modern architecture refers, if it refers to anything at all, to the history of architecture (echoing the way in which modern man refers to his own achievements)⁴³. The Houses of Parliament embody all of the tensions of

⁴³ A strange anomaly is 55 Broadway (1927-9), by Charles Holden, which houses St James Tube Station (although it is not in St James!). Built to house the offices of what is now called London Underground Limited, 55 Broadway was conceived of as a 'cathedral of industry'. Its cruciform plan form is extruded to define a sort of urban block that is decorated with a number of sculptures, which attempt to embed technology within a pseudo-mythical relationship with the natural world. This are: *Day and Night*, Jacob Epstein; *North Wind*, Alfred Gerrard; *North Wind*, Eric Gill; *East Wind*, Eric Gill; *East Wind*, Allan G. Wyon; *South Wind*, Eric Gill; *South Wind*, Eric Aumonier; *West Wind*, Samuel Rabinovitch and *West Wind*, Henry Moore (Cf. *Modern Architectural Sculpture*, Ed. William Aumonier, The Architectural Press, London 1930). The function suite on the 10th floor of the building was originally set up as a dining room for the Chairman and senior executives, in the manner of the grand civic patriarchs of Provincial

Victorian civic culture, and yet transform the technological and artistic demands of a modern democratic representational structure into an image of continuity and invention. It is full of quotations of semi-mythic, semi-historical veracity, and Barry and Pugin retrospectively invented heraldic crests for Edward the Confessor in order to create visual consistency across the facades of their Palace of Westminster. It is at once a grand infrastructure project and a series of rooms. The building can be said to be 'anachronic'⁴⁴, renewing and embedding new traditions in the city and reviving and re-establishing the tradition of them there. This term implies that something that appears to be anachronistic, in terms of style, might in fact be something like a type or an archetype in spatial terms. In the case of the creation of The Houses of Parliament this was not so much the case of inventing a new type or copying an established one, but of reusing certain spatial typologies. This was a particularly sensitive approach I suggest, since a debating chamber that was based upon a former chapel represented well the inherent tensions between the crown and the state, and between democratic and monarchic power, that typify British governance.

In response to pressing economic and social problems – and the threat of more civil unrest, the politicians' commission to the architects was opaque. Barry won the commission by solving functional problems of the site, retaining the river edge and orchestrating the twin houses of British democracy in such a

England, and of course the merchants of Florence and Venice. At this level there are also two roof gardens, one of which was dedicated to the wife of a former Managing Director. Apparently this is in recognition of her enthusiasm to encourage this early form of environmental work. Any link between the analogical structure of gardens and their unity with sculptures is sadly absent in this 'recognition'. Similarly, there is no spatial relationship between the building and the surrounding representational structures. It is almost impossible in fact to view the sculptures as this entails stepping into traffic. Instead, it is possible to suggest something of a mechanical sort of patrician sensibility at play, a hangover of Victorian civic pompousness, crossed with awareness of the death of natural conditions (i.e. faux medievalism). Holden seems to have intuited the imminence of the modern sensibility that the futurists et al evolve from industry and i.e. electricity as god, speed as ecstasis (Cf. *C* by Tom McCarthy). I would tentatively suggest also that the intellectual and 'poetic' climate of England at this time is echoed in the various attempts by people like TS Eliot (and Holden) to fuse modernity with myth. Eliot's great London Poem is *The Wasteland*, and according to C.K. Stead, the structure is based on: 1 The movement of time, in which brief moments of eternity are caught; 2 Worldly experience, leading on to dissatisfaction; 3 Purgation in the world, divesting the soul of the love of created things; 4 A lyric prayer for, or affirmation of the need of, Intercession; 5 The problems of attaining artistic wholeness which becomes analogue for, and merge into, the problems of achieving spiritual health (*The New Poetic: Yeats to Eliot*, Pelican Books, 1969). This structure fits somewhat too neatly into a reading of the tube station as an example of a sort of Dante-esque mediation between heavenly gardens and an infernal pit, of course, to be true.

44 Cf. *Anachronic Renaissance*, Christopher Wood and Alexander Nagel, Zone Books, 2010.

way as to enable security and ventilation, etc. He also resolved the representational problem of the three-tiered hierarchy of British government in the unusual situation where the monarch is also head of the church. The twin towers of Big Ben and Victoria Tower house chimney flues that originally heated the structure, but they also have iconographic significance, suggesting the origin of democratic debate in St Stephen's Chapel. The debating chamber of the House of Commons is in fact based almost exactly on the spatial type of St Stephen's. This was retained and inverted, forming a point of orientation between the topographic and geometric contingencies of the new river wall and the cardinal orientation that the old palace shared with Westminster Abbey. This insistence upon continuity enshrined a crude mode of dialectical confrontation and arguably supports what is now a rather fictional tradition of a two-party political system. Somewhat anachronistically, the image of democracy originating in a monastic context is retained and amplified in Barry's plan and Pugin's facades. Similarly, Hawksmoore's anachronistic Neo-Gothic towers at the Abbey are arguably yet another example of an attempt to heal rifts between tradition and history at Westminster. In both instances, architecture is deployed to re-make broken traditions, to re-assemble an image of continuity, and to accommodate almost unbearable tensions between inherited tradition and political change.

In direct and immediate contrast to these courtyards of power and mythic Englishness, Victoria Street was born from a systematic suppression of history by ingenuity and technology. Unlike the Palace of Westminster and the Abbey, the architecture of Victoria Street ignores the natural world, banishing it and any civic representation to the disconnected background of schools, hotels, private gardens and to The Royal Parks. The morphology of Victoria Street is defined by three things: At the Eastern end the most important buildings in England sit around Parliament Square – a quasi-public space cum garden – and arguably a street, Whitehall, fulfils the role of a “piazza”. At the Western extreme Victoria Station sits at the head of what was a canal basin. The canal that fed the Stag Brewery was filled in with train lines once Snow made the connection between the dangers of standing water and Cholera. Advances in medical science and transport technology shaped the formation of

the new area known as Victoria, as much as the attempt to create a new civic quarter linking the courts of Belgravia to Parliament.

Springing seemingly fully formed from the minds of The Cubbitt brothers in the 1820s, Belgravia was developed as a ready-made fashionable residential district, close to the court of St James and to Buckingham Palace, which had recently become a Royal Residence. Along with Regent Street, Belgravia is a typical example of large-scale Georgian town planning from a single developer-architect-client. It was conceived almost entirely as residences, and whilst it imitates in part the 'public squares' of Italy, Belgravia lacks urbanity. Thought of in terms of typology, Georgian squares have affinities with the sorts of places that English architects and patrons visited on their Grand Tours. Both lack the vital element of spontaneity that comes from the mixture of different activities that characterise the life of a city.

In contrast, Victoria Street lacks a clear geometric order – it is not a Boulevard drawn as a straight line on a map. The third influence upon its formation was the introduction of underground trains. The tube network occurred without a central plan, once railway entrepreneurs realised the limits of building dormitory suburbs and constructing train lines to bring people from the countryside in to town. The limit being commuting time: specifically the time necessary to traverse on foot or by horsepower, the largest city in the world⁴⁵.

⁴⁵ *London in the 19th Century*, Jerry White, London, 2008, pp. 37-65.

Figure 12 Map of London 2010 showing the relationships between the underground tube network and the topography of Victoria Street and with The Albert Embankment

Victoria Street was really founded because of the creation of Victoria Station, and ostensibly it triangulates the station with Buckingham Palace, and also with Westminster Abbey and the Palaces of Westminster. Yet not only is there no regal route that would justify the street being named for a Queen, nor was it ever used for the sort of Victory parades that inspired Haussmann's boulevards in Paris or Schinkel's work in Berlin. Victoria Street also kinks roughly at its centre, as the District and Circle Line peels away to avoid drifting into the water table.

Despite its formal architectural shortcomings Victoria Street was thought of by the engineers who worked upon and named it and established their offices there (on what became known as 'Engineers' Row') primarily as a street. As such, Victoria can be thought of as exhibiting the characteristics of a high street in a town, or as a town within a town – as a typical London district. This was not evident from Victoria Street until recently.

iv *The Problem of Urban Infrastructure, Civic Depth, Urban Topography, Rhythmic Spatiality & The Disunity of Victoria Street*

'If the expression of a city totality is handled by Bruni as a rendering of rhetorical continuity, this entails movement from an allegorical to a scenographic representation of civic topography, where overt artifice points to rhetorical constructions of significance at given moments in the description... the ideals which are the foundation and aspiration of civic ordering manifest themselves through ritual and ceremony rather than being continuously apparent throughout the whole city.'

Clare Guest

Figure 13 View of original Kingsgate House 2010

Some monolithic modern office buildings obscured the civic depth of Victoria Street, until, following planning consents gained by Lynch architects, they were removed in 2011. One can list technical obsolescence and aesthetic paucity as reasons for their demolition – and on occasion I have used these terms to engage those whose professional vocabulary is defined by these terms. Underlying these assumptions I have seen my task as the revelation of the background structure of Victoria Street and the neighbourhood that it fronts –

its civic depth⁴⁶. This background is partly a non-systematic 'network' of institutions whose layering reflects the typicality of almost all European city quarters. This urban order was until recently impossible to traverse, and it was impossible to 'see' the rich background that is supported by Victoria Street. Spatial continuity between the urban hinterland and the 'high street' was blocked by large slab-blocks. As I see it, the architectural task there is not only to situate new buildings in relation to old ones in terms of form and style – or 'mass and bulk', if one prefers planning terminology. The task is also to re-situate the existing civic structures in relation with each other in such a way that the latent urban order and the submerged natural world can be sensed, if not directly seen.

Acknowledgement of the latent urbanity of Victoria Street and the problematic character of rhythmic and communicative space in Victorian London, has been the basis of my approach towards the series of architectural interventions that we have proposed there over the past eight years, some of which are currently being built.

Figure 14 Collage showing Lynch architects projects on Victoria Street

⁴⁶ Cf. 'Civic Depth', Peter Carl, in *Civic Architecture: The Facades, Passages and Courts of Westminster*, Lynch architects exhibition catalogue, New London Architecture Gallery, The Building Centre, November-December 2014.

Our design insertions are made into a Victorian topography that is latent with a spatial richness that was previously obscured by buildings that denied any communicative movement between site, architecture and sculpture. Our insertions need similarly to be latently rich enough, in order to fill out the lack of mediation between the upper symbolic levels of life represented by the cathedral, the abbey, parliament and city hall and the vacuous blocks of information processing represented by conventional office buildings.

The question that I have posed myself is thus a question of the relevance of the 'communicative' space between buildings. In order to fully understand the nature of the question it is necessary to understand the role of 'communicative movement' in spatiality generally. This *movement* reveals the importance of architecture as a mode of culture itself; as something capable of not only communicating the presence of culture, but of situating it and allowing it to take place. In this way architecture is essentially spatial – in exactly the way that rooms, rather than abstract spaces – situate and support human life.

Figure 15 The City of Westminster as a series of public rooms

In viewing the city of Westminster as a series of spatial settings, or 'urban rooms', the latent communicative movement between them becomes clearer. In this way, the 'style' of the architecture that houses these is not as important as the depth of reciprocity between the internal and external spatial settings that accommodate the life of a city. This is territory that has been traditionally also mediated by sculpture, often within as well as in-between

buildings, and often at the threshold between private and public realms. For this reason, the formalist, art-historical cliché of ‘The Battle of Styles’ in Victorian architecture is unhelpful to describe the actual achievements of say Cockerel at Liverpool or Waterhouse at Manchester. Both St George’s Hall and Manchester Town Hall are fundamentally civic buildings, settings for art works and city life, and in both cases the art of architecture is indivisible from the art of city making. The character of the recurring rhythmic continuity communication between site and architecture – its disruption, or arrhythmia – and possible recuperation, is the subject of this dissertation. This continuity will be investigated as a series of characteristics that can be summarised as a number of critical terms – urban topography, communicative and rhythmic spatiality, ornament, decorum, nature, representation, etc., – and these terms will be explored in exemplary case studies. My ‘method’ is to look at built examples of continuity between architecture, site and sculpture in different contexts and at different times, looking for lessons that might account for its persistence as a mode of critical imaginative discourse and praxis. In other words, I proceed from theory to praxis, whilst keeping alive the traditional Greek idea that these terms are not exclusive and that the former is no guarantee of the success of the latter. At a couple of points in the dissertation I have introduced quite long footnotes in order not to interrupt the flow of the argument, whilst referring to contemporary examples today that are evidence of the misunderstanding of certain philosophical or artistic principles being discussed in the main body of the text. My approach seeks continuity of philosophical themes across time, and is also a critique of the corruption of these themes by architects who have misconstrued their meaning.

Gadamer believed that rhythm plays a central role in revealing the participatory character of art works, and that this establishes the grounds for the continuous *relevance of the beautiful*:

The autonomous temporality of the art work is illustrated particularly well by our experience of rhythm. What a remarkable phenomenon rhythm is! Psychological research tells us that rhythm is a factor in our hearing and understanding. If we produce a series of sounds or notes repeated at regular intervals, we find that the listener cannot help introducing rhythm into the series. But where

precisely is this rhythm? Is it to be found in the objective and physical temporal relations between the sounds, in the wavelengths, frequencies, and so on? Or is it in the mind of the listener? It is clearly inadequate to conceive the matter in terms of such a crude set of alternatives. It is as true to say that we perceive it there. Of course, our example of the rhythm is to be perceived within a monotonous series is not an example drawn from art. Nevertheless, it shows that we can only hear the rhythm that is immanent within a given form if we ourselves introduce rhythm into it. That means we must really be actively involved ourselves in order to elicit rhythm at all. Every work of art imposes its own temporality upon us, not only the transitory arts of language, music and dance. When considering the static arts, we should remember that we also construct and read pictures, that we also have to enter into and explore the forms of architecture. These too are temporal processes. One picture may not become accessible to us as quickly as another. And this is especially true of architecture. Our contemporary forms of technical reproduction have so deceived us, that when we actually stand before one of the great architectural monuments of human culture for the first time, we are apt to experience a certain disappointment. They do not look as "painterly" as they seem from the photographic reproductions that are so familiar to us. In fact, this feeling of disappointment only shows that we still have to go beyond the purely artistic quality of a building considered as an image and actually approach it as an architectural art in its own right. To do that, we have to go up to a building and wander around it, both inside and out. Only in this way can we acquire a sense of what the work holds in store for us and allow it to enrich our feelings for life.⁴⁷

I would like to suggest that the rhythmic character of the typical situations that one finds in buildings, and in urban settings generally (as rooms), is accompanied also by the rhythmic character of architectural facades and thresholds (as niches, windows, doorways, etc). Both enable the hinterland of building interiors and of civic territories to co-exist in the rhythm of city life, animated by both social occasion and analogues of myth, tradition, and the effects of weather, the seasons, natural and second-nature, etc.

Gadamer foregrounds the organic nature of humanity whilst emphasising 'a decisive difference between animal and human being. The way of life of human beings is not so fixed by nature as is that of other living beings.' He makes it clear that 'animals too have *praxis* and *bios*... a way of life', whilst emphasising the role that the horizon of language plays in reason; the

⁴⁷ 'The Relevance of the Beautiful: Art as Play Symbol and Festival', Op. Cit., pp.44-45. In this passage Gadamer points to the curious problem of involvement which could be summarised as: museum-going is a mode of contemplation versus using a building.

role this plays in choice defines humanity, just as natural conditions define the basis for freedom as *freedom from*⁴⁸. This is why praxis is central to human life, since practice is 'the mode of behaviour of that which is living in the broadest sense.' A Ph.D. by praxis is a way of participating in reality that involves one's whole being. Gadamer described the potency and rhythm of this in exhilarating and inspiring terms, providing the *Leitmotif* of this dissertation and my orienting *ethos*:

Practice, as the character of being alive, stands between activity and situatedness. As such it is not confined to human beings, who alone are active on the basis of free choice (*prohairesis*). Practice means instead the articulation of life (*energia*) of anything alive, to which corresponds a life, a way of life, a life that is led in a certain way (*bios*).⁴⁹

Building's and sculpture's continuity depends upon 'communicative movement' and a certain degree of reciprocity that articulates and responds to the topography and character of their setting. The character of *urban topography* – and the demands for the possibility for its renewal today, from the most unlikely quarter – is the subject of the first chapter.

48 On the one hand, this is the basis of an argument that Heidegger articulates as earth/world – conditions/possibilities (which is what one might also call the ethical basis for any artistic or practical "commission"); which is why it is possible for him to claim that 'the city gives a direction to nature' (I will investigate the historical basis for this claim in some detail below: It is interesting to note that orientation is implied in the notion of a commission, and that it shares a common etymological ground with "missile"). On the other hand, we now find ourselves in a condition of committing to 'nature' as a way to orient our cities with regards to natural conditions, ecology, ethical and sustainable architecture and food production, etc., etc.

49 'Hermeneutics as Practical Philosophy', H-G Gadamer, *Op Cit.*, p.90. William Blake reminds us that 'Energy is eternal delight!'

Figure 16 View of the original Kingsgate House looking north across Victoria Street from Wilcox Place with Westminster City Hall to the right and St James Court Hotel in the background (David Grandorge, March 2010)

Figure 17 View of Kings Gate from Wilcox Place (Patrick Lynch, November 2014)

CHAPTER 1

URBAN TOPOGRAPHY, PHYSIOGNOMY, SPATIAL CONTINUITY & PRAXIS

'To situate means also to communicate.'
Dalibor Vesely

i *The Topography & Physiognomy of Cologne*

Figure 18 Contemporary postcard showing the destroyed inner-city of Cologne in 1945

Victoria Street is arguably a direct and also an indirect result of the effect of the aerial bombardment of cities during World War II. Even those parts of European cities not affected by extensive bombing were routinely subject to whole scale re-development after the war, largely motivated by a combination of architectural dogma inspired by an enthusiasm for the motor car and a dislike of streets, and developers' zeal for profit. In both cases, the

Victorian ideal of The High Street was regularly sacrificed in favour of ground planes comprised of car parks or service zones. New building types disrupted the traditional urban metabolism of cities, destroying the layered character of hinterland and foreground, and obscuring if not obliterating the reciprocity and hierarchy of civic domestic and representational buildings (the physiognomy and topography of urban settings). In traditional cities, even in 19th century parts of them - as we have seen - the relationships between High Street and background city quarters maintained and in some cases even represented aspects of civic depth, and this depth is often an expression of the topography of urban settings and the effects of technology upon them. The relationship of a cathedral on a hill to the mercantile river sat below it is a mode of decorum one finds in Roman and medieval cities such as Porto, and in early industrial cities such as Liverpool⁵⁰. In contrast, the modernist city is characterised by buildings disconnected from the topography of the city, and as a consequence it is usually very difficult to orient oneself in such places (Stuttgart, Birmingham, etc.). An attitude of partial demolition predominated in cities where only parts of them were destroyed by war, creating the opportunity for further 'site-clearance' and the instigation of 'mega-blocks'. In London, this is led to the creation of The Barbican and then to The Brunswick Centre, and also to the strange juxtaposition of the slab blocks of Victoria Street adjacent to the stone facades and quads of Westminster Abbey and Whitehall⁵¹.

50 If one stands on the traffic island crossing between The Adelphi Hotel and Renshaw Street in Liverpool and look around 360 degrees the view encompasses St George's Hall, 'Palazzo Adelphi', The Victoria Tower of The University of Liverpool, and then The catholic Metropolitan and Anglican cathedrals on the skyline above, and Jacob Epstein's sculpture of a merchant sailor on the façade of George Henry Lee's department store.

51 Such was the enthusiasm for renewal after the war that even sensitive architects like Leslie Martin were caught up in the mania for destruction, and his Westminster master plan project of 1964 has recently been re-examined in *Demolishing Whitehall*, Adam Sharr & Stephen Thornton, Ashgate, 2013. James Dunnett describes Martin's 'proposed Government precinct', which 'was to be largely traffic-free thanks to a proposed tunnel alongside the Thames, would have stretched westwards from the Houses of Parliament all the way to Central Hall and north to south between the 'gateways' spanning the ends of Whitehall and Millbank. The Middlesex Guildhall (present Supreme Court) and the whole of its block were to be removed... The grandeur of the conception was certainly breathtaking (and its hinted-at extension northwards to the British Museum even more so), and you cannot help feeling that Martin, the former practical-minded Architect to the LCC, must well have known he was giving a hostage to fortune: it would have required the determined backing of a politician of major calibre to see it through, and in the event, commissioned by one Government (Conservative) and delivered to another (Labour), it got not much more than lip service. Martin was seen by many to have exceeded his brief, and indeed the forms he proposed for the major office component are so prescriptive that it is hard to see how they could ever have constituted (as claimed and required) no more than guidance to whichever architect was actually commissioned to carry them out.

In cities that were almost totally destroyed, the question was whether to start afresh (Coventry) or to try to renew the existing urban structure (Cologne) – albeit with modern building techniques in combination with careful restoration of the most beautiful and important civic monuments (Coventry and Cologne Cathedrals). This process involved concrete judgements in response to finances and to the customs of a place, public witness, participation and democratic processes. At Cologne, the approach of architects and planners after the war was to maintain and to resurrect the Roman and medieval street pattern; yet to rebuild the domestic and mercantile city blocks as modern buildings. The result offers us a powerful insight into the importance of urban topography, and its positive benefits for modern architecture that seeks to recover the communicative aspects of cities.

Arriving at Cologne by train for the first time recently is a thrilling and satisfying experience of strangely familiar orientation and discovery. The station forecourt opens directly onto the long south façade of Cologne Cathedral, turning the ticket hall into one of the most memorable rooms in Europe. One is struck by the realisation that this is despite the station's décor, which is unimpressive, perhaps even deliberately anonymous. Raised directly above this, on a stepped stone plinth, the cathedral is strangely porous and accessible. On arriving we wandered through it with our children, carrying our luggage without any feeling of impropriety, as if the cathedral were simply another, albeit extraordinary, *part of a city*.

Figure 19 Cologne Hauptbahnhof foyer

Figure 20 Cologne Hauptbahnhof from the Cathedral

They were an architectural solution in themselves, and the Grand Gallery concept could not have worked unless the whole of the Foreign Office, the Great George Street and Bridge Street buildings and Richmond Terrace were demolished.' (The Architectural Review, 26th February 2014: <http://www.architectural-review.com/reviews/lets-demolish-whitehall/8659289.article>)

The cathedral is largely surrounded by modern buildings 4-6 stories tall, all of which were constructed after the Second World War, laid out in an almost perfect simulation of the bombed medieval city centre. Cologne retains not only the formal characteristics of its *Alt Stadt*, but also its character – despite the modern detailing of the buildings. These are obviously modern buildings, and whilst they respect the rhythm and scale of the old city (the ‘mass and bulk’ that planners refer to remains intact) – the architectural expression varies depending upon the use of a building and the talent of the architect. Some of the buildings are better than others of course. What is impressive is that the essential characteristics of a medieval city remain recognisable, the structure of spaces and the main civic buildings exist still, albeit in different guises. The town hall is now concrete.

Figure 21 Cologne Cathedral from the Museum of Roman History

However, beyond what are arguably superficial differences, the spatial and political relationships that the domestic and civic architecture of Cologne have with its religious buildings and institutions is continuous, if not completely unchanged. The rhythm of Cologne's urban spaces remains consistent despite huge and sudden destruction, and massive changes to the appearance of the architecture. Whilst this melange of old and new might not satisfy conservationists on one hand, nor a modernist attitude towards urban regeneration on the other, the juxtaposition of modest background buildings and civic monuments works well as a recognizable human habitat. The achievements of many generations - centuries of thinking - are not only legible still, and largely intact, but open to change and capable of accepting new architecture.

Figure 22 St Kolumba museum of church history at Cologne by Peter Zumthor

This capacity to accept new parts into a whole derives from and is a characteristic of the rhythmic qualities of urban space there. These spaces are animated by the rhythms of typical situations and the diurnal and seasonal rhythms of use that are accommodated there - markets, annual festivals and carnivals, weekly events, etc. It is clear at Cologne that 'the prominence of certain buildings or spaces helps us to move from a random sequence of

experiences to a more structured vision of a situational pattern⁵², and that orientation occurs seemingly naturally and without a great deal of effort.

Figure 23 Cologne Cathedral from the South with retail, offices and apartment buildings from the 1950s

The cathedral is a reliquary or frame for things and events, with a cold stone, attending, waiting presence that is transformed by use and music. Architecture there is geometry and rhythm articulated by sculpture. Painting hardly comes into it: even the stained glass at Cologne relies upon weather to fully become articulate.

⁵² *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation: The Question of Creativity in the Shadow of Production*, MIT, Dalibor Vesely, 2004, p. 45.

Figure 24 Cologne Cathedral, Feast of All Saints, November 2013

ii *Dalibor Vesely on Topography, Physiognomy & The Continuity of References in Communicative Space*

Arguably, a building's relation to its sculptures is like a city's relation to its buildings; all are spatial settings, which are more or less connected as rhythm. The more interesting thing perhaps, is not that buildings are like sculptures, but that both operate spatially and it is this that makes a good building like a decent city quarter: that is homely and uncanny, work and pleasure, renewing and consoling at once.

Reading a map of the city of Cologne on the train corresponds somewhat gracefully with one's corporeal experience of it in a satisfying manner, and 'the relationship between the given reality and its representation is mediated and communicated' by the architecture of the city itself. In many modern cities a degree of anomie and dislocation typify one's first encounter with them, yet in other places very quickly one gains a 'sense of reality asserting itself, very often against our will'. It is not so much 'intellectual curiosity' as the 'situational conditions of everyday life' and the 'spatial conditions of the natural world in which we live' that orient us, Dalibor Vesely claims⁵³. What is often overlooked, Vesely suggests, is the crucial role that representation plays in orientation. Whilst the typology of buildings and spaces is important to one's orientation when looking at a map of a city, 'it is not just the visible appearance or surface of things but the visible manifestation of the whole topography of the actual space in which it is possible to recognize the physiognomy as well as their place and purpose', Vesely insists⁵⁴. This is true as much for a room, as for a city, I suggest, since a city is made up of a series of internal and external rooms.

Physiognomy is an aspect of specificity to be sure, yet Vesely is insistent that spatiality is also territorial and temporal:

⁵³ Ibid., p.44.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p.52. The example that Vesely gives to illustrate and to prove this point is a space station in zero gravity conditions, citing an astronaut: "it is as though your mind won't recognize the situation you are in until it sees it pretty close to the right orientation and then all of a sudden you get these transformations made in your mind that tell you exactly where you are", p.54.

The topology, orientation, and physiognomy of space constitute a unity: the visible aspects of space, its physiognomy, depend on orientation; and orientation depends on the topological character of the surrounding world. This sequence of relationships and dependencies brings us closer to understanding the phenomenon of continuity in its identifiable manifestations.⁵⁵

Vesely elaborates upon an observation by Maurice Merleau-Ponty that “what counts for the orientation of the spectacle is not my body as it is in fact is, as a thing in objective space, but as a system of possible actions, a virtual body with its phenomenal ‘place’ defined by its task and situation”⁵⁶. His elaboration of this point leads to a startling conclusion:

The concept of “virtual body”, defined by its tasks and situation, refers to the creative formation of space in terms not only of its topography (as a situated place), or its orientation, but also its physiognomy. Only with these aspects of architectural space in mind can we understand the deepest levels of space as it is constituted in the domain of given natural conditions and human spontaneity. On this level, spatiality is primarily dependent not on the position of the human body, but on the continuity between the actual and possible structures of the surrounding world to which the human body belongs... the horizon of all of our experiences that cannot be fully thematized in fact defines a world in which space is only a dimension. In this context it would be more appropriate to speak about the spatiality of the world so that structure, topography, orientation of space could receive their proper ontological meaning. There is no ultimate origin or ground of space, for the same reason that there is no ultimate ground of the world. Instead there is a continuum of references mediating between the more articulated and explicit forms of space and its implicit deep structure.⁵⁷

The *continuum of references* includes the physiognomic characteristics of a city e.g. ‘the prominence of certain buildings or spaces’, but Vesely is clear that ‘the nature of space depends on the continuity of reference to deeper structures of the human world’ and that ‘these structures are in a certain sense related to the earth as a primary reference (*arché*)... the integrity of space is reflected in the coherence of human experience.’⁵⁸ What is also suggested is that the *creative*

55 Ibid., p.52.

56 Ibid., p.48: Vesely is citing M. Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* (1962), p.250.

57 Ibid., pp.48-49.

58 Ibid., pp.51-2.

formation of space reveals an aspect of ‘embodied memory’ and “creativity” that is common both to the designer and inhabitant of cities:

Each project rests on a network of communication that involves the silent language of craftsmanship and skills, drawings, sketches, and other visual representations and instructions.⁵⁹

It is more precise, Vesely claims, to describe this creative aspect of spatiality as ‘ontological’,⁶⁰ as it involves ‘openness to what is given in the conditions of our existence’⁶¹. Vesely describes this as ‘pre-reflective experience’, as something that sportsmen and craftsmen experience when in tune with their work or game, and he suggests that the ‘unity and order’ that is revealed in situations has a number of consequences for designers also. Primarily, pre-reflective experience (in contrast to modern theory), ‘overlaps considerably with the classical notion of practical life (*praxis*).’ A clue to this lies in the fact that whilst ‘we may be able to produce a drawing or play a piece of music with great skill’, we ‘are not always able to explain how we do it. The same is true for other skills and indeed for much of everyday life.’⁶² Praxis, therefore, is not something unique to “the professions” or to specialist sportsmen or women, but is an intrinsic aspect of everyday life (as the Jesuit Michel de Certeau suggests⁶³). Other aspects of ‘pre-reflective experience’ will be examined in some detail below, including the essential role that movement plays in spatiality and in comprehension, and in particular we will examine the ‘resonance’ between embodiment and articulation, which typifies architectural space.

Vesely provocatively compares the ‘language’ of brain-injured sufferers of *apraxia* to the “intelligent arc” that Merleau-Ponty refers to that “projects round us our past and future, our human setting, our physical and moral situation which results in our being situated in all these respects.”⁶⁴ In contrast to praxis, which moves from a pre-reflective to a reflective ontology (akin to a footballer or craftsman’s “synesthetic”⁶⁵:immersion in play or work), apraxics’

59 Ibid., p.44.

60 Ibid., p.81.

61 Ibid., p.82-83.

62 Ibid.

63 Cf. *The Practise of Everyday Life*, Michel de Certeau, University of California Press, 2011.

64 Ibid., p. 56. Vesely is citing T. Kiesel “Aphasiology, Phenomenology, Structuralism” in *Language and Language Disturbances*, ed. E.W. Straus, Duquense University Press, 1974, p.217.

65 Ibid. p.81.

use of language becomes, Vesely suggests (citing Kiesiel), “akin to the highly technical univocal language of science which having been disengaged from its original hold on life-world structures, can now be employed only mechanically according to the rules of the game like cards or chess”⁶⁶. Whilst the former are ‘more focussed on the tactile domain’ and are involved in the world via movement, apraxics are distanced from phenomena in a manner that suggests similarities with modern notions of theory and perspective generally. Although we are ‘largely unaware of the richness of articulation and the potential meaning of what is shaped by spontaneous movement, communication with other people, objects and tasks, taken together, common situations can best be described as the latent world, to be understood’, Vesely contends, ‘only under certain conditions.’⁶⁷

By implication, the systematic language of most architectural theory and systematic design methodologies might be said to exhibit characteristics of ‘mental blindness’⁶⁸. Similarly, systematic approaches to architectural design fail to acknowledge the fundamentally spatial character of architecture and the essentially situated nature of representation⁶⁹. The continuity of references that characterise architectural experience, Vesely suggests, articulates the situational character of human ‘tasks’ and ‘motility’ in general. I will examine the role of motility in spatiality and in communicative movement below.

Rhythm is revealed as central to spatiality in the example of the role that music played in Dr Oliver Sacks’ recovery from ‘a serious inability to coordinate the movement of his leg with the rest of his body.’ Vesely recounts

66 Ibid., p.54: Vesely is citing M. Merleau-Ponty’s *Phenomenology of Perception* (1962), p.136.
67 Ibid., p.83.

68 Cf. ‘Death and the Model’, Peter Carl, forthcoming: ‘If actual three-dimensionality is responsible for this quirk of the nomenclature, it is not obvious why the CAD representation is always called a model, since it is a collection of algorithms organising data pertaining to length, orientation, parameters, Bezier splines, types of connectedness, etc. (a mathematical model). Architects tend to succumb to a digital autism in this milieu, enthralled with geometric processing, unlike the digital practitioners in video games or films who work fluidly between sketches, several kinds of maquette and material from actual settings.’

69 In contrast to the obviously systematic language used by Eisenman and Schumacher referred to above, attempts to create a “universal language” of typology, (semiotics, historicism, etc.) treat architecture, independent of context, as it were a branch of grammar. The relevance of language to architecture is and is also not obvious – when language becomes systematic, the assumption is that meaning is similarly systematic. Vesely’s work addresses this phenomenon as an aspect of spatiality and at the same time as a problem of creativity. Spatial creativity reveals the role that language plays in structuring reality – which, despite architects’ misguided efforts, resists systematisation.

Sacks' account of his recuperation from injury as an example of the situated and spatial character of corporeal experience generally, and how this is often most clearly revealed when disturbed. Sacks was not responding to therapy until he was 'eventually exposed to the sound of music', and this 'enabled him to regain the ability to walk normally in a very short time.' Vesely surmises that:

What is surprising is not that music, generated by movement, could contribute to the coordination of movement but that the source of movement and change was in the situation and not in the brain or in the body of the patient.⁷⁰

Rhythm is pattern in sound or images of things, and also in words and movements. It is the outward manifestation of time organised into sequences, and these can relate to the cycle of the year as seasonal time, as well as its division into festive events⁷¹. I suggest that it is rhythm – and dance and music and architecture as a manifestation of this – that situates movement into a coherent structure in which gestures can become meaningful. Rhythm enables bodily movement to recover its coherence; the continuity of references that structure reality, and enable us to participate with it, is ordered by rhythm. However, whilst rhythm is situated movement (and rhythm has content through the structure of references of a situation), situation is not something that most contemporary architectural thinkers concern themselves with.

Attempts to define architecture as a theoretical discipline tend to describe it as something that is independent of context and situation⁷². In other words, and whilst it might be impolite to suggest this, contemporary architectural theory appears to be an extreme parody of what Vesely refers to, apropos apraxia and aphasia, as 'mental blindness to the external environment'. Mental blindness, however, at least according to Merleau-Ponty and Kurt Goldstein, is not terminal. 'Mental blindness can be partly cured', Vesely

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 57. Vesely is citing O. Sacks, *A Leg to Stand On*, New York, 1984, pp.144-50.

⁷¹ Rhythm's etymological origin is Greek, *Eurhythmia*:
<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/rhythm>

⁷² Cf. *The Autopoiesis of Architecture: A New Framework for Architecture*, Patrick Schumacher, Academy Editions, John Wiley and Sons, London, 2011: Schumacher describes his desire for a 'radical autonomy and ultra-stable demarcation of the domain of architecture within society' (p.26) and describes the basis of the 'origin of the discipline in the Renaissance' as 'Autonomization' (p.81). Whilst this obsession with autonomy might explain why the work of Zaha Hadid architects is curiously similar regardless of location, climate, program and culture i.e. air-conditioned with fully sealed walls, such special pleading doesn't extricate it from an ethical, philosophical or a political critique.

suggests, and the antidote 'has much to do with a change of environment.' As the example of music and Dr Sack's leg reveals, the rhythmic continuity of a situation helps to mediate between fundamental conditions and particular situations. Understanding how rhythmic architectural ordering supports this drama, and the vulnerability of praxis, is the task of this dissertation.

Rhythm is something that characterises architecture, our bodies, the natural world and social life in general. If we have forgotten its central role in architecture and in culture generally, this is because rhythm is something common to all, an aspect of the background to our lives which is largely unremarked upon and taken for granted. Nonetheless, its importance was recognised by Greek philosophers as an essential aspect of geometry and measurement, poetry and visual composition, mathematics, dance, and architecture. Similarly, Vitruvius recognised the relationship between rhythm and harmony:

Eurhythmia is a beautiful appearance and a fitting aspect of the parts in compositions. This is achieved when the parts of a work have a height suitable to their width, a width suitable to their length; in short, when all the parts are commensurate with one another (*ad summam omnia respondent suae symetria*)⁷³.

Eurhythmia is a matter of pleasing proportion - or what Ingrid Rowland terms 'shapeliness'; *symmetria* being commensurate parts⁷⁴.

Vitruvius then offers an analogy of the human body as a doorway to suggest the vital role that poise and gesture play in composition, and the intrinsic relationship perception has with *symetria*. He noted that 'appearances can be deceptive. Optical illusion and distortion must be taken into account by an architect, and he must make additions and subtractions in his work, based on his own intuition, in order to achieve the proper effect'.⁷⁵ J.J. Pollitt emphasises that the purpose of distortion is not caprice, but rather, Vitruvius 'points out that it is sometimes necessary to alter the real, measurable

⁷³ Vitruvius 1.2.3, *Ten Books on Architecture*, edited by Ingrid D. Rowland and Thomas Noble Howe, Cambridge University Press, 2001. Cf. *The Ancient View of Greek Art*, J.J. Pollitt, pp.144-8; see also *Vitruvius: Writing the Body of Architecture*, Indra Kagis McEwen, MIT, 2003, pp.200-3.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p.149.

⁷⁵ Vitruvius 6.2.5., *Op. Cit.*

proportions of parts of a building to compensate for the distortion caused them by our vision. When the measurable proportions are altered to suit the *décor* of the temple, the “*appearance of eurhythmia*” results.⁷⁶ The ‘proper effect’ is determined not by abstract measures alone, although ‘it is necessary to first establish a theoretical system for the relationship of parts’. Nor - as Pollitt somewhat confusingly suggests, should *eurhythmia* be ‘understood subjectively’⁷⁷ - since, as he suggests *proportions are altered to suit the décor of a temple*.

Rhythm is not only something plastic then (“shapeliness”), but it is also communicative of appropriateness, scale and situation. It is clear from Vitruvius’ emphasis upon the importance of rhythm that architectural proportion and symmetry are not things that can be considered as autonomous, assessed independently of human situations, but a matter of correspondence, perception and appropriateness: ‘...a theoretical system for the relationship of parts, from which adjustment can be made without hesitant uncertainty... so that the appearance of being well formed should be beyond doubt to all viewers.’⁷⁸

76 Pollitt, Op. Cit, p.148.

77 Ibid.

78 Vitruvius 6.2.5., Op. Cit.

iii *Bacteria Navigating a Nutrient Gradient: The Schumacher-Eisenman Interview*

The desire to assert the autonomy of architecture from human situations and ecology – which is somewhat typical of systematic notions of design – is not the whole story of course: and even contemporary architects and theorists otherwise convinced by its autonomy are beginning to question the limits of the possibility of systematic architecture, and do so by invoking notions of topography. A sense of the deprived quality of abstract space leads those otherwise concerned with the autonomy of systematic or “parametric” architecture towards attempts to re-situate their computational abstractions in concrete situations, albeit in ones in which ‘depth’ and ‘landscape’ become formal metaphors. An amusing, if also somewhat bemusing example of this was published in 2013 in *Log* magazine. In discussion with Peter Eisenman, Patrick Schumacher declares:

Each point in the urban field of our master-plan is embedded in a sequence of transformation that modulates building height, block size, grid density and directionality. Each block is also located within a typological morphing series. So urban dwellers and visitors can navigate the field according to all these gradients, like bacteria are navigating a nutrition gradient.⁷⁹

Eisenman responds, suggesting that he has also recently become increasingly concerned with variety and locale:

Give me any collage of initially unrelated elements and I can generate connections, resonances, invent correlations. I reject the pure interruption, the pure discontinuity, collage. That doesn't mean I'm not craving for as much versatility and diversity within this coherent texture.

However, despite referring to ‘texture’, their primary design intent is ‘systems’, ‘rules’, and ‘aesthetic sensibility’, attempting to combine ‘intuitive’ knowledge’

⁷⁹ ‘I Am Trying to Imagine a Radical Free Market Urbanism’: Conversation between Peter Eisenman and Patrik Schumacher, New York 2013, *Log* 28, Summer 2013, Anyone Corporation. (<http://www.patrikschumacher.com/Texts/Radical%20Free%20Market%20Urbanism.html>). All quotes from Eisenman and Schumacher in this section are from the *Log* article, cited above.

with 'order' - understood as self-consistent system, like apodeictic geometry i.e. a pile of rubbish has an order, as does improvisation - in an attempt to 'simulate natural processes' and only then to allow these metaphoric and mechanistic 'natural processes' to approach life. Schumacher admits to Eisenman, rather bizarrely - since they have both just professed little respect for Peter Zumthor (apparently he is not "critical" like "Rem") - that:

I criticize your work to some extent because I think you're a great innovator on the level of concept and process - reflecting process and making it productive - but when I look at your work I feel that you could have benefitted from reflecting the phenomenological dimension better... It needs to (*acquire sense of*) phenomenological presence that comes with attention to materiality and light. I think we sense our environment not only visually, but with the whole body where we feel lightness, heaviness, and that's the way we orient and navigate space. I feel sometimes, and this may be harsh, that you don't do that, that the environments you create don't have the force required to truly stimulate and you don't give your structures the material power and force that compels our attention and trust in them as forces to be reckoned with, you don't deliver sufficient presence. It's not substantial enough to draw you in. Your works are like stage sets; it doesn't give me the sense of reality that would compel me to pay attention to its ordering suggestions. Plaster and sheet rock cannot compete with concrete, steel, stone. Even the material magic of carbon fibre compels attention. So it's not heaviness, its character that comes with material performances and specific affordances; the different characteristic presences and levels of force to draw you and propel you. These are mediated via phenomenology, i.e. via visual, tactile, acoustic as well as proprioception and vestibular perception etc. Initially I'm always going by my intuitions and by what I am feeling, asking why I am attracted to this, why I am exhilarated here; and then I am trying to analyze what it is that works and what doesn't work intuitively. This way I can rationally validate or critique my aesthetic reactions. But there is a caution to be observed: The architect needs to distinguish and assess the difference between one's professional sensibilities as designers, the way we read and evaluate buildings as expert connoisseurs and versus how the ordinary users of the buildings would experience them. The purpose must be to construct successful, innovative, productive spaces for users who are in the midst of their high performance pursuits: Spatial orders and spaces that communicate and frame communication on a new level of complexity and intensity.

Schumacher seems to sense that there might be something else missing in a diagrammatic approach to architecture, which he approaches - as it were, from above (topography looks like a gradient graph when seen

from above)- as the problem not only of the meaning of space, but also the problem of meaning understood as experience⁸⁰. The problem remains however not one of culture, or of wit or talent or rhetoric, but of how to relate abstract measurements, digital information, to the lived world of a room in a city. Except he doesn't start with a room, but with a system, and his comments are at once poignant and unintentionally humorous:

I found a way to integrate the semantic layer, the meaning layer, into the digital design model. I get the meaning layer as another correlated subsystem in my multi-system parametric model. The signifying relation is another correlation within the logic of associative modelling. Specifically, I'm taking agent-based crowd modeling as this meaning layer and program agents to be responsive to designed environmental clues in their behavior; their behavior is modulated by architectural articulation. Any feature of the environment might modulates their behavior, and thus becomes an effective sign or communication. That's the signifying relation proper for architecture. In the end the meaning of the space is what takes place within it, that's what it should be communicating. The designated, designed space is a framing communication that invites potential participants to share a certain particular communicative situation. The meaning is the use, the social function. I can bring that social function into the model by crowd modeling and by scripting individual actor's behavioral rules relative to spatial distinctions. Agents might come into a space and slow down as they move from a marble floor onto a carpet, gather around a central position that they're invited to gather around by a territorializing ceiling feature. These are not key-frame animations, they are literally programmed agents that move autonomously according to stochastic rules that change in dependency to spatial markers, thresholds, gradients etc. The agents are scripted, modulate their behavior relative to selected stimuli, which are the features of the model, the designer. So I can say carpet means "slow down and orient towards others" (private places), hard surface means move independently and ignore other agents (public spaces). That's operationalized, parametric semiology.⁸¹

80 i.e. bringing him somewhat unwillingly perhaps, and also unwittingly maybe, close to Borromini's intentions, wit, and sense of decorum in play at the Roman Oratory - see below.
81 Ibid.

Despite his perhaps deliberately oxymoronic phrase “autopoiesis” (from *poiesis*, to make), what Schumacher is trying to explain – the rhythmic character of decorum and the occasion for spontaneity and recognition in urban situations – might be better called I suggest *practical poetics*. Whilst aspects of a city are systematic – drainage, traffic, IT, etc., the question facing architects today is: how can one absorb these systems into buildings and *places*? I argue that this is only possible with a *poetic* or creative imagination, because one cannot derive *decorum* from systems. City life mirrors human creativity generally in this regard, since making in general, and poetry in particular, is anything but systematic or automatic.⁸²

Schumacher’s attempts to engage systematic thinking with specificity are hampered by the fact that his thinking is derived from the legacy of modern architectural theory. In the twentieth century, critics typically discussed design in terms of its distinct aspects – the clichés of space, function, and form – rather than as the manifestation of a particular commission. Even if some modern architectural theorists⁸³ attempted to try to recombine these atomised parts into a theoretical whole, this task has not been helped I suggest, by accepting definitions of architecture that are not conducive to the tradition of *rhythmic spatiality* – of which architecture is the most stable representation (the other artistic manifestations of rhythm are dance, poetry and sculpture, and I will discuss the importance of these for our modern understanding of spatiality and sculptural space in some detail below).

In contrast to modern theory in general – of which architectural theory is symptomatic – the traditional relationship between culture and life (*theoria*) is built upwards from natural conditions and from embodied experience of the world, towards the more articulate realm of concepts and symbols. Modern theory – and most contemporary architecture – works downwards, attempting to embed ‘forms’ in the quality-less *Res Extensa* of the Cartesian universe. In this universe the architect’s ‘vision’ dominates the natural conditions of the world; and perspective and the visual sense dominate all other senses. Not only

⁸² Ibid. As before, all quotes from Eisenman and Schumacher in this section are from the Log article, cited above.

⁸³ Cf. *Space, Time and Architecture: The Growth of a New Tradition*, Sigfried Gideon, Harvard, 1951.

is vision only one of the senses at play in spatial experience, of course, but perception involves not only sensation, but also participation with reality and comprehension and judgements. And so one can say with conviction, that architecture is an art of orientation and involvement.

One cannot distinguish between function and form, or between meaning and pragmatics in communicative architecture. At St Peter's Klippan (as I aim to show) and at Cologne Cathedral, the primary impression is that there are only degrees of articulation held together in a tense analogical field or rhythm. The tension resides between the 'at hand' quality of things and the situations that orient these towards use (work, play, representation, etc.) and meaning⁸⁴. These activities are also oriented, of course, and are more less examples of *decorum*, acknowledging the public witness of events (*civilitas*, tradition, etc.). Architecture sits between, behind or beneath these rhythms, offering the possibility of spontaneity by its stability, which is very hard to discuss in terms of 'function' or 'form', because to do so misses the pull that the horizon of events has upon us. Both "form" and "abstract space" are concepts – this is the basis of 'top-down'.

Renaissance cities are often described as the birthplace of modern consciousness, and Terry Comito and Robin Evans emphasise the gregariously physical character of this sort of society – the embodied and carnal nature of civic life⁸⁵. Architects such as Michelangelo or Borromini would not have described their architecture as spatial – as something abstract. Architecture was

⁸⁴ In *Being and Time*, Heidegger points us towards as Aristotle's description of Practical Wisdom (*phronesis*) in Book VI of his *Nicomachean Ethics*. Whilst in the modern world 'even practical behaviour has been understood as... "non theoretical" and anti-theoretical' (*Being and Time* Martin Heidegger, Basil Blackwell, 1993, p.85). Heidegger proposes to seek within the world of work in particular an authentic understanding of the oriented and directed character of human affairs, exhibiting in fact 'its own kind of knowledge'. This knowledge (or what Aristotle calls *praxis*) is superior to modern scientific method since it brings us into direct circumspect contact with the worldly nature of things (equipment); and thus the worldly character of Being is 'equipmental'. Heidegger describes dealings (*Umgang* can also be translated as assignments, similar in fact to "commissions") also as 'taking up relationships towards the world' which are predicated upon the fact that things 'meet up with *Dasein*', which gets its 'ontological understanding of itself in the first instance from these entities which itself is not.... But which it encounters "within" its world, and from the Being which they possess.' (Ibid, p.85) Since Descartes we have become accustomed to treating things as pure quantities available only to mathematical assessment freed of any existential involvement with them (materialism). Heidegger radically re-orient this assumption. His manner of doing so is to refer to every aspect of human activity and to seek within it ways in to re-think Being.

⁸⁵ *The Idea of the Garden in the Renaissance*, Terry Comito, Rutgers, 1986; 'Figures, Doors and Passages', in *Translations from Drawing to Building and other essays*, Robin Evans, AA, 1996; see also *Michelangelo, Drawing and the Invention of Architecture*, Cammy Brothers, Yale, 2008.

a matter of rhythm and proportion, the latter a mode of analogy of natural law and mediation of temporal circumstances and cosmic conditions. Geometry was a means to demonstrate mediation in architecture, embodying the invisible aspects of reality. Architecture coordinated and oriented the civil aspects of law and religion with the specific conditions of a town or city (or even a village church). Renaissance patrons self-consciously demanded representation of urbanity, and early modern city settings were attempts to mediate the 'intolerable strains on communal institutions'⁸⁶. The so-called *Natural States* of the Italian Republics commingled political with religious power, and the dominant *doxas* of church and state were often made up of members of the same family. Renaissance architecture therefore reflects the extremely mediated character of society, and one very clearly sees the theatrical character of this sort of public life in the gestural corporeality of Michelangelo's thresholds⁸⁷.

Figure 25 Model of façade of S. Lorenzo at Florence, Michelangelo,

⁸⁶ *Power and Imagination: City States in Renaissance Italy*, Lauro Martines, Pimlico, 2002, p.97; see also *Interpreting the Renaissance: Princes, Cities, Architects*, Manfredo Tafuri, Yale, 2006.

⁸⁷ 'Only Fire Forges Iron: On The Architectural Drawings of Michelangelo', Patrick Lynch, *Drawing: The Process*, Intellect Press, London, 2005.

Figure 26 Drawing for *Porte Pia* at Rome, Michelangelo

In general terms, Renaissance architecture represents the tense nature of efforts to reconcile familial loyalties - and domestic spatial typologies - within a public realm that was made up of series of layers of material and habitual territories, access to which was mediated by gestures as well as architectural thresholds. This network is clear in the way in which families such as the Medici consolidated their power and articulated their influence in the appropriation of parts of the city of Florence. In the creation of a series of representational *topoi* and buildings, articulated by art works and embodied in festive movement, wealth was oriented by rhetoric, and specifically oriented by architecture towards civic virtue.

Figure 27 Plan of Medici Florence in the late 15th Century

Figure 28 Processional Routes in 15th Century Florence showing the façade of S. Lorenzo in this context

iv *The Sacrifice of Space: David Leatherbarrow on Palladio's Palazzo Chiericatti*

David Leatherbarrow's description of the 'portico' of Palladio's *Palazzo Chiericatti* at Vicenza situates it exactly in the civic topography of the 16th century town and suggests that its status as both grand entrance and public short cut derives from this contingency. Leatherbarrow describes how the location of the project on the edge of the town led to complex negotiations between the authorities and Chiericati, who argued in his petition to build a colonnade beyond the limit of his property that "the "portico" would not only offer him "greater convenience" (greater depth for his *salone* and associated loggias) but the entire city too (the covered walk)."⁸⁸

Figure 29 Palladio's Palazzo Chiericatti at Vicenza (detail of central bay of columns)

⁸⁸ 'The Sacrifice of Space', David Leatherbarrow, *Common Ground: a critical reader*, ed. David Chipperfield, Kieran Long, Shumi Bose, 13th International Architecture Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia, Marsilio, 2012, p.30.

Figure 30 Palladio's Palazzo Chiericatti at Vicenza

Leatherbarrow notes that in his treatise Palladio 'argued that ancient precedent provided a model for donations to the public good. "Porticos should be arranged around squares... their purpose is to enable people to escape the showers, snow, and discomfort caused by wind or sun."⁸⁹ The inconvenience of the marginal site led to the 'difficulty of assimilating Palazzo Chiericati into the typology of arcaded urban palazzi' when the base of the building meets a site that slopes and does so via a colonnade that is also open to the town. An upper loggia and *salone* affords good views over a river and the countryside beyond, making the building appear as both a palazzo and a villa, i.e. as both urban and individualistic.

89 Ibid.

Figure 31 Palladio's Palazzo Chiericatti at Vicenza (during a flood in 2010)

Figure 32 Palladio's Palazzo Chiericatti at Vicenza (view from 1st floor loggia)

Colonnades, Leatherbarrow observes, 'typically suppress the individuality of the buildings they join', however Palladio's colonnade is also clearly part of the façade of the house, and 'shows how the house is disjointed from the town.' His 'aim' Leatherbarrow suggests, was to emphasise 'the room above – an emblem of the house', giving this 'greater prominence, without detaching it entirely from the running length of the colonnade. Both details bind the house to the sidewalk and therefore the public realm.'⁹⁰ If one only studied Palladio's drawings, which famously do not show doors or any information about his sites, one might be misled into assuming that his

⁹⁰ Ibid., p.32.

architecture is primarily concerned with the autonomy of geometric figures freed from any context. As we have seen from this brief example, Palladio's projects are far from being examples of some theoretically autonomous art – and the architect's skill lies in resolving the tension between the inhabitant's needs and the civility of their setting⁹¹. Both are manifest in terms of rooms, internal and external, and reconciled and articulated by rhythmic spatial qualities that articulate a strong sense of public and domestic decorum – of body and world⁹².

91 Cf. At the Palazzo della Ragione at Vicenza, for example, Palladio applied a decorative ornamental façade to a collection of medieval structures, creating an urban loggia distinguished by a rhythm of arches whose inter-colonnation is adjusted to relate to the openings in the older structures behind it. Far from seeking autonomy, Palladio skillfully accommodates the existence of previous structures into a coherent and civic architectural rhythm that is capable of acknowledging and accepting different programs (town hall, shops, etc); as well as mediating the extreme topography of the site. The 'town hall' acts as a face to the hinterland of the town and the 'region' of Vicenza. In doing so, a new/old urban façade appears, one that situates the civic depth of the site. This 'depth' involves the rhythms of local agriculture, trade, government, festivals etc., with civic life in general. Palladio's façade situates the topography of the civic situation in relation to use, custom, habit, ornament and decorum.)

92 'The metaphor with which I have been concerned with is more extended – a double one – in that it involves three terms, a body is like a building and the building in turn is like the world', *The Dancing Column: On Order in Architecture*, Joseph Rykwert, MIT, 1999, p.373.

V *Building as Gesture & Argument: Joseph Rykwert on Borromini's Oratory at Rome*

The prominent role of mediation and of the human figure in Borromini's buildings reveals his debt to Michelangelo. The Oratory of St Philip Neri at Rome sits beside the chapel of St Maria in Valicella on Piazza della Chiesa Nuova, whose travertine façade was finished by Fausto Rughesi in 1605. Joseph Rykwert describes how 'when Borromini took over in 1637, his main problem was how to provide an exterior for a hall in which the new kind of literary-musical devotions (now called '*oratorio*' after the congregation which devised them), were to be held.'⁹³ Rykwert describes this problem as a 'rhetorical' one. He claims that Borromini makes a joke about the presence of a figure in the brick façade, with open arms welcoming you into the oratory. It might be better to describe this as an example of wit, as it is a deeply serious and respectful gesture. Brick was appropriate, Borromini claims, since:

the oratory is the child of the church... it was resolved that the façade of the Oratory should be, as the daughter of the Church façade, smaller, less ornate, and of inferior material... Where the church was of travertine it was resolved to make it of brick. Where the first is of Corinthian order, the other should only have a skeleton of a good order, and only indicate the members and the parts of architecture, not ornament and perfect them.⁹⁴

The Oratory's façade to the piazza steps forwards, as it were, and the upper level steps back like a torso with extended arms. A small balcony sits between these two extremes of projection and withdrawal. This balcony sits in front of the library situated at the first floor. What appears at first to be a church façade, sat somewhat oddly beside the church next door, is in fact not the entry to a chapel, but the decorated face of what Rykwert calls a 'new building type'. The curves and swells of the façade do not describe a single volume within, but

⁹³ 'Building as Gesture, Building as Argument', Joseph Rykwert, in *Thesis: Medium Architektur: Zur Krise der Vermittlung*, Weimar, 2003.

⁹⁴ Rykwert is citing Borromini from *Borromini's Book: The 'Full Relation of the Building' of the Roman Oratory*, Francesco Borromini and Virgilio Spada of the Oratory, Oblong Creative Ltd, 2010.

rather create a spatial threshold between the various levels within the building and the square that it faces. The library balcony at first floor emphasises the entrance, whilst projecting the interior of the building outwards onto the piazza. Rykwert suggests that 'he makes his joke in order to sharpen the passer-by's awareness of his metaphor, as the masters of rhetoric suggested. He could, of course, only operate at this level of complexity because he is indeed invoking a commonplace – or *topos*, to use a rhetorical term'.⁹⁵

Figure 39 Khunrath etching (probably by Vriedeman de Vries) of what he calls a "lab-oratory" from *Amphitheatrum Sapientiae Aeternae*, Hamburg 1595, showing a tent (before which Khunrath prays) similar to that in the *sala di ricreazione* of the Roman Oratory as well as music and a hearth, combining the principal reciprocities of the *salae di ricreazione* and refectory, as well as the library and oratory

In fact, it is more precise to say that the building is two pairings: library over oratory and, for the monks, *sala di ricreazione* over the refectory (these latter are both oval). These are respectively *contemplativa* above and *attiva* below. St Fillipo Neri was famous for having an enlarged chest, from an

⁹⁵ Op. Cit. For a fuller description of the role of rhetoric in Humanist culture see *Rhetoric as Philosophy: The Humanist Tradition*, Ernesto Grassi, Illinois, 2001: for a demonstration of the importance of rhetoric in logical thought see the description of the importance of the analogy of 'the time before the Muses' for Plato's argument (in *Phaedrus*) that 'true rhetoric' is not *episteme* because it is musical i.e. *rhythmical*, leading to the belief (in Late Medieval) culture, that 'Philosophy itself becomes possible only on the basis of metaphors, on the basis of the ingenuity which supplies the foundation of every rational, derivative process', p. 34.

enlarged heart, and this source of heat/warmth was thought of as being obviously analogous to the flaming heart of Christian symbolism. The facade faces South, catching the sun, and the *topos* about chest and arms is an embodiment of St Fillipo Neri himself (Borromini also speaks of being able to see the early Christian church of San Pancrazio on the Gianicolo from this balcony). In the *sala di ricreazione* there is a huge oval hearth - a marble tent in fact - which is paired with the pulpit for readings whilst dining in the refectory below. There is a famous engraving by Khunrath of what he calls a "laboratory" featuring just such a tented fireplace on the left and musical instruments in the foreground. It appears, therefore, that Borromini was playing with this transformational power of heat and music, and St Fillipo Neri's curative powers.

Figure 34 Engraving of the façade of the Roman Oratory, Borromini

Rykwert calls this rhetorical architecture 'gesture' and 'argument', noting, in agreement with Aristotle, that whilst 'the architect's life must be... the poetic life... he will inevitably have recourse to rhetoric' if only 'to convince his client and his public that he is doing something worthwhile'. Rykwert stresses that what Aristotle calls 'the contemplative life' (*bios theoretikos*) in his *Nicomachean Ethics* was 'always complementary to *bios poietikos*, *bios praktikos*, a life of making or of political activity. The good life relied upon their constant interaction'. The "theoretical" aspects of architecture reside therefore

with ethical orientation towards the idea of a 'good life', and designing architecture is considered by Aristotle⁹⁶ to be an exemplary mode of 'practical wisdom' (*phronesis*). Rhetoric plays a key role in the formation of civic values, Aristotle believed, as a way of orienting public life towards truth and justice. This orientation was seen to be capable of manifestation, in Renaissance architectural theory (following Vitruvius), via the *decorum* of buildings, and specifically not only in their appearance *per se*, but in the spatial relationships that can be established by the communicative depth of façades as thresholds.

As the example of Borromini's Fillipan Oratory demonstrates, the *decorum* of a threshold is also a matter of the way in which the experience of the interior is expressed on a façade, and expresses not only outward beauty but communicates also relationships between the inner and outer characteristics of a situation. More generally, a literate building project for a villa, for example, will manifest not only aspects of the '*vita contemplativa*', or the pleasure of country life (*otium*), but also a degree of distance from and acknowledgement of the negotiations (*negotium*) of city life. *Decorum* is not simply then a matter of an individual building's style or form, but something that orients it within the continuity of reality that we call urbanity, the theoretical and practical basis for city life and politics generally.

96 '... we may return to the good which is the object of our search. What is it? The question must be asked because good seems to vary with the art or pursuit in which it appears. It is one thing in medicine and another in strategy, and so in the other branches of human skill. We must enquire, then, what is the good which is the end common to all of them. Shall we say it is for the sake of which everything else is done? In medicine this is health, in military science victory, in architecture a building and so on – different ends in different arts; every consciously directed activity has an end for the sake of which everything that it does is done. This end may be described as its good. Consequently, if there be some one thing which is the end of all things consciously done, this will be a doable good; or, if there be more than one end, then it will be all of these.', *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle, translated by J.A.K Thomson, Penguin, 1965, Book One, Chapter Seven, pp.35-6. Aristotle describes *Phronesis*, or Practical Wisdom (Thomson also calls this 'sagacity' in his references) in Book Six, Chapter Five, noting that: 'Practical wisdom is a rational faculty exercised for the attainment of truth in things that are humanly good or bad. This accounts for the reputation of Pericles and other men of like practical genius. Such men have the power of seeing what is good for themselves and for humanity; and we assign that character also to men who display an aptitude for governing a household or a state...', (p.177).

Figure 35 Plan of the Roman Oratory

In very simple terms, the oratory chapel in Rome is a room focussed upon an altar, decorated with a painting set within an oval left within the cross-webbing of the vaulted ceiling, created for several kinds of performances and housing and making explicit the co-fraternity of the lay and consecrated Oratarians. Something of the inner life of a traditional medieval cloister appears coincidentally with a typical Renaissance *Scuole* or Guild room. The entry is centred on the façade and leads to the oratory and to the centre of the cortile. This cortile was supposed to have housed the fountain at Monte Giordano, and its long corridor was described by Borromini as the longest street in Rome⁹⁷.

In order to reconcile the perfected inner realm of the cloister garden – a square of grass fringed with a colonnade – with the extrovert face of the oratory towards the piazza, the architect had to adjust the inter-colonnation of the vestibule columns. Or rather, in order to dignify both situations with appropriate geometric *decorum*, the last column of the entrance *loggia*

97 Op. Cit.

thickens and is absorbed into the wall of the chapel. The tension between the three specific spatial rhythms of the façade, the chapel and the cortile is resolved and disguised by the placement of a bust of St Fillipo Neri at this point⁹⁸, forming a niche and a significant threshold between the inner and outer world of the complex. At this moment the particular and special character of the Oratarian mission - as both active and worldly, and at the same time declamatory, musical and contemplative - are brought together at their intersection between *monasticum* and city, in a gesture of subtle and significant symbolism. The role of sculpture and architecture here is irreconcilably site specific, and the background and physiognomic aspects of the city remain in concert.

98 *Borromini*, Anthony Blunt, Harvard, 1979, p.89.

In contrast to this harmonious situation, in the modern city ‘the deep background of language and conditions that give it life must be rediscovered’, Vesely claims. The modern city is comparable to how, ‘in amnesic aphasia, the discontinuity between the possible and actual reality of words, between their concrete and abstract meanings, destroys the physiognomic qualities of experience, perception and language.’ He concludes that ‘The loss of physiognomic qualities is directly related to the loss of categorical background, affecting language and perception.’ From this analysis of ‘mental blindness’ we can see why contemporary architects’ emphasis upon ‘sculptural form’ has two dire consequences: not only do ‘icon’ buildings lack figural or figurative physiognomic presence, i.e. decorum, they also destroy the background aspects of urbanity. I will discuss below some of the reasons for this development, and its origins in architectural modernism, but at this point it is worth noting David Leatherbarrow’s observation that whilst 20th century architects such as Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew:

suggested that art could compensate for the cultural sterility of functionally determined buildings. The widely celebrated architects of our time no longer *insert* art into functional solutions, but use it to drape or cover them; yet here too sculptural form is essentially compensation for the inadequacy of functional solutions.⁹⁹

An almost ubiquitous acceptance of ‘sculptural form’ by architects has had a seriously negative effect upon recent buildings and urban design, I suggest, and contributes to what Peter Carl wryly calls ‘our current persistent inability to make decent cities’¹⁰⁰. Part of the difficulties that architects have with Civic Design¹⁰¹ today, I suggest, is the result of looking at existing cities as ‘built form’, as the manifestation of a concept, rather than the result of negotiation and exchange. This often – if not usually, in fact - leads architects to propose

⁹⁹ *Architecture Oriented Otherwise*, David Leatherbarrow, Princeton, 2009, p.48.

¹⁰⁰ ‘City-image versus Topography of Praxis’, Peter Carl, *Cambridge Archaeology Journal*, October 2000, p. 328.

¹⁰¹ ‘Civic Design’ is the name of the department of ‘Town Planning’ at Liverpool University, and it is where the architecture students used to receive their undergraduate urbanism lectures.

superficially complicated sculptural forms in response to complex situations. This tendency has a long and ignoble history and its origins lie not only in 'mental blindness' or 'ontological blindness', but also in insecurity about the contingent nature of architecture as *praxis*. Similarly, the obvious fact that cities are not "projects" does not deter architects from claiming that they are¹⁰².

Attempts to make architecture an academic subject led, in the 20th century, to phrases such as 'built form' being used to denote 'the embodiment of cultural ideas', usually considered manifest in that other chimera 'city image'¹⁰³. Peter Carl contends that looking at city plan forms as images, leads architects then to think of 'city as concept'¹⁰⁴. Our use of confused terminology leads to confused notions of what cities and architects are for, 'most evident in the profligate use of such terminology as 'aesthetics'¹⁰⁵, 'ideology', 'technology',

102 Cf. 'The City as Project: A Research project at TU Delft', and *The City as Project*, ed. Pier Vittorio Aureli, Ruby Press, Berlin, 2014: 'The city is often depicted as a sort of self-organizing chaos. This collection of essays, edited by Pier Vittorio Aureli, makes the case for the opposite hypothesis: The city is always the result of political intention, often in the form of specific architectural projects. Whilst the argument with Schumacher's notion of the city as automatic is clear, it is worth noting that Pier Vittorio Aureli exhibited alongside Eisenman and Kipnis at Venice in 2012 as *The Piranesi Variations*. The theme was autonomy in architecture, a reprise of the motif of *The Possibility of an Absolute Architecture*, Pier Vittorio Aureli, MIT, 2011. In terms of practical poetics, the problems begin in the very first sentence: 'This book proposes to reconsider architectural form in light of a unitary interpretation of architecture and the city'; and ultimately lie in the impossibility of 'an absolute architecture', (p.ix). Pier Vittorio Aureli is struggling with the legacy of political philosopher Mario Tronti and his ideal of *Autonomia Operaia*. Tronti attempted to reconcile the ideas of Karl Marx and the Nazi legal theorist and judge Carl Schmitt; and Pier Vittorio Aureli attempts to link teleological politics and 'political theology' to the autonomy of architecture advocated by Rossi in his categories of type and place. "Struggle" is the correct term for this effort, I suggest, with all of its associations with absolutism in twentieth century thought.

103 Cf. *The Image of the City* by Kevin Lynch, (Harvard-MIT Joint Center for Urban Studies), MIT, 1960. This interesting and evocative book sits somewhat on the threshold between systematic and hermeneutic readings of cities I suggest: at once open to the importance of analogy in architecture, whilst restricted by an over-arching emphasis upon city as 'image' - as opposed to city as quotidian and civic life.

104 Carl, Op. Cit.

105 Cf. *Aesthetica*, Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, 1750: 'Baumgarten appropriated the word aesthetics, which had always meant sensation, to mean taste or "sense" of beauty. In so doing, he gave the word a different significance, thereby inventing its modern usage. The word had been used differently since the time of the ancient Greeks to mean the ability to receive stimulation from one or more of the five bodily senses. In his *Metaphysic*, § 451, Baumgarten defined taste, in its wider meaning, as the ability to judge according to the senses, instead of according to the intellect. Such a judgment of taste is based on feelings of pleasure or displeasure. A science of aesthetics would be, for Baumgarten, a deduction of the rules or principles of artistic or natural beauty from individual "taste." In 1897, Leo Tolstoy, in his *What is Art?*, criticized Baumgarten's book on aesthetics. Tolstoy opposed "Baumgarten's trinity — Good, Truth and Beauty...." Tolstoy asserted that "these words not only have no definite meaning, but they hinder us from giving any definite meaning to existing art...." Baumgarten, he said, claimed that there are three ways to know perfection: "Beauty is the perfect (the absolute) perceived by the senses. Truth is the perfect perceived by reason. The good is the perfect attained by the moral will." [2] Tolstoy, however, contradicted Baumgarten's theory and claimed that good, truth, and beauty have nothing in common and may even oppose each other. "...the arbitrary uniting of these three

'commerce' or 'space', Carl claims. These terms obscure what he calls the 'tensional network of analogies' that 'arises from within the practical domain of concrete and metaphoric relationships', that constitute city life, and these 'methodologies' and 'generalizations of concepts' tend to 'flatten the difficulty of reality' inducing 'an ontological blindness'¹⁰⁶. Carl does not believe in the Hegelian distinction between 'matter and spirit', nor the subsequent functionalist-symbolic dichotomy that arises from this distortion of reality: he asserts instead that 'there is no such thing as an absence of content, no gap between the practical and the symbolic, only progressively more explicit modes of symbolic representation.' The problem of the city therefore, is not a question of the form or image of the city, or one of methodology, but of recognition that 'no universal exists in separation apart from its particulars'¹⁰⁷. Carl proposes that Aristotle's description of situational knowledge (in his *Metaphysics*) is the basis of *praxis* in *Nicomachean Ethics*. What enables one to move between the universal and particular, Carl calls 'typicality of praxis'. Praxis cannot be reduced to materialism, nor to tectonics (materiality), nor to the variously pseudo-scientific modes of formalism that are really the search for a new style of architecture based upon information (semiotic Post-Modernism and digital Parametricism are curiously alike in this way¹⁰⁸). Carl's ambition for 'praxis' as a conceptual basis for architectural meaning is clear in this passage:

I want to emphasize that the measures of a *techne* are only partially determined by questions of fabrication; rather, the key to these measures are the customary postures or gestures, distances, groupings, the distinctions and hierarchies of human situations. For example, discourse is customarily face-to-face; dining is customarily inflected towards the manners of host/guest and involves the often elaborate symbolism of food preparation... the house is customarily the institution which is most consistently present in architectural and urban representation. The paradigmatic dimensions of this typicality are also the basis (in the Ancient Near East) of

concepts served as a basis for the astonishing theory according to which the difference between good art, conveying good feelings, and bad art, conveying wicked feelings, was totally obliterated, and one of the lowest manifestations of art, art for mere pleasure...came to be regarded as the highest art. And art became, not the important thing it was intended to be, but the empty amusement of idle people." (*What is Art?*, VII.) Wikipedia, accessed 15/04/13 at 3.44pm.
 106 City-image versus Topography of Praxis', Peter Carl, Cambridge Archaeology Journal, October 2000, p. 328.

107 Ibid., p. 334 (Carl is of course citing *Metaphysics*, 1040b26, Aristotle).

108 Cf. P. Schumacher, Op. Cit. and Pier Vittorio Aureli Op. Cit.

larger “symbolism”, since what is always present in such situations is the exchange between the given conditions and historical possibilities. There is an arbitrary element in any symbol; and a symbol is less illuminated by looking at its intrinsic qualities (a mountain, for example) than by looking at its modes of use (e.g., as throne base, or in poetry), which are culturally specific.¹⁰⁹

Carl’s work is concerned with the latent conditions of urbanity that constitute the grounds for praxis, and he acknowledges that architectural praxis provides encounters that architectural theory cannot, ‘the sorts of opportunities which only reality throws up’.¹¹⁰

Carl’s term ‘Culturally specific’ resonates with the expression ‘Site Specific’ which Richard Serra uses to describe his sculpture, and with Donald Judd’s provocative term ‘Specific Objects’, but of course is significantly different. What is meant by ‘contextualism’ is at stake, and also the problem of formalism per se. The method of this study is to examine the language that has been traditionally used to discuss sculpture and architecture (*eurhythmia*, *analogia*, etc.)¹¹¹. Partly this involves the reconstruction of terms such as ‘space’ and ‘rhythm’, and it ultimately leads me to examine the possibility of their recuperation as ways to bring architecture closer to life, and specifically to city life. For Dalibor Vesely, the simultaneous loss of background and articulated urbanity in contemporary architecture raises some very complex questions

109 City-image versus Topography of Praxis’, Peter Carl, *Cambridge Archaeology Journal*, October 2000, p. 332.

110 Peter Carl, email to Patrick Lynch, 24 Jun 2013, at 14:20: ‘these are indeed the sorts of opportunities which only reality throws up. The opportunity presents itself to do a complete life cycle... la Tourette’s cells are little churches’. Correspondence concerned the example of a catafalque being used as a bed in the chapel of a convent that my practice have designed in London, in order for it to comply with disabled access regulations (‘Similarly, it would be possible to place a bed at ground floor, to provide accommodation if the lift were ever broken. We could detail the chapel for example to accommodate a piece of furniture that could also become a bed, as it is highly likely that this item would also be used as a catafalque to support coffins’ – Patrick Lynch, email to Ben Dixon at Islington Planning Department, 24 Jun 2013 13:14).

111 *Seeing is Forgetting: A Life of Contemporary Artist Robert Irwin*, Lawrence Weschler, California, 1982: There is a story about an attempt to bring the best minds together to discuss the possibility of collaboration between architecture and sculpture. As introductions were being made, each architect in turn described themselves as ‘an artist’. The only actual artist present was Robert Irwin, and he got up and left, ‘leaving the artists to it’. Subsequently, Irwin became ‘the architect’ for the Dia Foundation’s rural collection. The Dia felt that architects were unable to behave appropriately, that only an artist could deal appropriately with the site and with the art works. Similarly, when Richard Serra’s sculptures were installed in the Bilbao branch of the Guggenheim, Serra was aggrieved at the poor quality of the building (see *Icon Magazine* 026, ‘The Matter of Time’, Justin McGuirk, August 2005 <http://www.iconeye.com/read-previous-issues/icon-026-%7C-august-2005/the-matter-of-time-%7C-icon-026-%7C-august-2005>, accessed 03/09/2013 at 14.57).

about decorum in buildings, and their potential to communicate in the modern city:

The example of the highly developed space of a medieval cathedral brings to the fore a number of important but difficult questions. What is the nature of the relationship between the verbal articulation of the program, painting sculpture, and the body of architecture? Are the more articulated possibilities of expression anticipated or prefigured in architecture, or is architecture only a passive receptacle for the more expressive possibilities of sculpture, painting, and the spoken or written word? Is there anything in architecture literally, or metaphorically as a form of language or text?¹¹²

I aim to try to address these questions by discussing sculpture and architecture in terms of what these disciplines have in common: spatiality, rhythm and site. Rhythm is not simply a primary aspect of physical movement but also of communicative space. Dalibor Vesely's term *communicative movement* hints at the power of architecture to articulate the conditions of life that are common to all. The horizon of engagement that is established in typical situations is matched by a degree of inarticulate structure, the rhythm of light and architectonics, all of which set up the possibility for spontaneity and participation. Urban topography contributes powerfully to the communication between architecture, site and sculpture, and its recovery re-establishes the possibility for a *practical poetics*.

The next part of this study concerns the rhythmic and communicative character of space; whilst the following part concerns the powerful claim decorum and ornament make upon the imagination and its orientation with urban life; the next parts of this dissertation situate spatiality in the realms of work and play revealed in Martin Heidegger's writing concerning Being and sculpture, and in particular in his collaboration with Eduardo Chillida; this is followed by an examination of the role that embodiment and articulation play in St Peter's Klippan; I will then examine the consequences of the adoption of formalist principles to urban sculpture with the consequential loss of civic depth in the combative collaborations between Peter Eisenman and Richard Serra; concluding with an examination of the conditions for the possibility of

¹¹² Op. Cit., p.68.

the rebirth of practical poetics and the communication between site,
architecture and sculpture in some of my design projects at Westminster.

CHAPTER 2

RHYTHMIC AND COMMUNICATIVE SPACE

i *Adolphe Appia on l'Espace Rhythmique & Hellerau*

'An ornament, a decoration, a piece of sculpture set up in a chosen place are representative in the same sense that, say, the church where they are found is itself representative.'

Hans Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*

Arguably, the birth of the term 'space' occurred simultaneously with the idea of rhythmic space. This may be because 'space' became an important aspect of human culture whilst human events were still entwined with natural conditions, even if for Mallarmé, space appeared as a gulf or void, as death amidst a shipwreck – the wreckage of traditional society wrought by the violence of industrial capitalism¹¹³. For El Lissitzky 'space' is whiteness, a *tabula rasa* of post-revolutionary possibility upon which architects might project their axonometric visions of buildings that are optimistic about their potential to transform the flotsam of the broken world into paradise. For Adolphe Appia, however, space was essentially musical – '*l'espace rhythmique*'. 'Without changing my basic orientation', Appia claimed, 'eurhythmic freed me from too rigid a tradition, and in particular from the decorative romanticism of Wagner', for whom he had designed stage sets¹¹⁴.

113 Cf. *Convivius Ergo Sum*, unpublished manuscript, Peter Carl.

114 *Texts on Theatre*, Adolphe Appia, ed. Richard C. Beacham, Routledge, 1993, p.76. Appia's term 'eurhythmic' means, loosely speaking, rhythmic theatre, which distinguishes it from Vitruvius' eurhythmy i.e. "shapeliness". As outlined above, direction, decorum and orientation is implied by Vitruvius' use of the phrase, and light and 'mythos' (or plot) situates Appia's theatrical spaces also.

Figure 36' Parsifal, 1896 - Un décor du premier acte (La forêt sacrée), Adolphe Appia

Space was not only musical but also theatrical for Appia, and he is emphatic that space is not abstract:

I shall call this corporeal space, which becomes living space once the body animates it... Whereas earlier, in the case of Wagner, I had based my designs on the performer, now lacking a score, I thought I could begin with space itself, but I failed miserably. Finally I understood! If I lacked a score, I at least had the living body... This conclusion liberated me... Wherever the pencil touched the paper it evoked the naked body, the naked limbs. The active role of light developed naturally from a spatial arrangement, which demanded it,

and everything thereby took on the appearance of expectancy: the nature of space made the presence of the body indispensable...¹¹⁵

Crucial to his conception of space was the rhythmic character of light as much as the 'eurhythmic movements' that Appia learnt about from Émile Jaques-Dalcroze, his patron at Hellerau, as well of course as the music of Wagner, for whom he had created earlier stage sets. 'Apollo was not only the god of music; he was also the god of light!' Appia declared in his essay 'Eurhythmics and Light' in 1912¹¹⁶.

Figure 37 'Dessin de Rythmique - Prométhée', Adolphe Appia, 1929

His setting for *Orpheus and Eurydice*, Act II, 'The Descent into the Underworld', created in Hellerau in collaboration with Dalcroze in 1912

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 74.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 94 (Appia is citing his friend Houston Stewart Chamberlain's *Richard Wagner*, 1896, p.196).

consisted of a staircase down which Orpheus 'gradually descended... bringing the light with him as he was opposed by, then gradually subdued, the Furies.'¹¹⁷

Figure 38 Adolphe Appia, stage set for *Orpheus and Eurydice*, Act II, 'The Descent into the Underworld', 1926

Whilst Appia's later work at Hellerau may have superficially overcome what he saw as his earlier 'decorative Romanticism', it retains a primordial

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

sense of 'clearing' and of earth/sky. In fact, his spatial settings retained a strongly communicative quality, and spatial rhythms articulated both the content and action of an opera – although the eurythmic performances were less opera than ballet – emphasising a rhythmic order, needless to say. This spatial exegesis was powerfully atmospheric, turning 'thousands of electric light bulbs', secreted behind gauze, into a lambent threshold between human and divine realms, whilst maintaining a strongly situational and human scale. A sort of grand if not quite civic – although the fetes at the theatre were meant to be part of a festival cycle for the town – quality of emotion was invoked but remained somewhat abstract and inarticulate. This ambiguity is akin to the resacralizing tendencies of Romantic painters whereby light symbolised God-in-Nature, and a sort of Germano-Hellenic mythic topos.

Figure 39 Junotempel in Agrigent, Caspar David Friedrich, 1828-30

What saves Adolphe Appia's stage sets from becoming pure signs, in the manner of Leni Riefenstahl's theatres of light at Nuremberg – although there exist obvious similarities, not only in the Wagnerian ecstasy of mood but also their common dramatic exaggeration – is the combination of dramatic and real time, of the movement of actors across naturalistic terrain, in recognisably symbolic versions of real situations. These topographic thresholds are primitive and earthy, exhibit a mute resistance to the fleeting action upon them, both

abstract and figural – settings for real bodies as Appia suggests. It is this carnal quality and the articulation of temporality (by artificial light that imitates natural light) that grounds Appia’s rhythmic spaces in common experience.

Figure 40 Ulysses deriding Polyphemus, JMW Turner, 1829

The question they pose however, is ‘how do these rhythms contribute to the creation of a communicative spatial realm?’ In part they are examples of 20th century primitivism, with its roots in Romanticism, what August Wiedmann calls ‘the mythopoetic instinct’ that is present in Turner’s *Ulysses deriding Polyphemus*¹¹⁸. This ‘mythopoetic instinct’ led not only to allegorical settings in paintings and theatre (in particular by Wagner), but also led towards a sense of the essential role that festivals played in orienting both ancient Greek and Italian city-states. This instinct did not articulate the deeper dimensions of *decorum* – the natural conditions upon which city life is founded and depends, and Romanticism tended towards inwardness and ‘a simplicity at one with nature’¹¹⁹. The re-birth of the tradition of festivals at

118 *Romantic Art Theories*, August Wiedmann, Gresham Books, 1986, pp.82-3.

119 *Ibid.*, p.12.. Wiedmann claims that for many 18th century observers Romanticism, and in particular Fichte’s notion that ‘Within leads the Mysterious Way!’ was ‘nothing more than Protetstantism *in extremis*, the hubris of the subject before the Fall.’ (p.68). On the other hand, a Romantic poet was usually a ‘passionately religious poet’ (such as Shelley), and ‘the backward-looking Christian Romanticism of the Nazarenes’ was emphatically Catholic. Regardless of denomination, Romanticism was at once a search for and acceptance of ‘cosmic harmony and

Hellerau, admittedly within the theatre school of Émile Jaques-Dalcroze, sat within and around a quasi-urban temple-theatre, is evidence of attempts in early modernist design culture to re-unify the arts (architecture, stage design, music, dance, opera, etc.) along with the senses (light, sound, movement).

Figure 41 Festspielhaus, Hellerau, Heinrich Tessenow, 1910

conflict of the elements' (p.83), Wiedman claims; and this was fundamentally anti-urban, against 'rational-scientific culture' (p.13) and 'in favour of humble and rustic life' (p.12). Whilst their sense of 'horror before an imminent Wasteland', and 'dread of a disenchanted world' led to many to seek in 'cultic' art refuge from modernity, it is also worth noting that in Schelling's *System of Transcendental Idealism*, 'Genuine art always combined *natural* necessity and *ideal* purpose.' (p.74).

Figure 42 Festspielhaus stage, Hellerau, Adolphe Appia, 1910

Hellerau offered an opportunity for the eurhythmic theories of Dalcroze, and Appia's own notions of rhythmic space, to become articulate in a quasi-urban setting – a small town devoted to craft and to art. Appia's set designs and Dalcroze's performances were, as it were, the summit of a quite broad cultural pyramid whose layers included the 'werkstätten' of Hellerau and Tessenow's urban design, residential and school buildings, interiors and furniture.

Figure 43 Site plan and illustrations Hellerau

Figure 44 Drawings of the workers' housing at Hellerau, Heinrich Tessenow

Hellerau is in fact a suburb of Dresden (a city particularly made up of semi-independent suburban satellite towns), one of the most significant urban achievements of both Baroque culture and Enlightenment *Bildung*, and the rhythms of the wider city and of the natural world informed the life of Hellerau, which reached a sort of profane apotheosis in eurhythmics.

Figure 45 Hellerau shown in relation to Dresden

The enchanted setting of theatre offered a possibility for reconciliation of the mytho-poetic themes of the 19th century – which had previously only existed in paintings and in music – with a theory of movement and spatiality in general. What is revealed by Appia at Hellerau, I suggest, is the role that rhythm plays in communicative spatiality generally. The communicative power of his stage sets is an aspect of the “synaesthesia” that Vesely identifies as vital to orientation, of which movement is key. Rhythm may in fact be a crucial aspect of urbanity, but we need to step beyond the frame of theatre in order to encounter it, because urbanity is not a spectacle.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ There are numerous examples in which architects mistake the monumental effects of light and shade, such as one sees in the drawings of Appia and in the paintings of De Chirico, and a vaguely classical architectural language for urbanity *per se*. Whilst the Italian architects of the 1930s made some useful interventions into cities (C.f. Giovanni Michelucci's post office at Pistoia, and the Santa Maria Novella train station at Florence), attempts to create whole cities or city quarters from monuments is problematic not least because of the problem of domesticity in relation to civic life (Cf. *Esposizione Universale Roma*). It seems to work best for mortuaries or set design (Cf. Aldo Rossi's Modena Cemetery).

Whilst it might be common place to suggest that cities exhibit rhythms, it is also perhaps too obvious to say that all aspects of life are rhythmic. So obvious, in fact, that we do not notice that rhythm characterises the world and our being in it in biological and ecological and social terms. In *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life*, Henri Lefebvre sketches a 'portrait' of 'the rythmanalyst' who is attentive to this continuity between self and world, one who 'calls on all his senses':

He draws on his breathing. The circulation of his blood, the beatings of his heart and the delivery of speech as landmarks. Without privileging any one of these sensations, raised by him in the perception of rhythms, to the detriment of any other. He thinks with his body, not in the abstract, but in lived temporality.¹²¹

Acknowledging his debt to Gaston Bachelard's 'topo-analysis' (and his investigations into *The Poetics of Space* and *The Psychoanalysis of Fire*), Lefebvre adopts a quasi-phenomenological approach towards what he calls 'The Critique of the Thing', that nonetheless juxtaposes as 'categories' those characteristics which phenomenological enquiry seeks to reveal as continuous and reciprocal viz., 'quantitative and qualitative', 'continuous and discontinuous'¹²². He posits the idea of 'secret' as against 'public' rhythms; and 'fictional' versus 'dominating rhythms'¹²³; and whilst Lefebvre claims that 'the characteristic traits' of 'the real' are that it is 'truly temporal and rhythmic not visual', his analytic approach is based upon a series of conspicuously theoretical metaphors¹²⁴. Lefebvre claims that:

To release and listen to rhythms demands attention and a certain time. In other words, it serves only as a glimpse for entering into murmur, noises, cries. The classic term in philosophy, "the object", is not appropriate to rhythm. "Objective"? Yes, but exceeding the

¹²¹ *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life*, Henri Lefebvre, Bloomsbury, 2013, p.31.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p.19.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p.27.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.41.

narrow framework of objectivity, by bringing to it a multiplicity of (sensorial and significant) meanings.¹²⁵

However, his critique of 'the thing' lapses into a description of rhythmanalysis as subjectivity, claiming that it comes close to 'the poet'¹²⁶. Lefebvre's descriptions of 'children leaving school, some very noisy', etc., are exuberant and keenly observational, and like Bachelard he writes well and evocatively, even if the meaning of his words sometimes slips away within the 'wave' of verbal rhythms. Some sense of the inter-subjective quality of phenomenological 'measurements' is evident in his description of a 'window overlooking the street' that 'is not a mental place':

the window offers views that are more than spectacles; mentally prolonged spaces. In such a way that the implication in the spectacle entails the explication of this spectacle. Familiarity preserves it; it disappears and is reborn, with the everydayness of both the inside and the outside worlds. Opacity and horizons, obstacles and perspectives implicate one another because they complicate one another, imbricate one another to the point of allowing the Unknown, the giant city, to be glimpsed or guessed at. With its diverse spaces affected by diverse times: rhythms.¹²⁷

These rhythms he then calls 'the music of the city'. Writing at the beginning of the 1980s, in central Paris, Lefebvre observes changes to the city with a mixture of delight and horror. He sees evidence of city music in the ways in which 'the squares have refound their ancient function, for a long time imperilled, of gathering, of setting the scene and staging spontaneous popular theatre':

Here on the square, between Saint-Merri and Modernism erupts a medieval-looking festival: fire-eaters, juggler, snake charmers, but also preachers and sit-in discussions. Openness and adventure next to dogmatic armour-plating. All possible games, material and spiritual.¹²⁸

Lefebvre asks if there is 'a hierarchy in this tangled mess, this scaffolding?' 'A relation between' what he calls the 'physical flows of movements and gestures,

125 Ibid., p.41.

126 Ibid., p.33.

127 Ibid., pp.42-3.

128 Ibid., p.44.

and the culture that shows itself (and yells) in the enormous murmur of the junction?' He is resigned that whilst the 'windows, doors, street and facades are measured in proportion to human size', the 'hands that move about, the limbs, do not amount to signs, even though they throw out multiple messages'. Despite his sense that people should 'impose a law... An order of grandeur', and the fact that 'the little bistros on *rue R.*, the boutique, are on a human scale, like the passer-by'; modern 'constructions wanted to *transcend* this scale'. Lefebvre is scathing not only of the modern architecture of Paris, but also of capitalist property development generally. 'Money no longer renders itself sensible as such,' he observes, 'even on the façade of the bank...not long ago this capital centre retained something of the provincial, of the medieval: historic and crumbling.' Just as modern banks no longer show the presence of money but hide it, the architects of Beaubourg:

leave known dimensions and also all models past and possible behind; leading to the exhibition of metal and frozen guts, in the form of solidified piping, and the harshest reflections. And it's a meteorite fallen from another planet, where technology reigns untrammelled.¹²⁹

'Capital', he declares, 'kills social riches. It produces *private* riches', and he continues:

just as it pushes the *private* individual to the fore, despite it being a public monster. It increases political struggle to the extent that states and state-apparatuses bow down to it. With regard to social richness, it dates from an earlier time: gardens and (public) parks, squares and avenues, open monumentality, etc. Investment in this domain, which is sometimes reliant on democratic pressure, grows rarer. What sets itself up is the empty cage, which can receive any commodity whatsoever, a place of transit, of passage, where the crowds contemplate themselves (example: the Beaubourg (Pompidou) Centre – the Forum in Paris – the Trade Centre in New York). Architecture and the architect, threatened with disappearance, capitulate before the *property developer*, who spends the money.

Just as Lefebvre juxtaposes a definite distinction between individual and state, he draws absolute distinctions between 'everyday' spatial settings and

¹²⁹ Ibid., p.43.

'Modernism' – between the city and architecture in fact. This is, I suggest, an extension of what he calls 'repressive' 'state apparatuses' to encompass capitalist space also. He even describes these as exhibiting different rhythms – even different geometries. What he calls 'the cyclical is social order manifesting itself. The linear is the daily grind, the routine, therefore the perpetual, made up of chance encounters.'¹⁹⁰ He elaborates on the distinction between the 'everyday time' of city dwellers and 'the state' in an essay entitled "An Attempt at the Rhythmanalysis of Mediterranean Cities" (published in the same volume in English), drawing particular attention to the theatricality of Venice:

Isn't it that because of a privileged form of civility, of liberty, founded in a dialectic of rhythms, gives itself free-rein in this space? This liberty does not consist of being a free citizen within the state – but in being free in the city outside the state. Political power dominates or rather seeks to dominate space; whence the importance of monuments and squares, but if palaces and churches have political meaning and goal, the townsfolk-citizens divert from it: they appropriate the space in a non-political manner. Through a certain use of time the citizen resists the state. A struggle for appropriation is therefore unleashed, in which rhythms play a major role. Through them, civil, therefore social time seeks to and succeeds in withdrawing itself from linear, unrhythmic, measuring/measured state time. Thus public space, the space of representation, becomes "spontaneously" a place for walks and encounters, intrigues, diplomacy, deals and negotiations – it theatricalises itself. Thus the time and rhythms of the people who occupy this spaces are linked back to space.¹⁹¹

Lefebvre is clearly unwilling to admit that 'the public' and 'the secret' 'imbricate' each other in both traditional and modern cities – despite his evocation of the masked balls of Venice and his description of the windows of Paris. Whilst it is clear that modern cities suffer from modern buildings that appear as 'empty cages', it is less clear how what he calls 'The Capitalists' seek to gain from the creation of asocial space. Lefebvre hopes that 'perhaps ancient truths will come to pass through a language other than that of the modern, and the position in

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., p.40.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., p102.

favour of the social¹³². What these 'ancient truths' might be, Lefebvre resists mentioning.

I share his distaste for Beaubourg and I do not accept Richard Roger's assertion that he and Renzo piano represented and came from the populist social movements that inspired the events in Paris in 1968¹³³. It is named, after all, after the right wing President that commissioned it, *Centre Pompidou*. It is clear that whilst the creation of a vast and vastly expensive art gallery (and spectacular if ultimately anti-dynamic escalator ride) occurred as a response to civic unrest and replaced spontaneous civic life with spectacle. The Pompidou Centre is purely a visual spectacle. It has nothing in common with the rhythmic experience of a medieval city that Lefebvre (and the Situationists) saw as a vital contrast to 'Modernism'.¹³⁴

The public and private aspects of buildings and spaces in traditional cities are not as antagonistic, or as absolute, as Lefebvre claims. Nor, I suggest, is it impossible today to imagine design that is oriented towards 'the social'. This social life is a mode of theatricality, as Lefebvre suggests, but he does not describe the transformational power of theatricality that over turns typological categories. Such inversion and metamorphosis was specifically observed in 1930s Naples by Walter Benjamin to reside in the balconies and deep facades of buildings and in the streets. Benjamin was much more of 'a poet' than Lefebvre of course, and he saw theatre as a quality of immanence and latency. Benjamin describes theatricality as metamorphosis, and as a form of spatial, temporal and architectural porosity that characterises the city of Naples and its inhabitants:

132 Ibid., p64.

133 Richard Rogers: *Inside Out*, exhibition at The Royal Academy, 18th July - 13th October 2013: Rogers made this claim in a film that was shown in the exhibition. I will refer to this and other interviews in more detail below.

134 Dalibor Vesely remarked on the (limited) success of the public space in front of Beaubourg in our interview for the Venice Biennale, (Op. Cit.), which I see as deriving from the failure of Roger's to instigate his plans for the space: "A good analogy is to think of the space in front of Beaubourg in Paris (*Centre Pompidou*), where the piazza is. I remember, when it was under construction, I was talking to Richard Rogers and looking down from the second floor onto the huge piazza below, and he described to me his vision of this going to be the future flower market of Paris. That was his intention. Obviously, it didn't happen. But it's probably quite good that it didn't happen, because then it would be a monologue, just flowers.... So now it's open to events, as they come and happen, and whatever happens happens, and it's a sort of city space, which sometimes is more interesting than the exhibitions inside. That's fine."

As porous as the stone is this architecture. Building and action impenetrable in the courtyards, stairways and arcades. In everything they preserve the scope to become new unforeseen constellations. The stamp of the definitive is avoided. No situation appears intended forever, no figure asserts it's 'thus and not otherwise'. This is how architecture, the most binding part of the communal rhythm, comes into being here: civilized, private, and ordered only in the great hotel and warehouse buildings on the quays; anarchical, embroiled, village like in the centre, into which large networks of streets were hacked only forty years ago... Porosity results not only from the indolence of the Southern artisan, but also, above all, from the passion for improvisation, which demands that space and opportunity be at any price preserved. Buildings are used as a popular stage. They are all divided into innumerable, simultaneously animated theatres. Balcony, courtyard, window, gateway, staircase, roof are at the same time stage and boxes... Irresistibly the festival penetrates each and every working day. Porosity is the inexhaustible law of the life of this city, reappearing everywhere. A grain of Sunday is hidden in each weekday, and how much weekday in this Sunday!¹³⁵

He describes this capacity for transformation as festival - as 'a grain of Sunday' that inhabits each weekday and *vice versa*. Lefebvre's description of everyday life as something defined and ranged against 'the state' or 'the capitalists' misses the essential aspect of urbanity that makes it theatrical - this capacity for transformation. The fire-eaters that he observed at *Saint-Merri* are not enacting a medieval rite - they are not engaged in a festive use of the space, their tricks are not, in fact, communal activity at all - but evidence of the lack of it. The reason why the jugglers outside Beaubourg are not actually in a 'medieval city square' is not simply because the building is an 'empty cage' - or ugly, or lacking in scale in formal terms. What is problematic in these spaces is the absolute distinction between public and private life, and gawping at a street entertainer is not a satisfying form of encounter because *it is not a mode of participation in city life*. A spectacle is fundamentally not participatory, because there is no 'communicative movement' at play.

¹³⁵ 'Naples', in *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms and Autobiographical Writings*, Walter Benjamin, Shoken, pp.165-8.

iii *Dalibor Vesely on Communicative Movement at Chartres & Würzburg*

Having established the importance of 'the situational structure of the world', and the role that praxis plays in revealing this, Vesely then proceeds to explain how *communicative space* reveals that the distinctions between form and content, and between autonomous self and extensive world are 'fictitious'. To do so the role of 'communicative movement' is clarified and shown to play a central role not only in spatiality but also in representation i.e. in both pre-reflective and reflective experience, revealing both the spontaneous aspects of space and the role that architecture plays in culture generally:

The place of architecture in the continuum of culture is special because its reality coincides with the reality of primary situations and their mode of embodiment. The history of architecture can be seen as the history of attempts to represent the latent order of nature and create a plausible spatial matrix for the rest of culture. The plausibility of the spatial matrix rests on a long process of interpretations and modifications that established an identifiable tradition.¹³⁶

Vesely calls this 'the playing field of architecture', and suggests that 'If we extend the notion of playing field to architecture, then it may be possible to say that what the playing field is to the game, architecture is to culture in its broadest sense'.¹³⁷ What are the grounds for this claim? Firstly, he cites Erwin Straus to demonstrate that architectural space reveals the primary character of spatiality to lie in movement:

Sensuality and motility are co-ordinated in the tactile sphere in an especially striking fashion. We pass our fingers over the table top and apprehend its smoothness as a quality of the object. The tactile impression results from the completion of the movement. When the tactile movement stops, the tactile impression dies out.¹³⁸

Movement is not only inherent in sensuality, but also essential to embodiment generally, and this is the crucial aspect of space that enables architecture to

¹³⁶ Op. Cit., pp.103-4.

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 106.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p.82.

become articulate. In spatial articulation the arts play a part in 'synesthetic experience' in the same way that all the senses are coordinated in everyday life generally. Architectural space 'supports' our movement, providing stability for culture generally (as a playing field does for sportsmen):

We experience the most obvious manifestations of the structuring role of architecture almost constantly in our everyday lives. There is hardly a place or a circumstance that is not organised by spatial intentions (or in the case of natural surroundings, experienced as organised). The encounter with things and their spatial order is an encounter with the otherness of our situation, accessible through the dialectics of revealing and hiding... However, we need to see these terms (embodiment and articulation) in their dialectical relationship: it is by resistance that architecture supports our intentions and the appropriate meaning of a situation. We are aware of this most intuitively each time we move up a staircase, travel through uncomfortable corridors, enter rooms with certain expectations, or recognize the purpose of a building from its layout and physiognomy.¹³⁹

Vesely furthermore suggests that here is a play between the 'silence' and 'resistance' of space and the role that architecture has in 'supporting' and 'articulating' the 'unity' of the arts in traditional buildings, which reveals the profound contribution that it has in situating and orienting us in the world. He offers some architectural examples to explain the role movement plays in our experience of space and in our comprehension of the representative aspects of it (whilst noting that 'the process of bringing the latent world to visibility is most clearly demonstrated in the design of gardens, where the cosmic conditions are revealed in a visible order'¹⁴⁰). In each, 'the natural world' provides the means of and measure of experience. Firstly, the rose window on the West Front at Chartres Cathedral represents the second coming of Christ (*Parousia*) and the fulfilment of Christian cosmogony, which began with the 'incarnation of the word'. Vesely insists that 'the body of the cathedral provides a background for the articulation of the more explicit meanings visible in the physiognomy and iconography of the sculpture and coloured windows.'¹⁴¹ This

139 Ibid., p.106.

140 Ibid., p.83-4: 'The order is always a result of dialogue between the representative structure of space and the spontaneity of natural change, manifested in the changing nature of the seasons, growth and decay of the flora, changing weather.'

141 Ibid., p.64.

articulation occurs as interplay between a relatively inarticulate rhythm of columns and arches (of the barely articulated stone architectural space), and the highly articulated rhythm established by the sun's movement (illuminating the stained glass):

The relationships between these levels of articulation and their equivalent modes of embodiment are brought together in the east to west movement of the sun, the visible source of light, which culminates in the sunset. The correspondence between the Last Judgement in the rose window and the sunset illustrates very beautifully the link between the invisible phenomena of death and resurrection, their visible representation in the window, and their embodiment in the hierarchical structure of the cathedral, animated by the movement and light of the sun. The crucial observation at Chartres is how the body of the cathedral, itself abstract and silent, is capable of revealing and supporting a very subtle and highly articulated meaning of salvation – a meaning that can be brought down to earth tangibly and concretely.¹⁴²

Vesely's other examples of 'communicative movement' in architectural space involves both the description of the typical Parisian café as a 'field of references' and as a 'visible text'¹⁴³ and a baroque staircase. The latter reveals that embodiment is movement, not simply materiality (although this plays a supporting role as 'resistance' enabling and 'supporting' movement). Vesely refers repeatedly to the example of staircases, noting that a stair is 'in one sense a pure object, intended to serve a defined purpose', but also as 'a field of relationships – not always visible and obvious, but permanently available.'¹⁴⁴ Before dealing in some detail with a particular example he alludes to a theme that unites his term 'continuity of references' with 'communicative movement' as something that is both spatio-temporal and cognitive. Decorum is introduced as a matter of the 'institutional nature' of 'the French café' example, 'rooted in the habits, customs and rituals of French life... the invisible aspects of culture and way of life are embedded in the café's visible fabric, as if they were a language conveyed in a written text.'¹⁴⁵ He is insistent that this

142 Ibid., pp.66-67.

143 Ibid., pp.77-78.

144 Ibid., p.77.

145 Ibid., p.78.

institutional character is not available via 'conventional typologies, relying solely on appearance', because:

Identity is not a property of things or structures; it is constituted in the continuity of references to the ultimate sameness of the most regular movement in reality as a whole – that is, the celestial movement, measured by the stability of the earth.¹⁴⁶

Nonetheless, whilst the ultimate reference for us is gravity and seasonal time, human finitude, etc., there are a network of relationships which situate each reference in relation to each other; cognition and comprehension of this occurs instinctively and provides orientation. This is why staircases possess particular and usually typical identities, since they are part of a 'field of relationships' that make up typical situations; we might call such a collection of typical situations urbanity, and it is something that exists between things in a building and amongst individual buildings. Staircases connect, bring together and define as distinct, different spatial characters and identities within and also beyond buildings. 'These relationships', he declares, 'are available in all our preliminary design decisions, including about the staircases' general character and overall spatial arrangement.' In fact, staircases facilitate not only physical but also perceptual and communicative or ontological movement; they facilitate spatial recognition and orientation:

When we speak about the character of the staircase being domestic or public, simple or monumental, we have in mind a precise relationship between the space, the light, the size and material of the staircase, and the movement that occurs on it. There is a striking contrast between the inexhaustible richness of possible interpretations and the limited number of plausible or optimal solutions. This limitation is even more puzzling in more complex designs such as those of residences, libraries, theatres, and concert halls. Most spatial situations show a remarkable level of identity that cannot be derived from spatial characteristics alone; it is something more complex and enigmatic.¹⁴⁷

In the case of the example of the baroque staircase at the bishop's residence at Würzburg, this enigmatic complexity is a characteristic of an elaborate iconographic scheme in which the architecture of Balthasar Neumann and the

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p.79.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p.77.

frescoes of Tiepolo are unified. Both resistant stone and painted ceiling combine to situate actual and imaginary space in relationship to each other - 'one art participates in the reality of the other'¹⁴⁸ - and this unity is achieved through movement. 'The unity of space', Vesely reminds us, 'depends on the continuity of references, which in our case is the continuity of embodiment understood not as the materiality of a particular art but as situatedness and participation in movement' (whose ultimate reference is 'earth'). This unity 'reveals the tension between the anonymity and silence of the architectural body and the iconicity that can be anticipated', and results from the 'universality of the imagination' that enables architect and artist to anticipate the culmination of each other's efforts, which in this case occurs on the landing of the staircase at which point it becomes clear that the ceiling represents an image that resolves itself through 'communicative movement':

What we can understand through our experience is the structure of the articulated world in which we can directly participate. This is precisely what we do when we move through the foyer and enter the ceremonial stair hall. The staircase itself is aligned with the movement of the sun, represented by Apollo; this gives orientation not only to the staircase but to the room as a whole. As we ascend to the first landing and turn, the staircase becomes part of the structure of the room; the four walls transform themselves into four continents and eventually disappear into the light of the ceiling.¹⁴⁹

Both Appia's stair-stage at Hellerau and the baroque staircase at the bishop's residence at Würzburg use rhythmic ascent/descent to embody a change of state. The Hellerau stair is descent to chthonic realm of Orpheus, whilst the Würzburg stair is ascent to Apollo's luminous realm (the Hellerau stair is 'beneath' the Würzburg stair). Both imagine themselves to be stair-rooms (treppenhaus) with theatric attributes, the earlier as part of Baroque reception ceremony (in which one might participate...its effect depends on actually passing through the telamones and arriving at that landing); the later more as spectacle/drama (in which one participates through witnessing) The earlier is for nobles, the later for child actors representing ancient Greeks; the earlier situates its mythic elements in a lived present, the later is both more historicist

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p.86.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.,p.88.

– using ancient costumes – and more abstract, a-temporal, light, and concerns movement as such. The first carries many more layers of reference – and many more kinds of rhythm - with its ornament and frescoes; the second strives to be more timeless, eternal, a specific insight into “being-human”. The first is vastly expensive, required Europe’s best artists, stuccoists, architects and sophisticated structurally (the thin vault survived WWII bombing); the second is temporary, inexpensive, more image than substance, more stage set than architecture as such.

However, embodiment is body-in-movement and since ‘situation is communication’; our bodily situations provide a clue to the nature of decorum. I will discuss decorum as an aspect of ornament, and ornament as the orientation provided by art experience in some detail below. Vesely alludes to this as the role that ‘décor’ plays in architecture, and it is significant that in the architectural examples that he offers of ‘communicative space’, artworks play a vital role in revealing the ‘reciprocity between the articulated world and its embodiment’. He suggests that this reveals ‘Heidegger’s effort to grasp’ the significance of “earth” and the role that ‘the work of art’ plays in situating world and Being in relation to each other:

the setting up a world, does not cause the material to disappear, but rather causes it to come forth for the very first time and to come open of the work’s world. The rock comes to bear and rest and so first becomes rock; metals come to glitter and shimmer, colors to glow, tones to sing, the word to speak. All this comes forth as the works sets itself back into massiveness and heaviness of stone, into the firmness and pliancy of wood, into the luster of metal, into the lighting and darkening of color, into the clang of tone, and into the naming of the word.¹⁵⁰

Vesely also situates geometry and ‘resonance’ as aspects of spatiality that place architecture as central to the formation of communicative culture generally. Both aspects of communicative space are closely related to rhythm and to proportion he suggests¹⁵¹. He contends that ‘what logic and grammar are to verbal language, geometry is to the visual world’, asserting the central role that

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p.107. Vesely is citing ‘The Origin of the Work of Art’, Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, Martin Heidegger, New York, 1971.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p.91.

it played in pre-Enlightenment culture 'on the boundary of visible realities.'¹⁵² Vesely suggest that 'geometry is subtly linked to language by movement and gesture' and that 'even at its most abstract level, geometry depends on certain basic movements and gestures, such as measuring and drawing, visual analysis and making models.'¹⁵³ Once again architecture is seen to exhibit aspects of communicative movement not only as spatial experience in a finished building, but in the corporeal and imaginative act of design, which is a form of orientation itself. Like craft or sport, design is a mode of communicative movement. Resonance and rhythm are aspects also of relationships that imply orientation as 'decorum', and as such are part of a hierarchy of relationships implied by analogies and 'the communicative nature of movement, imagination, and language.'¹⁵⁴ I will discuss in more detail below the particular relationships between geometry and analogy that made it central to Greek thinking about poetry and architecture, and the vital role that rhythm plays in this.

152 Ibid., pp.71-73.

153 Ibid., p.72.

154 Ibid., p.91. Vesely continues: 'Resonance... casts light on the spontaneous formation of identities and differences, similarities and analogies, and more generally on the metaphorical nature of all communication. At the same time it is closely linked with rhythm, proportion and harmony. It is well known that the primary meaning of proportion is analogical; and while analogy belongs to the metaphoricity of discourse, proportion more explicitly represents its structure, which can eventually be expressed in numbers. We do not need to be reminded that proportion was, until recently, at the center of thinking about architecture and its order. But it is not always understood or acknowledged that proportional thinking was primarily mediation between the ideas of a potential unity of the world and the uniqueness of a particular situation or phenomenon. In the history of Western culture, this process became a mediation between the celestial and the terrestrial order, between human and divine reality, and finally between the universal and particular in the understanding of the world.' (pp.91-92).

Vesely's description of the primary importance of communicative space in Western culture and his claim that this enables architecture to 'create a plausible spatial matrix for the rest of culture', implies, as he suggests, the central place that *praxis* plays in our lives. The creation of a 'spatial matrix' reveals the important place that institutions play in both spatial and ethical orientation, and the role that urbanity has in stabilising and acting as a mode of praxis. Praxis is typified by institutions and cities, since they provide the 'horizons of involvement' that situate ethical action and reflection, Peter Carl contends:¹⁵⁵

The phenomena summarised as a 'city's culture... prevail as institutions, always already there. Institutions of this kind are more or less visible as such, but are activated as soon as one becomes involved, as is evident in greetings – at a formal dinner or a garage, to a junior or a senior, to an animal, or according to someone's customs. Institutions are typicalities (conceptually) with attached constituencies (concretely). These constituencies are mostly anonymous (and mostly deceased, recollected), but are manifest in the particular person whom one seeks to greet properly, or in the character/direction of the context into which one seeks to intervene architecturally. Gadamer's term for horizon, 'tradition', reflects this depth of anonymous, ancient constituency as the conditions for freedom (which we are as free to get wrong, or misunderstand, as we are to profoundly understand). Here lies the source and authority for architecture's capacity for memory.¹⁵⁶

In contrast to formalist readings of institutions as physical types or concepts, Carl proposes that we should think of them as 'latent background / context, awakened and made compelling in the situation / involvement.'¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ 'Praxis: Horizons of involvement', Peter Carl, in *Common Ground*, Op. Cit., pp. 67-81.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p.73.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

Figure 46 Illustration from Peter Carl's essay 'Praxis: Horizons of involvement'

He continues to describe the Horizons of Involvement in a series of diagrams that reveal the relationships between the 'basic situation of the claim of a topic'; 'the stratification of embodiments'; and 'fundamental reciprocity of conditions and possibilities', that 'give the structure of any poetics, the basis for references, allusions, metaphors.'¹⁵⁸ The grounds for this are both concrete and ontological, and Carl describes the city in terms of 'architecture and urban topography' that 'provide particular structures of embodiment, situated in a

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., pp.74-75.

particular place and for a duration in history, of the more universal phenomenon.'

Figure 47 Illustration from Peter Carl's essay 'Praxis: Horizons of involvement'

Recognising the primary role that *topos* and 'topic' play in urbanity situates architectural imagination in regards to both 'actual natural conditions' ('a garden, wilderness, materials, light') and the 'ontological natural conditions' that they are 'concrete manifestations of' ('called *physis* in the Greek philosophical tradition').¹⁵⁹ He continues 'Praxis is civic life', stating that this has 'two dimensions... action and reflection.' Both confront the natural conditions or 'earth/*physis*' and whilst action 'revolves around choice rooted in judgement, and is always a matter of concrete/particular instances of choice';

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p.74.

reflection ('called by Aristotle *theoria*') 'is essentially ethical speculation on the nature of our understanding of the good, the divine, the common to all.'¹⁶⁰

There is an inevitable theatricality to the enactment of judgement, and Carl points out that 'all the principal institutions of Aristotle's polis were characterised by *agon* / conflict and its resolution – judging and making laws, tragic drama, religious sacrifice, games, symposia.' These events were situated somewhere but 'architecture is not the drama', Carl insists. Rather, 'architecture is a discipline of peripheral vision, of setting the conditions and horizons of *praxis*.'¹⁶¹

Carl situates the theatricality of 'architectural *mimesis* / interpretation set within the stratification of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book VI' in order not only to explain that *praxis* is both an imitation ('play between *mimesis praxeos* and *mimesis physeos*) but also a form of practical wisdom that now involves *phronesis* directly with *techne*:

Architectural design now requires being able to reconcile primordial spatial and material phenomena with a range of discourses, techniques and people that move between technical specialists, bureaucrats, users or constituents, politicians, journalists, scholars, and so on. It is not easy to preserve the integrity of the topic / question where the building codes are the most explicit representation of common-to-all. Something like practical wisdom is needed if we are to recover technological making for ethical reflection. Because it incorporates the embodying conditions of participation / understanding and can communicate with the most abstract discourses, the closest we have to a practical philosophy is phenomenological hermeneutics.¹⁶²

This mode of enquiry comes closest to Platonic dialogue, which is not simply a matter of discussion between different individual's points of view (nor of systematic visions of city in terms of this or that social class and the ultimate triumph of either). Socratic dialogue, Carl reminds us, is a matter of 'ascent and descent through levels of participation / understanding' that 'has its roots in the collaborative *agon*, a trusting of the disagreement to help to find the truth of a topic.' Carl is clear that 'we cannot avoid these conditions' and that *praxis* 'is a matter of interpreting them well or badly.'

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p.76.

¹⁶² Ibid., p.78.

Figure 48 Drawing of traditional and modern hierarchical relationship between knowledge, skill and ideas (redrawn by author from an illustration in Peter Carl's essay *Convivimus Ergo Sum*)

Elsewhere he describes the vertical hierarchy between topics and ideas, *the primary dialectic*, in Heideggerian terms as between 'da' i.e. earth, and 'sein' i.e. being/comprehension¹⁶³. This finds curious resonance, Carl remarks, with Le Corbusier's comment about the chapel at Ronchamp, that architecture is 'word addressed to earth'.

The conditions of mediation between the ontological and actual 'earth' correspond with architectural settings that 'establish the conditions for participation and for witnessing' he believes, and it is this that orients the *polis* with *praxis*. In other words, it is the ornamental character of architecture, and its role as mediation that means that it is associated with beauty by Gadamer. Carl contends¹⁶⁴ that the 'time out of time' aspects of festival resonate with the theatricality of architectural settings. Both are typified by rhythm – be it poetic, seasonal, rhetorical, mathematical, structural, light-shade, geometrical and analogical – and by mediation. In order to see how the affiliation of beauty

163 Unpublished seminar notes on *Being and Time*, Peter Carl.

164 *Ibid.*, p.78 and see also 'Convivimus Ergo Sum', Peter Carl, forthcoming.

with mediation enables Carl to assert that dialogue is the basis of civic life itself (*Convivimus Ergo Sum*), we need to now see how communicative movement situates art experience as an aspect of urbanity, and the role that architecture plays in this in concert with the other arts.

Figure 49 Diagram articulating the stratified structure of embodiment/articulation of worldhood of world; the layers on the right correspond to “institutional horizons” (drawing by Pater Carl)

In particular, I suggest, Carl's emphasis upon Heidegger's observation that *'the city gives a definite direction to nature'*¹⁶⁵ reveals the particular role that architecture and sculpture play in the specific spatial and cultural mediation that is known as *civic decorum*. The role that rhythm plays in communicative movement is a key aspect of spatiality, suggesting its importance in the potential recovery -alongside the re-appearance of urban topography - of the civic depth of urban architecture.

165 Ibid., p.67. The Heidegger citation is from *Being and Time*, Martin Heidegger, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1962, p.71 (this is erroneously credited in *Common Ground* as SCM Press, London).

CHAPTER 3

THE CITY GIVES A DEFINITE DIRECTION TO NATURE: DECORUM, TEMPORALITY AND URBANITY

i *Hans-Georg Gadamer on art & architecture as Ornament, Decorum & Play*

"The city gives a definite direction to nature."
Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*

The analogous role that nature plays in ornament need to be made explicit if we are to understand the profound contribution that rhythm makes to the decorum of civic culture.

Dalibor Vesely describes the role that *decorum* and ornament play in structuring urbanity:

... what we have been saying about the appropriate, right, corresponding - call it whatever - location, situatedness of particular things in the structure of the city - is a question of being proper (*Prepon*). And proper, of course, eventually is *decorum*, and *decorum* means fits the purpose, something which fits the purpose. Decorum is when you're dressing for a particular event: you can be overdressed or underdressed, because you're missing the decorum of the event... and the *decorum* is subordinated to the overall notion of order... what is 'proper' etcetera, is order as a whole, it fits into the overall order of things. And from then on you can also begin to understand or derive the meaning of terms like what is 'common good'? And what is 'good'? Because the good is part of what fits the purpose of the whole, and responds to it. And *decorum* is of course subordinated to the notion of order, and order - in the original term for it - is '*kosmos*'. And it's interesting that *kosmos* can be translated into Latin as 'ornament'. Ornate; ornament; order; *cosmesis*: because *kosmos* is ordering. And it's still preserved in the current term 'cosmetics'. You order yourself for a particular purpose; you paint your face. You re-order yourself, and so on. So, eventually, underneath that term, is ornament. Ornament is ordering. Ornament is a language, which is mediating between the different levels of reality, and eventually brings things into coherence and harmony and co-existence. But it's an ordering principle, bringing things into overall order. That's why you ornate, because you are referring to something beyond its own presence. That's what people don't appreciate anymore in modern terms of ornament, that ornament

is not there just to embellish, to make it more interesting. If we say it makes it more interesting, we have to finish the sentence with 'interesting for what?' For a purpose: In order to make it part of a larger whole, to situate it, and therefore make it part of the overall order of things, because it's only from the overall order of things that you can understand, or derive, the order of the particular thing.¹⁶⁶

Vesely's emphasis on *decorum* echoes Hans-Georg Gadamer's emphasis upon ornament as orientation and mediation, and ultimately, his ambition in *Truth and Method* is to 'free' the concept of play 'of the subjective meaning that it has in Kant and Schiller and that dominates the whole of modern aesthetics and philosophy of man'¹⁶⁷. Gadamer makes it clear that:

When we speak of play in reference to the experience of art, this means neither orientation nor even the state of mind of the creator or of those enjoying the work of art, nor the freedom or subjectivity engaged in play, but the mode of being of the work of art itself.

One of the most potent aspects of art is that it is 'an experience that changes the person who experiences it'¹⁶⁸, and 'contains its own, even sacred seriousness'¹⁶⁹. Gadamer's insistence that art is primarily a mode of play does not diminish the importance of art in culture, but, rather, emphasises the ubiquity and centrality of art (play) to society generally. This central importance lies in its symbolic character, and the essential role that symbols play in culture.

The key aspect of play that makes artistic play a mode of the symbolic, is that it too is primarily physical. 'Play', Gadamer insists, 'is the occurrence of movement as such', and 'it renews itself in constant repetition.'¹⁷⁰ Whilst it might be tempting now to settle for the fact that 'movement' or 'repetition' are closely related with rhythm, and of course play is all of these things at once,

166 Interview with Dalibor Vesely, 'Inhabitable Models: Eric Parry architects, Haworth Tompkins architects, Lynch architects', Venice Biennale of Architecture 2012. Cf: 'Plato "played upon the modalities of that term (*Kosmos*) which include the world or universe, order as arrangement (and therefore, as *Kosmiotes*, propriety or decorum) and ornament and embellishment', 'Ornament and Time', Peter Carl, p. 50 (and the footnote 112 to this in which he acknowledges that 'Vesely put me onto this problem many years ago by observing the presence of ornament in *Kosmos*', *Ibid.*, p.61.). Vesely makes the same point somewhat differently in the chapter 'Communicative Space' in *Op. Cit.*, p.94.

167 *Truth and Method*, H-G Gadamer, Sheed and Ward, London, 1993, p. 101.

168 *Ibid.*, p. 102

169 *Ibid.*

170 *Ibid.*, p. 103.

what is more significant in Gadamer's chapter 'Play as the Clue to Ontological Explanation' is that play is also imitation of the creative processes at work in nature. Gadamer cites Friedrich Schlegel:

All the sacred games of art are only remote imitations of the infinite play of the world, the eternally self-creating work of art.

In other words, play is a mode of *mimesis*. Art, as play, possesses some of the rhythmic character of the natural world; it is temporal, situational, territorial, 'requires a playing field' whilst being paradoxically a 'sphere of play' closed off from the world¹⁷¹. As important as the physical aspect of play is the fact that 'the cognitive import of imitation lies in recognition.'¹⁷² This is why a play-world is credible no matter how apparently absurd – it can be a world. e.g. *Alice in Wonderland*.

In the same way that children have a need to be recognised as playing a part - as being disguised - the character of *art-as-play* reveals the theatrical character of *decorum* and civic life. Gadamer is able to make this claim because he demonstrates that all aspects of play reflect aspects of city life. Play becomes 'transformed into structure' as it assumes ever more theatrical roles in culture, sport, the law, religion, education, and art itself, are all modes of play that reveal the essential character of public life to be representation¹⁷³. 'Thus imitation', Gadamer is able to declare, 'as representation, has a special cognitive function', and therefore he continues, not only is it pointless to discuss art in terms of objects (formalism), but also:

the being of art cannot be defined as an object of aesthetic consciousness, because, on the contrary, the aesthetic attitude is more than it knows of itself. It is part of the event of being that occurs in presentation, and belongs essentially to play as play.¹⁷⁴

171 Ibid., p. 107. Gadamer acknowledges at this point that 'Huizinga rightly points out' that the field of play 'sets off the sphere of play as a closed world'. He is referring (of course) to *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture*, Boston: Beacon Press, Huizinga, Johan, 1955, p. 17.

172 Ibid., p. 113.

173 'No one will be able to suppose that for religious truth the performance of the ritual is inessential', Ibid., p. 116.

174 Ibid.

Play as Play is heuristic and pedagogic, and is a means by which children learn of course. It is not 'a mere subjective variety of conceptions', because what emerges is 'possibilities'. Gadamer likens this to any experience noting that not all art works reveal their secrets at the same rate, and our response to them changes over time.¹⁷⁵

Gadamer goes on to claim that temporality is essential to one's cognition of art, as 'it has its being only in becoming and return'. He elaborates on this theme in his later writing about festivals,¹⁷⁶ (I have written elsewhere about the essentially theatrical nature of certain cities, particularly baroque cities, for which festival was inspirational and central to public life, to the design of buildings and public spaces.¹⁷⁷). In *Truth and Method*, Gadamer proposes that 'the spectator is an essential element in the kind of play we call aesthetic', freeing play from the subjectivist bias that relegated art to something private on the one hand, or petrified into objects for scrutiny on the other. He is able to recover the public and civil character of art experience by showing that not only is art temporal, but that it is also symbolic:

There is an obvious distinction between a symbol and a sign, for the symbolic is more like a picture. The representational function of a symbol is not merely to point to something that is not present. Instead, a symbol manifests the presence of something that is really present.¹⁷⁸

The power of a symbol to 'take the place of something' lies in the fact that it 'makes something immediately present'.¹⁷⁹ In the next chapter, 'The Aesthetic and Hermeneutic Consequences', Gadamer suggests that 'architectural monuments' do not owe their meaning to 'the public act of consecration or unveiling' but to the thing which they commemorate. In order to achieve their function of commemoration they must be participated with in use. Just as in the case of a festival, in which the spectator is a key participant in the event, the user of an architectural edifice – albeit a building or a

175 *The Relevance of the Beautiful: Art as Play Symbol and Festival and other essays*, Cambridge University Press, 1986.

176 *Ibid.*, p. 123.

177 For an example of the relevance of this to architecture see *The Theatricality of the Baroque City: The Zwinger and Dresden*, Patrick Lynch, Verlag Dr. Muller, 2011.

178 *Ibid.*, p. 152.

179 *Ibid.*, p. 154.

monument – determines its significance and success. This is what is meant by ‘immediately present’, and Gadamer is adamant that it is true not only for monuments but for buildings in general:

A building is never only a work of art. Its purpose, through which it belongs in the context of life, cannot be separated from it without it losing some of its reality. If it has become merely an object of aesthetic consciousness, then it has merely a shadowy reality and lives a distorted life only in the degenerate form of a tourist attraction or a subject for photography. The “work of art in itself” proves itself to be a pure abstraction.¹⁸⁰

In the context of this dissertation, a building or monument should be seen within the rhythm of life and as a setting for typical recurring situations. The ‘becoming and return’ that characterises cognition are described as aspects of play in terms of ‘movement’ and ‘repetition’, recalling Dalibor Vesely’s phrase ‘communicative movement’. *Communicative movement* arises in participation, with knowledge, and in particular this arises in the heuristic experiences of work and artwork. Art is a form of work Heidegger claimed, just as work is a mode of play (as we will see below). Gadamer continues this theme, in proposing that play is a form of knowledge that specifically brings us closer to life. This is the basis for all of the cultural games that comprise civilized society and which are housed in buildings, Gadamer suggests. What we should focus on when looking at and thinking about a city, to paraphrase both of them, is not primarily the form of the buildings that make up a city, but the situations housed within buildings and the equipment and spatial settings that support them. It is the rhythm of these spatial settings and the typical situations that they accommodate that determine the character of city life.

The *decorum* of individual buildings seems to derive from the ways in which facades of individual buildings relate to their neighbours, and in doing so both reveal and enclose spatial settings; and can even act as spatial settings themselves – both as niches for performances, and as thresholds for demonstrations. Traditionally, sculptures activated the analogous role of buildings as settings for commemorative and significant public events¹⁸¹.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 156.

¹⁸¹ Contemporary buildings cannot simply display their functional interiors in an attempt at political ‘transparency’ – since security is as much of a barrier as glass of course. Political life is essentially participatory, adding a sign to a blank façade cannot stand in for the participatory

Certainly a city is not simply 'crowds of anonymous individuals without explicit connection with each other' as Denise Scott Brown suggests¹⁸². It is not enough simply to make certain buildings large and to claim that this makes them civic: nor to suggest that all large buildings are civic, as everyone from Rem Koolhaas¹⁸³, Colin Rowe¹⁸⁴ and Richard Rogers¹⁸⁵ want to persuade us. In

experience of places that makes them homes. This might be appropriate for tourists uncertain of their direction and thus hungry for information in Las Vegas at night. Foster's GLA Building is glass but impossible to enter without an invitation. O.M.A's Prada store in Los Angeles has no door during the day but does have security guards.

182 Cf. *The Ethical Function of Architecture*, Karsten Harries, MIT, 1998, p. 81. Harries is citing August Hecksher's *The Public Happiness*, New York, 1962, p. 50, whom Denise Scott Brown refers to in her preface to the revised edition of *Learning from Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form*, MIT, 1977, p. xvii.

183 Cf. *S,M,L,XL*, Rem Koolhaas, Monacelli Press, O.M.A, Rem Koolhaas and Bruce Mau, 2002. In his essay 'What ever happened to Urbanism?' Koolhaas proposes 'the architecture of Bigness', claiming that 'small' equals private or domestic architecture (as if a small church was somehow not public, or a merchant's house in Spitalfields also not a place of work and trade); and he generally misuses the term 'scale' when he only means size. Like most recent architectural books *S,M,L,XL* is actually an office brochure rather than a treatise or any sort of argument, and this PhD is an attempt to offer to Koolhaas' question about urbanism a visual and a scholarly response. O.M.A were on the shortlist for the Kingsgate House project on Victoria Street that was won by my practise. It is now being built and will be completed in 2015. The other firms on the shortlist were Herzog & de Meuron and Foreign Office architects.

184 Rowe also claims that New York is similar to Rome because it has large buildings too: 'to move from Rome to London, to New Haven, and finally, to Manhattan, is still to receive a version of the same message. For, in Manhattan, the earlier skyscrapers (almost everything built before 1950) are still obedient to the principles observed in Rome. No doubt New York City is a vertical excess, but, until very recently, almost every skyscraper behaved approximately like Sant' Agnese in Piazza Navona. The Woolworth, the Chrysler, the Empire State buildings all behave this way. Below a certain level they are reticent and no more than street furniture; and at this level while they accommodate the street, they make no insistence. At street level they are quiet. They are not big and bold and grand. Instead, they only display what they intend to become above a highly calculated elevation. Below this, they are tranquil; and above this, they are disposed to be exuberant. The set-piece, the celebration of object, the *floritura*, belong on top', 'The Present Urban Predicament', in *As I was Saying, Volume 3*, Colin Rowe, pp. 201-2. Rowe's use of the phrase 'floritura', literally 'flowery' in Italian, is borrowed from opera criticism. It sounds clever when said in Italian, just as the use of the phrase 'form' sounds impressive when 'shape' would reveal the vapid shallowness of 'formalism'. What Rowe says about the lack of insistence of office buildings at ground floor is fine in terms of decorum, but the extrapolation of this to include Sant' Agnese inflates the point to the extent that it takes off like a hot-air balloon of rhetorical hubris; so that all the attention is suddenly upon the balloon-like dome of a church in Italy, and the reality of a street in Manhattan gets forgotten. Perhaps unwittingly, or perhaps because he just liked showing off and didn't care about the effects that his references might have upon his audience, we now have whole city quarters made up of office buildings without the Piazza Navona, and office blocks that strain to take-off like rockets.

185 Cf. 'Richard Rogers RA: Inside Out' at the Royal Academy, August-October 2013, includes a BBC film of Alan Yentob and the architect walking around Florence and London remarking on how exactly the same the extreme contrast between the narrow streets and large buildings of each are (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b009228r>). Florence's Duomo and Castelvecchio are discovered after a short stroll down an alleyway, and juxtaposed with similar shots of The Lloyd's Buildings and Lord Foster's St Mary's Axe (aka The Gerkin). The idea I think, is that extreme and visually spectacular shifts in the size of building forms is a sort of contextualism that can be applied all over ('that's Florence, and that's Lloyds'). For Rowe, Rome was a model that could equally be applied to London or Manhattan, for Rogers Florence serves this end. In *Delirious New York*, Koolhaas seeks a model for contemporary building generally. In all of these examples, including Las Vegas (which is apparently also 'just like Rome' - Scott- Brown, Op. Cit)

traditional cities, buildings *disclose* the spatial settings housed within¹⁸⁶. The measure of a building's success – as something alive and part of 'reality', 'manifests the presence of something *that is really present*.' The relationships *between buildings* that are *really present*, yet withheld, the network of specific situations, relies upon the wit and imagination of architects working together at different times, collaborating together to play a game whose aim could be said to be the representation of something already present there, but sometimes not *really present*. In other words, the task of an architect involves re-presenting the city anew, and renewing the relationships of the typical situations that make up city life with the conditions of life in general. The 'special importance of architecture' for Gadamer lies in the 'element of mediation without which a work of art has no real "*presence*".¹⁸⁷ 'Architecture', he continues:

gives shape to space. Space is what surrounds everything that exists in space. That is why architecture embraces all the other art forms of representation: all works of plastic art, all ornament. Moreover, it gives a place to the representational arts of poetry, music, acting, and dancing. That perspective is decoration. Architecture safeguards it even against those forms of art whose works are not decorative but are gathered within themselves through the closure of the circle of meaning.¹⁸⁸

The 'special importance of architecture' for the other arts is that it situates them ('ornament or decoration is determined by its relations to what it decorates, to what carries it. It has no aesthetic importance of its own that is

the experience of buildings is of someone on the outside of them, often moving at speed in a car, or drifting around like a flaneur or as a tourist. Rogers misrepresents architectural settings as technological features, and he even describes the escalators at Lloyd's as 'a piece of kinetic sculpture that draws the eye, and is fun.' This is architecture as spectacle, for a society of architects' working in what George Saumarez-Smith calls 'the style of new classicism' (*A Treatise on Modern Architecture in Five Books*, George Saumarez-Smith, The Bardwell Press, 2019, vii). Admirably Smith publishes his pencil-drawn survey sketches of various buildings. However, a drawing of a house plan is presented with this commentary: 'Part of a medieval courtyard house showing the organic flow of thick granite walls. This was measured and drawn around the turn of the millennium', p. 107. How does granite flow? How are they 'organic' in any other sense than that everything stone is an organic substance? How does this commentary help us to understand the purpose for which the rooms were built? All of these architects are the victims of a series of formalist clichés that distance them from reality, denying their architecture the capacity to bring us closer to life.

186 What Heidegger calls art, *alethia*, means disclosure, i.e. revealing and enclosing.

187 Ibid., p. 157.

188 Ibid.

thereafter limited by its relations to what it is decorating'¹⁸⁹). In doing so it transforms the play of rhythm as movement into the communicative (or ontological) movement of cognition, as imitation becomes representation.

The closeness of a building to 'the context of life', to which Gadamer claims it properly belongs, occurs at the same moment as the recognition that the architectural imagination, as a mode of play, is 'imitation and representation'. This brings Gadamer to a discussion of the purpose of architecture as ornament, and the ultimate purpose of this is said to be *decorum*. He begins his exegesis by restating his position regarding the artistic content of a building:

A building should certainly be the solution to an artistic problem, and thus attract the viewer's wonder and admiration. At the same time it should fit into a way of life and not be an end in itself. It tries to fit into this way of life by providing ornament, a background of mood, or a framework. The same is true for each individual work that the architect carries out, including ornament, which should not draw attention to itself but function as a decorative accompaniment. But even in the extreme case of ornament it still has something of the duality of decorative mediation about it... It is not intended that the forms of nature used in an ornament should be "recognised". If a repetitive pattern is seen as what actually is, then its recognition becomes unbearably monotonous.¹⁹⁰

The representational character of ornament distinguishes pattern from decoration. The role of 'architectural ornament' as 'mediation' distinguishes it from patterns of natural phenomena in a reproduced mechanical fashion, (as various architects from Owen Jones to Foreign Office have attempted to do as a way to 'connect architecture to culture'¹⁹¹). Architecture would not need to be *connected* to culture, or *connected* to a city, if it were conceived of situationally, (re-affirming the topographic continuity-in-difference). The problem of non-site specific sculpture that Serra is ranged against (Henry Moore's sculptures

189 Ibid., 159.

190 Ibid., p. 158.

191 Cf. *The Function of Ornament*, Farshid Moussavi & Michael Kubo, Actar and Harvard, 2008, ornament they claim, is a 'mechanism to connect architecture to culture,' p. 1. In contrast to this mechanistic and Hegelian misreading of culture and of ornament (as pattern), see *Rethinking Decoration: Pleasure and Ideology in the Visual Arts*, David Brett, Cambridge University Press, 2005, which provides a hermeneutic account of Gadamer's work on ornament and its relevance to contemporary *praxis*.

randomly dropped into strange settings), finds its echo in the recent attempt to retrofit formalist (technical) design methodologies into 'culture'.

Gadamer claims that sculpture should not be thought of free from situation:

Even the freestanding sculpture on a pedestal is not really removed from the decorative context, but serves to heighten representationally a context of life with which it is decoratively consonant.¹⁹²

Gadamer sees the potency and relevance of sculpture to reside not only in its site-specificity, but also in its *consonance* with a site. He extends this argument to spatial settings to demonstrate that all of the arts are contingent upon witness.

Poetry and music, which have the freest mobility and can be read or performed anywhere, are not suited to any space whatever but one that is appropriate: a theatre, concert hall, or church. Here too it is not a question of subsequently finding an external setting for a work that is complete in itself but of obeying the space-creating personality of the work itself, which has to adapt to what is given as well as to create its own conditions (Think only of the problem of acoustics, which is not only technical but architectural).¹⁹³

In other words, *decorum* reflects the contingent character of art itself. Gadamer re-establishes ornament as 'something that belongs to the self-presentation of

192 Ibid., p. 157.

193 Ibid. Vesely elaborates on this point, suggesting that music plays a role in explaining the 'mystery of symbolization, mediated by communicative movement' and that settings for music reveal the veracity of his 'claim that architecture contributes to the life of our culture as text does to our literacy' (Op. Cit., p.104). He continues: 'In a space of a church or a concert hall, where the silence of architecture is complemented by the sound of words carried in music, we can recognize a distinct mode of spatiality in the sphere of words, sung, as it were, from a page. Enhanced by music, the spatiality of language reveals the deep structure of articulation in which words are animated by the hidden communicative movement and meaning of gestures. The gestures themselves belong to a unified corporeal scheme, which not only is a source of order but also provides the structure and content of communication. As we have already seen in the case of a game, a corporeal scheme has the power to situate and structure the complex, changing world of the game in the framework of the playing field. If we extend the notion of the playing field to architecture, then it may be possible to say that what the playing field is to the game, architecture is to culture in its broadest sense. This structuring role of architecture is clearly displayed when the same piece of music is performed in different places - leading us to wonder how the architecture of a particular place contributes to the overall musical experience. A similar question can be raised in view of the changing nature of space in film, when the sound turns into silence. Less obviously, we are answering the same question each time we choose the most appropriate place for activities such as work, study, and conversation.' (Op. Cit., pp.104-6).

the wearer', enabling one to understand its public character. This enables him then to re-define the role of architecture as *decorum*, since it establishes what Gadamer calls 'a universal ontological structural element of the aesthetic, an event of being.' This structure sets up the potential for spontaneity, because it keeps in motion, or sets into play again, the recurring and repetitive rhythm of becoming. In doing so, the ontological significance of culture is revealed to lie not so much in pattern, or 'Gestalt' or form, but in rhythmic spatiality – manifest in ornament and in the way that architecture acts as what Vesely calls a 'playing field'¹⁹⁴. This mediation is the 'old, transcendental meaning of the beautiful', Gadamer declares, concluding that:

The truth is that the concept of decoration needs to be freed from this antithetical relationship to the concept of art based on (personal) experience (*Erlebnis*).; rather, it needs to be grounded in the ontological structure of representation, which we have shown to be the mode of being of the work of art. We have only to remember that the ornamental and decorative originally meant the beautiful as such. It is necessary to recover this ancient insight. Ornament or decoration is determined by its relation to what it decorates, to what carries it. It has no aesthetic import of its own that is thereafter limited by its relation to what it is decorating. Even Kant, who endorsed this opinion, admits in his famous judgment on tattooing that ornament is ornament only when it suits the wearer. It is part of taste not only to judge something to be beautiful *per se* but also to know where it belongs and where not. Ornament is not primarily something by itself that is then applied to something else but belongs to the self-presentation of its wearer. Ornament too belongs to presentation. But presentation is an event of being; it is representation. An ornament, a decoration, a piece of sculpture set up in a chosen place are representative in the same sense that, say, the church where they are found is itself representative... What we mean by "representation" is, at any rate, universal significance of play, we saw that the ontological significance of representation lies in the fact that "reproduction" is the original mode of being of the original artwork itself. Now we have confirmed that painting and the plastic arts generally have, ontologically speaking, the same mode of being. The specific mode of the work of art's presence is the coming-to-presentation of being.¹⁹⁵

The re-presentation of Being involves also the formulation of public roles. The creation of public *personae*, and the ritualistic and performative aspects of

¹⁹⁴ Vesely, *Op. Cit.*, p.106 (see above).

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

society, mirror the representational and transformational character of art (*mimesis*). Both contribute together to the creation of culture, and what we refer to as 'civic' values. Civic is the transformation not only of play into structure (laws, rituals, etc); but also the transformation of natural conditions in ornament, i.e. *decorum*. This is why we can talk of the *decorum* of people, costumes, buildings and situations, etc. *Decorum* in architecture concerns, therefore, not only the façade but also the disposition of spatial situations and the relationships between these parts and the whole, the immediate context, natural conditions, etc.

This was seen in the medieval period to have limits set by the laws of blasphemy, but architecture played a central role in re-establishing the power and beauty of city life in the Renaissance. Ultimately, imitation, *decorum* and playful imagination re-oriented the introverted scholastic mind outwards towards the world. Emphasis upon the textual character of holiness was reoriented towards the Hellenic *ethos* of the city as the site - and the purpose and the means - for love and wisdom.

'Civic' is a term traditionally associated with Renaissance Florence, and in particular with its use by Hans Baron. Baron uses the term 'Civic Humanism' to define and distinguish between the medieval emphasis upon poverty as grace in Franciscan and Dominican theology, and the proto-modern (neo-Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic) world of Ficino, Bruno, Petrarch and Alberti. Of course we recognise that Petrarch was once a poet, philosopher and gardener, and that Alberti was a priest, philosopher and architect. These factors define the essence of 'Renaissance Man'. Civic Humanism was the expression of this 'tradition' – it was possible at this point in history to lead a contemplative and an active life Alberti argued, to be at once engaged in city life in a generous and imaginative way, without being a slave to committees or to greed. What we now call 'modern' is also defined by this tradition – a tradition of belief that 'Virtue needs material possessions in order to appear dignified and beautiful'.¹⁹⁶

This belief leads directly to acknowledging that creating beautiful buildings and civic amenities is virtuous – and that mercantile trade is virtuous

¹⁹⁶ *In Search of Florentine Civic Humanism: Essays on the Transition from Medieval to Modern Thought, Volume I*, Hans Baron, pp. 236-7, Princeton University Press, 1980. Baron is commenting upon and citing Alberti's texts *Vita Civile*, and *Della Famiglia*.

if it supports these works with finance. In fact, without orientation beyond profit towards virtuous expression in architecture, trade was considered dangerous – as wealth leads to the fear of losing it, and to sins that follow on from this fear. Civic Humanism is the rebirth of antique values that promoted the individual and the city they inhabited through the virtue of transforming wealth into beauty. Machiavelli and Erasmus called this the ‘exercise of virtue’ and ‘organ of virtue’. Alberti saw architecture as the professing of virtue, and one role of the architect was the teaching of virtue to patrons. Architecture manifests virtue he believed, re-presenting it as something civic.

One other aspect of *decorum* is revealed in Bialostocki’s attention to the Renaissance concern with ‘*Natura Naturans*’. ‘*Natura Naturata*’, is defined as ‘the imitation of created nature’, a tradition which the Humanists inherited from the Greeks along with Ovid’s emphasis upon ‘Metamorphosis’. This was a tradition in which artists and farmers engaged together with what Petrarch called ‘cultivation’. Cultivation of the natural world was seen in the Renaissance, as an example of divine will (*Natura sive Deus*). ‘For the Stoics’, Bialostocki contends¹⁹⁷, ‘Nature was identical with life-giving power’, something that was also revealed in imitation. *Mimesis* (as an act of cultivation) revealed man’s cultivation, his participation with cosmic order. ‘*Natura Naturans*’ is ‘a second concept, that of the imitation of creating nature.’ Alberti ‘employs this second concept when he calls nature “marvellous artificer of things” and says, “nature itself seems to delight in painting”’. Bialostocki points out that this ‘concept enables him to consider architecture as an art of imitation’, and that ‘Alberti then tries to establish which laws are being followed by nature as she strives towards perfection.’ Alberti places nature foremost as a model for representation and nature’s laws as a guide for what is practical and ideal, calling this a ‘general law’ of Congruity (*concininitas*).

Alberti translates Aristotle’s idea of *mimesis* into his proposition not only of nature as a guide to representation (*decorum*), but extends this to claim that nature is transformed by imagination and thus renews itself in the artist or architect’s ‘perfection of nature’. Bialostocki distinguishes this from the

197 *The Renaissance Concept of Nature and Antiquity* Jan Bialostocki, in *Renaissance and Mannerism: Studies in Western Art, Acts of the Twentieth International Congress of the History of Art, Volume II*, Princeton University Press, pp. 19–30).

scholastic tradition, since 'medieval writers always considered nature as a divine creation superior to human art', stating that 'Human art could never, until the Renaissance, have been considered as surpassing nature.' Alberti 'formulated a new idea of great importance' Bialostocki claims, 'Nature is perfect as a harmonious whole, but her elements are not', enabling Humanists to see their task as the completion of, and perfection and participation with nature. From the Scholastic idea that man cannot surpass nature, that 'art is infallible as nature' (Grosseteste), arose the idea that the 'world is a living, animated, and intellectual being', (Ficino). Whilst for Alberti art begins with the imitation of nature, Bialostocki claims that for 'Leonardo it is replaced by creation based on knowledge of necessity and inherent laws of nature'. Bialostocki's argument is that whilst Alberti views nature as transformational, as a natural mode of *mimesis*, the innovations of Leonardo da Vinci and Mantegna ignore nature as transformation, seeing it instead as 'perfect form'. Bialostocki defines this as the beginning of 'Mannerism' in art, whereby the history of artworks became the model for artistic inspiration, 'an order discovered by the searching mind and an analytical eye': in other words, Academicism, or Historicist Formalism. In contrast, the intense relationships between ornament and decorum, and between urbanity and nature, form the basis of continuity between architecture, sculpture and site.

Clare Guest describes the eloquent character of *Figural Cities*, in terms of rhetoric and ‘the “body” of civic virtue’¹⁹⁸. Guest sees in the funeral oratory of Florentine Renaissance noblemen a movement from ‘allegory to scenography’ that relates the rhythm of speech to ornament, since this means ‘reflecting, or participating in universal order’¹⁹⁹. ‘Such reflections’, she notes, ‘drew their meaning from their relation to metaphysics; where this ontological background is neglected the invocation of ornament will remain superficial and things which are not objects of artifice, such as city states, be treated as though they were art objects.’ Guest demonstrates that *decorum* represents ‘civic harmony’:

the civic virtues of Florence – its prudence, justice, magnificence – correspond to Aristotle’s *Ethics*, but these virtues have become embodiments of the measure and harmony of virtue, as well as exhibiting the splendour and excellence of the city.

For the 15th century Florentine chancellor Leonardo Bruni *decorum* is at once a matter of Ciceronian rhetorical harmony (*covenientia*) and the Albertian conception of mathematical harmony (*concininitas*)²⁰⁰. Guest declares that for Bruni and Alberti:

The city is asserted as a totality, but it is a totality asserted (almost imposed) by rhetoric, which insists on the architectural fabric as *ornamentum* in relation to its virtues... Bruni’s work shows quite clearly the rhetorical background to Alberti’s efforts to articulate the union of harmonious body of a building or the city, and the harmonious body of *decorum*; in each writer rhetorical ornament *concininitas* plays an important role. Fundamental to the union of physical fabric and ‘body’ of decorum is the understanding of justice as measure... as we should see Aristotle’s discussion (*Ethics*) as essential to Alberti’s view of proportion as ethical and mathematical... As decorum requires that virtue has an outer form of corresponding splendour, so the visual aspect of the city places its virtues before the eyes, as in the funeral oration for Nano Strozzi, which celebrates the city through epideictic eloquence and “the

¹⁹⁸ *Rhetoric, Theatre and the Arts of Design: Essays presented to Roy Eriksen*, Clare Guest, Oslo, 2008, p. 157.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.* p.178. Guest cites Cicero ‘discussion on rhythm’ in *De Oratore* III.xlv.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p.158.

magnificent display of things". The splendour of the city is not therefore a mere outer dress for the virtue of its inhabitants, but an excellence which penetrates through every part of the fabric of the city.²⁰¹

Bruni conceived of 'the city as ornament', since ornament is a mode of virtuous contemplation. In making a connection between ethics and civic virtue, Guest reveals that ornament is an expression of 'praxis, the essence and praise of civic life'²⁰². Brunni boasts that 'In our City there is no street or district which is not filled with the most eminent and ornate buildings', and 'links rhetorical arguments for unity of form and content with the analogy of the building as body so important in Humanist architectural writings'²⁰³. In contrast to Florence, Brunni claims, 'The *'ornamenta* of other cities are instantly visible to a traveller, as an outer covering or shell... but anyone who goes... to the core or marrow (of Florence)' will find harmony between the buildings of a city, its parts, furnishings, paintings, streets: 'the outer walls have not more ornament and magnificence than those within it, nor is one street or another handsome or beautifully kept and refined, but the parts of the whole city are thus'. Brunni also relates the 'magnificence of ceremony' to the excellence of its festivals and this to its civic virtue (ornament is thus revealed as a mode of *ethos*). Guest illustrates Brunni's conception of civic ornament with the examples of rhetorical figures of speech in paintings of dancers depicted as celestial bodies; and the 'harmony between the external and internal parts of each building and between the districts which comprise parts of a city'²⁰⁴. Brunni also brings the relationship between the city of Florence and the neighbouring countryside into his rhetorical '*topoi*', Guest claims, and she notes 'a topographical continuum of garden and city which has its first architectural expression in *Quattrocento* villa architecture, for example in Michelozzo's Villa Medici in Fiesole.'²⁰⁵ Brunni laminates the rhetorical figure (of noble lives) as 'stars' shedding light on the world (the 'lights and colours' of noble speech), with his assertion that Florentine villas have 'fallen from heaven rather than been built by human hand'. He thus unites ornament and *decorum* in a continuum

201 Ibid., pp.159-160.

202 Ibid., p.166.

203 Ibid., p. 160.

204 Ibid., p.161.

205 Ibid., p.165.

between the natural and manmade aspects of the world. The city gives a definite direction to nature, 'which allows for a whole which is both graduated and harmonious' Guest suggests. Ornament is essentially orientation. This is what enables Gadamer to insist upon *the relevance of the beautiful*.

As we saw in the examples of Borromini's work in 17th century Rome, *decorum* is not simply the imitation of other buildings, nor merely the representation of tradition. Its relation to natural conditions reveals a vital aspect of *decorum as ornament*. In order to illustrate the veracity and relevance of this vital aspect of architecture, I propose to discuss Eduardo Chillida's sculptures at San Sebastian and Rafael Moneo's Kursaal there; and then Sigurd Lewerentz's church of St Peter's Klippan – even though this is usually considered to be aniconic and purely materialistic. I aim to show that even in the late 20th century, collaborations between architects, clients and artists can reveal the latent urbanity of a situation, even one that appears on the surface to be otherwise dominated by technology (such as Victoria Street). This latent urbanity is characterised by, and could be defined, as, I would suggest, spatial settings that offer *a definite direction to nature*. In order to avoid the trap of facile and shallow "operative criticism", and to understand the continuity of sculpture and architecture in a modern setting we now need to explore the reciprocity of philosophical, geometric and spatial aspects of an analogical and ornamental understanding of 'nature'. This needs to be clarified if we are to fully understand the contribution that modern philosophy has made to modern art and architecture. This contribution is important to enabling us to see how the representational presence of the natural world in modern architecture and art need not imply traditional or kitsch copies of classical models: abstracted yet rhythmic spatiality has a role to play design that seeks to reveal civic dimension of the ecology of urban settings. The revelation of the profound potential of this is my aim in the following two chapters.

CHAPTER 4

GEOMETRIC AND RHYTHMIC SPATIALITY IN THE HEIDEGGER-CHILLIDA COLLABORATION

i *Art & Space*

'Here concern means something like apprehensiveness... This term (Sorge - care or concern) has been chosen not because Dasein happens to be proximally and to a large extent "practical" and economic, but because the Being of Dasein itself is to be made visible as care... because Being-in-the-World belongs essentially to Dasein, its Being towards the world is essentially concern.'

Martin Heidegger

Whilst the 20th century German philosopher Martin Heidegger's interest in architecture is well documented, his intense interest in modern art, and in sculpture in particular, has only recently come to the attention of scholars, although he was active and quite well known in his lifetime as a protagonist in what we now call 'the art world'. In *Art and Space*²⁰⁶, a book produced in collaboration with the Basque sculptor Eduardo Chillida, Heidegger elaborated on his belief that 'the physically-technologically projected space' of 'modern man' leads us to assume that the world is a thing available for 'utter control'.

²⁰⁶ *Art and Space*, Martin Heidegger translated by Charles H. Seibert (*Die Kunst und der Raum*, SG Erker Verlag, St Gallen, 1969).

Figure 50 Martin Heidegger, Max Bill, et al, 1964 (from *Heidegger Amongst the Sculptors*, A.J. Mitchell)

Figure 51 *Die Kunst und Der Raum*, Martin Heidegger and Eduardo Chillida (cover)

In contrast to a materialist conception of the world - one that 'is only as

old as modern technological natural science' - Heidegger saw in certain works of sculpture the characteristics that have the potential to disclose Being. Sculpture defines the world 'by demarcation' and by 'setting up an inclosing and excluding border'. Heidegger quotes Aristotle (*Physics*, Book IV) in his preface:

it appears, however, to be something overwhelming and hard to grasp, *the topos* - that is, place-space

One way of grasping this overwhelming condition is provided by Chillida's sculpture, Heidegger infers, not only because 'Sculpted structures are bodies' but because these demarcate borders and territories. Are these 'articulated spaces, artistic space, the space of everyday practice and commerce', he asks, 'only subjectively conditioned pre-figurations and modifications of one objective cosmic space?' And if this is so, how is this possible if we now only believe in 'objectivity of the objective world-space'?

Figure 52 Pages from *Die Kunst und Der Raum*, Martin Heidegger and Eduardo Chillida

In his essay 'Weak Architecture', the Catalan architect Ignasi de Sola Morales discusses Heidegger and Chillida's collaboration, and he concludes

with the suggestion that in an age that cannot build bell towers or traditional monuments, there is poetic resonance still in the 'tremulous clangour of a bell that reverberates after it has ceased to ring.'²⁰⁷ We are in the age after monuments he suggests, perhaps in unwitting accordance with Hegel's belief that we live in a period after art. Ignasi de Sola Morales' essay is evocative and cautious, but does not fully reveal the depth of the power of the collaboration between Heidegger and Chillida, nor the consequences of their work on space for architects.

Paul Crowther was the first contemporary scholar to emphasise the ontological significance of sculpture in his essay 'Space, Place and Sculpture: Working with Heidegger.' Crowther's work inspired a recent book *Heidegger Among the Sculptors* by Andrew J. Mitchell, to which I will also refer below. According to Crowther/Mitchell, Chillida's sculptures reveal the 'unconcealment of Being': this is, the conditions of worldhood i.e. the situated character of Being-in-the-World. Crowther's essay draws our attention to some of the specific aspects of Heidegger's 'thinking through sculpture'. These can be summarised as: The truth of space is revealed in art that illuminates the relations between things to be part of the nature of places; Spatiality belongs to places; Place is revealed by art, and this is a preparation for dwelling; Place is the home of Being; Being is unconcealed in places through actions and activities that reveal its embodied character (dwelling)²⁰⁸.

²⁰⁷ 'Weak Architecture', Ignasi Sola Morales, in *Architecture Theory Since 1968*, ed. K.M. Hayes, p. 623.

²⁰⁸ 'Space, Place and Sculpture: Working with Heidegger', *Continental Philosophy Review*, June 2007, Volume 40, Issue 2, Paul Crowther, 2007, p.152.

Figure 53 Martin Heidegger and Eduardo Chillida examining a copy of *Die Kunst and Der Raum*

Figure 54 *The Comb of the Wind*, San Sebastián, Eduardo Chillida

I suggest that this shows that there is less an explicit 'turn' or '*Kehre*' in Heidegger's thinking - from Being towards space (as Vattimo and others suggest²⁰⁹) - and instead continuity based upon the examples of work and play that Heidegger sees to reside in sculpture. In particular, Crowther insists that whilst some studies insist that 'space' is the dominant theme in Heidegger's late work, his 'main thematic in the essay is not the problem of space itself but the way in which it is *overcome* in the sculptural work.'²¹⁰ What he means by this, I think, is that sculpture is exemplary of spatiality, rather than abstract space; and it is this ambiguity between space/place in *topos* to which Heidegger is drawing our attention. What is continuous, Crowther suggests, are Heidegger's insights that 'making room admits something', and that 'clearing away is the release of places towards which the fate of dwelling turns'.

Heidegger insists that we acknowledge that 'once it is granted that art is the bringing-into-the-work or truth, and truth is the unconcealment of Being, then must not genuine space, namely what uncovers its authentic character, begin to hold sway in the work of graphic art?' Crowther suggests that space:

is that which can be linked to the *unconcealment of Being*. This 'genuine space' is the primordial basis of *all* spaces, and hence the artistic space of sculpture must involve some distinctive articulation of it.²¹¹

209 *The Adventure of Difference: Philosophy after Nietzsche and Heidegger*, Gianni Vattimo, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993 & *Martin Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*, William Richardson, Fordham University Press, 1993.

210 *Op. Cit.*

211 *Ibid.*, p. 156. Crowther reads 'Art and Space' in concert with 'Building, Dwelling Thinking' as he sees the articulation of genuine space to be the fact that 'It lets openness hold sway which, among other things, grants the appearance of things present to which human dwelling sees itself consigned... Place always opens a region in which it gathers the things in their belonging together'. Crowther understands the significance of this to be a question of practical wisdom, and ultimately one of dwelling. He calls Heidegger's notion of 'making room' for example, 'place in its relational sense', and suggests that whilst 'modern technologically and scientifically determined thought sometimes reverses this order of priority', in 'Art and Space' and in 'Building Dwelling Thinking', 'Heidegger emphatically restores it.' Whilst it might appear that relational place is 'rather anthropocentric', Crowther believes that 'there are considerations that mitigate against such an interpretation... humans find places through adapting to locations already laid though the interaction of processes. Human dwelling can transform these; through technological and environmental abuse it can erase them, but they will always remain a part of its character, and may even retain something of their individuality within this.' He illustrates this point by referring to Heidegger's example of a bridge in 'Building Dwelling Thinking' 'where the edifice does not come simply to some empty location, but rather defines a location through being constructed there.' For Heidegger therefore, 'spaces receive their being from locations and not from abstract "space". Crowther explains that: '*in* the sculptural thing something extraordinary occurs. The work is a particular material thing... which manifests an image of *something else*.'

Indeed, Heidegger does allude in *Art and Space* to the 'something' which is revealed in art as that which allows 'the release of places toward... the preserve of home', and Heidegger continues comparing this to the 'brokenness of homelessness' or 'complete indifference to the two'. This cosmic dimension of space conditions all involvements- what is called in *The Origin of the Work of Art* the 'strife of earth and world' - is participatory (like work), and is a mode of 'involvement' and 'interest' in 'places as a region'. The specific reason why Heidegger 'turns' towards art and towards the problem of space, I suggest, is that what is revealed there is the embodied nature of territories. Heidegger is not only writing about some specific sculptures by Chillida in *Art and Space*, but also declaring what he thinks sculptures in general should be like, and how they should be another mode of work revelatory of both Being and dwelling:

sculpture would be the embodiment of places. Places, in preserving and opening a region hold free gathered around them which grants the tarrying of things under consideration and a dwelling for man in the midst of things.

Heidegger's phrase 'in the midst of things' describes the situation in which we

Abstract sculpture might appear to be an exception to this point. But it is not. In fact enigmatic shapes and masses of such works give them a quite distinctive image character. They are things that suggest the embodiment of other phenomenal forms and forces over and above their physical materiality. In this respect they are *allusive images*, and, if anything, this allusive character intensifies our sense of something else being present in the work, by forcing us to think about what it might be. Crowther's assessment of sculpture's latent representational content is dependent upon participation rather than an inherent semiotic content to a work, its 'twofold character'; and he asserts this because 'rather than settle in its character as a particular thing, the sculptural work will always be caught in the state of becoming something else.' Crowther claims its importance to Heidegger's philosophy, and to our understanding of both art and of human consciousness generally, resides in the way in which: 'Sculpture is where that event of finding or bringing together of different things which is also constitutive of place itself as fixed in place through work's distinctive character as a thingly, three dimensional image. Sculpture manifests the reciprocal dependence of elemental and relational aspects of place through its distinctive two-foldness.' In Crowther's view, even aniconic sculptures carry references, register as sculpture as such, because we experience them in a gallery situation (or in a garden, or even in a field) and are named as such by the artist - so they cannot but refer us to 'the diachronic history of sculpture as a medium'. Crowther proposes a sort of modern interpretation of Aristotle's notion of *mimesis*, a metamorphic and unfolding representation that is temporal and dependent upon recognition and witness. In this reading of art (*mimesis*) the linguistic content is not so much code as figuration i.e. symbolic; and this is something that is not fixed in language but evolves like language across time. Like all human language, it is something that we participate in rather than control or simply quote. In other words, for Crowther, the act of thinking called upon by the 'allusive images' of sculpture, is a mode of being.

find ourselves called to work. The first thing to recognise when starting work, something which we also recognise in works of art, Heidegger suggests, is that 'Emptiness is not nothing. It is also no deficiency.' He continues, 'In sculptural embodiment, emptiness plays in the manner of a seeking-projecting instituting of places.' This suggests that art refers us to things outside of and defined by the object-like presence of a material thing – not to the 'failure' of the space it occupies. Crowther calls this 'relational place', insisting that it is not anthropocentric.

Heidegger cites an analogous situation described by G. Chr. Lichtenberg in regards to language:

If one thinks much, one finds much wisdom inscribed in language. Indeed, it is not probable that one brings everything into it by self rather, much wisdom actually lies therein, as in proverbs.²¹²

This colloquial and idiomatic sense of language – what Heidegger calls 'idle chatter' in *Being and Time* – is something like tradition, not in an academic sense, but as one aspect of global knowledge – of the world in which we are situated by language and things. Sculpture might appear to be an unusual means by which to discuss the character of Being as territorial, and abstract modern sculpture might seem an unusual way to discuss the way in which we are situated in the world by language.

What Heidegger seems to have been thinking about, I would like to suggest, is the ancient sense of 'rhythm' as geometry, measure and as representation. In particular, he seems to have been thinking of Plato's *Philebus*, when Socrates refers to the ways in which thought is situated in the world. Socrates explains to Protarchus that 'the letters of the alphabet' are 'sound', 'which passes through the lips whether of an individual or of all men is one and yet infinite.' We are able to speak without realising that language is 'infinite', and yet 'grammarians' possess 'knowledge of the number and nature of sound' and musicians possess the same knowledge understood as 'harmonies'. Both speech and music are comprised of 'intervals and their limits or proportions', which, Socrates claimed, have 'affections corresponding to

²¹² *Art and Space*, Op. Cit. (The English translation that I have does not have page numbers).

them in the movements of the human body' that when measured 'by numbers ought... to be called rhythms and measures.'²¹³

There is a further connection between thought and movement, which the Greeks understood as 'rhythm.' One clue to this lies in the etymology which 'to draw' shares with 'to pull' or to 'draw out', and which relates 'shape or pattern' to the character of a man, which has also been 'formed'²¹⁴. These influences and forces that work upon the world shape thought and 'the rhythm of a building or a statue', yet rhythm is not only movement, but also the positions that a dancer was made to assume 'in the course of a dance':

Rhythm is that which imposes bonds on movement and confines the flux of things... the original conception that lies beneath the Greek discovery of rhythm in music and dancing is not *flow* but *pause*, the steady limitation of movement.²¹⁵

Rhythm in dance was made up of steps that 'were naturally repeated, thus

213 *Philebus*, Plato, 17a - 17b:

Soc. *I may illustrate my meaning by the letters of the alphabet, Protarchus, which you were made to learn as a child.*

Pro. *How do they afford an illustration?*

Soc. *The sound which passes through the lips whether of an individual or of all men is one and yet infinite.*

Pro. *Very true.*

Soc. *And yet not by knowing either that sound is one or that sound is infinite are we perfect in the art of speech, but the knowledge of the number and nature of sounds is what makes a man a grammarian.*

Pro. *Very true.*

Soc. *And the knowledge which makes a man a musician is of the same kind.*

Pro. *How so?*

Soc. *Sound is one in music as well as in grammar?*

Pro. *Certainly.*

Soc. *And there is a higher note and a lower note, and a note of equal pitch:-may we affirm so much?*

Pro. *Yes.*

Soc. *But you would not be a real musician if this was all that you knew; though if you did not know this you would know almost nothing of music.*

Pro. *Nothing.*

Soc. *But when you have learned what sounds are high and what low, and the number and nature of the intervals and their limits or proportions, and the systems compounded out of them, which our fathers discovered, and have handed down to us who are their descendants under the name of harmonies; and the affections corresponding to them in the movements of the human body, which when measured by numbers ought, as they say, to be called rhythms and measures; and they tell us that the same principle should be applied to every one and many;-when, I say, you have learned all this, then, my dear friend, you are perfect; and you may be said to understand any other subject, when you have a similar grasp of it. But the infinity of kinds and the infinity of individuals which there is in each of them, when not classified, creates in every one of us a state of infinite ignorance; and he who never looks for number in anything, will not himself be looked for in the number of famous men.*

214 *The Ancient View of Greek Art*, J.J. Pollitt, p. 138

215 *Paideia*, Jaeger, p. 126, cited in *Ibid.*

marking the intervals in the dance.' Whilst dance is movement, it is also 'pattern and schemata'. Dance set the rhythm of music in Greek theatre, and 'this explains why the basic component of music and poetry was called a "foot" (Plato) or a "step" (Aristotle). Thus the dynamic art of dance related directly to a static art like sculpture, because it was seen to represent "rests" or 'points at which fleeting movements came to a temporary halt, thus enabling the viewer to fasten his vision on a particular position that characterized the movement as a whole.'²¹⁶ In this way, ancient Greek musical theory and poetics generally, and the static arts of sculpture and architecture, were united by the notion of 'rest' or 'pause'; the beats between notes and movements, dividing the whole into rhythmic sections. In other words, 'time-out-of-time', just as festivals and rites punctuate the year.

As we saw above, Vitruvius distinguishes *symetria* and *eurhythmia*. The latter requires adjustments to proportions: 'optical illusion and distortion must be taken into account by an architect' who must use his '*ingenium*' in order to 'achieve proper affect.' And Vitruvius continues to give the example of the need to adjust the proportions of a door to suit the 'décor' of a temple so that the 'appearance of *eurhythmia*' results²¹⁷, thus linking questions of appropriateness and decorum to the rhythmic relationships established between situations which are mediated by spatial thresholds – spaces in-between.

It is clear that in antique culture measure was established by rhythm, and that this is a special form of silence or pause, something that relates things together in a way that their interdependence comes to visibility and makes them whole. It is also clear that all of the senses were combined in appreciation of rhythm, and that rhythm can change from a musical beat to a poetic meter, to the lines of a statue, to the gesture of a doorway placed into a wall. This is a form of measured relations that describes things not as single forms, but as parts of a greater whole, fitted-to and revealing of an unseen but imagined and sensed order, like pauses in a musical piece, or movements in a game. Geometry describes relationships that move from analogues to proportions,

²¹⁶ Ibid., p. 139; Pollit is citing Plato, *Republic*, 400A ("foot"); and Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1087b37 ("step").

²¹⁷ Vitruvius 6.2.5, cited by Pollit, *Op. Cit.*, pp.147-8.

from ratio to harmony, and it reveals the nature of continuity-in-difference that establishes communication between things; and so geometric order is a way to demonstrate similarities and differences. This was the means by which, for Plato, one's soul might participate in World-Soul.

What comes to life in music and in poetry, and in sculpture and in architecture, is the relational character of things, their dependence upon and proportional relation to each other. Like moves in a game, the relation between pause and step is both spontaneous and part of an overall order, and we are able to go from dance step to declamation, from line to plane, and from part to whole.

Figure 55 Geometric construction after Albrecht Dürer, Le Corbusier, Le Poem de l'Angle Droit and La Section d'Or in which he discovered the Bull²¹⁸

²¹⁸ Cf. *Esthétique des proportions dans la nature et dans les arts*, Matila C. Ghyka, Gallimard, Paris, 1938 & *Le Nombre d'Or - Rites et Rythmes Pythagoriciens dans le Développement de la Civilisation Occidentale*, Matila C. Ghyka, Gallimard, 1959. Joseph Rykwert reports having seen two copies of the latter in the Le Corbusier archive; one had un-cut pages, the other was heavily annotated (telephone conversation 5th April, 2014). These studies border of the occult and mystic numerology, which Corbusier's own interests also veered towards (see Carl & Murray, Op. Cit).

What is revealed in the silence of a sculpture is a world of rhythm that is otherwise invisible to us. Rhythm structures traditional sculptural settings, enabling the eye to move from different scenes and between parts and the whole. We saw in Dalibor Vesely's example of the rose window in the West façade at Chartres Cathedral, how the background of the church acted as a setting for sculpture and coloured light, all of which was animated by the movement of the sun – bringing the death of each day into poetic resonance with the Christian concept of The Resurrection. At the bishop's residence at Würzburg the ambiguity between actual and painted spaces is unified by communicative movement. In both cases, individual spaces are unified through the synesthetic qualities of artworks and architecture. These combine to situate particular places in relationship to other implied territories. In this way, ontological movement - or *communicative movement* - reveals a latent order of reality made up of perception, anticipation, imagination and memory, and this synesthetic aspect of spatiality is key to orientation generally.

Whilst The Blood Altarpiece by Tilman Riemenschneider at St. Jakob in Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Germany, is a very different affair from modern art works such as Chillida's metalwork posted in the rocks at the San Sebastian shoreline, in both cases rhythmic spatiality is the key to the phenomenon of space-place revealed by sculpture.

It is very clear how this is built up in the Blood Altar (from folds in cloth and skin to the curlicues of hair and beards and trees and clouds; the rhythm of gestures/postures of the protagonists at the Last Supper for example leads the eye outwards towards the aedicule that frames the setting; and again the repetition of this type (a flattening of the curved arches made by trees, and the arched space implied above the figures seated at the table by their gestures) enables the series of microcosmic scenes to become part of the architecture setting also.

Figure 56 The Blood Altarpiece by Tilman Riemenschneider at St. Jakob in Rothenburg ob der Tauber (detail of The Last Supper)

The rhythmic repetition of the *aediculae* situates the sculpture within and as part of a building, ultimately Heavenly Jerusalem²¹⁹. Its placement at the back of the altar and role in the rites is established by the repetition of the rhythm of use – the temporal rhythm of the space. From this temporal stability the viewer of the iconographic content is able to oscillate between sites, from Jerusalem to the Mount of Olives to a dining room in a house situated in a forest beneath the Christian universe. The altar was built to situate worshipful attention and prayer upon the blood of Christ, which is believed to be housed there, making the church the focus of pilgrimage, and so the sculpture makes explicit the theatrical re-enactment of the Eucharist and the analogical structure of supper-wine, and sacrifice-blood. The aedicule situates the Eucharistic Rite in continuity with The Last Supper and the church as part of the universal ‘Church’. It is a “model” of re-enactment, time-out-of-time, symbolic.

²¹⁹ ‘Heavenly Mansions: An Interpretation of Gothic’, pp.1-28, in *Heavenly Mansions and other Essays on Architecture*, John Summerson, New York, 1963.

Figure 57 The Blood Altarpiece by Tilman Riemenschneider at St. Jakob in Rothenburg ob der Tauber (view of the front)

Figure 58 The Blood Altarpiece by Tilman Riemenschneider at St. Jakob in Rothenburg ob der Tauber (view of the back: note how the glass situates the scene of The Last Supper)

At the same time the sculpture is one of many *aedicular* moments in the church, which is itself a threshold on the route to St. James Church in Santiago de Compostela, Spain (Jakob/James/Iago). Interaction and participation with the sculpture, both imaginatively (in contemplative prayer) and in ritual, complete the rhythmic motion set into play by the sculptor. The topics contained within the sculpture describe mental and actual topographies that are united by the rhythmic articulation of the lines and pauses orchestrated by the artist, but which makes sense fully only in use. The rhythm is counterpoised between human events, mythical events and the natural world beyond the church, and geographic (actual) and imaginary (real or otherwise) realms are united.

Figure 59 St. Jakob in Rothenburg ob der Tauber (view of the church interior looking

Figure 60 St. Jakob in Rothenburg ob der Tauber (view of the church exterior from the Hennen Brunnen)

ii *Museo-Chillida Leku & The Wind Combs by Eduardo Chillida at San Sebastián*

Chillida poses rhythmic spatiality as a question: the metal lines are opposite in form to – and mediate between – both rocks and sea, but otherwise are both assertive and vulnerable, leaving us suspended between shoreline and the instinct/insight of the sculptor. In this case however the crash of the waves against the sea wall describe the space between the metal tines, and along with the wind they make the sculptured spatiality sing, like a tuning fork. In both cases, temporal rhythm, and in particular the rhythm of the seasons (Christmas, Easter at St Jakob – Summer and Winter storms at San Sebastian) situate the sculptures in particular locations. The sculptures make the places specific in both instances, opening this specificity to orientation and to universality, and ultimately to Being.

Figure 61 The Comb of the Wind, San Sebastián, Eduardo Chillida

Figure 62 The Comb of the Wind, San Sebastián, Chillida & Ganchequi

As well as the huge metal tuning forks, Chillida & Ganchequi burrowed under the sea wall creating points at which the seawater bursts out of the boardwalk like liquid fire works. The energy and violence of the sea is trained and tempered and revealed as sculptural spatiality. The structure of this rhythmic order incorporates:

- A The Beach – Sea/Shore
- B Tides and Seasons – Storm/Calm
- C Marking the Place
 - i locations (a play with horizons, shore, peninsula, island, stones, etc.)
 - ii burrowing and terracing
 - iii metal figures
 - iv wind chimes

Chillida's sculptures "spatialize" the place, by which I mean, they make explicit the spatial relationships the town has with the sea. The space itself is the subject of the sculptures, just as it is in the drawings in *Art and Space*.

Figure 63 Aerial photograph of San Sebastián (Chillida's sculptures sit in the bay to the left within which sits Isla S. Clara: Moneo's Kursaal is at the confluence of the dock road and the beach and the river in the right-hand bay)

Figure 64 Plan of San Sebastián showing the locations of *Comb of the Winds* (on the left of the image, to the West of La Concha Bay) and The Kursaal (at the head of the River Urmea, to the East)

Figure 65 Pages from *Die Kunst und Der Raum*, Eduardo Chillida

In particular, in both the lithographs by Chillida and in his sculptures at the town, space is not nothingness or a lack, and the island in the bay does not appear as an isolated object, but part of a network of rhythmic relationships. In the case of San Sebastián the space between things is aqueous - almost solid - and this is transformed in the artworks into air and light and sound. This theme of spatial inversion, whereby space becomes visible as light, is continued in Rafael Moneo's Kursaal.

Figure 66 The Comb of the Wind, San Sebastián, Eduardo Chillida

Figure 67 The Kursaal, Rafael Moneo, San Sebastián, seen from the sea & river wall

In fact, Chillida describes spatiality as volumetric:

A dialectic exists between the empty and full space and it is almost impossible for this dialogue to exist if the positive and material space is not filled, because I have the feeling that the relation between the full and empty space is produced by the communication between these two spaces. You can't simulate volume.²²⁰

Volume is given strong spatial orientation in his work either by the relationships that are established with existing conditions, or through the intense directionality of topography. Chillida's sculptures are in some cases more like rooms or gardens, in which one discovers a sculptural object.

Figure 68 The Basque Liberties Plaza, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Eduardo Chillida

Figure 69 Monumento a los Fueros in The Basque Liberties Plaza, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Eduardo Chillida

²²⁰ An Interview with Eduardo Chillida, *Sculpture Magazine*, accessed 09/12/2013 at 20.27: <http://www.sculpture.org/documents/scmag97/childa/sm-chlda.shtml>.

I would like to suggest that the drawings and prints that Chillida made for *Art and Space* are attempts to describe the volumetric 'dialect' of his sculptures. Territories are described and rooms appear within the thickness of walls. Traditional figure-ground relationships are distorted and one cannot speak of object or void.

Figure 70 Pages from Die Kunst und Der Raum, Eduardo Chillida

Figure 71 Crucifix, Eduardo Chillida, Santa Maria, San Sebastián

What is apparent is the equal weight given to the space of the page that has not been inscribed: this equivalence is echoed on Chillida's sculptures, perhaps most notably in the *Crucifix* in the church of Santa Maria at San Sebastian. Chillida's sculptures are attempts to answer a question that he phrased in poetic terms in a series of meditative dialogues published posthumously in Spanish 2005 by Museo-Chillida Leku:

'Rhythm - time - silence
Is matter not also space, a slower space?'²²¹

Figure 72 Homage to Alabaster, Eduardo Chillida, Museo-Chillida, Leku

Figure 73 Homage to Alabaster, Eduardo Chillida, Museo-Chillida, Leku

²²¹ *Escritos*, Eduardo Chillida, Museo Chillida-Leku, 2005, p.28 (translated by Gavin Hennenberry and Patrick Lynch). See also *Eduardo Chillida: Writings*, Richter Verlag, 2009.

Figure 74 Museo-Chillida, Leku

Chillida's "museum" is in fact a sculpture park in a village called Leku (meaning "place" and "space" in Basque) ten kilometres West of San Sebastian. It consists of a garden, small new building housing his archive (by the architect Luis Peña Ganchegui, a close friend and collaborator, also the designer of the landscape surrounding the Wind Combs); and a renovated medieval barn, which has the status of an art work (since it failed to comply with any building regulations).

Figure 75 Barn, Eduardo Chillida, Museo-Chillida, Leku

Figure 76 Barn, Eduardo Chillida, Museo-Chillida, Leku

Chillida sat many of his sculptures into the grounds in order that they patinate before being moved to their intended locations elsewhere. In some cases, sculptures made for commission were in fact not ever installed and so the “museum’ consists of piece that he either couldn’t bear to part with, or which the original patron did not want.²²² These are arranged in the park as a sequence of rhythmic spatial and material encounters with sculptures that are complimentary both to each other, the site, and architecture.

²²² In conversation with Luis Chillida, 8th April, 2014, at Leku. He noted also that his father was visited by Frank Gehry when he was designing the Guggenheim at Bilbao, who asked for a Chillida sculpture to sit in front of the entrance. Luis states that “the reason my father refused was because he didn’t want his sculpture to have to compete with the architect’s sculpture”.

Figure 77 Sculptures by Eduardo Chillida, Museo-Chillida, Leku

Many of Chillida's sculptures were made in series, and their titles reveal that not only was his work site-specific work, but also that his sculptures that were inspired by recurring and particular pre-occupations. Sometimes the work is made in response to a certain material, and *The Depth of Air XVII*, for example, is one of a series of works that investigate the spatial possibilities within a number of blocks of red Indian granite that Chillida discovered in the scrap heap of one of his local stone merchants. The stone works can be seen in the tradition stemming from Michelangelo's poetic search for the spatial and figurative possibilities of a material his son Luis Chillida suggests. Chillida was particularly attracted to the work of poets, philosophers²²³, Christian mystics²²⁴,

²²³ Cf. Chillida's many book projects included an edition of Parmenides' Poem published in Paris, 1990. Gaston Bachelard wrote the catalogue essay for Chillida's first solo exhibition (Maeght Gallery, Paris, 1956) and Octavia Paz wrote the catalogue essay for Chillida's retrospective at The Guggenheim (New York, 1980): see also 'THE WORK AND THE IDEA', Miguel de Beistegui, PARRHESIA, NUMBER 11 • 2011 • 1-34 and *Aesthetics After Metaphysics: From Mimesis to Metaphor*, Routledge, 2012. Beistegui writes about Chillida's sculptures following a discussion of the role of metaphor in the work of philosophers from Plato to Heidegger in terms of 'the emergence of the hypersensible' and 'an excess of materiality, or earth, over function, or world'. He sees the importance of sculpture for Heidegger as an example of the 'presentation of truth that takes the form of a strife between world and earth... the original strife between clearing and concealment.' Heidegger, he claims, saw the "danger" of 'wanting to reduce earth to world', and sees in sculptures a hyper-sensibility that transcends 'the mondialisation of the earth'. My thesis differs from Beistegui's in one way. I see work as an aspect of poetics, whilst Beistegui claims a distinction: 'Heidegger emphasizes (In *The Origin of the Work of Art*) the work's ability to make matter itself visible, yet in a way that resists appropriation for practical, and in even more specifically technological, use: in the case of equipment and practical life, matter is simply "used up" and even "disappears into usefulness". Technology, as Heidegger makes clear in 'The Question Concerning Technology' (*The Question*

Figure 78 Parmenides' Poem, Eduardo Chillida, Museo-Chillida, Leku

Concerning Technology & other essays, Harper & Row, 1977), pp.4-5), is not the same as *techné*, and similarly, as he is at pains to make clear, art, as an exemplary mode of Being-There, is not directionless activity (*Being & Time*, Op. Cit, 'The Worldhood of the World': 'Dasein's spatiality shows the characters of deseverance and directionality' and is 'both active and transitive' p. 139. This is why it is possible for him to say in 'The Origin of the Work of Art' that art is poetics (see above), and that it prepares us for dwelling. Art therefore reveals something of the possible directionality of human activity in general. Gadamer suggests that a clue to its significance lies in the importance of ornament for our self-understanding - for civic life - and for identity in general (see above). The social aspects of work as praxis, and ultimately as art (as opposed to labor) remain largely uninvestigated. The reciprocal significance of poetic work ("vita contemplativa") as a mode of thought - and of physical work as a mode of reflection ("vita activa") - is made clear in Hannah Arendt's *The Human Condition*: 'the poetic activity which produces the poem before it is written down is also understood as "making"... The same emphasis on the craftsmanship of poets is present in the Greek idiom for the art of poetry: *tektónes hymnón*' (Chicago, 1989, 'The Permanence of the World and the Work of Art', p.170). The influence of Heidegger's emphasis upon work as a mode of Being is clear also in the work and thought of British sculptor Richard Deacon, Penelope Curtis and Clarrie Wallis suggest: 'Deacon draws an analogy between the work in the world and language in society... Deacon, by emphasizing the fabricated aspect of his sculptures, points to their own syntactical quality and their kinship with language... Rilke's poetry also illuminated how the subject-object dichotomy could be replaced with the concept of 'Being', the philosophical counterpart of which was hypothesized by martin Heidegger, whom Deacon had also read... artwork that stands on its own is not to be understood, however, as an empty autonomy, regarded for its own physical thingly, presence; rather, it stands between subjectivity and objectivity. As such it has a resonance beyond itself, adding what Heidegger calls the "unforgetting" of Dasein. This certainly illuminates Deacon's own practice, and an affinity can be seen between the artist's and the philosopher's shared understanding of the role of language. For Heidegger, language, especially poetry, is not merely a literal, utilitarian exchange of information, but can open us up to Being-as-such: "All reflective thinking is poetic, and all poetry in turn is a kind of thinking'. Deacon too is concerned with how language exceeds itself, and how it cannot be reduced to the status of a tool when used for poetic or reflective thought. But for him the aim is not to re-establish a realm that transcends language, but to establish one that is immanent with in it.' (Richard Deacon, Tate, 2014 'Language and the Poetic', pp.27-8). 224 In conversation, Luis Chillida: 'at his death, when all else had deserted him, my father spoke on the words of St Juan de la Cruz', Op. Cit. Luis confirmed the profound influence of Michelangelo upon his father's thinking, which is clear, I suggest, in the poem by Chillida cited above. I do not want to speculate wildly on the importance of Neo-Platonic philosophy upon Chillida, who, like Michelangelo, was also a devout Catholic. However, the correspondence between sensible and intelligible realms of experience is clear in Chillida's suggestion that 'the unknown can also be known in what is known', *Writings*, Op. Cit, p. 97. He is emphatic about the value of beauty, but insists that 'Beauty is always mixed up in issues', Op Cit., p.98. 225 Chillida designed a monument for the poet Jorge Guillén.

His stone work, I suggest, was influenced by Michelangelo's invocation of the inherent presence of space of life in matter: 'No block of marble but it does not hide/ the concept living in the artist's mind-/ pursuing it inside that form, he'll guide/ his hand to shape what reason has defined' (*Sonnet, 151*).

Figure 79 The Depth of Air XVII, Eduardo Chillida, Museo-Chillida, Leku

In contrast, Chillida's metal works are primarily but not solely geometric studies, recalling Michelangelo's contention that, 'Only fire forges iron/to match the beauty shaped within the mind' (*Sonnet 62*).²²⁶ In *Homage to Lucca Paccioli* the importance of Chillida's study of geometry in the architecture school at Madrid (ETSAM) in the 1940s is evident.

Figure 80 Homage to Lucca Paccioli, Eduardo Chillida, Museo-Chillida, Leku

The text that he wrote accompanying the art work displayed in the barn at Leku makes it explicit that the work should be seen in terms of groups

²²⁶ Michelangelo, *Life, Letters and Poetry*, ed. George Bull, trans. Peter Porter, Oxford 1987, pp. 142 & 153.

of works relating to various possibilities found in each material, wood, stone, metal, concrete, ceramic, felt, paper, etc.

Figure 81 Exhibition texts in the barn, Eduardo Chillida, Museo-Chillida, Leku

In particular, the importance of alabaster to Chillida is made explicit as 'a direct source of inspiration from architecture' that in the creation of 'a space... establishes a direct link to the universe.'²²⁷

A general equivalence between solid and void is also particularly evident in the *Wind-Comb* and in *Eulogy to the Horizon*.

²²⁷ Exhibition text in the barn, Eduardo Chillida, Museo-Chillida, Leku.

Figure 82 Eulogy to the Horizon, Girona, Eduardo Chillida

Chillida's motivations for making a work that explicitly deals with the horizon is acknowledgement not only of his relationship with Heidegger he explains, but also because of the public nature of sculpture itself:

public works are open to the horizon and are in a public scale, the scale of man. Horizon is very important to me, it always has been. All men are equal and at the horizon we are all brothers, the horizon is a common homeland.²²⁸

Whilst this statement could be said to oscillate between political naivety and New Age generalities, Chillida's sculpture hints at something essential, the shared nature of a common horizon. The oscillation also between matter, volume, distance and involvement introduce also a stylized mode of *desevered spatiality*. It is the rhythm within the pieces, and the rhythm of the participant's involvement with them that is called into play, which enables a mode of what Heidegger called 'desevered spatiality'.

The special importance of the *Wind Combs* in Chillida's oeuvre is clear from only a cursory glance at the tourist stalls in San Sebastian – they are a symbol of the city and can be found on T shirts and key rings, fridge magnets, etc.

²²⁸ An Interview with Eduardo Chillida, *Sculpture Magazine*, accessed 09/12/2013 at 20.27: <http://www.sculpture.org/documents/scmag97/childa/sm-chlda.shtml>.

Figure 83 Postcard and fridge magnet of San Sebastian

Wind Combs sits at the extreme western edge of the bay of La Concha, beyond the breakwater that connects this to the island of Santa Clara over which the Atlantic waves dissolve. This protected 'shell' cove was the first modern tourist resort in Spain, its safe and beautiful bay becoming fashionable in the mid-19th century as a bathing resort. This led to the creation of a boardwalk in the 1860s, illuminated originally by gas lamps, that houses fresh water and changing facilities, staircases, and which supports cafés and bars. The main boulevard that was built beside this accommodates not only cycle paths and a promenade, but also is home to dozens of hotels, including Hotel Niza, which was founded by Chillida's grandmother's family and is still owned by them.

Figure 84 Boardwalk and Boulevard of San Sebastian viewed from the Eastern edge of the beach
(Hotel Niza is on the far right)

Figure 85 Sketch of La Concha bay at San Sebastian with Wind Combs on the left and the town hall and old town on the right connected by the boardwalk and the boulevard

Wind Combs completes this 19th century project, creating a space to encounter the natural world just beyond the safe edge of the bay. Chillida's sculpture can be seen as the evolution of the hollow boardwalk from civic facility into a highly mediated encounter with nature – one which is also an encounter with one's self, and yet also public, a thrilling, pleasurable entertainment.

Figure 86 Sketch of *Wind Combs* viewed from the beach

It is saved from the solipsism of Romanticism, I suggest, because it is deliberately scaled as a public space and this has enabled it to become appropriated by wedding parties, by school parties, by courting couples, gangs and individuals.

Figure 87 Sketch of Wind Combs viewed from the Southern edge of the stone landscape

Figure 88 Wind Combs with newly-married couple 7th April 2014

Figure 89 Sketch of Wind Combs viewed from the Northern edge of the stone landscape

Its popular and artistic success derives I suggest, from the fact that it is a collaboration between the architect Luis Peña Ganchegui and Chillida. The potency of this reveals the rhythmic and communicative potential of site, architecture and sculpture. It is no way populist or patronizing, and is in fact quite dangerous and austere. I believe that the artist and architect were intensely conscious of the spatial resonance that the landscape and sculptures would have with the island, the geometry of La Concha bay, and the materials and colours of the site.

Figure 90 Sketch of *Wind Combs* showing the relationships between the plateau of the stone landscape and Isla Santa Clara

Figure 92 *Wind Combs* viewed from the top of the stone landscape set up to capture its relationship to the horizon

Its rocks leach iron ore onto the granite landscape, which the Wind Combs only seem to exaggerate and to intensify. The wind is almost overpoweringly loud, and quite painful, yet one is aware of being carefully situated in close proximity to the ocean, the island, the bay, the hotels, and the stone steps accommodate and invite seated bodies quite comfortably.

Figure 99 Sketch of *Wind Combs* site showing the relationships between the plateau of the stone landscape, Isla Santa Clara and the town

Figure 94 Photograph from the Southern edge of *Wind Combs* site showing the relationships between the breakwater in the bay, Isla Santa Clara, and the town

I suggest that *Wind Combs* is a form of speculation in space of the relationships between the natural world, human and geological time, and the inter-relatedness or 'dialogue'²²⁹ between the visible and invisible aspects or reality. Chillida asks us to consider that:

there must be a relationship between the rhythms of – for example – the bark of a fir tree and the directions in space in which its branches sprout. Between the infinitely similar and varied forms made by a breaking wave and the forms, in this case spatial, made by erosion. On the rocks of the coastline the relationship of form is clear, but the laws that in such distinct processes come to produce such similar results are worthy of being searched for and consulted... It is very simple; absolutely everything can be reduced to learning and asking... On the

²²⁹ Cf. 'There is a series of laws in my works – I am referring to my entire body of work – that are fundamental and that are at the root of the freedom with which I work. They are before and ahead of forms. The dialogue between forms, whichever they may be, is much more important than the forms themselves.', Eduardo Chillida: Writings, Op. Cit, pp.70.

edge of shrillness, silence. To cross space silently. To find mute vibration... Beyond and behind knowledge there is a language...²⁹⁰

Figure 95 Sketch of Wind Combs looking out to sea

²⁹⁰ Ibid., pp.50-53.

Figure 96 The Comb of the Wind and The Kursaal shown in the context of the ocean and the town of San Sebastián

Figure 97 The Kursaal, Rafael Moneo, San Sebastián, model and plan by architect

The volumetric and rhythmic characteristics that Chillida refers to in his descriptions of his sculptures seem to have been noticed also by the architect Rafael Moneo²³¹. Moneo confirmed to me in April 2014 that ‘the Kursaal is a project concerned with geography’ and identified ‘two types of space in Chillida’s sculptures: space defined by lines, usually lines of metal; and

²³¹ Rafael Moneo in conversation at the Bienalle Finissage dinner in Venice, 24th November, 2012.

carved space, especially space carved from alabaster that is matter and also light. The Kursaal is informed in part by the latter."²³²

The Kursaal sits between the edge of the ocean and the town of San Sebastián – between natural time and the life of the town, in-between the rhythm of music festivals and popular culture, and the institutional and regional character that typifies public life generally.

Figure 98 The Kursaal, Rafael Moneo, San Sebastián, seen from the sea wall and boardwalk

Two translucent glass boxes house timber-lined auditoria, sat upon a plinth made up of an aggregate of stones arranged to form a highly synthesised version of a rusticated battered base, or sea wall. The intensely mixed quality of this ground is exposed towards the water and appears as a compressed and artificial mounding up of stones and driftwood – a sort of waterborne archaeology of densely compacted groins that at night are playfully revealed to be part of a group of translucent layers.

²³² Rafael Moneo in conversation at his office in Madrid, 28th April 2014.

Figure 99 The Kursaal, Rafael Moneo, San Sebastián, from the bridge

Figure 100 The Kursaal, Rafael Moneo, San Sebastián, from the bridge at night

Figure 101 The Kursaal, Rafael Moneo, San Sebastián, the threshold to the town

Figure 102 The Kursaal, Rafael Moneo, San Sebastián, the threshold to the town at dusk

In contrast to the very porous threshold to the city, and the seemingly solid sea wall to the north, the concert halls within are slickly polished hulls marked by thousands of thin oak boards. The scale of the timber is echoed in the thin glass panels that form the facades. Concave and stippled glass planks create another layer of rhythm of light and shadow, distort the watery light into a semi-solid background state akin to mist or spray, enabling salt particles to collect and frost the surface of the building. The aqueous nature of the rhythmic glass and its contrast with the wooden hull of the concert halls exhibits a dialectics of remoteness and proximity. Moneo exaggerates this further through the device of platforms and landings, contrasting the intimate spaces of the concert halls to the distant sea, with the landings sat half-way between them – literally and figuratively in-between them, making the contrast remarkable.

Figure 103 *The Kursaal*, Rafael Moneo, San Sebastián, the grand stairs connecting the auditoria to the foyer

Figure 104 *The Kursaal*, Rafael Moneo, San Sebastián, the grand stairs connecting the auditoria to the foyer

Within this intense background, the concert hall is revealed as a series of thresholds that echo with the rhythm of the crowds of concert goers flooding the interiors, and whose mass temporarily fills the voids between the strand and the city. It goes without saying that the music plays an important part in this dramatic rhythmic spatiality, and it is to Moneo's credit that the architecture enables one to participate in the drama of its situation – and like the Chillida sculptures, it makes the place itself the main protagonist.

The spatial threshold between the town and the ocean to which Chillida draws our attention in the natural rhythms of salt spray and wind and water, is deepened by the *decorum* of the Kursaal. Moneo could be said to have inserted a series of mediating territories into the deep threshold set up by Chillida's sculptures.

Figure 105 The Kursaal, Rafael Moneo, San Sebastián, the entrance at dusk

Figure 106 The Kursaal, Rafael Moneo, San Sebastián, the plinth towards the sea at night

Moneo's building responds not only to the conditions of the natural world, but also to rhythms of concert-going, making the experience of visiting the building at dusk a dramatic and satisfying one. A transformational and tense equilibrium is established between everyday situations, seasonal time, and the festive time embodied by music. The commingled character of these is exaggerated, creating a witty mode of experiential *decorum*. One becomes aware of the extremely contingent character of a concert hall, at once part of the *oikos* of the town, the Basque region, national politics, etc. What is also apparent is the strange character of modern musical performances that are powerfully immersive and distant from everyday life. Yet this experience is immediately followed by a sort of shock, when one is plunged back into the world. The site-specific character of Chillida's sculptures is accompanied by Moneo's carefully calibrated spatial territories. In both cases, architecture and sculptures act as thresholds between the diverse psychic, organic and imaginative realms that situate music in the life of San Sebastián, as if orientation itself is at stake.²³⁹

239 Moneo has written about the 'problems' of 'the concert halls' in '(Gehry versus Venturi) Reflecting on Two Concert Halls' (Walter Gropius lecture, Graduate School of Design, Harvard University, April 25 1990), published in Rafael Moneo: Imperative Anthology 1967-2004, El Croquis. In particular he notes the 'very specific circumstances' of Gehry's concert hall: 'Los Angeles is movement, change. Things do not endure there. Everything lives together. There is tolerance and looseness. Gehry's architecture does not care about context; being contextual in Los Angeles means to ignore context.' Moneo has a different reading of the 'pretentious' attitude Gehry takes towards his work, believing that: 'Gehry is employing a subtle strategy to survive. Art - painting, sculpture, and even more, contemporary architecture has always been fragile. And yet we preserve art, and treat it with the utmost care because of its value. Gehry understands that the only way to guarantee architectures's durability today is to upgrade it to the status of 'work of art' (p. 627). This might be true of the situation of a concert hall in Los Angeles, but at San Sebastián Moneo does not need to play this trick, as the city is the work of art that completes the beauty of the natural setting. Chillida knew this too I suggest, and *The Comb of the Winds*, like the *Kursaal*, recognises and draws our attention to the stability and vulnerability of human situations.

Figure 107 The Kursaal, Rafael Moneo, San Sebastián, view of the ocean and town in the early evening 7th April 2014 during the interval of a performance

I believe that just as Chillida completed a 19th century project by making an edge and limit to the town and the natural world, Moneo's Kursaal owes a profound debt to the spatial communication established by the sculptures, urban design and infrastructure of San Sebastian. There are obvious and perhaps significant similarities between Chillida's sculptures and the Kursaal in terms of material and composition of course.

Figure 108 Homage to Marble, Eduardo Chillida, Museo-Chillida, Leku

However, beyond formal or material similarities, there is also a deeper correspondence between the work of Chillida and Moneo at San Sebastian, and this lies in the communicative aspects of spatiality and site. Both projects sit on the edge of the city, and occupy and make inhabitable a liminal situation between pure rhythm and human situations.

Figure 109 Comparisons between the topography of San Sebastian as two 'shells' of water and the Kursaal as two 'shells' of light

Just as the spatial forms of the La Concha bay are re-presented in microcosm by the arcs of the *Wind Combs*, Moneo's Kursaal represents the topography of two 'shells' of water as two shells of light. Physicists famously define the aqueous character of glass as "a very slowly moving liquid"²³⁴ – and Moneo's Kursaal recalls Chillida's question cited above (*Rhythm – time – silence/Is matter not also space, a slower space?*):

²³⁴ Cf. "Glass is an amorphous (non-crystalline) solid material that exhibits a glass transition, which is the reversible transition in amorphous materials (or in amorphous regions within semicrystalline materials) from a hard and relatively brittle state into a molten or rubber-like state.": <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glass>.

Will it not be the dimension of the present that makes life possible,
as the non-dimension of the point makes geometry possible?
I did not see the wind I saw the clouds move.
I did not see time I saw the leaves fall.

A surface
A place
A whereabouts

Rythm-time-silence.
Is matter not also space, a slower space?

There is a hidden communication in all that is close.

In the extremity of the acute, silence. Go through space silently.
Achieve the mute vibration.

*Figure 110 from **Escritos: Eduardo Chillida** (pp.28-9), translated by Gavin Hennenberry & Patrick Lynch*

The Kursaal situates the playful activity of concert going at the threshold between the worlds of work and pleasure, at the edge of man-made shoreline and natural conditions. In his profoundly mimetic exaggeration and amplification of the geometry and morphology of the town he audaciously accommodates poetic sound – music – within a practically poetic structure – architecture.

Figure 111 San Sebastian, Wind Combs and Kursaal

The difficulty of acoustically isolating and lighting two structures is achieved with a wonderfully inventive and witty device: the outer skin is a grand luminaire, in imitation of the crystalline lanterns that deepen and enchant the night and the boats at anchor there²³⁵. Moneo and Chillida's

235 Cf:

*'She sang beyond the genius of the sea,
The water never formed to mind or voice,
Like a body wholly body, fluttering
Its empty sleeves; and yet its mimic motion
Made constant cry, caused constantly a cry,
That was not ours although we understood,
Inhuman, of the veritable ocean.*

imaginations seem to have synchronised in a profound manner, transforming the somewhat banal spectacle of promenading along the coast into a powerful encounter with the forces of nature and human ingenuity. Town and ocean,

*The sea was not a mask. No more was she.
The song and water were not medleyed sound
Even if what she sang was what she heard.
Since what she sang was uttered word by word.
It may be that in all her phrases stirred
The grinding water and the gasping wind;
But it was she and not the sea we heard.*

*For she was the maker of the song she sang.
The ever-hooded, tragic-gestured sea
Was merely a place by which she walked to sing.
Whose spirit is this? we said, because we knew
It was the spirit that we sought and knew
That we should ask this often as she sang.*

*If it was only the dark voice of the sea
That rose, or even colored by many waves;
If it was only the outer voice of sky
And cloud, of the sunken coral water-walled,
However clear, it would have been deep air,
The heaving speech of air, a summer sound
Repeated in a summer without end
And sound alone. But it was more than that,
More even than her voice, and ours, among
The meaningless plungings of water and the wind,
Theatrical distances, bronze shadows heaped
On high horizons, mountainous atmospheres
Of sky and sea.*

*It was her voice that made
The sky acutest at its vanishing.
She measured to the hour its solitude.
She was the single artificer of the world In which she sang.
And when she sang, the sea,
Whatever self it had, became the self
That was her song, for she was the maker.
Then we, As we beheld her striding there alone,
Knew that there never was a world for her Except the one she sang and, singing, made.*

*Ramon Fernandez, tell me, if you know,
Why, when the singing ended and we turned
Toward the town, tell why the glassy lights,
The lights in the fishing boats at anchor there,
As night descended, tilting in the air,
Mastered the night and portioned out the sea,
Fixing emblazoned zones and fiery poles,
Arranging, deepening, enchanting night.*

*Oh! Blessed rage for order, pale Ramon,
The maker's rage to order words of the sea,
Words of the fragrant portals, dimly-starred,
And of ourselves and of our origins,
In ghostlier demarcations, keener sounds.'*

The Idea of Order at Key West, Wallace Stevens, Op Cit.

and work and play meet each other in a series of spatial and material settings that are primarily typified by rhythm. In this encounter a series of rhythms of association are revealed and can be enjoyed, which situate one in a pleasurable domain of wit and physical exuberance, silence and repetition, noise and stillness: An equilibrium is established at certain times of the day and year – the calm inversion of states that typifies art experience– what Gadamer calls ‘festive still’²³⁶ (‘time out of time’)

Chillida made a crucifix for the cathedral and for the church of Santa Maria. In the cathedral the cross projects out of a stone background, and a kilometre away this finds its echo and answer in the spatial recesses of Santa Maria. Inversion is clearly a theme at play in Chillida’s sculptures at San Sebastian. Moneo seems to have intuitively understood and responded to this, and to the lamination of everyday and festival at play at the city edge; and his Kursaal is a profound example of the appropriateness of extreme architectural exertion made to appear ludic and graceful.

Rhythmic play characterises the world of the workroom and reveals it as a *Spielraum*. Play is work transformed into contemplation; and when work becomes action, a mode of ontological movement is established that extends rhythm into understanding. In his study of *Heidegger among the Sculptors*, AJ Mitchell touches upon the ludic quality of sculpture, referring to the fact that Chillida almost became a professional footballer (he played in goal for San Sebastián), citing what he wrote about the similarities:

There are a lot of connections between football and sculpture. The conditions you need to be a good goalkeeper are exactly the same as the conditions you need to be a good sculptor. You must have a very good connection, in both professions, with time and space...²³⁷

Mitchell claims that the ‘sculpture shapes the space of collaboration’ and that everything from Heidegger’s text “written in gothic characters from his bare hand”, at Chillida’s request, upon the Bavarian Solnhofen stone that Chillida engraved his lithographs, should be seen as a form of ‘teamwork’.²³⁸ This

²³⁶ *The Relevance of the Beautiful*, Op. Cit., p.40.

²³⁷ See also ‘Ornament and Time’ by Peter Carl, Op. Cit..

²³⁸ *Heidegger Among the Sculptors: Body, Space, and the Art of Dwelling*, AJ Mitchell, pp.83-4. A similar point is made by Vesely in his book, op. cit., pp.80-81: ‘the topography of the

slightly crass metaphor is redeemed by the insight that art experience of space 'is preparatory for dwelling, for if there is to be dwelling for humans at all, it must be amid and between the things and others of the world... we are able to dwell because we are already permeated by these places and things.'²³⁹ He concludes that 'the truth of sculpture is the truth of being: mediation.'

Heidegger declares in *Art and Space* that art should not be 'a domination of space' or 'a technical conquest of space', but the revelation of place. His famous example of a Greek temple in 'The Origin of the Work of Art', which as well as 'raising up' the hill on which it sits towards the sky (the gods), also 'saves the stone' that it is made of²⁴⁰ so that it is not 'passed over'. Instead of abstract space and objectified matter, what is revealed by the temple is 'a place'. Heidegger emphasises the 'work' character of 'the work of art' and also its status as a 'thing'. He calls art that has been taken out of its context examples of 'world-withdrawal and world-decay', and laments the tendency of 'art historical study (that) makes the works the objects of

ground, the rules, previous experience constitute a preunderstanding of the game... each layer is able to translate the kinesthetic reality into its visual equivalents, and conversely, respond kinesthetically to a situation that can be assessed only visually. Even more surprising is the contrast between the constant changes in the game and the stability of the field to which each player refers at all times. This contrast reveals the role of our corporeal scheme, sometimes less appropriately referred to as a "body image". Although football is given as an example of the spatio-temporal aspects of human situations generally and not specifically as an aspect of creativity, the participatory character of space suggests that play is a mode of spatiality in itself. Sculpture and the temporal arts could thus be seen to be aspects of spatial behaviour generally, ecstatic and joyful expressions of it: 'In the activity of an artist or craftsman we find a similar context to that of the players in the game examined above, though the role of their movement is less explicit and the unity of their experience is more focused on the tactile domain. This brings to light more clearly the elementary forms of creative movement and its power to animate all around it.' I suggest that it is the rhythmic character of play and of work that makes them both authentic modes of being, and as such also modes of dwelling. Movement therefore – *ecstasis* – might be seen not as the opposite of dwelling, but the vital aspect of what Vesely calls 'Communicative Space' that establishes urbanity. This insight is confirmed by the dance critic Edwin Denby who writes of the reciprocity of the urbane character of a town, and the rhythmic nature of human situations and movement: 'In ancient Italian hill towns the narrow main street at dusk becomes a kind of theatre. The community strolls affably and looks itself over. The girls and the young men, from fifteen to twenty two, display their charm to one another with a lively sociability. The more grace they show, the better the community likes them. In Florence and in Naples, in the ancient city slums the young people are virtuoso performers, and they do a bit of promenading any time they are not busy... Their stroll is as responsive as if it were a physical conversation... Their liveliness makes these courteous formalities – which recall ballet – a mutual game of skill... ballet was originally an Italian dance... (with) the lively sociability of its spirit and forms.' 'Forms in Motion and in Thought', in *Edwin Denby: Dance Writings and Poetry*, ed. Robert Cornfield, New Haven, 1998, p. 301. For a further discussion on the reciprocity between play and urbanity see *Man, Play and Games*, Roger Caillois, University of Illinois Press, 2001. 239 *Ibid.*, pp. 86-7.

240 C.f., *Stone*, John Sallis.

science²⁴¹. In contrast, works of art are part of the 'living world' and the places that are revealed by art reveal an ultimate reference in 'the earth'. The earth is revealed as that from which 'man bases his dwelling', and Heidegger's famous and evocative passage on the temple – albeit discussed in isolation from its 'world' and relation to any actual *polis* – evokes a proto-ecological sense of 'earth':

The temple's firm towering makes visible the invisible space of air. The steadfastness of the work contrasts with the surge of the surf, and its own repose brings out the raging of the sea. Tree, grass, eagle and bull, snake and cricket first enter into their distinctive shapes and thus come to appear as what they are. The Greeks called this emerging and rising into itself *phusis*. It clears and illuminates, also, that on which and in which man bases his dwelling. We call this ground the earth. What this word says is not to be associated with the idea of a mass of matter deposited somewhere, or with a merely astronomical idea of a planet. Earth is that whence the arising brings back and shelters everything that arises without violation. In the things that arise, earth is present as the sheltering agent.²⁴²

Earth is the primary reference for Being, Heidegger insists (what Peter Carl calls 'the common limit of human finitude'). The situational character of art enables it to provide orientation in relation to this. Art is primarily situational Heidegger contends, and 'situation always prevails' he insists²⁴³: 'we hear the door shut in the house and never hear acoustical sensations or even mere sounds. In order to hear a bare sound we have to listen away from things, divert our ear from them, i.e. listen abstractly'²⁴⁴. I suggest, therefore, that Heidegger's emphasis upon the 'work' character of art (in 'The Origin of the Work of Art'), should be seen in concert with his emphasis upon work-places in *Being and Time*: because what unites these two discussions is the 'situational' character of everyday things and art works. Both reveal that the directional and orientation character of spatiality lies in our situational involvement with *things in space* i.e. at a particular place.

Whilst Heidegger is happy to suggest that 'The thing is formed matter' and that in a 'synthesis of matter and form a thing-concept has finally

241 'The Origin of the Work of Art', Op.Cit., p.40.

242 Ibid., p.42.

243 Ibid., p.25.

244 Ibid., p.26.

been found which applies equally to things of nature and use objects'; he contends that 'form and content are hackneyed expressions under which anything and everything may be subsumed.'²⁴⁵ Instead of these categories, Heidegger insists furthermore upon the directionality of things. Remarking that: 'the interfusion of form and matter prevailing here is served by jug, ax, shoes. Such usefulness is never assigned or added on afterwards to a being of the type of a jug, ax, or pair of shoes. But neither is it something that floats somewhere above it as an end.' Art is somewhat different to a pair of shoes of course, and Heidegger is careful to distinguish natural, equipmental and artistic things, whilst insisting nonetheless that:

Works of art are familiar to everyone. Architectural and sculptural works can be installed in public places, in churches, and in dwellings... If we consider the works in their untouched actuality and do not deceive ourselves, the result is that the works are naturally present as things. The picture hangs on the wall like a rifle or a hat.²⁴⁶

However much art works are things, the 'presence' that they embody is 'the basic Greek experience of the Being of beings'; and this was revealed in the belief that 'the core of the thing was lying at the ground of a thing, something always already there'²⁴⁷. It is the basic reticence of things and their resistance to appropriation and consumption that typifies art works also:

A piece of equipment, a pair of shoes for instance, when finished, is also self-contained like the mere things, but it does not have the character of having taken shape by itself like the granite boulder. On the other hand, equipment displays an affinity with the art work insofar as it is something produced by the human hand. However, by its self-sufficient presence the work of art is similar to the mere thing which has taken shape by itself and is self-contained. Nevertheless, we do not count such works among mere things. As a rule it is the use-objects around us that are the nearest and authentic things. Thus the piece of equipment is half

²⁴⁵ Ibid., pp26-7: 'That which gives things their constancy and pith but is also at the same time the source of their particular mode of sensuous pressure – colored, resonant, hard, massive – is the matter of things. In this analysis of the thing as matter (*hule*), form (*morphe*) is already coposited. What is constant in a thing, its consistency, lies in the fact that matter stands together with a form.'

²⁴⁶ Ibid., p.19.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., p.23.

thing, because characterised by thingliness, and yet it is something more: at the same time it is half art work and yet something less, because lacking the self-sufficiency of the art work. Equipment has a peculiar position intermediate between thing and work, assuming that such a calculated ordering of them is permissible.²⁴⁸

In emphasising the situational character of things, and of art work's 'thingliness', Heidegger attempts to overcome the clichés of 'useless art' and of 'form and content' in which 'form is correlated with the rational and matter with the irrational'²⁴⁹. Ultimately, he refutes Kant's idea that art is irrational²⁵⁰, proposing instead that 'what we call feeling or mood, here and elsewhere, is more reasonable – that is, more intelligently perceptive – because more open to Being than all that reason which, having meanwhile become *ratio*, was misinterpreted as being rational. The hankering after the irrational, as abortive offspring of the unthought rational, therewith performed a curious service.' Heidegger declares that the 'reason' that we find in art is a function of language itself, and that 'the nature of art is poetry'²⁵¹, since 'language is poetry in its essential sense.'²⁵² Poetry is 'the founding of truth' because 'the poetic projection of truth that sets itself into work... is... never carried out in the direction of an intermediate void'. Poetry – as work – is projected towards 'the opening up or disclosure of that into which human being as historical is already cast. This is the earth, and for an historical people, its earth, the self-closing ground on which it rests together with

248 Ibid., p.29.

249 Ibid., p.25.

250 Cf. *Critique of Pure Reason*, Immanuel Kant, Penguin, 2007. Heidegger attacks the idea that art is not reasonable or communicable in *Art & Space*, by comparing art with space (which is something that we do know about and which art, and in particular sculpture, reveals the truth of). In *Being and Time* he refutes Kant's view that objects (and indeed space and time): 'cannot as appearances, exist in themselves, but only in us. It remains completely unknown to us what objects may be in themselves and apart from all this receptivity of our sensibility. We know nothing but our manner of perceiving them, a manner which is peculiar to us, and not necessarily shared by every being, even though it must be shared by every human being.', p. 75 (B59,60/A42,43). By emphasising the heuristic aspects of art as "work" Heidegger recovers aesthetic judgment from Kantian pure sensibility, irrationality and solipsistic subjectivity. Gadamer extends Heidegger's work on art and space to include specific aspects of this, such as festivals, and he grounds Heidegger's claims that *man dwells poetically* in the urban situations that involve ornament and decorum with the playful aspects of civic life generally. Merleau-Ponty's critique of Kant is based on his observation that 'Kant's conclusion was that I am a consciousness which embraces and constitutes the world, and this reflective action caused him to overlook the phenomenon of the body and that of the thing.', *The Phenomenology of Perception*, Op Cit., p.303.

251 Ibid., p.75.

252 Ibid., p.74.

everything that already is, though hidden from itself.²⁵³ Poetry is an aspect of 'openness' and in fact 'the Open' is an ontological state that 'poetry lets happen'. It recalls the openings or clearings that we find in the world, and also 'time-out-of-time' or "festive" moments in which we encounter 'the earth' as the 'ground of Being'.

This is why a sculpture is important for Heidegger - not as a thing, or even simply the abstract space between things - rather, its importance lies in the relationships that it opens between things, since 'the work belongs, as work, uniquely within the realm that is opened up by itself. For the work-being of the work is present in, and only in, such opening up.'²⁵⁴ For Heidegger *opening up* enables 'the unconcealedness of Being' (he refers also to the 'unconcealment of Being' in *Art and Space*), and this, because it is 'the setting into work of truth'²⁵⁵, he insists, 'is not necessarily dependent on embodiment'. Heidegger continues and concludes *Art and Space* by citing Goethe:

"It is not always necessary that what is true embody itself; it is already enough if spiritually it hovers about and evokes harmony, if it floats through the air like the solemn and friendly sound of a bell."²⁵⁶

Mitchell declares that 'Space is the truth, the space through which, as Goethe says, what is true resounds, not as raw noise but like a bell, that is, as something rippling through a medium.'²⁵⁷ This seems to me to rely still upon a structured movement between embodiment and articulation, which the metaphor a 'friendly sound of a bell' *overcomes*.

²⁵³ Ibid., p.75.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., p.41.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., p71: 'Truth, as the clearing and concealing of what is, happens in being composed, as a poet composes a poem. All art, as the letting happen of the advent of truth of what is, is, as such, essentially poetry. The nature of art, on which both the art work and the artists depend, is the setting-itself-into-work of truth. It is due to art's poetic nature that, in the midst of what is, art breaks open an open place, in whose openness everything is other than usual'.

²⁵⁶ *Art and Space*, (13), p.8.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 91.

Heidegger would have been conscious also of the analogical character of geometry, not only because of Edmund Husserl's *The Origins of Geometry*²⁵⁸, but also through his study of Plato and Aristotle. Geometry is traditionally understood as the logical description of relationships. For this reason, Husserl was able to demonstrate Aristotle's proposition²⁵⁹ that geometric relationships are metaphoric i.e. a verbal expression is a geometric construction implying a relation; A is to B as B is to C for example, describes a continuous proportion as well as a syllogism. It is this observation that enables Heidegger, in his poem 'The Thinker as Poet', to make the claim for poetry as a form of philosophy, since it is an expression of *logos* and reveals the 'topology of Being':

When the cowbells tinkling from
the slopes of the valley
where the heards wander slowly...

The Poetic Character of thinking is
still veiled over.

Where it shows itself, it is for a
long time like the utopism of
a half-poetic intellect.

But poetry that thinks is in truth
the topology of Being.

This topology tells Being the
whereabouts of its actual
presence.²⁶⁰

Heidegger is referring to a tradition of thinking that is now almost entirely

258 C.f., "Origin of Geometry", Appendix to *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, Edmund Husserl, Northwestern University Press, 1970; *Edmund Husserl's "Origin of Geometry": An Introduction*, Jacques Derrida, (1962), 1989, Bison Editions ; and 'Geometry and Discourse', Peter Carl.

259 *Topics*, Aristotle, 159a1, 161a35.

260 'The Thinker as Poet', Martin Heidegger, in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, Op. Cit., p.12.

concealed beneath a flood of rationalist misinterpretations of presence and Being, and of the role that geometry plays in traditional dialectics. It is worth quoting at length from an essay by Peter Carl entitled 'Geometry as Discourse', as he explains the differences between Aristotle's and Plato's understanding of geometry and rhetoric, and the status poetics holds for both in terms of revelation of truth:

Plato's Divided Line and Aristotle's comparison between geometric proportion and the syllogism...have in common the desire to understand the mediation of difference through analogy, expressed in terms of geometry. This is rooted in *logos* itself, which is not only discourse but also account, accounting, counting. Thus Plato and Aristotle are both moving within agonic *logos* between concrete dialogue and dialectic, with the common aim of rescuing the weakness of the *logoi*, their capacity for error or untruth. If, however, both agree on the importance and nature of concrete dialogue, they differ on the nature of dialectic. For Plato, dialectic is the highest stratum of *noesis*, whereby, through *analogia*, the individual soul has the potential to participate (*methexis*) in the structure of the world-soul (*Republic, Timaeos*). According to the ascending and descending movement, the individual is reconciled with the truth of the order; and the many of the polis is oriented to the ethical coherence (the one) that is always-already-there, common-to-all, divine. Although Aristotle preserves the stratification (in the movement from the knowledge of *praxis* to *episteme* to *sophia* in the *Nichomachean Ethics*) and speaks of particular (individual, historical) and universal (the order of the whole, eternal) in the *Metaphysics*, in his texts which concern the nature of *logos* in the polis, he brings dialectic into the work of discourse. These texts comprise the *Topics*, concerning the common-places which are typical of polis-discourse (common agonic situations), the *Rhetoric*, which addresses the nature of the common framework of discourse for all political and celebratory affairs of the polis (the framework which claims all participants, like the polis itself), and what has become known as the *Organon*, the collection of texts on logic, of which the syllogism (A:B::B:C) is the basis for all logical expressions. Logical discourse or thought is distinguished from rhetorical discourse, and in this sense recalls Plato's sense of a separation of dialectic from everyday *logos*. However, particularly in the *Topics* (judged to be the earliest of this series of texts), one can see Aristotle working with the notion that dialectic might be more involved with clarifying statements in political and legal *praxis*. Similarly, whilst Plato decants mimetic discourse to the milieu of *doxa* – all the while building it into the presentation of his dialogues, which move from everyday jokes through carefully structured argument to myth – Aristotle separates mimetic discourse from the work of politics and logic, in his *Poetics*. At the same time, he

makes the central thesis of his treatment (of, mostly, tragic drama) the proposition that poetics is a mimesis of *praxis*; and the basis of this mimesis is what he terms *mythos* (usually translated as 'plot'). Accordingly, one can see that Plato and Aristotle are responding to the life in logos in different ways, but that the life in logos itself harbours a commonality that claims all speakers. One always finds oneself in an agonistic movement between particular and universal, between concrete many and symbolic one, between dialogue and dialectic. As the very nature of 'finding oneself', being, there-being, this *agon* would be reframed by Heidegger as one between earth (conditions) and world (possibilities), which points to the universal nature of 'situation' (all situations involve interpretation). His formulation captures the deeper similarity between Plato and Aristotle, and suggests why one always finds them in reciprocity in the subsequent history of philosophy. Put simply, Aristotle articulates how the amplitude of the practical life is embodied in the spectrum of discourses which one finds woven together in Plato's evocation of being in the *logos* of finite beings.²⁶¹

Despite the absence of involvement with the geometric tradition in his writings (certainly by comparison to Gadamer), there is some evidence that Heidegger took a concrete interest in geometry, and that in acting as a geometer he saw himself fulfilling his aim to situate thinking in the world, even that he saw thinking as situated geometry. We are grateful to Adam Sharr for revealing to us the origins of Heidegger's Hut at Todtnauberg in Bavaria, but until recently the ornamental geometric figure that was constructed atop of the drinking fountain was not considered significant. Sharr simply notes that, 'A split hollowed log is fed with water from a spout in another, upright log connected to a natural spring. A star is carved in relief from a timber cube sits on this upright'²⁶², and the 'well' is not included on the model that he makes of the *Hütte*.

²⁶¹ 'Geometry and Discourse', Peter Carl, unpublished essay, 2010.

²⁶² *Heidegger's Hut*, Adam Sharr, MIT, 2007, p. 42. The 'well' is drawn but not annotated on the plan on p.25, nor included on the model photographs which appear on pages 27 and 28. The historical and intellectual context of the hut is discussed but not its actual physical context, and Sharr can be accused of committing a Heideggerian error; he concentrates on the hut as an object, missing the relationships set up between Heidegger's study and the landscape, the view of which is mediated by the analogical device of the Brunnenstein.

Figure 112 Heidegger's Hut, Todtnauberg, Digne Meller-Marcovicz (view towards entrance past the well, with Heidegger's study windows and the East façade)

Ross Anderson delivered a paper at the Kyoto conference on phenomenology in 2011 entitled 'Brunnenstern: The talismanic presence of the architecture and ornament of philosopher Martin Heidegger's Hütte at Todtnauberg, Germany, 1922', in which he proposed that

In a photograph from 1968, Heidegger is captured walking back to the *Hütte* having filled a bucket with water from the *Brunnen*. The unusual cubic- stellar ornament atop the continually filling trough demands attention. It sits incongruously in the rustic setting otherwise thoroughly purged of excess, carefully attuned to a paradigmatic mountain existence. Given there is little ornament elsewhere in the *Hütte*, there is cause to suspect this assertive element was of personal significance to Heidegger.

Figure 113 Heidegger at the well, Digne Meller-Marcovicz (view from the land between the study windows and the path)

In fact, Heidegger's son Hermann confirms that his father "used to sit here at the desk and look out at the water trough, which had a special significance for him". Anderson admirably investigates the meaning of the symbolism in archaic Teutonic culture, and suggests that the *significance* that the fountain held for Martin Heidegger is partly historical symbolism, and also as a demonstration of his philosophical stance. It

... prompts thought of Heidegger's *Totenbaum* (tree of the dead) in 'Building Dwelling Thinking', known more generally as a *Baumsarg* (tree-coffin); a casket finished from a single oak tree trunk. When relating how the fourfold ordered the black forest, Heidegger writes that 'it made room in its chamber for the hallowed places of childbed and the *Totenbaum* (tree of the dead)... and in this way it designed for the different generations under one roof, the character of their journey through time.'

Figure 114 View looking East from Heidegger's study, Digne Meller-Marcovicz

Totenbaum is a term local to Baden-Württemberg, for what in German is more generally known as a *Baumsarg* (tree-coffin), referring to a casket finished from a single tree trunk split lengthways and hollowed out for a corpse. Heidegger would thus have been reminded of the essential characteristic of *da Sein* as 'being towards death' as he wrote in his study each morning, facing the rising sun, and contemplating the well/fountain.

Figure 115 Heidegger at his desk in his study, Digne Meller-Marcovicz

Figure 116 Heidegger at his desk in his study, Digne Meller-Marcovicz

Sein itself was marked in *The Question of Being*²⁶³ as crossed through, indicating the limit of being, like a *memento mori*. Anderson also suggests that there is rhetorical significance in the form of the Brunnenstern itself:

Geometrically it can be classified either as a polyhedron compound of two tetrahedra, or as a stellation of an octahedron. The composition is of particular interest because both the tetrahedron and octahedron are Platonic solids, as articulated in Plato's *Timæus*; a cosmogony paired with the Republic, whose divided line presents an ontology of understanding demonstrating how the individual soul participates in the world soul. In the *Timæus* each solid was accorded the qualities of an 'element' (earth, air, water and fire). Earth was associated with the cube, air with the octahedron, water with the icosahedron, and fire with the tetrahedron. Geometry, *analogia*, is implicated in the origins of the thinking-being that Heidegger derives from Parmenides, and there exists a highly provocative possibility that he might have sought to bring his own idiosyncratic fourfold²⁶⁴ of 'earth, sky, divinities, mortals' into dialogue with the more classical 'fourfold' of earth, air, water and fire.

Figure 117 Illustration of the 'Stella Octangula' by Leonardo Da Vinci in Luca Pacioli's *Divina Proportione*, 1509

Anderson continues to propose a symbolic reading of the sculpture, suggesting that 'the significance of the *Brunnen* to Heidegger may in part be as a heavily sublimated self-effacing reminder to himself' of the task of thinking as mediation, 'the philosopher between fool and interpreter of truth'. He discusses

²⁶³ *The Question of Being*, Martin Heidegger, Rowman & Littlefield, 1958.

²⁶⁴ Peter Carl claims that 'this is an error - it comes from Plato's *Gorgias*.'

the analogical significance of the star as a form of memory aid²⁶⁵, and demonstrates that whilst appearing complex it is in fact 'unexpectedly simple to carve'²⁶⁶. It is tempting to see in this its value to Heidegger as an embodiment of *deseverance* – the prone coffin-tree receives water from the erect tree-fountain with its stellate 'capital' positioned like a font along the path to the hut and alternately part of the land at a distance and ready-to-hand offering water. It demonstrates the embodied character of knowledge, as ideas become visible under what Michelangelo called the 'thinking hand of the sculptor.'²⁶⁷

Figure 118 Sequence of images tracing the process of fabricating the Brunnen ornament out of a cube of timber and Stella Octangula as a polyhedron of two tetrahedral (A); Stella Octangula as a stellation of an Octahedron (B), computer renderings, model and photographs by Ross Anderson

²⁶⁵ Ibid., p.6: 'The second possible reference comes from Meno, which contains a demonstration of *anamnesis*; the notion that certain knowledge is innate and 'recollected' from the past lives of the immortal soul. Socrates induces one of Meno's slaves to 'remember' how to find half the area of a square. He draws a square in the sand, and through a series of questions and accompanying drawings passes through a series of false conclusions based on partial logic in order to eventually arrive at the correct solution.'

²⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 7.

²⁶⁷ 'Only Fire Forges Iron', *Sonnets*, Michelangelo.

These allusions to the history of representation are quite typical in the ornamentation of villas, which are in essence thresholds between the natural world and the life of contemplation, and the negotiations of political life²⁶⁸. It maybe “incorrect” in formal architectural terms, or in terms of style, to think of the *Hütte* as a villa, but villas are not so much typological models as examples of a particular mode of dwelling²⁶⁹. Heidegger’s modest building is adorned with a perceptible grandeur through the position and constellation of the Brunnenstern, as is the act of thinking – which is revealed in this arrangement not only to be the act of moving water, of carrying it, its weight, wetness etc., but also as orientation (it is to the east of the house). What is clear is that a) it is not plumbing (like his critique of the dam, nature as standing reserve) and b) as a figure, as something like sculpture, it is not taken for granted, simply used, but exerts a claim upon reflection – which includes distance, eastward orientation for thinking, dying-reviving, tree/human, tree/geometry, body/head, etc. That is, the thinker is situated through activating the horizons of reference.

In other words, the situation is made up of a number of activities of things at hand and ready at hand which precede thought and which situate contemplation as an act occurring specifically somewhere, overlooking the valley, facing the morning sun. Just as the house is said to have its sunny side, it has a view onto a region of life in which the desk, the chair, the pen and the hillside are all part of a workroom situated and oriented in part by the fountain. It ornaments the natural conditions otherwise implicit in the view from the study, bringing to the surface a rhythm of sound and moving light. Heidegger was emphatically in place there, the fountain and the Brunnenstern situating and re-presenting the themes of life/death implied by the movement of the water from ‘tree/body’ to geometric ‘capital/head’. In other words, it

268 c.f., ‘Sanctified Leisure: The Villa is not a Temple or a Barn: The Villa as Archetype and Paradigm’, Patrick Lynch, catalogue chapter, *The Lives of Spaces: The Irish Pavilion at the Venice Architecture Biennale*, Dublin, 2008; and ‘All imagination has to be re-imagined: the villa and the architectural imagination’, Patrick Lynch, *Architectural Research Quarterly*, Volume 9, number 2, Cambridge University Press, 2005.

269 Cf., *The Villa: Form & Ideology of Country Houses*, James Ackerman, Princeton, 1992, in which it is made clear that ‘the villa typology’ is not pure (they can equally be courtyards or barns with temple fronts). Despite the title, Ackerman is more insightful on the activities of villa life than the terms ‘form’ and ‘ideology’ would suggest.

imitates and represents his belief that thinking grows from the everyday world of nature and work, which is in this case typified by the play of water and the rhythmic qualities of the natural world present in the fountain as part of the background to the work-room.

Figure 119 View of Heidegger looking West out of the door of his hut with Frau Heidegger, Digne Meller-Marcovicz

The fountain also acts as a figurative middle ground between the hills beyond the hut, and the desk on which Heidegger's hand sat. Anderson suggests that the photographs that Heidegger staged with Meller-Marcovicz allude to the stories about the lives of various philosophers²⁷⁰; Heraclitus sat by a stove, etc. He also suggests that it fulfils the purpose of linking the practical and symbolic aspects of everyday life to Heidegger's notion of the fourfold:

²⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 10: 'We can place an episode from Heidegger's "Letter on Humanism" in the context of the dignity of everyday ritual relating to heating from a stove. He reports an incident recorded by Aristotle, where a group of curious strangers come to visit Heraclitus and are perplexed by their first glimpse of his abode. They had expected to catch sight of him at that very moment when, sunk in profound meditation, he is thinking. The visitors want this 'experience' not in order to be overwhelmed by thinking but simply so they can say they saw and heard someone everybody says is a thinker. Instead, they find him warming himself at a stove. "In this altogether everyday place he betrays the entire poverty of his life. The vision of a shivering thinker offers little of interest... The visitors are on the verge of going away again. Heraclitus reads the frustrated curiosity on their faces... He invites them explicitly to come in with the words... 'Here too the gods come to presence.'" Heidegger seeks to replicate this condition in general with his Hütte, and possibly more explicitly via one of the staged photos in a folio by Digne Meller-Marcovicz, in which he sits idly by the stove.'

The *Brunnenstern* is approximately aligned with the major wall halving the interior of the cabin in the East-West direction, and therefore is aligned approximately with the stove. This may symbolize a relationship between water and fire; the movement from the spring in nature to the ritualistic everyday human need to heat water for cooking, washing and so forth.²⁷¹

I would like to suggest an equally presumptuous reading of the situation, but one grounded in Heidegger's experience of the *Brunnenstern*, and drawn from the evidence of staged photographs. In the photographs of Meller-Marcovicz Heidegger sets the scene for us – he looks as if he is having fun, he appears playful, he even smiles in one image. Anderson observes that the fountain is strongly figurative:

the vertical trunk looks like it would fit into the recess of the trough, further enhancing its anthropomorphic character. In this context it is to be observed that the photograph of Heidegger returning to the *Hütte*, having filled a bucket of water at the *Brunnen* displays the same motif repeated twice: once as vertical and horizontal tree and once as Heidegger and his bucket. It may or may not be an accident. The fact that he is carrying the bucket in his left hand whilst walking back towards the *Hütte*, thus exactly duplicating the configuration speaks for deliberateness. Therefore, the *Brunnenstern* is also the 'capital' of the column, just as a person rests on earth and whose head symbolizes *nomos* (thought)

Anderson suggests that Heidegger has staged a photograph of himself beside a sculptural artefact that he surely must have designed . It is in fact impossible to prove who designed the *Brunnenstern*; perhaps in order to tell us something? Anderson's insistence on 'the vernacular' character of the hut (he compares and contrasts it to Le Corbusier's *Cabanon*) somewhat misses the grandeur that the sculptural fountain adds to the hut. My assertion that the hut is in fact a type of villa is based in part on the importance of contemplative work in the writings of his student and lover, Hannah Arendt²⁷², who makes a case for contemplation as something vital and committed to reality²⁷³. In particular, she emphasises the contribution contemplative thought makes to politics, which

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² Martin Heidegger: *Between Good and Evil*, Rüdiger Safranski, Harvard, 1998.

²⁷³ *The Human Condition*, Hannah Arendt, Chicago, 1958.

can be rephrased as the contribution the *vita contemplativa* makes to the *vita activa*; as the contribution the villa makes to the city; the contribution play makes to work and vice versa: it is a form of reconciliation of opposites, of agonic sublimation, poetic commingling, analogical-geometric thinking.

Figure 120 View of Heidegger's Hut from the North West, Digne Meller-Marcovicz

The hut is placed exactly at the point at which the cultivated landscape gives way to forest, at the threshold between the world of men and the mountains. Heidegger's workroom is situated overlooking a valley, on the edge of rising ground, above which the tree line begins. It is not in the wilderness like a hunter's lodge or cabin, but at the extreme edge of urbanity – just as villas traditionally occupy and construe a threshold between cities and the natural world²⁷⁴.

Villas typically house galleries from which to contemplate this distinction, and these rooms are traditionally decorated to reflect the themes of transformation and of the commingling of mythic themes and natural conditions, in which thought and physical labour unite the various meanings of cultivation. Heidegger's study exhibits exactly these spatial characteristics, and

²⁷⁴ Cf., 'All memory has to be re-imagined: the villa and the architectural imagination', Patrick Lynch, *Architecture Research Quarterly*, Volume 9, Issue 2, June 2005, Cambridge.

his view of the natural world is mediated not only by contemplative action (philosophy), but by the *Brunnenstern*, which represents the unity of visible and invisible worlds - the work of a geometer-philosopher, as Heidegger saw it.

Figure 121 Drawing of the spatial relationship between the workroom and the well, (Patrick Lynch)

I do not wish to base an argument upon one image – my observation is based on the series of images that were made that day and upon what they enable us to reconstruct in our minds i.e. how they mediate reality and communicate to us the relationships between the hut, and the inhabitants, and the natural world in which everything sits. From his work chair, Heidegger could observe the fountain and the water constantly falling and splashing into the trough – eternal, self-replenishing potential. His study has two windows facing east. These are the only windows on this face of the building and they appear like eyes, looking directly at the log and mast of the fountain. Meller-Marcovicz's photographs of Heidegger in his workroom, show him sat in his chair looking out, one of which is taken low-down from the position of someone sat in a chair in conversation with him.

Figure 129 View of Heidegger thinking in his study, Digne Meller-Marcovicz

In this image, and in the other photographs made in the study, you notice that Heidegger has hung a small circular wreath onto the wall, to the left of his desk. It appears in the photographs to float above his head, almost a halo, a small sun. The wreath is probably a votive offering from the harvest festival, a reminder of the commingling of solar symbolism in Christian eschatology with the seasons of the year, with images of rebirth and sacrifice in Teutonic culture, and in the intellectual context that Heidegger occupied from Parmenides onwards. I would like to suggest that this contextual reading is an example of the task of the thinker that Heidegger set himself, and that only analogical thinking enables one to move between the universal and the particular. The universal aspect of this task is suggested to us by the resolution that the circle offers the quartered star, set above the endless rhythm of the spring. Heidegger's star sits in the world of work, contemplated by the philosopher-geometer, and set in place by thought. The role of contemplation is important in the disclosure of Being of course, and poetry – like art in general – establishes the grounds for dwelling. In this instance, Heidegger's thought and action came together in a particular mode of rhythmic spatiality at his Hut, situated between the earth, the forest, seasons, customs, traditions,

habits, domestic life and rituals of life and death. Death and renewal are symbolised by the *Brunnenstein*, marking the ground as a bridge across a stream; and practical and poetic life (the well is a drinking fountain and a semi-sacred 'font'-tree) combine together to set in motion the conditions of poetic dwelling.

Figure 123 View of the Hütte poste (with a crude reconstruction of the star carved as Z planes - the original Brunnenstein is now in the Heidegger Museum at Schloss Messkirch)

Heidegger insists in 'The Origin of the Work of Art' that whilst 'art is the setting into place of truth' to "fix in place" can never have the sense of rigid, motionless, and secure', because 'boundary in the Greek sense does not block off... Boundary sets free into the unconcealed... the work's being is "energia"²⁷⁵. This energy is always directed, 'never carried out in the direction of an indeterminate void', just as a statue is directed at a 'historical group of men', 'letting a statue be set up... means laying, laying down an oblation.' Heidegger sees the directed nature of art to exhibit the characteristics of work, and he explicitly refutes both Kant and Hegel in the *Addendum* of 'The Origin of the Work of Art', just as he set out to destroy Descartes' errors in the introduction to *Being and Time*.

Heidegger suggests that a workroom is a type of '*Spielraum*' in *Being*

²⁷⁵ 'The Origin of the Work of Art, Addendum', Op Cit., pp. 82-3.

*and Time*²⁷⁶, presumably since skill entails a form of playful engagement with reality, and because 'Being-busy which is "absorbed in the thing one is handling"... in such bringing close, the essential structure of care – falling – makes itself known'²⁷⁷. I suggest that this is why he then addresses what the modern world considers to be 'mere play' in order to show that art is a form of work ('the setting into work of truth'). Along the way he draws back the mystical veil thrown over art by the subjectivity of Kant from 'the German Romantics onwards', and he also moves art out from under the shadow of 'German Idealism', 'rationalism' and 'technological-scientific thinking'. This is the obverse of what he achieves in *Being and Time*, whereby thought is saved from individualism and method. He does this in 'Building Dwelling Thinking' by showing how dwelling is a mode of poetry, and that poetry is related to life; and he emphatically links dwelling to art and both to being:

All creation, because it is such a drawing-up, is a drawing, as of water from a spring. Modern subjectivism, to be sure, immediately misinterprets creation, taking it as the self-sovereign subject's performance of genius.²⁷⁸

In contrast, creativity is a 'leap' that 'throws us into the world', away from subjectivism, overcoming distanced relationships in space, into the rhythms of life.

²⁷⁶ *Being and Time*, Op. Cit., p.369: 'With regard to that space which it has ecstatically taken in, the "here" of its current factual situation (Lage bzw. Situation) never signifies a position in space, but signifies rather the leeway (*spielraum*) of the range of that equipmental totality with which it is most closely concerned – a leeway which has been opened up for it in directionality and deseverance.'

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

²⁷⁸ 'Building Dwelling Thinkinge, Heidegger, Op Cit.; if we compare this to Peter Eisenman's statements about individualism vs. 'total order' in his PhD, it is clear that his 'formal' reading begins with an erroneous understanding of the nature of creativity, and that his arguments rely upon an idealist juxtaposition of subjects (subjectivity) versus objects/forms (objectivity); hence his need for 'total order' to counter 'individualism', and for 'form' rather than situation, since the latter is 'relative'. Dalibor Vesely has shown that 'typical situations' mediate the unique and universal dichotomy that Eisenman is trapped within (*Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation: The Question of Creativity in the Shadow of Production*, Op. Cit.).

Figure 124 View of Herr and Frau Heidegger at lunchtime, Digne Meller-Marcovicz

Heidegger's renewal of the task of thinking as a mode of situated geometrics shows us also the mediating power of sculpture in revealing the communicative movement between the natural world and human habitat. In this case dwelling in a small summer house is revealed as a mode of serious play and ludic work - as poetic. Chillida and Moneo respond to the geography and spatiality of the settings for their public works in a similarly mediated and synthetic manner - making their projects a way to reveal the full experiential potential of an encounter with culture at the edge of the man-made and natural worlds. The urbane role of architecture in concert with the other arts in an otherwise suburban situation dominated by banal technology is the theme of the next chapter - and the civic dimension of a small church and community centre illustrates some of those other aspects of social life and urbanity that one finds at Victoria - dwelling, working, playing, participating in political life and with a common commitment, etc..

CHAPTER 4

RHYTHMIC SPATIALITY AND THE COMMUNICATIVE MOVEMENT BETWEEN SITE, ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURE AT ST PETER'S KLIPPAN BY SIGURD LEWERENTZ

Thus the concern about the doctrine of form, became bound to a classically-aesthetic conception of form. This canon was a doctrine of empty dimensions into which one poured the stuff of the world –forming meant the minting of dumb material. This teaching based itself on sculptural form and at least it was able to provide classicist buildings. The architecture of antiquity is not false. Aside from the fact that it was once historical, it represents an eternal possibility in building, its symmetry and static quality, can be changed. Therefore a canon that is derived from it is not false and yet it is narrow. It is limited to the validity of this “sculptural form”, and like it, this canon is a matter of feeling and taste... A doctrine which insists on form without imparting the glimmering spark is empty and leaves its listeners cold.'
Rudolf Schwarz, 1923²⁷⁹

We are now equipped with an understanding of the importance of the terms 'urban topography', 'rhythmic spatiality' and 'communicative movement' to civic design, and we have seen how they are essential aspects of the urbane art of architecture in its continuity with sculpture and analogical modes of 'nature'. St Peter's at Klippan demonstrates the serious decorum of the play ethos that Hans-Georg Gadamer identifies as the primary characteristic of the artistic imagination. As we have seen, the communicative nature of artistic experience reveals itself in participation, and the potentially public character of play reveals also the orientation that ornament has towards urbanity. It is these aspects of the playful imagination of the architect and his client that make you feel so emphatically in place at Klippan after visiting its church – and suggests a way to recover the civic depth of situations otherwise bereft of any communicative movement between site, architecture and sculpture. To understand how this is achieved and the profound contribution that it makes to continuity of the civic ethos in modern architecture is the aim of this chapter.

Sigurd Lewerentz and his client, Lars Ridderstedt, identify and fulfill, I'd like to suggest, Gadamer's ambition – discussed above – which is described in *Truth and Method* as the desire to 'free' the concept of play 'of the subjective meaning that it has in Kant and Schiller and that dominates the whole of modern aesthetics and

²⁷⁹ *The Church Incarnate: The Sacred Function of Christian Architecture*, Rudolf Schwarz, English translation, Munich 1958, p.p. 220-7.

philosophy – in freeing play from subjectivity, the full civic dimension of art and architecture is recovered. St Peter's is an example of the transformed role that ornament plays in modern architecture, in concert with the other arts, in the recreation of a communicative civic realm.

Sigurd Lewerentz's later church buildings, most obviously St Peter's at Klippan, are generally seen to lack traditional iconographic content and to represent pure materialism in architecture. However, Lewerentz continues the tradition of 'communicative movement' that characterizes the Gothic and Baroque buildings that we have discussed above. St Peter's also articulates rhythmic spatial relationships between site, architecture and sculpture, and in particular the hinterland of semi-rural agricultural industry, and semi-urban and suburban settlement are revealed as aspects of the civic depth of Klippan. In solving problems at an urban scale, and also at a bodily or equipmental scale, Lewerentz created an exemplary complex of civic buildings that are as useful to their occupants as they are to the town generally.

Figure 125 Drawing of *The Way of the Cross* for Stockholm Cemetery competition 1915, Sigurd Lewerentz

The architecture of St Peter's offers a counter to the contemporary division that clients and critics of architecture usually make between useful but pointless buildings, and aesthetic but useless ones. Its combination of architectural and sculptural artefacts create a richly meaningful urban quarter,

redeeming the road engineering of the New Town and situating its inhabitants in continuity with the natural world and the history of Swedish and European urban culture.

The purpose of studying this project in detail is to reveal an exemplary mode of praxis. I aim to reveal that St Peter's at Klippan is both a poetic landscape and part of a modern town – an attempt to turn a suburb into a recognisable place. St Peter's is a liturgical theatre that reconciles the town with its natural topography, and which situates Christian mythology into a modern landscape i.e. in space. The theatre of the Swedish Lutheran *Mässe* reveals the dramatic presence of events situated in The Holy Land, fusing the ontology of Klippan within the motif of a 'catholic' or universal church (from Greek *katholikos* 'universal')²⁸⁰. In doing so, the ancient notion of a *topos* is recovered in both the history and practice of modern architecture, and with this the full depth of the poetic task of articulation is revealed again. *Topos* inspires in the imagination communication and participation – making and recognising places as distinct. This is a practical task oriented towards wisdom. It is practical and interpretative, bodily and macrocosmic, at once useful (*usus*) and representational (*actio*). Less obviously hermeneutic in character, but nonetheless articulate of phenomenal and territorial relationships is the Kursaal at San Sebastián by Rafael Moneo. In both examples, the fundamental relationships between architecture, nature and urbanity – that we saw embodied in both Medieval and Renaissance situations – has remained more or less articulate in spatial terms. Whilst the obviously semiotic content of the architecture is different of course, they remain capable of communicating iconographic and symbolic spatial content. This achievement, I suggest, is derived from and through the revelation of the spatial and temporal dimension of buildings' relationships with sculptures, landscape and social structures. This expanded field might be a way of discussing and defining architecture in both traditional and contemporary contexts, as rhythmic spatiality; and the

²⁸⁰ For a definition of 'catholic' as 'whole' ('the most important definitions of the word in the early Church stress that calling the Church "Catholic" is a matter of grasping that it teaches the whole truth in a way that involves the whole person and is addressed to the whole of humanity'); see the Foreword by + Rowan Williams to *The Heart in Pilgrimage: A Prayerbook for Catholic Christian*, ed. Eamon Duffy, Bloomsbury, London, p.VII. By this definition 'catholic' means any Christian who rejects the Calvinistic doctrine of pre-destination.

relationships between site, architecture and sculpture reveal the role that communicative movement plays in spatiality and in urban culture generally. These projects embody and articulate continuity in architecture, and demonstrate the possibility of its contribution to civic decorum today.

For over 45 years The Swedish Social Democratic Party formed a uniquely stable participatory democratic parliamentary government (1932-1976), enabling the formation of a modern welfare state and establishing a prosperous, well-educated and increasingly urbane nation²⁸¹. In this period, the SDP ruled in concert with 'The Farmers' Party'. Design played a large part in the industrialization of Sweden, and quite early in its development the welfare state sought from 1930 onwards to integrate technology into a traditional if increasingly secular public realm. The cemeteries of Stockholm and Malmö that Asplund and Lewerentz undertook from the 1920s onwards illustrate very well the integration of large scale machinery into a pastoral or semi-pastoral setting, and in part these projects also disguise and embed modern transport systems in a pseudo-traditional landscape.

Figure 126 Drawing of *The Way of the Cross* for Stockholm Cemetery competition 1915, Sigurd Lewerentz

The great earth mound in the Woodland Cemetery in the suburbs of Stockholm was built not only to resemble a Tumulus and to direct the eye to a sacred route towards the Chapel of Resurrection, it blocks one's view of the train station where you have just alighted. This station is of course the reason

²⁸¹ *Swedish Modernism: Architecture, Consumption and the Welfare State*, ed., Helena Mattsson & Sven-Olov Wallenstein, Black Dog Publishing, London, 2010. The following citations are from their Introduction, pp. 8-33.

why the new suburbs could exist and why the local population needed a cemetery. Almost from the beginning of his career, Lewerentz seems to have been not only attracted to places where technology and tradition meet, but also to have exhibited an ambivalent attitude towards each. Or rather, it is as if he refused to be drawn in favour of either, accepting that the modern task of design would involve both traditional forms of use with vernacular and semi-classical architectural expression, and in doing so he did not reject the challenges and opportunities created by modern technology.

Figure 127 Eastern Cemetery Malmö, Sigurd Lewerentz

Lewerentz's ambivalence could be seen as a form of creative pragmatism, refusal to discount the possibility for symbolism within ultra-mundane settings. I believe that he saw within the absolutely worldly situations of religious structures in new towns and suburbs and in very precise technical and programmatic problems, the potential for common ground. This common ground is characterized in his work as quite violent juxtapositions between ancient and brute new things, and in between their juxtaposition a continuity of sorts is established and revealed. Sweden's welfare state enabled this ludic attitude towards tradition to prosper. As the nation industrialized, the 'Swedish Model' of governance by compromise, consultation and representation of difference, led to, and even encouraged, the co-existence of

contradictory modes of thought.

Figure 128 Chapel of Resurrection Stockholm Cemetery, Sigurd Lewerentz

Recent histories of Swedish Modernism emphasize the unusual situation of its arrival in the country via The Stockholm Exhibition of 1930. The 'first manifesto of Swedish Modernism was published in 1931', Helena Mattson and Sven-Olov Wallenstein claim in "Swedish Modernism: Architecture, Consumption and the Welfare State". Published as *acceptera*²⁸², it was 'co written by six of the most prestigious architects and intellectuals of the time: Gunnar Asplund, Wolter Gahn, Sven Markelius, Gregor Paulsson, Eskil Sundahl and Uno Åhrén'. Mattson claims that it was published at a point at which world economic crisis led to the failure of the avant-garde modernist project elsewhere (*pace* Tafuri). Mattson and Wallenstein believe that 'in its Swedish version, modernism was not portrayed to the same extent as a break with tradition, as was the case with the European avant-garde, but rather, at least if we follow the arguments of *acceptera*, as a programme to re-connect traditional values to contemporary development'. This mirrors almost exactly the political situation at the birth of Social Democratic governance, which presented itself as The Swedish Model or "The Swedish Way", which they

²⁸² 'Acceptera' (Stockholm, 1931), *Modern Swedish Design: Three Founding Texts*, Asplund, Gunnar; Wolter Gahn; Sven Markelius; Gregor Paulsson; Eskil Sundahl; Uno Ahren, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, , 2008. See also Helena Mattson and Sven-Olov Wallenstein, *Op Cit.*, p.19.

define as 'a set of ideological motifs centred on "Swedishness", the spirit of collaboration between labour and capital, and a certain aloofness from the disarray of post-war Europe'. Ultimately these motifs are an 'ideological illusion', they fear. However, in the 'manifesto' of *acceptera*, they see the 'primary task of functionalism' to be an attempt to 'make the individual identify with the project of modernisation by creating an amalgam of old and new, and a kind of 'patchwork history' became the crucial way to achieve this'. This patchwork included what they call 'Vernacular Modernism' on the one hand, and also tacit acceptance of Le Corbusier's vision at the end of *Vers Une Architecture* (1923) that 'revolution can be avoided'; and that this 'architecture should be capable once more of unifying society and making everyone identify with a given totality'.

Figure 129 All Souls' Day at Woodland Chapel Stockholm Cemetery, Sigurd Lewerentz

This led to a series of tensions within a society in which tension and conflict had been agreed upon as being unproductive, and in which compromise and negotiation were supposedly able to mediate tradition and modernity. In architectural terms these tensions are manifest in the state project of 'the million programme', whereby one million apartments were built between 1965 and 1974; the manufacturing of the romantic notion of

“folkhemmet” (‘the people’s home’); and the ‘creation of non-descript suburban milieus’. Mattson and Wallenstein see the latter as an example of ‘hatred against “urbanity” (itself strangely enough understood mainly in terms of the nineteenth century cityscape that preceded the arrival of modernism), and as an effective way of depriving architecture of whatever artistic and imaginative potentials it might have’. Mattson and Wallenstein adopt a post-Marxist technique whereby Tafuri’s analysis of the failure of the avant-garde project is elided with a neo-liberal attitude towards recent history. Extrapolating from their own explanation, ‘consumption’ is inserted between ‘architecture’ and ‘the welfare state’ to explain the passivity resulting from ‘the Swedish way’ of doing politics - reflected in a uniform way of life; and ‘the Swedish version’ of modernism articulated in a suburban architectural landscape.

Figure 130 Stockholm Cemetery, Sigurd Lewerentz

Against this conformity is contrasted another mode of anti-urban national myth-making found in the children’s stories of Astrid Lindgren. Pippi Longstocking (1944) ‘offers both an extreme version of child autonomy and a resounding confirmation of the social order that surrounds her’²⁸³. Individualism is the key aspect of Swedish life that leads Henrik Berggren and Lars Trädgård to the conclusion that ‘though not literally orphaned’, the

²⁸³ ‘Pippi Longstocking: The Autonomous Child and the Moral Logic of the Swedish Welfare State’, Henrik Berggren and Lars Trädgård, in *Ibid*, pp. 50-65.

contemporary equivalents of Pippi Longstocking 'have been abandoned by working mothers and yet they are not surrounded by the 'gentle paternalists' Pippi knew. They insist that 'Sweden, it must be emphasised, is not the middle way between Italy and the United States. Basically, Sweden is a variation of the American Situation... (sharing) the dubious distinction of topping international statistics in terms of divorce... the breakdown of traditional support structures through the acceptance of globalisation and a competitive market economy. Drugs, sexual promiscuity and strong youth sub-cultures are part of everyday life. Both countries can supply good arguments for a general critique of modern, Western Civilization.' Indeed, both the U.S. and Scandinavia top the tables for GDP per capita, education, research, etc.²⁸⁴

Figure 131 Pippi Langstrum, "The Strongest girl in the world", Astrid Lindgren, 1948

Berggren and Trädgård concede that whilst Pippi Longstocking is 'a fanciful fantasy about the sovereign child', it must be noted that 'her world displays most of the characteristics – non-productiveness, idleness, excessive and meaningless consumption, criminality and disorder – that according to the French philosopher Georges Bataille are the characteristics of the "sovereign

²⁸⁴ Cf. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_GDP_\(PPP\)_per_capita](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_GDP_(PPP)_per_capita).

man” who rejects the normal existence as a “servile man” subordinate to the social contract (*The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy*).

One part of Berggren and Trädgård’s essay has the heading ‘An Übermensch Disguised as a Child’, and they note that ‘Nietzsche had a great impact on intellectual life in Sweden at the closing of the nineteenth century’²⁸⁵. They also suggest that the anti-social aspects of the modern Swedish national heroine Pippi Longstocking are symptomatic of the malign aspects of The Swedish Model, which is quasi-Nietzschean in character, suggesting that ‘the temptation on the part of the adult world to view children as a means to an end is great... We can destroy them by giving them too much or too little freedom.’ The Welfare State they claim, legitimated children’s rights over their ability to exercise them – making them citizens before they stopped being their parents’ responsibility. Such a dramatic account of extreme individual and group pathology contradicts the supposedly benign character of the Swedish Welfare State, and continues the thematic of the ‘hatred’ of the city suggested by Mattson and Wallenstein. Recent Swedish popular culture has begun to deal with the tensions between a domineeringly benign Welfare State, extreme youth culture, and a conservative and secure business elite (cf. the removal of Lisbeth Salander’s sovereignty by the Swedish state in Stieg Larsson’s *The Millennium Trilogy*²⁸⁶). The wartime ‘neutrality’ of Sweden has also been recently suggested to be at best a form of moral equivalence or ethical ambivalence, as well as the cover for a sizeable National Socialist movement – the other example of course of an elision of tradition and modern politics in 1930s Europe. Perhaps traditional culture was reconciled with modernism in the SDP led Swedish Model; but ‘tradition’ and modernity, or at least stylistic or rhetorical interpretations of these terms, were also manipulated by Left and Right for political aims, and by architects to aesthetic and personal intentions.

²⁸⁵ Berggren and Trädgård refer the reader to *Nietzsche’s Influence on Swedish Literature*, Harold Borland, Göteborg, 1955; and to *Persönlichkeitidealismus und Willenkult: Aspekte der Nietzsche Rezeption in Schweden*, Heidelberg, 1945. They also note that ‘The French editors of Pippi found her superpowers disconcerting and did their best to tone down her self-sufficiency and autonomy in relation to the adult world.’, p. 63 (footnotes no.2 and no. 7).

²⁸⁶ *The Millennium Trilogy: The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo, The Girl Who Played with Fire & The Girl Who Kicked the Hornets’ Nest*, (Stockholm, 2005-7), Stieg Larsson, Vintage, London, 2010.

Figure 192 Town Park notice board with crest of Klippan that is based upon the local topographic features

So, it is perhaps not surprising that despite the tolerance of traditional cultural values within this nascent modern state, when the regional government of Skania decided upon the establishment of the new town at Klippan in 1945, they did not immediately seek to create it as a new parish, nor to erect a church there. Before its civic foundation, Klippan was remarkable only as a topographic feature, and as a collection of houses known as Alby (which was not a parish). Locals identified a 'klippan' or 'the cliff' in the river, which must have appeared prominent in the flat Skanian landscape when seen from the road between the large towns of Helsingborg and Hasselholm. The creation of a town at this spot arose in response to the industrial role the river would play, and because the cross-country train lines were built so as to stop at a factory there. Thus Klippan's foundation was essentially economic and bureaucratically profane, and was effectively the recognition of a series of almost haphazard acts of covering the ground with buildings and mills. 'Klippan' blankets are the most notable local export – evidence of the role the river plays in manufacturing.

Figure 139 Klippan with the blanket factory outlet on the right

By the late 1950s, the small group of local Lutheran parishioners were keen to elaborate upon their meetings at the local school hall²⁸⁷. Slowly this ambition grew into the aim to create a properly designed church setting, and over a number of years they gained confidence and expertise sufficient to gain the attention of the church commission and the local council members. Initially, the plan was for the creation of a modest chapel and a community centre, to be funded partly by the church and local council. The latter group saw that the creation of a church might be a necessary compromise, if it led to a community setting with public rooms for the elderly, a youth club and kindergarten. It seems that the local priest's initial thoughts were along similar lines to the politicians – the chapel was to have a straightforward and simple structure, almost an addendum to the community centre.

I hope to show that in building the church of St Peter, the town was retrospectively named and recognized by its inhabitants as a setting for the theatrical rites of passage that mark human time as something essentially public. It also recovered, in part, the ancient relationship between architecture and the natural world and its role as a limit to this – its essentially urban character.

²⁸⁷ *Adversus Populum: Peter Celsings och Sigurd Lewerentz sakralarkitektur 1945-1975*, Lars Ritterstedt, Hallgren & Fallgren, 1998: see Addendum.

Figure 134 Klippan town centre with 19th century country house amongst 20th century buildings

Figure 135 North façade of the community centre of St Peter's seen from the town park

St Peter's came into existence partly due to two pieces of good luck. Sigurd Lewerentz had an exemplary client representative to discuss his work with, the Reverend Lars Ridderstedt. Ridderstedt was an educated and sensitive man who had become a sort of expert-client for the Church of Sweden in the 1950s and 60s, a 'liturgical advisor'. He was able to support and encourage and even to participate in the creation of St Peter's, smoothing Lewerentz's way with the local priest, and directing the architect and his ideas. The second piece of good luck – for us today, is that Ridderstedt submitted a PhD on the religious architecture of Peter Celsing and Sigurd Lewerentz at the University of Upsalla in 1998. This text is published in Swedish, with parts of the main argument translated into English in a brief addendum, and I have had the chapter relating directly to St Peter's translated into English (all of the English texts can be found in the Addendum to this document)²⁸⁸. I will draw lightly upon this text, but I aim to move back and forth between a description of the process of work and an interpretation of the project as built.

St Peter's has not been written about a good deal in histories of twentieth century architecture. It is usually seen as an anomaly, the fruit of Lewerentz's extremely individualist approach to architecture. Certainly, Lewerentz did not write much, nor teach at all. However, it would be a mistake to think that his architecture does not communicate, and I suggest that it is foolish to ascribe a psychological reading of his aloof persona to his buildings, as Jahne Ahlin does²⁸⁹. Modern critics of literature and the visual arts tend towards this journalese almost as a default setting. Lewerentz did not write, but that does not mean that he was 'unaware', as Smithson suggested in her description of him as one of *The Silent Architects*.²⁹⁰ The other tendency, which Wilfred Wang uncharacteristically falls into in his recent otherwise excellent record of the design process of St Peter's, is to ascribe to the architecture the somewhat vague Anglo-Saxon cliché that St Peter's represents a 'Nordic protestant ethic'²⁹¹. This cliché recurs partly because its architect

288 *Adversus Populum*, Op. Cit. Ridderstedt published his PhD in 1998, and whilst it contains a summary in English, as far as I am aware I was the first person to commission a translation of the chapter on St Peter's (in 2011).

289 *Sigurd Lewerentz architect*, Jahne Ahlin, Byggförlaget, Stockholm, 1987, pp. 11-13.

290 *The Silent Architects*, Alison Smithson, in *Sigurd Lewerentz 1885-1975: The Dilemma of Classicism*, Architectural Association, 1988.

291 *Sigurd Lewerentz: St. Petri*, Wilfried Wang, O'Neil Ford Monograph, 2009.

didn't speak much, and mostly because 'protestant' equals 'Calvinistic' for most commentators in the Anglo-Saxon world²⁹² – even though Luther was an Augustinian monk and his catechism is catholic if not Papist. The Swedish Church retains five sacraments²⁹³, and its cathedrals maintain a strong musical tradition.

The other erroneous tendency is the assumption that because St Peter's looks unusual, Lewerentz rejects 'the tradition of western sacred architecture'. In 'Sigurd Lewerentz and a Material Basis for Form' Adam Caruso claims that:

In attending to the raw, existential nature of his materials, Lewerentz privileges a subjective and shifting experience of the world. In this, he is making a decisive break with the tradition of western sacred architecture, which relies strongly on convention to embody a particular ontology. Even Ronchamp makes explicit reference to Neolithic ceremonial structures in order to assert its continuity with a sacred tradition. At Klippan, Lewerentz rejects iconography as a basis for form. In the same way that he makes us look at bricks as if they were a new material, each of us must confront the spaces of St Peter's anew, and on our own. The severely reduced palette of materials has the same effect as a silent space, and we gain an enhanced awareness of the physical presence of the church, a presence onto which we can project meanings. By adopting a phenomenological approach, Lewerentz recognises prayer as an individual, meditative activity.²⁹⁴

Caruso suggests that *haptic* experience of materials is subjective, and whilst he quotes Heidegger he seems to misconstrue phenomenology to mean 'individual' subjectivity'. As we have seen, and I will demonstrate further, this is

292 Cf. *The Plain Style: The Reformation, Culture and the Crisis in Protestant Identity*, David Brett, Black Square Books, 1999. Brett explains in detail the effects of 'reformed education' upon domestic spaces and upon design generally; and also the effects of the destruction of traditional image based memory learning systems upon language acquisition and spatiality in protestant societies in the U.S. and in the north of Ireland (he compares this to the medieval model that Francis Yates famously called *The Art of Memory*, Routledge, Keegan and Paul, London, 1966). See also *Reformed Theology and Visual culture: The Protestant Imagination from Calvin to Edwards*, William A. Dryness, Cambridge University Press, 2004; and *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland*, Alexandra Walsham, Oxford University Press, 2011.

293 See the website of the Swedish for details of the four 'public' sacraments: 'Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage and Funeral: The occasional services are where the Church of Sweden comes into direct contact with the majority of the Swedish people, and when the description national church most truly applies'. The other sacrament is ordination. They do not recognize Reconciliation (confession); nor First Holy Communion (Confirmation stands in for this in Anglican life too); nor Coronation.

(<https://www.svenskakyrkan.se/default.aspx?id=661764>).

294 'Sigurd Lewerentz and a Material Basis for Form', Adam Caruso, OASE, 1997.

a misunderstanding of Heidegger's thinking on spatiality and creativity. Anyway, Caruso contradicts then his claim that experience is subjective, in claiming that a 'phenomenological approach' to building materials might provide the basis for something objective, i.e. 'form'. This is a classic example of an intelligent and talented architect confusing the design process with criticism. We sort-of know what he means, in the way in which you sort-of know what someone is saying in a foreign language without being able to speak it, but you might as well say instead: "*Sigurd Lewerentz and a Subjective Basis for Form*". However, this also would teach us nothing, nor bring us any closer to the building or to the architect's intentions, and would further obscure Lewerentz's great ability to situate tradition in the modern world. In sum, it is simply a mistranslation of his aims and achievements, and no guide to anyone interested in learning from Lewerentz's example.

Whilst there isn't otherwise a great deal written about St Peter's in English²⁹⁵, Lewerentz continues to attract critical attention from practising architects. Yet the most informative essay remains Colin St John Wilson's 'Sigurd Lewerentz: The Sacred Buildings and The Sacred Sites' published in various formats from the 1980s onwards²⁹⁶. Wilson offers us the compelling image of a 'hidden lake' beneath the church, and he also emphasises the importance of the 'Lutheran Mass', and by implication the catholic nature of the services that St Peter's was designed to house. Wilson may have met Ridderstedt, as he mentions his involvement in the project. There is no mention of this in the biographical monograph of Ahlin. Wilson also suggests a series of connections to both ancient Greek and modern poets – in particular

²⁹⁵ There are two graduate dissertations of note, both of which approach the building with a phenomenological interpretation. 'Drawing, Building, Craft: Revelations of Spiritual Harmony and the Body at St Petri Klippan', Gordon A. Nicholson, unpublished M.Arch dissertation, McGill University, 1998, looks at the significance of the Lutheran Mass upon the design of the architecture. As the title suggests, the 'poetics of silence and darkness' and a sort of superstition about the significance of brick construction as metaphor (craft-faith; an unwitting Free Masonry) clouds an otherwise insightful contribution. This tendency is shared in 'The architecture of the poetic image: the visible and the invisible in the sacred architecture of Sigurd Lewerentz', Paula Anne Patterson, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Washington, 2009, in which St Peter's is briefly referred to as 'profound silence'.

²⁹⁶ 'Sigurd Lewerentz: The Sacred Buildings and The Sacred Sites', Colin St John Wilson, in *Sigurd Lewerentz 1885-1975*, ed. Nicola Flora, Paolo Giardiello, Gennaro Postiglione, Electa, 2001; *Sigurd Lewerentz 1885-1975: The Dilemma of Classicism*, Architectural Association, 1988 (with introduction by A + P Smithson); published also in *Architectural Reflections: Studies in the Philosophy and Practice of Architecture*, Butterworth, 1992 & Manchester University Press, 2000.

he mentions somewhat suggestively the poetic-theory of T.S. Eliot, who was a touchstone for Anglo-Catholics like Wilson²⁹⁷. Eliot defined himself as a catholic because he was a modernist, which for him meant someone who believed in the transformational power of tradition. Wilson attempted elsewhere to consider the architectural implications of Eliot's essay 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' (from *The Sacred Wood*, 1921)²⁹⁸, straining to relate the poet's criticism to the work of Alvar Aalto, and ultimately to attempt to redeem what he calls the other tradition of modernism²⁹⁹. Wilson's essays on Lewerentz and Aalto have been described as attempts to define an authentic protestant architecture, from which England can learn. They could also be said to reveal not only the deeply ambiguous nature of his definition of modernism as a form of tradition – evolved from what he calls 19th century 'English Free School', but also of the ambiguous character of his High Church Socialist Anglicanism. Without elaborating beyond introducing Ridderstedt as a protagonist in the drama of the creation of St Peter's, Wilson touches upon the complex nature of Lewerentz's commissions within the milieu of the ambiguously 'conservative' and modern Swedish High Church movement.

Similarly, Peter Blundell Jones claims that St Peter's darkness is 'not Puritan clarity'³⁰⁰, without elaborating on this claim. He attempts to construct a tectonic-programmatic reading of the detail of the doors and gutters and downpipes that suggests that the ritualistic use of the building is articulated in its ironmongery and joinery. This reading doesn't become fully iconographic since it is not his intention to do so, nor part of his functionalist-tectonic heritage (established alongside Wilson at Cambridge beside Sir Leslie Martin). Wilson refers directly to Ridderstedt in passing, but neither he nor Jones mention in detail Ridderstedt's role in the project. Although their insights are at best quasi-poetic or quasi-intuitive attempts to decipher the mystery of the architecture, Wilson and Blundell-Jones nonetheless make suggestive and intriguing readings of St Peter's without managing to reveal the depth of the

297 Cf. *Anglo-Catholic in Religion: TS Eliot and Religion*, Barry Spurr, Lutterworth Press, 2010.

298 *Architectural Reflections*, Op. Cit.

299 *The Other Tradition of Modern Architecture: The Uncompleted Project*, Colin St John Wilson, Academy Editions, 1995 & Black Dog Publishing, 2010.

300 'Sigurd Lewerentz: Church of St Peter Klippan 1963-66', Peter Blundell Jones, ARQ, vol. 6, No.2, 2002.

urban and architectural problems that Lewerentz engaged with. This claim is made not to discount their contributions, but to suggest that Ridderstedt's description of site meetings with Lewerentz - and of their creative discussions - sheds direct light upon the liturgical and architectural task he faced and thus upon the design as a response to this. I will attempt to reveal the profoundly urban character of this task - the reconciliation of landscape and architectural design with an ornamental and programmatic depth.

More recently, Nick Temple attempts to deepen our understanding of the architectural intent and meaning of St. Peter's in invoking the iconography and morphology of baptisteries in the early church, suggesting that St Peter's can be seen as an invocation of and representation of the original sacrifice myth of Christianity³⁰¹. This is not specifically proven in Ridderstedt's description of the evolution for the project, although the intention was to recover the atmosphere of 'holiness' of early Christian 'catholic churches'.³⁰²

Yet Ridderstedt describes a project that was much more ambitious and pragmatic than any one could have guessed. My method will again be to describe the process of design and to seek to amplify the importance of the decisions that Lewerentz made; and then to place Ridderstedt's theological text into an architectural discourse. Despite his erudition and humour, Ridderstedt's field was liturgy. St Peter's is not simply a built liturgical program, but a highly useful and witty response to a set of particular and universal architectural problems and themes, problems that are specific and also typical of the modern urban situations where architects are called to work.

In the case of Klippan, architecture was not the first thing that the Swedish government thought about when it considered founding a town. My thesis is that despite this situation, Lewerentz's architecture - in concert with other arts - enabled the re-establishment of the town in a meaningful way; as a recognizably modern habitat, part of both the natural world, and the modern and traditional modes associated with Swedish life. The Swedish situation, as we have seen, was an interesting if self-congratulatory and slightly complacent admixture of political and social forces intent upon a somewhat smug compromise between history and action. For example, the trade unions had a

³⁰¹ 'Baptism and Sacrifice: Cosmology as Private Ontology', Nick Temple, *ARQ* vol. 8, No.1, 2005.

³⁰² *Op. cit.*, p. 343

voice in the governance of both businesses and the state. Alongside a hereditary monarchy, the Church of Sweden was at once High-Church Lutheran in liturgy and socially minded in everyday practice.

Figure 136 Views of exterior of All Saints Margaret Street, William Butterfield

If this sounds familiar to readers in England, it is because Sweden and England experienced quite similar reactions to church Reformation and to the modernization of the State. Both countries experienced a political Reformation in which monarchs broke with the Church of Rome and ultimately established a national church as a means to further their own ambitions. Unlike England, The Swedish Church's liturgy was directly shaped by Lutheran theological teachings. Calvinism was considered alien, and up until the 18th century it was illegal. The Church of Sweden was dis-established in 2000 and whilst church attendance is as low as 2%, the majority of Swedes (73%) recognize their membership and pay a church tax. However, the High Church or Anglo-Catholic movement in The Church of England, the Tractarian movement or Oxford movement, was highly influential upon The Swedish Church in the late 19th and early 20th century Lars Ridderstedt claims³⁰³. In England, the rediscovery of the catholic origins of Anglicanism occurred at exactly the same time as the industrialization of the country – 19th century medievalism was a

303 Ritterstedt, *op. cit.*, pp.333-4.

reaction to and rejection of this industrialization, and religion was one means by which political resistance was manifest. This led in England to the oppositional paradox of High Church Anglican priests operating in working class parishes in sympathy with the poor, and in concert with Labour groups, against the Establishment that they were intrinsically part of³⁰⁴. In Sweden this conflict seems to have been less extreme. In part this was because the country adopted industrial working processes relatively later than England. In the early 20th century, the population became urbanized, and the creation of consensus governance established both continuity with traditional ways of life and belief and enabled modern visions of social welfare to grow naturally from the charitable foundation of Christian worship.

Nonetheless, the High Church movement in Sweden grew in part in response to social critics alarmed that industrialization and rapid urbanization were stripping society of its symbolic common ground. In 'the Swedish model' of social governance the church was another voice to be listened to, but it was not represented in government in the way that the Anglican Bishops sit in The House of Lords. In fact, the growth of the economy and the generally smooth transition from agrarian to industrial economies led to a lack of conflict in Swedish society, and the role of the church diminished with the development of urban capitalism and what the Bishop of Lund Frantz Wormordsen called 'Rationalism'.

Ridderstedt suggests that in response to the intense and rapid industrialization of Sweden at the end of the 19th century, the theologian U.L. Ulmann and the art historians Sigurd Curman and Johnny Rosval 'tried to awaken interest, in Sweden, for medieval churches and art'. For Ulman "solemnity" ("*högtidlighet*") 'was a key-word having a distinct theological content'. Ridderstedt links this in part to what he calls 'National Romanticism and Mysticism'³⁰⁵, 'the most prominent exponent' of which was the architect Lars Israel Wahlman who 'had been inspired by the English Art and Craft movement and had been impressed by the traditions of John Ruskin and

³⁰⁴ *Anglo-Catholic in Religion: TS Eliot and Religion*, Spurr, Op. Cit.; see also *Anglican Papalism: An Illustrated History*, Michael Yelton, Canterbury Press, Norwich, 2005.

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

William Morris³⁰⁶.

Figure 197 View of interior of All Saints Margaret Street, William Butterfield

Wahlman 'emphasizes the importance of the Byzantine Heritage in the creation of church space' and his two concepts of 1920, 'sincerity and truth', Ridderstedt suggests, 'came to leave a lasting mark on the churches of Lewerentz and Celsing'. Similarly, the liturgy and in particular the role of communion was seen as central to the sacramental character of the Swedish Lutheran *Mässe*. However, the High Church movement, with its sympathy towards greater solemnity - generally a movement within protestant national churches (Sweden and England, etc.) - was countered from within the Roman Church and protestant churches in Germany. On the one hand, the influence of Rudolf Schwarz's 1923 book *Vom Bau der Kirche* (translated as *The Church Incarnate: The Sacred Function of Christian Architecture*³⁰⁷) emphasized the

306 Ibid. Curiously, perhaps, there is no mention of William Lethaby being a direct influence on Swedish architecture; although one could arguably extrapolate an imaginative if unsubstantiated lineage from his *Architecture, Mysticism, and Myth* (1891) and *Mediaeval Art* (1904) to Lewerentz's work. In particular Lethaby's response to Ruskin, 'the temple idea', demonstrates ways of seeing mythic man's inherent engagement with nature and the translation of this into the architecture that echo Lewerentz's own contribution in this field.

307 *The Church Incarnate: The Sacred Function Of Christian Architecture*, Rudolf Schwarz, English edition Chicago, 1958.

communicative nature of the Eucharistic celebration, and in his designs the priest faced the congregation over the altar, prefiguring the changes of The Second Vatican Council by 30 years.

Figure 138 Illustrations from *The Church Incarnate*, Rudolf Schwarz

Alongside this catholic influence from Germany the chapels of Matisse at Vence and of Le Corbusier at Ronchamp and the *Art Sacré* movement generally was profound. In Swedish this led to the publication in 1962 of a study of the history of church architecture, "*Domus Ecclesia*", written by the priest Dean Axel Rappe, which Lewerentz read whilst he was working on the

designs for Klippan³⁰⁸. On the other hand, the Low Church Calvinistic-Lutheran tradition that developed under Friedrich the Great in Prussia continued to challenge the idea of the church as a House of God (*Domus Dei*), in favour of the idea that instead what was needed for a Parish House – a hall that could also be used for religious services (*Domus Ecclesia*).

Figure 139 Härlanda Church by Peter Celsing

Peter Celsing recommended Sigurd Lewerentz to the church committee of Klippan³⁰⁹. At this time the Lutheran community met in a local school, and as I mentioned before, initial plans were for something that Ridderstedt calls a building type akin to 'The Working Church', or at best what Wahlman called a 'church with appendices'. In the most extremely protestant case this meant in effect a parish hall that could also be used as a chapel; and at

308 Op. cit., p. 335

309 See *Adversus Populum*, Op. Cit.; and also *The Architecture of Peter Celsing*, Wilfried Wang, Inferno Books, 1996. Celsing's son Johan Celsing is also a very good church architect, and in fact he recently completed a new crematorium chapel at The Woodland Cemetery (see http://www.celsing.se/project_display.php?id=81).

the high end of Lutheranism there was quite a lot of theory about what modern 'Catholic' churches should be like, but without referencing that many actual examples. Thus Lewerentz began with a not particularly promising brief, but on the other hand a situation with possibilities. Once the parish committee visited Lewerentz's St Mark's church in the Stockholm suburb Björkhagen, they were convinced that he was the architect for them, and also that their project could be architecturally and socially ambitious. This model, of a church with ancillary social buildings, satisfied the local S.D.P. politicians and the Low and High parts of the church commission and the local population, and a design competition was instigated with Lewerentz's St Mark's in part forming the model for the design brief.

Figure 140 View of interior of the parish hall at St Peter's Klippan

Lewerentz submitted a scheme that is very close to what was ultimately built, proposing an assemblage of a central block with a threshold oriented towards the road, and with an L-shaped block creating a cloister between the sacred and social parts of the church complex. In the competition brief a site was identified on the corner of the town park, at the crossroads of two major roads. Unlike the other entrants' designs, Lewerentz did not propose to place the buildings on this corner. Instead, he proposed to site the church 200m to

the east of the crossroads, aligning the entrance directly across from the entry to a large detached timber suburban villa. He seems to have done this in order to isolate the church somewhat from the crossroads, protecting it from exposure to any future development there. This was prudent. Today there is a large petrol station-cum-convenience store diagonally across from the church-park corner, creating the most extremely banal form of sub-urbanism.

Figure 141 Google Earth view of St Peter's Klippan showing the pre-existing town park, the villa opposite, the roundabout and garage

I suggest that Lewerentz wanted to provide a counter example to this, to create sufficient terrain around the church - a landscaped threshold - that established a different mood to the road-based town planning that dominates Klippan. He achieved this through the creation of a fruiting hedge upon a 2m tall mound that shelters the church complex from both an existing fast food shack and the roundabout crossroads. The earth for this was spoil dug to form a large pool that sits between the church and the crossroads, establishing a series of landscaped thresholds within which the church sits.

Figure 142 View of St Peter's Klippan from the roundabout on 'KlostervUagen' showing the fast food kiosk on the right and the church set back on the left

The intention seems to have been also to unite it with the pattern of the domestic settlement of the town, and to infer that the villa has grown up around the church. This tactic is intrinsic to the architecture itself, which appears strikingly primitive and anachronistic within the modern setting of the new town of Klippan, strongly reminiscent of Skanian brick farms and manor houses.

Figure 143 Views of Skanian farm houses and castles

Figure 144 View of St Peter's from the edge of the pond just before the earth mound and hawthorn hedge and the edge of the 'cathedral close'

Figure 145 View of the brickwork façade and the rhythm of shadows of a tree

From the exterior the church complex appears older than the neighbouring buildings, suggesting that Lewerentz was attempting to retrospectively re-establish the town as something that has grown up around a farm or manor in a traditional or vernacular fashion or form of urban development. This conceit works well in the sense that one does not notice the church as something that was planned after the park was established. In fact, the park now appears as part of the extended landscape of the religious complex, and is also articulated as part of the town by the church.

Figure 146 St Peter's seen from the street with the West façade of the chapel on the left

Figure 147 Site Plan of St Peter's Klippan, final revision 27th May 1966 (Sigurd Lewerentz)

In creating a particular and special character of place around St Peter's for highly pragmatic reasons, Lewerentz succeeds in uniting the road system with the town's open spaces, via the church. A car park for parishioners sits behind the southern sweep of the mound beside the kiosk, and from this approach the first sight you have of St Peter's is of a tall brick chimney rising like a kiln on axis with the path. A large notice board announces the church of St Peter and the town's park, adorned with the crest of Klippan, a cliff and falling water.

Figure 148 View of St Peter's community centre hall from the carpark beside the fast food kiosk (the park sign and the park are on the right)

It seems that in taking seriously his brief to create a 'community centre' and a church, he understood that what was at stake in this architectural problem was something profoundly urban. Lewerentz had the wisdom and ambition to attempt to solve more than the immediate 'problem' of the design of a building, and he did this in a witty and erudite manner that revealed that the problem of designing a church in the modern world has as much to do with the world as it does with immaterial matters.

Figure 149 View in the cloister looking towards the street

Figure 150 View in the cloister looking towards the pond

Figure 151 Ground Plan of St Peter's chapel at Klippan, 18th May 1966 (Design development drawing by Sigurd Lewerentz)

The church at Klippan reveals also the deeper problem of modernity with which architects grapple – banal briefs, clients who lack cultural ambition, etc.; and the essential architectural tasks that have always existed – the resolution of mundane and ideal problems and the transformation of these into geometrical, tectonic and representational coherence and order. Lewerentz transformed the functional requirements of his brief into a representational program that transformed use into action, exposing the drama of city life to public witness.

Figure 152 View from the entry to St Peter's Klippan showing it situated across from one of the original houses of Alby

In the case of Klippan, the particular architectural problem was the foundation of the town itself - which originated as a hamlet (originally called Alby) - which lacked the status of traditional Swedish and indeed all European villages and towns. It lacked a proper name that anyone understood to have any meaning; it lacked a parish; and it lacked a deep connection between the land from which it sprang and the history and culture which sustain human settlement. The creation of the new town, 'Klippan', derived its name from a local geographic feature, but this was not enough to situate life there in a meaningful manner. This is why, I suggest, the locals wanted and needed a church and parochial centre. In actual and metaphorical terms, Lewerentz succeeds in re-founding and in alluding to an alternate founding of the town as a place with meaning and significance for its inhabitants.

Figure 159 View from the entry to St Peter's Klippan from across the street with the community centre on the left and the belfry in the centre

How does he achieve this? Obviously, a church houses many uses beyond the weekly or everyday worship of believers. Across the world, chapels and synagogues and mosques act as the focus for local communities of course, providing a location for the rites of passage that characterise the public nature of our lives. At Klippan, the church and community centre form a coherent urban ensemble, united by the rhythm of situations accommodated there, set into a quasi-natural setting oriented by a rhythm of brick boxes (and also by the spaces in-between these structures); and made up of 'terra cotta' (i.e. bricks).

Figure 154 Sketch showing St Peter's Klippan as an urban ensemble (Patrick Lynch)

The ground is formed from a series of excavations, and by assemblages of chthonic settings. Earth dug to form the pond forms the berm that shrouds the western edge of the site from the roundabout. The altar and baptismal font are complementary echoes of void and mass. A series of settings are defined by brick-formed mounds, and in use they describe a journey from earth to light, from mundane to sacred territory, situating the town as a fragment of a profound civilization. Generally, this movement is between earth and light, and the material hierarchy set up from the site-location (roundabout – park); pool; berm; cardinal orientation; sculptures; street furniture; ironmongery; architecture. This then extends within the buildings:

- A boxes of baked-earth with openings
- B altar and baptismal font (both these setting and the structures themselves are analogous of hills with pits filled with water)
- C Steel 'cross' and steel font structures (with a conch shell supported on the latter)
- D Timber furniture
- E Light
 - i existing everyday natural light
 - ii oriented daylight and shadows
 - iii candle light
 - iv electric lights

Figure 155 Sketch showing the movement of a worshipper at St Peter's Klippan (Patrick Lynch)

The brick whole comprises also a series of settings laid out in accordance with the order of liturgy, and set beneath the movement of the sun across the sky.

Figure 156 Sketch showing the spatial settings of worship at St Peter's Klippan (Patrick Lynch)

The representational and actual activities of Christian worship are organised together in rhythmic harmony as parts of the church complex, and as a fragment of an actual and symbolic landscape. St Peter's is made up of a

series of powerful spatial images that invoke other places and actions, whilst grounding one strongly in Klippan.

Figure 157 Views of the entrance and 'front door' of St Peter's Klippan

I am now going to present a phenomenological description of the experience of moving through the church, and in particular of visiting it in use one February Sunday morning in 2012. I will then attempt to reveal the hermeneutic significance of the various situations encountered along this route or journey. I hope that the repetition captures some of the rhythm of one's encounter with the various spatial settings at St Peter's, which changes quite dramatically from shock to pleasure, and from bewilderment towards orientation. My aim is to juxtapose an individual experience of the building at various times of the year and over a decade, with the public aspects of participation in the *Mässe*, in order to try to reveal the great visual intelligence and wit at play at St Peter's.

The entrance to the church is first a descent, followed by ascension. Bells hang in a hollow roof to the left of a low timber door. The door is pressed deep into a brick opening, and is adorned with a curious cross, its 'four ribbons' symbolise that our way forward and upwards leads through the four

evangelists⁹¹⁰. Entry is a step up. One is immediately presented with a small model of a boat that appears to float in a brick vault of light. The narthex of the church is in fact a small a wedding chapel.

Figure 158 Section through marriage chapel in the vestibule at St Peter's Klippan looking East towards the entrance doorway, 4th October 1965 (Sigurd Lewerentz)

310 *Sankt Petri Church in Klippan: a Masterpiece by Sigurd Lewerentz*, Lars Falkfors, a pamphlet printed by Sankt Petri Church, Klippan. Neither the maker nor designer of the cross is named.

Figure 159 Photograph of the model boat hanging in the marriage chapel at St Peter's Klippan

Ahead, to the left, an opening breaks through a cliff of bricks. This is the entrance at the corner of what in contrast is a very large, very dark, almost black room. Four high windows pierce the darkness, two on the right, two ahead. High windows on the right cast light down onto a small brick mound, the emphatic brick-ness of the space is cut by reflecting and intermittently moving water.

Figure 160 Photographs of the threshold into the nave of St Peter's Klippan

In the background a large brick table seems to hover. Something tall and thin lurks in the middle of the room, deeply in shadow. Initially, all is mass and matter. Bricks predominate: above, below and beside you. Slowly one

becomes accustomed to the lack of light, and things begin to register as such. It slowly becomes apparent that there is equipment in the room, awaiting use. The space seems to pulse like an empty stage, tense, apparently resting, but ready, awaiting action.

Figure 161 Section East –West through St Peter’s Klippan, last revision 14th June 1965 (Sigurd Lewerentz)

Figure 162 View of the nave at St Peter’s Klippan looking South with the altar to the left

Figure 163 View of the font at St Peter's Klippan

Immediately on the left, a conch shell sits in a black steel shelf, held above a shallow pool that appears as a deep cut in the brick mound. Water drips from a thin metal pipe, into a shallow smear of water held within the shell. In turn this drips out down into a culvert in the brick ground: drip, DRIP.

Figure 164 View of the font at St Peter's Klippan

Immense and quite loud in the room, it is as if one had forgotten the sound of water, and the rhythm of a heartbeat.

Figure 165 The font from the West side

Figure 166 The font from the East side

During *Mässe* a horizon of candles marks out the room above head height. Light bulbs hang from the gloom, creating a field of light. Balls of light reveal the fall of the floor, like an orchard planted on a slope. The altar table is set out lower in the space. Pale timber and woven straw chairs sit in rows marked out by the brick floor, somewhat askance to the walls and yet intently focussed upon the altar. Deep on the left, a large blonde timber and reflecting steel organ steps out from the dark. The back wall seems to sit backwards, receding into darkness.

Figure 167 View of the font at St Peter's Klippan from the Priests' side

Figure 168 View of St Peter's Klippan looking towards the altar just before the beginning of Mässe N.B. from a child's height one sees a cross on a hill

Figure 169 View of St Peter's Klippan looking towards the altar just after Mässe with *Cathedra* and pulpit to the left and the cross of St Peter on the right for use during processions

Figure 170 Hymn books at St Peter's

After an hour into the 11 o'clock Sunday service, in Spring and Autumn, the sun suddenly enters in through the two South-facing windows to the right of the altar. Queuing for The Eucharist³¹¹, sunlight hits the organ, seemingly bringing forth music. Turning from Communion two things suddenly become clear. Directly in front and very close, a massive steel cross becomes visible silhouetted against the sudden light that enters through the West-facing doors. The tall steel column is holding aloft huge, high steel beams. Above them, brick clouds seem to roll over the steelwork, tensed like brick muscles in motion, echoing and inverting the profile of the conch shell.

311 I have been asked by my external examiner, Flora Samuel, to state my religious convictions. I am a practicing Roman Catholic, who exercises their conscience and sometimes take communion in Anglican and Lutheran churches, when it is offered.

The space of the church is held in between these two profiles.

Figure 171 View of the ceiling of St Peter's Klippan

The massive steel cross dominates the centre of the room, penetrating the horizons of light that define up and down. Outside, three lamps hang their heads like figures crucified upon Calvary, and the nave of the church is suddenly revealed as *The Way of the Cross*. This spatial type is part of Swedish Lutheran tradition (it is an example of *imitatio Christi*) – and formed the basis also of Lewerentz's design for the landscape of the Woodland Cemetery. Originating with St Francis of Assisi, it is paradigmatic of pilgrimage, which was, to St Augustine, paradigmatic of Christian life more generally³¹². Pilgrimage is both a horizontal movement that involves the body in a form of sacramental spatial rhythm (walking); and is also a form of contemplative action that is oriented by and focussed upon the soul's movement vertically. At St Peter's these two forms of movement are united in the re-enactment of the sacred mystery in the Mass, and specifically at the Eucharist; at which point the horizontal and vertical elements of the space can not only be seen but can

³¹² Cf. Diarmaid, MacCulloch, *Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years*, Penguin, 2010. For a general recent discussion of the relationships between theology and church architecture in traditional and modern settings, see *A Sense of the Sacred: Theological Foundations of Christian Architecture and Art*, R. Kevin Seasoltz, Continuum, New York, 2007.

be understood i.e. one experiences the 'communicative movement' of the space through the rhythm of worship.

Figure 172 The Altar

Figure 173 View of St Peter's Klippan looking towards the West doors from the altar just after Mässe

Figure 174 View of St Peter's Klippan with the priest beside the West doors just after Mässe

A few things need to be explained to account for this effect. Firstly, as one can see from the image of the young girl at the font, seen from her height (or when genuflecting or praying), the interior of the church is dominated by the image of a cross on a hill. One is not directly aware of this as an adult, or as a non-participant in the Mass, or during a casual visit to St Peter's. It only becomes evident, like the way in which the *Way of the Cross* defines the spatial

rhythm of the nave, via participation³¹⁹. Over time, as one adjusts to the extreme shadows, it becomes evident that a number of things are placed directly onto the brick surfaces of the church. Metal numbers on the walls announce the hymns.

Figure 175 Section South-North looking towards the internal elevation of the West façade, last revision 4th October 1965 (Sigurd Lewerentz)

At the font, a brick cross is inlaid in the floor to describe the position of the initiating priest, making the sacrificial nature of Christian baptism evident. As the material details of the church become clear, a number of situations are revealed. These situations accommodate the sacramental and non-sacramental rites recognised by Lutherans. In order of appearance they are Marriage, Baptism, Eucharistic Communion and Confirmation (the *Cathedra* is evidence of the latter).

Whilst there are no 'pictures' in the building, there are in fact a number of very memorable spatial images. A very large table, a cross on a hill of course, a river cut into this, a cave whose door is opened; Golgotha, Calvary, Jordan and The Holy Sepulchre are evoked and elide to bring the Holy Land into close resonance with the church and with the town of Klippan. As in the churches of Rudolf Schwarz, the Last Supper, The Crucifixion, Christ's Baptism and The Resurrection appear at once; Maundy Thursday, Good Friday appear

³¹⁹ We know from Lewerentz's drawings of the cemeteries, and from Ritterstedt's account of the design of St Peter's, that these traditional religious spatial typologies were central motifs in his architecture.

together³¹⁴.

Figure 176 Sketch of the Christological and Apathetic aspects of St Peter i.e. rhythm of situations (Christ as man) and rhythm of armature (God as light) (Patrick Lynch)

The Christological aspects of the mass are set out in a series of sacramental settings that allude to the actual and poetic landscape of the universal church. This church is situated in a continuum of places and in a continuum of events. The garden and pool beyond are approached from an intense experience of darkness. The resultant disorientation is confusing, physically shocking, intellectually shocking. In inferring and evoking some sort of space beyond comprehension, an allusion is made to the Edenic paradise of a monastic *hortus conclusis*.

314 Cf. *Theology in Stone: Church Architecture from Byzantium to Berkeley*, Richard Kieckhefer, Oxford, 2008, p.238.

Figure 177 View of the West façade of St Peter's from the pond

An imageless image appears, making doubly present the rhythm of clouds and sunlight. The natural conditions of the site are brought to appearance with phenomenal intensity, and at the same time images of early Christian cloisters echo around the site. What is revealed in the pond is the central tenant of Christian belief – that heaven and earth were reunited when God became man.

Figure 178 Sketch plan of St Peter's indicating orientation of spatial types (Patrick Lynch)

Whilst the Reformation of the church led to the removal and mistrust of images, in Luther's Catechism Christ's demand to the apostles at The Last Supper to 'do this in remembrance of me' meant exactly that³¹⁵. Luther insisted that participants witness the mass as if they were seeing it for the first time, and thus the use or '*usus*' of bread and wine and a table should be exactly that. However, Luther was emphatic that the act of communion should remind

³¹⁵ Handbook for the Proper Evangelical Mass, Malmö, 1539; echoed in the 20th century in another conservative Lutheran handbook *The Proper Communion Vestments* 'De rette Messeklaeder', 1924.

communicants that the '*actio*' that they are witnessing is a re-presentation of something³¹⁶. Fully incarnate and also embodying an image of an event, the mass needed no other mysteries, no relics, no painted images, no candles for the dead. For Luther, Mass was a sacred theatre. The priest and congregation re-enacted the Last Supper and the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. At St Peter's a tapestry hangs from the ceiling intensifying the atmosphere of 'Eucharistic Sacrifice'. Lewerentz has achieved a powerful - almost Baroque - synthesis of the arts, creating a syncretic moment in which art and architecture combine to articulate each other. At St Peter's, abstract art is reconciled with use. The rhythm of the liturgy, and the time it takes one's eyes to adjust to the gloom, synchronise one's movements within an orchestrated experience of art and architecture - one united to reveal the dramatic temporality of worship as re-enactment.

316 *The Large Catechism by Dr. Martin Luther*, Translated by F. Bente and W. H. T. Dau, A Penn State Electronic Classics Series Publication, (<http://www2.hn.psu.edu/faculty/jmanis/m-luther/mlc.pdf>): 'However, it is not enough for them to comprehend and recite these parts according to the words only, but the young people should also be made to attend the preaching, especially during the time which is devoted to the Catechism, that they may hear it explained and may learn to understand what every part contains, so as to be able to recite it as they have heard it, and, when asked, may give a correct answer, so that the preaching may not be without profit and fruit. For the reason why we exercise such diligence in preaching the Catechism so often is that it may be inculcated on our youth, not in a high and subtle manner, but briefly and with the greatest simplicity, so as to enter the mind readily and be fixed in the memory. Therefore we shall now take up the above mentioned articles one by one and in the plainest manner possible say about them as much as is necessary.' p. 11.

Figure 179 View of the interior of St Peter's looking towards the West door after Mass showing the blood red "Passion" side of the tapestry designed by Sven Erixson and woven by Barbro Nilsson

Figure 180 View of the interior of St Peter's looking towards the West door after Mass showing the sky blue "Redemption" side of the tapestry designed by Sven Erixson and woven by Barbro Nilsson

Lewerentz and Ridderstedt added allusions to the universal i.e. catholic nature of the church of St Peter, placing a *Cathedra* into a Swedish Lutheran Church 'for the first time since The Reformation' Ridderstedt claims³¹⁷. In this way, a continuum of historic time is suggested in a shockingly subtle image. The floor of the church appears to be crimped and to fold up the eastern wall to form the *Cathedra* and the clergy bench. This mirrors the mound of earth outside that hides St Peter's from the crossroads, creating an intense sensation of withdrawal and confrontation between the church and the town – a landscape of thresholds is articulated between them. The centre line about which the mirroring of mound and bench occurs is the west gate.

Figure 181 Sketch of St Peter's showing the spatial settings of the sacraments as a series of types (Patrick Lynch)

Similarly, the transformational moment of the Eucharistic sacrifice occurs at noon. At this point in the mass sunlight floods the raised Host, and the huge, dark steel cross is revealed as the centre of the church. At this moment the brick floor appears to mirror the sky, and both are held together and apart by the steel crucifix. Immediately after this the west gate opens, flooding the space beyond with daylight. As one's eyes adjust to this sudden convulsion the pond reflects the sky. It is not otherwise visible from the interior. Mirrored planes exist about the vertical axis of the west gate and about the horizon of the raised Eucharist, situating the church in relation to the town and to the sky.

Figure 182 Sketch section West-East showing iconographic spatial relationships between the pond and the ceiling of the church oriented around the horizon of sight at the altar (Patrick Lynch)

Implicit in the geometric order is the central importance of the crucifixion to Christian worship, around which the movement of the worshippers literally revolves. Nick Temple's plan drawing demonstrates that the steel cross sits at the centre of the plan form, central both to the chapel and also to the church complex. The quartering of the space into distinct territories recalls a traditional Greek cross church plan. In both cases one cannot easily sense the spatial type, and at St Peter's one cannot actually see the centre of the space, nor in fact occupy it. However, it is possible to come very close to the centre at the moment when the crucifixion is celebrated at the Eucharist.

Figure 18.9 Windows from the inside looking out

Figure 18.4 Column-beam connections

Figure 185 Nick Temple's drawing of the plan of St Peter's Klippan showing the geometrical relationship between the chapel to the community centre complex as a square within a square with the steel column in the centre of the chapel

The baptismal font takes the place of the traditional site of a statue of the virgin on the gospel side of the altar. A conch shell is of course a symbol for Venus and also for The Virgin Mary in Renaissance paintings, and this symbolism is of central importance for Marian worship and for rococo architecture generally³¹⁸. Whilst Mary is absent as a statue at St Peter's, she is present in spatial and temporal terms – in the image of a pregnant mound, and in the wedding chapel, and in the baptism of children.

318 Cf. 'Zur Charakteristik des Rokoko', Hans Sedlmayr, *Manierismo, Barocco, Rococo*, Rome, 1962. See also *Heavenly Caves: Reflections on the Garden Grotto*, Naomi Miller, Allen and Unwin, 1982. Jose de Paiva notes: 'The connection of Mary (and water and specifically) the sea has, in a sense, always been there, though of course historically it is entirely based on wordplay. We see this throughout the Middle Ages in the Latin play between the word *mare*, *-is*, and in the pl. *maria* (lit. 'seas') and *Maria*. The connection to water is there too in medieval iconography either relating to Mary, or the baptism of Christ. This develops with the multiplication of medieval pilgrimages to Marian shrines – finally coming to identify the pilgrim himself with the shell, under the protection of Mary. In the fifteenth century, this takes a turn with the maritime expansion, under the patronage of Henry the Navigator; and by 1500 we are dealing with churches like *S. Maria de Belém*, the foundation of which is availed by the Papal *Bula inter cœtera*, and built for mariners as they arrived in Lisbon from the expeditions to the Indies. The aim of the sea expansion was made explicit in the sails bearing the cross of the Order of Christ, and could be described as religious, political and commercial. In the *Lusíadas*, a Renaissance epic poem published in 1572, Camões describes it as 'the expansion of the empire and the faith'. In line with Franciscan interpretation, the expansion was now seen as leading potentially to a fifth empire, in this case a Christian one, following the empires of Antiquity.', email, 08.03.2014.

Figure 186 The Birth of Venus, 1486, Sandro Botticelli

Figure 187 View of the baptismal font – The River Jordan/Klippan

Figure 188 View of the three 'crucifixion lights' - Mount Calvary/Klippan

Figure 189 Sketch section through St Peter's Klippan East-West (Patrick Lynch)

To the liturgy side of the church high windows block the sound and

sight of 'youths on motorbikes' Ridderstedt claims. On this side light also fills the space at noon, transforming what cannot be seen into something whose effects can be. The absolutely mundane yet situational aspects of the architecture, transform the space from dumb brickwork to a participatory communicative realm (what Schwarz and Ridderstedt both call '*commonitas*').

Figure 190 View of St Peter's Klippan looking towards the West doors just after Mässe (Patrick Lynch)

At St Peter's the visible and invisible swell and recede in focus in the mind's

eye. Metaphors and situated events coalesce and dissolve into actual useful things, and everyday events take on significance. This 'ontological movement' is achieved within an atmosphere of silence and darkness. In *Architecture Oriented Otherwise* David Leatherbarrow suggests that:

Perhaps the greatest challenge for designers is to work through the nonexpressivity required for this sort of dialogue; the communication I have in mind arises instead out of a tacit form of presence. Articulation in architecture presupposes reticent receptivity, the silence that architects such as Loos, Le Corbusier, Kahn, Peter Zumthor and Ando have recommended in their writings and cultivated in their projects.³¹⁹

Perhaps it is exactly this quality of potential that enables Lewerentz's building to articulate something that cannot be approached directly? Appia called this quality 'expectancy'³²⁰, and a profoundly communicative architectural imagination is present at St Peter's'. This was formed, I suggest, not only by the Reformation, or by the High Church Movement in Sweden, or by the architect's devout Christianity, but also in Lewerentz's acknowledgement of the conditions of modernity. Lewerentz's cemeteries are "new types" I suggest, in a similar way that Rykwert describes Borromini's Oratory. Lewerentz's imagination is also oriented towards *decorum*, and the rhythmic orders of time and geometry in his work reveal the natural conditions that lie beneath the appearance of modern urbanity.

319 Op Cit, p. 12.

320 *Texts on Theatre*, Adolphe Appia., Op. Cit., p.74.

Figure 191 Windows at the back of the chapel illuminated at noon

Figure 192 Lettering designed by Lewerentz announcing the hymns

I would like to suggest that it is also a response to the 20th century condition generally, an architecture that acknowledges a certain distance from tradition, and also distance from the assumption that transcendence occurs directly via representation. Lewerentz grew up in a period that witnessed two world wars and one in which Nietzsche had claimed the 'withdrawal of God' (in

Will to Power and *The Twilight of the Gods*, etc.). Jean-Luc Marion believes that 'Nietzsche transgressed the idolatrous relation to the divine' by coming 'face to face with something finally living within the divine', and that this led to his descent into madness, 'the plunge into darkness.' This 'patent contradiction' is explained by the fact that in *Man and Superman*, *Antichrist* and *Beyond Good and Evil*:

Nietzsche believed himself to be advancing beyond or in the place of the idols, in order there to play a metaphysical role. But, as if sucked in through the idols as far as the divine itself, he there succumbed. Dionysus touched him. This is perhaps because, without distance, a distinction can be made between the idols and God no more than the relation to the divine can be supported. Only the infinite separation of distance ensures one of subsisting within the infinite proximity of God. Conceptually idolatrous, too removed from the divine – too close, personally experienced with the divine: a double missing? Lacking of distance, which brings together and separates at once, which in a word keeps the divine and man at a good distance – a distance of Goodness. Perhaps this is what Nietzsche teaches, at bottom, that is most precious.³²¹

This distance, or 'silence' enables the 'at hand' aspects of St Peter's to 'remain ready at hand', as Heidegger puts it, without becoming things that we can easily 'pass-over' or consume, aesthetically or otherwise. They transcend consumption and resist appropriation, opening up a space for participation. Things in the world co-exist for us along with relational associations in the same way that stories and myths and beliefs resist direct assimilation, and as Alberti saw it – are aspects of the rhythmic transformation of natural conditions. Reality is not made up of distinct objects for humans, but is experienced by us via involvement and interest, and in participation. In the same way, classical and Christian cultures form a 'cumulative, paradoxical and inaugural heritage for Heidegger', Marion claims – 'the fraternity of Christ with Hercules and Dionysus' that he (and Hölderlin) both 'understood'³²². St Peter's is a dark background presence inviting imaginative use. Whilst the equipment in the chapel and the rhythms of use and action there 'de-severs' distance, its

³²¹ *The Idol and Distance: Five Studies*, Jean-Luc Marion, Fordham, 2001, pp. 77-8. As many commentators have noted, Nietzsche's direct philosophical confrontation between man and God led indirectly, largely through misunderstanding, to the rise of Fascism, which was typified also by a lack of distance between life and myth.

³²² *Ibid.*, p.213.

powerful spatial presence maintains a distance between ritual and everyday life, reminding us of Merleau-Ponty's assertion that 'what protects the sane man against delirium or hallucination, is not his critical powers, but the structure of his space'.³²³ Whilst it might be tempting to describe spatial qualities in terms of complexity or simplicity, these aesthetic criteria fail to reveal the relational character of spatial situations. Leatherbarrow is adamant that 'talk of space will always be distracting if it is seen as a neutral or homogenous field in which independently conceived objects are placed.' Rather, 'space', he insists, 'must, instead, be seen as a field of variations.'³²⁴ The referential field of variations at St Peter's is topological (geometric) and topographical (both rhetorical and material), and somewhat shadowy, thick and mysterious.

³²³ *The Phenomenology of Perception*, Op. Cit., p.291: see also 'Architecture, Simulation and Reality', Dalibor Vesely, *Scroope: Cambridge Architecture Journal*, Issue 5, 1993/4, pp.26-8.

³²⁴ Op. Cit., p.265.

Figure 193 View from the sacristy towards the altar

Figure 194 View from the altar towards the sacristy

Figure 195 Sketch showing the relationship between the material and immaterial aspects of St Peter's as experienced in the "ontological movement" of a worshipper's experience of Mass (Patrick Lynch)

The current pastor thinks that the chapel is 'too dark' in fact, and he believes that 'it does not welcome you'³²⁵. Presumably in an attempt to make the church less 'dark', he has recently installed supplementary lighting. One now finds a confusingly "symbolic" hollow globe filled with candles placed at

325 Short informal interview over coffee after Mass, 26th February 2012.

the base of the central steel column. A black plastic spotlight has been attached to the column, illuminating the candles³²⁶. I attended the confirmation of the children of the parish. The priest preached with a PowerPoint presentation projected onto a plastic screen fixed above an empty *Cathedra*. No one processed with the cross of St Peter. A piano was used rather than the organ.

Figure 196 Photograph of the church during the sermon, February 26th 2012

Perhaps the Pastor's claim that the chapel is 'too dark' is correct, perhaps it is too much like a force of nature to be reassuring, or simply enlightening. It is a national monument and cannot be harmed too much by changes in the fashion of worship, or by brief appearances of new technologies. Whilst it is the fate of churches today to be venerated mainly as the settings for art works – nonetheless they remain a horizon of sorts. All of the equipment necessary for the traditional life of a parish are in place in Klippan. St Peter's resists, silent, waiting, patient, open like a book, or like a stage anticipating action.

³²⁶ Arguably, the pastor has attempted to alleviate this condition in ways that are blasphemous from both a Lutheran and from an architectural point of view! For example, Luther believed that prayers for the dead were wrong, as doing so implied the possibility of human intervention beyond the limit of the temporal realm. This is why you do not find candles lit for the dead in Protestant churches, although it has recently become also fashionable in Anglican cathedrals to do so.

Figure 197 Chairs at St Peter's Klippan aligned to the rhythm of the brick floor 'oriented' towards the altar i.e. mostly facing Eastwards

Figure 198 Sketch view of the various situations encountered at St Peter's seen as a series of *aedicules* or little houses (Patrick Lynch)

Perhaps the best way to describe the church is as a *heuristic landscape*. Its landscape of images is a catechistic device, a theatre of memory, a Sunday school made flesh. It has something in common with the primitive qualities of a child's drawing. Lewerentz seems to have been aware of the profoundly image-like character of memories.

Figure 199 The Organ sat unaligned with the brick ground but aligned with the diagonal of the square plan of the church, angled to catch the South sun entering the chapel at noon

Figure 200 A Cross on a Hill (baptism is death and renewal, initiation into eternal life, attained through death)

Lewerentz's photographs of Italy, made at the end of the second decade of the twentieth century, reveal that he composed spatial images as fragments.

Figure 201 Photographs of an Italian journey (Sigurd Lewerentz)

St Peter's Klippan carries the emotional violence of dream-like fragments into the waking world, reclaiming for it - in the fecundity of images - the profound power of situations. It situates what we might call the positive aspects of Vesely's fragments, what he calls 'the reciprocity of the actual and the possible.'³²⁷ The sculptures at Klippan transcend formalistic and subjective readings of them, and distinctions between use and meaning seem specious.

Figure 202 The Bowls of Grace by Christian Berg: "The turned up bowl: we receive God's Grace. The turned down bowl: we give people what we have received from God"

St Peter's exemplifies Peter Carl's assertion instead that 'there is no such thing as an absence of content, no gap between the practical and the symbolic, only progressively more explicit modes of symbolic representation.'³²⁸

³²⁸ 'City-image versus Topography of Praxis', Peter Carl, *Cambridge Archaeology Journal*, October 2000, p. 328.

Figure 203 Sketch showing the relationships between the roof and the pond as paradigmatic representations of celestial realms (Patrick Lynch)

In Lewerentz's work pathos is leavened by wit, and St Peter's is a *spielraum* for the serious games of religion and art.

Figure 204 Sketch showing the relationships between the roof and the font as paradigmatic representations of sacramental territories (Patrick Lynch)

Ridderstedt claims:

That the name of the church became St Petri depends of course on the allusion to the name of the town and the connection to Jesus' words in Matt. 16:18 : "And I tell you that you are Petrus, the cliff (rock), and on this cliff I will build my church."³²⁹

Klippan means 'the cliff' (or the rock) Ridderstedt reminds us, and not only does the church appear as a cave, but also the naming of the church and the town is inscribed in the most rhythmic parts of the building.

329 Op. Cit.

Figure 205 Sketch showing the relationships between the rocks of St Peter's and water (Patrick Lynch)

Ridderstedt takes delight in telling us about the process of naming the bells:

By tradition, church bells were usually provided with a text stating when and by whom the bell had been cast as well as providing information about the current acting Bishop, priests, etc. A hymn often complemented this list. In Klippan, Pastor Gustafsson made contact with Poet Bo Setterlind, who early on had taken an interest in this particular poetry art form. In an undated letter (probably written in spring-winter 1966) Setterlind thanks Gustafsson for "the study material about the church and its architect! Very rewarding. I found quite soon, that there existed a friendship, not unsubstantial, between the architect and the poet, also professionally – we are both romantics", Setterlind writes. In a letter dated 19.4.1966, he proposes that the church bells would be named after the apostles

Petrus, Andreas, Paulus and Tomas, "...the largest to the smallest". It is hardly surprising from a theological point that the big bell was named Petrus, but Setterlind gives the apostle's name a local connection:
EVERYTHING EARTHLY ESCAPES – ITS GLORY DISAPPEARS
– BUT THE LORDS CLIFF STANDS – FOREVER.³⁹⁰

Figure 206 Setterlind's 'bell-poems' texts cast in a bronze plaque mounted across from the entrance to the church

390 Ibid.

Figure 207 View up into the belfry

At St Peter's the topography of Klippan is brought into the church and blessed and named. Lewerentz co-mingles the River Jordan and the Klippan river, united in a common image. Thus the stories associated with St Peter act as topic, or common ground, or rhetorical *Topos*, onto which various meanings can be set in play, in order to re-found the town of Klippan as a legitimate place oriented within a deep context of history and geography. Lewerentz managed to retrospectively insert the church into the history of the foundation of the town, placing it into the centre of the town like a ruin, a ruined cathedral complex, a *cloistered monasticum* or even a renovated one.

Figure 208 The park reflected in the windows of the community centre parish hall

In this audacious act, the town is recuperated, brought back to consciousness after its premature birth as an accidental consequence of technology. The town and the park are re-presented in the mirroring windows of the church and community centre. It appears as if the sky comes to earth when it is reflected in the pond, suggesting that 'it is in the dialectics of imagination and its hidden content that our vision becomes an ongoing and inexhaustible process', revealing, as in a 'mirror, the hidden content of pre-reflective reality.'³³¹ When the bells ring out, and the sky is relected in the pond, the world is converted into pure rhythm, fulfilling Heidegger's description in *Art and Space*, of art's role in 'evoking harmony' ³³².

³³¹ Vesely, *Op. Cit.*, p.84.

³³² As in Heidegger's image from Goethe, cited at the conclusion of *Art and Space*, *Op. Cit.*, (13), p.8.

Figure 209 Detail of staining from the copper roof on the West Facade

CHAPTER 6

THE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURE IN THE LATE 20TH CENTURY: THE PROBLEM OF SCULPTURAL FORM VERSUS SCULPTURAL SPATIALITY

'When Sculpture enters the realm of the non-institution, when it leaves the gallery or museum to occupy the same space and place as architecture, when it redefines space and place in terms of sculptural necessities, architects become annoyed. Not only is their concept of space being changed, but for the most part it is being criticized. The criticism can come into effect only when architectural scale, methods, materials, and procedures are being used. Comparisons are provoked. Every language has a structure about which nothing critical in that language can be said. To criticize a language there must be a second language dealing with the structure of the first but possessing a new structure.'

Richard Serra (in an interview with Peter Eisenman), *Perspecta 19*, 1982

i *Collisive Fields & Bricolage: Colin Rowe on Urbanism as Architectural Form*

Despite the achievements at Klippan and San Sebastián, contemporary architects seem to have an antagonistic relationship with sculptors, particularly in America, one that is founded on a misunderstanding of the spatial aspects of sculpture in favour of 'sculptural form', which, I suggest, profoundly effects the quality of American cities. The example of communicative movement at St Peters suggests that one way to avoid the confusion of architecture with formalist sculpture on the one hand, and with aniconic technology on the other, might be to recover the traditional relationships between architects and sculptors, and between buildings and sculptures. Their continuity is clearly still rich with potential, and offers an example of architecture capable of recovering the civic character of sites otherwise dominated by transport technology. It is instructive to consider the example of a recent attempt by an architect to re-establish a working relationship with a sculptor – albeit in the deprived context of Peter Eisenman's formalistic and pseudo-philosophical discourse – if only to see how problematic such collaborations can be.

Contemporary collaborations between architects and sculptors are often fraught with misunderstanding and not a little aggression from both

sides. Indeed, claiming kinship with sculpture is almost a cliché for a certain sort of architect, presumably because one influence of ‘sculptural form’ has been to create rivalry, jealousy, and also the need to be taken seriously as an “artist”³³³. Eisenman is arguably the most prominent exponent of this sort of confused attitude towards sculpture and sculptors; although I’d also suggest that the formalist tendencies of Eisenman, Jeffrey Kipnis and Greg Lynn *et al* derive from Colin Rowe’s emphasis upon the urban form of Rome and his notion of *Collage City*. This might initially seem a perverse assertion, since Rowe was also concerned in *The Architecture of Good Intentions* with utopia and metaphysics as much as with form³³⁴. However, both of these themes derive from his thesis that architecture expresses ‘cultural concepts’, that

333 Interview with Peter Eisenman by Iman Ansar, Architecture Daily, 13th September 2013, ‘Eisenman’s Evolution: Architecture, Syntax, and New Subjectivity’. Eisenman is emphatic that: ‘If there is a debate in architecture today, the lasting debate is between architecture as a conceptual, cultural, and intellectual enterprise, and architecture as a phenomenological enterprise – that is, the experience of the subject in architecture, the experience of materiality, of light, of color, of space and etc. I have always been on the side opposed to phenomenology. I’m not interested in Peter Zumthor’s work or people who spend their time worrying about the details or the grain of wood on one side or the color of the material on the surface, etc. I couldn’t care less. That having been said, it is still necessary to build. But the whole notion of the idea of “cardboard architecture” meant that the materiality of the work was important as an “anti-material” statement. Probably the most important work I did in the conceptualist realm was the cardboard architecture houses. Pictures of house II, for instance, were taken without sunlight so you have no shadows, and no reveals or things like this, and in fact one of the pictures we took of House II was in a French magazine that said it was a “model of House II.” So I achieved what I wanted to achieve, which was to lessen the difference between the built form and the model. I was always trying to say “built model” as the conceptual reality of architecture. So when you see these houses and you visit them you realize that they were very didactic and very important exercises – each one had a different thematic – but they were concerned not with meaning in the social sense of the word or the cultural sense, but in the “architectural meaning.” What meaning they had and what role they played in the critical culture of architecture as it evolved over time. So while the work was interested in syntax and grammar, it was interested to see what the analogical relationships were between language and architecture. And of course that’s when I get into working with Jacques Derrida.’ <http://www.archdaily.com/429925/> accessed 10/12/2013 at 16.55. As we have seen, his interest in analogy has been hampered by a formalist conception of language, and is, as a consequence, quite superficial. Arguably, Eisenman changes what he says about his work depending upon the audience, and after the 2012 Venice Biennale he has begun to temper his statements about the supposedly autonomous nature of architecture in favour of a quasi-sculptural approach. For example, when interviewed for Bomb Magazine (*THE ARTISTS’ VOICE SINCE 1981*) by Carlos Brillembourg (Fall 2013) he claimed that: ‘the energy of Terragni permeated my early work; House I is certainly Terragni, but House II is much more influenced by, say, Rosalind Krauss’s writing on contemporary art at the time and the idea of sculpture in the expanded field and the work of minimalist sculptors Robert Morris and Sol LeWitt. By House II, Krauss and I were working closely—she eventually wrote “Notes on the Index” in *October* 3 and 4, which became key to House IV’. Brillembourg then asked ‘What about Donald Judd?’, to which Eisenman claims, ‘We did a project with him, and one with Michael Heizer. By then I had put the Terragni book aside and was working on my own project, which was more influenced by conceptual art, by color field painting, by Krauss’s, Michael Fried’s, and Clement Greenberg’s writings.’ <http://bombsite.com/issues/117/articles/5991> accessed 10/12/2013 at 17.03.

334 *The Architecture of Good Intentions*, Colin Rowe, pp.28-9.

buildings operate as a 'theatre of prophecy'³³⁵. Against this idealism and literalism Rowe used the example of gestalt diagrams to try to articulate the need for backgrounds for prominent 'built objects', what he called the 'Predicament of Texture'³³⁶. I will return to the problematic nature of these seductive visual metaphors shortly. Whilst Rowe doesn't obviously exhibit the systematic characteristics of apraxic language that Vesely identified, there is nonetheless evidence of an elision of processes with visual imagery and thence with the 'Gestalt' or 'form' of cities that typifies the architect's causist approach to history and to reality generally³³⁷. This approach is exemplified by the theoretical and built work of his second most famous student³³⁸.

Peter Eisenman's PhD, 'The Formal Basis of Modern Architecture', was supervised by Colin Rowe at Cambridge University and completed in 1963³³⁹. He declares in the introduction that 'a specific situation, by its relative nature, limits us to relative ends'³⁴⁰. Instead, Eisenman claims, what matters is 'form', and 'total external order is our absolute'³⁴¹. The term 'form' is used in an attempt to limit and to control 'individual expression', which Eisenman accepts as 'legitimate', but which needs to be controlled for the sake of 'the comprehensibility of the environment as a whole.'³⁴² It is perhaps no surprise that it is Terragni's architecture that is seen by Eisenman as the means by which individualism can be subjugated to absolute (formalist) order – as, arguably, fascism arose as a response to 19th century Romantic individualism³⁴³. Whilst Eisenman categorizes 'generic form in its Platonic sense', no mention is made of Plato's understanding of geometry or analogy. The influence of Rowe's

335 Ibid., p.49.

336 Ibid., pp.52-65.

337 Vesely acknowledges a debt to Rowe in the introduction to his book, but reminds us in it of the problem with 'Gestalt' theories of architecture: 'The nature of vision manifests itself in its most elementary form as a tendency to experience reality in terms of visual patterns and identifiable configurations, a tendency conventionally described as eidetic vision or Gestalt. Unfortunately, many interpret Gestalt principles as if they were a law establishing the formal identity of objects or objectlike structures, forgetting that Gestalt is always situated in the intentionality of our life and therefore closely linked with the meaning of some potential or actual action.' Op. Cit., p.84.

338 James Stirling being the foremost, of course.

339 *The Formal Basis of Modern Architecture*, PhD Dissertation, Peter Eisenman, Cambridge University, 1963; Facsimile published by Lars Muller, 2006.

340 Ibid., p. 31.

341 Ibid., p. 30.

342 Ibid., p. 29.

343 Cf. 'Albert Speer and the Fear of Freedom' Colin St John Wilson, in *Architectural Reflections*, Oxford, 1992.

art history studies at The Warburg Institute coincided in Eisenman's dissertation with Rowe's attempts to create a historical legitimacy for modern architecture based upon geometry and proportion understood as form. Neither are historically or philosophically precise³⁴⁴. Plato does not talk of 'form' as absolutes, but sees *eidōs* - often wrongly translated as form, when it more closely means ideas (which in turn is not the Kantian idea of a concept, but rather a noetic symbol³⁴⁵) - embodied in certain geometric relationships as analogous of the relative degree of embodiment (of, for example, an individual soul in the world-soul).

'Form' is perhaps the most pernicious of these mistranslations, as it corrupts the language that we use so that the meaning of 'formal', for example, loses its connotations of 'correct', 'proper' and 'appropriate', so that *the decorum of a specific situation*, that is implicit in architecture, is forgotten in favour of abstractions. Whilst Colin Rowe's description of the arrangement of spatial dimensions in plan in Corbusier's and Palladio's villas is rhythmic in 'The Mathematics of the Perfect Villa'³⁴⁶, and his essay 'Transparency: Literal and Phenomenal'³⁴⁷ is evidence of an interest in experience in architecture, the over-riding emphasis in his writing is upon composition and form. Rowe's *Collage City* exhibits a formalist approach to architectural urbanism that suggests that some of the characteristics of a traditional city might be attractive still today. Yet Rowe ignores the social forces that shaped the architecture of the past in favour of a historicist approach to urbanism based upon composition. His appreciation of neo-classical town planning principles, and his fondness for the picturesque tradition, created in his Cornell students' projects an eclectic mixture of fragments³⁴⁸, which he called, after Levi-Strauss, 'bricolage'³⁴⁹. The site of this eclecticism was not the modern city as we

344 Ignorance of the meaning of the terms that they used did not stop Rowe and his students assuming that 19th century art history is a sound basis for the creation of an academic discipline of architecture. The various mistranslations of Beaux Arts themes by Anglo-Saxon theorists are part of the problem that afflicts our discipline today. For example, *genre* did not mean 'type' for Durand, etc.

345 Cf. 'Conflict of Representation', AA Files 8, Dalibor Vesely.

346 *The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa and Other Essays*, Colin Rowe, MIT, 1987.

347 'Transparency: Literal and Phenomenal', in *Ibid.*

348 Cf. 'Cornell Studio Projects and Theses', *As I was Saying: Recollections and Miscellaneous Essays*, Volume Three: Urbanistics, Colin Rowe, MIT, 1995.

349 *Collage City*, Colin Rowe and Fred Koeter, MIT, 1978, pp. 106-7. Rowe's student projects formed the basis of international design charrettes such as 'Roma Interrotta' in 1978, whereby

encounter it as architects working for private or commercial or institutional clients; but an academic view of the historical city as a formal system. Rowe's city was one filtered through a transformation of the Nolli Plan of Rome (1748) into the figure-field dialectic imported from Gestalt psychology. This formal reading of cities tended to ignore the intentionality of the various agents who paid for and made the civic monuments and dwellings that make up a city; everything is talent and/or ideas³⁵⁰. There is an unresolved conflict in Rowe's work, between the life of the 19th century city depicted so brilliantly in *The Architecture of Good Intentions*, and his theory of design, in which, arguably, there is no mediation, no economy, and no representation beyond form. For example, in *Collage City*, Rome is described with fizzing verbal brio as:

a collision of palaces... an anthology of closed compositions and ad hoc stuff in-between which is simultaneously a dialectic of ideal types plus a dialectic of ideal types with empirical context... something of the bricolage mentality at its most lavish.³⁵¹

Rowe's exuberant descriptions disguise the life of the city. His desire to impose verbal order - of a sort - upon what he sees as 'a traffic jam of intentions', reveals also a certain relish in using visual metaphors to illustrate generalisations. He flits between the universal and the particular like a low-flying pilot turning verbal stunts, and his influence is so potent that it blinds his observers to the life that inspires urbanity, to the fact that urbanity is primarily a way of life, not a flamboyant or scientific academic discipline. Rowe's prose strains to lift up the city so that it becomes a record of ideals, emancipating it as 'some sort of model which might be envisaged in contrast to the disastrous urbanism of social engineering and total design.' He claims that whilst it is 'products of a specific topography and two particular but not wholly separate cultures' (Imperial and Catholic), Rome is actually 'a style of argument

eminent architects took parts of the city and proposed urban redesign without commissions or reference to patrons or clients. The participating architects were Piero Sartogo, Constantino Dardi, Antoine Grumbach, James Stirling, Paulo Portoghesi, Romaldo Giurgola, Venturi and Rauch, Colin Rowe, Michael Graves, Rob Krier, Aldo Rossi, Leon Krier. The competition and all twelve entries are examined in detail in *Architectural Design*, Profile 20, No.3-4 1979, which was guest edited by Michael Graves (<http://01studio2008.blogspot.co.uk/2008/10/roma-interrotta.html>, accessed 19/08/2013, at 21.47).

350 Cf. 'Ideas, Talent, Poetics: A Problem of Manifesto', *As I was Saying: Recollections and Miscellaneous Essays*, Volume Two: Cornelliana, Colin Rowe, MIT, 1995.

351 Op. Cit., p. 106.

which is not lacking in universality'. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Rowe's universality of form was not propelled by science, efficiency or technology. However, what this might be is described as visual metaphors that elide history with quasi-natural processes. Rowe's views of cities resemble a Baedeker Guide (plans + history and novels) and his imagery recalls film stills, time-lapse photography, or speeded up sections of a disaster movie:

the physique and politics of Rome provide perhaps the most graphic example of collusive (sic.) fields and interstitial debris, there are the calmer versions of equivalent interests, which are not hard to find.³⁵²

Rowe claims – somewhat *ex-cathedra* – that his flippant description of 'the politics of bricolage', that characterizes 'the Rome-London Model', is sufficient that it 'may, of course, perfectly well be expanded to provide comparable interpretations of a Houston or a Los Angeles. It is simply a question of a frame of mind with which one visits places.'³⁵³ The use of the phrase 'a Houston' reveals that Rowe has no interest in the actual Houston in Texas, beyond its capacity to reveal the efficacy of his methodology, which he summarised with breathtaking bathos as 'a frame of mind'. The uninteresting parts of cities, to a formalist 'frame of mind', are dismissed as 'interstitial debris', leading to the tendency of American architects to concern themselves with replicating or simulating the effects of imaginary 'collusive fields' (sic.)³⁵⁴.

Similarly, Peter Eisenman uses almost the same visual metaphor to attempt to ground his City of Culture outside Santiago de la Compostela in a plausible imitation of public topography as geology. Unfortunately, it is only a visual metaphor, not an actual city³⁵⁵. Whilst West Berlin showcased the

352 Rowe, Op. Cit.

353 Ibid., p. 107.

354 Cf., Cooper Union Dormitory block Manhattan, Ohlhausen DuBois architects, whose 'form' is based upon the observation that the grid of Alphabet City 'collides' with the Lower Manhattan Grid, which commences at this point, all of which is supposed to be significant and a useful reason to design the building. Sunlight, views, decorum, use, all of these design principles are subjugated to the 'formal manipulation' of a series of cubes and grids; which is only contextual in the sense that this is the design methodology taught by Eisenman and his ex-students and his associates to the 2nd year architecture students at Cooper Union.

355 Cf., 'Galicia, Spain – Peter Eisenman fails to translate a seductive proposal into a successful City of Culture for Spain', *The Architectural Review*, 22 September 2010, William JR Curtis: 'Eisenman's (competition) presentation was accompanied by computer drawings which gave the impression that the project had been 'generated' by scanning the structure of the old city then distorting it in a fractured geometry. The plan shape of the vast new 'city' was also traced to the

formalist visions of architects in the IBA projects of Aldo Rossi, OMA, Peter Eisenman, Zaha Hadid, Peter Cook, etc. Yet it is impossible to imagine a street, never mind a city quarter, made up of “icon” buildings by Zaha Hadid, or indeed any of these architects. The contemporary manifestation of urbanism as window-dressing is, of course, similarly devoid of urbanity. Joseph Rykwert refers to this generically as ‘Emirates Style’³⁵⁶, whereby ‘access to tall buildings is determined by road engineering, the traffic engineers are back in control.’³⁵⁷

shape of a shell, the emblem of Saint James and of the pilgrimage route. There was in turn an overlaid grid (a customary Eisenman device). The complex thus combined several geometrical systems and emerged as a sort of palimpsest, supposedly filtering the natural surroundings into the artificial world of the architecture. Eisenman’s project for Galicia summed up several years of research into fragmentation, striation, and interstitial space. Folds, of course, were very much in fashion at the time and Eisenman was forever sexing up his dossiers with a little French theory, for example quotations from Deleuze on *Le Pli* (The Fold). Some of his followers in turn introduced a pseudo-scientific badinage concerning strings and algorithmic transformations. Behind the smokescreen of pretentious theorising, Eisenman is in fact a formalist who raids sources and manipulates forms for their own sake, leaving aside the problem of content. For all the promotional chatter, the City of Culture in Galicia seems to have been inspired fairly directly by an example in the realm of land art: Grande Cretto in Gibellina, Sicily (1985-9) designed by Alberto Burri as a memorial to the earthquake of 1968. This takes the form of a solidified ‘map’ of the destroyed city made from concrete and rubble, with folding shapes, incised streets, and the striations of a distorted grid laid out across the landscape. Eleven years later Eisenman’s project for the City of Culture is less than half constructed and the original budget of a little over 100 million euros has more than quadrupled; the programme has also continued to change, with talk now of a major centre of contemporary art. There is enough already built to get some idea of how things may look, and one section is even open to the public. The project promoted for its topographical sensitivity in fact required the complete decapitation of *Monte Gaias* and the removal of millions of cubic metres of soil.’ (<http://www.architectural-review.com/view/galicia-spain-peter-eisenman-fails-to-translate-a-seductive-proposal-into-a-successful-city-of-culture-for-spain/8606086.article>, accessed, 06/09/2013 at 13.50).

356 *The Judicious Eye*, Joseph Rykwert, Chicago, 2009, p.243.

357 Interview with Patrick Lynch, ‘Inhabitable Models: Eric Parry, Haworth Tompkins, Lynch architects’, Common Ground, Venice Biennale of architecture, 2012. The interview considers the intellectual context in which Rykwert wrote *The Idea of a Town: The Anthropology of Urban Form in Rome, Italy and the Ancient World* in the 1950s. It was arguably the first example of an attempt to counter technological functionalism attitudes towards ‘road engineering’ with an appreciation of the ritualistic basis for what might more properly be called Civic Design. In a discussion with Mark Wigley at a graduate seminar at Columbia University a few weeks after the Biennale opened in September 2012, Eisenman asks himself aloud, presumably rhetorically, ‘why did Colin Rowe ask me to attack Rykwert?’ (‘The Wobble’, Graduate seminar at Columbia University school of architecture, Peter Eisenman and Mark Wigley, September 2012, see [www.http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gu4-FrX6hDA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gu4-FrX6hDA)). Eisenman was angry and amazed that ‘phenomenology’ had reappeared at the Biennale, something, which he and Wigley ‘thought we had killed off’. Their interview is by turns appalling, rude, solipsistic, self-pitying, and unintentionally hilarious (‘they took your *alma mater*, your old mother, Cambridge University, and corrupted her’, etc.). I wonder if Eisenman is seriously interested in understanding why Rowe might have been sufficiently alarmed by Rykwert as to invoke an attack? Whilst it is not wholly accurate to describe Rykwert’s work as ‘phenomenology’, it is an attempt to create a more profound discourse for architecture than narrow technical functionalism or dilettante or pseudo-intellectual formalism. This study is inspired by such endeavours also, and by the sense that if one took seriously the question of sculpture and architecture, and more generally examined the relationships between philosophy and architecture, one might arrive at somewhat different conclusions than the literalism of Eisenman and Rowe.

Once the fever of Neo-Classical formalist Post-Modernist architecture had passed, the territorial aspects of the modern city remained exactly as they had been during the rest of the 20th century. Architects continued to create object-like buildings, only this time modernism affected lairy colours, and what critics and architects persist in calling 'sculptural-form'. Justin McGuirk insists that: 'If Gehry shows us how to do architecture as sculpture, then Serra has returned the favour by showing us sculpture as building'.³⁵⁸ However, in an interview in 2005 Serra is contemptuous of Gehry's Guggenheim Bilbao, stating, "As architecture it's junk".³⁵⁹ A passionate line of criticism of modern architecture came directly from sculptors, who saw architects' attempts to usurp their discipline as specious and immoral. Donald Judd developed from philosopher to art critic, to artist, and then towards architecture, and finally polemic. Judd's 1964 essay 'Specific Objects'³⁶⁰ rails against Yves Klein's blue-daubed female bodies, fabricating against this spectacle a case for considering perception itself to be the subject of modern art. When challenged by the 'art world' to justify himself, Judd produced a series of cubic sculptures that draw attention to the specific tectonic character of each object – in other words, exposing to public scrutiny the fallacy that objects lack specificity. Judd cites the influence of *The Phenomenology of Perception* by Maurice Merleau-Ponty upon his thinking and art, and although 'Specific Objects' work well as experiential sculptures and as a provocative essay, the repetition of this

358 Justin McGuirk on "The Matter of Time" in "ICON" Magazine 026, March 2005.

359 Ibid. 'It is nearly 40 years since Serra started leaning steel slabs against each other like playing cards. Far from the very basic power of those early works, The Matter of Time has a fluency, you might even say a facility. Serra has mastered his material, and as far as he is concerned materials give form. That is why the building rankles him. Standing in the middle of the spiral piece, he looks up at the arcing horizon and the way it frames Gehry's elaborate ceiling. "Is that real?" he asks, pointing at the ceiling. "As architecture it's junk." He is confident; he knows that his works are doing exactly what they appear to be doing, whereas the building is mostly hollow and ornamental – in short, that the building is bluffing. Serra describes the piece at the end of the hall as the installation's ballast, and in a way the whole ensemble is the building's ballast. The museum needed content, and now it has it. Serra looks up again. "I don't think of my piece as a container for the superfluosity of the architecture," he says. "It ain't a trash can".

360 'Specific Objects', in *Complete Writings 1975-1986*, Donald Judd, 1959-1975, Nova Scotia, 2005, p.181.

approach at Marfa in Texas revealed the limits of an object-based approach to place making³⁶¹.

Arguably, Judd's most insightful contribution to architectural criticism is his essay *Nie Wieder Krieg*³⁶² written just before 'Gulf War I' in 1991, and his death, three years later. Discussing the effects of 'the war machine' upon culture generally, he sees American foreign policy as imperial and colonial, as a way of "opening up markets" for exploitation. American architects are complicit in this process of invasion he declared, as the destruction of cities creates the perfect opportunities for international modern architecture. Judd is belligerently damning of those architects who present their work as art, and in fact of the whole economy of the art world. Long before Richard Serra's memorable phrase 'the wafer thin junk culture of the Guggenheim', Judd decried the 'horrifying design of Frank Gehry's museum of design for Vitra. These buildings make a joke of art, of culture, of the community, and of the whole society' he declared. Judd goes on to suggest, however, that the design is a symptom of a general problem:

The consequence of a fake economy, which is a war economy, is a fake society. One consequence of this is fake art and architecture... The art museum becomes exquisitely pointless, a fake for fakes, a double fake, the inner sanctum of a fake society.³⁶³

Such damning dismissal of the work of this architect and of a whole culture is touched with righteous indignation and a sort of despair (and is not dissimilar from the critique by Lefebvre). I am inclined to agree with Judd about the disingenuous affectation of culture by architects, and clearly we are motivated by the necessity to find work, even if these commissions offend our artist and academic friends.

Beyond aesthetic or personal moral distaste for the complicit nature of architecture, what is at stake in Judd's despair? I believe that this despair derives from what he sees as the powerlessness of architects and artists, and that the search for autonomy in 'specific objects', or the anonymity of 'collusive

361 C.f., 'Marfa, Texas: Art in Exile', Irina Davidovichi, Scroope 15, Cambridge Architecture Journal, 2003.

362 "Never Again War" in *Donald Judd Architecture*, Cantz Verlag 2003.

363 Ibid.

fields', are two sides of the same problem – the problem of imaginative agency in “creative” work today. This is ultimately not an ontological problem – although we each have to try to resolve our feelings of powerlessness in the face of the world – but an ethical problem, a problem of civic culture generally. Critics of American culture in the later twentieth century deplored ‘the culture of narcissism’³⁶⁴.

It was somewhat naïve of Serra and Judd, to say the least, to suggest that this condition might be challenged by an authentic encounter with ‘place’ mediated by artworks. Yet this is exactly what they advocated in experience of their large, external sculptures. This work did not resolve the problem of ‘our persistent inability to make decent cities’, of course – and the prevalence of what James Wines called ‘the turd in the piazza’³⁶⁵ makes one wonder if sculptures are not supposed to stand in not only for “public art” but also for “public life” itself. The encounter of architecture with sculpture in the 1970s and 1980s – and the confrontations between architects and sculptors - generated some friction though, and opened up the possibility of ‘site specific architecture’, if only as a throw away comment in a conversation.

³⁶⁴ *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations*, Christopher Lasch, Norton, 1991.

³⁶⁵ “De-Architecture”, James Wines, Rizzoli Intl, 1987.

ii *Watered-down Artistic Conventions: The Eisenman-Serra Interview*

This conversation occurred when Richard Serra was invited by Peter Eisenman to discuss the relationship between sculpture and architecture, in an interview that was published in *Perspecta*, the journal of the Yale School of Architecture, in 1982. Serra established immediately his distaste for Post-Modernist architecture, and in particular, the ways in which architects appropriate sculptures in aid of a supposed 'humanist project':

The biggest break in the history of sculpture in the twentieth century occurred when the pedestal was removed... the need architects feel today to repress the history of sculpture since Rodin is based upon their desire to represent questionable symbolic values under the guise of questionable humanism. The fact of the matter is that symbolic values have become synonymous with advertisements... trying to convince people that placing a *contrapasto* figure atop a column serves humanistic needs.³⁶⁶

Serra continues his attack asking if 'Charles Moore's Piazza d'Italia in New Orleans, for instance,' isn't just 'a little condescending?' He claimed that 'one reason architects consume and use traditional sculpture is to control and domesticize art', continuing, 'Architects are openly reactionary in their adaptation of watered-down artistic conventions. Their continual misuse of art as ornamentation, decoration, and garnish denies the inventions of the past.'³⁶⁷ He attacked also Michael Graves's 'Portlandia logo for the Portland building'

³⁶⁶ *Richard Serra: Writings, Interviews*, Chicago, 1994, pp. 141-2. Serra's observation is very insightful I believe, and he is right to suggest that architects continue to use out-dated artistic conventions. In the 20th Century a number of modernist architects incorporated sculptures on pedestals in their buildings, long after sculptors themselves had begun to abandon this way of working, and Penelope Curtis investigates this tendency in *Patio and Pavilion: The Place of Sculpture in Modern Architecture*, J. Paul Getty Museum, 2008. She also considers the work of sculptors such as Dan Graham, whose work is 'semi architectural', and architects such as Frank Gehry whose buildings are 'semisculptural'. My interest is slightly different, and following conversation with Curtis I decided to take Serra's assertion that 'The biggest break in the history of sculpture in the twentieth century occurred when the pedestal was removed' as the basis for a discussion about what is particular about modern sculpture - which according to Serra is its 'site-specific' character. It seems to me that that is something that sculpture shares, or could share with architecture. Arguably, as sculptors became more interested in specificity, architects became more interested in serialisation and autonomy, mistaking this for 'sculptural form', which confirms Serra's belief that 'Architects are openly reactionary in their adaptation of watered-down artistic conventions'.

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

and what he called 'Johnson/Burgee's "Golden Boy" for the AT&T Building', concluding the interview with the observation that 'postmodernists also believe in the future: the future of AT&T and corporate America.'³⁶⁸ Arguably the symbolic advertising content of capitalist America had evolved by the time it reached Bilbao, by which point it was freedom and creativity itself that was being celebrated, just as in Berlin the IBA projects promoted these values towards the Soviet Bloc. Presumably Serra was not aware in 1982 of the CIA's tacit financial support of Abstract Expressionism and its support for Jackson Pollock?³⁶⁹ Nonetheless, his attack upon architects was not simply political, but artistic. On the one hand Serra repeats the Kantian view that 'to deprive art of its uselessness is to make other than art', and on the other hand his disdain for ornament mirrors modernist architects' misunderstanding of the communicative depth that can be articulated in architecture. Certainly, the fate of 'The Tilted Arc' sculpture in Manhattan – which originally commissioned by the United States General Services Administration Arts-in-Architecture program for the Foley Federal Plaza in front of the Jacob Javits Federal Building, installed in 1981 and then removed in 1989 after a public controversy³⁷⁰ reveals something of the hubris of his disavowal of the ornamental or communicative aspects of sculpture – its civic spatial role.

Serra is at loggerheads with Eisenman throughout most of the interview, but for the most part their differences are superficial and personal (Eisenman talks about Pollock's works being 'not representations' but 'expressions of his feelings... pulsations'; Serra replies, 'I have great difficulty with spurious psychological interpretations.'). Both ascribe to the view that art is best when useless, except that Eisenman seems to think that architecture is also best when useless. Serra believes that 'the internal necessities and motivations' of 'sculpture and painting' have the 'potential to alter the

368 Ibid., p.154.

369 'Modern Art was a CIA Weapon', Frances Stonor Saunders, *The Independent on Sunday*, 22nd October 1995: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/modern-art-was-cia-weapon-1578808.html>

370 Michael Kammen, *Visual Shock*. United States: First Vintage Books Edition, 2006, p. 238. See also David Hopkins, *After Modern Art 1945-2000*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 159.

construction, function, and meaning of architecture' and he claimed that 'Le Corbusier understood this' potential in his Soviet projects.³⁷¹

³⁷¹ Ibid., p. 142: an editor has presumably added this in parenthesis: ('see his letter to Victor Nekrasov, 20 December 1932, in *Oppositions* 23 (1981), p. 133).

Corbusier was quite willing to jump on the bandwagon of Constructivism in an attempt to win work in Russia³⁷². However, his dedication to artistic integration, to the ‘plastic incident’ is clear in his work from the 1950s. He declares in the introduction of Volume 6 of *Oeuvre Complete*, published in 1957, that whilst ‘in our century it is not permitted in the eyes of the “organisers of work” to be a man of different arts – one must be specialized’, what he aspires to is the ‘act of unity’ of a ‘poetic incident’. In this unity, ‘architecture, sculpture, painting, that is to say one volume, form, colour and rhythm are incommensurable or synchronous – synchronous and symphonic’³⁷³. This highly ambiguous phrase was written when Corbusier was ‘in his 70th year’, and is the ‘harvest’ of a ‘seed’ that had been planted ‘fifty years ago’ he claims, for which he had only recently been able to find ‘expression’. Corbusier worked as a writer or painter each working morning, and he worked as a stained glass artist³⁷⁴ at Ronchamp. In the same way, Corbusier acted as a textile artist at the Palais de Justice building at Chandigarh, commissioning and collaborating with the Mill Owners’ Cooperative upon several massive

372 Cf. ‘Le Corbusier and the USSR: New Documentation’, Frederick Starr, *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, Volume 21, Issue, 21-2, 1980, pp. 209-221; and *Le Corbusier and the Mystique of the USSR Theories and Projects for Moscow 1928-1936*, J-L Cohen, Princeton University Press, 1992.

373 *Oeuvre Complete*, Volume 6: 1952-57, Le Corbusier, Birkhäuser, 1957, pp.8-9.

374 Peter Carl notes that Le Corbusier was not at all the first to ‘revive’ this art – its revival begins in the 19th – e.g. the cathedral at Christ Church Oxford – and continues unabated through arts and crafts to folk like Léger. His early water colours from *Voyage en Orient* are full of Ruskinian attention to the synthesis of stone carved and coloured, mosaic, fresco; and he went through the stages of painting via Expressionism to Cubism. The early Purist buildings were white articulated with colour; but Pessac was seen to be an urban scheme articulated through paint [on the exterior]. In the late 20’s, his painting shifts from the “harmony” of the still-lives to figural [and more mystical] themes; that is to say, situational. Admittedly these were situations in an emblematic space – like those illustrating Michael Meier’s Atalanta Fugiens – but the insight corresponded to what he was trying to do with the architecture: create settings in which these relationships and their meanings (according to him – as in the *Poeme de l’angle droit*) became evident (the emblematic approach makes these situations easier to reconcile with the generally ornamental order, as below). The *synthese des arts* text in volume 6 is important, to which the *porte molitor* exhibition proposal also belongs; these and Ronchamp are all happening at the same time and that building and Chandigarh are the most explicit iconographically in his oeuvre. Otherwise, he is quite aniconic and it was not ‘till well after his death that people began to wake up to what he was doing. The iconographic work was explicit in Ronchamp and Chandigarh and otherwise conveyed in photos and in his paintings / graphic work. What is constant is the reciprocity of a structured spatial field and situational requirements – a basis for all metaphoric or thematic development. Email, 29.08.2013.

hanging tapestries, amplifying the use and decorum of the building through ornamental artwork.

Figure 210 Mill Owners' Cooperative Building illustrated in Le Corbusier's Volume 6 of *Oeuvre Complete* (note the emphasis upon the site specific nature of the architecture)

This study is not devoted to the significance of Le Corbusier, although he is complicit in any discussion about art and urbanism in modern architecture of course. It is worth noting however, that overall, Corbusier's attitude towards representation remained highly figurative, both in terms of spatial typology (altars, porticos, kitchens, cloisters, etc), and in sculptural terms (bull's horns, shell roofs, etc).

Figure 211 Palais de Justice building at Chandigarh illustrated in Le Corbusier's Volume 6 of Oeuvre Complete (note the emphasis upon the situation specific nature of the ornament)

Le Corbusier's architecture is undoubtedly a form of ornament, where the figural elements are embedded in geometric armatures; his comparisons between his paintings and architectural plans (*Modulor*) are not strictly formal, as Colin Rowe imagined³⁷⁵, but analogical. Peter Carl demonstrates this in the opening argument in his essay 'Architecture and Time'³⁷⁶, stating of Le Corbusier's 'comprehensiveness of the algebra of signs':

in so far as this code is possessed of content, it resides in the
"marriage of the human and cosmic orders", for which the Modulor
provides the paradigm

Carl goes on to demonstrate that Corbusier's 'whole enterprise' is summarized in this declaration from his *Le Poème de l'Angle Droit*:

³⁷⁵ 'The Mathematics of the Perfect Villa: Palladio and Le Corbusier Compared', Colin Rowe, *The Architectural Review*, March 1947 (published also in *The Mathematics of the Perfect Villa and Other Essays*, MIT, 1982).

³⁷⁶ 'Architecture and Time', *AA Files* 22, 1991, p. 50.

'This for Urb(anism)
architecture
painting
for dialogue
for exegesis
essay (writing)³⁷⁷

Furthermore, Carl shows that 'proportion' relates these 'categories' in a way that makes sense of Corbusier's assertion that 'Music is like architecture, is time and space. Music and architecture alike are a form of measurement'³⁷⁸. He does so by referring us back to the origins of architectural discourse (of Vitruvius) in rhetoric (Cicero):

in this discussion of *ornatus* (and notably, the section on *numerus*, "rhythmic utterance" recalling both ritual speech and the presence of "discourse" and "ratio" in logos), Cicero remarks that good oratory must have *utilitas*, *dignitas*, and *venustas* (beauty).³⁷⁹

Le Corbusier was attempting to articulate the unity or 'harmony' of the arts that are combined together in architecture via analogue, as geometry, and in rhythm. For Corbusier, ornament is the articulation of spatial rhythm as geometry.³⁸⁰ He struggled to recover the analogical significance of proportion from the purely aesthetic use to which it had descended. There are roughly four layers to Corbusier's 'geometric play', Carl contends:

A geometric figure, by virtue of participation in 'golden' ratios offers a paradigmatic sequence of relations (implicitly recovering Neo-Platonic harmonic hierarchies but displaced from Pythagorean harmonics to a logarithmic visual cone he called "visual acoustics"). Secondly this is given dimensional significance through correlation with a putative human standard (re-interpreting *Vitruvian* man via a London hobby). Thirdly, a geometric armature contains within it the potential for figuration according to standard ornamental procedures (his buildings are effectively enlarged portions of ornament) and as deployed in his paintings (for which the Cubist 2D/3D fluctuation is essential). The basic role of ornament is to mediate between the primordial natural

377 Ibid., p. 49.

378 Ibid., p. 48.

379 'Ornament and Time: A Prolegomena', Peter Carl, AA Files 23, 1992, p.50.

380 Cf. pp 15-16 of the *Le Poème de l'Angle Droit*, Le Corbusier, where he moves from his head in a stone, to a stone inscribed with the golden ratio geometry to the 'dance' of the earth, moon, sun; to the annual day-night cycles – solstice/equinox, in which golden-section geometry is cast as mediation between opposites embodied materially.

conditions and human history. Finally, certain geometric armatures contain “arguments” that can be deployed architecturally to locate key settings, walls, columns, *promenades architecturales*, etc. – for example the double square with slipped third square (mediation of the *coincidentia oppositorum*) that constructs the Modulor and underlay the plan of the chapel at Ronchamp.³⁸¹

Corbusier’s insistence upon the power of art to transform architecture was a valid point for Serra to make, even if it is somewhat weakened by Serra’s insistence upon the ‘uselessness’ of art, and his refusal to accept the orientation that ‘ornamentation’ provides both art and architecture.

Figure 212 Chapter on Tapestries in *Le Corbusier’s Volume 6 of Oeuvre Complete* (note the figurative characters set within a rhythmic field akin to plan armature or facade)

³⁸¹ Paraphrased from an email discussion with Peter Carl, 29/08/2013, about the exhibition ‘The Olympic Stadium Project: Le Corbusier & Baghdad’, The Victoria and Albert Museum, 2008- 2009, and the article ‘Geometry and Analogy in Le Corbusier’s Baghdad Veils’, Peter Carl and Irene Murray, AA Files 67.

Figure 213 Image from *Le Corbusier's Modulor I* showing comparisons and similarities between the composition of his paintings, buildings and urban design

Serra's most effective, and critical, attack upon architecture is informed by Land Art. Eisenman continues to use phrases that he had presumably ingested from neo-classical mis-readings of Vitruvius via Rowe³⁸², viz., 'it seems that you ultimately reject this idea of dis-equilibrium in your work and that you reject it because it implies formalist notions of balance, symmetry, and, finally, composition'; and 'is there a notion of scale specificity that is not anthropomorphic, not related to man, but related to the intrinsic being of sculpture?' In contrast, Serra rejects formalist descriptions of sculpture, and instead replies specifically: 'I use gravity as a building principle. I am not particularly interested in dis-equilibrium'; and 'I don't think it's related to the intrinsic being of sculpture. I think that it's related to site and context.'³⁸³ In particular, Serra is keen to challenge architecture through sculpture, and he uses the exemplar sculpture offers of both scale and context to attack both the theory and practise of formalism generally:

You can't build a work in one context, indiscriminately place it in another, and expect the scale relation to remain. Scale is dependent on

³⁸² *The Formal Basis of Modern Architecture*, PhD Dissertation, Peter Eisenman, Cambridge University, 1963; Facsimile published by Lars Muller, 2006.

³⁸³ *Op. Cit.*, p. 145.

context. Portable objects moved from one place to another most often fail for this reason. Henry Moore's work is the most glaring example of this site-adjusted folly. An iron deer on the proverbial front lawn has more contextual significance. Architects suffer from the same studio syndrome. They work out of their offices, terrace the landscape, and place their buildings into a carved site. As a result, site adjusted buildings look like blown-up cardboard models.³⁸⁴

Sculpture challenges architecture as a mode of praxis, Serra suggests, by being 'site specific'. It also challenges what architects call 'context', and 'contextualist architects' generally (Eisenman claims that Serra criticises 'specifically Robert Venturi' - in fact he doesn't mention Venturi):

for "contextualists" to build site-specific means to analyse the context and the content of an indigenous cultural situation, then to conclude that what's needed is to maintain the status quo. That's how they seek meaning. They give a great deal of priority to the person who laid down the first rock as well as the last person who put up a signboard.³⁸⁵

Eisenman's response to this accusation is to accept it and to propose that 'there could be site-specific architecture that is critical, that attempts something other than an affirmation that everything pre-existing on the site is good.' He then suggests that 'Piranesi's recreations and Palladio's redrawings were inventions and not so much concerned with what had actually been on a site'. In doing so, he immediately distances himself from the problems of 'critical site-specific architecture' in favour of fictional and formalistic abstractions of architectural language. Eisenman seems to have instigated the interview with Serra because he felt genuine 'interest' in his work. However he cannot cope with the challenge that Serra makes to formalism.

What is revealed in the interview - if Eisenman is as representative of academia as he and I would suggest he is - is that American architects' discourse is fixated with semiotics in language, and formalism in the visual

384 Ibid., pp.145-6. Serra continues however to declare that 'There are exceptions: the work of Le Corbusier, Wright, Kahn, Gehry...'. Presumably, at this point Gehry was still friendly with the Venice Beach crowd that included Robert Irwin, et al. For a description of this scene see *Seeing is forgetting the name of the thing one sees*, Lawrence Weschler, University of California Press, 1982.

385 Ibid., p. 147.

arts, i.e. two versions of formalism, with a 'pulsating' dose of visual metaphors standing in for visual intelligence.

iii *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe The Eisenman-Serra
collaboration at Berlin & Rachel Whiteread's Judenplatz Holocaust
Memorial at Vienna*

Arguably Serra and Eisenman's Holocaust Memorial is heavily indebted formally to Serra's early work, in particular to *Shift* (1970-72)³⁸⁶. However, *Shift* is a situational and a geometric construction not a formal one. Serra describes it very precisely as a way in which 'looking back across the valley, images, and thoughts are remembered which were initiated by the consciousness of having experienced them'. Eisenman and Serra's response to the broken nature of Berlin, in *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe*, refer us to its historical situation via disorientation i.e. as one walks it one experiences fear, as one's companions temporarily disappear.

Figure 214 *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, Peter Eisenman and Richard Serra*

³⁸⁶ Serra left the project unexpectedly in 1998 before a winner was announced. See: <http://www.nytimes.com/1998/06/04/arts/serra-quits-berlin-s-holocaust-memorial-project.html>.

Despite its formal abstraction, the work is like an advertisement, illustrative of a predetermined position, an emotional response to a somewhat hokey metaphor ('Berlin is broken') and an emotionally manipulative experience ('your loved ones disappear'). The "architectural elements" of the disabled entrance lift, and the steep entrance stair, struggle to continue the formal language of the 'stelai' columns, but fail to reconcile the site-specific aspects of the design within a convincing architectural setting. There is no rhythmical communication between the 'practical' and the 'poetic' aspects of the project, and one is left wondering is this is a failure of 'design', or whether it fails as 'art'; or in fact, it fails as both. Serra dropped out of the collaboration after winning the competition, presumably before the pragmatic aspects of the project became so unbearably demanding, leaving Eisenman to try to incorporate disabled entrances into a project based upon monumental experiences, which is nonetheless actually also a small museum.

Figure 215 Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, Peter Eisenman and Richard Serra (disabled lift room entrance)

Figure 216 Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, Peter Eisenman and Richard Serra (doorway to disabled lift room)

This failure is in stark contrast to the immediate context of *Unter den Linden*, *Das Brandenburger Tor* and *Tiergarten*. City Gate, boulevard and park manage to both define and allude to a typical and an actual city. Whilst the structure has a powerfully morbid presence, it fails to offer the freedom of the neighbouring park, or of a typical civic square. Security Guards stop spontaneous games and the typical activities that constitute the public life of an urban space. The project seems to be a metaphor, but its meaning is confusing; are the 'stelai' tombs or people? Is the site a representation of a graveyard, or sacred ground? Or a representation of a city? It is impossible to participate with the structure, nor to make any other reading of the artwork than a literal one (stelai = tombs). In contrast, the reconstructed colonnade that winds around the Neues Museum recovers the rhythm of central Berlin, albeit interrupted, and scarred by evidence of the city's ignoble past.³⁸⁷ Part of

³⁸⁷ Cf., *Neues Museum Berlin: Architectural Guide*, Adrian von Buttlar, 2010: in which he describes how close Frank Gehry came to winning the competition to refurbish the museum, with a scheme that certain members of the jury thought might replicate the 'commercial success' of the Bilbao Guggenheim. Gehry's proposals contained elements with formal similarities to his projects in Spain and elsewhere, which are often considered to possess rhythm. My aim is to situate this quality as an aspect of spatiality, not as a description of shapes.

the problem the project poses is the impossibility of forgetting, in this context, Theodor Adorno's statement – usually mistranslated – that there should be 'no poetry after Auschwitz'.³⁸⁸ Eisenman's memorial has a peculiar sort of haunting 'poetic' quality, but it is neither particularly communicative, nor is it a mundane and useful part of the city; it offers neither a 'time out of time' experience, like a graveyard or a festive space, nor is it capable of transformation, like most other parts of most cities.

Arguably, a more appropriate Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe would be a new city block made up of businesses, a synagogue, apartments, a concert hall, a crèche, a study centre, etc., all of the everyday aspects of life that were lost in the Holocaust. Libeskind's Jewish Museum had already provided for Berlin spaces both within and around the galleries that act as series of powerful memorials of absences – and it achieved this in making a critique of the Humanist conventions of museum culture and of neo-classical architecture, without pretending to be sculpture. Crucially, it achieves this in spatial terms, and acts as a critique of semiotic and visual formalism.

³⁸⁸ 'Kulturkritik findet sich der letzten Stufe der Dialektik von Kultur und Barbarei gegenüber: nach Auschwitz ein Gedicht zu schreiben, ist barbarisch, und das frisst auch die Erkenntnis an, die ausspricht, warum es unmöglich ward, heute Gedichte zu schreiben.' *Cultural Criticism and Society*, Theodor Adorno, 1951.

Figure 217 'The Void of Memory', Jewish Museum Berlin, Daniel Libeskind

Figure 218 Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, Peter Eisenman and Richard Serra
(explanatory text describing what is not allowed to occur there)

Rachel Whiteread's Judenplatz Holocaust Memorial, opened in Vienna in 2000, succeeds as a public sculpture and as part of a city for a number of reasons. Firstly, the solid concrete block is situated in a city space that was traditionally the centre of Jewish life in the city, and which is used everyday as a route, and so one's encounter with it - and its power - is not dependent upon you consciously deciding to encounter it as 'art'. Secondly, the memorial sits in front of, and tacitly defines the forecourt of the Viennese Jewish Museum whose café acts also as an informal Community Centre; so it is part of the everyday experience of Jewish and non-Jewish life in Vienna. Thirdly, the intellectual, material and figurative content of the artwork brilliantly conveys both the scale of a single room, and re-presents the absence of a multitude. It also operates as a poetic image that resonates with Jewish cultural and religious metaphors - a room of books, an impenetrable ark, the world petrified in unreadable and unspeakable words.

Figure 219 Judenplatz Holocaust Memorial, Vienna, Rachel Whiteread

Eisenman attempts in his monument to represent the terrible nature of loss, the loss of a multitude of human figures, reified as stones, and, arguably, objectified as guilt. It is as if Germans and Germany can never be forgiven, can never recover, even if the city of Berlin belies this. Whiteread's memorial resonates because it is a fragment of what is lost, leaving visitor's imaginations to occupy the silence. As a thing it is a solid concrete cast inversion of a book-lined room, making potently palpable and visible not only a single space, but also a typical room that has been suddenly brought forward from the domestic into the civic realm. The simultaneous presence and absence of human voices resides in a petrified image of devastated Jewish *Mittle European* culture - a *momento mori* that succeeds through the figurative character and scale of a room. One's hands are drawn to touch the books, and the implacable withdrawn resistance of the concrete somehow manages to evoke its opposite, actual burnt books, burning hands, dead bodies. This mimetic inversion occurs on the 'outside' of a room that one cannot enter, whose interior is paradoxically suddenly all around you in the city. It faces a 19th century bronze statue of the playwright GE Lessing, which is sat on a granite plinth approximately the same

height as the Holocaust Memorial. Lessing's attempts to reveal the equality of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, in his play *Nathan the Wise* (1779)³⁸⁹, led to his commemoration in Judenplatz, and his continued rebuke to chauvinism helps to situate Whiteread's work in an urban and cultural continuum.

Figure 220 Judenplatz Holocaust Memorial, Vienna, Rachel Whiteread

The major achievement of the sculpture resides in the way that the civic depth of the site is revealed. Whiteread brings the domestic scale of a room into equivalence with a public space, via the mediating image of a library formed from the repetitive rhythm of inverted books. This ambivalent image of domesticity and urbanity is at once enduring and fragile, and is capable of accepting the quotidian delight of children playing on and around the plinth as they leave the neighbouring Jewish community centre. Whiteread's sculpture is thus essentially public – it brings history and daily life into close proximity with something unspeakable. The rhythmic continuity of city life and the rhythms of the natural world co-exist together of course with the human capacity for cruelty and beauty, and here they co-exist very clearly beside a reminder of the almost unbearable fact of human finitude.

389 *Nathan the Wise; a dramatic poem in five acts*, translated and edited by Leo Markun. Girard, Kan., Haldeman-Julius Co., 1926. See also his essay of 1766, *Laocoon. An essay upon the limits of painting and poetry: With remarks illustrative of various points in the history of ancient art*, translated by Ellen Frothingham. Boston, Little, Brown, 1904. In this essay Lessing criticizes the trend to accept Horace's *ut pictura poesis* (as painting, so poetry) as definitive also for literature: 'In other words, he objected to trying to write poetry using the same devices as one would in painting. Instead, poetry and painting each has its character (the former is extended in time; the latter is extended in space). This is related to Lessing's turn from French classicism to Aristotelian mimesis.' (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gotthold_Ephraim_Lessing, accessed 07/10/2014 at 16.43)

In contrast to his collaboration with Eisenman in Berlin, Serra insists plausibly that 'Shift' was made as a discovery:

We discovered that two people walking the distance of the field opposite one another, attempting to keep each other in view despite the curvature of the land, would mutually determine a topographical definition of the space. The boundary of the work became the maximum distance two people could occupy and still keep each other in view. The horizon of the work was established by the possibility of maintaining this viewpoint... a dialectic between one's perception of the place in totality and one's relation to the field as walked. The result is a way of measuring oneself against the indeterminacy of the land.³⁹⁰

In contrast to what Serra calls 'the machinery of renaissance space' which 'depends on measurements remaining fixed and immutable, these steps relate to a continually shifting horizon, and as measurements they are totally transitive... the line, as a visual element, per step, becomes a transitive verb.'

Figure 221 Shift, Richard Serra

³⁹⁰ 'Shift', in *op cit*, p. 11-12.

Serra concludes that due to the role memory plays in one's experience of place, 'the work does not concern itself with centering'. Rather, whilst there are two vaguely symmetrical forms created by the walls, your experience of them as you walk on them is not of things; instead, 'this alignment contracts the intervals of space – not as drawing (or linear configuration) but as volume (as space contained).' As a result of participation in the artwork, which is a way of participating with the site (hence 'site-specific' art work), 'the expanse of the work allows one to perceive and locate a multiplicity of centres.' He concludes that the work 'shifts' perception from objects to the spaces described by figures walking on them, and so its name refers to how it is perceived cognitively, not what it looks like metaphorically. Cognition is involved however; not simply visual perception, but also a geometric experience of something described by one's involvement with the site, and with someone else there:

'Similar elevations – elevations equal in height – in an open field, on a flat floor, shift both horizontally and vertically in relation to one's locomotion. Because of this, the centre, or the question of centring, is dislocated from the physical centre of the work and found in a moving centre. Hat's off Galileo.'³⁹¹

Figure 222 Shift, Richard Serra, sketch showing the orbits of movement described by the sculptor

As well as a critique of perspectival space, Serra reveals in the last line of his description of the artwork – itself a critical part of one's experience of it – what

³⁹¹ Ibid., p. 13. It is debatable whether he actually meant to praise Copernicus!

can only be described as literally a cosmic dimension to 'Shift'. One's perception of it echoes the elliptical orbit of planets.

Figure 223 Shift, Richard Serra

Not only did Copernicus (Serra mistakes him for Galileo) *shift*³⁹² the centre of the cosmos from the earth to the sun he also set in motion a new mental image of the place of mankind on earth in relation to tradition, the church, etc. Perception was shown to be a construction that could alter with knowledge, and through action. Serra's friend Robert Smithson refers to this as 'the topography of the mind'³⁹³ whereby mental processes occur like tectonic shifts, rock falls, etc. Land Art reproduces the processes of the mind, not by imitating the appearance of mental topography as a visual metaphor, but by offering experiences in which perception shifts, making one aware of the gravity of thought and its contingency dependent upon situations.

³⁹² Serra seems to have been referring to Thomas Kuhn's *The Copernican Revolution*, originally published by Harvard in 1957, which introduced the phrase "paradigm shift".

³⁹³ 'The Topography of the Mind', in *Writings of Robert Smithson*, ed. Jack Flam, California, 1979.

Figure 224 Shift, Richard Serra

Rhythm is of course ubiquitous – it is present in all aspects of life. Eisenman’s gridded blocks in Berlin are visually arresting – if a cliché for “order” – and yet one cannot help but notice the disjunctions between them and the city, manifest in cleaner’s equipment, disabled entrances, etc. So, whilst it is possible to say that the Jewish memorial is rhythmic in the sense that there is a formally rhythmic composition of blocks, it is cut off from the actual rhythms of life of the city – its institutions and everyday life. The problem comes from the fact that it isn’t an art gallery piece, but is an actual part of a city; and the need for a private police force to have to constantly tell children and teenagers off for waking on the blocks reveals that something is fundamentally lacking in the project i.e. anticipation of how the work of art might work in its site³⁹⁴.

³⁹⁴This is a failure of imagination I suggest, and arguably derives from an obsession with formal patterns over actions i.e. is a direct result, I would argue, of Eisenman’s formalistic theoretical position, which arguably exaggerates and distorts Rowe’s own work.

Figure 225 Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, Peter Eisenman and Richard Serra (showing what is not allowed to occur there, but what happens there every day anyway)

What one might call "rhythms of city life" include the possibility for spontaneity and for highly structured representation. The preceding chapter on Florence describes how "communicative movement" works to situate urban life in relation to both the countryside and to death e.g. funeral orations, parades, etc.

In *Shift* Serra succeeds in revealing that the "grounds of being" are at once bodily and imaginative. Despite being in a field in the middle of the countryside³⁹⁵, it is communicative in the sense that it "throws" the participant beyond themselves into the world. In experiential, and geometric terms, its centre is displaced. In his book *Architecture Oriented Otherwise*, David Leatherbarrow describes what he calls 'aliocentric architecture':

Always a matter of degree, the individuality of a building, like that of a person, is measured by its participation in shared conditions. With this observation in mind, one can also say that the disintegration of urban order is the precondition for the building's object like independence. More positively, the dependence assumed in both sharing and privation suggests that the building is codetermined by conditions that are not of its own making. This means that the definition of a location

³⁹⁵ Shift is located in King City, Ontario, Canada about 50 kilometers north of Toronto. The work was commissioned in 1970 by art collector Roger Davidson and installed on his family property: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shift_\(sculpture\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shift_(sculpture))

involves a corresponding dislocation, a centering of the building outside itself. Orientation is nothing other than the acknowledgement of this *ecstasis* or *allicentricity*.³⁹⁶

I suggest that this 'ecstasis' is an aspect of rhythm that reveals its public or civic potential. Rhythm establishes the possibility of communicative reference between site, architecture and sculpture as an innate and latent aspect of the encounter between the imagination and the world³⁹⁷. We can now add the vital role that rhythm plays in communicative movement to our understanding of the potentially civic character of spatiality. This repertoire of critical terms – urban topography, communicative movement, analogical nature, geometric poetics, etc., - and their role in certain exemplary projects, provides a critical framework to discuss the potential for the renewal of civic life at Victoria – what an artist collaborator calls, with ridiculous yet humorous hubris, 'The Rebirth of Public Man'³⁹⁸.

396 *Architecture Oriented Otherwise*, David Leatherbarrow, Princeton, 2009, p.11.

397 Heidegger was influenced a great deal by the concept of *Umwelt* developed by Jakob von Uexküll, Tim Ingold claims in 'Point, Line, Counterpoint: From Environment to Fluid Space', in *Being Alive: Essays on Movement, Knowledge and Description*, Routledge, 2011, p. 81. For von Uexküll 'every creature is equivalent to a melody in counterpoint', and it seems that Giles Deleuze may have also been aware of this metaphor when he claimed that to improvise is 'to join with the world or meld with it. One ventures home on the thread of a tune' (cited by Ingold, *Ibid*, p.84). In contrast, my thesis is that it is the rhythm of situations that structures one's movement each day, and that architecture supports, enables and re-presents the rhythmic character of situations in its physiognomy and spatial order.

398 Cf. *The Fall of Public Man*, Richard Sennett, Knopf, 1977. Hilary Koob-Sassen is working with me on the sculptural program for Victoria Library. He is the son of Saskia Sassen and the stepson of Richard Sennett.

CHAPTER 7

RHYTHMIC SPATIALITY AND THE COMMUNICATIVE MOVEMENT BETWEEN SITE, ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURE: LYNCH ARCHITECTS AT VICTORIA STREET

'The original meaning of "decoration" or décor, adheres closely to that of "ornament", which derives from the Latin translation and equivalent of the Greek kosmos – the order of the natural world. In this ontological understanding, order is an implicit and harmonious relationship of parts to the whole, which in our case corresponds to the reciprocity between the relationships of individual arts and unified space. Architecture and the arts take their decorative meaning from the nonaesthetic, mediative role in the process of representation. They are thus closely related to the Greek understanding of representation as kosmospoiesis, the articulation of meaning and order in view of the whole.'

Dalibor Vesely

I will now describe in detail a number of projects that I have designed at Victoria that attempt to re-establish the possibility of communicative movement between site, architecture and sculpture in London today. These projects represent an attempt to reconcile questions of spatial rhythm and *decorum* within a technological and civic urban topography. This hubristic ambition can be characterised in two ways: firstly, as an attempt to situate existing and new civic institutions into a coherent image of a town (one that is currently lacking visibility although is latent within the existing urban order); and secondly, to try to reveal the urban topography of Victoria, in experiential and symbolic terms, as key to one's understanding of it as a place.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁹ I exhibited some of this work at the Venice Biennale of architecture in 2012 entitled *Common Ground*, which was curated by Sir David Chipperfield and Kieran Long. I used the opportunity of exhibiting at Venice to present to public scrutiny the questions posed by this dissertation (I have commented above upon the reaction that this elicited from Peter Eisenman). I did this by going back to origins of the influence of my teachers upon me, and I think also to the core of their thinking about the problems of *decorum* and technology in modern cities, which is central to my design work in London. These encounters led quite quickly to questions about the representational content of urban life, and also to the ethical nature of this and to the ethical content of representation and ornament. This resulted in a short film based upon interviews with Rykwert and Vesely (which so enraged Eisenman), a 1/3 scale model of the new Victoria library façade, and a table upon which I exhibited drawings and artefacts and films by artists with whom we are collaborating at Victoria.

Figure 226 Model photograph showing Land Securities current building projects on Victoria Street

Our client, Land Securities, is in the unusual position of owning most of the land and buildings at Victoria. In the 1960s they constructed a number of mediocre modernist pastiches, e.g. Portland House is a not-so-distant echo of Gio Ponti's Pirelli Tower in Milan, itself copied by Beluschil et al for the Pan Am building in New York. Land Securities are currently developing and building projects at Victoria by Benson and Forsyth, PLP (formerly KPF), David Chipperfield, Caruso St John, Buschow Henley and Lynch architects. We are working on two large urban sites, one of which forms the 'planning gain' for VTI, which is made up of a market-residential building along Buckingham Palace Road by Benson and Forsyth, and 3 large office blocks by PLP. I will describe the VTI project first, as this is the part of the first group of

projects that we designed at Victoria, and because this is the most explicit example of an architectural project that seeks to recover the status of civic institutions and to recreate the traditional notion of architecture as a setting and explicitly a setting for sculpture.

Figure 227 Model photograph showing Victoria Street in the context of London

Figure 228 Aerial photograph with Lynch architects projects superimposed upon Victoria Street; Buckingham Palace and the Royal Parks sit in the centre of the image with Westminster Cathedral at the base, Victoria Station is bottom left, Westminster Abbey off the page to the right, and Buckingham Palace and The Mall also in the centre

Figure 229 Urban Rooms on Victoria Street 2

Figure 230 Collage showing Lynch architects Library on Victoria Street viewed from Victoria Station

Victoria Library forms the 'setting of a listed building', Frank Matcham's pseudo-Renaissance Victoria Palace Theatre. It is the 'Section 106' part of a much larger development that has been called variously Victoria Transport Interchange (VTI), Victoria Circle, and at the moment, Nova (North Victoria). Large developments inspire complex taxation (known in planning law as Section 106 agreements). These tie developers to paying tithes for receiving planning consent and provide local authorities with funds for improving the public realm and public services. Typically schools receive grants for new buildings, or pavements are changed from asphalt to stone. This levy stands in for general taxation, which successive governments since the 1980s have felt unable to declare in their manifestos. The shortfall in revenue gathered by central government is now raised directly by boroughs and the councils from developers who can see exactly where the tax will be spent. It stands in for, and in many ways replaces, if not replicates the Welfare State.

Figure 231 Model photograph showing Lynch architects projects on Victoria Street with Parliament Square at the top of the image

Figure 232 Collage showing the South façade of Lynch architects Library on Victoria Street

Victoria Library sits above a sewer built by Bazalgette in 1865, following his work on the draining of the marshland upon which Victoria was originally constructed. The former canal that became the mainline train terminal used to work in tandem with The Stag Brewery, which sat on the site of Portland House across from our site, and which is now being refurbished by David Chipperfield architects.

Figure 239 Collage showing the library on the left and David Chipperfield's proposals for Portland House to the right

Figure 234 Site Plan showing the Library Site with new buildings by Benson and Forsyth architects and KPF/PLP to the left, with Chipperfield's Portland House project on the right; Victoria Station is on the bottom left and the Westminster Cathedral Piazza on the bottom right of the image

Figure 235 Drawing showing the underground constraints affecting the Library site

In-between the library and the sewer runs the Victoria Line, and in particular a new ticket hall is currently being built beneath our project, the ventilation towers of which will be incorporated into our building. Chipperfield is working on the conversion of Portland House to residential accommodation, and he also has designed the new entrance to the Victoria Line station, which will sit across Bressenden Place from the entrance to our library. Vogt Landscape are working on a large-scale planting scheme for Victoria Street and its neighbouring hinterland, which attempts to 'soften' the road engineered system and to allude to and bring closer the verdant world of St James Park. The presence of major subterranean technological infrastructure, and its submergence and taming of the natural world is a primary theme in our Victoria projects. It is also the principal inspiration for the iconographic program of sculptures that we have devised with the artist Hilary Koob-Sassen.

Figure 236 Axonometric detail and sectional façade showing the layered solar chimneys of the south façade of the library

The other major influence upon the design of the building is its southerly aspect and the need to limit solar gain and thus to limit the running costs of the library. Ventilation shafts represent the presence of the underground system and its reliance upon fresh air, and our project is in a crude sense a decorative carapace around this. Earth, air, sunlight; these are the primary ingredients of the decorative program. Hilary sees the screen façade as a trellis upon which the cultivated natural world blossoms into an expression of the fruits of culture, revealing the constant presence of the natural world and of the implicit tensions within technological infrastructure and public life. He also calls the project, with huge hubristic exaggeration, 'the re-birth of public man'.

Figure 237 Axonometric drawing showing the initial strategy for sculptures as part of the library façade

Figure 238 Composite drawing by Hilary Koob-Sassen and Lynch architects showing sculptures representing the muses inhabiting the south façade of the library 'trellis'

In urban terms our project is in fact a mixed use L-shaped edge to a city block, and we have tried to consolidate and to emphasise the primacy of the block in this location in contrast to the neighbouring existing and proposed buildings whose forms are generated almost exactly as a correlation between the shape of sites defined by roads and the economic imperative, which ordinarily leads architects to build to the limit of the plot boundary.

Figure 239 Model photograph showing the city block with indicative positions of the sculptural program arranged across the three new buildings

In programmatic terms, the library is accompanied by 36 units of affordable housing i.e. 10 x 1 bedroom 'intermediate' flats which 'key workers' (nurses, firemen, school teachers, etc.) will occupy and part-own, and 26 family 'social needs rented' flats ranging from 2-4 bedrooms, which will be occupied by low-income residents. The library is pre-let to Westminster City Council at 50% of the market rental for office accommodation, and the 'affordable housing' was designed in tandem with Dominion, a 'Registered Social Landlord' who will manage the properties and act as landlord. Accompanying these uses, a small office building will sit perpendicular to Bressenden Place along Allington Street at the rear of the site, behind the Palace Theatre's planned new fly-tower. This incorporates the façade and ground floor and basement of Suttons, a 1930s 'Moderne' Pawn Brokers, which used to sit 200m away on Victoria Street.

Our initial intention was to house sculptures representing the 9 Muses in the solar-screen that defines the south façade of the library, and for each of the muses to be represented not as a figure *per se*, but rather for the essence of each muse to be re-presented in a spatial and material analogue. Put somewhat crudely, each muse embodied and represented one aspect of culture central to ancient Greek society. This culture was oriented towards re-presenting aspects of the natural world. Urania re-presents and stands in for the role that astronomy plays in culture; astronomy is a metonym for the stars and the night sky, which in its self is one visible aspect of Cosmos – that is, order, unity, world, universe. And so what is necessarily partial in human understanding was understood in the familial metaphor of a family of sisters to be a form of linked unifying themes that taken together describe the unity of culture as a mirror of nature. The co-existence of the library and theatre led me initially to think that the muses was an appropriate metaphor for the essentially memorial nature of both, in the sense that a House of the Muses might be construed not only as a museum, and that a library houses all of the knowledge that we associate with the muses. The muses represent in fact the various aspects of culture that we collect in books and house in libraries. However, unlike a mediaeval library or a 16th century university library such as Coimbra or a monastic collection such as at St Gall, a modern public library does not order books according to the *Trivium et Quadrivium*, or any other analogous system of Muse-like derivation. What can be said though, is that a library is now much less of an archive or a scriptorium than in the past: it houses not just images of the cornucopia of human activities contained previously within books, it actually houses them. A modern library in London is not just a metaphorical representation of an ideal civic life: it accommodates it, and should represent this fact.

The question that arose immediately alongside this hermeneutic interpretation of 'house of culture' as 'the muses', was 'how can the various aspects of culture housed in a library respond to its location in a city quarter?' Since it is clear to me that a house of culture cannot simply stand-in for culture, and that the true home of this is the city itself of which a library is simply one part. It might be one of the most explicit parts of a city – but it must be explicit about its role in and place in a city if it is to exhibit any of the

civic qualities that Alberti demanded of architecture. It is not enough for a library simply to 'look like a library' in semiotic terms i.e. it is not enough to have a set of stone steps up to a portico in the manner of most 19th century institutional buildings. It is not enough for a library to become instead a machine for reading or a machine for meaning. What remains interesting about the muses is that in depictions of them something of the character of each discipline and art is revealed, and that these share resemblances with each other. I take this to mean that they are like buildings in a city rather than strangers.

In fact, buildings in cities not only define each other as different institutions or 'types' but share characteristics; buildings in fact can have many spatial typologies and even different building types within themselves. A library is not just a book depository or a store, but also a theatre for performances and readings as well as a place to study: it houses individual and communal activities, re-representing all of them to inhabitants and the city beyond. A library should exhibit aspects of civic culture and at the same time attempt to re-present the origins of our knowledge in the natural world.

Figure 240 Exploded Axonometric drawing showing the grand stair at ground floor that also acts as an amphitheatre and the layers of the facades which house sculptures at specific points in one's experience of the building's relationship with its setting, sunlight, views, etc.

The question 'how can the various aspects of culture housed in a library respond to its location in a city quarter?' can only be answered as architecture. This is why the following texts stand-in for drawings and images that need to be imagined and also remembered when assessing the success or otherwise of architectural ambition. Civic ambitions might be defined as architectural ambition. The desire and ability to create memorable images and experiences of city institutions re-presents these values located somewhere, and are incarnate and heuristic. How, then?

Figure 241 Composite Sections through the library South-North showing the District and Circle Line tunnel to the left (The Victoria Line runs perpendicular beneath this) with the intermediate one bedroom apartments in the upper right of the image sat above the reading rooms

The base of the new building steps back from the entrance colonnade to the theatre creating the opportunity for a seat (from the necessity to face the exposed brick wall with stone). This new stonewall will house a *bas-relief* sculpture depicting the underground transport and technological systems, or in other words the history of the site. The Muse of history is Clio, and so it is possible to extrapolate a slightly hokey and pretentious allusion to her presence in a mural that represents the hidden aspects of the site. This intellectual scaffold became at once too obvious and pointless quite quickly, and as the project developed the thematic of the muses has become absorbed into a less selfconscious attempt to situate a number of spatial settings in relation to use and to their location. The stone bench is a typical architectural trope which was common to Renaissance Palazzos, grounding the battered base of Alberti's Palazzo Rucellai for instance in a common territory of use. Despite its niches and statues, Frank Matcham's *frons scenai* façade of The Victoria Palace Theatre is uninhabited and shallow. In contrast, our urban palace can operate not only as an allusion to a classical architectural trope analogically, but its use as a library enables us to inhabit the immediate territory with real bodies.

Figure 242 Ground Floor Plan showing the Victoria Station tube vents etc., in blue with the listed building Suttons superimposed into the top left North-West corner of the site (moved 200m from Victoria Street)

The ground floor of the library is entered – during library hours – at the southeast corner of the building, and after-hours the upper floor restaurant and bar can be entered from the secondary entrance beside the theatre. So, the need for a large staircase at the ground floor, clearly orienting visitors and separating the children’s library from the foyer offers the opportunity also for an amphitheatre enabling reading groups and recitals and actors next door to perform and to rehearse. This grand stair is of course a common spatial type in traditional and recent architecture, and its orientation towards natural light gives direction to a library. It also acts grounding a visitor in common experience of libraries generally, acting as an actual and imaginative link to the experiences that follow. In this case it seems obvious to us that a *bas relief* sculpture would be best revealed in light falling on to it from above, continuing the thematic of depth established outside in Hilary’s allusion to the underworld

beneath Victoria Street – its murky past and birth in the control and purging of nature of its inhuman elements. You can experience what Peter Ackroyd calls, in *London Under*, ‘darkness visible’⁴⁰⁰.

Figure 24.9 Early design development sections through library staircase

In this vein the ascent through the library corresponds with an archetypal journey from earthly confusion towards illumination and transcendence, if only in terms of transition from thickness towards lightness, from opacity towards transparency. In our somewhat strained analogy, the muse of mass or choral poetry, Polyhymnia, seems an appropriate image to form the backdrop to the space for the various performances of being in a library. But this analogue should perhaps instead be seen as a basic contrast between matter and light. In typological terms the grand stair defines the first level of the library as a gallery, which opens above the entrance to reveal a balcony extension to the *piano nobile*; thus establishing the ground floor colonnade as a transitional order that also links the library loggia to the upper

400 *London Under*, Peter Ackroyd, Vintage, London, 2012, pp.1-13.

levels of the auditoria within. Theatre and library are established in continuity with each other both as urban figures on the streetscape, and as a series of territories held and defined by their theatrical facades; these are penetrated by a landscape of staircases that combine movement with stasis (drama), from bar to stage on the one hand, and from foyer to bar on the other hand next door. The large stair at ground floor resolves a practical problem by creating a territory between the children's library – necessarily situated at ground floor – and its proximity to the main entrance. This solution avoids the need for walled barriers, but also creates a shared *topos* for performances and play.

Figure 244 Model photographs of grand library stair

Ascending to the 4th floor past and through three floors of reading floors, one emerges past a translucent red onyx wall, via a café, onto a south-facing roof terrace framed by a row of giant-order stone columns that form a parterre overlooking the long sweep of the railways tracks towards the river. These house solar chimneys, precisely calibrated to purge warm air from the reading rooms below. They also establish an analogue between the gallery of a villa or a palace, and its garden or loggia. From this point one ascends still further into the double height public meeting room, which will be used for planning committee meetings and other evening activities associated with the working of Westminster Council. Evening sunlight enters this room from a small, high west-facing window, situating the planning committees and the other events there in an explicit relationship with both the city beyond and also the natural world. The implied horizon of the actions to be enacted within are

both literally above, and also not quite aloof or distant from the life of the city. The theatricality of terrace of the café below work in concert with the performances set up by the orientation and character of the double height public room and the rhythm of the seasons. The calendar of political life – bi-weekly planning meetings, monthly council meetings, etc., - will become sensible as both background to urban order, and also effective upon the urban structure that situates the foreground of decision-making, the drama of justice, etc.

Figure 245 Collage of public room at the top of the library

Figure 246 Collage showing the South East corner of the library

The urban institutions of Victoria were present but hidden from each other by the domination of traffic-determined architecture. Victoria Street became typified in the 1960s by very long office buildings. The design of 123 Victoria Street led to the design of Westminster Cathedral Piazza, at the insistence of Westminster Council's Planning department. Up until then, the Cathedral had no space in front of it for processions – and in fact its inauguration in 1910 led to police intervention in the parade of The Blessed Sacrament around the site. However Cardinal Manning was able to consecrate the building by blessing the cathedral precinct.

Figure 247 Collage showing the consecration of Westminster Cathedral in 1910 with the baldacchino of St Peter's Rome (about 1/3 size) superimposed upon the forecourt

Until the 1970s it was impossible for Palm Sunday Processions or any other civic displays to occur there. In 2011 Westminster Council held a design competition for Westminster Cathedral Piazza, in concert with the cathedral and Land Securities, who owned the commercial buildings facing it. Lynch architects were shortlisted and made a design for the piazza based upon the proposition that a baptistery was required to establish a transitional territory between the shops and the cathedral that could also act as a drinking fountain for the homeless. This would take the form of a baldacchino whose height and location was set up by the rhythm of the colonnade within the cathedral, one bay of which was to be projected out into the piazza.

Figure 248 Plan diagram showing the spatial rhythms that locate the baldacchino and the 'Venetian' paving in Westminster Cathedral Piazza

Figure 249 Collage showing the proposed baldacchino in Westminster Cathedral Piazza

Westminster Cathedral is built upon the foundations of a prison, which sat in marshland, and it does not face East. Our baldacchino would sit on cardinal orientation within the piazza, sat beside a mature plane tree, acting as a portal marking the limit of ritualistic and mundane time. Westminster Cathedral was designed by JF Bentley following a trip to Venice, from where his trip to Istanbul was curtailed by a cholera outbreak. Bentley's intention was to visit early Christian Byzantine churches and to base his design upon these precedents, feeling that Gothic had been appropriated by The Church of England and that nothing could compete with Westminster Abbey. He was also looking for an ecumenical architecture, something that could re-establish continuity following the break with tradition symbolised by the English Reformation. His Venetian visit was fruitful however, and the cathedral has been influenced by St Marks I suggest. What is lacking though is Piazza San Marco and Piazzetta San Marco. Our plan is to introduce these two types of spaces to Victoria, creating a strong rhythmic connection to Westminster City Hall in a way that is analogous of the civic territory of Venice.

Figure 250 Model of the Piazzetta San Marco with library on the left, Doge's Palace on the right and the church and campanile towards the top of the image

Figure 251 Plan of Piazza and Piazzetta San Marco

This *topos* holds the competing demands of temporal and divine power in a balanced equilibrium and tension; the cathedral, Doge's palace and Sansovino's library combine together to articulate a representational spatial realm. This is achieved through the rhythm of the spatial settings and through the repetition of spatial proportions and volumes within the facades of the various building types and in the measure of the volumes that connect them. The markings on the ground at Venice enabled Napoleon to regulate the market traders, creating what he called 'Europe's Drawing Room'. Our design for Westminster Cathedral Piazza takes the idea of a city of urban rooms as the basis for a spatial proposition that sees rhythm as a mode of *decorum*.

Figure 252 Collage showing our proposals for Westminster Cathedral Piazza

We also suggested an iconographic program for the baldacchino working again with the sculptor Hilary Koob-Sassen. We proposed that only one of the columns would be carved, and only one of the sides would depict a figure. This image would depict the face of The Blessed John Henry Newman, which was said to have been as white as milk. The baldacchino would be made of fine white pre-cast concrete, parts of which would be inlaid with white marble, enabling the likenesses of future English Saints to be carved into the structure. Obviously, it would take a very long time to complete the project.

Figure 253 Model photograph of the baldacchino

Figure 254 Collage showing the piazza in use for a wedding

Figure 255 Image from above Westminster Cathedral looking East towards Westminster City Hall showing Kings Gate and Westminster City Hall

Westminster City Hall is housed within a 19 storey office tower built as a speculative development 1960-66 to a design by Burnet Tait & Partners, and the council rent it from Land Securities. Either side of it the same architects built two 135m long slab blocks called Kingsgate House (to the west of city hall) and Selbourne House to the east. The latter was demolished in 2009 and

is now replaced with a new office building by Cesar Pelli. My practice's other building site on Victoria Street comprises two new buildings and 3 new public spaces next to city hall. The District and Circle Line runs to the rear of our site forming the northern edge, cutting off Westminster City School and the St James' Court Hotel from Victoria Street.

Figure 256 Model photograph of the new Kings Gate showing the office building on the left and the residential tower on the right

The original Kingsgate building echoed this divisive condition, acting as wall between the south side of Victoria Street and the north. The land between the tube line and Kingsgate House was used solely as a service road for City Hall and the retail units that faced Victoria Street. Despite these twin boundaries and the resulting apparent 'rifts' in the urban topography, alleyways such as Seaforth Place to the north of Victoria Street are still used.

Figure 257 Diagram showing the constraints and opportunities posed by the Kingsgate House site

Figure 258 Diagram showing the proposed figure-ground of the new Kings Gate

The service road was a pedestrian alternative to Victoria Street enabling passage across it to Westminster Cathedral to the south or East-West from Cardinal Place towards Christ Church Gardens past the Korean Embassy. A network of civic institutions existed, but they lacked any architectural articulation or civic presence. Tube and road infrastructure cut off the two sides of Victoria Street at the very moment that it was created of course.

Figure 259 Proposed Site Plan of Kings Gate showing the scale and rhythm of spaces on Victoria Street

Our project is based upon a grand conceit that seeks to draw out the latent urbanity of Victoria as a city quarter. Our aim is to create a situation in which it appears as if we have simply taken away a twentieth century building, enabling 'once again' connections across Victoria Street. Our new office building has a solar-gain protecting layered façade that opens for ventilation, using cold water pumped up from below the site to cool its exposed concrete ceilings.

Figure 260 Early design drawings of the South façade of the office building

Figure 261 photograph of 1/25 scale model of the office building façade showing entrance to shops at ground floor

We use the 'coolth' inherent in the high water table there to aid the building's sustainability. Which in this case means that the development will avoid technical obsolescence and remain a useful part of the city when fossil

fuels become depleted or ridiculously expensive, and conventional ways of cooling modern buildings are impossible.

Figure 262 Model photograph showing the South-West corner of the office building with the façade partially opened

Figure 263 Mock-up of office façade by Gartner, Bavaria, November 2013

The residential building is shaded by a filigree stone screen that cuts solar gain as well as discretely enabling large south-facing domestic balconies to take their place on the street in a civic fashion. The sun moving across the building will reveal its depth. The deep facades control the damaging affects of the sun to the interior inhabitants – reducing the need for energy to cool them.

In casting shadows across the surface of the glass, figures within will be revealed. The deep window reveals are also an attempt to situate the human figure within the facades of large buildings. Our aim is to make architecture that confirms Alberti's description of 'second nature'; architecture that elaborates upon and extends the presence of the natural world into everyday life; architecture as mediation between nature and culture, forming the face and ground of the city. On the northwest side of the building, the layers of the façade are reduced, creating a different rhythm.

Figure 264 Collage showing the residential tower from Wilcox Place

In this situation our buildings lack explicit civic programs and are conceived of as background to the neighbouring buildings that do, Westminster Cathedral and City Hall. The former exhibits strong urban characteristics, whilst city hall is really only civic in the sense of being the tallest building in the middle part of Victoria Street. Its previous neighbours each side did not emphasise the urbane character of a tower structure. Our new buildings step up the street beginning with a contextually deferential stance towards the cathedral to the west. The office building is composed of what appear to be 3 blocks, whose scale, form and massing echo directly the apartment buildings that neighbour Bentley's Cathedral quarter. In planning terms we form 'the setting of the cathedral conservation area' and 'the setting of a listed building'. Our residential building continues this stepped composition in plan and section, and is angled to align with both the front and rear faces of the ground floor colonnade that forms the entrance to city hall, bringing its threshold into play as part of a rhythm of spaces.

Figure 265 Ground Floor Plan of Kings Gate (without Kingsgate Gardens or the works to the school shown)

This colonnade is the only example of architectural *rhythm* on this side of the street, and the only thing that could identify city hall as anything other than a tall office building. Looking east up Victoria Street from the edge of Westminster Cathedral Piazza, Westminster City Hall will now appear as a distinct urban figure whose neighbours mediate in part the scale and programmatic differences of a city quarter. Looking west from this position you will see the corner of the new public library sat beside a theatre. The rhythm of spaces between these buildings is complemented by the rhythm of their facades, which are designed to modulate sunlight and to emphasise the volumetric quality of the architecture.

Figure 266 Detail view of the South façade of the residential building

Figure 267 View of a balcony on 8th floor of the South façade of the residential building, looking South-West towards Westminster Cathedral

Figure 268 Jura Limestone piers by Szerelmy, sample inspection, The Isle of Portland, February 2014

Figure 269 Mock-up of limestone pier by Szerelmy, at the British Research Establishment Watford, October 2013, during testing for impact loads from a cleaning cradle

Figure 270 Photograph of installation of limestone piers by Szerelmy October 2014

Figure 271 View of Victoria Street from 1st floor balcony of Kings Gate Summer 2014

Figure 272 View West from Westminster Cathedral of library by Lynch architects

Figure 273 View East from Westminster Cathedral of Kings Gate by Lynch architects

The topographic shifts across the site (the school and hotel are 4.5m lower than the street) are accommodated into a practical architectural representational program and structure. A new park designed by Vogt landscape architects will sit above the District Line at the rear of Kings Gate, enabling Westminster City Hall access across Victoria Street in-between our new buildings. It is conceived as a 'dried-up river bed'. The aim is to re-present the high-tide mark on the site before the draining of the marshes and the construction of Victoria Street. The park will house flora and fauna that reflect its 'ecological history', providing the school with a grotto-like botanic garden for study at the lower sunken level, and a park for public enjoyment at the level of the street. It is defined along its northern edge by a concrete and flint wall that forms gateways into the school and hotel. This helps to merge the previously utterly distinct territories, masking the backs of some unattractive buildings and defining and creating a common ground in topological and analogical terms. It is analogous of a city wall, re-defining in architectural terms what was once the natural limit of Westminster. In placing this deliberately anachronistic device into play on the site as a ruin, we aim to ground experience of the city as a distinct and as a typical place, as a recognisable human habitat.

Figure 274 Model photograph of 1/25 scale model of Kingsgate Gardens by Lynch architects and Vogt landscape architects

Figure 275 View of Kingsgate Gardens showing Lynch architects new classrooms for Westminster City School on the left of the image

Figure 276 View North of Kingsgate Gardens from the courtyard between the new office and the residential buildings

A quiet 'court' is being created between our new residential building and City Hall. Lined with trees and without any public seating, this passage provides entrance to the apartments and is conceived of as a route connecting you to the medieval alleyways to the north and east. It is a version of the courts typical to Westminster, something like a Venetian or Portuguese Largo, a route and a civic space, but not a *piazza*. The two-storey sidewall of city hall has been revealed by the demolition of the old Kingsgate House. This will be filled by a shallow *bas-relief* artwork 30m long x 8m tall by the photographer and artist Rut Brees-Luxemburg, cast into gold-coloured glass-reinforced concrete, and broken into panels formed by thin pilasters applied to the surface of the building. The thematic content of the space will be literally reflected in the artwork, and shadows of the real trees and of people passing reveal images of a forest cast into the thin concrete. The revelation of an image of something naturalistic that predates the creation of the site will be juxtaposed with the absolutely temporal conditions of Victoria Street, sunlight, weather, use, etc. combining to articulate an experience of temporal and spatial 'depth'.

Figure 277 View of West façade of Westminster City Hall with artwork proposed by Rut Bles-Luxemburg

Figure 278 Detail view of West façade of Westminster City Hall with artwork proposed by Rut Bles-Luxemburg seen from residential entrance lobby of Kings Gate

Figure 279 Initial Ideas for 'The Silver Forest' for Westminster City Hall by Rut Blee-Luxemburg

Figure 280 Material sample tests by Graphic Relief for 'The Silver Forest' for Westminster City Hall by Rut Brees-Luxemburg

Our Public Art Strategy for the project also includes a number of other artists working in a variety of different media. The entrance to the residential building will be marked by an ornamental pattern carved into a cruciform granite column. This pattern is based upon an 18th century French *Chinoiserie* Toile, designed by the textile artists Timorous Beasties.

Figure 281 Drawings of the Cruciform Granite column by Timorous Beasties

Figure 282 1/3 Scale Cruciform Granite column by Timorous Beasties made for the Venice Biennale 2012

Figure 283 Cruciform Granite column by Timorous Beasties installed 1/3 scale in 'Inhabitable Models' exhibition by Lynch architects at the Venice Biennale 2012

Figure 284 Cruciform Granite column by Timorous Beasties marking residential entrance to Kings Gate ('The Silver Forest' by Rut Brees-Luxemburg will sit on the right of the Maples)

Figure 285 Photograph Kings Gate stone Oriel windows December 2014

Figure 286 Photograph Kings Gate stone flank faacde December 2014

In contrast to the *bas-relief* sculptures in the court, the thematic content of representational nature continues in a less embodied sense in digital artworks proposed for the gardens and for the roof terraces and facades of the office building. Dutch artist Simon Heijdens is proposing a time-based piece that responds to the weather, the seasons, peoples' movement within and around the buildings, and to the growth of vegetation on the site. Sensors transform data into digital code, which is then projected as light onto the glass walls, balustrades and onto the ground around the buildings, which are further then affected by human movement and by the interaction of various natural and urban phenomena. The theme of ecological responsibility (as an aspect of civility) is articulated not only in the passive aspects of the façade and structure, but also in ornamentation that brings the interaction of site, architecture and sculpture to visible appearance and to a state of participation.

Figure 287 Drawings of 'Tree' digital light installation by Simon Heijdens

Figure 288 'Tree' by Simon Heijdens installed in Utrecht

Figure 289 'Light Weeds' by Simon Heijdens installed at The Victoria and Albert Museum

Figure 290 Drawings of 'Light Weeds' digital light installation by Simon Heijdens

Heijden's digital light pieces will appear also in the basement changing rooms, where office worker who have cycled or run to work can wash themselves, and again on the 10th floor roof terrace overlooking the cathedral and Buckingham Palace. Occupiers of the building will gain specific experiences of the site, and the artwork will amplify the relationships between particular situations and the broader context of Victoria. Generated from photo-voltaic cells on the roof, the art work will act as "décor", bringing the spatial qualities of the background to one's attention, emphasising the energy

usage of the building and the relationship this has with the seasons, etc. Unlike the stucco mouldings in the drawing rooms of Georgian London the fine white lines of light will move to the rhythm of the city. In both instances, however, the presence of the natural world within the 'second nature' of the city suggests the latent order of spatiality grounded in *physis* and articulated in typical situations. In this case these are oriented, like the life within a *piano-nobile*, outwards towards the city.

Figure 291 Sketch showing locations of digital artworks by Simon Heijdens at Kings Gate

Figure 292 Collage showing proposed projections by Simon Heijdens at Kings Gate

Figure 293 Collage showing proposed projections by Simon Heijdens at Kings Gate

Figure 294 View of the South-West corner of the office building at Palace Street and Victoria Street intersection showing 'Light Weeds' digital light installation by Simon Hejdens at 1st floor

Figure 295 Sketch plan of the new colonnade in the school as a continuation of the spatial rhythms of Kings Gate and Westminster City Hall

We have also designed a new building for Westminster City School to house a drama studio and a music room, and also a new story that will sit on top of the art block. These are articulated as a brick colonnade and as a glassy lantern story. The former establishes the playground of the school as a courtyard, and the latter mediates between the brick territory of the school and the hinterland to the North, and the office blocks of Victoria Street.

Figure 296 Model photograph showing the additions to the school in the context of Kings Gate

Figure 297 Composite views from Westminster City School showing new classrooms by Lynch architects and their relationship with Victoria Street made by the Kings Gate buildings

Figure 298 Collage view of the new building for Westminster City School showing a series of layered situations involving the neighbouring hotel, city hall, etc.

Figure 299 Collage from Westminster City Hall of Westminster City School showing new classrooms by Lynch architects and their relationship with the Kings Gate buildings and the District and Circle Lines (Castle Lane is towards the top of the image above the playground)

Figure 300 Model photograph of Westminster City School with Westminster City Hall and Kingsgate House

Figure 301 Collage showing proposed projections by Simon Heijdens at Kings Gate

The ambit of the project takes in also Castle Lane to the north of the school and 'The Passage', a homeless charity based in the St Vincent de Paul convent on Carlisle Place to the immediate West of the cathedral. In both cases Victorian buildings are being extended and refurbished to provide 'affordable housing'.

Figure 302 Affordable Housing on Castle Lane SW1 by Henley, Halebrown, Rorrison architects
(Westminster City School is on the left of the image)

Figure 303 Affordable Housing on Castle Lane SW1 by Henley, Halebrown, Rorrison architects
(detail of facade)

Between the two new Kings Gate buildings a courtyard space is being built, which is something like a *Piazzetta* lined with restaurants and bars. It is south facing and leads directly to the new wall and gate to Westminster City School. West evening sunlight will illuminate the rear of the space in summer. The plan-form of the two new buildings is mirrored about this space, which creates a perspectival for-shortening of the courtyard and focus upon Kingsgate gardens beyond. Vogt call this space a 'baroque dining room'.

Figure 304 Collage of courtyard looking north towards Westminster City School across Kingsgate Gardens showing the public seating and drinking fountain

Figure 305 Concrete column sample by Careys, July 2013

The grotto-like character of the wall creates a strong contrast with the strongly volumetric and geometric order created by the giant-order columns that line it. Both the columns and wall will be rough to touch. The surface of the concrete will be washed away to reveal the 'latent aggregates'.

Tables and chairs from the bars and restaurants will occupy both sides of the lower portion of the colonnade during the day and in the evening. School children will pass at 8.30 and 3pm. A drinking fountain sits against the wall of the office building, in-between the office lobby and a restaurant. A delicatessen and bakery will sit at the base of the residential building facing Victoria Street. Vogt have designed a 15m long concrete bench for the courtyard space that will beside the drinking fountain.

Figure 306 Site photograph of courtyard looking north towards Westminster City School (December 2013)

In a few years, a public library should also open – once London Underground Limited complete a new ticket hall beneath it - and Victoria Street's role in supporting the rich background rhythm of an energetic city quarter will become clearer. As in the examples of Baroque architecture, described above, in which the rhythmic character of the typical situations that one finds in buildings, and in urban settings generally (as rooms), is accompanied also by the rhythmic character of architectural facades and thresholds (as niches, windows, doorways, etc): my conception of architecture might be summarised as *rhythmic armatures housing rhythmic situations*.

Figure 307 Site photograph of the library project (December 2013)

I have aimed to make architecture that is highly responsive to the rhythms of the seasons, to the daily life of Victoria Street, and which reveals the hidden topography and scale of the city. The hope is for 'iridescent architecture'⁴⁰¹ that is nonetheless silent. This paradox is possible because 'the silence of embodiment is always to a certain degree a voice of articulation,' Vesely reminds us, and 'it is only under these conditions that we can understand the language and the cultural role of architecture.'⁴⁰²

Figure 308 Mock-up of office façade by Gartner, Bavaria, November 2013

Figure 309 Photograph of office façade December 2014

401 In conversation, David Evans, co-director of Lynch architects, 2010.

402 Op. Cit., p. 106.

Figure 310 Photograph of office façade January 2015

Figure 311 Photograph of Kings Gate façade November 2014

Figure 312 Collage view from Wilcox Place showing part of the Eastern façade of Kings Gate just visible on the left, and Westminster City Hall now evident as both a tower and loggia

CONCLUSION

POETICS, BEAUTY & URBAN PRAXIS

*They said, "You have a blue guitar,
You do not play things as they are."*

*The man replied, "Things as they are
Are changed upon the blue guitar."*

*And they said then, "But play, you must,
A tune beyond us, yet ourselves,*

*A tune upon the blue guitar
Of things exactly as they are."*

Wallace Stevens, excerpt from *The Man with the Blue Guitar*

My arguments for the significance of rhythm in the communicative movement between site, architecture and sculptures can be summarised like this:

- a) securing involvement as the mode of being of *Da-sein* as understanding (the Rose Window at Chartes cathedral, St Peter's Klippan) as against subject-perceives-object
- b) securing spatiality as intrinsic to understanding as it always involves content and direction (the *Treppenhaus* at Wurzburg, St Peter's Klippan)
- c) connecting spatiality to rhythm in its original senses (*Shift*, the *Wind Combs* and The *Kursaal* at San Sebastián)
- d) connecting rhythmic spatiality to other manifestations of rhythm, in particular geometry/*analogia* and poetry (the *Brunnenstern*, *The Poem of the Right Angle*)
- e) connecting rhythmic spatiality to sculpture as a site of disclosure, that is, mediation between fundamental conditions and possibilities in history (The

Oratory at Rome, St Peter's Klippan)

f) this is what is at issue in dwelling, where, however, decorum of typical situations – the orientation of particular circumstances in history to their paradigmatic conditions – is the topic of creative interpretation, the specificity of site arises from sculptural qualification (St Peter's Klippan)

My conclusion is that as one cannot step outside Being: just as one cannot step outside of space, we cannot objectify it. Certain conditions of Being are revealed in spatiality, and are made thematic in the conditions of rhythm. A pause in a dance, or space in between things, is like the *time-out-of-time* of festival, etc., with obvious links to philosophy⁴⁰³. It is only in these gaps in everyday time that the fundamental conditions of Being become thematic, making Being as such “conspicuous”. The two modes of rhythmic spatiality that we see exhibited in sculpture – *rhythm of physiognomy* and *rhythm of situation* – are characteristic not only of those aspects of life that reveal *Being* in general, but are also characteristic of architecture that reveals the conditions of dwelling. Dwelling is characterised not only by contemplation of course, but also by the urbane and communicative aspects of playfulness, and by creativity as a mode of *decorum*. Like rhetoric and all modes of play generally, what Dalibor Vesely calls the ‘communicative movement’ (or ‘ontological movement’) inherent in one’s experiences of art and architecture are fundamentally *specific*. The ‘specific’ qualities of art works is something which late 20th century sculptors recovered from the wasteland of 19th century Romantic egoism.

I hope it is clear that whilst the architecture of Lewerentz and Moneo is undeniably site specific, it should also be seen as typical of the tradition of a spatial dialogue between sculpture and architecture that we have inherited from the Greeks and which has proven capable of regular renewal. This tradition is analogical: it re-presents some of the topics of Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy that unite rhetoric and poetry, dance with geometry and rhythmic spatiality, and architecture is traditionally the setting for this

403 Cf. *The Relevance of the Beautiful: Art as Play, Symbol, and Festival*, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Cambridge, 1986.

unity. We have seen how architects have articulated the dialogue between sculpture and the natural world over the past five hundred years, and that this is not a matter of form or style, but of rhythmic spatiality. Whilst the functional program of a concert hall is distinctly different to a church and superficially the architecture of Moneo and Lewerentz is diverse, the quasi-operatic performances at the Roman Oratory indicate that the difference is not as great as between either of these and, say, a petrol station. Arguably, the modern examples are also exemplary of a late twentieth century context in which a weakened mode of Welfare State Modernism encountered traditional culture on the one hand (“the church”, local politics, etc.), and neo-liberal capitalism on the other (social democratic governments, private-public finance, etc.).

This is largely the context in which any European architect will be lucky enough to be still working today. I felt that it was necessary to understand what is at stake when architects talk about ‘form’ and ‘function’ and ‘ornament’ and ‘public space’, etc. In an ‘Open Access Society’⁴⁰⁴ we supposedly all have access to communication, and yet communicative space has become something that is now elusive if not impossible to encounter. Vesely’s phrase ‘communicative movement’ seems to require a degree of participation and involvement that ‘open access’ seems paradoxically to deny – since there can be no movement or transformation if *everything* appears open, yet in fact is already mediated, but lacks hierarchy. This leads to the attempt to define everything as a system: all the ethical and political good intentions of an architect are impossible to reconcile with a purely systematic or formal order.

We do not experience anywhere as architects that is not a mediated encounter. What we sometimes blithely call ‘the site’ cannot be simply reduced to a redline boundary defining a building plot; when this happens, the Frankenstein architecture of ‘icons’ emerges from the alienated imaginations of architects’ grasping for our attention, and desperate for recognition. Peter Eisenman called for *critical site specific architecture*’ thirty years ago, and yet

404 Cf. *Violence and Social Orders: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History*, Douglas C. North, John Joseph Wallis, Barry R. Weingast, Cambridge University Press, 2012. Their recent work on violence suggests a malign side to the notion of ‘open access order’ that they presented over the past decade.

immediately recoiled from the possibilities of this into the vacuum of 'autonomous architecture'⁴⁰⁵.

I suggest that the ghost of 19th century architecture haunts the work of Colin Rowe and his students. The infamous and alleged failure of the Victorian 'Battle of the Styles' - between the Gothic decoration of Pugin and the Classicism of Barry - is supposedly one reason why modern architects saw in technology a way to avoid the question of ornament altogether. Arguably, in comparing Le Corbusier's buildings to Palladio's via an analysis of their 'mathematics', i.e. proportions stripped of ratio and analogue, Rowe completed the task of providing a pseudo-historical justification for Modernist architects' abandonment of *decorum* and rhetoric in favour of analysis and formalism. This is perhaps why what we now call 'theory' in architecture is incapable of bearing its traditional meaning - what Gadamer calls 'sharing in the total order of the cosmos'⁴⁰⁶ - or of providing any practical guidance about anything that might be remotely communicable to clients, planners, colleagues in other disciplines, etc. Nonetheless, the problem remains that we have inherited from the Victorians aspects of rhythmic and communicative space in London and other cities, but also its lack; or rather, we lack continuity between traditional and modern settings, and the city itself, its urban rooms and routes, seems to be largely obscured by the collision of social engineering with transport engineering in the domain of appearance.

As I suggest above, Peter Eisenman's oscillation between wanting to be a theorist and wanting to be an artist - forgetting the primary civic task of architecture along the way - is a symptom of the 19th century problem that one sees enshrined on the facades of the Victoria and Albert Museum⁴⁰⁷. The unity between commission, ornament and decorum is fundamental for a utile art such as architecture. Imitating sculpture, and misunderstanding this as 'sculptural form', seems not only problematic from the point of view of architecture as a discipline or art itself, but also - and most importantly - this

⁴⁰⁵ Interview with Peter Eisenman by Iman Ansar, *Architecture Daily*, 13th September 2013, 'Eisenman's Evolution: Architecture, Syntax, and New Subjectivity'.

⁴⁰⁶ *Truth and Method*, Op. Cit.

⁴⁰⁷ 'Decorative sculpture on the exterior of the Victoria and Albert Museum', John Physik, 1978. Published in the V&A Masterpieces series. Revised 2007, <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/d/decorative-sculpture-on-the-exterior-of-the-victoria-and-albert-museum/> accessed 10/12/2013 at 17.29.

gauche impersonation has had disastrous consequences for the quality of our cities.

The common counter reaction to 'icon architecture' is to claim that architecture should simply be functional. Recent emphasis upon 'materiality' is also problematic I believe, because materialism ignores the essentially representational character of architecture. All of these tendencies, which are often seen in opposition to each other, are similar in that they risk depriving architecture of its urbanity and its communicative power. I believe that the problem is not that there is too much philosophy in architecture schools, but that this has little relation with *praxis*.

As an uncritical part of "the construction industry" architectural practices are largely disengaged from the traditional ambitions of philosophy. This ambition was traditionally oriented towards establishing the possibility of 'the good life'⁴⁰⁸, and this is why so much traditional philosophy concerned cities. This did not mean, for Plato, attempting to create an ideal city or society, but, rather, revealing those aspects of conduct and ethics that manifest goodness. He saw, in the search for truth, goodness manifest as beauty. Whilst 'Plato linked the idea of the beautiful to that of the good, he was still aware of

408 A notable exception is *The Good Life: A Guided Visit to the Houses of Modernity*, Iñaki Ábalos, Gustavo Gil, 2001. For an elaboration of the notion of goodness and beauty into ecological design, see also 'Thermodynamism and Architecture', Iñaki Ábalos, in *Ábalos + Sentkiewicz*, 2G 56, Gustavo Gil, 2011 and the forthcoming *Abalos+Sentkiewicz: Essays On Thermodynamics, Architecture And Beauty*, Actar, 2014. See also Luis Fernandez-Galiano 'Thermodynamics and Architecture', unpublished lecture at the *Academia Reale* in Madrid 2012. See also *Aer to Air*, forthcoming, Helen Mallinson; and 'From city air to urban space: passion and pollution', in which she makes explicit the connections between 'bad air' pollution and Platonic notions of civic good in 16th century English thought: 'Shaftesbury did not compete with Newton's mastery of space but instead tried to solve the epistemological problem of how the mind learnt about truth and beauty. He suggested that man possessed a *moral sense* rather than innate ideas. Locke himself had suggested there might be more than the traditional five senses and Shaftesbury took the opportunity to expand the repertoire. He reworked Platonic ideas about soul into a faculty of moral sense that could work with the good and the beautiful in the same way that the mind was able to work with the data provided by vision through sight and light. Shaftesbury's new faculty gave credence to the strong moral and educational agenda that developed in eighteenth century aesthetic theory. The problem of identifying "the good" unfolded new horizons. Shaftesbury broadened the argument around enthusiasm by moving away from the issue of authenticity, focusing instead on issues of context and judgment. Both humour and imagination were essential to the new 'civility'. The material air, meanwhile, was slowly becoming associated with physical health rather than moral character', *Journal of Architecture*, forthcoming, 2014, p.10. Cf. also 'Weather Dissidents: from *Natura Naturans*, to "Space" and Back Again', in *Architecture and the Paradox of Dissidence*, Routledge, 2013.

the difference between the two and this difference involves the *special advantage of the beautiful*, Gadamer claims.⁴⁰⁹ The advantage it has is that:

The beautiful is distinguished from the absolutely intangible good in that it can be grasped. It is part of its own nature to be something visibly manifest. The beautiful reveals itself in the search for the good.⁴¹⁰

Gadamer continues to explain that 'beauty has the most important ontological function: that of mediating between idea and appearance', stating that this 'is the metaphysical crux of Platonism.' This 'finds its concrete form in the concept of participation (*methexis*) and concerns both the relation of the appearance to an idea and the relation of ideas to one another.'⁴¹¹ Participation lies at the heart of Plato's demonstration of the beautiful - as that which is visible to all (and participation is the basis for Gadamer's own concept of art as festival): 'However much beauty might be experienced as the reflection of something supraterritorial, it is still there in the visible world.' Yet 'the beautiful appears not only in what is visibly present to the senses', Gadamer claims, because 'it does so in such a way that it really exists only through it - i.e. emerges out of a whole.'⁴¹² Traditionally, *Theoria* was a means to share in the full richness and diversity of the *Kosmos*, acknowledging the complex hierarchies of relationships between the material and invisible aspects of reality. Poetics was the means to reveal the *harmony* that is latent within the cosmos.

Poetics is a quality that we find in visible, audible and comprehensible well-made things, what Aristotle called 'well-formed works'⁴¹³. It enables beauty to 'emerge as a harmonious whole that is proportioned within itself'. Poetics plays a central role in the disclosure of truth, Plato believed, 'which is part of the nature of the beautiful.'⁴¹⁴ Gadamer reminds us that 'the sensible mean, exactness of proportion is part of the oldest definition of the beautiful. We need only think of the sensitivity to the tonal harmonies from which music is constructed.'⁴¹⁵ Beauty is manifest in material things, but it is better,

409 *Truth and Method*, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Sheed and Ward, London, 1993, p. 480.

410 *Ibid.*, p.481.

411 *Ibid.*

412 *Ibid.*, p.482.

413 *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle, II, 6,1106 b 10.

414 *Philebus*, Plato, 51d.

415 *Op. Cit.*, p.482.

Gadamer suggests, to describe it 'not as simply symmetry but appearance itself... related to the idea of "shining"... Beauty has a mode of being of *light*.'⁴¹⁶ Poetics embodies and articulates beauty, that which is "most radiant" (*to ekphanestaton*). Because it is 'radiant', Gadamer suggests, beauty is something that illuminates and makes beautiful the things that surround it.

When we experience an example of the art of architecture we recognise both the memory of other typical situations, and a paradoxically refreshing, renewed yet recognisable quality. Gadamer captures this paradox neatly in 'The Relevance of the Beautiful': 'Art is the creation of something exemplary which is not simply produced by following rules.'⁴¹⁷ In a very similar way to creative design in fact, interpretation of a building involves an act of imagination. This reveals something of the role of rhythm as time, and of the importance of participation in art experience – of the necessity to step over the threshold of one's self in order to allow a sculpture, a building, a poem or a painting, a piece of music, drama, etc., to speak.

Writing, drawing and making buildings are not directly the same thing, of course, but are aspects of an exchange that finds its fullest manifestation in urbanity. What we learn from the resonance of site, architecture and sculpture, I believe, is that – as Eduardo Chillida suggested – 'Beauty is always mixed up in issues'.⁴¹⁸ There is a fundamental problem for urban praxis when architects crib methods from modern experimental science, and arguably "scientific method" *per se* is an inappropriate way to investigate architecture, since it is an activity undertaken neither in an artist's garret nor in a laboratory. Whilst my approach has limits in terms of its direct applicability in every other case – it is not a theory in this sense – my contribution has been to show the potency of particular philosophical and artistic themes to modern architecture. The continuity of this is not a matter of style nor of type – but of imagination. On the other hand, there are a number of typical situations that we have inherited from the introduction of technology into cities during the past two centuries that we encounter in our work as architects today. My aim has been to offer the means by which one can identify general urban problems of discontinuity and

416 Op. Cit., p.482.

417 The Relevance of the Beautiful: Art as Play Symbol and Festival', Op. Cit., p.21.

418 Eduardo Chillida: Writings, Op. Cit, p.98.

to suggest the potential that recovering the communicative movement between architecture, sculpture and site has in terms of praxis.⁴¹⁹

My research continues to influence my work as a practicing architect, and my thesis is that they are reciprocal. *Practical Poetics* involves an architect acknowledging and participating with what Vesely calls ‘the reciprocity of the actual and the possible’. It entails articulating and ‘manifesting the reciprocity of necessity and freedom, where “necessity” represents a given reality – the inevitable, necessary condition of our freedom and creativity.’⁴²⁰ *Practical Wisdom* and *Practical Poetics* resolve – in their reconciliation of interpretation and making – methodological conflicts between knowledge and imagination: uncovering, I suggest, the philosophical grounds and artistic potential for a renewed urban, architectural praxis.

419 Cf. Lynch architects’ project for The National Youth Theatre site in Islington:

<http://www.lyrchitects.com/projects/holloway-road/>

420 *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation: The Question of Creativity in the Shadow of Production*, MIT, Dalibor Vesely, 2004, p.58.

ADDENDUM

ADVERSUS POPULUM PHD BY LARS RIDDERSTEDT- *ST PETER'S CHURCH KLIPPAN 1962* (CHAPTER TRANSLATED BY NINA LUNDEVALL)

When Bishop Martin Lindström brought up the need for a church in Klippan, the project had been discussed for decades already. The previous pastor Axel Malmberg had already in April 1951 informed the parish council that a foundation had been set up that same month to “create, own and administer a fund with the aim to build a church”. The funds totalled 147.612 kronor on the 22.11.1961.

Following the announcement, churchwarden Erik Arlock and Carl Udding wrote to the church council in December 1960 suggesting “a parish with a church hall or a chapel with ancillary spaces” would be constructed. On the 30.1.1961, the church council decided to appoint a special committee of five members including builder and carpenter Eric Larsson as chairman, as well as donating 5000 kr to the committee. Pastor Carl-Hugo Gustafsson was appointed secretary.

Sigurd Lewerentz' involvement in the church project in Klippan was by no means certain from the beginning. If the forces within the parish council and church council had prevailed – they wanted the cheapest possible church to be built in the shortest time - the result would have been a rather traditional parish house with a church room. Pastor Gunnar Rudborg from Gothenburg, known in the context of small churches, was called to Klippan in spring 1961. He announced that “a beautiful, contemporary church building, in the current climate, could be obtained for 300.000 to 400.000 kronor”. Knowing Pastor Rudberg's church building ideals, one can imagine a small traditional chapel of the kind he had been involved with in the neighbourhood of Skår in Gothenburg. The committee went on a study trip to Gothenburg in spring 1961 to visit the new churches in Skår, Kortedala, Biskopsgården, Björkekärr and Kungsladugård among others.

The location of the church was not clear from the beginning either. No less than six alternative sites were discussed at the first committee meeting in spring 1961. The area around Gröningen, near Samrealskolan, in the centre of

Klippan, was the site settled on in the initial planning stage. Rudberg had found the site named 'Fajeronska' to be the best one when visiting Klippan in spring 1961, but also too expensive. According to the chairman of the church council and the committee, Eric Larsson, it was the chairman of the municipal council who, during the discussion in August 1961 about the congregation's presentation to the town of Klippan about buying land in the centre at Gröningen, voiced:

“No one begrudges the congregation the right to acquire the facilities it needs, we all agree on that, but there should be other site possibilities than the proposed one.”

He suggested the matter would be postponed, which also happened.

On November 28th 1961 the municipal council in Klippan decided to lease a site for free to the church in the citypark.

The question about the site was principally resolved.

Apart from the above mentioned trip to Gothenburg, the committee decided on the 3.7.1961 to make a study trip of small churches in Copenhagen together with the parish council and church council. The trip would take place once the question about the site had been resolved. The trip did not happen until the 31.3.1962 but would have a critical significance on the perception of modern church building and the choice of architect.

However, already on the 31.3.1962, Gustafsson informed the committee he had been in contact with Björn Linn at the Royal National Property Board (Kungl. Byggnadsstyrelsens byrå) and consulted him regarding a suitable architect for the small church of Klippan. Linn had promised to suggest two or three suitable architects.

The same day, the 13.3.1962, Gustafsson had shown a sketch and images of Österängskyrkan in Jönköping by architect Johannes Olivegren. However, the committee reassembled already two days later on the 15.3.1962 when Gustafsson informed he had again had contact with Architect Linn, and been told that “the Royal National Property Board had decided to suggest Architect Sigurd Lewerentz from Eskilstuna as a suitable architect for a small

church project. Architect Linn had emphasised the importance of entrusting the project to a good architect and that Lewerentz is unique among Swedish architects. He has long experience of church buildings and has built, among other projects, Marcuskyrkan in Skarpnäck.” However, it was apparently not certain Lewerentz would be commissioned. The committee decided secretary Gustafsson should consult with Gunnar Rudborg and theologian Per-Olof Sjögren in Gothenburg about the suggested architect.

A month later, 17.4.1962, Gustafsson informed the committee, that according to Per-Olof Sjögren, architect Lewerentz was a ‘good man’ and that he could certainly build a beautiful church. It is an advantage that Lewerentz does not have a very large office, but draws mostly himself. Dr Sjögren thought it wise to use an architect of his calibre. He also recommended that the committee contacted the secretary of “Kyrkfrämjandet”, Vicar Lars Ridderstedt, who is involved with architects’ building projects. Apparently, Gustafsson had called Ridderstedt almost immediately after his conversation with Sjögren. According to the same protocol: “Vicar Ridderstedt considers Architect Lewerentz one of our best architects and that his church, Marcuskyrkan in Skarpnäck, is one of the finest modern interiors created in Europe today.

Gustafsson had asked Ridderstedt to speak at the yearly meeting of the church foundation in Klippan and to visit the site in the city park on the same day. Björn Linn had consulted his superior on the Royal National Property Board, Sven Söderholm, before he gave his opinion to the committee secretary. Söderholm had warmly supported the suggestion to invite Lewerentz. Ridderstedt and Söderholm met at the building committee and decided to try in any way to contribute to Lewerentz being engaged in the project.

Janne Ahlin’s description of the events leading up to choosing an architect only partly corresponds with available protocols. That Lewerentz visited Klippan first in 1963 does not match the available documents. Lewerentz was there already a year before. On the 17.4.1962, the first brief for the new church is reported in minutes of the committee:

Church room of approximately 160 fixed seating, Sacristy with storage cupboard for vestures

*A vestry of approx. 120 seats, Organ gallery in the church space,
Bible study room, also to be used for the parish council meetings,
Two rooms for confirmation studies, ideally on the first floor, approx. 30 seats each,
Parish office with archive,
Youth facilities in the basement, Pantry, Toilets, Archive in the basement, Hobby room
,
Possibly, there should be a small entrance hall in connection with the porch, which could be used as a waiting area for christening and wedding entourages.*

Apparently, Janne Ahlin had not observed this protocol.

The waiting area next to the porch is an interesting detail in the brief, which was to be carried out completely in accordance with the original intentions.

However, an organ gallery was never considered in the future brief. Lewerentz arrived in Klippan on the 16th of May 1962 to visit the site. Apparently, he was fascinated by the project and found the park a suitable site. Marcuskyrkan had of course also been located in a similar park-like situation. However, according to Janne Ahlin, he wanted to place the church further into the park. On the 14.12.1962, the church council had mentioned the western corner of the park (the junction between Vedbyvägen and Klostervägen) as a suitable site for a small church..." Most likely they wanted to place the church to the west as far as possible, and close to the roads. Lewerentz wanted the church further east, right opposite the rectory, in order to create a recreational area to the west, which according to the author proved to be very farsighted. However, he wanted to keep the connection with Vedbyvägen and allowed the church porch and bell tower to reach the footpath. When the deed of gift was signed on the 23.10.1962, it was the site proposed by Lewerentz that was referred to.

When Lars Ridderstedt met Lewerentz for the first time in Skanör on the 1.3.1963, he told him with evident joy how he imagined the church complex in Klippan as a whole. "You see, it is so bloody windy in Skåne. Therefore I have placed the church premises as a protecting angle around the church with a courtyard between them. In that way there will be shelter at least sometimes in one of the courtyards."

Lewerentz worked through the first sketches relatively quickly. As mentioned, he visited Klippan for the first time on the 16.5.1962, and already on the 31.7.1962, the National Property Board received plan drawings dated 25.7.1962. Shortly thereafter, on the 3.8.1962, Sven Söderholm visited Klippan, where he met with representatives from the town and the congregation. Three days later he sent a written opinion to the vicar's office. He refers to his "verbal advice regarding traffic, parking and town planning questions as well as details about the formal application process". Söderholm continued by saying that Lewerentz sketches 'seem unusually suitable for further development".

The same day that Söderholm signed his statement, the 6.8.1962, the church council met in Klippan to decide on Lewerentz' proposal. With the support of the parish council, the committee solicited that the church council in principal approves one of architect Sigurd Lewerentz sketches for a church and its situation in the park. Completely without discussion, the church council decided to follow the recommendations of the committee.

Lewerentz could now continue according to plans. On the 31.10.1962 it was announced in the church council that the city had, on the 28.8.1962, decided to hand over an area of land of approx. 3500 square meter in the park, right in front of the rectory next to Vedbyvägen in accordance with the site plan of 25.7.1962, as a gift to the congregation of Klippan". This site plan was included in the drawing documents by Lewerentz, which had been received by the National Property Board on the 21.7.1962.

Lewerentz maintained the original concept for the complex throughout the planning process. In a plan sketch of the church room from 1962, which art historian Gun Schönbeck had found, one can see the two extensions, the sacristy and the porch north of the church, project towards the street in pretty much the same way as they would later be realized. In the square church room there is a four meter wide altar (4 x 1m) placed a meter in front of the east wall, and slightly to the right of the central axis when seen from the west, where the main entrance portal suggests the procession toward the altar. The pulpit has in this proposal been placed near the south gable of the altar in an angled extension in the east wall. A large square christening font, 150 x 150 cm, is placed a few meters in front of the north gable of the altar, in the front of the

church room. The seats are arranged in three straight blocks, the largest one in the south (10 benches), a slightly smaller one in the middle, and the smallest closest to the organ against the north wall (possibly meant for the choir). A beam across the church room is suggested by two projecting buttresses in the south and north wall. The beam would also be supported by a short wall in the middle aisle. This wall, 150 cm long, is slightly set at an angle in relation to the straight line from the main portal to the altar and follows the dotted line for one of the vaults. Dotted lines namely indicate seven conical vaults – alternating between pointy ones towards the east and the west – with the beam as a breakpoint. Straight in front of the altar and outside the east wall, a nearly four meter projecting wall is rediscovered, which was possibly meant for the church bells. Four portals open into the church room, the main entrance portal in the west, a door to the porch in the north west, a door to the sacristy in the north as well as a door in the south wall, near the above mentioned buttress for the roof beam. All details in the church room in this plan are perpendicular to the walls apart from the angled pulpit, in a similarly angled projecting part of the east wall.

The author has found a later plan, first dated the 10.1.1963, in the journal “Arkitektur” in connection with an article by architect Per-Olof Olsson. This plan, which had its last revisions on the 15.7.1963, is close to the one which formed the basis for the final proposal, except for a few adjustments.

The same base plan was further developed with recorded dates: 24.5, 19.8, 8.9 and 29.12.1964. This plan shows how Lewerentz refined and developed his ideas. A christening chapel is found again in the northwest corner of the church room with a large circle of lights hanging above one side of a square christening font. Two horizontally hanging beams, placed at an angle, divide the christening chapel half way between the floor and the ceiling. The organ has been rotated 45 degrees diagonally towards the center of the church room. The pulpit has been moved to the position in front of the north end of the altar, where the font stood in the earlier proposal, and has also been rotated so the speaker would be turned towards the center of the room. This is now marked by a steel pillar, which replaces the short wall mentioned before, as support for the cross beam.

The altar has moved forward a little, and made shorter and deeper. The altar ring in this proposal is turned in a half circle in front of the altar and fixed in its north end to the pulpit. On the side the altar ring is made up of a straight part towards the east wall. An additional opening has been made in the west wall next to the large portal. The north east corner of the porch has been pulled in a few meters, probably in order to increase the width of the small alley into the church. The sacristy has moved from the northwest to the northeast corner of the extension, which has been widened towards the east in order to be flush with the east wall. The cross wall behind the altar has been removed.

It was the first one of these proposals which Lars Ridderstedt was shown when he visited Lewerentz in Skanör on the 1.3.1963. Lewerentz was in a very good mood on this occasion and developed his thoughts on church architecture in general and the Klippan church in particular. From this Ridderstedt understood that the architect's relationship to Vicar Gustafsson was a bit tense, and that therefore he wished to be in contact with someone who had dealt with both liturgical as architectural questions. The same day, Ridderstedt shared his impressions of the proposal at a meeting in Klippan with Eric Larsson among others.

A month later, on the 3.4.1963, Ridderstedt revisited Lewerentz in Skanör – this time together with Eric Larsson and Erik Arlock from Klippan. They were very impressed by the architect's persona and his creativity but still wanted to hear Ridderstedt's opinion about the proposal. The main move – the square church room and the angled courtyard with the facilities as a protecting wall towards the east and north – Ridderstedt found very convincing. Even though he at this moment already had a few opinions about the liturgical design of the church room, he did not consider himself yet capable of being critical. Ridderstedt would later get the opportunity to go through a great many details alone with the architect.

Sven Söderholm had even he visited Lewerentz in Klippan, namely on the 30.12.1962, and wrote on the 7.1.1963 a note about this visit for the records of the Royal National Property Board: "plans, sections and facades in scale 1:50 existed. Model is being made for the committee. A thoroughly interesting

proposal, both functional and architectonic, which the board should as far as possible try and support.”

In the congregation, the opinion was that the work of the architect had reached so far that the deciding organ would be able to approve his sketches and modeled proposal. On the 17.5.1963, one year and a day after the architect first visited the site, a thorough briefing of the proposal to the church council in Klippan was held by the architect. The detailed minutes from this meeting are crucial in understanding the architect's intentions with his proposal.

These minutes clarify that the architect agrees on the traditional orientation of the church room in the eastwest axis. To a question on the possibility of a folding wall between the church room and the assembly room, the architect answered “that such an arrangement had shown to work very badly”. He strongly stressed that the church room needs to be a sacred building “completely separated from the other parts of the church. The architect then described the extensions to the north: the porch with waiting area for the christening and wedding entourages as well as the sacristy with space for church hosts and cantor, and above the bell chamber with space for four church bells. The following description largely follows the agenda previously circulated. The notes echo the architect's voice, for example he says “the kitchen is apparently too small for the vicar's wife, but I will have to review that later”. The question about the final design is left open on several points.

The architect placed great emphasis on the location of the ensemble in the park. He wanted to create a “peaceful church site with a pond”. The pond should only be 6-7cm deep. “It is about creating a calm setting with a bank around the pond planted with blackthorn for example, which flowers and later give amply of berries for the birds. This wall would also hide the ugly newspaper kiosk” Behind this wall, a parking area could be arranged.

Lewerentz also tried to consider the teenagers. “The ‘wilder elements’ who like driving their mopeds can gather in the courtyard between the assembly buildings. Lewerentz said it is therefore appropriate for the church to have no windows on the side facing the youth facilities.

Regarding the park, the architect said “In a park one should not build high buildings. The church achieves its height by conical vaults. The exterior of the church simply follows the interior. The church is built ‘from the inside’. The

altar becomes the centre of the church.” After reporting on the type of brick, which he calls “Persategel”, a machine made dark brick from Helsingborg, he answers questions about the acoustics. He mentions here that he has appointed civil engineer Brandt from the technical university in Stockholm. The architect returns thereafter to the question about the altar, which he thinks “should be large and powerful and stand free from the wall. It shall dominate the church room. In order to get the proportions right it should be mocked-up. The artificial lighting will be centered on the altar to mark its importance in the church room”. The architect here mentions a detail proposal, which was not built: “A golden crucifix will hang over the altar.” The procession cross with Christ’s monogram, XP, in a circle on a stick, which now stands on the right side of the altar, could be said to have the same function as the conceived crucifix.

Thereafter the architect mentions the tapestry of the X, which would later be made: “It will be an expensive item, which I hope you will try your best to raise money for”, he says. “Only the best is good enough for the church of Klippan.” He then describes the two sides of the tapestry: “One a light side, which expresses the joy of Christianity, the other one dark to symbolize the “Passionstiden” (time of Passion?). The idea is for ‘the eye to rest on a central item on the way to the altar. However, the architect expresses doubt about the position of the tapestry, but strongly makes the point: “the tapestry must under no conditions hang behind the altar, so that we get a more traditional church decoration. The tapestry must neither be lit.”

Regarding the light conditions in the church room he says: “Too much natural light destroys the atmosphere in a church room. Therefore the light fittings I spoke about must always be lit during the ceremony.”

His idea for the christening space is especially interesting at this stage of the planning. He talks about the christening chapel “immediately inside the porch. It is given the shape of a well which is separated by crossing beams. These beams of timber are hung from chains from the ceiling.” Projections in the walls to carry these beams still exist but already at this stage the architect says “it is possible I will abandon the idea of a dedicated christening chapel”. The beams would never be installed, but the architect wants to hold onto the

idea of a christening well. "The place shall be designed as an angled cliff which rises up from the floor in the northwest corner of the church. From here comes the water in a christening well. During a christening, the water would be lifted up in a bronze shell. It should also be possible to move the shell so that the christening can take place in the middle of the congregation, for example in front of the altar."

Regarding the location and design of the pulpit, he says it is still unclear. The choir should be a "singing part of the congregation". He recommends chairs instead of benches. Finally, he recommends the church bells should be operated manually through a bell team as is done in Marcuskyrkan.

One member of the church council questions, in his opinion, "the overly large altar". Lewerentz responds "that the design of the altar is not completely finished, and neither is the liturgical building up in the rest of the church. He ended by saying that he has studied quite a lot Rappe's book about the liturgical building up of a church".

The evening of the 17.5.1963 was a great success for the architect. The parish council decided unanimously to recommend Lewerentz proposal to the church council.

The 29.5.1963 the church council voted unanimously to follow the parish council's recommendation. Now the detail regulations and the costing of the scheme could begin.

The 3.8.1963, Lewerentz signed a detailed description of this proposal alongside a cost plan. The architect begins by describing a list of materials: "Machine struck brick from Helsingborg for all ground floor walls. Walls with less thickness than half a stone are to be built as cavity walls with insulations or hollow bricks as infill, connected with ties. The mortar to be strong lime cement. The joints to be well filled and struck. Basement walls and slab of concrete. The architect already in this description raises the importance of the slab and column of the bell tower to be separated from surrounding walls due to vibrations.

The heating to be "hot air in culverts beneath the floor. These culverts would also distribute water, drainage and all electrical cables. The architect later told Lars Ridderstedt that he had been inspired by the heating system of

old roman villas. That other services would also run through the culverts, showed the simplicity Lewerentz wanted to achieve in the practical details.

Regarding the decoration, the architect writes that he imagines “a crucifix, candle holders and a communion vessel in gilded silver”. Apparently, he wanted these objects to really attract attention.

The shell for the christening water, which he wanted made in bronze, he now wanted in gilded silver. This shell should be placed on an iron tripod and at the christening it his intention that the priest shall scoop up water from the well using the shell and then replace it on the mount. The shell would then be used as a christening font. This arrangement shows the architect’s detailed interest in liturgical questions. The previously mentioned timber beams around the christening chapel recurs here in a slightly different shape:” Over the christening well a sculpted frieze in timber.” Here reoccurs even the previously mentioned tapestry, which the architect imagines “hanging from the first beam to the right of the column , seen from the west opening” [the position which later became the definitive one].

The architect tried to engage the inhabitants of Klippan to carry out the same activity as the bell team in Marcuskyrkan had achieved. “In order to create a sonorous ringing by the bell team, the tower is planned to have four bells.” He finishes his description with the following words: “There should be subscription lists available at the parish office for donations to the planned decoration.” A preliminary costing by the architect is also attached. He assumed an average price of 250 kr per cbm and arrives at a total manufacturing cost of 1.583.000 kr.

When the above description arrived in Klippan, the congregation could apply for his Majesty’s approval “to erect a church and congregation building in the city park of Klippan according to a proposal by architect SAR tekn. Sigurd Lewerentz. The application arrived at the planning department on the 22.8.1963 and were then sent on to Lund’s Cathedral Chapter (Lunds domkapitel), who gave their opinion shortly after. In the absence of the bishop, the dean Yngve Ahlberg signed the statement from the Cathedral Chapter, who did not have “anything to recall in the matter”. However, the cathedral chapter “is of the opinion that the building should receive a decoration which, in a

more outspoken [directly translated as 'pregnant'] way, marks its sacred character. Apparently, the chapter in Lund had not understood the "sacred character" in Lewerentz' proposal. On the 4.10.1963, the planning department referred the matter to the government and commented on the Chapter's opinion by pointing out "that the proposal in its entirety as well as in its details is characterized by an unusual imagination for the task" and requests that His Majesty determines the proposal. On the 25.10.1963 the proposal was approved in the cabinet of Stockholm Palace.

The detail planning could now begin in earnest. However, two questions needed to be resolved before construction could start: a plan for the financing of the project and a permission to start by the County Labour Board (länsarbetsnämnden) of Kristianstad. On the 28.2.1964, Lewerentz wrote to the building committee and pointed out that in the application to the County Labour Board one ought to request carrying out the foundation work during the autumn months of September, October and November, but that the brick laying should not start until 1 mars 1965". [---] "Splitting the time on site will be of great benefit to the result." CLB gave their permission on the 17.4.1964 in accordance with the architect's wishes.

On the 18.6.1964 the parish council met to work out a plan for the work ahead. The council decided to request to the church council that the previous planning committee would be turned into a building committee with the duty to build the ensemble in accordance with the architect's proposal, and that a grant for 2.400.000 kr would be allocated. The committee suggested that the congregation would claim 200.000 kr from the congregation's investment fund as well as 200.000 kr of contributions from Klippan Church Foundation and Åby sewing circle, as well as take up a thirty year loan of 2M kr". On the 26.6.1964 the council decided unanimously to sanction the Parish Council's request. On the 13.8.1964 the finance department granted the congregation's request for a 2 M kr loan with a thirty year repayment period. Now the building work could begin.

The building firm Helge Lindgren in Klippan was chosen as the main contractor and on the 30.9.1964, the chairman of the building committee turned the first sod. Everything had so far gone according to plans. However, the efforts to produce all the necessary documents had apparently been too

great for the architect. When work began on site he was in hospital in Lund. However, a phone was installed in his sick room so that he could follow the work on site. This way he got to know the foreman Carl Sjöholm long before they met. After a while, the architect was allowed to return to his home in Skanör and initiated a visit by the foreman who showed photographs of the foundation walls which according to Janne Ahlin worked like medicine on the architect. When it was time to do mock ups of the brick walls he appeared on site for the first time.

However, another problem arose. Lewerentz had dimensioned the building according to modular bricks, which was a novelty in the building industry at that time and which he really wanted to try. These dimensions differed from normal bricks and meant the bricks would need to be laid in courses of 100mm instead of the usual 80mm. The architect had forgotten to inform about this. Helsingborg Brickworks did not produce the modular brick. The brick delivered was of the normal type, which meant the brick courses had to be recalculated so they worked with the openings and corners.

During the work, a friendly relationship developed between the architect and the foreman. "Sjöholm's role became to act as a receiver for a constant stream of ideas about how building problems should be resolved. He was a good litmus-paper for Lewerentz who appreciated the confident southerner and his objections and comments" writes Janne Ahlin.

On the 7.1.1965 Lewerentz was in such a good vigor that he could receive both builder Sven Peger and Helge Lindgren. At this occasion, the latter made an extensive memo about the building works in 21 points. According to this document, drawings for the basement facilities, church and assembly facilities are complete at this point. Many details in the program were decided and the architect promised the drawings for the brick laying would be finished by the 1.3.1965. It was decided that the bricklaying would begin in the south eastern part of the assembly facilities. As in the construction of Björkhagen in Stockholm, the joints are described as fully mortared, not struck but cut off while laying the bricks". Regarding the vaults it says that "these are to be laid by hand without a masonite formwork".

At a meeting in Klippan with the building committee four days later, Lindgren reported back from the meeting in Skanör and issued the above mentioned memo.

Already in the year of 1965, the architect and the congregation wished to have the sketches for the planned tapestry by artist Sven Erixson approved by the relevant authorities. The planning department referred the proposal to the Chapter in Lund, which in turn requested the opinion of the Church Building Committee (Kyrkans byggnadsbyrå). As the director of the committee, Lars Ridderstedt contacted the architect to see the cartoons the artist had made at full scale. Sven Erixson had added a detailed description to the sketches, which explained his intentions with the tapestries. Ridderstedt was able to support the proposal from both a theological and aesthetics point of view. In the response to the Chapter in Lund on the 18.2.1965 it says: "The colouration is extremely well considered from a liturgical point of view." On the 23.6.1965 the building committee decided to buy the sketches and contact Barbro Nilsson about drawing up a contract for the weaving.

On the 23.6.1965 the builder Helge Lindgren informed that the bricklaying would start on the 10.8.1965 the latest. A box with documents about the church project would be embedded in the foundation of the church.

When the walls had progressed for a while the architect felt he needed help with all the drafting. He therefore employed the Greek born architect Michel Papadopoulos, who could complete the principals which had already been set up and make site visits. This was even more important as Lewerentz (according to Ahlin) became ill a second time during the construction period. Apparently he improved later that autumn. On the 7.12.1965 Lewerentz participated in a meeting with the building committee in Klippan. It was decided that a topping out party would be held on the 11.1.1966 and that the architect and committee would travel to Copenhagen on the 12.1.1966 to study different chairs and furniture types.

At the same meeting it was decided that the church bells would be equipped for mechanical ringing. At a meeting the day before the above mentioned, the committee had decided that the prerequisites for manual ringing were nonexistent". Further, they wanted the architect to reconsider his proposal for bells as follows: " 4 number bells are to be obtained, but only two

will be purchased now.” The reason for this decision was, according to the protocol, that the committee only had 45.000 Kr at its disposal. A few months later they thought they could afford three. The 4.7.1966, the committee approved the purchase of a fourth bell.

At the meeting of the 6.12.1965, it was decided to object against the invoices from contractor Hjalmar Granholm AB. They were considered “disproportionate to both the received cost plan of 13.11.1963 and the budget. On the 19.4.1966, the builder in charge, Sven Peger, responded in a letter to the secretary of the committee, builder Lindgren, with specified information about the work carried out as well as the basis for how the fees had been calculated. The letter continues by saying “the work on site has taken a lot of time, which is natural considering the building project is especially peculiar and every detail has to be carefully checked”.

Now the questions about the interior also began to be discussed. On the 16.2.1966 Helge Lindgren showed a section drawing of the church which “aroused general satisfaction with the exception of the decoration for the altar”. The committee decided to ask the architect to “reconsider his proposal”. It was also proposed that the kneeling bench would be provided with a handrail considering older people.

By tradition, church bells were usually provided with a text stating, when and by whom the bell had been cast as well as providing information about the current acting Bishop, priests, etc. A hymn often complemented this list. In Klippan, Pastor Gustafsson made contact with Poet Bo Setterlind, who early on had taken an interest in this particular poetry art form. In an undated letter (probably written in spring-winter 1966) Setterlind thanks Gustafsson for “the study material about the church and its architect! Very rewarding. I found quite soon, that there existed a friendship, not unsubstantial, between the architect and the poet, also professionally – we are both romantics”, Setterlind writes. In a letter dated 19.4.1966, he proposes that the church bells would be named after the apostles Petrus, Paulus, Andreas and Tomas, “...the largest to the smallest”. It is hardly surprising from a theological point that the big bell was named Petrus, but Setterlind gives the apostle’s name a local connection: EVERYTHING EARTHLY ESCAPES – ITS GLORY

DISAPPEARS – BUT THE LORDS CLIFF* STANDS – FOREVER.

According to a protocol of the 5.7.1966, there had been some disagreement about the rest of the text on the bells. On the 18.5.1966, the committee had decided: "the large bell shall also be provided with the names of the vicar, the architect and the main builder, as well as the names of the building committee's members." The 5.7.1966 it was decided that this paragraph should be removed. In his letter of the 19.4.1966, Setterlind had suggested that the smallest bell would be signed with "Bo Setterlind scripsit."

That the name of the church became S:t Petri depends of course on the allusion to the name of the town and the connection to Jesus' words in Matt. 16:18 : "And I tell you that you are Petrus, the cliff, and on this cliff I will build my church."

As mentioned above, discussions about the interior had begun already in February 1966. During spring 1966, Lewerentz traveled up to Klippan every week and actively participated in the resolution of various construction details. During the evening he sat with builder Sjöholm and prepared the following day's work. During this time the architect called up Ridderstedt to ask if there was anything he was unsure about.

To these questions, I responded that I found one of the openings into the church unnecessary. There was namely at this stage in the building process a special door for the priest in the northeast corner of the church room, through which the priest could easily reach the pulpit. It was now planned that the organ would stand in front of this corner, diagonally turned toward the centre of the room. West of the organ, the procession from the sacristy to the altar was already marked with special openings for natural light in the roof. I tried to describe what it would be like if the priest suddenly appeared behind the organ as a cuckoo in a cuckoo clock", which Lewerentz gratefully noted with a sincere laughter. The day after Sjöholm was given orders to brick up the "priest door".

The furnishing was now becoming an urgent matter. Ridderstedt arrived in Skanör on the invite of the architect to discuss in detail the liturgical related questions, and stayed until the following day. Regarding the location for christenings, we both agreed that the large timber beams, which Lewerentz imagined would frame the christening chapel, were not necessary. In his conversation, he expressed his great admiration for Celsing's christening font in

Vällingby and would like to create a similar arrangement with dripping water. He wanted the calm sound to reinforce the sacred silence. Ridderstedt noted it was easy to interpret his design of the well in the floor as a symbol of the original sea (Urhavet), Tehom, in the book of Moses, and that the rise of the floor closest to the well could be seen as a symbol for the spherical earth crust. Originally, Lewerentz had imagined a font in bronze, which could be moved if one wanted to carry out christenings by the altar. With great exhilaration, the architect told me he was traveling together with the building committee to Copenhagen to buy a large, white shell from the Caribbean.

When we got to the design of the entrance from the north and the porch, I mentioned that in Hagia Sofia in Constantinople, there had originally been two sacristies either side of the narthex, which could be said to correspond with the porch.

One of them had been used by the priests and the other for storing clothes, bread etc. which were collected during the ceremonies and later given to the poor. The architect took this knowledge to heart, and it was the origin of the little altar in the porch, where he wanted a permanent offering bowl standing. Eventually, it was decided that wedding ceremonies with only a few witnesses could take place here. A waiting area for christening and wedding companions already existed north of the porch.

The design of the altar I found completely in order, both regarding size, form and location. However, I expressed hesitation about his proposed pulpit, which was pulled forward towards the centre of the room. Since the room was almost square I found it unnecessary to place the pulpit so far forward. The altar would appear better if the pulpit was pushed back towards the east wall. For a priest "it is always nice to stand with your back against a wall", I noted.

In this context, we discussed the design of the sanctuary in some of the world's oldest churches from the 4th century in Rome, especially San Clemente. I told him how common it was at this time to have the bishop sitting on a high chair behind the altar with the priests on so called clergy benches either side. Something similar has never existed in the medieval churches in our country, since clergy benches was no longer used when our first stone churches began to be built in the 12th and 13th century, "Imagine if we were to join the pulpit with

a bishop throne and let a clergy bench in brick continue south towards the east wall behind the altar”, I spontaneously suggested. Lewerentz was immediately interested and started making quick sketches on the drawing board. After a few hours he was clear about how he wanted it. Since I knew bishop Martin Lindström in Lund, I asked if I could call her about visiting the bishop’s palace the following day, the 19.7.1966, to show how Lewerentz had imagined the combined pulpit, bishop’s throne and clergy bench. The bishop promised to receive me. The architect had made a card model, which I brought to Lund with great care. Martin Lindström was very amused by the thought that he, as the first bishop in modern time, would inaugurate a church equipped with a bishop’s throne, which he himself would sit in after the inauguration. When I returned to Stockholm I called Sven Söderholm and told him about the interior proposal and the reaction of the bishop. The Royal National Property Board had nothing to object.

An important detail in the church room was the light through the chimney-like lanterns in the church roof, above the procession from the sacristy towards the altar. Through these shafts, there would be a warm light onto the cross-bearer, the church hosts and the priests as they wandered to and from the altar. According to Ahlin, Lewerentz had taken the reference for these lanterns from the old brick factory in Helsingborg. “He had there seen the light fall in shafts from small openings in the roof.” Similar windows recur above the porch, the waiting area and the cantor’s room east of the sacristy. In the latter room the light ended up too weak according to the architect.

The inauguration was now approaching. It would take place on the first Sunday of advent in 1966 and was prepared in minute detail. Lewerentz did not come. He did not like attending large crowds. In his place he sent his colleague and friend, Bernt Nyberg. A few sentences from Bishop Lindström’s inauguration speech interpret quite well what many present experienced that day:

I have heard it said, that a few mean that the church is not what they expected. They are probably right, but should be pleased about it. No one could foresee that the church of Klippan would look the way it does now. It does not attempt to resemble churches from past times. It is something new. If everyone had immediately been satisfied, it

would have meant that it would not have anything to say beyond the usual. Now it speaks the formal language of our own times [---]. A celebrated artist has here built with his whole being, built a holy room of a majestic weight. It speaks of God's immensity and equally of the safety under his protection. The honesty of the work, which lets every material be what it is, says that her truth is required. This is the holy house.

*

Klippa = Cliff

Klippan = the Cliff

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